

Learning Commons Committee

November 5, 2013

1:00 - 2:30 pm

Location: SMIL Screening Room, Scott Library

http://www.library.yorku.ca/cms/learning-commons_committee/



Agenda

1. Notes of Sept. 26th, 2013
2. Business Arising
3. Information items
 - LC Brownbags
 - SPARK: An Intro & Discussion – Thurs. Nov. 7th, Scott 503
 - Embedding Academic Literacy Instruction into Disciplinary Courses – Tue. Dec. 3rd, 10:30-12:00, Location TBA
 - Writing in the LC Hub
4. Discussion:
 - LC partner visits
 - LC Retreat
5. Subcommittee reports
 - Faculty Sub-committee (Sophie Bury)
 - Virtual Learning Commons/SPARK (Mark)
6. Other Business?

Learning Commons Committee

November 5, 2013
1 to 2:30 pm
503, Scott Library



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Present: S. Bury, K. Grewal, P. MacFarlane, A. McKenzie, M. Robertson (Chair), C. Salole, T. Scott, E. Sims, R. Carcasole

Regrets: D. Twombly, P. Warren

1. Notes from the previous Learning Commons meeting were approved.

2. **Business Arising**

Learning Commons Ambassadors (K. Grewal)

The Learning Commons Ambassadors (LCA) team up with the Red Zone Ambassadors on Tuesdays from 1 to 3 pm to promote the Learning Commons.

Social media training was offered to the LCA. This will help the Ambassadors create tweets which will help in increasing visibility on campus. The twitter account name is LCSA. To date we have 41 followers one being the President's office.

The LCA also helped with promoting SPARK when it was launched on Oct. 16th.

YU Connect was contacted in order to obtain a list of all clubs and organizations at York. Academic clubs were targeted since it was assumed they might be more receptive than cultural clubs to hearing about the Learning Commons and SPARK.

M. Robertson noted that once a year he gets invited to the Student Representative Roundtable to discuss what's going on in the libraries. This year we could consider asking a LCA to come along.

Learning Commons Branding

We are currently working on bringing the LC branding in line with York branding requirements. This would include the LC banners and website. Jocelyn contacted Communications and we are now on a waitlist. We will need to create a new 'creative brief' in order to produce new branding. The creative brief we used to develop the green leaf wordmark would need substantial updating.

Jocelyn has contacted Library Computing Services (LCS) to request help in switching the template.

3. Information Items

LC Brownbags

2 Brownbag sessions will be held on academic literacies this term. It was suggested from the last meeting that these sessions happen before the retreat. These sessions will be open to all and it was encouraged to pass along this info to anyone who would have an interest in academic literacies.

SPARK: Intro and Discussion, on Nov. 7th, 1 to 2 pm in Room 503, Scott Library
Speakers: Sarah Coysh, Adam Taves and Ron Sheese

The session will focus on how the new Virtual Learning Commons SPARK can be used to help students acquire literacies. They would also look at some strategies of how Faculty can integrate the modules into their curriculum as well as how the modules can be used to promote blended learning.

Embedding Academic Literacy Instruction into Disciplinary Courses: Laying the groundwork
Tues. Dec. 3rd, 10:30 to 12
Speakers: Ron Sheese and Sophie Bury

The session will describe strategies for integrating academic literacy instruction into disciplinary courses at York through work with instructors on assignment design and curriculum development. Ron and Sophie will describe their findings from their literature review and on focus groups that were conducted with York instructors.

Writing in the LC Hub

- Tom Scott and Mark Robertson have begun working with the Writing Dept. to fine tune the set up at the Writing pod in the LC Hub in Scott. Some issues that arose are it's a stressful environment, students have to wait and get upset, unclear who is next in line, can't see everyone, some students are asking questions which really should be directed to the other area.

Some suggestions:

- a signup sheet be created at the beginning of the shift with 15 minute time slots.
- when students are in the lineup they could fill out a quick survey indicating what they hope to achieve from the session. What questions do they need answered. This will save a lot of time when they actually sit down with the Writing counselor.
- At the Career Centre the counselors make use of a document "What are your needs?" A template will be forwarded to Mark Robertson for review
- Mark Robertson noted better communication needs to occur when persons will be absent for the shift so there is a replacement

4. Discussion

- **LC partner visits**

Mark Robertson had discussions with Partners between Sept. to Oct. 2013. Mark distributed a three page detailed summary highlighting key benefits, key areas to work on and future directions was distributed.

Some of the benefits and strengths discussed are:

- Gives the partners political leverage
- Good for strategic planning

- Visibility for all partners
- LC very successful on campus
- LC well respected by Sr. administration
- Career Services is located in very good location
- Benefit of collaborating is enriching to all of us
- Good cross training – we learn what each other does

Some disadvantages noted are:

- The LC is not a unit. Won't really be considered for administration prioritization, or specific based budgeting.
- Hub discourages collaboration and sends the message that writing, research, learning skills are separate processes
- Not a good classroom space for workshops
- Staff working in the participating unit need a better sense of what services we offer
- etc.....

- **LC Retreat**

The LC is preparing for a retreat in early January to be facilitated by Learning & Organizational Development. We will be connecting with Andrea Thompson, from Learning & Organizational Development Office to discuss:

- What do we want to come out of the retreat?
- See what's realistic for a ½ day retreat
- pick out some possible themes
- do we want a strategic plan or a work plan made?
- eLearning focus to tackle developmental issues
- how are we going to move forward?
- what is our envisioned path?
- how can this group function differently?
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5. Subcommittee reports

- **Faculty Sub-committee (S. Bury)**

A three-hour contribution to the Course Design @ York event by committee members took place in October 2013. The committee has developed slides and a range of templates and worksheets in Moodle to share with attending faculty to help them develop students' reading, writing and library research skills.

Next steps would be to work on the development of the faculty module of SPARK. We hope to enlist faculty advisors in different disciplines to assist with this.

- **Virtual Learning Commons/SPARK (M. Robertson)**

SPARK was launched on Oct. 16th. The response from students and York community has been tremendous. Already within two weeks we have reached 11,000 web visits. Launches were held in Scott, Frost, Bronfman and Steacie. On Nov 4th we also held a celebration for all the people who contributed to SPARK over the last several years of its development. Currently we have two additional modules under development: an Academic Integrity module, and a Faculty module intended for instructors on how to incorporate SPARK into curriculum.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm