Library Renovation Project Brings “Learning Commons”

The Library is pleased to announce the near completion of the Library Renovation Project—“Learning Commons.” All newly renovated areas including The Oval, Library Lounge, and Leisure Corner are now open for public use. We sincerely apologize for the disturbances caused by frequent removal and replacement of study desks, chairs, and other furniture in the past few months, and we thank all users for their patience and cooperation.

The Library Renovation Project has two major objectives: to redesign and improve building services and to construct a Learning Commons for interactive and collaborative learning.

When the Library was first constructed two decades ago, the University had a mere student population of 6,400 and a library collection of 150,000 volumes. Today, the University enrols more than 20,000 students while the Library houses over one million print and electronic volumes. Insufficient space for both users and the Library’s ever-expanding collection has long been a critical issue. Having never undergone major overall renovation since its launch, the Library saw a pressing need to reorganize its space and services.

Continued on page 2
The renovation undertaken has greatly improved the Library’s physical environment. The new air conditioning system has brought about a significant improvement in air quality and an optimized temperature throughout the whole Library. The new spatial design and organization not only creates an informal, comfortable, and relaxing environment conducive to learning, but also caters to diverse user preferences by adopting noise level controlled zoning and subject zoning systems.

The Library at CityU is the first among the local university libraries to construct a full-scale “Learning Commons” situated within its own premise. The major function of this Learning Commons at CityU is to induce and promote collaboration and knowledge creation among students and across disciplines and sectors in the University. It is a “one-stop-shop” that brings together services that enhance learning, research, and technology by integrating IT help desk, media facilities, learning services, library research help, and information literacy. Such a learning community will help create a common culture and foster a positive atmosphere of cooperation and active learning.

After the spatial reorganization and completion of Learning Commons, there will be a substantial increase in the space for both individual and group study, as well as IT, reference, and media support and facilities.

Newly renovated areas are classified under the new zoning system to minimize the interference between interactive and self-learning activities. The following is a list of the renovated areas and new service counters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Oval Zone: “Silent Zone”</th>
<th>No. of seats: 114</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ Equipped with nearly 100 computers for users to study and work on assignments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ All desks come with sound proof panels to create a quiet environment for study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Desks for wheelchair users are provided.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ A 30,000-volume Reference Collection constitutes the other section of The Oval.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Library Lounge
Zone: “Quiet Discussion Zone”
No. of seats: 86

- Designed for collaborative learning and group activities.
- Users can gather to discuss projects and assignments.
- The area functions as venue for library activities and cross departmental events.

Leisure Corner
Zone: “Silent Zone”
No. of seats: 50

- On display: current local and international newspapers and magazines.
- A 60” TV tuned to news channels will be installed.

Media Area
Zone: “Silent Zone”
No. of seats: 34

- Equipped with 30 viewing booths and a wide range of media facilities/equipments.
- A media collection of more than 20,000 items, including the latest films, TV shows, music CDs, and documentaries.

Semi-Closed Collection Area

- The area is used for semi-closed materials, course reserve items, and requested book holds.

Special Needs Room
Zone: “Silent Zone” / “Quiet Discussion Zone”
No. of seats: 12

- Two smaller rooms are further included in the room for users who prefer a quieter space for studying.
- Equipments installed include Perkins Braille typewriter, PowerBraile 40, and CCTV magnifier etc.
Information Counter

- Staffed by Information Counter Officers and students from the Department of Chinese, Translation, and Linguistics employed as student interns.
- Answers general enquiries and directional questions about the Library collection and services, makes referrals to other service counters in the Library, and receives guests.

Reference/IT Help Desk

- The counter provides reference, IT support, and media and e-resources services to help users with their various enquiries and troubleshooting.

During the Revision and Examination Period, the Library has converted many renovated areas to temporary study and reading areas to provide extra space for students to complete assignments and prepare for the examinations. These temporary study and reading areas include: Reference Collection area, Semi-Closed Collection area, Media Area, and Sorting Room. Also, areas that are “Quiet Discussion Zones” have been converted to “Silent Zones” during this period.

Renovation work was suspended during the Revision and Examination Period in order not to cause disturbance and inconvenience to users studying. The remaining renovation work will resume when the Examination Period is over.

To maintain a pleasant environment for reading and study, cooperation and support from our users are essential. They are reminded that standard library regulations are applied to all newly renovated areas as well as temporary study and reading areas.

To strive for the highest standard of service is always the ultimate goal of the Library. With the support from users, we believe that the renovated Library can better serve their needs and provide them with a brand new experience of learning and research. For updated news on the Library Renovation Project please visit:

Staff and Services Reorganization

To coordinate with the setup of the new Learning Commons, the Library management sees a need to reorganize our human resources to meet new service trends, streamline current workflow and equip our staff to acquire new knowledge and skills. In the past few months, the Library management has reviewed the existing organizational structure, and after much discussion and consultation with staff, proposed a reorganization plan. New units such as Collection Developments, Digital Services, and Business Developments are now being created to meet changes in service delivery. Existing sections have also been re-structured, such as the Acquisitions and Serials Sections are merged and the Information Services and User Education Section is now renamed Reference Section.

With the opening of the Learning Commons, near The Oval is a new combined counter, with one side the Reference Desk staffed by professional librarians; while the other side the IT Help Desk manned by the Equipment Management Team (EMT). This EMT team provides technical support and assistance on the use of facilities and equipment (PCs, A/V equipment, printers, photocopiers, etc.) in The Oval. Not only are they responsible for installing, maintaining, and troubleshooting hardware and software, they also handle multi-media production and webpage support. Members from this team are under the Digital Services Unit.

The old Reference Counter is replaced by the new Information Counter. Close to the Library entrance, this counter helps to filter general enquiries, answer directional questions, and refer users to appropriate service counters. This counter is staffed by six support staff that have been re-deployed from different sections to serve as Information Counter Officers (ICOs) in office hours and five Student Interns in the evenings and weekends. This team of ICOs and student interns has received extensive training and is under the supervision of the Reference Section.

The Media and Electronic Resources (MERC) Counter has phased out. Multi-media equipment has been relocated to the new Media Area near The Oval. The Library is planning to install Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology to enable self-check service to the CD/DVD collection in a few months. The duties of other new units will be introduced in the future when they become operational.
Student Interns Answering Users’ Questions

Did you notice some students in the student ambassador’s uniform are answering users’ question at the Information Counter? They are students from the Department of Chinese, Translation and Linguistics working as interns in the Library. The Library has entered an internship agreement with the Department who has helped to advertise the position, interviewed, and selected candidates with the desired qualities. After a series of extensive training by different Library staff, five Student Interns are now working at the Information Counter of the Library in the evenings and weekends. They have been trained to provide customer and information services, answer simple enquiries and directional questions, and refer users to appropriate service counters. The internship program provides them with work knowledge, real life experiences, financial incentives, training and mentoring opportunities.

When the Student Interns were interviewed on what they benefit the most from this internship program, their replies are:

“Now I know more about library services and how to do research. I can search some databases more effectively now and am even able to teach my friends!!”
“The opportunity of talking to users speaking different languages is great!”
“I learn different service skills, and to be proactive but not intrusive.”
“My communication skills have been refined and I am more confident now.”
“Now I know the rich resources of the Library, its operation, services, and the behind-the-scene work.”
“Learn about customer service, which is essential in my future career.”

As to the main difficulties they have encountered, their responses are:

“I’m afraid of unreasonable and grumbling users.”
“Sometimes I don’t know how to help the user.”
“I find explaining clearly to the students is a challenge.”
“I realize that in order to answer their questions, I need to be very knowledgeable.”

Prof Steve Ching, University Librarian, comments, “These students have a good command of English and Putonghua and are able to learn fast. After extensive training, they are able to filter some frequently asked questions, relieving library staff to handle other duties. Besides, students tend to approach someone at their age group for help instead of going to the staff.”
Dr Sunyoung Oh, the program coordinator from CTL remarks, “The Department sees that language is power and makes an effort to build strong language competence in our students. While we have many students with good scores in English and Putonghua, opportunities to practice and improve their language skills were not many. This internship certainly provides our students an incentive to use more English and Putonghua with on-campus work experience that can help them develop interpersonal skills. We are happy to be the partner and given recognition with our strong language training in English and Putonghua.”

Reading Promotion Scheme 2007-2008

To encourage and nurture a good reading habit among students, the Office of Dean of Student Learning (DSL) together with the Library, Education Development Office (EDO), English Language Centre (ELC), and Student Development Services (SDS) organized the Reading Promotion Scheme 2007-2008. Not long after Semester A started, all undergraduate freshmen, foundation, and exchange students received one of the five selected books for free. A Reading Club Wiki site was launched for readers to share comments and insights on the five books online, and prizes were awarded to best contributors. Book Discussion Club sessions were also held in late October in the newly renovated Library Lounge, hosted by the staff of the organizers. Students who have received and read the books participated and shared their insights and ideas.

The five selected books were:

- Tuesdays with Morrie
- The Alchemist
- The Kite Runner
- Balzac & the Little Chinese Seamstress
- 築夢的人: 大學生涯的自我實現

Students share thoughts and insights on Reading Club Wiki site
Lecture by World-Renowned Economist

World renowned economist Professor Gregory C Chow (鄒至莊) gave a lecture on July 9 entitled ‘From Research to Social Change’ in the 5th Famous Scholars/Writer Lecture Series co-organized by the Library and the Department of Economics and Finance. In the lecture, Professor Chow shared his views on basic versus applied research, applying knowledge to real life problems, communicating polices to the government effectively, and problems and solutions of policy implementation. His experience in economic policy advice given to the governments of Taiwan and mainland China were cited as illustrations.

Professor Chow is author of over 200 articles and twelve books and has served on the editorial boards of numerous professional economics journals. He has taught at Princeton, MIT, Cornell, Harvard, Columbia, and is honorary professor of City University of Hong Kong and eight universities in mainland China. Upon his retirement from Princeton in 2001, the Econometric Research Program was renamed the Gregory C Chow Research Program in his honor.

New OAPS Partner Shares Experience

On July 9, two Xiamen University guests shared their insights and experience regarding the Outstanding Academic Papers by Students (OAPS) project. Prof Wu Daguang (邬大光), formerly Director of Academic Affairs Office and currently Vice President of Xiamen University, spoke on “大陸本科生培養若干思考 – 隨論廈門大學的思考與做法,” while Mr Mr Xiao Dehong (蕭德洪), Deputy University Librarian of Xiamen University, discussed related topics in “內地學術圖書館向外整合的問題探討.”

Having newly joined OAPS in summer 2007, Xiamen University has received strong and enthusiastic support from its senior management in terms of policy coordination and funding. The project has been viewed by the University as a precious opportunity to cultivate students’ academic writing skills and develop meaningful collaborations between universities.

OAPS currently comprises seven partner institutions: City University of Hong Kong, Tsinghua University (Beijing), Feng Chia University, National United University (Taiwan), Xiamen University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, and Seoul National University (Korea).

For more information on OAPS please visit: http://www.cityu.edu.hk/lib/digital/oaps/ or contact Stacey Ng at 3442-6348 / email: waicng@cityu.edu.hk.
Self Service with RFID Technologies – Pilot Tests Forthcoming

Alongside with the initiative to establish for its users a Learning Commons, the Library is now actively exploring the possibilities of using Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technologies to introduce self service. The objective is to provide more service options, convenience, privacy, and flexibility to the users.

To start with, two different RFID pilot tests will be conducted in the Semi-Closed Collection and the CD/DVD Collection (part of the existing Media Resources Collection) respectively. The two collections, now residing together in the glazed room adjacent to the Circulation Counter, will be moved into two separate rooms located near to the top right and left corners of the Oval. The two rooms are now used as temporary reading areas, but shortly after the Lunar New Year, they will become the Library’s pilot sites for High Frequency (HF) and Ultra High Frequency (UHF) RFID self service applications.

High Frequency (HF) RFID applications, to be sourced from a selected commercial vendor, will be used for the CD/DVD Collection that consists of some 20,000 items. Currently, all CDs and DVDs must be checked out from the Circulation Counter where the library staff will remove the locking bars in the cases for the users. With the RFID solution, users can self check items from the Collection and remove the locks themselves without staff intervention. The process is streamlined and users can enjoy more privacy.

Ultra High Frequency (UHF) RFID applications are to be used for the Semi-Closed Collection which consists of some 10,000 volumes of short-loan books. It is in fact an Applied Research Grant joint project between the Library and Wireless Communications Research Centre of the University. With the self-check machines inside the Collection Room, users will be able to check out and return multiple library items at any one time by themselves without library staff around.
The primary goal of the project is to assess the usability of UHF RFID technologies within the library context. Although UHF RFID technologies have been widely used in the logistics field, their application in the library arena is still very limited. Therefore they offer ample opportunities for research and development when compared to HF RFID technologies that have reached the plateau.

Results of the two pilot tests are pertinent. They will provide very useful information for the Library to decide on which RFID technologies, HF versus UHF, are to be extensively adopted for the entire collection in the long run.

While the long term vision of the Library is to make self service a norm, RFID solution also brings about other benefits. RFID solution offers an efficient means for collection management and maintenance (including inventory and stock taking, shelf reading, tracking of missing and reserved items). It also facilitates the generation of more timely, accurate, and comprehensive reports of the collection to support the decision making of the Library Management. All these in turn enable the Library to further improve its services.

**Video On Demand for Selected Video Programs**

Selected local TV programs and educational programs are now available as video on demand (VOD) to CityU users. About 400 episodes of six local TV programs since 2006 can be viewed through the campus network. And more will be added from time to time. Users can click on the "View Online..." link from the Library Catalogue to view the VOD with RealPlayer.

List of local TV programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Television Company</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATV</td>
<td>時事追擊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVB</td>
<td>Money Magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVB</td>
<td>新聞透視</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVB</td>
<td>星期日檔案</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVB</td>
<td>財經透視</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTHK</td>
<td>鏗鏘集</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For details of the listing and ways to access, please visit:

Online Access to CityU Research Theses of All Years

Theses of our research degree students are important intellectual output of the University that are of continuing value to other researchers and students. Submission of research theses in electronic version since 2004 has made online access to these works of originality by the University community more handy and efficient. To further enhance the service, the Library has taken the initiative to retrospectively digitize all the pre-2004 research theses that were originally submitted in print format. We are now pleased to announce that the task has been accomplished. From now on, CityU research theses of all years are available for online access by every staff and student of the University.

To access CityU E-theses Online, please visit:

Email Alerts & RSS Feeds for Journal Table of Contents and Automatic Search Results

Many Library-subscribed online resources provide “alert services” which enable you to receive the latest information on the journals/topics of your interest. In addition to the traditional way of receiving alerts via email, you can also choose to receive these alerts via an RSS reader.

RSS stands for “Really Simple Syndication” or “Rich Site Summary.” It is a format used to deliver frequently updated Web contents. In order to receive alerts via RSS feeds, you need to install an RSS reader/aggregator on your computer or register at an RSS reader web site beforehand.

To help you make full use of the available alert services, the Library has prepared a Research Guide on how to set up alerts in various Library-subscribed e-resources:

A link to the Guide can also be found under the RSS tab in the CityU e-Portal. CityU staff who prefer reading the ToC feeds for Library-subscribed journals in the e-Portal may make the request via the “RSS Feed Recommendation” module under the RSS tab.
New E-Resources Enrich Learning

Upgrading to SciFinder Scholar 2007

A new version of SciFinder Scholar, an important chemistry and life sciences database, was released in Aug 2007 with a number of powerful new features, allowing you to

♦ Categorize your reference answer sets
♦ Combine answer sets
♦ Export commercial chemicals records from CHEMCATS® into Excel
♦ Explore from substance displays
♦ Print structures in grid format
♦ Use the database in Windows Vista™

Do install the new client software to try the new features!

The new and enhanced Apabi Reader is now available!

The new and enhanced Apabi Reader (version 3.1), downloadable from the Apabi eBook homepage, provides a number of new and exciting features and functionalities.

In addition to reading Apabi e-books, the new Apabi reader can be used to open and read documents or e-books in CEB, XEB, PDF, HTML formats. Another important feature in the new Apabi Reader is Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese Conversion. At present, all Apabi ebooks are in Simplified Chinese. Using the window mode of the Apabi Reader, users can easily convert Simplified Chinese characters into Traditional Chinese characters, and vice versa, in one click.

If you already have the previous version of Apabi Reader installed on your PC, please uninstall it before downloading version 3.1.