
Western Libraries

Engage. Empower. Excel.

Operational Priorities 2019-20

As a key partner in the academic enterprise, Western Libraries provides essential information resources, people, technology and spaces to accelerate teaching, research and scholarship at Western University. The following document outlines priority projects for Western Libraries in 2019-20 that will support student success, educational excellence and recognized research, as we realize our vision to “...engage, inspire and empower students, scholars and researchers to achieve their full potential as global citizens and leaders”. In addition to these priority projects, library staff will continue to be engaged in the activities necessary to meet the day-to-day needs of our users.

Throughout this document, icons have been used to identify Western Libraries teams contributing to the work of achieving a desired outcome; these icons and their associated teams are provided here for reference:



Administration and Operations



Archives and Special Collections



Content Management, Discovery and Access



Teaching and Learning



Research and Scholarly Communication



User Experience and Student Engagement

I. Transformative Projects

Introducing Collaborative Futures – a new shared discovery platform

Western Libraries is committed to providing access to world-class print and digital collections and resources through systems that strengthen information access, discovery, curation and dissemination. In December 2019 Western Libraries will introduce a new shared discovery platform, giving users seamless access to the breadth and depth of

Western Libraries collections through a single-search interface, and providing staff with the opportunity to share expertise and network-level workflows. Western is one of 13 Ontario University libraries partnering on the implementation of a next generation library services platform, catalogue and discovery layer. This collaboration will, over time, help Western Libraries realize efficiencies in the acquisition and processing of collections, as well as expand user access to collections not held by Western and available from one or more of our partners.

The launch of the new shared platform will require staff to prepare Western Libraries' data for migration to the new system, re-define workflows for acquisitions, cataloguing and patron records management, and become proficient in using the public search interface. All of this work will be done as part of the consortium of libraries participating in the project, dubbed Collaborative Futures, a name signifying the way forward as we build the library collections of tomorrow, today.



Revitalizing Weldon Library

An investment of 15 million dollars by Western toward the revitalization of the Weldon Library, the most heavily used library location on campus, has enabled Western Libraries to begin a process of stakeholder engagement for the creation of user-centred space designed to enable student and faculty success. With a goal of beginning construction in spring 2020, Western Libraries will start preparing for renovations by identifying collections to be shifted to secure, stable, retrievable, storage locations. Through thoughtful consideration of how our collection is used and careful analysis of usage data, we will manage our collections in a manner that honours the need for access to and creates room for growth of our print collection. This work will also allow for the introduction of inviting and inspiring learning, research and teaching spaces that enable student success and new modes of collaboration and scholarship for Western campus. Consultation will continue throughout 2019 to define a plan for proposed new spaces and programs, such as a learning commons and digital scholarship centre. Programming will be developed through prototyping potential service partnerships that leverage the skills and expertise of key library partners, such as Research Western and Student Experience.



II. Key Priorities

A. Successful Students

Providing service excellence

Building on the work of adapting and aligning Information and Public Service practices system-wide to support a more consistent user experience, Western Libraries will continue to explore and implement contemporary options for service delivery. This will include identifying and executing a strategy for the introduction of self-

service options that enhance our current services and provide users with more flexibility in accessing critical library collections, services and spaces, upgrading our self-checkout machines and introducing new technology that allows users to independently pick-up holds and reserve materials. We will also seek to expand the Ares course reserves service as a way to provide access to required course readings at no extra cost to students and to continue to enhance our physical library spaces to improve and enhance student learning spaces.

The Western Libraries website is a critical portal to online tools and supports for students and faculty. Western Libraries will review and update the site to exemplify current best practices and enable the best user experience for digital access and use of research, teaching and learning tools.



B. Educational Excellence

Enabling e-learning

As a leader in advancing 21st century literacies development for students, Western Libraries will work with faculty to support e-learning and online learning strategies and initiatives at the university and library level. Staff will contribute to a Western-wide group on the development of Western's online learning plan with a goal of developing and disseminating general purpose and course-specific e-learning/online learning objects and content that support information literacy skills development.



Integrating information literacy

Western Libraries will continue to develop curriculum mapping expertise, working with our faculty partners integrating information literacy learning outcomes into courses in a systematic way that supports a scaffolded and intentional approach to building information literacy skills across academic programs, including primary source literacy and digital literacies, resulting in an enriched student learning experience. Curriculum mapping will allow staff to embed library expertise, collections and resources into student learning experiences, and better plan and allocate resources for a more proactive and effective information literacy program.



C. Recognized Research

Building sustainable collections

Western Libraries continues to be fiscally responsible, and seeks opportunities to work more effectively and realize more efficiencies in our work. Western Libraries will analyze journal usage data and consider other factors to inform a serials review, including large journal packages, and will work to reduce duplication within the collection. This work will help us manage our acquisitions budget in an environment of average annual publisher

increases of 3%. We will also begin a comprehensive multi-year review and assessment of all our archival resources. This collection management work will help us to continue providing access to the information that best supports the research and instruction goals of Western University.



Developing distinctive digital resources

Western Libraries digitizes and stewards unique resources and collections. A key component of a comprehensive digital strategy is a long term-preservation program with proper procedures to ingest, store and provide access to authentic, reliable digital content, including archival material and research data. Western Libraries will test software services available to support a digitization program, develop digitization policies, and identify projects to be used to prototype a digitization program. In conjunction with this work, Western Libraries will also implement a basic digital preservation management service to begin to support both internal and campus wide projects.



Fostering a culture of Open

As part of a broader global movement toward openness (open access, open data, open education) Western Libraries is a campus champion for the open exchange and dissemination of knowledge. Western Libraries has and continues to advocate for a large and liberal approach to sharing our work with our colleagues on campus, in Canada, and across the globe for the benefit of society and to advance science. In furtherance of this mission, we believe that the time is right for a comprehensive campus conversation on Open Access, and Western Libraries will provide leadership in this work, facilitating a dialogue on the future of scholarly publishing, and advocating for models that remove barriers to access of high-quality research. Western Libraries will also continue to support knowledge dissemination through mediated deposit of Western research to Scholarship@Western, explore and implement enhancements to open access journal services, and support researchers in meeting requirements for open publishing and data management planning as mandated by Tri-Agency policies.



D. Telling our stories

Engaging community

Western Libraries collaborates across campus and with the external community to facilitate connections and conversations across a range of disciplines. We will continue to provide space for different forms of dialogue and knowledge exchange, from public lectures to musical performances, and will seek to expand our work in this area through development of a formal network of library staff who will coordinate and help execute events. We will also work to establish a consistent brand for Western Libraries and expand visibility of Western Libraries' archives

and special collections locally and globally as a way of enhancing Western's reputation as a world-class institution.



E. Passionate and Prepared Team

Assessing for action

To be effective in a constantly changing environment requires ongoing assessment of the user environment and user expectations. Western Libraries will develop a set of resources to guide the assessment and ongoing iteration of library services. This will include a toolkit describing and teaching a variety of assessment methodologies that can be adapted by staff across the organization. Teams will confirm, collect, and action the metrics needed to make evidence-based decisions that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the full range of library services, from collections to teaching. Through these activities, Western Libraries will begin to build a community of practice around evidence-based decision making that supports user needs.



Mobilizing our capacity

After a year working in our new organizational structure, Western Libraries teams will continue assessing the effectiveness of service models, identifying team successes and addressing challenges by planning and implementing new strategies to support staff as work evolves.



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