

Executive Summary

On May 1, 2017, a letter from then Interim Vice-President Academic and Provost (VPA), Dr. Richard MacKinnon, was sent to the Library head at the time, Dean of Library and Multicultural Learning, Shawn Bethke, launching a review of the Library. In response to this, Dean Bethke oversaw the implementation of the Library Review Committee (RC), the composition of which was sent to the VPA on May 18, 2017. A timeline for the review was then submitted to the Office of the VPA.

The RC held meetings over the following months and began collecting stakeholder input. A series of events unfolded in 2018 that resulted in a stalling of the review process, including the resignation of the dean and subsequent departure of the chair of the RC, and the initiation of a workplace assessment process by Human Resources. With the significant upheaval in the unit, the timeline of the review was extended and the work picked up again in 2019, under a significantly altered RC.

The first full draft of the self-study report was submitted to the Quality Assurance Committee of Senate (QAC) on November 15, 2019. The QAC met to discuss the draft on December 12, 2019 and responded to the RC with an extensive list of comments and suggested edits. This required significant consolidation within the document as well as updating of sections, given the time that had passed since some sections had been written. With the transition to online learning and service delivery early in 2020 due to COVID, the work on the self-study updates was delayed. The final document was submitted to the QAC on December 12, 2020.

Review team members were identified in March, 2021 and the virtual site visit was held April 28-30, 2021. The two external reviewers – Jennifer Richard, *Academic Librarian, Acadia University*, and Melanie Sucha, *Chief Information Officer, Brandon University* - were assisted by senior CBU staff member and member of the CBU Faculty Association, Tammy Byrne, *Writing Centre Coordinator*. The visit involved meetings with a broad cross-section of faculty, staff, and students. Since the visit was virtual, a tour of facilities was accommodated using the [CBU Virtual Tour](#).

In their report, submitted to the VPA on June 11, 2021, the external reviewers were complimentary of the work of Library staff and librarians, while identifying a number of areas for improvement and investment. Some of the areas of emphasis follow.

- The Library has a committed staff, willing to go above and beyond; “they truly are the most valuable asset of the Library.”
- There is a strong alignment between the work of the Library and the objectives of CBU’s strategic and academic plans, illustrating the Library’s commitment to advancing these plans. As an example, the reviewers highlighted the Downie-Wenjack Legacy Room and the collection of materials focused on residential schools and reconciliation, noting, “CBU Library is leading the way in the incorporation of Mi’kmaq resources and programming in the Library in the Atlantic region.”
- The Library makes positive contributions to the student experience and to EDI at CBU.

- Although it could benefit from review to ensure sufficient breadth and depth, overall, collection access is sufficient and the collection is in a healthy state.
- There is a need for improved communication and better partnerships between the Library and other units across the university.
- Rapid enrolment growth has resulted in significant space constraints and strain on services.
- There are a number of accessibility issues in the space, including in the Circulation desk area and reaching the second floor.
- Investments in the Library should focus on staffing and the physical space.

The Library RC submitted a response to the report of the external reviewers to the Office of the VPA in September, 2021. The make-up of the QAC changed substantially with the start of a new academic year, so new members reviewed all relevant documents, including the self-study document, the external reviewers' report, and the RC response, over the course of two meetings. Their comments were submitted to the VPA for consideration in his response.

In the VPA's response, thirteen VPA recommendations were stated.

Recommendation 1: Finalize the new organizational unit, combining the Library and Cultural Resources.

Recommendation 2: Undergo annual training on safety and securing, ensuring all unit members are aware of their roles in the case of emergencies.

Recommendation 3: Hold regular and ongoing meetings between the Dean, Library and Cultural Resources and the Chief Information Officer.

Recommendation 4: (For university administration) Create a dedicated budget line for ongoing OER development and emerging RDM initiatives.

Recommendation 5: Renovate the circulation desk to include reference services and ensure accessibility. (A panic button should be installed as part of this renovation.)

Recommendation 6: Investigate the renovations required to make the elevator at the rear of the Library more useable for Library patrons. Further space redesigns should be included in this investigation, such as office spaces and programming spaces, in achieving this result of accessibility to the second floor via the existing elevator.

Recommendation 7: (For university administration) Keep the need for additional space in the Library front-of-mind as decisions are made around movement of units and/or possible expansions.

Recommendation 8: Complete the hiring of an Indigenous Information Specialist.

Recommendation 9: Prioritize administrative/managerial support and circulation duties in the next hiring requests.

Recommendation 10: Ensure all Library Technicians complete training and show proficiency in the use of Alma.

Recommendation 11: Given recent additional hires, expand the hours of the reference desk service.

Recommendation 12: Consider an internal adjunct model to support collaboration with units that focus on student and faculty support, e.g., Jennifer Keeping Centre, Writing Centre, Math & Science Centre, Centre for Teaching and Learning.

Recommendation 13: Move the Writing Centre into the Library space to better support students by having research and writing support co-located. The Math and Science Centre should also be considered for relocation to the Library, assuming appropriate space exists to accommodate the collaborative model the centre utilizes.

The final report was submitted to Senate in December, 2021, for approval at the January 21, 2022 meeting.