

Learning Commons Philosophy Statement *(following Meeting of April 12/11)*

Fostering Academic Literacies

The role of the Learning Commons is to support students in developing the academic literacies they need to achieve their educational goals. Academic success rests on a complex mix of competencies that include research, writing, organizational and other critical skills. We understand learning to be a holistic, organic and recursive process. For this reason, we approach research, writing and learning as deeply interconnected processes that engage the intellect, unique motivations, emotions, skills and strengths of each individual. While there is no “one best way” to do academic work, best results are often achieved when learning is understood as a recursive, “back-and-forth-and-sideways” process that cannot be adequately captured in a linear model comprised of fixed steps leading to a predetermined product.

An Integrated Approach

A central principle of the Learning Commons is collaboration, which currently involves the following partners: the Libraries, the Writing Department, the Learning Skills Services, the Career Centre and the Centre for Support of Teaching. The aim is to make academic support more accessible, integrated and student-centred by bringing together academic support services into common intellectual and physical spaces in the Learning Commons at Scott Library and on the web and by creating new, integrated programming to support student learning. Learning Commons partners work with students in a variety of ways such as individual sessions, workshops and online. The Learning Commons also seeks to collaborate with faculty to promote academic literacies for students through the curriculum. Additional partnerships continue to be sought.