Six-Year Planning: Initiative Summary
Western Libraries

To facilitate discussion of initiatives and the updating of the Planning Units’ Six-Year Plans, please use the following template to outline the initiative you are proposing. It is not expected that the initiative will be a fully developed proposal at this point, so estimates are expected, but excessive detail is not.

**Title:** Managing Libraries Spaces for Collections, Teaching, and Learning

**Initiative Description, including statement of purpose and anticipated outcomes:**

This initiative will analyze, plan, and implement sustainable and effective space management for the Western Libraries that meets the resource access, teaching, and learning needs of faculty, staff, and students.

The Western Libraries faces significant space pressures on its resource access, teaching, and learning mission. Despite increasing opportunities for and interest in electronic resources, physical materials – especially monographs – constitute an essential component in meeting faculty and student needs. To enable the creation and maintenance of core library collections required to fulfill Western’s education mission, additional shelving space will be required.

The location and type of additional physical storage is directly related to the Libraries and Learning Commons other core mission – to provide teaching and learning support as well as to accommodate student study and collaboration needs. In a 2012 survey, a majority of faculty listed help developing their students’ research and writing skills as one of their top two goals for the Libraries, beyond provision of scholarly resources. In response to faculty expectations of the Libraries, demand for research-writing workshops and consultations is growing, which has placed pressure on the few mediated teaching and learning spaces in the Wilson Library and Haggard Hall. Tutoring Center use by students also shows a steady rise, pointing to the pressing need to address the long-term space requirements for this high-impact co-curricular student service.

The teaching and learning synergies and positive educational outcomes created among Learning Commons partners offer opportunities to combine two core Learning Commons goals: to build competencies around inquiry and knowledge and to apply these competencies through curricular, curricular-embedded, and co-curricular opportunities in innovative ways. The Teaching-Learning Academy and Center for Service Learning currently anchor the latter goal,
and there have been three recent discussions about welcoming new members to the Learning Commons.

Finally, 78 percent of students indicated in a 2014 survey that they rely on the Libraries for quiet study, and 29 percent of respondents use individual and collaborative spaces located in close proximity to Learning Commons services. Over the last several years, students have gravitated in larger numbers to the second floor of Wilson Library and Haggard Hall, suggesting that the library “as place” remains highly relevant to students’ learning. Accommodating growing student demand and access to physical collections will not be possible without rethinking current space use.

Within the next decade, the Libraries will run out of space to store the university’s physical collections and still meet its teaching and learning obligations. For the last several years, the Libraries has reconfigured the location and quality of teaching and learning spaces without reducing physical collection size. The use of compact shelving in WL 174 and WL 190 has maintained overall storage capacity but on a smaller footprint and in locations less conducive to teaching and learning activities (i.e. basements, windowless areas, etc.).

A variety of possible solutions could accommodate and balance the Libraries collections, teaching, and learning mission. Weeding physical collections is not an answer to solving Western’s long-term space needs, and it comes with significant risks that could compromise the quality of students’ educational experience as well as faculty research. In close collaboration with the Senate Library Committee and by engaging faculty more broadly where appropriate, the Libraries will develop a comprehensive collection storage strategy to guide the university over the next several decades. Elements in that plan will account for expected physical collection growth (as predicted in large part by the size of the resource access budget), the breadth and depth of needed core collections, the role of interlibrary loan, purchase of journal back files in electronic format, storage opportunities for low-use materials, and shared print repositories. Installation of compact shelving on one or more floors of the Wilson Library would add approximately 30 percent more storage capacity for monographs and other collections and should receive serious consideration as a long-term investment in the university’s continued need for access to physical collections.

**What University units (depts., colleges, etc.) will be involved?**

Senate Library Committee  
Space Administration/Management, Academic Affairs  
Office of Facilities Development & Capital Budget  
University Advancement
Associated Students

**How does the initiative support the University Mission and Strategic Plan?**
The Managing Libraries Spaces initiative directly supports Western’s mission and strategic goals, particularly goals 2-5 related to student access, life-long learning, application of Western expertise, and institutional effectiveness.

**Are there potential partnerships with external organizations/institutions?**
The Orbis Cascade Alliance -- in particular the Summit borrowing system and consortial licensing -- offers opportunities to develop strategic acquisitions plans that balance Western’s primary undergraduate teaching mission with the increasing depth and breadth of faculty and student research. Membership in The Western Regional Storage Trust or other distributed retrospective print journal repositories may offer solutions for shared print journal back files.

**Anticipated new positions needed to implement the initiative:**
- **Faculty:** Click here to enter text.
- **Staff:** Click here to enter text.
- **Graduate Students (supported):** Click here to enter text.

**Space needs** (boldface one; attach note from Space Administration):
- Existing space is sufficient
- **Existing space will be sufficient after modification**
- New space may be required

**New equipment or other one-time costs:** Compact shelving per floor in Wilson Library: $1.3 million plus labor to move materials (state funds); Wilson Library Reading Room and adjacent area: $1.2 million (private funds); completion of Research-Writing Studio: $350,000 (private funds); Special Collections exhibition spaces: $200,000 (private funds); renovations to spaces occupied by current or future Learning Commons partners: unknown.

**Recurring operating costs:** Possible off-site storage: costs to be determined; annual membership in perpetual electronic and/or physical access solutions: costs to be determined.

**Estimated timeline for implementation:** The Libraries proposes to conduct a comprehensive assessment of projected space needs over the next twenty-five years during the 2015-2017 biennium; to prepare and submit funding documents to university officials and government agencies by the 2017-2019 biennium; and to implement a variety of complementary space management solutions by the 2019-2021 biennium. Over the next six years, the Libraries will
continue to pursue private donors for renovations to the Wilson Library Reading Room and adjacent area, completion of the Research-Writing Studio, construction of Special Collections exhibition spaces, and other smaller projects designed to improve study and collaborative spaces.

Potential funding sources (boldface all that apply; attach notes from University Advancement and University Relations)

- **State operating budget** (decision package)
- **New enrollments** (tuition-based)
- External Education (fee-based)
- **Reallocation**
- Federal Support (agency: ______)
- Grants
- Partnerships (organizations/institutions: ______)
- **Private Funds**
- Other (please specify)