Learning Commons Committee

January 21, 2013 2 - 4 pm
Room 503, Scott Library (5th floor)
http://www.library.yorku.ca/cms/learning-commons_committee/

Agenda

1. Notes from October 16, 2012 meeting
   - Business arising

2. Information items:
   - Academic Administrators session
   - Undergraduate Research Fair

3. SPARK (Student Paper and Academic Research Kit) presentation (Sarah Coysh/Adam Taves)

4. Peer Mentoring presentation and discussion (Catherine Salole, Norda Majekodunmi and Yelin Su)
   - *How are students/peers used in each unit?*
   - *What are the possible models for our Learning Commons? How can we effectively use students as peer resources (services, workshops)?*
   - *What are some possible cautions or challenges?*

5. Subcommittee reports
   - Faculty (Sophie Bury)
   - Workshops (Peggy Warren)

6. Scheduling next meeting

7. Other Business?

Learning Commons Committee Notes
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Present: N. Majekodunmi (chair), S. Bury, J. Dupuis, P. MacFarlane, A. McKenzie, C. Salole, D. Twombly, P. Warren.

Guests: S. Coysh, Y. Su, A. Taves.

Regrets: C. Popovic, T. Scott, J. Spencer

1. Notes from October 16, 2012 meeting: No errors or omissions reported.

2. **Information items**:
   - Academic Administrators session
     N. Majekodunmi C. Salole and P. MacFarlane were in attendance from the Learning Commons. They displayed the "Access to Success" videos and they were well received.

   - Undergraduate Research Fair
     A joint initiative of York University Libraries and the VPRI office, the Fair showcases undergraduate research papers with poster sessions and awards. It was noted that D. Twombly (Career Centre) and D. Craig (Libraries) will shortly be running a workshop on presentation skills for undergraduates geared to poster presenters. Next year's

3. **SPARK (Student Paper and Academic Research Kit) presentation (Sara Coysh/Adam Taves)**
   S. Coysh provided an overview of the steering committee membership and advisory board that directs the Virtual Learning Commons in collaboration with the consultants. Content was developed in consultation with writing teams. The web page was previewed. Feedback is welcomed from individual units. Three ("Creating Bibliographies", "Books, Journals & More", and "Effective Reading Strategies") of the 12 modules were presented to the LC Committee. The website was reviewed by students for usability. The results of usability testing were shared and pages that received a low usability grade were modified. A progress report was provided.

   A. Taves has been working with Learning Technology Services to develop video content. There is a combination of videos developed in house and harvested videos that exist elsewhere. Feedback will be solicited from Faculty on the modules and design. More module content is being developed, including an academic integrity module. Various promotion strategies will be used and the initiative will be launched in September. Feedback is welcome and will be shared

with the VLC Steering Committee. Feedback should be sent to scoysh@yorku.ca or taves@yorku.ca. It was noted that a link to SPARK will be placed on the Learning Commons website when it is public. The first three modules are accessible at http://www.theknowledgetransfercompany.ca/SPARK/index.html . **Please note that the modules are still in progress and the link should be kept private**

4. **Peer Mentoring presentation and discussion** (Catherine Salole, Norda Majekodunmi and Yelin Su)

The Peer Mentoring Working Group presented on "Peer Mentoring in the Learning Commons? : Benefits, Models and Discussion". The Powerpoint presentation will be posted on the Learning Commons webpage. Members went around the table and described how students/peers are used in each unit:

Libraries
There are Information Desk students who answer basic questions such as directional and policies and procedures. The U of T Library School students (MLIS, MIS) work at the Information Desk in year one and reference desk in year two. Circulation desk students and shelvers also provide basic reference help. In Maps, SMIL and Archives circulation staff provide public service.

Student Community and Leadership Development (SCLD)
SCLD has a number of units and a majority of services are provided by peers with coaching by 18 professional staff to 200 student leaders. e.g. Dons, peer health promotion

Teaching Commons
In the Teaching Commons staff work with TA's to design programs to help each other out in the individual courses. Experienced TAs are paired with new TAs, but not as part of the Teaching Commons' daily operations.

Career Centre
The Career Centre has the following workstudy student positions: a Web Assistant, Volunteer Coordinator, Multimedia Assistant and an Administrative Assistant. They are responsible for the Career Fair and event volunteers, etc.

Writing Centre
The Writing Centre does not use students due to regulations. A. MacKenzie has experience working with peer mentors and recommends extensive training for peer tutors.

Learning Skills Services
Two work-study students run workshops. In the past Learning Skills did have students providing one-on-one consultations, but that is when they had a pool of older students

What are the advantages to using peer mentors?
Students feel more comfortable approaching other students.
Builds leadership capacity, teaches the mentors as well (experiential education/learning).

Students feel peers are more in touch with their concerns.
Improves retention and encourages student engagement.
Contributes to academic success

Two brainstorming groups were formed to answer the following questions:
- *What are the possible models/ways we can use peers in our Learning Commons? Identify top 3*
- *How can we effectively use peers in the Learning Commons (services, workshops, other) ?*
- *What are some possible cautions or challenges to consider?*

The Peer Mentoring Working Group will take these ideas and develop a proposal for a pilot project. The proposal will be presented at the next meeting.

5. Subcommittee reports – Will be brought forward to the next meeting
   5.1. Faculty (Sophie Bury)
   5.2. Workshops (Peggy Warren)

The meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.