What is a Learning Commons?

Stop! Go! – Pause! Go! – Full Speed Ahead!

Poster Session: Tuesday, March 31\textsuperscript{st}  
2:15 - 3:15pm  
Aims Community College, Greeley, CO  
Presented by: Ellen Willis, Lead Librarian  
Mary Gabriel, Program Coordinator II
“What we want to do with our libraries is make students comfortable with this ... hybrid print and digital world by incorporating some of the traditional messages of past libraries ... with the technology our students need. We want to do it in a way that says to students: this is a place you want to be. This is yours. You have citizenship in the realm of knowledge.” --Barbara Fister

http://campuslibrary.cocc.edu
What is a Learning Commons?

“…generally it is a physical space …that incorporates many workstations equipped with software supporting a variety of uses, offers workspace for individuals and groups, provides comfortable furniture, and has staff that can support activities related to access to information and use of technology to develop new products.” --Joan Lippincott

http://campuslibrary.cocc.edu
? How to offer full library services for 15 months while building is being remodeled?

- Persuade occupants to give up their space
- Decide which services to offer in which rooms
- Select materials to be housed in various locations including storage
- De-select materials
- Determine hours of service with limited staff
- Create staff schedules for various locations
- Find various rooms on campus we can use
- Advertise new locations & new hours
How to render an older library with large amount of dedicated space into a space with less square footage and new combined services?

- Weed the current library collection
- Place certain % of library collection into storage
- Create new collection, holding codes for all library items
- Purchase additional circulation license for temporary physical space
- Work with architects & designers on the new library space
- Research & offer ideas for a combined learning commons space
Kiefer Library Services
Location Transition

Previous Home: College Center 1967 - 2009
• Kiefer Library included:
  • Library collection
  • Computers
  • Group study space
  • Individual study space
  • Faculty Teaching Learning Center
• Library collection comprised 1,297 shelves of library items
• Sq. Ft. = 10,017
• Fully staffed for all open hours

Temporary Stops: EDBH 127 & 127C GS 276 & 260 2009- 2010
• Collection and space now located in 4 rooms & in 2 buildings
• Library staff dispersed throughout these locations
• Service hours are reduced
• Size of collection is reduced; 462 shelves
• Part of collection is in storage; no checkout
• Office of Lead Librarian moved 3 times

New Home: College Center July 6, 2010
• Kiefer Library, Academic Resource Center & Tutoring merge to become a Learning Commons
• Now located in one space; great for “one stop service” for students
• Sq. ft. = 8,812
• Physical library collection to fit onto 810 shelves
• All open space; no internal walls
• One Information & Circulation Desk staffed by merged departments
Kiefer Library
Old Setting
Sq. Ft. = 10,017
1,297 shelves
18 computers
Kiefer Library
Temporary Locations
Sq. Ft. EDBH = 3,184
Sq. Ft. GENS = 3,874
462 Shelves
30 computers
How does one move a computer lab, academic testing area, and tutoring services twice in 3 months?

- Identify software/hardware needed for temporary space
- Label all equipment with interim & final destinations
- Pack up tests, always maintaining security
- Advertise locations, hours, & resource availability
- Maintain staff cohesion: meetings, trainings, & celebrations
- Schedule as much time as possible to set up computers & other equipment for each move
Academic Resource Center Location and Department Transition

Previous Home: Horizon Hall 2005-2010
- Academic Resource Center included:
  - Computer Learning Lab
  - Tutoring Services
  - Academic Testing
  - Disability Access Services
  - Located in 8 connected rooms
  - Open a wide range of hours

Temporary Stop: Ed Beaty Hall May-July 2010
- Now located in 6 separate rooms
- Rooms dispersed throughout the building
- Service hours are reduced
- Number of services are reduced
- Less software
- No microscopes, etc.

New Home: College Center July 6, 2010
- Academic Resource Center joins Kiefer Library to become a Learning Commons
- Now located in one large space
- Academic Testing and Disability Access Services are reorganized into other departments
- Accessibility Lab remains within the Learning Commons
Academic Resource Center
Old Setting
Sq. Ft. = 7,163
86 computers
Academic Resource Center
Temporary Location
Sq. Ft. = 3,581
52 computers
Previous Locations

Kiefer Library

Academic Resource Center
Construction of the Learning Commons
Moving and set up new space in 4 days

- Moving dates were set by construction project timeline
- Move-in date was mid-summer semester
- Closure dates kept to an absolute minimum so that students had access to resources & services as long as possible
Welcome to the Learning Commons at Aims Community College!
Entrance to the Learning Commons with view of Reading Room
Learning Commons
Now Located in CC,
2nd Floor
Sq. Ft. = 8,812
810 Library Shelves
102 computers
Learning Commons
Statistics for Fall Semester 2010

First full semester in our new location!
- Gate Count: 74,830
- Library Circulation: 10,400
- Reference Transactions: 11,600
- Number of Weekly Service Hours: 67.5
- Number of Learning Commons Staff Presentations: 47
- Number of Attendance at Learning Commons Staff Presentations: 900
- Computer Lab & Tutoring Statistics:
  - Individual Students: 3,306
  - Total Number of Student Sessions: 35,606
Tips!

☑ Learn as much as possible about the other areas and work through the different area norms.
☑ Make the time to plan the moves in detail.
☑ Change is difficult: plan out specific activities and tasks to help staff adjust to changes.
☑ Complete all other projects both before and for a few months after the move so that all time can be devoted to a successful transition.
☑ Strive to find positive answers to challenges.
☑ Allow more time to re-create WebPages.
☑ Advertize locations & hours in many places.
☑ Staff must continue to show flexibility.
☑ If you build it, they will come.
Accomplishments

- One combined space for library, computer lab & tutoring works well!
- The right people = success. Teamwork is crucial!
- Our teams always said yes. Recognized as positive team on campus during entire moving process!
- Can actually move & set up an entire library or computer lab in 5 or 10 working days!
- Students adapted quickly to new settings.
- Reinforced belief that library, computer, and tutoring services are crucial part of campus life; people found us & expected good service wherever we were.
- Ideas we explored about combining resources are now working successfully!
Zooming Ahead

- Continue to integrate and cross-train staff
- Explore new options for increased 24/7 access to electronic materials
- Establish a Learning Commons identity as well as an individualized work unit identity
- Explore new technology applications to coursework
- Increase online resources available to students
Thank you for viewing our presentation!