

LEARNING COMMONS SERVICE PROGRAM

Drafted by the Learning Commons Services Working Group
December 16, 2004

This document summarizes proposed key elements of the Learning Commons service program. It is meant to provide background for:

- discussion and feedback from staff
 - decisions by senior administrators of partner units
 - union/management discussions
 - other Learning Commons working groups
 - development of publicity materials
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Philosophy

The Learning Commons is an accessible, collaborative space where people pursue and share ideas. This enriched learning environment brings together tools, resources, and support for the academic experience of Queen's students. The dedicated space unites people who assist students through individual consultation, workshops, peer mentoring, and collaboration, and it includes improved support for accessing and exploring digital resources and technology.

Services

The following table is intended to provide a point-form summary of the kinds of help a user can expect to find in the Learning Commons. It does not represent the full range of services provided by each independent unit. Details regarding hours or frequency of particular services are still to be determined.

<i>Help with...</i>	<i>Where</i>	<i>Who</i>
Navigating services and facilities (welcome, referral and general info)	Learning Commons (LC) Desk, Circ Desk, anywhere	All
Searching – known item	LC Desk, Circ Desk	Library, ITS
Searching and evaluating – research topics in humanities/social sciences	LC Desk, consultations, workshops	Library
Information literacy skills development in humanities/social sciences	LC Desk, consultations, workshops	Library, Writing Centre
Research support in statistical access, analysis and presentation	Consultations, workshops	Library
Saving research products (eg theses, datasets) in Q-Space database	Consultations	Library
Citing sources	LC desk, consultations, workshops,	Library, Writing Centre
Writing (assignment interpretation, grammar, format, etc.)	Consultations, workshops	Writing Centre
Academic success support, coaching and referral	Consultations	LSD Peer Mentors
Learning skills (time management, note-taking, exam preparation, essay writing, learning styles, etc)	Workshops	LSD Peer Learning Assistants, Writing Centre

Course-specific studying	Workshops	LSD Peer Learning Assistants
Learning and using adaptive technology, acquiring educational materials in alternate formats and using library resources for research	Special Reader Services	Special Reader Services
Printing, saving, viewing information	LC Desk, Circ Desk	ITS, Library
Using software to present information	LC desk, IT Support Centre, consultations, workshops	ITS
Connecting online (Net-ID, wireless etc)	LC Desk, IT Support Centre	ITS
Using course software	LC desk, IT Support Centre	ITS
Troubleshooting personal hardware/software (configuring a laptop, virus protection, security software, etc)	LC Desk, IT Support Centre	ITS
Repairing, purchasing, upgrading personal hardware/software	Technology Solutions Centre	ITS

Group and individual study

Students work together in enclosed, accessible, technology-enabled study rooms, and at open tables. Study rooms can be booked using an online form on the Learning Commons website. Soft seating provides the opportunity for comfortable contemplation and discussion. Individual study spaces are plentiful on both floors, as well as on the quieter upper floors of the library.

Learning and research events

The Learning Commons provides a forum for stimulating academic events, such as interdisciplinary lectures, readings, or displays. Events take place in the seminar room or the entrance loggia. They are organized by and held for Queen's students, faculty or staff. Requests to hold events are made through an online form on the Learning Commons website.

Technology

The Learning Commons includes:

- Over 100 computers distributed throughout the facility, providing full Internet access software, and common tools such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- Laptops available on 3-hour loan
- Wireless network (restricted to campus Net-ID holders)
- "Quickstop" stations for quick look-ups
- Printing
- Scanning
- DVD and video viewing
- An electronic classroom with 30 computers, data projector, smartboard and instructional software

Technology offerings and policies will evolve in consultation with users.

(Note: staff support mechanisms are under discussion in the Learning Commons IT Working Group.)

Governance

The Learning Commons is a collaboration of several units: IT Services, Learning Strategies Development, the Library, Special Reader Services and the Writing Centre. The aims of the Learning Commons governance structure are:

- (1) to form a true partnership in which each of the units has input and responsibility for building collaborative programs and making the Learning Commons a success;
- (2) to retain independent administrative structures in each unit – for example, staff in one unit do not supervise staff in another unit.

Executive Team

The Learning Commons Executive Team makes decisions on governance, facilities and financial matters pertaining to the Learning Commons. Its members have senior administrative responsibility for a partner unit. Members report on Learning Commons matters (e.g. operating budget, program assessment) to their respective Vice-Principals. As the unit responsible for the Learning Commons physical infrastructure, the Library representative chairs this team, at least initially. The team meets quarterly.

Services Team

The Learning Commons Services Team is responsible for the development and delivery of effective services in the Learning Commons. It reports to the Executive Team. Each of the partner units has a representative on the Services Team. These representatives are individuals with direct managerial responsibility for programs in the Learning Commons. The Learning Commons Coordinator is an ongoing member of the Services Team. The team elects a leader who facilitates the development of meeting agendas and long-term planning. Meetings are held weekly or at whatever frequency allows issues to be addressed efficiently and effectively.

Advisory committee

The Learning Commons Advisory Committee provides student and faculty input on Learning Commons programs. Members help the Services Team set general directions bi-annually, they are available to staff for consultation on an ongoing basis, and they may be involved in the development of specific events. Members include representatives of the Dean of Student Affairs, the Faculty of Arts and Science, AMS and SGPS.

(Note: this does not in any way replace other advisory committees such as faculty library advisory committees)

Learning Commons Coordinator

The Learning Commons Coordinator is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Learning Commons. The Coordinator is employed by the Library but pursues the interests of the Learning Commons as a whole. The Coordinator is a member of the Services Team and consults with each of the partner units on an ongoing operational basis.

Staff

The following brief descriptions are intended to summarize the different types of staff in the Learning Commons, as currently anticipated.

Library

Librarians who provide service at the Learning Commons (LC) Desk and teach research skills are QUFA members. The reference assistant (library technician) at the LC Desk and the library technicians at the Circulation Desk are CUPE 1302 members. Student and community casual

assistants also work at the Circulation Desk. The evening circulation supervisor is a member of the general support staff.

ITServices

ITS staff at the LC Desk are predominantly student casual assistants. ITS staff who provide the second and third level of assistance are members of the general support staff. Campus Computer Sales and Services (Technology Solutions Centre) has a few staff who are members of CUPE 254.

Special Readers' Services

The Coordinator for Special Readers' Services is a librarian and QUFA member. The assistant to the Coordinator is a library technician and a CUPE 1302 member. Two part-time adaptive technologists are members of the general support staff. Several student and community casual assistants work as editors and office assistants. Volunteer readers are solicited from both the Kingston community and Queen's community.

Writing Centre

The only full-time employee of the Writing Centre is the director, who is a QUFA member. There are four adjunct professors, three senior tutors who share the job of assistant director, two work study students who assist with peer tutoring and administration of the tutorial program, and approximately twenty tutors. Only the director has an office in the Learning Commons.

Learning Strategies Development

Learning Strategies Development relies heavily on peer learning assistants and peer mentors. These are student volunteers who are recruited, trained and evaluated by staff in Health, Counselling and Disability Services. The Coordinator of the Learning Strategies Outreach program, a member of the general support staff, may be located in the Learning Commons.

Learning Commons Services Working Group:

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Elizabeth Gibson, Library (December 2004-)

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