“It’s a Real Library Now!” By these words and their numbers quickly filling the spaces, students have expressed their appreciation of the renovated Kelowna library. But what do students expect of this library? What role can a library building play in this 21st century age of digital and social media? In redesigning the Kelowna Library, the vision was to situate the Library as not just a place for collections and services like computer use and reference. The Library mission [insert on page 2] focuses on our role in advancing student learning.

The Library is a campus space uniquely suited to meeting needs for learning, “a centralised location where new and emerging information technologies can be combined with traditional knowledge resources in a user-focused, service-rich environment that supports today’s educational and social patterns of learning” (Freeman 3). Renovation objectives included creating spaces and an atmosphere conducive to both collaborative and independent learning. A dramatic outcome has been the increase in space for the use of technology. The InfoCommons has expanded to 74 stations. Group IC stations are an initiative to encourage and accommodate collaborative group work apart from the main Commons. Wireless connectivity enables personal laptop usage, and with the Library’s laptop lending program, access to a range of information technology options for group collaborations or individual work is facilitated.

“Yoga!” “Fezziwig’s!” “Filmmaking!” “So many languages can be heard in the atrium!” “Study rooms are awesome!” “International students love to gather here...”

“We wanted the Centre for Learning to be a ‘learning building’ in keeping with our mission, vision and values.”

The Centre for Learning is creating opportunities for collaboration and referral between the two student support areas [Library and Learning Centre], while the bridgeway and atrium entrances create links with the Centre for Learning, International Education, IT Services, and the Educational Technology Centre, among other program and service areas.

Ross Tyner, Director of Library Services

Michelle Ward and International students cut the cake at the Opening Celebrations of the Library and Learning Centre.
express IC stations. The proximity of the relocated Learning Centre enables partnerships and referrals between librarians and academic tutors to guide students needing learning support.

Because group project work is widely required across programs and students have a natural tendency to study with others, six variably-sized rooms are in place with whiteboards and plasma screens for digital hook-up. The convenient online room booking system has resulted in these rooms being used to full capacity, alongside another 8 similar rooms in the Centre for Learning.

Aside from class-driven learning, self-directed student academic activity is making a comeback in the library. Students are engaging with on-site collections – an unexpected sight in these social media-dominated times. Wide aisles and well-spaced collections find the students comfortable to sit and browse the shelves. Faculty and students are browsing newspapers in the comfortable Reading Lounge. ESL and literacy students regularly browse the Literacy zone to go beyond classroom texts.

The Library, when envisioned as a place, is now expected by students to be a place to study, a place to be. The Centre for Learning seeks to create an environment conducive to out-of-class encounters between students; within the complex, the Library is keen to play our part in fostering that vibrant culture. Whether it be to collaborate with other students or simply to find an individual workspace, options include silent study carrels, group tables close to collections, small tables for quiet study and comfortable movable chairs - all with the purpose of meeting the spectrum of learning preferences of any individual student as well as the diversity of students.

This redesign of the Kelowna Library space is not a one-off repositioning in regards to the College’s learner-centred paradigm. The question will remain: How can the Library stay relevant in meeting student needs and in being part of their success as learners? Faculty, staff and students interested in being involved in the continued development of the Kelowna library can contact Michelle Ward for more information on the Kelowna Library Advisory Committee.


Michelle Ward, Ext. 4749

THE LEARNING CENTRE IN KELOWNA

By Paul Stephenson, M.Ed, M.A.
ILLT Fellow

In February 2010 the Kelowna Learning Centre moved to their new location in the renovated Library building. The spacious new facility offers students much improved access to tutorial and diagnostic testing services. The philosophy of the Learning Centre is to assist students in developing their learning skills. We work with students one-on-one and in small group settings. Our focus is to provide learning assistance by reviewing and supporting skills taught by instructors and faculty. Learning Centre Coordinators assist students in English, English as a Second Language, Mathematics and Science. We also have faculty who come to the Learning Centre and volunteer their time to assist students. In addition, we employ second, third and fourth-year student tutors. These student tutors receive a comprehensive training program which provides them with the necessary skills to be effective tutors. The Tutor Training Program also gives students a credential, the College and Reading Learning Association (CRLA) Level 1 Tutor Certification, which they can use to subsequently gain employment as a tutor at over 700 post-secondary institutions across North America. The Kelowna Learning Centre is an integral part of the education and retention of students at Okanagan College. We enhance the practice of learning and teaching by providing a crucial support role to the work of instructors and faculty. The Learning Centre Coordinators and student tutors provide support in numerous content areas, including English, ESL, Math, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Business, Accounting, Computers, Psychology, History and Political Science.

First-year students are especially vulnerable in the first semester. Learning assistance for new high school graduates who are facing many challenges in adapting to the demands of post-secondary education can often make the difference between a first-semester drop-out and successful completion of first year.

For many students, just knowing that there is another place that they can go in addition to class and office hours with their instructor, where they can receive non-assessment-based, confidential, free help can often determine whether they decide to persist in pursuing their educational goals.

Paul Stephenson, Ext. 4647

*There were very practical space problems that needed addressing... lack of classrooms, offices and library space ... off-site locations for the Office Administration Program.* Now there are twenty new classrooms serving a wide range of programs, such as: AACP Biology Business Chemistry Communications Computer Science Continuing Studies Economics Earth and Environmental Sciences Engineering Programs English ESL Film Studies First Nations Studies French Geography History International Education Math Philosophy Political Science Psychology Sociology Social Work

Visit the ILLT online at http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/about/ILLT
EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

By Mike Minions, ILLT Rep for ET

After hundreds of years of relative stability, college classrooms are starting to look very different. Digital media technologies are infiltrating the educational process. Instructors are incorporating rich media content into what we still call ‘lectures’. Students are handing in ‘papers’ that consist of online video embedded in a website. Until very recently teachers and learners could make occasional use of expensive media produced by others. Now they can quickly and easily make their own. To facilitate this transformation Okanagan College has established an Educational Technology Centre.

located at the north end of the 2nd floor of the new Centre for Learning at KLO campus, the Educational Technology Centre consists of:

- digital media workstations with a collection of specialized software for developing instructional media projects;
- audio-visual loan equipment (document cameras, microphones & stands, speakers & PA systems, projectors & screens, USB headsets & speakerphones, portable videoconference equipment);
- media production loan equipment (video cameras, still cameras, tripods, audio recorders, microphones, lighting);
- media conversion, digitization and duplication equipment (ie. VHS to DVD, disc duplication, photo & slide scanner);
- small workshop space for tutorials, workshops, webinars;
- small studio space for video audio interviews, photo shoots, and webcast origination.

Educational Technology Coordinator Mike Minions combines a background in media production with expertise in instructional design and an experimental bent to assist faculty and students in developing new media skills.

The Ed Tech Centre work room (e217) is available to Okanagan College instructors, staff and students to work on course-related instructional media projects. Mike Minions Ext 4755 Basalt Page: http://www.okanagan.bc.ca/administration/itservices/edtech/Professional_Development/On_Becoming_Learner_Centered.html

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY HELP DESK

By Deborah Matheson

IT Manager, Software and Support Services

Although you will find IT Services personnel located on the second and fifth floor of the CFL, the first floor of the (old) Library building, and at each of our regional campuses, the most public-facing part of our operation is the IT Services Help Desk which has a prominent and conveniently located office looking into the atrium, across from International Education.

In the past ten months, our Help Desk logged over 5,000 contacts and was able to resolve 85% of the issues presented to them. The remaining 15% were escalated immediately to our Technicians, Software, Networks, Telecommunication or Support personnel.

College employees can drop into the office any time between 8.30-4.30 with questions about their Okanagan College computer gear, network accounts, cell phones and Blackberries.

Due to limited resources and liability issues, the only assistance we are able to provide for students is connecting to our wireless and troubleshooting problems with our online services.

Services provided by our Help Desk include:
- A single point of contact · Issue tracking · Password resets · Connecting to all of our services · Utilizing technology tools such as scanners, digital cameras, and audio-visual equipment · Troubleshooting and escalating problems · Walk through new user orientation · Provision of on-line documentation · Knowledge base (ASKUS) of questions and answers and the IT website · Virus clean up · Audio Visual assistance · Current system status alerts

We look forward to assisting you with your IT-related questions and concerns. Phone: Ext 4444 Email: support@okanagan.bc.ca

For more information please contact: Deborah Matheson, Manager Ext 4224 Tom Esson, Coordinator, Support Services. Ext 4444

TOOLS FOR CHANGE

By Teresa Kisilevich, M.Ed., ABT Chair and Instructor

How could you change your life if you were given the tools, the time, and the space to learn what you needed to learn? Monday to Friday, the students enrolled in the various Office Administration certificates explore their own learning as they work to transform their own lives. The certificates are designed to offer students flexibility and control over their learning and job market skills. Some students will use the software programs that they learn here to support business, civic, and non-profit organizations or perhaps to start a small business. Others may take the hands-on legal administrative office procedures into a practicum for a local law firm. Yet others may decide that the introductory accounting courses offered here are just the beginning and will choose to ladder into other business courses.

The computer labs are designed with a flexible work schedule in mind. The computer monitors in two of the labs retract into the walls, allowing for a larger workspace on demand. The projectors and whiteboards in all the rooms allow for a bright, engaging learning environment. The majority of the certificates offered are available at all campuses, with the exceptions being our two Legal Administrative Assistant certificates, which are available in Kelowna only. The instructors share resources via Blackboard and shared network space, allowing for continuity across campuses as well as shared course preparation. This year, the Office Administration department used the Centre for Dialogue for the first time, when we held a one-day group professional development day. The space was perfect for our needs, bringing our geographically diverse group together for intellectual, emotional, and social connections.

Many of our students are in our program to change their careers, their futures, and the futures of their families. With the tools, the time, and the space to learn what they need to learn, they can and do change their lives. Teresa Kisilevich, Applied Business Technology, Ext. 4393
Okanagan College, strongly centred in four regions, has the capacity to deliver a variety of post-secondary programs throughout the Okanagan Valley and thus engage in a very collaborative manner with local School Districts and their students. Notwithstanding the great advantage for students to be able to stay at home and undertake their education and training without incurring the cost of living away after they graduate, collaboration with School Districts has resulted in programming that allows students to get a headstart by starting their college program while still in secondary school, and also use the credit towards secondary graduation. Post-secondary transition programs, as defined by the Ministry of Education Policy Branch, are ‘educational programs that combine secondary and post-secondary courses, and that lead to Grade 12 graduation as well as help students make smooth transitions to further education or training’. Dual-credit programs provide a seamless transition to post-secondary education. The credit counts towards both secondary and post-secondary credentials. Districts sponsor Dual Credit students and pay for the tuition because they can register students in what is called PSI (Post-Secondary Institution) credits and receive Ministry of Education funding. This is supported at the highest level by Ministry policy related to earning external credits for graduation. The majority of Dual Credit students are in Trades Foundation programs with students also earning dual credit in Health Care Assistant, Education Assistant, Nursing Unit Assistant, Esthetician and Office Administration certificates, and a few individual academic courses. So why is this of interest in a newsletter devoted to learning and teaching? The Okanagan College region (Revelstoke to Osoyoos and Princeton) has one of the lowest immediate transition rates in the Province. Transition programs help provide opportunities for students to seamlessly move into the college system with support from their high school and Okanagan College at the same time. Transition programs provide a unique opportunity for College instructors to make a difference for students who are willing to take the early step to post-secondary education. When graduation occurs, the student has already made their step to college. Diana Thomson Ext. 4849

There were very practical space problems on the Kelowna campus that the Centre for Learning had to address when the building was funded. These included the lack of classroom, office and library space on the campus and our two off-site locations for administration and the Office Administration Program. While addressing these practical objectives, we challenged ourselves to also create a building that was so much more. Through the advice, guidance and vision of staff and students at the College we built a learning space that is not only functional but creative, innovative and inspirational. This did not happen by accident. In 2006, consultation with our board, staff, students, aboriginal community and regional advisory committee, to name a few, resulted in a careful mission and vision being drafted for the building. These were our guides during all phases of the creation and construction of the Centre. All along we wanted the Centre for Learning to be a “learning building” in keeping with our mission, vision and values. The vision we created was to have a space that would provide learners with innovative learning spaces to meet the college’s vision of a vibrant campus life that supports an excellent education for local, national and international students. The Centre needed to promote free exchange of ideas and the development and application of critical thinking skills. As a College we want to develop global citizenship in our community of informed learners. We needed a physical space that enabled this development. So while building the classrooms we needed, we made sure to create unique learning spaces such as the round Centre for Dialogue classroom that you see as you walk into the Centre. We have different-sized classrooms, unique classroom furniture and configurations to ensure that we provide a variety of learning environments. One of the highly valued aspects in the Centre is the informal learning spaces that were created in the atrium area, library, and student meeting spaces. We also wanted students and visitors to know about its leading-edge sustainability. We have proudly labeled the Centre for Learning a big idea with a small carbon footprint, and it is. The process is underway to recognize the building at a LEED Platinum level, surpassing our original goal of LEED Gold. And for those new to campus, you might wonder why we called it the Centre for Learning. We did so because the name can be identified and embraced by all staff, students and our community. The name evokes our commitment to learning but does not take away the fact that this building will be flexible and multi-purpose. Seeing how well-used and valued the Centre is today, we can all take pride that the original vision we created in 2006 was accomplished. See also: Green Initiatives at Okanagan College.

The ILLT is very pleased to welcome Chandra McCann as the new Fellow representing all employees in Adult Academic and Career Preparation and Adult Special Education. We thank Chandra for bringing her expertise to the ILLT to help enhance learning and teaching at Okanagan College. Chandra is the Volunteer Literacy Program Instructor and Coordinator on the Vernon Campus and the Library Rep for Literacy institution-wide. Chandra also brings experience in writing and editing as a past editor of the Pine Beetle Review (now Other:___ Magazine). Chandra has travelled the world and brings to Okanagan College her broad range of interests and contributions.