Each academic year Western Libraries' librarians, archivists and staff make valuable contributions to the University’s teaching, learning and research mandates and provide excellent service. This report will highlight key initiatives, activities, and select accomplishments for 2017/18.

The major organizational initiatives for this period have been: continued implementation of the Western Libraries strategic plan; the Organizational Renewal Initiative transition and implementation; facilities enhancements and the completion of the Space Master Plan; and, continuation of an acquisitions cost mitigation strategy and serials review process.

I hope you enjoy this opportunity to learn more about our activities and how we are evolving to meet the needs of the Western community and beyond.

Catherine Steeves, Vice-Provost & Chief Librarian


All of the activities and service developments of Western Libraries are guided by the following Strategies of Excellence in the strategic plan:

- Manage world-class print and digital collections and resources
- Advance 21st century literacies
- Partner in and support research to advance research excellence
- Champion open access and transform scholarly communication
- Cultivate purposeful partnerships on campus and beyond
- Provide user-centred spaces and technologies
- Actively engage with our communities
- Deliver service excellence to library users and the University

By working together, Western Libraries can seamlessly deliver services across virtual and physical locations, ensuring Western students, faculty, researchers and alumni connect with the services they need, when and where they need them.

Message from Catherine

We continued to advance our Organizational Renewal Initiative (ORI) throughout 2017/18. Significant developments include the release of the new organizational model and structure in June of 2017 and the subsequent development of a new user service model, transition strategy and implementation plan. We are introducing elements of the new model incrementally, in anticipation of a formal launch at the start of the fall semester.

The new integrated service model and organizational framework is designed to support research and academic outcomes. It features five core user-centred services or functions: research and scholarly communication; teaching and learning; content management discovery and access; archives and special collections; and, user experience and student engagement. This system-wide transformation is a shift away from a distributed library-by-library model. By working together, Western Libraries can seamlessly deliver services across virtual and physical locations, ensuring Western students, faculty, researchers and alumni connect with the services they need, when and where they need them.

Users will continue to benefit from existing relationships with Western Libraries staff, while having the advantage of access to a broader range of knowledge and expertise and the opportunity to build new relationships and contacts. The new model affords the necessary flexibility to adapt to unique and new service requirements. As our users’ needs evolve, so too can the kinds of support and services offered.

We developed a staff transition strategy, in consultation with Human Resources, Faculty Relations, UWOFA, and UWOSA, to establish a proper plan and process that respects policies, good practice and employee agreements. We have completed multiple internal librarian/archivist competitions for new positions and leadership opportunities. Five Heads have been appointed and four specialized librarian roles have been filled from the internal pool. We held individual reassignment discussions with each librarian and archivist and they have just recently transitioned to their new functional teams. For the rest of Western Libraries’ staff, work assignment discussions are underway and they will transition to the new functional teams for the start of the fall semester. We’ve provided several personal development, team development, leadership, and change management workshops to assist and support library staff and leaders through the transition. Similarly, we are providing training and professional development to support the acquisition of new skills and knowledge related to changing responsibilities.

Organizational Renewal

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Space Master Plan and Facilities Enhancements

Each year Western Libraries undertakes renovation and facility projects of varying sizes and complexity to improve physical learning spaces and overall student experience. The most significant achievement this year was the completion of the Space Master Plan (SMP) in collaboration with Facilities Management and the Office of Institutional Planning & Budgeting and with the direction of the architectural firm Perkins+Will. Over 2016/17, as outlined in last year’s report, the focus of the project was stakeholder engagement, programmatic design, and structural review. Over the first half of 2017/18 the gross cost estimation was completed and the final report written and presented to university administration and library staff. The SMP provides a long-term vision and guide for evolving aging library spaces in ways that are technology-rich and enable learning, knowledge creation and scholarly communication within individual, collaborative and community spaces. It builds a case for reinvestment in our libraries and demonstrates both the need and the opportunities a rejuvenation of our spaces present. Plans for the two major libraries have been broken down into multiple projects to provide flexibility in the development of funding strategies and execution. The plan will soon be available on the Western Libraries website.

The priority for renovation is The D.B. Weldon Library (Weldon Library) – now just over 45 years old. Built in a different era, it was designed as a closed stacks facility. As a study, research and learning environment, it does not meet the current needs of our students and faculty. We greatly appreciate that the University has recognized renovating Weldon Library as a major capital project priority in the 2018/19 operating budget and allocated $15 million toward this end. We are in the process of developing the tender for the architectural design and renovation of the building and should be able to achieve some significant transformations with this first investment. Over 2017/18, we implemented and planned other facilities renovations, which included the front entrance and, on the lower and ground floors, the installation of new flooring and additional student study space. An update of the Kellogg instruction room in 2018/19 will complete the multi-phased Taylor renovation project begun at the start of this four-year budget cycle. The renovation of the former Gustav Mahler-Alfred Rosé room in the Music Library into a Music Lab, available to the Faculty and the library, was completed. We also developed a rejuvenation plan for the Education Library to revitalize the library by creating an inviting, inspiring space for collaborative learning and research through improved interior design, new furnishings and equipment.

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ROOF GARDEN
STAFF GRAD COMMONS
GENERAL LEARNING / GENERAL COLLECTIONS
CLASSROOM
COMMONS MEZZANINE
LEARNING COMMONS
COMMONS SUPPORT
DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP CENTRE / MAP AND DATA CENTRE
HIGH DENSITY COLLECTION
Western Libraries’ contributions to teaching and learning and to student success are many and varied. We contribute to the student experience by providing teaching and learning spaces, collaborative and independent study environments, scholarly resources and information technologies, and research help services.

Our librarians, archivists and staff provide instruction in information literacy and research skills in support of our academic and research programs; This past year, a team of library staff spearheaded a digital literacies outreach initiative, consisting of pop-up literacy workshops using games and online tools to share tips on how to strengthen passwords, protect privacy, and spot fake news. A key collaboration between Western Libraries and the Teaching Support Centre involves work on the Western Degree Outcomes (WDO) project. In 2016/17, we created Information Literacy Learning Outcomes, that complement the WDOs and a guide for their use in teaching important information and digital literacy skills is currently under development.

Western Libraries has moved to leverage the impact of peer mentorship on student learning through participation in the Learning Skills Centre Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) program. This popular program trains students to teach their peers various types of learning skills to help them succeed academically; this year, peer mentors received training from librarians on library resources and services available to support student success and how to refer students to these tools. Initial assessment of this collaboration indicates peer mentors know about library resources and services and are able to connect students to the library when needed.

We also develop and integrate e-learning strategies for information literacy and create online learning modules and research guides.

We continue our collaboration with the Teaching Support Centre (TSC) and WTS on the Supported Course Redesign (SCoRe) project, with librarians providing both general curriculum and discipline-specific support. Over 2017/18, the integration of Research Guides into OWL sites has reached 86 per cent.

Western Libraries partnered with both the TSC and University Students Council to advance campus understanding, adoption and creation of open educational resources (OER) at Western. Increased use of OER is a key priority of the current student government. In addition to helping organize the program for Open Education Day, Western Libraries provided a session on finding and evaluating open educational resources. Western Libraries, with the Teaching Support Centre, is co-chairing the Open Education Working Group to investigate current attitudes toward open education at Western and avenues to support the open dissemination of teaching and learning resources such as lectures and modules.

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Western Libraries is also working to integrate open textbooks provided through eCampus Ontario into our library catalogue, making these materials discoverable for use by our faculty and students. Finally, work is underway to create a new area within Scholarship@Western, our institutional repository, that will support the open dissemination of teaching and learning resources such as lectures and modules.

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The service has enhanced student access to required learning materials while decreasing student costs.
Acquisitions and Collections

We continue to monitor the acquisitions budget closely and deploy cost-effective strategies for providing access to the resources required by faculty and students. Annual publisher increases continually out-pace acquisitions budget increases, and our costs are vulnerable to currency fluctuations. Fortunately, the Office of Institutional Planning & Budgeting’s pegged-rate adjustment for the acquisitions budget (at 1.25) allows for planned predictability in subscription expenditures and moderates the impact of dollar value fluctuations. We are piloting evidence-based acquisition of resources, such as monographs and streaming video, which is proving to be a viable alternative, making a large quantity of selected material available for minimum cost. We are also near to completing consultations with faculty, which is the final step after consideration of citation and usage data, in a project to develop a list of priority journal titles to inform collections decisions moving forward. In addition, the Libraries’ anticipated move to the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) Collaborative Futures Shared Library Services Platform will allow us to explore ways to build and manage collections collaboratively with partner institutions in the province.

Western Libraries has been an active participant in regional, national and international conversations related to library acquisitions and the sustainability of the scholarly publishing model.

We are active in the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) participating on the License Transition Task Group, the Content Strategies Committee, and the Executive Committee. In addition, Western has lead an informal US working group (including Université de Montréal, Dalhousie, and Laval with input from CRKN and Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL)) in the development of a brief and presentation on responses to escalating journal costs and movement toward a sustainable scholarly publishing model.

Copyright

The Copyright Office promotes copyright literacy and campus understanding of copyright legislation, educational fair dealing and the responsible use of copyright-protected materials in teaching, research, personal study, and publication. Copyright literacy sessions are available to departments and Faculties upon request and incorporated into various campus orientations. The 2017/18 academic year marked an enhanced national conversation on copyright as the government implements the statutory review of the copyright act mandated by the 2012 Copyright Modernization Act. This includes potential challenges to the educational fair dealing right, which could have significant impact on Western faculty and students.

Fair Dealing Week provided an occasion to raise awareness of the copyright review and our team ran a series of Educational Fair Dealing Pop-Ups to engage faculty and students on the issue.

We have monitored events in Ottawa, advocated “on the hill,” and maintained a discussion with Western’s Copyright Governance Group, as well as with our national and consortial partners, such as Universities Canada, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries, and the Canadian Research Knowledge Network. Western applied to speak before the legislative review committee and will provide a written submission.

We have heard Western Libraries’ digitization agenda for special and unique collections benefits both local and international researchers across the disciplines. This year’s standout project is the partnership between Labatt Breweries and Western Archives to develop a major virtual exhibit, Intended to celebrate Canada’s 150th and Labatt’s 170th anniversaries, the exhibit uses over 500 digital images from the Labatt Brewing Company Collection to document and interpret the evolution of the nation and the company. The project also supported students, as funding from Labatt enabled us to hire two FIMS co-op students who gained valuable work experience, and public history students incorporated work on exhibit content as part of a course project. The exhibit has garnered national attention and Labatt recently received a prestigious award from the Archives Association of Ontario.

Among the most notable new archival and special collections acquisitions this year are the Dr. Frank Hayden fonds (the “Father of the Special Olympics”); the Jan Eisenhardt fonds (pioneer in national fitness programs); the Wright Lithography Company fonds; and World War One German East Africa aviation maps.

A special highlight this year was the receipt of a Canadian cultural property designation for the “Canadian Whites”, the World War Two era Canadian comic book collection previously donated by Dr. Eddy Smet, which includes a very rare copy of the first Canadian comic book, Better Comics #1.

Several wonderful exhibitions for the John A. Schweitzer Gallery and Weldon display cases were curated from our archival and special collections including: Bacon Sherman and Bucke: The Untold Story; 18th Century Treasures from the Music Library Special Collections; Dr. Frederick G. Banting; Holodomor: Ukrainian Famine/Genocide 1932-1933; Canada and the Two World Wars; Dr. Charles Drake; Prohibition in London; and the French Department’s 50th Anniversary: Language, Literature and Linguistics. And, similarly our materials went on exhibition in the broader community, examples include the Middlesex Centre and City of London Heritage Fairs, the annual Ting Comic and Graphic Arts Festival, and the exhibition of Shakespeare’s “Fourth Folio” at the 2017 London Words Festival.

Archives and Special Collections

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Research

Western Libraries is contributing to the advancement of research excellence by fostering new modes of scholarly communication; stewarding research collections; through statistical and geo-spatial data services and collections; and by providing research skills workshops and research consultations, including literature searches and systematic reviews, research data management, and research metrics analysis. Our librarians and archivists conducted 532 advanced research consultations over 2017/18. They also provided 117 research workshops and instructional sessions for graduate students, post-docs and faculty.

Scholarship@Western, our open access institutional repository, supports the dissemination and discovery of Western’s scholarly output including online journals, scholarly papers, and electronic theses and dissertations. It continues to expand in both content and impact. In 2017/18, we have selectively rolled out full-service assistance in depositing papers, articles, and other research materials to make it easier to comply with the Tri-agency Open Access Policy. Other quality control measures relating to the accuracy of metadata, copyright checking, accessibility requirements, and locating perma-links have been built into the service.

This year, we began investigating the feasibility of moving to a new repository platform. Elsevier acquired Bepress, the company that produces our current platform Digital Commons. Some users raised concerns about Elsevier’s commitment to open access and potential implications for content ownership, as well as, the likelihood of substantial increases in costs based on their aggressive commercial practices.

Part of this investigation has borne fruit for our Journal Publishing services, and we have migrated many of Western Libraries hosted journals over to Open Journal Systems, an open source system developed by the Public Knowledge Project and hosted by the Ontario Council of University Libraries. However, while we are actively exploring new repository services, and are preparing to run a pilot with Ubiquity Press, given the complexities and interdependencies between the repository, the school of graduate studies, and other Western stakeholders we have not yet determined when any such move will be possible.

Research Data Management (RDM) continues to be important to researchers, and is becoming increasingly salient to Canadian research funding bodies. With Potential RDM requirements on the horizon, Western Libraries, in partnership with Research Western, ran a RDM requirements survey, with the aim of assessing the RDM needs of our various Faculties. While response rates were low, we were able to identify some broad trends across the Faculties, most notably that there is a desire for Western Libraries to assist in research data management activities.

Looking Ahead

There is a lot on the horizon for Western Libraries in 2018/19. We will continue to implement the Western Libraries 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, along with the new organizational model and structure to align our organization with academic priorities and user-centred functions, we will engage an architectural firm to plan the Weldon Library renovation as imagined in the Space Master Plan, and continue the acquisitions and serials review and cost management processes. Our librarians, archivists, and staff will continue to contribute to teaching, learning and research through information literacy, community engagement, service excellence and, development and management of research, special and archival collections, and the provision of research services and consultations.