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I. Introduction and Executive Summary

In September/October 2011, R2 Consulting LLC (R2), a firm specializing in academic library workflows, strategies, and organizational structure, spent 25 days conducting an external review for the Wilfrid Laurier University Library (WLUL). R2’s work followed an external review performed by a team of librarians from similar institutions, and a wide-ranging self-study. This multi-faceted examination of the Library’s procedures and services was initiated by Laurier’s Vice President: Academic and Provost to explore reconstituting WLUL as a “21st-century library”, and to plan for the transition to a new University Librarian in 2012.

WLUL’s current situation is one of the most unusual and interesting R2 has encountered in the course of nearly 100 such projects. In our observation, the Libraries enjoy a high proportion of good talent, both at the librarian and staff levels. With a handful of exceptions, individual workers are highly committed to their own definitions of service. Library users are foremost in everyone’s minds and conversations. But there are almost as many ideas about what constitutes a WLUL user as there are library employees. Individual efforts and ideas proliferate, but these are not necessarily well coordinated, and wider uptake, even of the best ideas, is not assured. It is abundantly clear that while good intentions abound, no shared vision exists of the Library’s users, services, and role in the WLU community. WLUL’s role and future are understood in too many different ways. As a result, the organization is not aligned in support of a single comprehensive strategy, and has seen some opportunities missed and some of its potential slip away.

As noted in the previous external review, WLUL’s current organizational structure, and in particular the collective agreement which prohibits librarians reporting to other librarians, has created an environment in which all opinions are essentially equal. Since no librarian can define priorities for another, collaborative efforts rely on persuasion, consensus-building, and cajoling. In the absence of a clear shared vision, professional disagreements over priorities, direction, and services can prevent good ideas from gaining traction. For matters on which librarians or Library Council are divided in opinion, the University Librarian must intervene, or the issue continues to be handled independently, as each individual believes best.

One effect of this dynamic is to circumscribe the Libraries’ participation and influence in campus-wide initiatives. With 20+ direct reports and a regular role as “decider” on contentious issues, the University Librarian’s attention is constantly drawn toward intra-Library issues. This restricts the time and energy available for advocacy and engagement at the campus level. More subtly, it shifts focus away from the changing context in which the Library operates. An inward-facing perspective constrains the planning horizon and the ability to recognize and create new opportunities. It limits the time available to explore new roles for the Library in teaching and learning, digital publishing, copyright, collaboration, and serving multiple campuses. We hasten to add that this is not a comment on the incumbent’s performance, but rather a structural problem—one that is built in to the Library’s existing organizational design.

Another effect of a very flat organization is that progress within the Library is made or thwarted mostly when individual librarians act on their own values and priorities. There are benefits to this level of autonomy. Individual librarians and small groups have created pockets of real innovation in areas such as instructional technology (e.g., creation of online tutorials), the institutional repository, digital initiatives, and the First-Year Instruction Project, to cite just a few. More traditionally-minded individuals have set and met very high standards for face-to-face instruction, reference service, and cataloging quality. Others have experimented with moving into student workflows via chat and roving reference.
To the degree that new initiatives can be sustained by an individual or a small team, they persist and in some cases flourish.

But if they are not the result of widely-shared priorities, none is able to scale or grow very much. The ‘roving’ reference experiment, for instance, placed reference librarians in high-traffic areas such as the Concourse. Although the initial response was promising, the program had to be abandoned because not enough “volunteers” committed to support a regular schedule. Similarly, the Digital Studio suffered from lack of coverage and necessary technical skills. Creation of online tutorials, a technique very much in line with student preference for self-service, is limited to a relatively small group. The missing ingredient, in our view, is management, which, when done well, can shape efforts coherently in support of the institution’s goals. We will discuss this further in the organizational section of this report.

There are strong beliefs and valid points of view represented in all of these initiatives. But the cumulative impression is one of unevenness—even inconsistency—in the Library’s service offerings. Because the organization is not unified around a strong vision of its current and future role, few initiatives, no matter how innovative or necessary, achieve critical mass or momentum. A host of good individual efforts does not necessarily add up to a good library. If priorities are not established, if choices are not made, if focus is not articulated, if participation is not mandated, then opportunities are missed. A Learning Services entity develops independently of the Library, filling a need the Library might otherwise have met. Library resources are scarcely represented in MyLearningSpace courses, where students and teaching faculty do most of their work. Discussions over reference desk scheduling loom disproportionately large, especially when so many users interact with the Library virtually. The Library becomes, in the words of previous reviewers, “marginalized”, despite good people and good ideas.

Now is the time to change that. WLU has ambitious growth plans in Brantford and perhaps Milton. As it was described to us, WLUL could grow to support three campuses, each serving 15,000 or more students. This calls for a radically re-imagined and restructured Library (or rather Libraries) operation. In the words of the Vice President: Academic, WLUL needs to transform itself into a “multi-campus library system” from a building-based collection and service point. This creates a golden opportunity to re-conceptualize and re-establish the Library’s value to the University. The level of growth envisaged will challenge the Library’s ability to scale its services to meet demand. The dispersion of users across three campuses will compel a greater emphasis on virtual, electronic, and unmediated services. The need to control costs associated with growth will require greater collaboration within TUG and OCUL, and higher yield from existing resources. Services will need to be redefined and to some degree standardized. Most critically, the organization will need to orient itself outward, toward users, campus partners and other libraries, and to coalesce around a unified vision and a set of priorities that can support a tripling of its user base over the next ten years.

R2’s recommendations are intended to stimulate and support a fundamental transformation of WLUL. They are stronger and more radical than those offered in many of our projects, because we believe both the need and the opportunity warrant such an approach. Our thinking has also been emboldened by the degree to which it coincides with the 2011 peer review. Of the 30 recommendations put forth by that group, R2 concurs with nearly all. In some cases, we think their recommendations are sound but should be pushed further. There were two or three suggestions in areas beyond our scope, on which we do not offer an opinion. But overall, we agree with their thinking, and have tried to suggest specific ways to move forward on their recommendations. In addition, some of our recommendations echo WLUL’s self-study, especially in regard to new opportunities and unsolved problems identified by the Library staff. Finally, we have introduced some new ideas of our own.
Changes at the procedural level, including still greater TUG collaboration and the abandonment of some tasks and practices, can help create capacity for these new directions. A stronger management ethic will help pull WLUL’s current good work and talent together, and marshal them in the same direction. While new funding will obviously be required to support a three-fold growth in users, an approach that emphasizes digital content, virtual delivery of services, and radical collaboration, may make it possible to scale at a much lower cost than might otherwise be the case.

At the highest level, R2 suggests that three critical elements are necessary for building a shared multi-campus enterprise for the 21st century. These are:

- A restructured organization with more latitude for management
- A bold and shared vision
- Increased operational efficiency

As we see it, the desired transformation will be possible ONLY with a restructured library organization, and a new approach to leadership and operational management. In our view, there are three basic imperatives:

1. **Adoption of a shared vision and strategy; unified efforts and priorities.** There is no shortage of good ideas at WLUL, but as noted above, there is little agreement on which initiatives are most important for the Library and its users. All initiatives cannot continue to have equal importance; everything that is now being done cannot continue to be done. The emphases on digital content, virtual services, meeting users where they work, and deeper collaboration must be articulated, reinforced, and prioritized. WLUL needs to formulate a new vision and strategy that capitalizes on the best existing efforts and perhaps introduces new ones. It will require leadership and prioritization to help the organization cohere around a new set of priorities, and to assure that the organization remains disciplined in pursuit of those priorities.

2. **Recognition that management matters.** A significant culture change is needed at WLUL. R2 has never encountered a situation where the traditional responsibilities and activities of management are so under-developed. While we recognize that management must be balanced with respect for workers, it is an essential function in any organization. In an organization as large and complex as WLUL, especially one that expects to grow so dramatically in coming years, it is necessary to delegate authority, to hold people accountable, and to make decisions that not everyone agrees with. Benchmarks for productivity and contribution are needed. Annual performance evaluations are needed. Establishment of concrete goals and measurement of progress toward them are needed. This may be the single most difficult change to accomplish, but in our view good management is critical to the transformation of WLUL to a multi-campus library system.

More specifically, R2 recommends:

- Reinterpretation of the collective agreements
- Promotion of a stronger management culture
- Minimum expectations for librarians and staff
- Performance evaluations
- Weekly key measures
- Development of a management training program
3. **A restructured organization that supports new priorities and ensures accountability.** WLUL has become too large and complex to rely solely on its Library Council for decision-making. The Library is also operating in a rapidly changing learning environment. Economic constraints impose further challenges by compelling WLUL (like most other libraries) to expand the range and sophistication of its services without additional investment. While broad-based input will always be important, the Library must learn to make decisions more rapidly, even when disagreements exist. AUL positions must include the authority to make decisions, to retain discipline around priorities, and to charge department heads with appropriate responsibilities. At this point, everyone seems to agree that more structured reporting relationships are necessary, and we wholeheartedly concur. This will become increasingly important as WLUL evolves toward some mix of centralized and distributed support for three full-size library operations. More specifically, R2 recommends:

- Adoption of a more hierarchical administrative model
- Strengthening the role of Associate University Librarian; expand the number from 2 to 3
- Establish three operational divisions – each with an AUL
  - Desk Services and Collections Management
  - Collection Development, Outreach and Instruction
  - Administrative Services and Branch Libraries
- Define and fill a new librarian position dedicated to Collection Development

WLUL’s new vision, in our view, should recognize three key realities, which are further developed in the section of the report entitled *WLUL in the 21st-Century*:

1. **Library and learning activity will be increasingly virtual.** In surveys of undergraduate behavior, students overwhelmingly favor remote online access to full-text content. They prefer support for self-service and close association of library resources with their coursework. WLUL’s own statistics confirm this. In FY11, WLU users logged 775,879 visits (and 2,540,512 page views) at the Library website. Turnstile counts show 532,312 visits to the Library building and 17,024 reference transactions. Users downloaded 435,107 full-text resources, but checked out only 125,726 tangible items. EBooks will grow dramatically in the next few years. According to proxy server statistics, 70% of electronic resources uses originated off-campus.

Print circulation at the Waterloo campus declined 24% between FY05 and FY10. ILL lending declined 28.3% in the same period; ILL borrowing 45.9%. (This is similar to other libraries, and is largely due to the rise of electronic resources.) In-house use of tangible materials grew somewhat in FY10, but remains 55.2% lower than in FY04. Also in FY10, 195 face-to-face instruction sessions reached 9,814 users. But in FY 11, the Library introduced a small number (18) of online tutorials. These were viewed 8,505 times (by 7,619 unique users), nearly matching all face-to-face instruction during the first year they were available--and without much promotion. 75% of the Library’s materials budget goes to electronic journals, databases, and eBooks, and that percentage continues to grow.

All of these trends are accelerating. Since WLU’s projected growth will likely include a high proportion of commuters, demand for virtual services will grow even faster than it otherwise might. Granted, the existing library buildings are busy. There is still demand for face-to-face service. But these visible factors mask a far larger invisible demand. The fact is that the majority of the Library’s users do not walk through the front door. They must be met and served online,
with resources optimized for remote self-service. This demands rethinking the role of walk-in service points and even in-person classroom instruction in favor of creative uses of technology; e.g., instruction sessions via videoconference and webcast, online tutorials and other tools that extend the reach of a single session.

2. **Library resources and services must become integrated into user workflows.** The center of undergraduate class work for most students and faculty is MyLearningSpace, WLU’s implementation of the Desire2Learn (D2L) course management system. As demonstrated by the pressure for 24/7 Library access, many students work at odd hours. If the Library is to serve the majority of its users effectively, its resources and services must be placed where and when most users work. The current imperative in academic libraries is to reach into user workflows rather than expect even that users will come to the Library web site. Connecting library-provided resources to Google Scholar, Wikipedia and other likely starting points for research is one example. Inserting course-specific or discipline-specific library pages into D2L is another. Integration of electronic reserves, roving reference, a robust collection of online tutorials and screencasts, and smartphone access to the Library via a mobile web connection are others.

For faculty, office delivery of tangible items, integrated support for electronic reserves, copyright expertise, scholarly communication support via the institutional repository, and digital publishing services represent other types of user workflows where the Library could add value. Finally, it is worth remembering that in coming years Kitchener, Brantford, and Milton users can also be served with many of the same tools.

3. **Radical collaboration with consortial and campus partners will improve services and control costs.** WLUL already benefits immensely from its participation in TUG and OCUL. Many tasks and expenses are shared with TUG partners, from system administration to offsite storage. OCUL and Scholars Portal license many electronic resources on behalf of members, as well as providing centralized support for the SFX link resolver. Despite its inevitable frustrations, collaboration has served WLUL very well.

Recently, “radical collaboration” has become a concept of interest among academic libraries. Cornell and Columbia University Libraries, for instance, have begun to collaborate on technical services. The 10-campus University of California system is moving toward shared print management centered around its two regional storage facilities. The Five Colleges in western Massachusetts are moving toward centralized e-resources management. WLUL and its TUG partners are well positioned to undertake radical collaboration on print collections. For instance, the Annex could become essentially a TUG distribution center, holding all print except for carefully-targeted core collections on each campus. Print selection, acquisition and cataloguing could be managed centrally by a shared TUG Technical Services staff. Duplication could be further minimized, and significant stacks space made available for other purposes on each campus. (We did say radical, didn’t we?)

To accommodate the new vision, workflows must be adapted to create capacity for new initiatives. Detailed workflow adjustments and collections policies are described in the final sections of the report – each dedicated to a specific format or function. There are three key concepts related to workflow enhancements, summarized as follows:

1. **Emphasize electronic over print/tangible.** Electronic resources now claim 75% of the Library’s materials budget, and account for nearly four times as much use as print and other tangible
resources. The increasing availability and acceptance of eBooks will continue to shift the balance. The prospect of large numbers of new commuter students reinforces the need for content that is digital and remotely accessible. 60% of circulating print monographs (across all locations) have never been charged out. These factors suggest some significant reallocation of staff hours, and reduced investment in print/tangible collections. The hours released by this shift can be redeployed in support of electronic resources, metadata creation for Archives, weeding, and other high-priority tasks.

2. **Make immediate short-term operational improvements.** While WLUL has utilized automation, batch processing, and outsourced services to a degree, more could be done to optimize workflows, especially for monographs. In addition to streamlining, outsourcing, and expanding some processes, policy changes related to TUG cataloguing, gifts-in-kind, and ‘shadow’ systems could release a significant number of hours for other purposes. R2 offers many recommendations in this area.

3. **Say ‘no’ to some tasks.** In defining and executing strategy, saying ‘no’ to some ideas and tasks is as important as saying ‘yes’ to others. Once the strategy has identified the goals most important to the organization, disciplined pursuit assures progress. Some legacy tasks, which served a valuable purpose at one time, have to be seen in a new light. They may even have residual value, but still must be weighed against other efforts that users more clearly favor. One example: stop accepting donated books, which require handling, searching, and generation of donor letters with negligible benefit to the collection. Another: cease review of full-level Library of Congress cataloguing records; while an occasional error may be found, these are typically definitive records, and the time spent in review could be put to other uses.

R2 has developed specific recommendations across all of these themes in the body of the report. Although WLUL has not yet developed a fully coherent organizational response to the dramatic changes in user behavior and the overall information environment, there is a great deal of good work on which to build. The Library’s strengths are outlined at some length in the following section; they are many and various. In some respects, the Library’s delay in adapting may actually serve it well. The trends are much clearer now, and the climate for collaboration much more favorable. In our view, it’s conceivable that WLUL could leap-frog some of its peers, and move aggressively and directly to a virtual, distributed, and radically collaborative operation. The result: not just a 21st library, but the 21st library suitable for WLU.

Before launching into more detailed observations and recommendations, it is important to acknowledge that many of the changes we suggest will not be made voluntarily. There will be strong disagreement within the library over strategic goals; and controversy about the means by which they should be achieved. As described above, the construct and culture of the Librarians Council essentially precludes speedy, decisive, or uniform action. For this reason, R2 suggests that an external mandate may be necessary if some of the most fundamental improvements will be realized. This may be especially true with regard to the changes we propose to the organizational structure and culture. Consistent and sustained support from University Administration may be needed, if the WLU libraries will be truly re-envisioned and re-invented.
II. Laurier Library Strengths

It is one of the pleasures of R2’s work to bear witness to an organization’s strengths. Every library has many, and the Laurier Library is no exception. In this section, we simply highlight some aspects of WLUL’s operations and services that are working especially well, along with new ideas and capabilities that strengthen the organization. Many tasks and transactions must be executed well every day in an organization as complex as an academic library. In our experience, innovation and problem-solving occur much more routinely than is generally realized. We find it both helpful and heartening to call out examples of good work, but also recognize there are probably many others that did not come to our attention. Please feel free to add strengths we may have missed.

- WLUL boasts many dedicated librarians and staff members who aspire to provide a high level of library service. The competence and professionalism of staff-level employees is particularly noteworthy, as is the amount of time they spend on the Information Desk.

- The Library has shown willingness to experiment with varied forms of user interaction, including roving reference, chat reference, online tutorials, face-to-face instruction, and a mobile web application - making the Library accessible via smartphones.

- The current trial of the Primo Central unified discovery interface enables a simplified discovery experience for users, but also allows use of separate records for print and electronic versions of books and journals.

- Early efforts in Instructional Technology have yielded encouraging results. The first 18 online tutorials were viewed 8,805 times in a year. Creation of tutorials has occurred both at Waterloo and at Brantford. The Technology in Instruction Group provides a good forum for information sharing on these initiatives.

- 14 Class Guides, built in Drupal Views, have been implemented at Brantford.

- The First Year Instruction Project & Working Group is building content for a pilot project to support student research, which will launch in early 2012. Through this effort, the Library is contributing directly to student retention and student success, two priorities for the University.

- WLUL’s institutional repository, known as ScholarsCommons@Laurier, is about to go live with its first 800 electronic theses and dissertations (ETD). The repository has made rapid progress since June, with many policies finalized and most documentation completed. Communication has been exemplary. In addition to ETDs, the Commons will host Canadian Military History on behalf of the university press, as well as backruns of the student newspaper and Open Access (OA) articles by WLU faculty. Student workers have been used to prepare metadata and to find OA articles.

- The institutional repository coordinator position is structured to work 50% for the Library and 50% for the Press, in an excellent example of cross-campus collaboration.

- The successful harmonization of circulation policies among TUG members was a remarkable achievement, and can perhaps serve as a model for other functional areas.
• The TUG reciprocal borrowing program, while not without problems, delivers a high proportion of materials among campuses within 24 hours. Interlibrary Loan also adheres to a 24-hour turnaround on borrowing and lending requests.

• Unlike many libraries, WLUL undertakes regular inventories and shelf-reading projects. This active approach to stacks management is particularly helpful when, as at WLUL, significant weeding and storage projects are underway.

• The Collections Coordinator position has proved highly effective in identifying large numbers of candidates for withdrawal or storage. Organized weeding on this scale is fairly rare in our experience. Coordination with the TUG last-copy policy assures that duplication in the Annex is minimized. At present, however, the capacity to organize deselection and make decisions far outstrips the Library’s ability to perform the necessary record maintenance.

• WLUL enjoys many benefits from collaboration with its local partner via TUG and with provincial partners via OCUL. OCUL maintains shared CRKN and OCUL licenses on its members’ behalf and also administers the SFX instance. WLUL’s Voyager system is maintained collaboratively through TUG. The shared TUG catalogue, Primo installation, and Annex all benefit WLUL, as does the Last Copy agreement.

• Even when systems are not shared but are used in common, expertise and practices can be shared. For instance, all three libraries use ARES (electronic reserves), Desire2Learn (course management). Information on problem solving, configuration, creation of widgets and other tasks can be shared.

• The Library’s web site will undergo a complete revision next year and will use the newest version of Drupal. This is intended to enable much more rapid updates while assuring overall consistency of look, feel, and structure.

• An e-preferred policy is already in place for journals; eBook preferences are being established in some subject areas.

• Acquisitions has achieved a high degree of vendor consolidation for books (95% of firm orders and 89% of approval from YBP) and serials (Swets). This enables simplification and standardization of workflows and training.

• Acquisitions staff working with serials have been trained to handle both print and electronic formats. One estimate suggests they spend 75% of their time working in SFX and Verde, which closely mirrors the amount spent on those resources.

• Most book selection is done electronically via GOBI, YBP’s web-based acquisition and collection development tool.

• A YBP eBook approval plan and an eBook slip plan (for the Sciences and Brantford) are nearly ready to launch. WLUL is already allowing firm orders for eBooks via GOBI. This supplements a number of large eBook packages (e.g., Oxford and Cambridge).

• Electronic selection in GOBI is supplemented by GobiExport and batch creation of some purchase orders in Voyager. Electronic invoicing is in place for many monographs, using
Embedded Order Data (EOD) for approval receipts, and EDI (electronic data interchange) invoicing for firm orders. Derived fund codes area automatically generated by YBP from approval profiles, essentially pre-assigning codes to many titles.

- Third-party cataloguing records are purchased for most monographs, including eBooks.

- The Library experiences only a small percentage of rush orders (189 of 10,000).

- An accounting interface between Voyager and the University’s Banner system enables YBP-related financial data to be transferred electronically – no rekeying into University Accounts is needed. Expansion of this approach to other vendors is planned.

- Cataloguing has adopted the free MarcEdit tool to enable customized but efficient batch processing. The group also makes excellent use of keyboard macros to save time and improve accuracy. The department has recently begun to trial MARCt!, an Ex Libris service that supplies cataloguing records in batch for electronic books and electronic journals that are part of aggregator packages. In conjunction with a policy of separate records for print and electronic versions, this could prove a significant time-saver.

- The Electronic Resources Librarian has begun to implement SUSHI, which automatically harvests usage data for a broad swath of electronic resources. This will enable more informed evaluation of e-resources at time of renewal.

- The ejournals@wlu.ca email list (which also supports eBooks and databases) is viewed as an effective tool for communicating and trouble-shooting e-resource access problems.

- A locally-developed script, pulls information from Resource Pages or SFX, compiles it, and adds the information to the configuration file for the proxy server, effectively automating that workflow.

- Services are available for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities.

- Archives & Special Collections has recently embraced the Greene-Meisner mantra of “more product, less process.” Its proposed collection policy, currently under consideration, seeks to focus tightly on its core areas of interest: Environment, History of Lutheranism in Canada, and History of Kitchener-Waterloo. Archives has provided a great deal of source material for the Laurier 100 celebration.

Although it is quite satisfying to call attention to a library’s strengths, R2 is not usually hired solely for that purpose. For the most part, our charge is to identify opportunities for improvement. As in most libraries, some difficulties are apparent at Wilfrid Laurier. As we identify and analyze some of these in the following sections, please bear in mind that our intentions are constructive—and that we recognize and respect the good work that is occurring. It was clear from our time onsite that Wilfrid Laurier staff and librarians are well aware of these issues – in fact, most were brought to our attention during the interview process. We very much appreciate the intelligence, good will and candor shown by all with whom we spoke.
Further observations and recommendations are organized as follows:

- Organizational Culture and Structure
- WLUL in the 21st Century
- Electronic Resources – The Invisible Mainstream
- A New Approach to Cataloguing
- Optimizing Workflows for Print Monographs
- Special Collections and Archives
III. Organizational Culture and Structure

During the course of our projects with libraries, it is usual for R2 to address specific organizational challenges. In almost every project, we seek to offer ideas about committee and administrative structures, staffing patterns, capacity for strategic initiatives, levels of autonomy, and anything else that might help the library improve service to its community.

As in most academic libraries with which we have worked, the organizational structure at WLUL has evolved slowly, in response to workflow demands, individual career decisions, hiring opportunities, budget pressures, available skills, and personality conflicts. In some cases, departmental staffing has not kept pace with the changing information environment. Relatively conservative interpretations of the collective agreements and a relatively non-hierarchical structure have engendered a culture of individualism and a lack of unity/conformity and/or adherence to shared goals. This section of the report is intended to highlight what we see to be the organizational weaknesses that impact library workflows and user services. In many ways, R2 observations mirror those made by the External Review Committee in June 2011. Many of the same concerns were voiced by our interviewees.

- For MLS librarians (Masters’ in Library Science), the organizational structure is flat. All librarians and three non-MLS department heads report to the University Librarian (UL). The UL, then, has approximately two dozen direct reports. For an organization as complex as an academic library, and especially in an organization anticipating significant change, most management experts would recommend that no one should have more than 6-8 direct reports.

- Such a flat structure is not conducive to good communication or timely decision-making.

- The Associate University Librarian (AUL) positions are underutilized. They have no direct reports and little authority within the organization. The function and value of the AUL positions need clarification.

- There is no strategic plan for managing the exponential growth of library services and facilities anticipated at the Brantford and Milton campuses. As we see it, it will not be possible for the current library cohort to absorb this level of growth without some additions to staff.

- For some time, Collection Development (CD) expertise has been largely concentrated in one person. This person is now directing 60% of her time to external duties and the remaining 40% to scholarly communication. This introduces the question of how best to improve local collections policies and operations.

- Staffing patterns and internal expertise continue to favor print operations despite much higher user demand for electronic resources.

- At present, responsibilities for acquiring and maintaining e-resources are too highly to dispersed:
  - Subject librarians participate in selection and renewal decisions based on information assembled by CRKN, OCUL, or the Electronic Resources Librarian.
  - Cataloguing is responsible for load profiles, record loads, and copy cataloguing standalone e-books
o Acquisitions is responsible for local orders, order maintenance and SFX knowledge-base maintenance for local, OCUL, and CRKN titles

o Until recently, the E-Resources Librarian was responsible for troubleshooting, proxy server updates, and compilation and analysis of usage statistics. Since the departure of the Head of Collections, licensing and deals for locally-subscribed content and other duties have been transferred to this position.

o ARTStor, which provides licensed access to art images, is managed by a staff member in Access Services

• There is some lack of clarity/agreement about who should be responsible for “cataloguing” e-resources.

• Acquisitions and Cataloguing functions report through two different divisions, making it difficult to collaborate on more efficient workflows for newly acquired materials.

• The Head of Access Services has too many direct reports. Given the flat structure for librarians and the current staffing model in Access Services, the overall organization is not adequately agile or creative. Better structure and symmetry is needed.

• In many (most?) academic libraries, the role of Department Head for Access Services is now handled by a paraprofessional with strong managerial skills. At WLUL, this role is still filled by an MLS Librarian.

• Processing backlogs are building with regard to Archival collections. Additional staffing is needed to address this incoming flow.

• A good number of highly talented and experienced paraprofessionals appear to be underutilized. Paraprofessionals are largely excluded from the committee structure and are not always well-informed about internal issues and developments.

• In general, internal communications are not always adequate.

• There are no performance evaluations at the individual or the departmental level. There are also no benchmarks or quality controls. This lack of rigor makes it difficult for the library to improve the quality of service, or implement new initiatives and priorities; it must instead rely on individuals’ propensity to change. This absence of minimum expectations often translates to inconsistent service to patrons and to academic departments.

• There is inadequate attention being paid to specific and/or measurable outcomes from library instruction – which are increasingly required in other organizations.

• Since there is little expectation that professionals can be required to conform to new requirements, behaviors, priorities, or goals, the most familiar path towards change is to “wait for him/her to retire”. This situation has caused unproductive relationships to develop and endure.
• Work is distributed unevenly, and again, some paraprofessional work is being performed by MLS librarians.

• As observed by the previous external review team, the Library’s committee structure is large and unwieldy. Fundamental library functions are sometimes handled by standing committees rather than operational departments. To some extent, the committee structure is used to fill the managerial gaps of the current organization. One obvious example of this is the Instruction Committee and there are others.

• Certain tasks and/or functions are misplaced within the organization – mostly as a result of legacy assignments, etc. Some examples:
  
  o the ArtStor subscription and content is managed within Access Services, when all other electronic resources are managed elsewhere in the organization.
  
  o spine labeling for new materials occurs in Cataloguing, but re-labeling for older materials occurs in Access Services.
  
  o non-MARC cataloguing occurs in two library departments, but not within the Cataloguing Department per se.

• In comparison to other academic libraries, few students are employed by WLUL. Another concern is that they are all hired from within a single department making coordination and deployment more difficult than necessary.

• Organizational management and project design expertise is undervalued within the libraries. More of both are needed.

While some of these difficulties will surely persist, others can be addressed via new organizational structures and adoption of basic managerial principles. R2 is well aware that cultural and policy changes like the ones we recommend may be unpopular at first; and to expect voluntary or consensual adoption is unrealistic. Again, if existing hurdles are to be cleared, we suggest that the library and/or university administration have to mandate some version of the changes described in this section. In general, R2 challenges the WLU Libraries to embrace a stronger management culture and realize the benefits of coordination, goal setting, and self-measurement.

Reinterpret the collective agreements – promote stronger management

During the course of our onsite interviews, many pointed to the Library’s collective bargaining agreements to explain the absence of minimum job requirements and performance appraisals. At the same time, however, more than a few librarians and staff members fervently wish for a rigorous performance review process, to resolve various inequities and long-standing disagreements about individual responsibilities and organizational priorities.

R2 also had the opportunity to speak with administrators outside the library who said in no uncertain terms, “The collective agreements do not preclude the opportunity to manage.” While we are not experts with regard to these issues, it appears that regular evaluations are neither mandated not prohibited by the “Collective Agreement between Wilfrid Laurier University and Wilfrid Laurier University Staff Association” (July 1, 2008-June 30, 2011). In fact,
the following excerpts suggest that performance appraisal is an entirely appropriate management activity.

ARTICLE 7.2 Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Association recognizes and agrees that the University has the exclusive right and responsibility:

(i) to manage its business;
(ii) to maintain order, discipline, and efficiency including the right to plan, direct, and control the workforce;
(iii) to hire, classify, promote, transfer, demote, lay off, or recall employees, and to expand or reduce the size of the workforce;
(iv) to alter, combine, or cease any operation, function, or service.

ARTICLE 7.3 The University has the right to establish and enforce reasonable rules and regulations and to discipline, suspend, or discharge employees for just cause.

ARTICLE 7.4 The University will exercise the foregoing rights in a manner that is fair, reasonable, and consistent with the terms and provisions of this Agreement. In the event that it is alleged that the University has exercised any of the foregoing rights contrary to the provisions of this Agreement, the matter may be the subject of a grievance.

The “Collective Agreement between Wilfrid Laurier University and Wilfrid Laurier University Faculty Association for Full-time Faculty and Professional Librarians (July 1, 2008-June 30, 2011)” includes the following, suggesting that librarian performance too, may be evaluated:

ARTICLE 10.1 The University may review the performance of Members under this Article, once per year. Such an evaluation, if any, shall be in addition to any other assessments which may be required by other provisions of this Agreement. If the University wishes a Member to participate in any discussion or meeting as part of this review, the Member shall receive written notice of an evaluation under Article 10. The notice shall be given at least 5 days in advance of the meeting, and the Member shall have the right to be accompanied by a representative of his/her choice.

Again, R2 believes that the University Librarian (UL), the Associate University Librarians (AULs), and the Department Heads need to provide oversight, hold regular meetings, set priorities and goals for units and individuals, and review performance on a regular basis; this can occur within the parameters of the collective agreements. The collective agreements should not be used as a pretext for avoiding this critical work.

Establish minimum expectations for librarians and staff
To us, this seems like an absolute prerequisite for organizational soundness, but given what we heard about the current dynamics, this may be a difficult thing for WLUL to achieve. Minimum expectations can be very simple - but they should be measurable and should relate to the primary functions of the job. A few examples are provided here, offered solely to prompt conversation. Actual requirements must be established locally.

- All librarians will be onsite in the libraries at least 80% of their work week except during periods of vacation or research leave.
• Liaison librarians will attend departmental meetings of their respective faculties at least once every quarter.

• Liaison librarians will respond to research support requests within 24 hours of receipt.

• All staff will meet minimum throughput and quality requirements as established by their department head.

• All staff will serve on no less than 1 internal committee and 1 external committee.

• All members of management will schedule regular weekly or bi-weekly meetings for those that report to them. An agenda and meeting minutes will be published and stored for review.

• All department heads will ensure that procedural documentation is current and accessible to internal constituents.

Establish standard approaches for routine tasks and expect conformance
For the sake of efficiency and consistency, R2 recommends that individuals should no longer decide for themselves how they want to perform routine tasks. Some ways are simply more efficient and effective than others. If multiple people are doing the same thing, they should be doing it the same way. For example, we recommend a standard/shared sequence of preferred catalogues for Z39.50 searches; a preferred hierarchy of material vendors for new orders; a standard format for recording and storing policy statements, etc. Once standard processes are established, they should be clearly documented and kept up to date.

Implement regular employee performance evaluations
We heard from many employees that they would be eager for regular performance reviews. A formal evaluation process offers an opportunity to review position responsibilities and the individual’s performance in that position. An obvious first step in preparing for evaluations is to have current job descriptions for each employee. R2 saw some of these, but we are unaware of the extent to which they are complete and/or current.

Each employee contributes to the goals of the library organization, and the process of evaluation provides the context for talking about how each person adds value. It also offers a context in which to identify opportunities for improvement and for personal/professional development. The process can promote both the development of the institution and the people working in it if personal and organizational goals are integrated. Performance appraisals that genuinely encourage career growth demonstrate that an organization is doing its share to support advancement. A well-conceived, skillfully managed system of performance evaluation can also be a good way to promote communication between supervisors and employees.

Organizational development and personal development are both served when reasonably high goals are set. Our experience suggests that staff and librarians feel good about themselves and their employer when they do work that stretches their abilities and when they get recognition for those achievements. Setting what are often called “stretch” goals will help ensure that all individuals are working to the highest possible level.
A good performance evaluation system serves organizational development by seeking maximum results from minimal investment of resources. This is not to suggest that quantity or cost is the sole measure of performance. Quality of work, adhering to library procedures and standards, working collegially, taking the initiative when appropriate, and solving problems creatively are all important areas in which employees should be evaluated.

**Establish clear/shared priorities and timeliness standards**

During the course of interviews, R2 heard from many employees that they do not always have clear priorities governing the order in which they do their work. Each person decides for him or herself what will and what will not get done “today”. Establishing organizational and departmental priorities will prevent employees from avoiding types of work they are less eager to perform and will keep everyone focused on tasks deemed most important for patrons.

Establishing timeliness standards goes hand in hand with setting organizational priorities. Timeliness standards are driven by the goal of serving users as quickly as possible and establishing appropriate expectations for users and for colleagues. Timeliness standards make it possible to correctly predict specific outcomes. For example, routine throughput standards might include:

- Shelf-ready books will be available to patrons within 24 hours of receipt
- All new orders will be placed within 24 hours of the request
- All new e-resources will be activated in SFX within 2 days of notification
- All ILL requests will be processed on the day received

Public service standards might include:

- When a user reports an access problem – the report will be acknowledged immediately and a follow-up email will be sent within 24 hours
- Research assistance will be available within 24 hours of the request
- No more than 2% of library computers will ever be down at one time
- Every course page in MyLearningSpace will be linked to a liaison librarian before the semester begins

Other functions should have timeliness standards as well. All employees should be expected to meet these standards barring unforeseen circumstances. Conformity should be measured through sampling, which is described below.

**Develop operational and strategic benchmarks**

Budget reductions and even steady state budgets require libraries to become ever more vigilant about improving their cost effectiveness. Consistent self-measurement is one of the best ways to demonstrate accountability to external factions and provides equally important internal benefits. Benchmarking is a form of self-measurement that allows an organization to evaluate various aspects of its operations and services and compare them to locally established or industry-wide standards.

When an organization evaluates its own performance it can gain insight into those parts of the operation that are performing well and those that are not. Baseline analysis of existing processes, patron services, and other key performance indicators can be used to make the case
for change and can serve as the measurement against which ongoing efforts can be compared. A systematic approach to operational analysis and change management also helps to avoid the inclination to manage by perception. Selecting and monitoring key metrics are critical elements in operational analysis.

Most academic libraries have access to various kinds of transaction information, drawn from the ILS (Voyager), vendor databases, and manual tallies. These data tell us what is getting done each month and each year. They help us to understand the nature and the size of the collection, but shed little light on the workflow or operational issues facing each department. For example, the average “dock to shelf” timeframe is a basic performance indicator, an important management tool, and a factor that directly affects the user. At WLUL, however, this time frame is not measured and, as far as we are aware, no throughput goals exist.

Establishing appropriate benchmarks is not a simple task and, unfortunately, this is not something that has occurred systematically within the academic library community. For now, most WLUL benchmarks will have to be developed via informed expectations and desired goals, some of which may be gleaned from peer libraries that have optimized workflows. In this report, R2 has demonstrated that WLUL has not yet achieved maximum efficiency. Therefore, focusing initially on operational benchmarks, such as percentage of monographs arriving shelf-ready, and dock-to-shelf time frames, etc. is important. However, task performance should not become an end in itself. Operational performance benchmarks should remain within the context of an overall strategic plan.

Therefore, R2 recommends considering a few strategic benchmarks that focus on why and when. For example, how should the library positioned to perform in five or ten years? Strategic indicators could include overall characteristics of the collection, materials versus library employee budget ratios, study space available to students, peer comparisons, teaching outcomes, student and researcher efficiencies, etc. Administrators are often interested in strategic benchmarks, but in an environment in which a great deal of change will be required, R2 suggests that library employees at all levels should be familiar with both short and long term goals. Familiarity with end goals can help individuals contribute in ways that support the libraries’ strategic priorities.

The table below provides a small sample of the types of key measures that could be implemented to track progress on various strategic goals. Note that the goals and the numbers are all hypothetical.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>goal</th>
<th>benchmark</th>
<th>actual</th>
<th>queue or gap</th>
<th>oldest date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>increasing student study space</td>
<td>Sq ft. or seats</td>
<td>Sq. ft or seats</td>
<td>Sq. ft or seats</td>
<td>anticipated compliance xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>responsible high-volume weeding of print collections</td>
<td>volumes weeded per week</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of the onsite print collection that circulated this year</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goal</td>
<td>benchmark</td>
<td>actual</td>
<td>queue or gap</td>
<td>oldest date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>digital objects ingested/described</td>
<td># per wk.</td>
<td># per wk.</td>
<td># per wk.</td>
<td>xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of course pages with link to liaison librarian</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of departmental meetings attended by a liaison librarian this quarter</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Operational and service-level benchmarks might look something like this. Again, our examples are theoretical, not actual:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>work product</th>
<th>benchmark</th>
<th>actual</th>
<th>queue</th>
<th>oldest date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of access problems reported</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>license terms visible to all staff</td>
<td>50/week</td>
<td>12 this week</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URLs to repair</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>URL checker report xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARC record loads</td>
<td>30,000/week</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>oldest file date xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cumulative % of monographs budget encumbered</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>order to receipt timeframe</td>
<td>45 days</td>
<td>80 days average</td>
<td>500 open orders</td>
<td>oldest open order xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dock to shelf time frame (non shelf-ready)</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>0 boxes</td>
<td>oldest unprocessed invoice xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCCP/YBP cataloging errors</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YBP label or marking errors</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in-house cataloging errors</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>print serial cancellations</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>oldest request date xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faculty reserve requests accommodated within 48 hours</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>xx/xx/xx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some benchmarks could be effectively applied to individuals as well as departments and to the library as a whole, thereby addressing various issues related to compliance and equity. Red highlights can serve to draw attention to problem areas.

For some measures (such as order fulfillment and vendor cataloguing errors), performance may be the responsibility of third parties. Given WLUL’s reliance on third parties, the Library should systematically track their performance. This will enable recognition of new or recurring problems and substantiate or refute perceptions that are not based on data. If the quality of a particular function or stream of data becomes unacceptable, immediate measures must be taken to control the effect on patrons, on the database, and on other departments. We see this as a strong rationale for weekly measures rather than something less frequent.

In our experience, some libraries are reluctant to embark on weekly measures, claiming that they would be too cumbersome and of course, strategic measures are only meaningful on a monthly or annual basis. For routine operational tasks, however, R2 strongly encourages adoption of weekly measures. We believe this granular approach to be motivating to library employees, and much more instructive as the organization learns to recognize patterns and trends.

A framework like this can help educate employees to a new way of thinking about the work, and can provide a quick way to identify and communicate problem areas as they start to emerge. Priorities within units will more likely to be in synch with system-wide strategies and workflows can be organized in ways that make important benchmarks easy to measure. By scrutinizing some of the most critical (or most illustrative) task(s), and by measuring various time frames, we can create a powerful overview of operations, and simultaneously demonstrate the quality of service being provided.

The data itself, if collected consistently over a period of time, will help to identify annual patterns of activity and accurately predict staffing needs from one month and one year to the next. No one should hesitate to record the entire “queue” or backlog. In the end, a persistent queue may provide the needed justification for additional employees or reassignment of responsibilities within the unit. Employees at every level should become familiar with the current workload and production strategies of his/her own department and, at an overview level, the productivity and related issues of other units as well. Improved communication between departments can be achieved if individuals throughout the library become more aware of specific accomplishments and pressures facing others.

**Measure and control quality via sampling**

As described above, the concept of benchmarking incorporates some quality measurements as well as volume and time frame measurements. To measure quality, R2 advocates a sampling approach. As in commercial manufacturing, evaluating the “product” in libraries on a routine basis is important. It is easy to think exclusively about benchmarks in technical services but the concept should be extended to access services, inventory control, and public services as well. Any process of quality control assumes some level of standardization, which we suggest will benefit the entire organization in many ways. Four other critical assumptions must be made when embarking on a quality control program:

- Errors will occur
- Errors should be identified and analyzed via a sampling approach
• Some percentage (1-3%) of error is acceptable
• Perfection is not the goal

The concept of sampling may be unfamiliar so establishing appropriate sampling routines will require a highly focused and concerted effort. The advantage of sampling is intended to eliminate 100% review of anything while simultaneously eliminating speculation and improving confidence in the library’s products and services. Important elements of a new sampling routine should include:

• Specific definition of the product in terms of minimum requirements including identification of critical details.
• A convenient way to identify random samples (5% of total stream of work)
• Evaluation of in-house and third party (vendor) products according to the same standards
• A consistent log of the types and the number of errors found
• Expertise to correct any errors found at the sampling station
• Immediate response to an error rate that exceed the acceptable level (1-3%)
• Methods for retraining staff and/or resolving problems with the vendor
• Publicizing the error free % as an indicator of overall quality

By reporting a percentage of errors found each week or the percent of error-free work products, WLUL will guarantee a high quality service, normalize the concept that errors exist and that a specified (modest) error rate is acceptable, and lay the groundwork for measuring individual performance. With regard to organizational benchmarking in general, the literature emphasizes the need to reconsider and recalibrate the process on a regular, perhaps annual or semi-annual, basis. R2, of course, concurs.

Eliminate overly granular and/or manual tallies whenever possible
In the cataloguing section of the report, we make a similar recommendation, but the principal applies to all tallies. For example, R2 questions the value of tracking six categories for discards, and seven types of data on binding. At present, one category is “binding decisions resulting in return to stacks” -- 2 items in FY10. To the extent possible, use the system to generate throughput statistics and only require manual tallies for critical data collection that would be otherwise unavailable. Another approach is to gather statistics for a short period, to benchmark a specific task or workflow and to re-measure on an annual basis. Ensure that the collected data is used. If there is no specific analysis of the data collected, tallies should be abandoned.

Improve project management
Every library must accommodate special or one-time projects, like retrospective cataloging, large transfers, the launch of a new system or service, etc. Handling these effectively requires careful planning and monitoring of progress until the project is completed. R2 recommends that WLUL develop and consistently apply tools that will ensure the success these projects. One frequently used tool can be called a “statement of work.” The statement of work contains the following elements:

• Project name
• Project purpose and goals
• Project leader and champion
• Project description (how will this project be designed, who will be involved, what tools will be needed, how long will it take, how much will it cost, etc.)
• Clear identification of what is in and out of scope (to avoid project “creep”)
• Deliverables (reflecting the agreement between the project contributors and other affected parties)
• Expected completion date and benchmarks leading up to completion - posted publicly
• Library-wide acknowledgement/congratulations when the project is successfully completed

Such an approach sets clear expectation in and outside the responsible unit, and assigns clear oversight for the work. R2 suggests that the retrospective project to catalog DVDs and videos would be an appropriate initial project to which this approach can be applied. A first step in advancing this project should be to determine whether all materials in the inherited collection should be retained. For example, if a DVD or video has not been used once in 5 years, is it a candidate for withdrawal? Discrete weeding projects, too, would be good candidates for this approach. Indeed, implementation of R2 recommendations should be approached as a multi-phased project with careful planning, anticipated results, and measures of success, etc.

**Institute a management training program**

WLUL, like many academic libraries, lacks a sufficient number of trained managers who, in addition to understanding the specific issues associated with reference, collection development, acquisitions, cataloging, etc., also have training in personnel management, project management, and/or leadership. In some WLUL departments, we saw evidence of micro-management on the part of the head, and in others we saw a total absence of managerial activity. Both can be destructive of morale and overall effectiveness of the organization. For WLUL to redefine itself and to contribute appropriately to campus life, R2 recommends a new commitment to this aspect of organizational development. Incumbent and prospective managers should be encouraged to seek and gain new skills related to statistical analysis, supervision, and project management.

The fact that many librarians do not have traditional management skills is not surprising—these are not generally part of the MLS curriculum. In addition, we believe that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find and attract successful and skilled middle management librarians from other libraries. In our view, there are not very many of them and those that exist are often satisfied with their jobs and are not interested in moving themselves and their families across the continent.

Accordingly, we believe it is important for academic libraries to establish internal management development programs. If designed well, they can create advancement opportunities and can also address the need for succession planning. Developing new skills can make managers and supervisors more comfortable with processes and tools designed to ensure high quality outputs and both individual and departmental accountability. Finally, these programs can provide an effective stream of middle management personnel to fill current and future leadership roles at WLUL. Such a program can be modeled on those that exist in many corporate environments and might include the following elements:

• Younger and less experienced librarians would be identified as potential future supervisors and managers.
• Identified management candidates would receive broad-based technology and collections training

• Identified management candidates would participate in a program of training that would have them rotate through the various departments in the library.

• Identified management candidates would be encouraged to take leadership and organizational management classes—perhaps elsewhere on campus

• Identified management candidates would be assigned to a mentor within the library who would be responsible for helping the management candidate construct a management education program and a more general career development plan

**Adopt a more hierarchical administrative model**

If WLUL chooses to embrace a stronger management culture, a new management structure will be necessary. We recognize this to be a major cultural shift and do not offer it lightly. But the current approach is clearly not working well. As we see it, a change of this nature will be necessary if the Library is to gain the agility and the responsiveness demanded by the current information environment. R2 suggests that a more hierarchical structure will make it possible to expand decision-making authority, coordinate related decisions, increase consistency of service, and improve campus relations.

**Strengthen the role of Associate University Librarian – expand the number from two to three**

As did the peer reviewers, we think it vital to introduce a divisional structure and an additional organizational tier – specifically AULs with responsibility for well-defined parts of the operation. AULs should be granted the autonomy to make tactical decisions on a regular basis and should have the authority to ensure the conformance of librarians and staff working within their respective divisions. While internal opposition to this concept will surely persist, it is essential to identify and evaluate specific advantages to the organization which seem to us to outstrip perceived disadvantages to individuals.

It is important to recognize that the two AUL positions at Laurier are relatively new. For years the librarians talked about the need to have at least one AUL, but it was just last year that a document was prepared, and agreed to, that outlined how it would be implemented. At that time, the librarians recommended a single AUL with no particular authority and no direct reports. There was some shared recognition that a single AUL was a shaky proposition, and a second one was recently created. Still, however, all librarians were still reporting to the UL and the AULs have poorly defined “coordinator” roles within the organization.

It should be clear by now that R2 believes that the library needs more management thinking and more tools/structures with which to manage. We see a new administrative tier of AULs as a critical step in this direction. AULs are a standard construct in academic libraries. In our experience, it is very rare that an AUL would have so little autonomy as those at WLUL.

The number of AULs in any given library system varies widely, and depends on the many local factors. R2 is aware that there are just two AUL positions at present. It is clear, however, that given the number of distinct functions to be overseen and the specific strengths of the two sitting AULs, R2 recommends a third, as described in more detail, below. It seems to us that
investing in this expanded core management structure will make it possible for the libraries to meet the administrative demands of the current operation as well as the planned expansions.

**Strive for symmetry**
For the sake of equity and managerial consistency, it is important to balance individual workloads. Limit to six or eight the number of direct reports to any one person. The appropriate span of control (how many people report to a given manager or supervisor) should correspond inversely with the complexity of the job being supervised. That is, the more diverse and complex the functions managed, the fewer people most managers can effectively support.

This limit should apply to the University Librarian as well, and the rationale is the same. It may also be worth noting that the most academic library directors on average have 4-6 direct reports. Moving to a divisional model will, without doubt, make the UL role more tenable. As currently configured, it could be extremely difficult to re-fill this critical position with a top-notch administrator. In our opinion, many highly qualified candidates will not be interested in the position as it is currently configured.

It may also be worth noting that by reducing the number of people reporting to the new University Librarian, s/he will have a much greater opportunity to focus outward rather than inward. In some university settings, for example, the Library Director has assumed responsibility for related departments on campus such as the press, information technology, learning services, etc., in addition to the libraries themselves. An internal reorganization like the one we propose could create opportunities like this at WLU. In addition to expanding the pool of potential candidates, a broader role for the UL could also increase administrative efficiencies on campus.

**Assume that the AULs and the UL will form a representative management team of four**
A small management team comprised of AULs and the UL will dramatically increase the libraries’ agility and decisiveness. While the Librarians-in-Council will retain a critical advisory role, we strongly suggest that the new Management Team should be expected to establish priorities and policies, discuss concerns, and make decisions. At the outset, this group’s purview and charge must be absolutely clear.

Within each division, separate departments or work units should be established, each with a department head or supervisor. R2 recommends that WLUL use the new administrative structure for as much decision-making as possible by clarifying the degree of autonomy granted to each hierarchical tier. Primary tasks central to the daily needs of the library should be embedded within permanent divisions/departments, and any parallel or competing committees, etc. should be abandoned.

**Promote the most competent staff members to supervisory positions**
In order to limit the number of direct reports to any one person and to create advancement opportunities for staff, a small number of outstanding contributors with interest in management should be promoted to supervisory positions. Be specific about their areas of responsibility and grant them autonomy to evaluate performance, adjust schedules, and implement new procedures as necessary to meet shared organizational goals.
Establish and staff three operational divisions  
R2 believes that a relatively simple organizational model will support the development of consistent services and would immediately increase accountability across the board. The three divisions that we propose are as follows. Each is described in more detail below:

- Desk Services and Collections Management
- Collection Development, Outreach, and Instruction
- Administrative Services and the Brantford and Milton Campus Libraries

The chart on the next page offers a high-level view of the three divisions and their respective functions and/or areas of responsibility. An Associate University Librarian should be responsible for each division, and granted the authority to manage their respective operations according to the principles outlined above. We are certain that this model will not be adopted precisely as we have suggested. It is simply intended to facilitate conversation and to inspire new ideas. Consider it “grist for the mill”.
Proposed 3-Divisional Model
The boxes below each AUL should be seen as functions rather than positions per se. Especially critical relationships are indicated with dotted lines.
Establish a Desk Services and Collections Management Division

R2 recommends that several traditional library functions should be reconfigured to comprise the Desk Services and Collections Management Division. As the name connotes, we propose ending the distinction between Reference and Circulation desk services, in favor of combined desk services, which would fall within the purview of this division. Fully realized, this division would become the operational “engine” of the library, efficiently handling all the routine requirements of print and digital collections, and walk-in patron services.

All acquisitions and inventory control tasks, as well as all circulation and access workflows would occur here. Most cataloguing and copy cataloguing would also be performed here, along with e-resources acquisitions, access maintenance and troubleshooting. Link resolver and proxy server maintenance, link checking, and related duties would be performed in this division. As now, most of these services will be performed on behalf of all WLUL libraries, regardless of location. With regard to patron services provided in Kitchener, Brantford, and Milton, etc.; strategy, procedures, oversight, and training will be provided from within this primary operational division.

While all of these are familiar functions, R2 believes that they should be organized differently than now, to accommodate current technologies and obvious trends in the industry. The work groups or units that we suggest are these:

- **Circulation and Information Services**
  At WLUL, as in most academic libraries, traditional desk-reference queries are decreasing, there is more and more demand on reference specialists to provide instruction sessions, service to remote users, office visits, in-depth consultations, chat reference, and the outreach services. As well, reference librarians should be increasingly engaged with web page design, new teaching and research technologies, and scholarly communications, etc.

  One way to accommodate the multiple and growing demands on public services librarians is to merge the Circulation and Reference desks into a single Help and Information Desk and staff it with skilled paraprofessionals. This is an approach adopted by many libraries for the following reasons. A single service point provides:

  - A "one stop" shopping experience for users, which what they expect. Most users are unfamiliar with the distinction between the existing service points, as demonstrated by the query logs maintained by each.
  - A more efficient and flexible staffing solution
  - Additional opportunity for teaching, outreach, collaboration, and new initiatives
  - A more efficient use of space
  - Daily opportunities for circulation and reference workers to learn from each other; to better appreciate the complexity of each other's work; and to and gain self-confidence via shared knowledge and skills

A combined service point for reference and access services has a great deal of merit, as demonstrated by libraries that have already made this change. Service points will be
staffed with paraprofessionals, but with policies, procedures, oversight, training, and quality control provided by an MLS Librarian.

It will be critical to focus on training and documentation. In a perfect world all staff members would answer patron queries to the best of their abilities and then hand off requests that were beyond their scope. The reality sometimes suggests that employees either “don’t know what they don’t know” or are reluctant to ask for assistance from another colleague. In order to ensure that patrons receive consistently excellent assistance, a highly structured and rigorous employee training and evaluation program must be implemented.

Another aspect of this approach is that “higher level” help must be readily available. As now, it is not appropriate, for example, to suggest that an undergraduate wait for two or three days to meet with the liaison librarian most familiar with his/her course or discipline. Liaison librarians, while freed from a fixed desk schedule, must collaborate in new ways to provide timely responses to requests for advanced research support.

- **E-Resources Management and Cataloguing**
  From now on, a steadily increasing percentage of the WLUL collection will be virtual. Even at WLUL, professional cataloging efforts are already being drawn towards the digital and away from the physical. Formally aligning the Library’s cataloging expertise with the management of electronic resources will make it easier to bring that expertise to bear on the most heavily used content. Batch record loads should occur in this division, as well as interaction with OCLC and other record vendors and bibliographic utilities. In addition, this department should:

  o Manage the entire workflow for e-resources --- from license negotiation (for locally subscribed resources) through troubleshooting access problems and use statistics
  o Monitor and improve methods and speed of access to electronic content
  o Establish/coordinate policies and standards related to resource description for all aspects of the collection
  o Create and maintain appropriate metadata policies and parameters for all digital collections -- including locally digitized collections and the IR, etc.
  o Continually optimize of library resources as targets for external search engines like Google and WorldCat
  o Oversee cataloging and catalog maintenance for tangible collections which will occur in multiple departments.

To begin, this department should be staffed with two professional librarians and three staff members. The three staff members might come from Acquisitions and/or Cataloguing.

- **Acquisitions, ILL, and Document Delivery**
  As we see it, this is a natural evolution that has already begun. The primary reason is that the decision to buy or borrow has become central to the acquisitions process in most academic libraries. Whether it is article level pay-per-view, short-term eBook leasing, patron-driven acquisitions or traditional buy and borrow transactions, ILL and Acquisitions must come together to establish a coherent and shared approach to creating access. By aligning these two critical functions, we believe that work can be
accomplished as efficiently and seamlessly as possible. As print reserves, ILL borrowing, and general circulation continue to decline, staff in Access Services will have more time to devote to document delivery, inventory control, weeding, database maintenance, and support for walk-in users.

If acquisitions workflows are adapted as described in a subsequent section of the report, fewer staff will be needed to manage them. Staff should be shifted from conventional acquisitions and print serials function to help with the management of electronic resources. At least one cataloguing associate should be assigned to this department, so that the FastCat workflow can be implemented at point of receipt.

- **Inventory Control**
  While e-resources increasingly dominant, the libraries must also retain close control over their physical collections. Shelving, shelf-reading, shifting, weeding, binding, labeling, marking, repairs, etc. will demand a high-level of attention for a long time to come. R2 recommends that a distinct department be created for this purpose.

  In addition to the Collection Coordinator, this department should become home to at least one cataloguing associate, and as many student employees as necessary to keep the collection healthy. The cataloguing associate should have the training and permissions necessary to perform the routine catalogue maintenance (including withdrawals) demanded of these workflows.

  Tangible materials that will still require in-house cataloguing should be routed to this department for final processing, bar-coding, and shelving or distribution to other campus libraries. As well, this department might be the best place to implement various QC reviews, as described above.

**Establish a Collection Development, Outreach, and Instruction Division**
We see this division to be comprised almost entirely of MLS Librarians, who will focus exclusively on outreach, instruction, and research assistance, all without the burden of a fixed desk schedule. The AUL for this division will spearhead a new and clearly defined program with a coherent mission. The goal of the division will be to achieve new levels of visibility and consistency, with a focus on virtual environments. R2 believes that the emphasis should be on outreach and technology-enabled instruction, hence the division name. Given the “traffic” patterns described earlier in this report, it seems obvious that initiatives that improve the libraries’ virtual presence should take precedence over desk reference and walk-in research assistance. As described above, desk services will become the primary responsibility of another division.

**Compel conformance with regard to outreach and instruction**
In the realm of professional librarianship, ideas related to uniform practices and strategies must be introduced with caution. Faculty members should rightfully protect their autonomy and creative/intellectual independence. On the other hand, libraries are first and foremost service organizations, existing to bring value to their host institutions. One of the primary aspects of high-quality service organizations is consistency and predictability of service. It is necessary, therefore, to define an appropriate balance between professional autonomy and organizational consistency. This is sometimes easier said than done, but we encourage WLUL librarians and administrators to wrestle with the concept.
Define and fill a new librarian position dedicated to Collection Development

As we see it, the role of Collection Development in an academic library is absolutely critical. At WLUL, the Head of Collections position is now vacant, but internal support exists for re-introduction of a dedicated position. R2 believes that this position is of paramount importance with regard to the coordination and oversight of the Library’s collections-related decisions.

Furthermore, we think this role should be integrated with the outreach and liaison program, and should be organizationally aligned with public services librarians who will be engaged in selection activities and research support. This is a break with the current WLUL structure, by which collection development and acquisitions have been organizationally combined. In the model proposed by R2, decisions about what to buy will be made in one division (Collection Development, Outreach, and Instruction) and the technical aspects/mechanics of acquiring and creating access will be handled in another (Desk Services and Collections Management).

The Collection Development Librarian should be expected to:

- Allocate the materials budget appropriately. Prepare regular updates and spending reports.
- Support accreditation process/reviews, etc.
- Provide selection support for new programs
- Coordinate collections issues with regard to the anticipated growth in multiple locations
- Coordinate liaison outreach activities with regard to collection development
- Manage vendor relations and make primary vendor decisions – host visiting representatives
- Coordinate and document selection decisions including:
  - CRKN, TUG, and other consortial purchasing decisions
  - E-Resources trials
  - License and price negotiations for locally subscribed resources
  - Approval profiles and profile revisions
  - Journal reviews
  - Develop and monitor a pay-per-view program for scholarly articles (spending and usage, etc.)
  - Patron-driven selection program for monographs
  - E-book platform preferences
- Develop and/or update detailed collections policies including:
  - Project parameters and priorities for the Institutional Repository
  - Subject and non-subject parameters for acquisition and de-acquisition
  - Format preferences
  - Substitution/replacement rules
- A revised gifts policy
- Binding, repair, and replacement policies
- Weeding policies

- Perform routine collection analysis and planning such as:
  - Monitoring usage of print and electronic resources
  - Preservation/Disaster recovery

- Investigate/take advantage of opportunities related to collaborative collection development with other TUG and/or OCUL libraries. Represent WLUL CD needs/interests in TUG and OCUL, etc.

- Develop expertise regarding copyright law and coordinate copyright services within the Library and beyond.

Over time, consider creating additional AUL positions for Archives and Special Collections, the Brantford Campus Library, and perhaps the Milton Campus Library

As always, Archives and Special Collections poses an organizational conundrum – as this department tends to operate as a “library within a library”. Depending on the evolution of WLU’s ASC, it might eventually make sense to promote the Department Head to a fourth AUL position, who would serve on the UL’s Management Team. For the time being, it will be reasonable to have this department report through the Collection Development, Outreach, and Instruction Division. The ASC collection policy should be coordinated with policies for the general collections; and synergies should be strengthened regarding outreach, instruction, and web presence.

Depending on how the Brantford and Milton campuses evolve, and the degree to which discrete management positions will be needed to oversee library services in those locations, it is possible that fifth and even sixth AUL positions should be created. In the immediate, however, R2 recommends that operational oversight for both of these libraries – as well as their respective campus relations – should become the responsibility of the AUL for Administrative Services. That person will represent their needs internally and externally, will coordinate the implementation of new policies and practices, will oversee hiring of new staff to accommodate the growth of the respective user communities, and in general, will ensure that the libraries provide collections and services equal or superior to those offered on the Waterloo campus.

Assign two cataloguing associates to Special Collections and Archives

Since R2 recommends (in a subsequent section of the report) that WLUL revise its approach copy-cataloguing for new monographs, a considerable amount of copy-cataloguing talent will become available for other things. This is an excellent development. As mentioned previously, more time is needed for processing and describing archival collections, creating metadata for digital objects, and copy-cataloguing monographs. To handle these responsibilities, and to assist users at the service desk, R2 recommends redeploying two cataloguing associates to this department. The work they do with regard to resource description should be guided by policies and procedures established in the ERM and Cataloguing Department.
Establish an Administrative Services Division
In addition to administrative and managerial responsibility for the Brantford and Milton Libraries, the AUL for this third division will oversee elements of the libraries’ infrastructure, including:

- Budget and Finance
- Human Resources and Training
- Digital Initiatives – and relationships with campus IT
- Strategic Planning and Project Management
- Reception
- Facilities and Building Security

The AUL for Administrative Services will act on behalf of the UL whenever necessary/appropriate. Again, this will make it possible for the UL to focus outward rather than inward; to work with donors, university administration, and other departments on campus.

Streamline committees and committee processes
Interdepartmental teamwork is an important aspect of the library infrastructure at WLUL. Committees can effectively bridge otherwise disparate functional areas, and bring a range of experts together for successful exploration and collaboration on any number of topics. However, R2 believes that ongoing, mission-critical functions are best performed by permanent operational departments and/or divisions. If primary responsibility for a specific function (like Scholarly Communications) is assigned to an individual or a division, that entity should coordinate participation and communication, but a committee approach to primary library functions is often less than ideal.

Our experience also suggests that committee size should be limited for maximum efficiency. A committee of more than 4 or 5 members is too cumbersome and too expensive for the organization to support. Increased organizational agility requires that WLUL decrease the extent to which “individuals can be involved in everything.” Clearly, this change will necessitate a greater degree of trust in the judgment of colleagues, which may take a concerted effort to cultivate.

As well, a new expectation should be established with regard to committee outcomes. A specific method for evaluating success should be developed in conjunction with each committee’s charge. This in addition to predicted timeframes will inspire a new level of efficiency and accountability.

Have committees report to the management team
Our expectation of the Management Team in this context is that it will meet weekly or at least bi-monthly, and it will publish its agenda and minutes. Committee recommendations, related decisions and/or deferred decisions will be clearly described in the minutes. If indecision occurs because there is a lack of clarity or inadequate information, the management team can ask for additional input from the Librarians-in-Council, but final decisions will rest with the team.

Another idea is for all remaining committees to be “sponsored” by a member of the management team, who can provide oversight and advocacy. In this context, it may also be
useful for committees and their sponsors to develop a series of benchmarks against which committee work can be evaluated.

**Take fuller advantage of student workers**

In most libraries, temporary/student workers provide the most cost-effective solution for accomplishing routine and repetitive tasks. At Laurier, however, this potential resource has been somewhat underutilized. As we see it, more students could be engaged with:

- Marking and labeling print materials
- Periodical check-in (for print issues)
- Link checking for e-resources
- Archival collections processing
- Metadata creation for digital objects
- Scanning/creation of digital objects
- Technical support and troubleshooting for desktop computers, printers, photocopiers
- Routine quality control checks

We are unclear about what the barriers might be, but there should be no concern about staff members being replaced by student employees. As demonstrated throughout this report, there is more than enough work for all employees. Additional student workers will simply increase cost-effectiveness and capacity.

It might also make sense to allow department heads to hire and manage their own student workers, rather than having them all hired and managed from within a single department. The goal would be to facilitate the hiring process - any number of solutions could be explored.
IV. WLUL in the 21st Century

WLUL’s strategic challenge, as expressed by the Vice President: Academic—and by many in the Library—is to transform itself into a “21st century library.” Based on our experience and informed by the professional literature, some important characteristics of 21st century libraries include:

- Migrating rapidly from print to digital as the dominant information format
- Serving many more users online than onsite
- Developing services that reflect user preferences and support user workflows
- Maximizing technology to support self-service remotely and at any hour
- Providing resources and services where students and faculty work
- Adapting continually to a rapidly changing information environment
- Collaborating with campus and consortial partners
- Adopting best business practices to gain efficiencies and economies
- Demonstrating its return on its parent institution’s investment
- Empowering staff to act while assuring accountability

WLUL has already incorporated some of these attributes into its operations and services. But, as noted in the introduction, progress has too often been driven by individual efforts rather than a clearly articulated direction or shared vision of the Library’s future. It is clear from the environmental scan sections in the Library’s self-study that WLUL librarians and staff are well aware of trends in their respective functional areas. But somehow that has not translated fully to strategy and action. There appears to be a hunger for direction throughout the organization. Like the previous external reviewers, R2 suggests that an updated strategic plan and a bold vision for the Library are very much needed. We believe the following realities will prove essential toward transforming the organization.

- Library and learning activity will be increasingly virtual.
- Library resources and services must become integrated into user workflows.
- Radical collaboration with consortial and campus partners will improve services and control costs.

The following recommendations are offered in support of a vision for a 21st century multi-campus library system that reflects expected growth in users and adaptation of services.

Continue to emphasize and improve Web access

A high proportion of our conversations while at WLUL revolved around desk services and face-to-face instruction. While these undeniably play a role in library services, 532,000 walk-ins, 17,000 reference transactions and 125,000 checkouts pale in comparison to 776,000 website visits, 2,500,000 page views, 17,359,000 catalogue and database searches and 435,000 full-text downloads. While the Library’s visible front door remains busy, its virtual front door is far busier and its use growing much more rapidly.

This has occurred even though the Library’s website is far less developed and timely than most people would like. Although the Library Web Advisory Committee has put forth good ideas, decision-making and implementation have until recently been slowed because the site’s initial static-page design has made changes to content difficult. Next year’s upgrade will enable more functionality and more timely updates. The decision to shift more operational responsibility for
the website to Digital Initiatives should enable more timely and focused decision-making. And the release of a version optimized for mobile devices will enable still more convenient access for more users.

In some of the recommendations that follow, R2 suggests even greater reliance on web delivery of services such as online tutorials, stored webcasts, and computer-guided instruction. Demand for these and other unmediated services (e.g., video streaming) will only increase as more remote users seek library tools and resources. To paraphrase one interviewee, WLUL has for too long regarded its web presence as a “sideline” when it is now clear that web traffics is the Library’s mainstream.

**Dedicate 60-70% of librarian and staff hours to e-content and virtual services**

Print circulation at the Waterloo campus declined 24% between FY05 and FY10. ILL lending declined 28.3% in the same period; ILL borrowing 45.9%. (This is similar to other libraries, and is largely due to the rise of electronic resources.) In-house use of tangible materials grew somewhat in FY10, but remains 55.2% lower than in FY04. Also in FY10, 195 face-to-face instruction sessions reached 9,814 users. But in FY 11, the Library introduced a small number (18) of online tutorials. These were viewed 8,505 times (by 7,619 unique users), nearly matching all face-to-face instruction during the first year they were available--and without much promotion. 75% of the Library’s materials budget goes to electronic journals, databases, and eBooks, and that percentage continues to grow.

All of these trends are accelerating. Since WLU’s projected growth will include a high proportion of commuters, demand for virtual services will grow even faster than it otherwise might. (Even now, Brantford could benefit from much larger eBook collections.) Granted, the existing library buildings are busy. There is still demand for face-to-face service. But these visible factors mask a far larger invisible demand. The fact is that the majority of the Library’s users do not walk through the front door. They must be met and served online, with resources optimized for remote self-service. This demands rethinking the role of walk-in service points and even in-person classroom instruction in favor of creative uses of technology.

**Continue to extend and tune the range of discovery capabilities**

WLUL’s adoption of Primo and Primo Central has put powerful new discovery tools at the disposal of users. The ability of these systems to index heterogenous resources and de-duplicate results dramatically simplifies the user’s discovery experience. As noted in other sections of this report, these tools also enable greater use of third-party metadata records, resulting in more efficient back-room workflows.

Even so, there may still be more that can be done to link library resources with other discovery tools. WLUL already enables users to navigate from Google Scholar results to Laurier resources, for instance. But this might be optimized by providing plug-ins that assure articles can be opened through the proxy server. Many libraries have worked to establish similar links to authorized resources from sources such as Wikipedia (at least in some subjects). A survey of where users begin their research might be a good place to start, followed by creation of appropriate library links in the most popular tools. As will be discussed below, WLU’s course management system may be the most important of these other avenues.
Collaborate with faculty to develop Outreach Program parameters and priorities

The outreach strategy most likely to succeed is to identify goals that the library can share with teaching faculty and students. More and more successful libraries are finding those goals at the intersection of librarianship, information technology, and instructional excellence. Rather than trying to “teach” users about library resources per se, librarians should seek to leverage their unique knowledge to increase faculty productivity and to improve learning outcomes for students.

Components of an outreach program should be fixed, boldly promoted, and made uniformly available to every faculty member, in every department. One way to ensure consistent messaging to faculty is to publish a web page specifically designed to meet their needs, an approach that is gaining fairly wide acceptance. Some examples:

- Instructor Support Page, University of Minnesota Libraries
  [http://www.lib.umn.edu/instruction/instructorsupport](http://www.lib.umn.edu/instruction/instructorsupport)

- Instructional Services for Faculty, University of Wisconsin Libraries
  [http://www.library.wisc.edu/inst-services/#overview](http://www.library.wisc.edu/inst-services/#overview)

- Faculty Support, University of Buffalo Libraries
  [http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/blog/faculty/](http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/blog/faculty/)

- Faculty Support, Wright State University Libraries
  [http://guides.libraries.wright.edu/faculty-support](http://guides.libraries.wright.edu/faculty-support)

While the WLUL website does include an ‘Information and Services’ page for faculty, it could be developed much more fully to reflect recent changes in teaching and learning, and in library support for faculty members.

Continue refreshing and expanding WLUL’s approach to instruction

As many at WLUL are aware, “bibliographic” or library instruction continues to evolve in scope and sophistication. A short list of “21st century literacies” demonstrates how this discipline is changing. WLUL might consider reinvigorating its approach to instruction by more deliberate and consistent implementation of some of these concepts:

4. **Information Literacy**: Ability to find, evaluate, organize and use information to inform and solve problems

5. **Media Literacy**: Ability to question, analyze, interpret, evaluate and create media messages.

6. **Visual Literacy**: Ability to understand and produce visual messages

7. **Digital Literacy**: Ability to use digital technology, communications tools or networks to locate, evaluate, use and create information

8. **Statistical Literacy**: Ability to analyze and understand data to produce meaningful information
Experiment with new instructional methodologies and strategies
Each librarian at WLUL currently approaches instruction in his or her own way. Face-to-face instruction sessions occasionally take place as part of a specific course on campus, but most of the 200 or so sessions per year take place in the Library. Most of these use the “teacher as transmitter” model of instruction, which has strengths but also some limitations. Perhaps some of the following alternative tactics are already in use, but if not they may be worth considering:

- In-class or online interactive brainstorming
- Opportunities for students to interact with each other during class time
- Assign a research problem before class, and have teams demonstrate their own solutions. Evaluate solutions interactively.
- Computer-managed instruction, whereby a computer program provides learning objectives, learning resources, and assessment of learner performance.
- Serious gaming: programming and game design in support of learning objectives
- Creative integration of mobile devices in the classroom

Char Booth, is the Instruction Services Manager and E-Learning Librarian at the Claremont Colleges Library. Just this year, she published a book entitled, Reflective Teaching, Effective Learning: Instructional Literacy for Library Educators, which we recommend.

Measure the outcomes of instruction
As with all other aspects of the library endeavor, instructional effectiveness should be measured and learning outcomes should be assessed. Data should be collected with regard to how instruction contributes to students’ overall educational success and which factors characterize that success. As described by Julien and Boon in 2004, performance measures along these lines can provide the basis on which to advance instruction toward identifiable, positive outcomes. An emphasis on such outcomes is essential if librarians will continue to justify devoting such significant institutional resources to instructional activities. ([http://www.ualberta.ca/~hjulien/Julien_Boon_LISR_2004.pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/~hjulien/Julien_Boon_LISR_2004.pdf))

Make outreach, instruction, and liaison services consistent across all disciplines
At present, there is a great deal of variation in how outreach services are delivered. Interviews with faculty members confirmed the desire for a consistent approach across all disciplines and all courses. A more standardized model for instruction and liaison work should include:

- Standardized minimum expectations
- Named and pictured liaison on every D2L course page
- Office hours and contact details
- Response to user questions within 24 hours
- Subject librarians present at all departmental meetings
- Written description of departmental library rep responsibilities
- Meeting faculty expectations for quality of in-classroom teaching

Increase the number and variety of online tutorials
Several librarians from the Technology in Instruction committee, led by the Instructional Technology Librarian, have assembled 18 online tutorials that cover topics ranging from “Finding Electronic Books” and “Finding Peer-Reviewed Articles” to “Requesting Interlibrary Loans” and “Connecting to Library Resources Using Google Scholar.” In the first year that these screencasts were available, they were viewed 8,505 times by 7,619 unique users. This uptake occurred
without significant promotion, and despite the fact that the tutorials are somewhat difficult to find. During FY10, face-to-face instruction sessions reached 9,814 users.

The potential seems very clear. The web culture has conditioned users to expect and prefer self-service for most transactions, and context-sensitive online instruction is an excellent complement to self-service. WLUL should expand its efforts substantially in this area, developing more general-interest tutorials but also subject-specific and resource-specific versions. They should be highlighted on the Library’s web site and linked from D2L course pages when appropriate. A concerted communication program should be adopted to make students and faculty aware of them.

While screencasts and tutorials can be time-consuming to create and maintain, the ‘Captivate’ software now in use helps a great deal. Care should be taken to select topics and resources—and to develop consistent approaches— that will assure as long a useful life as possible. Standards and templates will be needed to assure consistency and effectiveness. Perhaps resource experts create outlines or scripts, which are subsequently implemented by a smaller group who become expert in sequencing, narration, etc. All of this skill development and content creation will take time and investment. But the potential use is very high, and will likely grow as the student population and campuses grow.

**Invest in video-conferencing, webinars and recording equipment to increase the yield of instruction sessions**

WLUL has a number of librarians who are passionate about teaching library resources and information literacy. But their reach is necessarily limited. In FY10, 195 library presentations to groups were conducted, reaching 9,814 participants. That number is impressive, and also represents enormous growth over the past five years. (In FY05, 56 sessions reached 3,455 users.) R2 suggests that the Library could dramatically improve the yield of these sessions by both broadcasting them simultaneously and recording them for subsequent viewing on the Library’s website.

Video-conferencing would enable users at Kitchener and Brantford, for instance, to participate in a session conducted at Waterloo. As Brantford grows and if Milton comes online, this will be even more useful. Conversely, a librarian at Brantford could offer a session that users in Waterloo could join. Recording the session would allow users with schedule conflicts to view it later. Webcasting, using a tool such as Adobe Connect, would enable screen-sharing and audio participation by anyone with a web connection. These tools are also configured for recording, which again would allow more users to benefit at their convenience—without the Library incurring any additional effort.

Over time, these tools will probably begin to change instruction. Web-based videos and tutorials tend to be much shorter (3-5 minutes) and modular. This may require some rethinking—and in fact may lead to designing instruction for web delivery in a very different manner. But in the short term, the number of participants per session could be increased by making instruction sessions available far beyond the scheduled face-to-face session.

In a related vein, R2 also recommends that WLUL deploy high-quality video-conferencing capability for library staff. This should include capability for multiple-site video meetings among librarians and staff at all locations. While the initial implementation may be expensive, over time it will save thousands of hours in travel time, and will encourage cross-system communication.
Optimize the Library’s presence in MyLearningSpace

A great deal of undergraduate and faculty work revolve around MyLearningSpace, WLUL’s implementation of the Desire2Learn course management system. Faculty would like to manage electronic reserves here, for instance, and integration of D2L and ARES is well underway. But there is a great deal more that could be done to put Library resources into the course-level workflows in MyLearningSpace.

At minimum, every course in D2L should have a basic Library page, reminding users that resources are available to support their coursework. The Library liaison for that subject should be named, pictured, and details about availability posted. In most cases, a list of discipline-related resources should be presented, along with links to relevant tutorials and screencasts. Ideally, a list of Library resources customized for that particular class would be developed and shown.

Much of the groundwork has already been done. The WLUL website features a list of dozens of Subject Guides or Class Guides, many of which already include the necessary information. What’s needed is to have annotations and links to those subject guides appear directly in D2L for each individual course. Many libraries have done this, and in doing so have made students more efficient and more aware of the Library’s value.

Even a cursory look at the existing Subject/Class Guides, however, discloses enormous variability in scope and approach. There is a real need to develop a more consistent framework and specifications for content and navigation. ClassGuides should look more or less the same for every class, even though the specific resources and research approaches highlighted may vary. The Drupal Views tool used to build these discovery pages provides some structural similarities, but more consistency in content and design are needed. We suggest a template, including mandated elements, be devised and implemented.

A word about tools and sharing of these workloads. As we understand it, both University of Waterloo and Guelph use a different software package called LibGuides. The Scholar’s Portal contains a large library of subject guides and course guides built using LibGuides. These are available for sharing and adaptation, but require the borrowing library to have LibGuides. Although DrupalViews, the tool used at WLUL, works perfectly well, it may be worth considering a move to LibGuides to enable sharing of expertise and content.

There is also one technical problem with D2L that must be addressed. At present, many SFX URLs for electronic resources exceed the maximum field length supported by D2L. This makes it impossible to link directly from MyLearningSpace to the full-text for some resources. We urge WLUL to work with D2L (and other libraries, as this problem is not unique to WLUL) to rectify this. SFX URLs do tend to be long, because they carry necessary citation information. It is unlikely that those can be changed. If it proves impossible to change the field length in D2L, WLUL might consider use of a URL shortener, but that will impose extra maintenance and potentially introduce errors. The goal is to enable students to link from the course management system to a full-text resource. This should be a core function of that system, and working with D2L to fix this problem is the preferred solution.
For graduate students, focus on research effectiveness and productivity

This interpretation of the Library’s role is another example of the Library reaching user workflows. In general, as we understand it, graduate students are confident they can find relevant information, but they are not as efficient as they could be with the rest of the process. One suggestion was that graduate students would be very receptive to instruction that focuses on ‘Research Workflows’ or ‘Tools for Managing Large Research Projects.’ These techniques would help assure that grant funds are spent effectively. Finding resources is less important than working efficiently with information. This idea would require some additional development and input, but also tallies with a profession-wide recognition that ‘enhancing faculty productivity’ should be a core library competency.

Explore data support and data curation services for faculty

The raw materials on which faculty research is based are growing in variety and complexity. On most campuses, there is an increasing need to collect and archives research data sets. These can take many forms: survey questions and results, geo-spatial data, interview recordings or transcripts, lecture notes and media, spatial or numeric data.

Curation of research data, and in some cases the systems that access that data, is a largely unaddressed problem in most institutions. The related tasks include some elements of an institutional repository, some of disciplinary repositories, and some elements of University Archives. There is an emerging need to capture, organize, preserve, and create access to research data. While it is not entirely clear what a library’s role should be in relation to data curation, it is certainly a way to support faculty workflows. We suggest that WLUL undertake an assessment of needs and capabilities, by bringing together staff from Scholars Commons, Archives, faculty and graduate students engaged in research.

Continue to develop digital publishing and scholarly communication services

WLUL’s recent implementation of the BePress Digital Commons platform is an exciting development. It is clear that a great deal of effort and creativity have gone into the launch of Scholars Commons@Laurier. More than 800 electronic theses and dissertations have been imported and described. A good working relationship with Archives has been established. Outreach to faculty has met with positive response. The Library has collaborated closely with the Laurier Press to digitize and make available Canadian Military History and the library has made The Cord’s digital content accessible.

This is another good example of finding a new and valuable role for the Library in supporting faculty, students, and the University as a whole. Although this institutional repository is still in its early stages, it is clear that much more can be done. Open Access articles by WLU faculty are being identified, copyrights investigated, and metadata created. Image collections now hosted at Our Ontario might be considered for local hosting as funding pressures threaten Our Ontario’s continued viability. A lower-cost alternative to the ARTStor shared shelf is needed.

Some initiatives may prove more possible than others. Digital Commons was designed primarily to support text-based content, and its capabilities to handle images need to be understood. More expertise in copyright and a role in communicating copyright responsibilities may need to be developed. But overall, this is clearly an area of growth for the Library, and continued attention and resources should be made available for its development.
Establish a campus-wide role for the Library in copyright expertise
Copyright expertise is an area where the Library could make significant contributions to the campus community, if time can be carved out to develop a program. Because of its work with electronic reserves, licensing of electronic resources, electronic theses & dissertations, and hosting of Open Access articles by faculty members, librarians at WLU have experience with many facets of copyright. Librarians already have some role in educating faculty and administrators about rights clearance for classroom use of electronic resources and videos. On most campuses, copyright is an under-developed role. But there is typically also a great need to understand and abide by laws and best practices. This role combines well with Scholarly Communication but also with Reserves and ILL. Policies need to be written, and a strategy developed to assure that the Library and University comply with copyright law. This is another instance of projecting Library value into user workflows, and we urge WLUL to create the capacity to address this area, even if it requires de-emphasizing others.

Consider re-aligning the Library and Learning Services
In some respects, the emergence of Learning Services as a distinct entity occurred partly because the Library itself did not embrace information literacy and student learning outcomes as early and effectively as it might have. In relatively short order, Learning Services has established relationships with faculty and become part of Curriculum Development and other key groups. Curriculum development, resource selection and course-level support are areas where the Library could have a bigger role, and could perhaps benefit from a closer relationship with Learning Services. Some of that already exists (e.g., Assignment Planner), but much more could be done.

This will require some adjustments on both sides, but in particular a recognition that Learning Services has developed a successful program—and that the Library has something to learn from them. And the Library has skills to contribute. Implementation of the previous recommendations regarding representation of library resources and services in D2L might be a good place to begin to foster more collaboration. It also might make sense to align the two groups organizationally.

Consider closer alignment of Library and ICT
The evolution from a building-based collection toward a much larger multi-campus system will require some fundamental changes in priorities and operations. As R2 has already suggested, most of the growth in Library services will require a much more integrated orientation to technology and content, whether that content is developed locally, licensed or purchased. Web delivery of services and content, integration with D2L, greater collaboration within TUG, support for the institutional repository, video and web conferencing—all of these building blocks for the 21st century library rely heavily (and increasingly) on technology.

Interruptions of access to high-demand journals, databases, and eBook packages are noticed quickly and widely. During our visit, for instance, the thousands of resources from ProQuest were inaccessible via the proxy server. A change in IP ranges at Brantford inadvertently cut off many users because those IP ranges had not been communicated to the Library or the vendors—whose licenses are based around IP ranges. Continued collaboration and communication are vital at this intersection between technology and content.

Sometimes the respective responsibilities aren’t entirely clear to WLU personnel, but they are completely opaque to users. Not surprisingly, the recent consolidation of Library IT functions
into a centralized ICT operation has generated additional uncertainty. The Service Level Agreement (SLA) is still being worked out, and in general there appears to be support for ICT handling hardware and infrastructure issues, with the Library handling access and content-related problems. An SLA that specifies immediate response to e-access problems will help minimize interruptions to users.

All of this suggests closer consideration of an organizational model that combines oversight of and strategy for IT and Library functions in a single position. Many at WLUL are familiar with this model, since it is already in place at Guelph and at the University of Toronto. R2 has seen variations of this approach at a number of libraries in the US, most recently at Colorado State. While the CIO model cannot work everywhere, we suggest that for the long term, it may be a good fit at WLUL, given the emphasis on our recommendations to prioritize the Library’s virtual front door, digital content, and radical collaboration. The integration of content and delivery in services calls for a similar integration of content and delivery in the organization.

While the potential benefits are clear, there are possible downsides as well. If, for example, a non-librarian is hired into the role of WLUL CIO, it could be difficult for the libraries’ agenda to receive the attention it needs and deserves. In this context, the library itself must develop a stronger identity, a clearer mission, higher-demand services, and greater organizational coherence around strategic priorities. To achieve this, R2 believes a robust second tier of library administrators (AULs) will be essential. This idea is described in more detail below.

**Consider consolidating the Information and Circulation desks at Waterloo**

We recognize that Information Desk staffing and scheduling are hot-button issues at WLUL. There are very strong feelings within the Library about the value of face-to-face reference transactions, and equally strong feelings that in-depth reference interviews are better handled by appointment. WLUL has done an excellent job of combining para-professional and librarian hours to cover the desk, and has extended its hours to 9PM on most nights. But by all accounts, many of the 17,000 ‘reference’ transactions that occurred last year involved simple directional questions or straightforward ready-reference questions. Many more transactions involved issues with printers, access to electronic resources, and other practical problems.

Many of R2’s other recommendations, especially those in support of virtual users and integration of library resources with D2L, will require more time from librarians. To create capacity for those efforts, it will be necessary to shift librarian (and to some degree staff) time and attention away from desk services. This suggests that a different approach to service desks may be needed.

We recommend that WLUL consider combining the Information and Circulation desks at Waterloo into a single service point. Further, we recommend that librarians no longer serve scheduled shifts on the desk. Instead, students and para-professionals in Access Services—supplemented with additional student and para-professional hours—can handle directional questions and first-level reference questions, with referrals to librarians for difficult questions or research support. Extra student hours and training might be usefully focused on support for printers and first-level access problems. On busy shifts, a dedicated para-professional would supplement Access Services staff.

Before taking up this issue in earnest, we urge everyone to read the chapter on ‘The Mommy Model of Service’ [http://docushare.lib.rochester.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Version-
44507/chapter_ten.pdf in the University of Rochester’s ‘Studying Students.’ It offers a compelling description of the differing service expectations held by librarians and undergraduates. Of particular interest is Rochester’s finding that “students do not necessarily know that reference and circulation are two different desks, designed for different purposes. They expect that anyone behind any desk will be receptive to a variety of requests.” In other words, they are looking for “a universal point of service, a physical Google.”

This is difficult for many of us to accept. Yet when Rochester and other libraries have consolidated service points and functions – and in some cases even embellished them with the IT help desk – satisfaction has resulted for both the library and the users. As uncomfortable as this discussion may be, we suggest it is worth having.

**Explore ‘radical collaboration’ with TUG partners**

Although there are doubtless many frustrations, collaboration within TUG and OCUL have served WLUL extremely well. To an outsider’s eye, there are many benefits from sharing an integrated library system in Voyager, sharing a discovery layer in Primo, and a link resolver (SFX) via Scholars’ Portal. Within TUG, all three libraries now use the D2L course management system, Relais for ILL, and ARES for electronic reserves.

While shared systems enable sharing of workloads and expertise, TUG members enjoy benefits beyond a number common automation platforms. Print resources circulated daily among all three libraries and their respective branches. Circulation policies have been harmonized. The Annex at Guelph provides remote storage for TUG members, and a last-copy policy (to minimize duplication of low-use material) was established in 2006.

In short, TUG has largely adhered to its stated Service Principles:

- Easy access to each other’s collections and services
- User-friendly desktop access to networked information on campus, in the workplace and from home
- Client-centred training services

We also found TUG’s Business Principles of interest. A partial list includes:

- Prepare development plans to deliver agreed upon levels of service
- Have a clear and agreed concept of our core business
- Optimize human and financial resource investment through sharing common technical and administrative infrastructure, when feasible
- Maintain a healthy balance between collaboration and independence
- Define models for life cycle investment costs to sustain the infrastructure
- Develop and maintain appropriate cost-sharing models

While we recognize that the actual experience of collaboration often falls short of its intentions, TUG strikes us as unusually well-suited for bolder experiments in shared services, resources, and infrastructure. The libraries reside in a relatively compact geographic area. Three mid-sized libraries and their branches offer sufficient scale to reap benefits, but a small enough group to administer. There is already long experience with working together. Current conditions in the
economy, changes in user preference and information delivery, advances in technology, and other factors make deeper collaboration attractive.

For these reasons, R2 suggests that WLUL initiate discussions within the group of TUG executives to explore whether taking collaboration to a higher level is of interest. It will be especially important to factor in the massive growth that WLU expects, and to determine whether similar plans are being developed at Waterloo or Guelph.

There are numerous topics that appear ripe for consideration. Shared workloads for some e-resources maintenance tasks already exist, but more could be done. Shared development of online tutorials or webcasts might work for some disciplines or resources. A common platform for building and maintaining class guides and subject guides could allow templates and sharing. No doubt there are many other ideas.

In our view, this may be an especially good time to tackle issues related to shared print collections. The Annex is reportedly close to full, as are most of WLUL’s stacks. It seems likely that Guelph and UW are experiencing similar space problems. At the same time, more than half of WLUL’s print monographs have never circulated. While eBooks, continuing conversion to e-journals, patron-driven acquisitions and increasingly electronic government documents will begin to reduce the number of tangible items arriving, a more immediate solution is called for. Use of print continues to diminish, and WLUL needs to accommodate more study space, an expanded information commons, and over time, a return of Learning Services to the Library building. There are several interesting possibilities to consider regarding shared print:

- **Implement a single TUG approval plan for print books.** TUG has already adopted a shared ‘last copy’ program, which minimizes duplication of print titles stored in the Annex. A shared approval plan would in effect be a shared ‘first copy’ plan, minimizing duplication of new content. A ‘first copy’ policy could be extended to many firm ordered titles as well; e.g., if one library already owns a title or has it on order, the other libraries would forgo the order, except for specified categories of high-demand titles. Had such a policy been in place in FY11, WLUL would have purchased 1,500 fewer books. Savings from forgone purchases could be dedicated to improved courier service or to a fund supporting shared patron-driven eBook rentals.

- **Implement a shared approach to individually purchased eBooks.** eBooks are even better suited to sharing than are print books. For publisher and aggregator packages and large historical digitized collections such as Early English Books Online, sharing is already in place through OCUL and CRKN packages. But for eBooks purchased individually, WLUL has just begun an approval plan and firm ordering through YBP. As with print approval and firm orders, shared multi-user licenses would reduce the number of individual transactions and overall expenditures. Even more importantly, those eBooks can ultimately be used at all the campuses of WLUL, UW and Guelph—without physical objects having to be shipped back and forth.

- **Accelerate deselection and shared management of print books.** WLUL is currently in the midst of a sizable deselection project, seeking to withdraw low/no-circulation titles from its stacks. (As noted elsewhere in this report, capacity constraints related to record maintenance are slowing progress; this can be addressed separately.) Deselection decisions include not only use data, but whether copies are held by one of the other
TUG libraries. In order to save every library the effort of assembling the necessary information, a single TUG deselection project might make sense. This would be a first step in considering the shared collection as a single whole. Tools such as Sustainable Collection Services (full disclosure: this is an R2 sister company) or the GIST Gifts and Deselection Manager could enable identification of overlap, and provide the necessary deselection metadata in a convenient form. A joint approach would also assure that space savings are distributed equitably across TUG.

- **Reconceive an expanded Annex as the TUG distribution centre.** The Annex already serves as a distribution centre for low-use last copies. Books and journal are shipped and received multiple times a day, though at present only a small portion of Annex resources circulate. It is interesting to consider an extension of this idea, in which all individual collections of tangible material are consolidated in an expanded Annex. Each individual library or branch would retain a small core collection on campus, but the bulk of the three combined collections would be consolidated in the Annex, where they would be largely de-duplicated.

The Annex facility would be optimized for article scanning (for journals) and 24-hour delivery of books to all branches in the TUG system. This might include direct delivery to faculty offices. Digitization and preservation initiatives could be organized and supported centrally, with costs shared across all three libraries. Some duplication would be necessary to assure timely service, and to separate archival copies from service copies if wanted.

There would be numerous logistical and management challenges to face; this is a very different way of thinking about managing library collections. But it offers the possibility of reclaiming large portions of library space for other uses while maintaining good service on low-use print materials. There may even be some cost savings, though they are not likely to be immediate, as investment will be needed to expand the facility, set up the necessary infrastructure, and improve delivery. But all of these factors make this an option worth exploring.

- **Consider a TUG collaborative collections and technical services organization.** A centrally-housed and managed print collection (and, for that matter, shared responsibility for e-resources management) suggest that content selection, print acquisition and cataloguing might be managed by a single TUG staff. Rather than three separate operations performing similar tasks—often on the same resources—a single centralized group could perform these functions on behalf of the whole. At the most radical end of the spectrum, TUG might consider adopting a group-wide content budget that supports a shared collection (with, of course, a portion set aside for local purchasing). Here again, there are many management challenges. Would physical centralization be necessary? What entity would employ the central staff? Etc. But the potential benefits may be worth dealing with some of those difficult issues.

The interesting strategic question is whether the collection development and management functions represent a competitive distinction among the three libraries. A truly shared collection means that all three institutions provide essentially the same resources to their users. But to some degree this is already happening, given widespread reliance on resources in CRKN and OCUL package deals for e-resources. On the print side, the effort expended in careful selection
over decades has resulted in use of fewer than half the selected titles. Perhaps it is more effective to provide the widest possible array of content, and focus more on curating the discovery layer to help connect users with those resources.

If TUG members moved in this direction, the respective libraries would need to distinguish themselves in other ways, such as support for teaching and learning, quality of web-based services, copyright and digital publishing expertise, quality and availability of instruction, etc. These strike us as much more fruitful areas for competition. By treating collection management as an element of shared infrastructure, more effort can be directed toward users.
V. **Electronic Resources: The Invisible Mainstream**

In FY11, the Library put at the disposal of its users 27,648 unique e-journals and 268 databases, mostly representing full-text content. These were supplemented by more than 228,223 eBooks, and thousands of electronic government documents. These resources constituted more than 75% of the Libraries’ $2.8 million materials expenditures, a share that continues to grow. In the press of daily work, it’s easy to forget just how much richer and more convenient library resources are today than ten years ago. This is why management of e-resources is so critical to user satisfaction. In FY11, users downloaded 435,107 full-text resources via SFX alone. This contrasts with 125,000 check-outs of tangible items (books, DVDs, etc.)

Like most libraries, WLUL is struggling to come to terms with its procedures, systems, and staffing for electronic resources. eBooks in particular are poised to grow substantially in coming years, and the variety of business and access models pose special challenges. User demand for electronic will continue to grow, especially as Brantford and Milton expand. The Library supports multiple discovery pathways, enabling users to reach electronic content through Voyager, Primo, A-Z lists, SFX links, resource pages, and to some degree subject guides and class guides. E-resources management is further complicated by some significant gaps in systems capability. It is clear that e-resources represent a major workload, both in scale and in importance to users.

But WLUL also benefits immensely from Canada-wide and province-wide support for e-resources. 50% of the Library’s electronic resources budget goes to CRKN deals. Another 25% goes to OCUL deals. Only the remaining 25% requires direct negotiation and licensing with providers. The CRKN and OCUL deals are immense time savers. CRKN’s Negotiating Resource Team (NRT) works with publishers and vendors to shape business terms and license content. CRKN then presents offers to individual libraries. The libraries are relieved of the need to gather information, negotiate terms, and finalize licenses; they simply accept or decline offers. Similarly, OCUL runs a team under its Projects Office (now run by WLUL’s former Head of Collections) that negotiates and licenses eBook and database content. Through Scholars Portal, OCUL also hosts and archives an enormous amount of licensed content. TUG partners share the cataloguing workload to some degree, as when UW handles Springer eBooks, Guelph handles JSTOR titles, and WLU handles Duke University Press.

At present, we estimate that 4-5 FTE’s (full-time equivalents) are dedicated to the management of commercial e-resources; this includes approximately 2-3 librarians and 2-3 staff members. This estimate includes the time of the Head of Collections, Electronic Resources Librarian, Acquisitions Manager, librarians on the Information Resources (IR) Committee, Serials Associates, Acquisitions Associates, Cataloguing Librarian, Systems staff (for proxy and Web support), and Information Desk staff involved in trouble-shooting access problems. This substantial distributed effort poses some challenges, but overall works reasonably well. But staff hours dedicated to e-resources still lag those spent on the much smaller base of print/tangible resources. Some rebalancing is in order. There is also insufficient back-up and redundancy in some key functions.

The set of tools for managing e-resources is extensive, but still contains some gaps. At various points in the process, all of the following are used:

- SFX 4 (link maintenance, title activation, holdings adjustment, generate A-Z list for journals)
- Voyager (link maintenance, cataloguing, financial data, bulk import, discovery)
- Drupal (generate resource pages, A-Z list for databases)
- EZ Proxy (to enable off-campus access)
- Primo (discovery, direct indexing of some resources, e.g. Springer eBooks)
• Excel (financial management, package tracking, accrual adjustments, wish list, contact/usage)
• Access (package tracking, usage statistics)
• U-Stat (usage statistics)
• OUR/LIM (OCUL-based rights and license tracking that feed SFX)
• The ejournals@wlu.ca email list
• Print files (for originals of signed licenses, etc.)
• MARCit! records for eBooks and e-journals (third-party cataloguing)
• Publisher/Provider MARC record files for eBooks (cataloguing, load to Primo)
• Probably others we’ve missed

Each of these tools has been implemented to solve a problem. The massive E-Resources tracking spreadsheet managed by the Acquisitions Manager is necessary in part because no combination of systems can provide the necessary information in a convenient form. WLUL’s 2008 move to accrual accounting (mandated by the university) creates additional tracking and allocation challenges. Usage statistics and cost-per-use data have to date been gathered manually, but with insufficient time to compile and analyze. The imminent implementation of SUSHI (an automated harvesting protocol for usage data) will help with gathering, but analytics will require more time.

Given the number of people, processes and systems involved, e-resources management is clearly a complex and multi-faceted task. An “Electronic Resource Checklist” lays out the steps very clearly:

• Product information
• PO and Invoice information
• Local Management
• Ordering & Licensing information
• License Access Details
• Voyager Details
• Web Site Management

Access problems, of course, can potentially arise at any of these points, but in practice most often originate from proxy configuration issues, bad SFX data, or vendor drop-off.

Overall, our impression is that WLUL has made this complex array of systems and processes work well on behalf of users. Congratulations are in order—this is no small feat. But there is also clearly room for simplification, streamlining, and perhaps a modest increase in staffing. Electronic resources are the core of WLUL’s collections and services, and their effective support needs to be a priority. Some recommendations in this vein follow.

Recognize electronic resources as the Library’s mainstream workflow
This sounds obvious but can be difficult to achieve. Unlike tangible resources, which provide visible clues as to workloads, electronic resources are invisible. In fact, as we have shown above, electronic journals, databases, and eBooks constitute an invisible, rapidly growing mainstream. More than 75% of the Library’s materials budget is dedicated to them. They are the Library resources in highest demand by users. Optimization of access and maintenance should be a top priority in all workflow steps from resource identification to access. It would be reasonable to expect that 50% of all Library staff hours be dedicated to their care and feeding. While this may not be possible in the immediate, it is clear that local staffing patterns should better reflect the primacy of e-resources for the user community.
Establish a dedicated E-Resources Management & Description department
As described above, responsibility for e-resources is widely dispersed throughout WLUL. While this allows many people to be involved, it limits the development of focus and expertise. Ultimately, e-resources will be part of everyone’s work. But in the near term, R2 suggests that the formation of a discrete department and a dedicated staff would reinforce the primacy of this work. In particular, because so much bulk importing and record management is involved, we suggest that a combination of e-resources management and cataloguing functions would be useful. This recommendation is described more fully in the Organizational Culture and Structure section.

In important respects, e-resources management is really the dominant feature of all WLUL collection development activities. Coordination of decisions through the Information Resources committee, budget allocations, vendor relations and licensing (for locally-subscribed resources), cost and usage analysis – these activities will comprise the core of any new Collections position. Print resources represent a smaller, less-used portion of the workload, and related activities need to be brought into proportion with that difficult fact. The departure of the Head of Collections opens up an opportunity to rebalance the description for that position.

A dedicated E-Resources group should also include sufficient capacity to address tasks that currently do not receive enough attention. At the top of this list is creation of a data-driven renewals process. That will require time to compile usage data, match it with cost data, and shape recommendations for renewal or cancellation based on cost per use and other quantitative elements.

Make strategic decisions about e-resource discovery and access
The goal for most contemporary researchers is to reach full-text content online with the fewest clicks possible. Speed of access and convenience are critical. WLUL provides numerous pathways to electronic content:

- Links from MARC records in Voyager
- A-Z list for e-journals (generated from SFX)
- A-Z list and subject lists for databases and some eBook packages
- Article-level access via Article Linker (SFX)
- Links from Subject Guides and Class Guides
- Links from the Primo discovery layer

While this array of possibilities offers maximum flexibility for users, it also adds complexity. Not every resource is available through every path. Some resources, such as Springer eBooks and Hathi Trust public domain titles, are discoverable only through Primo and not via Voyager. Other resources are discoverable through both. Not surprisingly, some WLUL users report that the existing options and modes of access are confusing.

All of these access paths must be maintained. Assuring timely, accurate, and comprehensive access through so many channels requires URL and holdings updates to multiple places. Because coverage information and links are so dynamic, this work can never be considered completely finished. Links and access need to be checked regularly. In addition to updating links, holdings, proxy strings and other data in user-facing access paths, WLUL’s staff tools (Excel spreadsheets, Access databases) must also be kept up to date. All of this represents an enormous workload,
replete with redundant tasks and many opportunities to introduce errors—despite the best efforts of staff.

R2 recommends that WLUL consider some serious simplification here. While some of this complexity may be unavoidable, a few key decisions could dramatically improve the situation by reducing the number of access paths maintained. For instance, most users reach e-journal content via a citation (and then through the SFX link resolver) or via an A-Z or subject list. In our experience, discovery of e-journal content through a MARC cataloguing record occurs in a miniscule number of cases. This might suggest that creation of e-journal catalog records be abandoned in favor of other access paths, eliminating both confusion and maintenance work.

But before making any such decision, R2 suggests that WLUL gather data on how users reach e-resources, and deliberately decide how best to shape the discovery experience. The goal should be to focus on those access paths most used by patrons, and to reduce the number of options. This will allow instruction to focus on a smaller set of preferred pathways, and enable more time for maintenance on those same pathways. For example, rely primarily on Primo, SFX, A-Z lists, and MyLearningSpace course guides for discovery. Eliminate e-journal records from Voyager. Load eBook records only to Primo; don’t add these to Voyager as well.

R2 recognizes that this approach has drawbacks. Journal access will be split, with records for print holdings in Voyager and information on e-journals only available through other sources. It undermines the idea that the online catalog is the authoritative and comprehensive source of access information. It flies in the face of historical cataloging practice, but it will provide clear strategies for finding both electronic and print. WLUL has already addressed this concern by providing information about locating print journal on the A-Z e-journal search page; see the screen capture below.
Perhaps these particular suggestions are wrong. But we strongly believe that the underlying point is valid. WLUL can benefit both users and staff by deliberately narrowing and deepening the options for finding e-content. We urge a concerted effort in this direction.

Stop entering financial data for e-resources into Voyager
As we understand it, all budgetary and financial management for electronic resources occurs via the E-Resources Tracking spreadsheet and the University’s Banner accounting system. Entry of this data into Voyager is an additional legacy task that adds no value. It is done primarily because the ILS acquisitions module has historically been the locus of this activity. But the complexities of accrual-based accounting, large-scale interdisciplinary packages of resources, and the need for additional data elements have outstripped Voyager’s capabilities. Financial details are handled in Excel, funding updates are entered directly into Banner, and even the ‘record of authority’ for e-resources resides in SFX, not in Voyager. Cognos reports that are based on Voyager’s database tables already have to be manually tweaked for e-resources statistics. All in all, we cannot see a downside to eliminating use of Voyager for these processes.

Further streamlining of financial processes could be accomplished by adapting the Banner ‘feeder’ program recently implemented for US monographs. This program enables automated upload of financial data to Banner from other sources. While it draws from Voyager for monographs data, it could draw directly from the E-Resources tracking spreadsheet for that data. Given the amount of money managed through this stream, E-Resources should be next in line for this automated upload treatment.

Consider upgrade of Serials Associates positions
While this is somewhat out of R2’s scope, we feel compelled to mention it. To a much greater degree than other areas, the serials associates have made the transition from print-related work to e-related work. Although both remain responsible for check-in and payments for print, 75% of their time is now dedicated to title maintenance, holdings maintenance, access verification, and activation of resources in SFX. The 104 active targets in SFX represent tens of thousands of e-resource titles, and the title detail here is considered the ‘record of authority.’ Serials associates add and maintain URLs in Voyager, SFX, and in the E-Resource Tracking spreadsheet. This level of responsibility is essentially identical to that of copy cataloguers, yet the serials position retains a lower classification. We are uncertain how this can be addressed, but suggest a move in this direction be considered. This is the sort of skill development that the Library needs to encourage.

As is discussed in other parts of this report, we also suggest that serials associates be given additional system permissions, to enable them to update holdings records in Voyager. At present, when they identify necessary adjustments based on their work in SFX, maintenance work is routed to the Cataloguing Librarian. This creates a hand-off that could be avoided with sufficient permissions and training. All of this, of course, will be moot if WLUL decides to abandon e-journal records in the catalogue!

Monitor the evolving support from CRKN
In addition to handling negotiation and licensing, CRKN has begun to send title and package details for ‘named packages’ directly to ExLibris for inclusion in SFX. When it reaches sufficient scale, this will reduce the amount of SFX work that must be done locally. Only a handful of packages have received this treatment to date, and progress is occurring ‘at a snail’s pace’ but the benefits should be enjoyed where possible.
Address the problems with the Link Checker
At present, an Access Services associate runs a link-checking program on a regular basis. This program identifies links to the Library’s online resources that are broken or not resolving properly. While link checkers are not a panacea, they do provide some degree of proactivity, enabling broken links to be identified and fixed before users encounter them. While we don’t have all the details, we understand that there is a problem with the link checker that is preventing the resolution of a small number of broken links. While not a high priority, it should be addressed.

Stop manual linking of e-documents to print documents in Voyager
As we understand it, one cataloguing associate searches government web pages for URLs for electronic documents; and copies them into the Voyager print record. R2 suggests that this approach is no longer appropriate. Many Canadian publications are freely available online. Studies have shown that most users also know this and typically begin their search for government publications outside the local catalogue.

Several libraries, such as Acadia University Library, have ceased routinely adding links to the catalogue. While Acadia does add links selectively, they note that far more documents are published than they are able to enter in their catalogue. On their website (http://libguides.acadiau.ca/content.php?pid=9779&sid=64292), they encourage users to search a number of sites, which they describe and to which they provide links, and also to simply search the Internet. If WLUL adopts this approach, which we strongly recommend, clear criteria for selecting those few exception documents that will have catalog links should defined.

The best case scenario, and one that should be investigated, is the potential to define various provincial and federal web sites as targets for Primo Central – thereby surfacing government documents along with library resources, as appropriate to the user’s query.

Increase systemization for reporting access problems for e-resources
Given the variety of systems, employees, vendors, and users involved in e-resources, trouble-shooting can be enormously complex. Without a visible train of activity, it also can be quite mysterious to those awaiting resolution. Currently, 6 to 7 people receive e-mails from the ejournals@wlu.ca inbox about access problems for e-resources. While this is an experienced group, dealing with and resolving these reports can results in hand-offs and sometimes multiple hand-offs.

We recommend creating a system that tracks problems, patterns, and resolution. This might be based on “trouble tickets,” which are used by many software firms and campus and library IT units. It might use a blogging platform, such as the one at use at the Auraria Library in Denver (http://auraproblem.blogspot.com) to which a variety of problems are reported. A specific web form might be developed for e-resources issues, or reporting might be integrated with other WLUL forms. These approaches permit tracking (including to whom the problem has been handed for resolution) and ensure that all problems are addressed as soon as possible after being reported. Responsibility for monitoring the reports should be assigned to one individual, who is able to resolve most of the problems and authorized to assign them to others as appropriate. Obviously, this individual will require back-up during absences.
Accept WCCP catalogue records for e-books that are purchased one at a time from YBP
We understand that e-books received from YBP are catalogued manually, using the existing record for a print version (where available) as a starting point for copy cataloguing. The WorldCat Cataloguing Partner Program (WCCP) will provide cataloguing records for these items (currently supplied on the 2170-05, -31, -33, and -55 subaccounts) just as it does for print books. These will create separate records from the print version, not unlike the records loaded in batch for eBook sets. See more on this topic in subsequent sections of the report.

Train cataloguing associates to work with electronic resources and ensure redundancy with batch loading routines
If we understand correctly, the Cataloguing Librarian is the only individual now working with record loads and the only person routinely involved with the description of electronic resources. This individual loads pre-order records from YBP, subsequent catalogue records from YBP, e-book records from e-book vendors, and also deals with record load profiles and problems as they arise.

The increasing importance of e-resources coupled with the growing number of records loads from vendors and e-content providers means the volume of this work will continue to expand. Concentrating this expertise in just one person puts the library at unnecessary risk. R2 recommends that cataloguing associates be trained to batch load records and to trouble-shoot related problems.

Remember that e-resources maintenance can occur irrespective of a staff member’s location
While this may seem like an obvious opportunity, many libraries have continued to perform all e-resources maintenance tasks from within the primary/central technical services departments. Despite the declining need for walk-in and desk services, highly skilled workers must still provide coverage at low-traffic times and locations. These people could be contributing in major ways to increase the reliability and intuitiveness of e-resources access. We suggest that many will be eager to learn new skills and provide new value, even while “sitting at the desk” etc.

Involves students in the most routine e-resources maintenance
In many libraries, students rather than staff members are employed to perform relatively straight-forward tasks like link checking and URL maintenance. This may be an idea worth considering at WLUL.
VI. A New Approach to Cataloguing

In all academic libraries, the local catalogue is decreasing in prominence, and for many users is no longer central to searching and/or accessing library resources. Rather, catalogues are being optimized to become one of many targets for Google or a federated search tool (like PRIMO). In some cases, it remains to provide access to print materials only. Already, more users find electronic resources via A-Z lists, link resolvers, subject or class guides than through OPACs. The effort expended on MARC cataloguing is in many institutions being reduced, while diverse metadata schema and standards are assuming greater importance. These environmental changes have inspired libraries to take fuller advantage of third party records and services and, in general, to invest less in item-level maintenance and local authority control, etc. Cataloguing staff are (or should be) increasingly focused on batch record loading, indexing, and metadata integration.

As described elsewhere in the report, WLUL’s cataloguing environment is complicated by participation in the TUG shared catalogue. While a shared practices document exists, it dates from 1998 - before the shared ILS and catalogue were implemented. The policies and practices set out in “TUG Cataloguing Function Group Policy Document” are outdated in many areas and, perhaps consequently, are not followed consistently by all TUG members. In particular, we heard that Guelph is an “exception” library that has chosen to load vendor records without scrutiny.

Given the prevalence of non-OPAC discovery tools, the inconsistency of TUG library practice and the need to focus cataloguers on non-mainstream content, R2 recommends that WLUL adapt cataloguing protocols, as described in this section of the report.

Take fuller advantage of available cataloguing copy

Even though several third-party cataloguing services have been implemented at WLUL, the associated benefits have not always been fully realized, given the amount of record review still occurring. For outsourcing to be cost effective, the library must accept vendor records as delivered, and must not seek to proof/edit every record. Employees in all parts of the library should recognize that occasional errors will occur, and the rate of error should be measured. WLUL should implement a systematic quality review of records to ensure acceptable standards are met.

To the extent possible, WLUL should accept available copy without review or editing. Again, all activity should be focused exclusively on discoverability. One example of questionable local editing relates to the medical, foreign, and thesaurus headings that are routinely deleted. We did learn that medical subject headings are retained if Guelph owns the title – because of their Dentistry Faculty. When asked about this practice, reference was made to the TUG authority control routines – and the problems caused by extraneous subject headings. R2 recommends that these problems be solved in other ways and that this manual editing be stopped. More subjects (authorized or not) will serve to increase the chance of a user finding the resource.

Relatedly, we see that the YBP Tech Spec calls for the 655 variable fields to be deleted. These are the fields in which form and genre are stored. In a faceted search environment like PRIMO offers, form/genre can be very useful. It may be worth reconsidering this, and simply retaining these genre headings.

With regard to Canadian history and literature, R2 is unfamiliar about the extent to which the Library of Congress routinely assigns Canadian subject headings and the FC and PS8000 classifications. We are less than sanguine about our interpretation of the 1998 TUG cataloguing
policy on this topic, and we did not learn enough about the local practice for these subjects. The following is excerpted from the TUG document, which may or may not be current:

**TUG POLICY: Continue the use of the FC classification for Canadian History**
- All 3 institutions use FC [a classification for Canadian history] without changes (some older material is in F 5000 at Guelph).

**TUG POLICY: It is too difficult to reclassify large collections. Canadian literary authors will remain in the already assigned class ranges at each institution. Classification practices can be indicated in the authority records for the literary authors.**
  - All 3 institutions use PS 8000 except that Laurier uses the alternate PS 8000 numbers for French-Canadian literature, and Guelph uses PS 9000 for the same.

Since there is no mention of Canadian literature or history in the YBP Tech Spec, we assume that LC call numbers are acceptable for all subjects, but this should be confirmed.

**Subscribe to OCLC’s WorldCat Cataloguing Partners Program (WCCP)**
Adoption of WCCP may be the single best way to leverage available cataloguing copy. R2 suggests careful consideration of this batch copy cataloguing approach for materials supplied by YBP and other participating vendors. Through this program, OCLC records are selected and delivered automatically in batches that correspond to specific shipments, rather than searched and downloaded from multiple sources. At present, WLUL purchases records from YBP, which is a somewhat more expensive approach to a similar end.

For those readers who may be unfamiliar with the process, WCCP records arrive just prior to receipt of the books and can be configured to automatically overlay the pre-order (GOBI) records that were batch loaded at point of order. For approval shipments, the load process is simpler, as no overlay is required (no order exists in the system), but the workflow benefits are equally significant. WCCP provides a profile (order form) that allows the library to specify what level of OCLC records it will accept, call number configurations, policy for setting holding in WorldCat, etc.

A typical academic library receives full-level MARC records for 85% of items through this program, and we assume a similar or higher percentage for WLUL. A brief record known as a PromptCat Data Record (PDR) is supplied for “no-hits”, primarily as a vehicle for local transaction information. The basic workflow is this:

- Each week, as YBP assembles its shipment for WLUL, they will send an electronic “manifest” to OCLC, which OCLC will match against WorldCat to produce a corresponding file of MARC records, plus transaction information, such invoice data, fund, location, PO#, etc. R2 recommends that the Library request that barcodes be applied by the vendor and inserted into the records supplied. This step can speed the receiving process immensely.

- That file will be retrieved by the Library from OCLC’s FTP server, and is always available before the books reach the Library. Upon import for firm orders, under library-specified rules, the OCLC record delivered by WCCP overlays the pre-existing bib record in Voyager— matching occurs based on the Voyager PO number that is present in both the
pre-order brief record and the OCLC record. If a barcode has been scanned into the record by the vendor, Voyager will also create the item record.

- The potential benefits are striking: automatic item record creation/update and automatic setting of WorldCat holdings for nearly 9,000 titles. (This will also require some additional process changes that are outlined in the Monographs section.) And as described below, an upgraded OCLC subscription would be somewhat more cost effective than the cataloguing arrangement currently in place with YBP, and the hit rate would be somewhat higher, even with the Basic service level.

- By utilizing WCCP, books from other participating vendors can easily receive the same treatment.

Our primary argument is not that the result will be better, but that less staff time could be spent on this stream of material for a comparable result – leaving more hours for work on the ever more numerous electronic resources, and/or unique WLUL content.

**Renegotiate WLUL’s OCLC Cataloguing Subscription**

To be eligible for WCCP services, WLUL will need to upgrade their OCLC subscription. At present, Wilfrid Laurier University Library has an OCLC full membership and:

- A Cataloging & Access annual subscription of: $1,499.29 (this includes batch load of WLUL holdings)

- WorldCat on FirstSearch annual subscription: $4,560.00 (discovery: exposure of Laurier’s holdings on popular search engines, WorldCat Local QuickStart, etc)

The $1,499.29 cataloguing subscription is the minimum level available. It allows up to 500 Z39.50 searches per year and up to 500 MARC downloads per year via Connexion. These features are inactive for WLUL simply because the registration process has not been completed. Logins/access can be acquired at any time from the local OCLC representative.

It is important to note that this level of subscription does NOT include the automated WorldCat Cataloguing Partners program support (formerly PromptCat). At R2’s request, however, OCLC Canada has proposed a revised cataloguing subscription rate that would include this service.

The following quote was offered by Andy Spilioe ([spilioea@oclc.org](mailto:spilioea@oclc.org)) on October 18, 2011.

- **WLU’s current batchloading/cataloguing subscription would increase to $4,920 CAD/year.**

- **This would give them access to WorldCat Cataloguing Partners Program:**

- **This would also give them approximately 1,900-2,000 exports via Connexion:**
  - [http://www.oclc.org/ca/en/connexion/default.htm](http://www.oclc.org/ca/en/connexion/default.htm) or 1,900-2,000 searches via Z39.50
With regard to YBP cataloguing charges, 6,158 titles were shipped on their processing sub-accounts last year, so WLUL’s cost for records came to $7,700. The level of service currently contracted is for LC records, un-upgraded CIPS, and provisional records. We should point out that another 1,400 items, potentially eligible for YBP cataloguing were ordered on a BY-PASS account because these items are already held by another TUG library and duplicate records are not wanted.

If WLUL adopts WCCP, YBP will charge the library a service fee of $.20 per invoice line. With the Basic service, some 15% of books will likely arrive without full records, and/or call numbers. To receive 100% of books with a call number and at least one subject heading, a higher-level OCLC subscription could be considered.

**Accept duplicate call numbers**

Accepting available copy “as is” also means accepting LC (Library of Congress) and other assigned call numbers. There will be a small number of duplicate call numbers but these should be accepted. This will have only limited impact on catalogue retrieval, as patrons almost never search by call number. Books with duplicate call numbers are co-located in the shelf, so they can still be found with minimal inconvenience. In general, the overall decline in physical browsing requires recognition that shelf location is far less important than it used to be. Costs associated with local shelf-listing should be minimized.

**Catalogue only to the level needed**

In general, the high cost of traditional cataloguing in an era of declining library budgets and competition from commercial search engines has inspired libraries to find new ways to meet user needs while decreasing costs. At this point in time, cataloguing only to the level needed is appropriate. Always consider cataloguing the context of user behavior and seek to meet but not exceed their needs.

Alternative standards, which are intended to simplify the cataloguing requirements while maintaining appropriate access, have begun to emerge. These new record types are designed to function in library ILSs, shared catalogues, and various meta-search systems. We recommend that WLUL track these developing standards and adopt non-MARC alternatives as appropriate. Some of these include:

- VRA Core categories (for DVDs and Videos)  
  [http://www.loc.gov/standards/vracore/schemas.html](http://www.loc.gov/standards/vracore/schemas.html)

- Access Level Record (for Series)  

- Access Level Record (for Internet Resources)  
  [http://www.loc.gov/catdir/access/accessrecord.html](http://www.loc.gov/catdir/access/accessrecord.html)

- Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO)  

An immediate application of this approach—using VRA Core 4.0—would both simplify and speed the retrospective cataloguing of 742 DVDs and 2,608 VHS tapes inherited from the MTR. R2 recommends this approach. Since most of these materials are commercially produced, and are not new, a very high percentage is likely to have available copy, meaning that paraprofessionals should be charged with this task. An obvious benefit of a using non-MARC alternative for
description is to expose cataloguing associates to non-MARC metadata, a direction that is discussed more fully below.

**Acquire OCLC MARC record sets for free**

If we understand correctly, IEEE is the only e-resource package currently acquired without records. At present, cataloguing work is handled manually, but R2 wants to point out that IEEE provides record sets through OCLC, who makes them available for free. This may be a service that can be leveraged at WLUL. See: [http://collectionsets.oclc.org/JustLooking?cmd=displayElectronicSets](http://collectionsets.oclc.org/JustLooking?cmd=displayElectronicSets)

**Limit the amount of effort devoted to editing records already in the catalogue**

One of the challenges for cataloguers across the profession is to accept the concept of “good enough.” Most experts now agree that too much attention is spent correcting/editing record details that do not affect discoverability. Some types of problems do require attention, of course. Among these are typos in the main entry, the title, and possibly the series title. Beyond these primary indexed fields (the ones users actually search), clear expectations should be established about the type of “clean-up” that is expected and/or acceptable when working on retrospective projects and other records already in the catalogue.

During the course of interviews, R2 heard reference to various streams/categories of material for which the records need to be “fixed”. We are unfamiliar with the precise problems and/or edits performed, but each should be carefully reviewed with an eye toward the return on investment. Are the fixes actually improving access? If not, they should be abandoned in favor of those that will. Some examples:

- **Nipissing/Brantford records** - as we understand it, WLUL catalogers “fix” inaccuracies in the Brantford education materials cataloged by Nipissing. These fixes are then reported Nipissing. These are relatively few in number and fixes are confined to reported errors in title, author and subject fields.

- **Current practice at WLUL** is to “tidy up” Voyager records entered by Guelph. This involves addition or correction of pagination, authors, illustrations, and other elements of physical description. It occurs even if the record has been coded full. Again, R2 questions this practice.

**Train cataloguing associates to work with non-MARC schemas and expand their responsibilities for its creation**

Currently, non-MARC metadata is not being created within the Cataloguing Department. If our recommendation to use alternative descriptive standards is implemented (for example, using VRA Core 4.0 to describe the DVDs and VHS tapes coming from the Media Center), a related requirement is that catalogers should be trained to use these non-MARC forms of metadata. If our recommendations in other sections of this report are implemented, we are confident that catalogers will have sufficient time to take on this work.

Dublin Core (DC) is currently being used in Special Collections and Archives to describe content added to “Our Ontario” ([http://ourontario.ca](http://ourontario.ca)). And other schemas may also be appropriate for the description of archival collections. Likewise, DC records for legacy theses and dissertations are being created by students for inclusion in Scholars Commons @Laurier. As we understand it,
they are transposing MARC data to DC. More complex applications of alternative schemas will be appropriate for cataloguing associates.

We believe that oversight of all resource description, whether it occurs physically in the Cataloguing unit or in another location in the library, should be coordinated by the Cataloguing Department Head. This is one way to ensure consistency and interoperability when systems are retired and replaced, etc.

**Review 5% of vendor-supplied and in-house cataloguing**

At this time, all YBP records are reviewed and edited by WLUL’s cataloguing associates. This 100% review significantly offsets the benefits of outsourced cataloguing. As we see it, a sampling approach should be implemented to ensure an acceptable level of service from the supplier, but the majority of these records should be accepted as received.

Everyone in the library must recognize that cataloguing errors are a fact of life. Cataloguing is a complex task performed by humans. Regardless of the procedures used, buying or producing 100% error-free records is impossible. Rather than seeking or expecting perfection, it may be helpful to establish and communicate an acceptable error rate. It can be as low as 2% or 3% and still be useful for purposes of workflow efficiency. The point is to have one. This is crucial in terms of cost-effective cataloguing.

As new services are implemented, a simple check should be performed on all incoming records. The focus should be limited to those errors that could impede access, including: call number, barcode, title, author’s name, and the existence of at least one subject heading (if required for the type of material). Errors should be fixed immediately and logged. Pagination, CIP dates, duplicate call numbers, and extraneous subjects (for example) should not be identified as errors.

WLUL should verify that records are received with an error rate of less than 2% or 3%. A 100% record review should cease once this has been determined. Then move to sampling no more than 5% to 10% of records, ensuring that the error rate never exceeds the acceptable level. This practice will guarantee that 97%-98% of all records added to the catalogue are accurate. If errors spike, the Library should revert to a full review of records and be in immediate contact with the vendor.

We recommend that a similar 5% sampling be applied to in-house cataloging. Again, the goal cannot be perfection. In addition to checking records for errors that could impede access, they should be checked for compliance with established procedures. Here too, errors should be corrected as found and brought to the attention of the individual cataloguer only when the percentage exceeds the acceptable error rate and/or a pattern has emerged. Data collected in the in-house sampling can be used in performance evaluations. For more on the topic of quality control and sampling, please refer to the section of the report pertaining to organizational culture and structure.

**Document cataloguing procedures and keep them current**

Work in cataloging is guided by rules (e.g., *The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, soon moving to *RDA*), standards (e.g., MARC format, Dublin Core), policies, and procedures. Policies are an overall guide - setting up general directions. An example of a policy is TUG’s “acceptance” of multiple records for serials. Many WLUL policies are guided by TUG policies. Procedures are usually library-specific and provide a sequential list of steps - a particular course of action
intended to achieve a result. Procedures ensure uniformity and consistency of output. A “Procedure for Withdrawing Items” might be one example.

Policies and procedures should be documented, dated, and easily found by employees who need to use them. They should be revised as new needs arise and new technologies are available, and should be reviewed regularly. Having up-to-date documentation will make it possible to “establish standard approaches for routine tasks”, as mentioned elsewhere.

Relax permissions for catalogue maintenance
While a library always needs to balance quality and productivity, we believe that WLUL has swung too far in the direction of control over speed and/or productivity. In this light, R2 recommends opening up permissions and imposing more systematic quality controls.

R2 strongly suggests that record maintenance privileges be extended to cataloguing associates so that they can perform routine inventory control work - a common practice in most libraries. For example, they should all be authorized to withdraw materials identified in the weeding projects, adjusting bibliographic, item, and holdings records as needed. A few hours of training and a more lenient policy with regard to permissions (in conjunction with other workflow changes described elsewhere) will make it possible for cataloguing associates to eliminate the current weeding bottleneck and keep pace with future weeding and/or shifting projects.

Further, R2 recommends that the copy cataloguers (associates) should be trained and granted the appropriate permission to perform cataloguing for various streams or formats currently handled exclusively by MLS cataloguers. Some examples include copy cataloguing books from Special Collections, and DVDs and VHSs recently acquired from the Media Center.

Simplify or eliminate manual tallies for cataloguers
Most cataloguing statistics serve three purposes: to report activity to external agencies, to monitor individual productivity for employee evaluation purposes, and to ensure equitable distribution of work, i.e., load-leveling. WLUL currently manually tallies some 100 different cataloguing actions, which are manually recorded and then compiled. We suspect that much of the tallied data is never used and that the practice of collecting it may be a remnant of a previous era.

Many libraries have eliminated completely or significantly reduced manually recording cataloguers’ daily work. Most data reported to external agencies is now generated automatically by the library’s automated system. We believe that WLUL tracks cataloguer’s work at an overly granular level, which can be significantly simplified. The minimum data points (without regard to format or genre) that should be tracked are:

- Copy cataloguing (any record accepted without modification)
- Complex copy cataloguing (records requiring significant upgrade)
- Original cataloguing
- Added items (copies or volumes)
- Transfers
- Withdrawals

These data should be used both to monitor individual productivity and to ensure equitable distribution of work.
VII. Optimizing Workflows for Print Monographs

Print monographs workflows have benefited more than any other format from the automation of processes in local systems and from the services that vendors provide. These functions and services are frequently updated and libraries must be attentive to maximize these options as they are offered. One challenge that libraries face is the tendency to replicate existing processes without taking full advantage of what automation offers. As described in our kick-off session, automation is really just another word for batch processing. To gain efficiencies, focus must be shifted away from item-by-item tasks. Shadow systems, reentry of data, printing and paper files, and work-arounds should be eliminated whenever possible.

R2 makes several recommendations that will address these often unnecessary and time-consuming activities. A key in all this will be to leverage YBP, GOBI, and Voyager features to the fullest extent. While WLUL utilizes numerous services provided by YBP, the Library has not yet reaped their full benefit. Greater efficiencies are possible by adjusting these services and then relying on them more fully. Recommendations in this section of the report are oriented towards these goals.

Drawing from a series of GOBI activity reports, we see that during FY11, 8,125 items were shipped and invoiced from YBP’s US office. Of these, just 133 were returned for credit, 109 from Brantford alone. The 7,992 items retained were supplied on the following YBP sub-accounts. Shaded rows are direct-ship approval sub-accounts, which yielded 2,491 titles, or 31% of the total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-account</th>
<th>Titles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2170-05 US EBRARY ORDERS</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-08 US BYPASS</td>
<td>1427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-09 US SLIP ORDERS</td>
<td>2962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-10 US FIRM</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-11 US AP BRANTFORD</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-13 US AP MAIN</td>
<td>1941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-17 US SOCWK</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-18 US BRAN US</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-19 US SOCWK US</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-21 US EDUPROF PLAN</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-22 US EDUPROFSLIPORDER</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-23 US ENG PLAN</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-80 US S/O LP</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-81 US S/O LA</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-82 US S/O LA/SEM</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-83 US S/O LG</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2170-84 US S/O LP/SEM</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>7992</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the same period, WLUL retained 1,552 titles out of 1,662 received from YBP’s UK office - on the following sub-accounts. Again, shaded rows are direct-ship approval sub-accounts, which yielded 866 titles, or 56% of the total.
At far as we can tell, technical support services or batch processes used for US books from YBP are not in place for UK sub-accounts. Those services include GOBIExport of pre-order records, Voyager electronic ordering, YBP cataloguing and electronic invoicing. Since these services have already been implemented for the US transactions it will be a simple matter to extend the benefits of the workflow outlined below to an additional 1,552 units.

**Ensure operational clarity regarding the automation available for firm orders**

As mentioned elsewhere, WLUL has installed all the elements for a state-of-the-art firm order workflow for YBP monographs. However, as we have seen in any number of libraries, this automation has not been fully leveraged and elements of legacy workflows have been unnecessarily retained. For those who may be unfamiliar with the primary concept, it may be helpful to review it here:

YBP approval titles that are not sent automatically as books and are not excluded via profile parameters are announced as “notifications.” These are made available electronically for review and selection in GOBI (YBP’s online database and ordering system). Most WLUL book selection already occurs in this online environment. WLUL librarians “select” titles in the GOBI interface; those requests are collected in an aggregate list of selected items.

Once a day, the acquisitions associate exports (from GOBI) the file of selected titles for immediate load to Voyager (Voyager). These ‘pre-order’ records include brief bibliographic data and order details entered by the selector. Records are provided in the MARC format, for standard retrieval via ftp. Import of this file into Voyager creates a bibliographic record and pending purchase order for each item, and identifies potential duplicates and fund overages. Upon approval in Voyager, purchase orders are sent to YBP electronically, in the EDIFACT format.

Each week, as YBP assembles its shipment for WLUL, they generate electronic files of data for each item in the shipment. At present, this includes a YBP MARC record, invoice data, and item/order information (fund, location, “notify notes”, PO#, and barcode number if physical processing is provided). These records automatically overlay the pre-order records described above. This automated workflow has been well established in academic libraries for more than 15 years, and is generally recognized as a best practice for monographs acquisitions.

While WLUL utilizes elements of this method, there are a significant number of manual interventions. These occur at almost every stage of the process. For instance, selection lists are searched manually in Voyager to determine whether a TUG bib record already exists. If so, the
item is moved to a bypass account, and the purchase order manually created. Further manual searching is done for Oxford and Cambridge titles, to prevent duplication of print orders with large eBook packages. Alpha prefixes are inserted into purchase order numbers and invoice numbers automatically generated by Voyager. A large number of printouts are made, annotated and filed from GOBI screens. Overall, the ordering and receiving processes remain much more manual and item-by-item than automated and batched. Exceptions rather than routine drive the process, and much of the potential benefit has not been realized.

**Continue to maximize orders sent to the primary vendor (YBP)**

WLUL has clearly recognized the benefits of consolidating their book business with a single primary vendor. 95% of firm orders and 85% of approval plan items are provided by YBP. We commend this level of consolidation because it has been demonstrated time and again that this is the best way for libraries to maximize operational efficiencies for monographs.

The primary vendor should supply approval plans, notification services, firm orders, standing orders, and as many e-books as possible. Coverage should include English and at least some European languages. If possible, the vendor should handle rush orders as well, although this is one category where Amazon can typically perform faster. The intent here is to make the WLUL mainstream as large as possible, with all items accompanied by the same set of services. We note this here simply to support the good decision the Library has already taken.

**Transfer all possible standing orders to YBP**

Approximately 135 items were received on standing order from YBP, but we assume many others are received from other vendors. To the extent possible, monographic standing orders should be transferred to YBP. This will help control duplication with approval and firm orders. YBP will be able to supply volumes shelf-ready, and with electronic invoicing. This transfer should also be used as an opportunity to cancel any print standing orders for series that are available in electronic form, if this has not already been done.

**Encourage all WLU entities (and non-WLU partners) to order books via GOBI**

During the course of interviews, R2 became aware of several WLUL “partner” entities that participate in monographs workflows. WLUL has agreed to catalogue books and other resources that are selected and acquired by these organizations, which include:

- the Military Center
- the Women’s/Gender Studies Center
- until recently, the Media Center
- Are there others?

As we understand it, batches of books from these locations arrive in the library from time to time, and receive copy cataloguing and physical processing before being sent back.

As WLUL updates its own workflows, these legacy arrangements should be reconsidered. Our idea would be to encourage these other entities to select their books via YBP’s GOBI and contract for the same shelf-ready processing that we recommend for WLUL books (below). We are unfamiliar with the financial arrangements between these various entities, but we do know that YBP sub-accounts can be set up with distinct billing and shipping addresses, while sharing other technical specifications as appropriate. If all these entities were to use a single interface for purposes of selection, they would also be able to eliminate unwanted duplication between
locations, etc. To the extent that Kitchener, Brantford (and Milton) grow their print monographs collections, direct, shelf-ready shipments from the vendor to those locations will be critical.

**Add Nipissing Education titles to Voyager without the book in hand**

We think we understand that in support of the Brantford/Nipissing concurrent session for Education, Nipissing forwards newly acquired education books to Brantford for inclusion in the WLUL catalogue. To this end, Brantford sends them to the Waterloo location where the Nipissing records may be edited and then added to Voyager. These items are then sent back to Nipissing for shelving. This number of hand-offs is inefficient and time-consuming, delaying the availability of the materials to users. At the very least, R2 recommends that Nipissing records remain unedited, and that they be copied into the Voyager catalogue via a list of bib record numbers rather than with book in hand.

**Take fuller advantage of the GobiSmart set-up for selector and acquisition screen defaults**

This screen shot below represents WLUL’s GobiSmart profile, a tool that allows the library to customize the selection and export screens. This chart can be found within GOBI itself.

![GobiSmart Screen](image)

A quick review makes it clear that field labels have not been customized for WLUL users, and that neither fund nor location codes are required on selection or export screens. R2 recommends that GobiSmart functionality be carefully explored. Selectors should be expected to choose the appropriate sub-account, a fund, a location, etc. and to enter “notify” notes so that these data need not be keyed, or re-keyed later in the process. One of the local data fields should be used exclusively for “patron notify” notes. GobiSmart makes it possible for selectors
to establish personal defaults or templates, which will make the whole process both intuitive and painless. A simpler YBP account structure may be helpful, with sub-accounts named in meaningful ways.

While in GOBI, R2 also noticed that more than 20 YBP sub-accounts are set to “YES” for GOBI orders. Given the established GOBIExport routines that are in place (ordering occurs in Voyager not GOBI), these should all be set to “NO”. In general, it seems clear that the wide array of YBP/GOBI features is not fully understood or leveraged. R2 recommends that someone in Acquisitions become an expert with regard to these services and functions, so that related workflows can be entirely coherent.

**Eliminate the BY-PASS routine for YBP orders that duplicate TUG holdings**

When a bib record already exists in Voyager (indicating that the item is on order or owned by another library), orders are printed and diverted to a BY-PASS folder for manual attachment of a new purchase order (PO) to the existing bib record. These are called “Attaches.” WLUL adopted this approach for two reasons.

The first was cost. YBP charges $1.25 for every print cataloguing record supplied. Because records already exist in TUG for these items, ‘attaches’ would generate unused cataloguing records unless they are assigned to a bypass account. In 2011, there were 1,427 attaches. This represents nearly half of US firm orders. At $1.25 each, these would have cost the library $1.783.75. By adopting the WCCP subscription service instead of the YBP record service (described in a previous section of the report) this cost issue would be avoided and all books could be handled via the same automated approach for a fixed subscription fee.

The other reason for having adopted this approach relates to the TUG policy of shared bib records for monographs. As described above, automation and batch loading has rendered this an outmoded policy, and one that Guelph has already abandoned. The simplest solution would be for WLUL to adopt the Guelph approach and add new/separate bib records for each title acquired, regardless of existing records in Voyager. Only intentional Laurier-Laurier duplicates would require BY-PASS and “Attach” protocols. This would enable batch processing to work with fewer exceptions—e.g., the 1,400 items on the BY-PASS account could be absorbed into the mainstream.

In the end, it probably makes sense for TUG to adjust its policy on this topic to reflect the realities of a mixed practice. Our understanding is that Primo can be configured to effectively handle multiple bib records. Another option, of course, would be to eliminate the acquisition of titles that duplicate those held by other TUG libraries. This too has been mentioned elsewhere in the report.

**Use a GOBI selection folder to store and track “recommended” titles**

R2 is unsure of the details here, but we think a separate spreadsheet is kept that tracks recommended titles. Any time an independent tracking system is used that is separate from available systems, it complicates processes. Recommended monograph titles (sometimes called “wish list” titles or desiderata) should be managed within a shared system. GOBI offers the functionality to manage potential selections online, attach notes, sort and re-sort, send to others through e-mail or save in personal or shared folders where the most current bibliographic, status, price, and local activity information is displayed in real-time.
Eliminate manual entry of PO prefixes
After import of pre-order records from GOBI, and upon import of approval bib records/invoice data, an acquisitions staff member looks up PO’s in Voyager and manually inserts prefixes into the system-generated numbers: LA for Waterloo campus orders and LB for Brantford campus orders. The point here, as we understand it, is to be able to visually distinguish Laurier POs from those of the other TUG libraries, especially when the PO has been “Attached” to an existing bib record. This is another element of the process that requires manual intervention and should be abandoned. In an automated environment, there is no need to retain the notion of “meaningful” PO numbers. We have seen the elimination of such prefixes work satisfactorily in other multi-library Voyager environments, such as the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC).

Improve the process for managing patron notifications
The current process for managing notifications is cumbersome. Orders with “notify” notes are diverted to a separate stream and are printed for use when modifying the purchase order. The PO is modified to prompt the receiver to open the record and read the notify note. Some (if not all) requested items from faculty are tracked in a separate spreadsheet that includes notes, disposition (ordered or not), etc. Another employee updates this as the orders move through the system. This creates an offline exception process that is dependent primarily on files that are external to the primary Voyager system. R2 recommends that WLUL seek a way to handle this requirement within the installed systems.

If they aren’t already, selectors should be encouraged to use the GOBI field labeled “Note to Acquisitions” to enter this information. Better yet, designate a separate data field for this purpose (described above) so that it can be automatically loaded in Voyager when the order is created. Items not ordered via GOBI get notification information added into the same field on the Voyager order record. If there are no specific rush requirements these materials can be mainstreamed. The receipting process should be modified such that the receiver looks at each order record upon receipt. S/he can then flag these items with the notification information and route them to circulation rather than shelf.

Another option would be to create a separate YBP sub-account for notifies – so that they can be invoiced separately and easily identified at point of receipt. In either case, the offline spreadsheet can be abandoned.

Eliminate duplication-checking routines
Currently, Oxford and Cambridge titles requested by selectors are searched by acquisitions staff against the e-book collections purchased from these publishers to avoid duplication. The need to do this work locally can be stopped by having YBP create block lists, using the same approach that is in place for ebrary and other e-book orders.

Stop double-checking YBP status reports for OP and OSI titles
At present, when YBP notifies WLUL that an item is Out of Print (OP) and the order is cancelled, WLUL Acquisitions staff look these up in Amazon and the order is reinstated if the Amazon status appears to contradict the YBP status. Likewise for those cancelled as “Out of Stock Indefinitely” (OSI). The Voyager PO is updated and the item is ordered via a “replacements” process. R2 questions to actual return on the time devoted to this practice.
To research this ROI, one would determine the number of items reported as OP by YBP, the time invested by employees to check Amazon, the number of time that Amazon reports availability, and the time required to update the PO and place a new order. The overall yield through this process is probably quite low. R2 recommends accepting the YBP data and allowing orders to remain cancelled. The order status should be reported to the selector.

**Eliminate manual counts of exported GOBI records**

At present, the GOBIExport cart is processed daily, meaning that the acquisitions associate requests (from YBP) a batch of pre-order records for books that selectors have requested. A manual count of the records requested/expected is also kept. This step should be abandoned. Once received, these records should simply be load into Voyager in batch. The number of records received will always match the number requested, and the system will record transaction volume upon import. Established location codes, rather than PO prefixes (Waterloo, Brantford, Kitchener, etc.) should be entered consistently for future reference.

**Get full benefit from the electronic invoicing which is already in place**

Voyager electronic invoicing works differently for approval and firm orders and WLUL has implemented both.

Approval plan invoice data is embedded in 98x fields in MARC record. Upon import, Voyager generates pending orders (one PO for each line) and pending invoices for each item. At WLU, several manual edits occur after this, however. Individual Approval PO’s are grouped into a single multi-line PO, and the LA or LB prefix added as they are for firm orders (described above). This is done to reduce the number of invoices to be processed. Again, this degree of manual intervention negates the potential time savings of electronic invoicing and automation in general. If direct-ship approval plans are retained (see below), these invoicing protocols should be redesigned. When fully optimized, it won’t matter how many invoices need to be processed. [A possible exception here that we do not fully understand: where are the HST calculations performed?]

For firm orders, EDI invoices are provided in a separate file from the cataloguing records – but they are linked to each other via the Voyager PO #. Upon import, the PO is matched and received against, and a Voyager invoice is created. Because of known Voyager limitations, firm order receiving can never be completely automated (it is not possible to automatically overlay item records), but it can be far simpler than it currently is.

R2 strongly recommends that the manager responsible for redefining the monographs workflow visit a Voyager library that has fully leveraged this technology. George Washington University Library, for example, is a member of the WRLC consortium, which is not unlike TUG. GW is also a YBP/WCCP customer, and they receive their books shelf-ready. They have effectively eliminated PO prefixes, and otherwise maximized the value of automation for mainstream monographs. As a point of reference, their receiver is able to process these materials (create item records and approve invoices) at a rate of 30+ per hour. The books are quality reviewed and shelved on the same day or the day after. This should be the goal at WLUL.

**Consider adoption of virtual approval plans**

For a combined 25 years, the R2 principals designed approval profiles and promoted approval plans as the most efficient way to acquire a core collection of monographs. We are exceptionally well-versed in the potential benefits/time-savings they can offer. However, times
are changing, and new light has been shed on the weaknesses of predictive or anticipatory collection development in academic libraries. In the case of WLUL, approval plans already represent a smaller stream than firm orders, and in some cases, the return rate is far too high to be cost-effective. In general, approval plans that yield fewer than 1,000 titles per year are probably less efficient than simple firm ordering routines, based on vendor supplied notifications. Of the ten YBP approval plans currently in place, just one meets this threshold.

In brief, the idea of a virtual approval plan is that YBP can set up profile(s) so that GOBI notifications/records indicate whether a given title would have been shipped as a "Book," or would have resulted in a "slip" or notification. No actual books are shipped, other than those the library, upon review of these slips or records, instructs YBP to ship. The process is essentially a simulation of the live approval plan and has become known as the "virtual approval plan". For a variety of reasons, many libraries have begun to opt for this approach. Once approved for shipment, the books can be made shelf-ready and supplied without fear of receiving unwanted, non-returnable titles.

Other potential benefits of this approach are significant, and include:

- All mainstream monographs will be acquired via a single (firm order) workflow
- All monographs can arrive shelf-ready
- The approval review and return routines can be eliminated
- The WLUL fund and account structures can be dramatically simplified
- Approval plans will have less impact so the profiles can be more loosely managed
- Approval profiles can still be used to generate new title alerts, and/or records to be loaded into the catalogue for PDA

**Adopt patron-driven-acquisitions (PDA) for some percentage of new monographs**

One application of the virtual plan is to load the records for “would-be” direct ship books (and perhaps title alerts as well) to Voyager, and treat them as the universe of titles eligible for patron-driven acquisition. In a patron-driven model, the Library loads MARC records for all (or a defined subset) of new monographs in the local catalogue, but does not immediately purchase any titles. If and when a user finds a title s/he wants, it can be purchased on demand or (if available electronically) “rented” via a short-term circulation.

It is typical that between 40% and 60% of “circulating” print monographs acquired by academic libraries never circulate. As a part of this study, R2 obtained WLUL data on print monographs usage, and learned that indeed, a full 60% percent of all books held in the “circulating” collection (including Brantford and SW) have never been checked out. Granted, there is no way to know if a user browsed a book and re-shelved it him/herself. And there is notable variation in these usage statistics that hinges on discipline and date of publication. All the same, the numbers are daunting. A snapshot of these data is presented on pages 77 – 78, and a full view can be obtained locally.

Based on these data, R2 suggests that if WLUL books have been purchased for contemporary users, the current methods for selection are not working well, approval plans included. As budgets continue to decline and scholarly houses publish more titles each year, it will be harder to predict which titles patrons will use. R2 recommends that WLUL begin to approach the task of selection with a “just-in-time” mindset rather than “just-in-case”. To this end, we suggest adoption of patron-driven-acquisitions for monographs.
The potential is quite interesting for print and for eBooks, although the eBook model is more appealing and has considerably more traction in the market. For example, EBL, the firm that originated the demand-driven model and short-term circulation capability, currently lists more than 200,000 titles in its database. While some of those may not be appropriate for an academic library, the addition of even 100,000 potential new titles increases the options available to users. Again, access increases, but the Libraries’ physical collection does not—all with very little risk.

It is also important to note that at the University of Vermont, PDA was successfully implemented for print, for some of the most reputable university presses. Here again, YBP is the partner/vendor. Shipping and processing times were aggressively reduced, such that items were delivered to patrons within 3-4 days of the order. Again, the idea is that while we may not be able to predict needs, libraries can make it a priority to respond to patron requests more quickly than ever. The primary benefit of PDA, is that all books acquired via this approach will have at least one user.

**Simplify the fund structure**

The trend in many academic libraries is to simplify fund code structures. WLUL, however, has moved toward greater granularity. Section 5.3.2 of the overview document prepared prior to R2’s visit notes that that the “ledgers were modified to provide a finer detail of tracking” and “it was important to track at a more detailed level for accountability purposes for faculty. To this end, each e-resource and serial title was assigned to a Laurier Faculty/School.”

This discipline-specific approach seems outdated, especially when broad-based e-packages are not discipline-specific. Information seeking is increasingly interdisciplinary and usage statistics indicate that users range widely outside their “home” subjects, thus we question the assumption that tracking expenditures at a greater level of detail demonstrates accountability to faculty. Usage statistics seem much more germane. Tracking individual e-resources within packages is labor-intensive and the result is not particularly meaningful. When expenditures for monographs or numbers of titles by discipline are needed for reporting to faculty, accreditation, and other purposes, YBP’s online system can generate activity reports by LC classes or ranges. A different approach should provide just enough structure to assure equity across the broad groups of sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

We suggest that administration consider creation of a fund structure and allocation formulas only at this level, rather than continuing with a subject-based model. Allocating money by format and/or order type within the larger groups we recommend might make sense. For example, a single approval fund has been adopted in many libraries, as well as single funds for e-journal packages, patron-driven acquisitions, etc. Simplifying the fund structure also will reduce the potential for errors when selectors are choosing a sub-account to assign to an order. Because of the required accrual accounting, WLUL is subject to a great deal more tracking and adjustment than most libraries. Simplification of the system elsewhere might help ease the overall workload somewhat.

**Implement shelf-ready services for YBP monographs**

In our experience, paying vendors for copy cataloguing and physical processing of mainstream monographs is almost always cost effective. More to the point, it frees library staff to focus on in-house projects and tasks that cannot be easily outsourced. This approach also maximizes
efficiency in a distributed library system like WLUL. Shelf-ready books should be delivered directly from the vendor to the final location, thereby eliminating the time and the expense of transporting processed books from Waterloo to the other library locations.

If monographs purchasing remains steady, we estimate that at up to 9,000 items might be eligible for this treatment each year, or more than 80% of all books acquired. Depending on the specifications, fees can be expected to fall between $2.50 and $3.00 per book. Shelf-ready services may include:

- Removing or retaining dust jackets
- Supplying and affixing magnetic security targets
- Stamping with library ownership stamps
- Applying barcodes and scanning the barcode into cataloguing records
- Applying spine labels

Again, it is important to note that YBP shelf-ready services are available for US and UK titles. The contract should be written to include both.

**Implement a FastCat process at point of receipt**

As mentioned in the previous section of the report, R2 recommends replacement of YBP cataloguing with OCLC’s WCCP. And again, both of these services are designed to REPLACE copy cataloging. If WCCP and shelf-ready services are adopted, it will be important to introduce a process that integrates the receiving, item creation, invoicing, and cataloging review into a single step at point of receipt. This approach, often referred to as FastCat, allows libraries to get books on the shelves within two days of receipt, and can free multiple staff members for other high-priority tasks.

Plenty of details need to be worked through, but the primary thrust of this approach is to perform all remaining tasks for shelf-ready monographs at the point of receipt—eliminating any subsequent hand-offs prior to shelving. Since the expectation is that these materials will be shelved within 24-48 hours, default location and status codes can be applied when the MARC records and EDI invoices are loaded to Voyager, records can be accepted as is, and manual intervention can be eliminated. This is a realistic and achievable solution that has been embraced by many libraries, and again, we recommend it for WLUL.

In the case of YBP shipments, only those that arrive without spine labels (no acceptable record was found by OCLC) should be routed to catalogers for attention. This circumstance is likely to occur for fewer than 15% of YBP titles. Non-YBP monographs for which adequate copy is available in WorldCat can be copy cataloged and bar-coded at point of receipt, since good records are imported at the time of order, and receiving staff will be trained to recognize acceptable copy. These should be handed off to students for final marking and labeling.

**Eliminate redundant tracking systems for non-YBP orders**

For non-GOBI orders and rush orders, items are requested via an online request form which goes to an Acquisitions email box. The acquisitions associate prints these for processing. Since they tend to be rush orders, they are most often filled:

- Via the campus bookstore
• Via Amazon credit card order
• Direct from publisher (if shown as in stock online)

Course number/name and fund are included on some orders and Acquisitions must sometimes assign the fund code. Once these orders have been placed, the email order confirmation (from Amazon for example) is printed out and kept in a separate folder. Individual orders are entered into an Excel spreadsheet for tracking. Finally, a purchase order is created in Voyager. As for other firm orders, if a bib record already exists in Voyager, the order is attached to that bib record. If a bib record must be created, a $39.50 search is used to locate a usable record from another library. The identified bib record is downloaded into Voyager and a purchase order is created but not sent, since the order has already been received by the vendor. These items must be received via title search in Voyager, since the system PO will not be supplied on the invoice.

Obviously, the best solution is to acquire as many books as possible via mainstream workflows, but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. When time constraints make this alternative approach necessary, Acquisitions staff should rely exclusively on the record in Voyager. Eliminate the filing of printed conformation records and the Excel spreadsheet for these orders.

**Implement a more efficient process for generating spine labels locally**

Even if shelf-ready services are implemented, some new books will still be processed in-house. And, of course, it will also be necessary to print replacement labels. The current WLUL process uses a stand-alone (locally developed) application that requires 23 steps to print labels. Each morning, spine labels are printed for the books catalogued the day before. Each cataloguer applies his/her own. This approach is fairly labor intensive and delays getting materials to the user.

Most libraries utilize the spine label-generating functionality provided by their automated systems. These are generally more efficient, because they are integrated and use data already available within the database, and do not require local maintenance of separate software. Voyager provides the option to print spine and piece labels by selecting *File>Print Label*. (See Chapter 4 sections 21-24 in the *Voyager® 8 Cataloging User’s Guide*.) We recommend that WLUL implement this Voyager label generating function, which will automatically format the call number from the 852 field, and make the spine label immediately ready for printing.

**Employ students to apply spine labels and complete the physical processing**

Once bar codes are applied and the item record is created, receivers and/or cataloguers should move items out of their work areas – and stage them for final processing. We suggest that catalogued items be marked, labeled and security stripped by student workers. After this final marking (and perhaps quality control), the student employee would take the items to the New Books Shelf on the 2nd floor and other locations in the building.

These same students should be employed to re-label the 2,000+ items that may require this kind of attention each year. At present, spine labeling of new materials is handled in Cataloguing and relabeling is handled in Access Services. The latter is necessary because labels have faded, are difficult to read, are missing, or damaged. Implementing the Voyager label-generating functionality could simplify this process. Moving all labeling and relabeling through a single workflow will improve efficiency and consistency.
Eliminate the weeding backlog

At WLUL, as at many libraries, weeding is a high priority. Space is severely constrained—student employees have difficulty shelving, users cannot find materials, and additional study space is needed. We are aware of three weeding initiatives: withdrawing JSTOR titles (in coordination with TUG), materials on publisher lists, and materials on the 5th floor. The Collections Coordinator is highly organized and prepared to make substantial progress immediately, in a way that is well coordinated with the TUG last copy agreement.

However, a catalogue/record maintenance threshold has been established, limiting processing to one cart per week. This is because only the Cataloguing librarian has the Voyager permissions necessary to delete holdings and withdraw items. We recommend (as noted elsewhere) that WLUL relax cataloguing and catalogue maintenance permissions to enable associates to withdraw materials and perform the necessary maintenance. In every other library in which we have worked, these responsibilities in weeding workflows are handled exclusively by paraprofessionals. As described above, cataloguing time currently spent on copy cataloguing and processing YBP monographs can be redirected to this critical task.

Another concern is that no staging area is available for weeding projects so materials cannot be batch processed. Once significant space has been cleared by weeding, we recommend that a staging area be created somewhere within the stacks and batch withdrawal process be established with Voyagers “Pick and Scan” functionality: (http://learn.exlibrisgroup.com/course/view.php?id=50).

Be prepared to move books from the Waterloo location to Brantford

Given the low and declining use of print books generally, we were surprised to hear that Brantford students are clamoring for more - especially those focused in Criminal Justice and related disciplines, which are largely taught at Brantford. R2 recommends permanent relocation of relevant collections to Brantford to the extent that shelf space is available. Since usage is relatively low on the Waterloo campus, and space is at a premium, this solution may be a win, win. Once appropriate items can be identified, Voyager’s Pick and Scan can be used to change locations codes in batch.

A Criminology “profile” could quickly be established, with relevant titles identified via a rules-based approach. Related books will primarily fall in the following H sub-classes, as well as the Js (Political Science) and Ks (Law). There may be related materials in the History sub-classes D-F.

Before the library embarks on this project, however, R2 recommends a closer look at the real (not just the perceived) needs and behaviors of Brantford students. A relocation project like the one envisioned will be expensive. In this context, it is important to note that a recent data extract from Voyager indicates that more than half of WLUL’s circulating monographs in these broad LC classes have never circulated. Details can be found on the next page. Here again, the libraries should seek to ensure a reasonable ROI. It may be that greater investment in eBooks (for example) would be a more prudent approach to increasing Brantford student access to monographic content.
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Stop accepting donated books for the general collections

Libraries throughout North America have had to face the fact that donated books are not free and that too many gift books can become a liability. WLUL reports that the number of gifts has decreased to fewer than 500 per year (number drawn from the self-study). During the course of interviews, we also heard that 1,392 items were received in FY10 with approximately 150 finally accessioned.

These numbers should be verified, but regardless of the specifics, processing donated books is a multi-step, manual process. Steps include searching all items in Voyager; segregating titles of potential interest to Archives; creating and maintaining Excel spreadsheet for both Main and Archives; marking materials that are 5 years old or less and not already held; determining if Brantford might want a title held in Waterloo; creating a gift PO in Voyager for items that will be added; searching the value in Amazon; preparing tax receipt letters for donors – and, of course, cataloguing and processing the item for the collection. Unwanted items are staged, boxed, and shipped to Better World Books for sale: http://www.betterworldbooks.com/.

While accepting gifts has a long history in libraries as a practice that generates good will and adds desirable materials to the collection, the return on staff time invested in processing them is seldom justified. Research has shown that in-kind donors are seldom significant future financial donors. Many donors are simply trying to clear their own offices and shelves and obtain tax deductions. Most print books are never used. As many libraries move to ordering materials on an as-needed basis, investing in building a retrospective collection through the addition of gifts is no longer a best practice.

The current WLUL gifts policy states that:

*The Library is pleased to accept donations for the Waterloo, Kitchener, and Brantford campus libraries. On receipt, the Library becomes the owner of the materials and determines whether they will be added to the collection and where they will be located. Decisions about whether an item will be added to the collection are based on the Library’s collections policies, the item’s physical condition, whether it duplicates material already in the collection, its long-term research interest to Laurier students and faculty, and its relevance to the Laurier curriculum. Items not added to the collection may be sold (with the proceeds used for library materials) or given to another library.*

R2 recommends that the language and the philosophy concerning gift books be revised as it has been in many academic libraries. WLUL should articulate the reasons for a highly-selective approach to gifts-in-kind, citing the declining use of print, the extent of already-held materials, significant space constraints, ability to provide materials not held locally via interlibrary loan, and the costs associated with gifts processing, both in staff time and opportunity costs such as other uses for time and shelf space.

More specifically, we suggest that WLUL no longer accept donated books for the general collection. Exceptions might include titles published within the last two years. Even these should be vetted via a collection profile, similar to those designed for approval plans. Duplicates should be disposed of. Obviously, high-status donors should be treated respectfully, but with a practical honesty that most donors will appreciate. Another exception to the general rule of non-acceptance might be rare or especially valuable books. If these do not fit the libraries’
collections policies, however, they should be sold. Donated books intended for Archives should match the very specific policy that has recently been drafted.

**Analyze the return on investment with regard to Better World Books**

Many libraries use Better World Books (BWB) as an option for disposing of unwanted materials, either withdrawn books or unwanted gift books. BWB facilitates use of their service via their Client Portal, which enables the user to print shipping labels. They also offer free pick-up, which the library schedules. While BWB encourages libraries to use their “Prescreen Tool,” this is not required. A simple manual sort can quickly determine the categories of materials BWB will accept. Most BWB library partners have found that reducing work by the library maximizes the return on investment. We recommend, at a minimum, that WLUL cease checking the BWB Prescreen Tool.

At present, WLUL uses the Better World Books program in coordination with the campus Bookstore. The latter program involves putting drop bins (into which students can deposit textbooks that the Bookstore will not buy back) outside the Bookstore. These bins must be placed and emptied by library staff. Currently, library staff (or student employees) search the BWB database by ISBN for items (withdrawals, textbooks, and unwanted gifts) before sending any to BWB. THE BWB database indicates whether the library should send the item or not.

If the item does not have an ISBN, WLUL either puts those items in recycling bins or sends the bibliographic information to the BWB’s Archive department—and waits to hear if BWB wants the items. Books are then boxed and shipped, keeping bookstore revenue separate from library revenue. The BWB program generated $2,600 in FY10. This should be examined in relation to the number of books that were processed for this program by WLUL and the cost of staff time required to do the work. Elimination of ISBN searching (with the Prescreen Tool) may result in some time savings, but even so, it may also be that the staff and the opportunity costs simply outweigh the benefits. What could these members of staff do that would offer greater benefits to patrons?

From a pure business perspective, it appears to R2 that the library is doing all the work, but giving the revenue from the textbooks to the Book Store. Our first thought is to get out of this relationship altogether. WLU has a campus-wide recycling program that the Bookstore could take advantage of directly. If, for reasons related to campus relations the library wishes to provide this service to the Bookstore, then the textbook revenue should be retained by the library along with that from their own discards. In addition to some increase in revenue, the process would be dramatically simplified.

**Implement a rules-based approach to rebinding and repair**

One area where improvements are possible is the handling of decisions regarding rebinding and repairing materials. R2 recommends streamlining the decision process. Currently, when books are returned or identified in the stacks that are damaged, our understanding is that they are routinely repaired if this is possible. If an item cannot be repaired, an employee in Collection Management creates a paper decision flag for the item, date stamps it, and puts it on a review shelf in Technical Services where librarians are supposed to review the items weekly. The choices are rebind, withdraw, send to the TUG Annex (if last copy in TUG, return to the stacks as is, or replace through reorder.) Not all librarians review these materials in a timely manner and materials can sit of the review shelves for longer than one week.
Most libraries have moved from involving professional librarians in decisions about the appropriate attention (bind, repair, rebind, etc.) to be given individual titles. This is accomplished by developing a rules-based decision tree so that employees in the unit doing the work can make an appropriate decision. Currently, an employee already populates the decision report form with data (i.e., other holding libraries, number of circulations by year) on which the decision is based.

R2 recommends that the Collection Development Librarian (position described below) decide the criteria/rules that will be used, and transfer responsibility for acting on these criteria to the staff member performing the work. For example, WLUL might decide that items that have not circulated in a specified number of years (excluding the circulation that identified the problem) and are held in another TUG library should be not be repaired and should be withdrawn; if said item is not held in another TUG library, it should be sent to the TUG Annex. The point here is to invest employee time and spend binding funds only on materials that are being used.

Implement media scheduling software and permit DVDs and videos to circulate outside the library
Currently, faculty who wish to schedule a videotape or DVD for in-classroom viewing are asked to complete a web-based form (library.wlu.ca/forms/mediabook) at least ten days prior to viewing. Instead, we recommend that WLUL implement something like the Voyager media scheduling module, which will eliminate the need for a stand-alone booking system and automatically block circulation that would conflict with the scheduled use. Note that there is a video tutorial on using “Media Booking in Hawaii Voyager” on YouTube (media booking 2010.mov).

Further, we recommend that WLUL permit circulation of these materials as many academic libraries have done. Nearly all users have the appropriate viewing equipment at home and do not need to rely on library equipment. Further, users prefer to view media in their own space at a time that is convenient to them. A potential benefit of circulating DVDs and videos may be reducing the installed base of onsite viewing equipment.
VIII. Special Collections and Archives
As elsewhere, our intent here is to move materials through the description and processing steps as efficiently as possible, while ensuring the appropriate level of access and preservation.

**Strictly define the scope for Special Collections and Archives**
An important corollary to developing a restrictive gifts policy described for general collections will be a clear collection policy for the University Archives and the library’s Special Collections, defining what is in and what is out of scope. Having such a policy in place will facilitate the implementation of an appropriately restrictive gifts policy, which will in turn ease the pressures that Archives and Special Collections face with regard to processing and housing materials.

R2 is aware that a strategic collection policy for Special Collections and Archives was drafted in May 2010, but has not been officially adopted. This policy states that collecting will focus on three broad categories: environmental and resource conservation; history of Lutheranism in Canada; and history of the Waterloo Region. We applaud this initiative and recommend that the draft be accepted and used both to guide future collecting and assessing unprocessed collections.

**Reduce the cost of processing archives and special collections materials**
Processing is not keeping up with acquisitions in many archives and special collections, and this is also the case at WLUL. For some time, the archival profession has been addressing this problem through an initiative known as “more product, less process,” encouraging changes in processing benchmarks in response to the greater quantities of acquisitions and growing backlogs. See: Mark A. Green and Dennis Meissner, “More Product, Less Process: Pragmatically Revamping Traditional processing Approaches to deal with Late 20th Century Collections,” *American Archivist* 68, no. 2 (fall/winter 2005): 208-263.

The goal is to make the most valuable material available the quickest with the greatest control. The head of WLUL archives has clearly embraced this approach, a key element of which is to describe materials at a level of detail appropriate to their arrangement and use. Another element is to assign the processing of archival collections to the level of employee appropriate to the level of work. We understand that the head of Archives would like to use student employees for much of this work. With regard to cost effectiveness and speed, we support this approach, which will help reduce the existing backlog and prevent it from developing again—and is very much in the spirit of “more product, less process.”

**Choose the appropriate descriptive standards and apply them consistently to archives and special collections materials.**
In addition to making thoughtful and appropriate decisions about the level of description, appropriate descriptive standard must be chosen. Standards include:

- Structural standards like:
• Content standards like:
  o *Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2004), which explain what information to put in those categories, and how to express it; and

• Communication standards like:
  o MARC21 and *Encoded Archival Description*, version 2002 (http://www.loc.gov/ead), which establish a technical syntax for exchanging descriptive information.

None of these standards require or even encourage description to take place at any particular arrangement level. For example, the DACS standard is designed to guide the description of archival materials for a variety of outputs, including multi-level collection inventories (such as an *EAD* finding aid) and single-level descriptions (e.g., a MARC catalogue record). DACS employs a three-tiered definition of level of description: Minimum, Optimum, and Added Value. Again, we applaud WLUL’s archivist for her vision in this regard.

**Implement a data management system designed for archival materials**
At present, however, WLUL archives are catalogued in the MARC format and are entered in Voyager. As some readers are certainly aware, this is generally recognized to be an ineffective approach for describing these kinds of materials.

One option for an archival data management system is the Archivists’ Toolkit™ (http://archiviststoolkit.org) (AT), an open source archival data management system that provides broad, integrated support for the management of archives. It is intended for a wide range of archival repositories. AT’s primary goals are to support archival processing and production of access instruments, promote data standardization, promote efficiency, and lower training costs.

The application supports accessioning and describing archival materials; establishing names and subjects associated with archival materials, including the names of donors; managing locations for the materials; and exporting EAD finding aids, MARCXML records, and Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS), Metadata Object Description Schema: MODS, and Dublin Core records. While it is not as popular in Canada as it is in the US, AT is in use at Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections: http://libraries.dal.ca/collections/archives_special_collections.html and Sisters of Providence, Edmonton, Alberta. Other institutions in Canada may be using AT as well.

As an aside, the library at *New York University* (NYU) received a $1,094,996 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to lead a partnership of three academic libraries to combine features of two archives management systems—Archon (www.archon.org) and the Archivist's Toolkit (AT)—into one project, *ArchivesSpace* (www.archivespace.org), which, like its predecessors, will be open source. This may be an initiative worth watching.

The following is a list of software that can be used by institutions that wish to computerize the management of their fonds and collections. It comes from the Canadian Council of Archives site: http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca/aaswg_usefultools.html. Some may be worth investigating for local applicability:
• CIDG inc. (ADHOC Documents) http://www.cidg.com/: management of administrative records and description of archival records according to RAD.

• COBA (COBA Document): includes the management of records with the help of descriptive files, the conservation calendar, the classification plan, the management of loans, control of access and research.

• Docu-Dépôt inc. (EDC): includes the control of files, the conservation calendar, and the production of reports. (See also the DocuData site.)

• GCI inc. (GESTION VIRTUELLE includes the management of records, classification plan, conservation calendar, and description of archival records according to RAD.

• GESTAR (ARCA): description of archival records according to RAD, and for all levels.

• GESTAR (DOCUMENTIK): includes the location of records, the culling of administrative files and records.

• Grics (GESDOC): includes the classification plan, the conservation calendar and the culling of records.

• SHLM & Infoka (ARCHI-LOG) : description of archival records at all levels according to RAD.

**Invest in a storage solution for locally digitized collections**

WLUL provides Dublin Core (DC) records and locally digitized content to “Our Ontario”, a shared portal to digitized documents (including government documents and historic newspapers), images, and objects from Ontario’s past under the aegis of Knowledge Ontario. This process uses VITA (Video, Image, Text and Audio), a web based toolkit for building digital collections, available as a service of Our Ontario.

VITA enables contributors to upload digital objects and create full descriptions, as well as providing sophisticated search, browse, and other interactive features for users and end users. Every object is made available through the OurOntario.ca portal as well as on a hosted customizable site created specifically for an individual organization’s collections. The VITA software can export a contributor’s record content in XML format for in-house storage, back up, or migration into other systems and databases. This too may be an option worthy of further investigation. We did note the following message on the VITA FAQ page: “We are presently transitioning our existing partners to a fee model for the Toolkit Service.”

Another obvious option is OCLC’s CONTENTdm, which stores, manages, and delivers content. A somewhat less inspiring option might be to work with the campus Information Technology Services (ITS), which “provides computing and communication services to students, faculty and staff for instructional, research and administrative purposes.” ITS does offer a service to host data sets; could they host and manage a server in which the libraries’ digital images could be stored?

At a minimum, R2 recommends that WLUL develop a back-up system for the DC records and digital objects provided to Our Ontario. Redundancy is a generally recommended best practice, which is at present, accomplished via two stand-alone hard drives. Given concern we heard in our interviews about the questionable future funding of Our Ontario (and we note that both the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Citizenship and Ministry of Education denied Knowledge Ontario funding requests in 2011), it is critical to ensure that these objects and records remain permanently available to the WLUL community.
Assign responsibility for copy cataloguing Special Collections books to cataloguing associates

If we understand correctly, copy exists for the majority of books in this part of the collection. All of them, however, are still catalogued by the Head of Cataloguing – as they have been for a long time. R2 can think of no compelling reason for continuing this approach. The associates are experienced copy cataloguers and should assume responsibility for these materials, freeing the department head for higher level work. Only those books without available copy should be routed to an MLS cataloguer.
IX. Summary of Recommendations
As the length of this report attests, R2 seeks to provide the broadest possible range of recommendations. As mentioned previously, university administration, library leadership, librarians, and staff must evaluate them and decide which can benefit WLUL. Some will be ignored or discarded; others modified to better fit the local culture. Again we urge careful consideration of each, because we are confident they can create new capacity within your operations, even as they push you beyond your organizational comfort zone.

We estimate, conservatively, that implementation of R2 recommendations will require 12 to 36 months of concentrated effort. It will be important to think about how to sequence them, how to accommodate dependencies, how best to communicate with participants inside and outside the Libraries, and how to prioritize this work in the context of other critical initiatives. And of course, the R2 perspective is just one of many to consider as the Libraries map their way forward.

In the following chart, we’ve listed all the recommendations included in this report. The list itself has become a tool for some libraries that have used it to evaluate and prioritize recommendations. A good way to begin the evaluation process is to look for “low hanging fruit” - those recommendations that seem most obvious, may already be underway, or may provide the biggest/most immediate benefits in terms of freeing capacity. In some cases, they are required first steps, upon which others hinge.

In a second pass, it might be appropriate to identify those that may have a lower priority, a lower potential yield, or which depend on a previous change. Some of these will offer less leverage in terms of specific workflow improvements, and others will require a longer period of “socialization”, greater collaborative effort, or organizational adjustments that cannot be accomplished in the near term.

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<th>Recommendation</th>
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<td>III. Organizational Culture and Structure</td>
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<td>Reinterpret the collective agreements – promote stronger management</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Establish minimum expectations for librarians and staff</td>
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<td>Establish standard approaches for routine tasks and expect conformance</td>
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<td>Implement regular employee performance evaluations</td>
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<td>Establish clear/shared priorities and timeliness standards</td>
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<td>Develop operational and strategic benchmarks</td>
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<td>Measure and control quality via sampling</td>
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<td>Eliminate overly granular and/or manual tallies whenever possible</td>
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<td>Institute a management training program</td>
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<td>Adopt a more hierarchical administrative model</td>
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<td>Strengthen the role of Associate University Librarian – expand the number from two to three</td>
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<td>Strive for symmetry</td>
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<td>Assume that the AULs and the UL will form a representative management team of four</td>
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<td>Promote the most competent staff members to supervisory positions</td>
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<td>Encourage all WLU entities (and non-WLU partners) to order books via GOBI.</td>
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<td>Add Nipissing Education titles to Voyager without the book in hand.</td>
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<td>Take fuller advantage of the GobiSmart set-up for selector and acquisition screen defaults.</td>
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<td>Simplify the fund structure.</td>
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<td>Implement shelf-ready services for YBP monographs.</td>
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<td>Implement a FastCat process at point of receipt.</td>
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<td>Eliminate redundant tracking systems for non-YBP orders.</td>
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<td>Employ students to apply spine labels and complete the physical processing.</td>
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<td>Implement a rules-based approach to rebinding and repair.</td>
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<td>Implement media scheduling software and permit DVDs and videos to circulate outside the library.</td>
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<td>Reduce the cost of processing archives and special collections materials.</td>
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<td>Choose the appropriate descriptive standards and apply them consistently to archives and special collections materials.</td>
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As ever, recommendations from outsiders can have enormous value, but they have obvious limitations as well. We hope that we have put forward a few ideas that can help move your own conversations forward. We thank the librarians and staff for participating so whole-heartedly in this process. The Wilfrid Laurier Libraries have been built through the efforts of many dedicated people, over more than 100 years. Our recommendations seek to build on that foundation and accelerate the Library’s creation of its next generation of library services.