INTRODUCTION

Mission: Western Libraries is committed to excellence: anticipating information and service needs related to the University’s goals for research and scholarship, teaching and learning, and service to our university community and key partners. Our staff engages the Western academic community in the development of new services, and continuously strives to exceed the expectations of our diverse user groups.

Vision: Western Libraries will be a leader in providing both the best library-as-place and the best place-as-library experience for the Western academic community.

LOOKING BACK - HIGHLIGHTS OF 2008-09

Support to Research & Scholarship

Scholarly Communication – Western Libraries welcomed the appointment of a Scholarly Communication Librarian (SCL) at the beginning of September 2008. The first opportunity to promote open access was the Open Access Day Webcast on October 14. Western Libraries has also signed a contract with Berkeley University Press for its products, Digital Commons and Selected Works. With the technology of Digital Commons, Western Libraries has created an institutional repository (IR) entitled Scholarship@Western that functions as an open archive of the intellectual outputs in digital format from the University’s faculty and graduate students. The SCL will work with different constituencies on campus to collect, manage, showcase, and preserve the University’s scholarly accomplishments, and ensure that they will be accessible to international academic communities and the public. In addition, the IR will host online journals and digital resources utilized for scholarly communication. Western Libraries will provide interested faculty with assistance for the launch and management of such online resources. The IR will also facilitate the implementation of electronic theses and dissertations for Western in consultation with the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Selected Works will furnish a professionally designed online platform for faculty and graduate students to highlight and provide access to their publications and presentations.

Information Resources – Western Libraries continued to grow access to more electronic research resources as a result of successful Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) consortial purchases (funded by CFI) largely in support of social sciences, arts and humanities. During the past ten years, we have been making the transition from journal print holdings to electronic publications in ever larger quantities; Western currently offers access to 45,000 full-text electronic journals. Publishers are now advancing into academic and scholarly books, as well. Western Libraries has taken advantage of Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL)’s consortial initiatives to acquire the Springer eBook Collection of over 13,000 titles covering titles...
from 2005 onwards. Other e-book collections that Western Libraries had previously acquired include the American Council of Learned Societies (1,700 titles), Canadian Reference Centre (136 titles), Early English Books Online (over 75,000 titles) and Eighteenth Century Collections Online (35,000 titles). In total, Western Libraries has close to 600,000 electronic books accessible via our catalogue: these include individually purchased items, packages of e-books purchased through consortial agreements, sets of analytics and government publications.

Western Libraries is one of six libraries working as a development partner with Innovative Interfaces on the development of Content Pro, a new digital library product that facilitates the collection, management and promotion of digital and digitized collections. Phase I development includes search and browse capabilities, and thumbnails of images for visual browsing. The digitized collections that will be used during development are of considerable significance for researchers: the Delaquerrière Album, a scrapbook belonging to a late 19th/early 20th century French tenor, from the Music special collections (the lead project); the McIntosh Gallery’s digital images of the collection in partnership with Western Libraries; and selections from Western Archives’ History of Medicine Collection.

Western Libraries has expanded access to non-English language resources through its membership with the Center for Research Libraries and its cooperative programs that provide reliable, cost effective access by traditional and electronic means to unique and unusual collections of international library materials in a wide variety of formats in all the disciplines.

**Research Liaison** – Work continues at Taylor Library to implement a pilot research support program, beginning with the Institute for Chemicals and Fuels from Alternative Resources (ICFAR) research team. By conducting interviews with research engineers and graduate students in this group, and in consultation with ICFAR directors, a program was developed to increase the effectiveness of their research processes and output. Short-term outcomes include acquiring needed online resources, providing four hours of intensive workshops (October 2008), and providing individualized research help. Longer term outcomes include exploring requirements for an integrated, collaborative virtual research environment to manage research results, share information resources, and foster knowledge development and transfer. As the collaboration continues between Taylor Library and ICFAR, and as we establish an ongoing relationship with the group to provide the services and resources they require, we are beginning to consider other strategic partners and to plan for managing the provision of research support to future research groups. There are increased efforts to offer faculty development programs to enhance awareness of research tools in selected areas.

**Support to Teaching & Learning**

**Enhancing the Graduate Student Experience** – We continue addressing graduate student needs by offering specialized instruction for graduate students through general and discipline-based workshops. New this year is our involvement in the Planetary Science interdisciplinary graduate program. Our Next Generation Website Implementation Team met its target launch date of mid-August 2008 and achieved its primary goal of delivering a user-centred design for the website. New features to support graduate students include: Teaching pages to support faculty, teaching assistants and classroom Instructors; and Research & Scholarship pages to support faculty, post doctoral fellows and graduate student researchers. Additionally there are new features that provide enhanced information discovery including a metasearch product that searches for journal articles. Also implemented is Encore, the beta catalogue search and its integrated Research Pro product that allows for simultaneous searching across a limited number of broad subject databases.
**Enhancing the Undergraduate Student Experience** – Our library hours of opening remain the same as last year with extended hours of opening during midterm and year end examinations. Western Libraries provides approximately 550 hours of opening per week through its seven physical service locations during the academic year. Obviously, the number of hours offered has implications for staffing in all the libraries, although the Taylor and Weldon libraries offer the greatest number of hours per week in addition to extended hours during examinations (122 hours per week in the latter case). As noted above, our Next Generation Website Implementation Team met its target launch date of mid-August 2008 and achieved its primary goal of delivering a user-centred design for the website. New features to support undergraduate students include: easy finding aids such as the simplified Search functionality, a Search for Journal Articles; Browse by Program, offering ‘best bets’ for undergraduate programs; and Essay Help, offering the Assignment Planner, Style Guides, and information about RefWorks (citation manager).

**Support to Undergraduate Program Review** – Western Libraries has representation on the Senate Subcommittee on Undergraduate Program Review (SUUPR) and is aligning its processes with and will be providing input to the review process. Western Libraries has developed a library documentation guideline and template that will be used by librarians when developing library reports as part of the review process. The Western Libraries report will include information about resources and services that support the program under review, e.g., library-specific teaching and learning activities, collection development and management activities, communication and collaboration activities, services, and any library-specific future directions that will have an impact on the program.

**Support to the University Community**

**Records Management Services** – Western Archives provides a range of records management services in support of the University’s administration and operations. These comprise secure on-campus semi-active records storage and retrieval; records retention and disposal schedules; confidential records destruction; and support for digitization projects. Of particular note this past year was the support provided to departments relocating to the new Support Services Building. Western Archives provided direction on what to do with records in advance of the move and accepted several transfers of records that were not needed in the new building. In one sense this support was highly successful, as more records went to the Archives and Research Collections Centre (ARCC) instead of being stored in the Support Services Building. However, the down side was the impact on space within the ARCC. More space for records meant less space for library collections, resulting in even further stresses and strains for some libraries, especially the Music Library. There is no longer any room to shelve current purchases in the Music Library and the ARCC is the only alternative. To date, due to both lack of space and environmental concerns, over 50,000 items from the active collection in the Music Library have been diverted to the ARCC.

**Western Ontario Health Knowledge Network** – The launch of the Western Ontario Health Knowledge Network (WOHKN) in January 2008 was a culmination of a multi-year project for which Western Libraries provided leadership. Western Libraries is a key partner in this not-for-profit, voluntary cooperative agreement between The University of Western Ontario and many of the hospitals that participate in an affiliation agreement with the University. The basis for the WOHKN partnership is the mutual care, teaching, and research goals of The University of Western Ontario and its affiliated hospitals. WOHKN improves access to appropriate, relevant and reliable evidence-based health care, research and education through the practice and
expertise of qualified professional librarians who ensure the best possible access to tools which are essential for informed evidence-based decision-making in health care settings. WOHKN collections available on the partner hospital sites provide essential evidence-based information for a broad range of professional users. The development and alignment of library and information services within WOHKN benefits Western’s students, faculty and researchers by providing more support from qualified librarians at hospital sites, and by streamlining and clarifying service provision between the Taylor Library and hospital libraries. The success of WOHKN is demonstrated by the interest expressed by other Southwestern Ontario hospitals that provide clinical training sites for Western students to join the five founding partners. Currently WOHKN covers 29 clinical sites that could be extended to cover up to 50 sites, mostly rural hospitals. Western Libraries is supporting the University’s teaching and research missions in health related fields through the WOHKN partnership, and through the continuing collaboration with the University of Windsor Library to provide required library services to the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry’s Windsor Campus that opened in September 2008.

LOOKING FORWARD - PRIORITIES FOR 2009-10

Support to Research & Scholarship

In support of Western’s role as a major research-intensive university, the Libraries provide services, and facilitate and coordinate access to scholarly resources for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty members, and others involved in advanced academic research.

General
- regularly assess the needs of graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty members, and research teams with respect to current and emerging areas of research
- analyze various sources of assessment data and apply knowledge gained to enhance or develop appropriate resources and services

Information Resources
- develop, manage, and assess digital collections, particularly in new and developing areas of research, and in support of new or expanding graduate programs, while assessing and managing access to existing resources
- selectively build print (including archival) collections, particularly in new and developing areas of research, and in support of new or expanding graduate programs, while assessing and maintaining appropriate access to existing information resources
- selectively digitize unique collections and support data curation and institutional repository initiatives
- develop, manage, and assess collections to support cross/inter/multi-disciplinary research

Services
- support graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members in making effective use of resources when conducting research
- support graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members with scholarly communication activities
Support to Teaching & Learning

In support of Western’s commitment to the best student experience, the Libraries provide services, facilitate and coordinate access to information resources, and/or deliver information literacy programs to address the teaching and learning needs of instructors and students.

General
- provide a physical environment that supports efficient and effective access to information, individual and group study, and the learning needs of an increasingly diverse student population
- provide a virtual environment that supports efficient and effective access to information, responds to diverse learning needs, and addresses the desire for new methods for information delivery and discovery

Undergraduate
- plan, develop, deliver, and assess undergraduate student information literacy programs to support curriculum, course, and/or individual needs

Graduate
- plan, develop, deliver, and assess graduate student information literacy programs to address the needs of individuals with discipline-specific and/or interdisciplinary learning needs
- expand and/or enhance support for graduate students

Support to the University Community

In support of Western’s overall mandate, the Libraries perform a range of activities designed to facilitate the effective operation of academic units, administrative units, individual libraries and departments, and/or to support compliance with legislation.

General
- provide records management and archival services to support the work of academic and administrative units across campus
- provide assistance to the University in meeting its legislative (e.g. copyright) and contractual obligations
- provide effective management of Western Libraries through its senior leadership team, and of individual libraries and departments through the work of designated library directors and department heads
- provide assistance to the University in achieving its goals with respect to ongoing assessment and accountability, including reviews of programs or departments by the University or external accreditation bodies