

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

LEARNING SPACE

Learning spaces in the libraries are subdivided into *general* and *specialized* categories.

General learning space includes a variety of layouts for individual study, including tables and chairs, carrels, computer stations, and identified quiet or silent study areas; the majority of the learning space currently provided in the libraries would fall under this category.

Specialized learning includes any space tailored to more specific learning modes, with an emphasis on group study and other collaborative modes, technology-rich investigation, and dedicated specialist facilities.

WELDON LIBRARY

At Weldon, the master program proposes an approximately 20,000 sf increase in overall learning space, which includes a small reduction in general learning space and a substantial increase in specialized learning space.

General learning spaces are distributed across all levels between Ground Level and Level 4. This is both to ensure that users have convenient access to learning seats wherever they may be in the building, and to enable a wider variety of spatial characters and ambiances to suit different learning styles.

A new Learning Commons includes a large general learning component, supported by specialized learning primarily in the form of technology-enabled group study rooms. The Learning Commons should be located and designed to function as a potential 24-hour zone for the library—conveniently located close to a main entrance, and capable of operating distinct from the rest of the building.

New specialized learning spaces, described below, include a Digital Scholarship Centre, a Graduate Student Commons, a substantial increase to the number of group study and presentation practice, and collaborative study rooms, and additional allocation to accommodate key learning programs as needs arise.

TAYLOR LIBRARY

At Taylor, the program proposes an approximately 6,000 sf increase in overall learning space. Again, this includes a very minor reduction in general learning space, and a large increase in specialized learning space, a space type not previously available in Taylor. The learning space program includes an expansion of the new Taylor Learning Commons along with an associated Research Commons, a Technology Sandbox, and additional flexible allocation.

LEARNING COMMONS (WELDON, TAYLOR)



A Learning Commons is a large, multi-use hub designed to encourage collaboration, foster new modes of scholarship, and provide a 'one stop shop' for library resources and services. The commons provides a variety of flexible spaces and furnishings suitable for a range of study styles and group sizes, supporting both individual and collaborative study modes on a variety of platforms. A commons should include a sufficient range of technologies to accommodate the full range of activities anticipated, and space for staff and student support functions embedded within it.

As a high-intensity, showcase space, a learning commons is best located close to a building



entrance. As a flexible, modular space, a commons can double as a space for events or other public functions. Extended hours are recommended. Key elements include:

- Comfortable, flexible furniture for both individual and group study
- Modular furnishings and writing surfaces that allow students to customize space as required
- Collaborative computing stations
- Open work areas
- Support staff and space providing technical and academic help
- Access to printers
- Ready access to food and drink

GROUP STUDY
(WELDON, TAYLOR)



Group study rooms should allow for traditional and tech-based collaboration by groups of 2-4 or 6-8. The rooms should provide a robust set of technologies to augment personal devices used in a group context, which may include:

- flat panel displays with wireless display for laptops and mobile devices
- tables with connections for laptop, power
- auxiliary connections
- other specific services, such as web-based video conferencing, as required

PRESENTATION PRACTICE
(WELDON, TAYLOR)



Presentation practice rooms are similar to group study rooms, but must also include the capacity for presenters to record and re-play presentations. Visual access into and out of the rooms should be controllable, to afford a higher degree of privacy as necessary.

Group study and presentation practice rooms can double as informal consultation, meeting, or tutoring rooms as necessary.

DIGITAL SCHOLARSHIP CENTRE
(WELDON)



The Digital Scholarship Centre will provide the spaces and technological capacity required to support cutting-edge research and teaching at Western. Key components may include:

- a Visualization Lab, with large-scale projection and audio capabilities
- a Digitization Suite, combining publicly-accessible digitisation equipment and a staff-supported digitisation lab. The lab will be the primary digitisation resource for Western Libraries.
- a specialized learning space for instruction, discovery or collaboration such as a primary



source classroom, digital media lab or makerspace

- breakout, consultation, and staff space
- general learning and research space supporting these specialized functions

The Centre will be a hub for faculty, students and researchers to engage with peers from across the University, and will support users and staff in developing new modes of scholarly communication and inquiry. It should be located close to the existing ARCC and map collections in order to provide the space and infrastructure for enhanced engagement with and long-term digitisation of archival materials.

GRADUATE STUDENT / RESEARCH COMMONS (WELDON, TAYLOR)



A Graduate or Research Commons provides a variety of spaces for consultation, individual work, and small-group collaboration, and should be able to accommodate small events aimed at sustaining a community of researchers at Western. Access control is important to ensure that the commons remains a suitable resource for focused research. The commons should include:

- Flexible furniture
- Tech-enabled group study rooms
- Ad-hoc training and seminar nooks
- Collaborative open brainstorming areas
- Mobile white boards and privacy screens
- Quiet study and group collaboration zones

TECH SANDBOX / GALLERY (TAYLOR)



A technology sandbox operates as a high-technology complement to a general learning commons. It is a showcase space offering students exposure to emerging technologies and demonstrating cutting-edge approaches to technological integration into learning and research activities.

A tech sandbox or maker space may include a device lending component, and can be enriched through strategic partnerships—both with suppliers or manufacturers, to ensure that the contents of the sandbox remain current, and with researchers interested in putting emerging technologies to use.

OTHER POTENTIAL SPECIALIZED LEARNING SPACES

The Master Plan for each library identifies specific locations for the preceding learning spaces, typically because of location or adjacency requirements that are anticipated to persist—a learning commons, for instance, will function as a high-intensity destination for many students, and is therefore best located close to a library’s entrance, collocated with community space and food and beverage access.

However, the plans also locate additional specialized learning space within the building plans without identifying their specific function. This is to maintain some long-term flexibility within the plans, allowing the library to adapt as technologies, programs, and literacies change over time. Potential programs for these spaces include:

- Access to specialized tools or resources
- Digital media production studios for graphics, music, or video production
- Project rooms that can be booked by groups engaged in longer-term research (per-month, semester, or year)
- Gaming studios

- Screening or viewing rooms
- Active learning classrooms
- Innovation or entrepreneurship incubation: An incubator typically includes space for collaborative and focused work; assignable office or project space; and space for private meetings or presentations. Partnerships with the local business or startup community are a common aspect of incubator spaces, in which case a location adjacent to a building entrance may be useful.
- Maker or workshop spaces: A makerspace allows design, creation, and assembly of physical prototypes. It should include digital fabrication equipment (3D printers, CNC machines); breakout space for meetings or informal presentations; and facilities and scheduling for technician support. Traditional workshop facilities (woodshop, metal shop) can be a useful complement to a makerspace, although adding these functions can increase engineering and service requirements substantially.