Establishing the **Learning Commons**

the experience of
Run Run Shaw Library
City University of Hong Kong

Present at
International Conference on Information and Learning Commons
HKUST
11 December, 2007
Learning Commons @ CityU Library

- How do we define Learning Commons
- What is our strategy on space planning
- What have we done so far
- How are we going to manage
  - Space
  - Services
  - Human Resources
How do we define Learning Commons?

No definition suits everyone!

- City University’s
  - Teaching Pedagogy
    - Outcome Based Learning
- CityU Library User Behaviours
- Literature Review
- Site Visits
  - USA, Canada, Singapore, Taiwan, China
CityU Library’s definition

Common area to support out-of-classroom learning

Community of practice for
  – knowledge creation
  – Knowledge transfer

Collaborative teaching & learning
  – through interaction

Cultural emphasis

Comfortable environment

Conducive to learning

Combined services
  – Reference desk + IT Help desk
### Library Space Planning Strategy (1)

#### Library Space Management Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Archive</th>
<th>Closed stack Library</th>
<th>Open stack Library</th>
<th>Learning Commons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- For storage</td>
<td>- For the storage of special collection and rare used items.</td>
<td>- To provide general reader’s services, such as loan and material browsing.</td>
<td>- To provide a multi-functional, open and flexible environment to enhance new learning activities such as group study, project-based learning, and the innovation of new knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- No reader’s services provided</td>
<td>- Reader’s services with limited reading space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Can accommodate a few readers to do their research there</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shatin Archive</td>
<td>(Hybrid Model)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Library</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Existing model**

**Future Model**
## Positioning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HK$466.68 (average price of English book: HK$392)</th>
<th>HK$40+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kowloon Tong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Shatin Archive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Campus Library
- Area: 11,628 sq. m.
- To provide general reader’s services
- To keep **700,000** volumes of books
- Learning Space: 60%
- Stack: 30%
- Services and Support: 10%

### Shatin Archive
- Area: 3,496 sq. m.*
- Mainly designed for the storage of special collections, and to provide space for a small number of users to do their research there.
- To keep **700,000** volumes of books
- Stack: 80% (standard shelves + compact)
- Learning/Research Space: 10%
- Services and Support: 10%

*Currently, only 2,952 sq. m. is belong to the Library.
What have we done so far?

• Obtain Budget
  – Applied for University and Government funding

• Office Relocation

• Professional Consultancy
  Strategic study and planning of the Library
  – Library’s size, existing facilities, space characteristics, and problems facing
  – Usage rate of existing collections and facilities
  – Workflow of Library staff
  – Comments and suggestions from users and staff

• Concept Development and Spatial Design
Recommended Concept Drawing

Theme: Information flow connecting East & West

Style: Continuous, Seamless, Dynamic, Exploratory
Some Basic Principles

Create Focal Points and Variety of Spaces

- Focal points

Zoning:
- Inspiration zone
- Interaction zone
- Learning zone
- Silent zone

Information provided by MCP
Some Basic Principles

Library Space – Support New Learning Activities

Workstation for individual study

Workstation for small study groups

Workstation for group study

Group discussion rooms
Some Basic Principles

Better Seating and Environment

Preferred seating/study spaces

- Comfortable furniture and setting
- Seating by windows
- Individual study carrels
- Workstations with high-end software
- Sofas
- Seating with planters
- Extended desk width
Communication & Collection of Feedback

- Public Forum
- Survey
- Sharing Sessions
  - University senior management
  - Academic units
  - Administrative units
  - Specific user groups (e.g. users with disabilities, student association)
Staff Briefing and Training Sessions

Collaboration with Facilities Management Office (FMO)
Survey Results

I visit the Library mostly to

- borrow/return library materials: 78.30%
- find information: 76.00%
- study: 74.00%
- do assignments: 46.60%
- use the Information Space: 40.80%
- do research: 32.40%
- read magazines/newspapers: 19.90%
- view multimedia items: 18.00%
- have discussion with others: 16.00%
- seek assistance from librarians: 16.00%
- meet friends or rest or wait for the next class: 4.10%
- print and photocopying: 2.70%
- others: 1.80%
The places/areas in the Library I normally use are:

- Study area: 63.1%
- Book collection area: 50.6%
- Information space: 46.4%
- Journal collection area: 30.3%
- Media and electronic resources centre: 19.6%
- Study carrel: 18.8%
- Group study/discussion/seminar room: 15.1%
- Current newspaper reading area: 13.2%
- Catalogue and electronic resources workstations: 12.4%
- Photocopying area: 11.6%
- Others: 0.6%

Survey Results
Light snack/drink should be allowed in a designed area of the Library?

- Yes: 70.7%
- No: 29.3%

Noise and discussion should be allowed in a designed area of the Library?

- Yes: 70.3%
- No: 29.7%

Legend:
- Light snack/drink should be allowed in a designated area only (such as cafe).
- Food should not be allowed in the Library at all times.
- Noise and discussion should be allowed in a designated sound proof area.
- Noise should not be allowed in the Library, including discussion and cell phones.
Promotional Activities

• **Exhibitions**
  - The Renovation Project
  - Today’s Libraries – other libraries as examples

• **E Newsletters and Email Broadcasting (EBS)**
  - Background/Rationale of renovation
  - What is Learning Commons
  - Major disturbances/Temporary measures
  - Renovation progress updates

• **Video**
  - Illustrate why a large scale renovation is needed

- **Website**
Furniture Trial Zone

Together, we will make our dream come true!

To contribute your effort on the library renovation project, please let us know your preference!
Learning Commons – Part 1

Facts

• Construction
  – Began in July 2007
  – Completed in November 2007 (in 2 stages)

• Total Area Renovated
  – 3,200 sq. m.
  = 1/3 of the whole Library

• 300 Seats
  – 30% for quiet discussion
  – 70% for individual study

Daily operation & services was not affected
Learning Commons – Part 1

Main Passageway
### Learning Commons – Part 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User/Library Needs</th>
<th>New Facilities</th>
<th>Special Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feel they are welcomed</td>
<td>Information Counter</td>
<td>Served by specially trained staff and internship students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask directional questions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative with teaching department in the student internship programme - encourage more students to participate in library services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High tech computer facilities</td>
<td>The Oval</td>
<td>Computer workstations (also for wheelchair users)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work alone with immediate help (both ref and IT) when necessary</td>
<td>Combined Counter (Ref + IT Help)</td>
<td>High speed printers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read leisurely in an informal but quiet environment</td>
<td>Leisure Corner</td>
<td>One-stop assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion &amp; work with friends on group projects/Library events</td>
<td>Library Lounge</td>
<td>Collaboration with other University units e.g. Reading promotion scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch media with updated equipment</td>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Newspaper + popular magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrow with less staff handling</td>
<td></td>
<td>60” screen for watching cable TV news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled access of specific materials</td>
<td>Semi Closed</td>
<td>Multi-media viewing booth with equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with disabilities</td>
<td>Special Needs Room</td>
<td>Application of RFID (HF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Application of RFID (UHF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reserved for users with special needs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Equipment for visually impaired users</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Newly Introduced Areas

Information Counter

Served by

Information Counter Officer (ICO)

+ Students from internship programme
Newly Introduced Areas

The Oval
The Oval

Library’s PC + User’s laptop

Dual Monitors
Newly Introduced Area

Reference Desk & IT Help Desk
Newly Introduced Areas

Library Lounge
Newly Introduced Areas

Leisure Corner
Newly Introduced Areas

Media Zone
Newly Introduced Areas

Semi-closed
(Temporary Reading Area)
Newly Introduced Areas

Special Needs Room
Others

LCD Wall

Informal Seating

Zoning
### Building Services and Infrastructure

#### Improvement in Building Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Services</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>Now</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Air Quality</td>
<td>5 L. per second per person</td>
<td>8 L. per second @ per person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature</td>
<td>Inconsistent</td>
<td>More consistent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Infrastructure

**Electronic Resources**

**HK$20M+**

**Corresponding Infrastructure**

- Power supply
- Network ports
- Additional hub room
The Next Step

Learning Commons – Part 2

- Constraints
  - Construction - only in summer break
  - Daily operation & core services are kept open

- 3-3-4 scheme

Student Enrolment Projection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UGC-funded FTE</td>
<td>21,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 2

Group Activity Facilities – **More, More, More!!!**

- **Peer Collaborative Learning**
  - Group discussion rooms
  - Group viewing room
  - Language clinic/other collaboration facilities

- **Subject Villages**
  - Business and Law
  - Humanities and Social Sciences
  - Science and Engineering

- **Cafe**

- **Better Noise Controlled Zoning**
What does Learning Commons bring?

Continuing Changes

Space

Services

Human resources

?
Service Model

The Bank

Counter services

Self-help

E-banking
Service Model

The Library

Counter services

Self-check

E-resources
Service Model

Concept of Merchandizing
– Good Retail
– More Personal Services

Richmond Public Library, Vancouver
What is our new Service Model?

- Less library specialist approach
  - from counter to user services
- More self-help services
  - Self check
  - Self-pick up
- More electronic resources and services

More Peer-to-Peer Learning
- Collaborative learning activities
- Student helpers
Human Resources

New Services
– Require New Staffing Structure

Traditional Staffing Structure
Traditional library duties

New Staffing Structure
Embrace new vision of learning and education
Human Resources

Budget Limitation

Staff Recruitment

Staff Re-deployment

Run Run Shaw Library

RECRUITMENT
How do we manage?

(A) Organizational Restructuring

New working teams to provide new services

- Information Counter Officer (ICO)
- Equipment Management Team (EMT)
- Teams to manage Subject Villages
How do we manage?

(B) Collaboration

Partnership with Academic Departments and Units

- Student internship with CTL Dept
- More Student Involvement & Participation
  - More mutual understanding
- Training from CSC
- RFID development with EE Dept
Other Collaboration

Reading Promotion Scheme with EDO & Dean of student Learning

Outstanding Academic Papers by Students (OAPS)

Language Enhancement Scheme with EDO
What are we facing?

Ongoing Needs

(A) Interaction with Users and Academics

(B) Collection of Feedback

(C) Continuing Assessment of Space Services Human Resources
Future Challenges

How to Measure?

1. Users like the Learning Commons?
2. No. of User/Access?
3. Knowledge Creation & Knowledge Transfer
4. Cost Benefit Analysis?