

Library PARC, Collections Location Strategy & Campus Consultation

Report and Recommendations for Movement of
Collections

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December 2014

Executive Summary

As the largest library in western Canada, UBC Library is a leader in ensuring the persistence of the scholarly record, which is achieved through managing content locally in both physical and digital collections. The University of British Columbia Libraries is currently building a high-density library storage facility, Library Preservation **ARChives** at UBC (PARC), as part of its strategy for collection management in order to **leverage the Library's collective capacity to define and implement a broader, system-wide approach to achieving the library's print retention strategy.**

A campus departmental consultation process was identified as a way to help verify and adapt the library's newly developed collection location strategy. With the assistance of staff and the Senate Library Committee, a campus consultation plan process was developed and implemented over a period of six months—January through June 2014.

This report summarizes the results of the consultation and provides a series of recommendations in six specific areas.

Background

UBC Library has identified a key strategic **commitment to optimal use and maximization of space in campus library branches** to provide a variety of study, research, and cultural opportunities for its users. Due to the ongoing growth of its physical collections, it is imperative that the Library creates a plan for identifying and monitoring collections usage to determine which materials should remain in campus branch libraries.

In 2005, the Library opened the Automated Storage & Retrieval System (ASRS), its robotic storage facility in the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre. The ASRS is now nearing capacity, creating the need for a second storage facility. UBC Library received approval and funding for such a storage facility in 2013. It is a new modular storage facility, with space for up to five more modules, to accommodate for the future growth of collections with lower capital and operating costs that are one quarter the cost of conventional library space.

Library PARC's location was chosen for its proximity to the main campus, allowing for fast, efficient and low cost delivery of items to and from the facility, as well as convenient access for patrons. Located on UBC Vancouver's South Campus, it will provide 2,280 square metres of high-density collection storage, capable of housing approximately 1.6 million volumes. PARC will provide a preservation environment (primarily for paper) with controlled temperature,

humidity, and lighting – preserving materials up to seven times longer than their average life span. The facility will also house a campus-wide records management service, in addition to a small digitization area, a contained freezer area for decontamination, a staff work area, and a publicly accessible reading room.

Collections Management

The construction of Library PARC will allow UBC Library to retain print materials even as it acquires more electronic resources. In the future, when online resources are more abundant, it may be asked whether there is a need to retain print copies of electronic and digitized materials at all. **The current digital infrastructure and publishing industry are not sufficiently reliable to warrant en masse de-acquisition of print materials.**

The Library's first priority is to provide direct on-campus access to materials required to support current academic programs. **Collections will be evaluated** based on usage and circulation statistics, faculty and student input and online availability to determine their optimal location.

Library PARC is expected to house least used materials, as well as materials which may benefit from the facility's controlled environment and heightened security. Selected materials currently in branches and in the Automated Storage and Retrieval System (ASRS) will be moved to PARC.

Selection criteria for movement of collections to the facility will vary across disciplines, departments and collections themselves. When considering which titles will be transferred to storage, branch subject specialists will use criteria outlined in the **Locations Strategy document** (*see Appendix II*) as a guide.

In its simplest form, the collection location strategy provides a three tiered approach to the housing of materials.

1. Campus branch libraries will house moderate to high-use items, new publications, items core to research and teaching, and reference sources.
2. ASRS, located at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, will house moderate use collections.
3. Library PARC, located in the Research precinct (south side of campus), will store least used serials and monographs, items with online equivalents, and older items designated for retention.

Campus Consultation Strategy

A working group consisting of members of the Library's Collections Advisory Committee, the Library Assessment Officer and Jo Anne Newyear Ramirez, Associate University Librarian, Collections Development and Management, was formed to develop a consultation process regarding upcoming collections moves for the many departments on campus. Five questions were developed, as well as a Collections Strategy Location document and a Library PARC FAQ document. Department heads were contacted and asked to supply delegates from each department whom the committee could consult with. Associate University Librarian Jo Anne Newyear Ramirez sent an initial introductory email that introduced the upcoming PARC facility and invited each department to take part in a consultation to aid in developing a collections strategy. Each department head was asked to nominate a faculty member in his/her department to receive the five questions and accompanying materials. Three attempts at contact were made over the course of four months. Consultations concluded in June 2014.

The objectives of this consultation process were:

- To understand faculty needs and expectations regarding movement of collections to PARC to help the Library implement effective policies
- To communicate library activities and vision to faculty members
- To develop and foster goodwill between faculties/departments and the Library
- To ensure academic faculties/departments had an opportunity to contribute to the selection process for storage of collections used by their department.

Analysis of Responses

Interviews with interested departments were conducted between February and June 2014. A total of 170 emails to 102 departments, institutes, and schools were sent between January 20, 2014 and April 15, 2014. As many as three attempts were made to contact department heads to set up a consultation. Of the 102 departments contacted, 67 did not respond, suggesting that they are well-served by the various ebook and ejournal collections licensed and owned by the Library.

Of the 102 departments contacted, 35 agreed to an interview, 27 responded but declined the interview invitation, and 40 did not respond at all. Over half of the 27 departments that declined to interview indicated that they rely heavily on e-resources and that the transfer of print materials to PARC does not worry them. 85% of the non-respondent departments are in the faculties where we expect the transfer of print collections to have a lower impact.

Of the thirty-five departments interviewed, twenty-one expressed no great concern about the move of their print collections. Eleven departments expressed some concern, though most of these supported the PARC initiative overall. Only three departments expressed major concerns. The most common were focused on “browseability” and collections movement criteria. Many departments expressed fears that the inability to physically peruse the shelves in the main library branches would lead to far fewer serendipitous discoveries of materials. In terms of collections moves, many departments expressed interest in viewing a list of the items slated to be sent to PARC. Most were dissuaded when told that lists will be thousands of items long, and have agreed that reviewing criteria for moves will be sufficient.

There was a notable difference in the responses from arts related faculties and departments as opposed to those that are science related. Most science departments have little trouble allowing older materials to be stored in Library PARC primarily because scientific research tends to draw on the newest materials, often serials, which are mostly accessible online. Conversely, subjects such as history and English literature rely on the use of materials both new and old, and typically value monographs much more highly than scientific researchers. A number of arts departments expressed concern for the loss of monographs which could be valuable to their research.

Many of the departments which expressed “some concern” had numerous questions about the facility. The most common questions included:

- What is the delivery time for materials?
- What is the timeline for moving books into PARC?
- Is there a way to preserve the “browseability” of materials?
- Will materials be readily available after they’ve been put into PARC?
- How much parking will be available at the PARC facility?
- What are the criteria for selecting items for storage in PARC?

A number of specific and unique concerns also came forth, usually relating to different types of materials. For example, scanned versions of sheet music can often be difficult to read, and streamed versions of audio recordings often lack the sound quality of CDs or LPs. There was concern that scanning art books will constitute a loss in fine details present in the original book. Additionally, there were concerns that materials written in non-Roman characters should be retained in the central campus libraries because they are already difficult to find in the catalogue and will likely be unreadable to most PARC staff. Some interesting suggestions were

made as well, including allowing retired faculty to store their personal libraries in PARC, to have locked space for researchers who need to spend extended periods of time at PARC, and to consider storing other media, such as magnetic audio tapes.

Results & Recommendations

1. Meet faculty user expectations for delivery of materials (PARC service model)

Recommendations:

- a. Provide next-day business day delivery, and electronic delivery Monday-Friday within business hours (for example, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.).
- b. Consider alternative hours of business, such as opening one evening or part of a Saturday.
- c. Provide secure storage for visiting scholars using the reading room.
- d. Provide access to appropriate equipment for utilizing different media if stored at PARC, including microfilm, film and audio recordings.
- e. Provide departments with regular updates regarding anticipated service parameters for the facility.
- f. Address the question of providing storage space for departments.

It is expected that materials stored in Library PARC will be requested online through the Library's catalogue. The documentation provided to each department clearly indicates that the delivery of material will predominantly be electronic when copyright allows. Comments from departments that "scanning is more advantageous and a better service than the ASRS" show support for this service approach. In practice, many of the scanned documents will likely be sent same day; with proper workflows to ensure that materials are retrieved from the shelves early enough in the day.

Though most departments are pleased with electronic delivery of materials at PARC, one department expressed great concern when presented with this model, indicating several issues with the proposed digitization service:

- Lack of deliveries on Saturdays and Sundays is not tenable for research needs.
- Scanning of print materials with colour reproductions may constitute a loss in quality through low resolution or loss of colour.

- Copyright issues for images may restrict the ability to reproduce the images, removing the ability to receive digitized copies of materials.
- Viewing an entire journal issue is very important for some research, since this allows readers to uncover key contextual information such as advertisements, front and back matter, etc. In some cases, the actual research matter is presented in advertisements and other parts of journals.

One department wondered whether there will be “adequate staff training or expertise available so that those scanning the books at PARC will be able to determine page numbers in CJK languages/script.” Another wondered whether “the PARC branch library will have the necessary equipment to read all the information formats [potentially] held at the storage unit (e.g., LP, CD, VHS, microfilm, microform, etc. players).”

However, **most departments were satisfied with a service model that has stored materials electronically delivered to the user, or physically delivered to a central campus library location by next business day.** Some department responses supported the onsite reading room feature and requested additional services such as lockers where researchers could store their personal materials on-site.

A few departments also expressed interest in storing their materials at Library PARC, such as large collection of research notes and magnetic tapes that might benefit from a controlled environment.

2. Establish timeline and priorities for movement of materials into PARC

Recommendations:

- a. Uphold the Library’s mission to preserve the scholarly record and steward its resources through strategic management of print collections in ASRS and PARC, under the coordination of the Central Technical Services (CTS) Collections Management Program (CMP).
- b. Assign management and coordination of movement projects, timelines and priorities to the CMP in coordination with others in the Library.
- c. Make the movement of least used material to PARC and ASRS a high ongoing priority, using analysis and identification of appropriate content across the library.

Departments have been informed that some Library materials have already been earmarked for intake into the new facility. The library collections management team will be reviewing items in

the ASRS and other Library locations to propose which items should receive priority when collections moves begin.

3. Address concerns over Library PARC storage criteria

Recommendations

- a. Customize movement criteria to reflect the specific needs of departments, with assistance from library subject liaisons and department heads.
- b. Provide more specific information around location strategy.
- c. Explore the expanding definition of multimedia materials in the context of long-term preservation and special collections acquisitions, with particular focus on LPs and other audio materials. PARC's environment is not suitable for the storage of all media types, but the development of strategies for preserving and stewarding non-textual sources will benefit their management in the future.
- d. Develop ongoing opportunities to work with departments and faculties on the library's future strategies for building and maintaining non-textual collections.
- e. Engage Library Communications and Administration to provide regular communications with departments regarding PARC developments, movement of collections, new acquisitions and plans for library space.

Movement of bound journals for which UBC has online access is generally not seen as problematic. Some departments expressed the need to view larger groups of holdings in main campus branches, but were reassured that materials stored in Library PARC may be relocated back to the main campus at any time. Faculty supported the proposed policy that they may request a permanent transfer back to branch libraries for anticipated usage. In addition, the vast majority of departments indicated a high level of trust in their library subject liaison to make the right choices when earmarking material for storage in Library PARC. The general feeling was that collections moves are the Library's area of expertise, and thus its librarians should be trusted to handle the collections accordingly.

There was some concern about the use of publication dates as a way to select items for movement to Library PARC, which can be part of broader strategy of identifying candidates for storage. Some departments have asked to be kept informed about proposed storage criteria. The desire to review the criteria for movement proposed by subject specialists was universal.

There is a need for individualized collections movement criteria which is specialized by discipline. Further dialogue with departments will be necessary to determine individualized criteria for the possible movement of each discipline's collections.

4. Connect with departments that expressed considerable concern

Recommendations:

- a. Arrange immediate follow up meetings with very concerned departments, that include the Library's departmental liaison, department head, AUL Collections Development and Management, and unit head, and managing AUL.
- b. Arrange other follow-up meetings with departments that indicated various concerns

A few departments indicated substantial concern with the movement of materials into storage, invoking strong language to indicate their disapproval. This indicates a lack of awareness of what is common practice in most of North America's top research libraries. There is a need for raising awareness among faculty about the benefits of long term preservation.

One department stated that it did not support the movement of any material into storage, except where there are e-book versions and they consist primarily of text. Another requested that members of the school be allowed to work closely with their liaison librarian, further stipulating that the liaison must have the appropriate knowledge experience with their discipline and its materials. Yet another department indicated that they consider the collections housed in the stacks to be their laboratory. They reiterated that collections should be readily browseable by faculty and students who rely heavily on the materials.

It should be noted that some department concerns were not directly related to the PARC facility, but rather expressed a general feeling that their needs were not being met by the Library.

5. Address "browseability" and availability of collections

Recommendations

- a. Develop a collections management standard that ensures that every item to be placed into storage is properly catalogued, at a standard developed by the Library.
- b. Develop a strategy to address requests for enhanced records, which may help address other issues of discoverability.

- c. Continue to invest in state-of-the-art, web-enabled research tools and services that facilitate faculty and student access to the vast scholarly and technical resources of the UBC Library, partner libraries, and the global knowledge landscape.
- d. Explore solutions that facilitate greater access and discoverability. For example, Syndetics is a vendor solution that enhances library resource information with additional content, improving a title’s relevancy for readers.
- e. Develop a plan for incorporating tables of contents from older monographs into their bibliographic records.
- f. Propose the creation of a working group to investigate and propose options around the development of a **virtual browse/discovery architecture**. A number of institutions have such systems in place—examples are North Carolina State University’s (NCSSU) Virtual Browse and Cornell University’s automated method to add LC-type call numbers, as well as subject headings, to some 50-60% of Cornell’s 500,000 ebook catalogue records
- g. Collaborate with the Faculty of Arts to develop a visual arts discovery system, possibly enabling university departments across institutions and libraries to share collections, expertise and staff, and assist with curating, discovering and accessing visual sources.
- h. Integrate regional and national accessible collections (i.e. Centre for Research Libraries) into the Library’s discovery framework.

One of the most widespread and pronounced issues brought forth during the department consultations was the concern for loss of “browseability” of the collection. Many researchers value the serendipitous discovery that comes from browsing shelves of physical books – the perfect book for your research could be right next to the one you had originally come to look for. Many departments raised numerous questions around the ability to find and discover materials once they are sent to PARC. Questions and concerns include:

- Ability to discover materials once they are no longer in the open stacks.
- Ability to train students in library research, and in particular the value of browsing shelves.
- Occurrence of serendipitous discovery of materials, which is nearly impossible in Summon.
- Difficulty finding some materials in Summon due to missing or incomplete records.

Ithaka S+R’s study on the research needs of art historians and historians echoes these concerns and emphasizes the need for libraries to maximize access to collections by offering discovery

environments that incorporate the full range of materials whether housed in local campus libraries, storage, online, or at another university. A new challenge for academic research libraries is to develop research support and models that provide new avenues in discovering and accessing primary source materials.

The Ithaka study also highlights the issue of discoverability and access to collections not available locally. Recommendations included that libraries should continue to advance their borrowing partnerships and joint collection management plans. Potential for collaborative agreements and partnerships with other institutions that might present the opportunity to expand the resources available to scholars should be explored. In addition, full text search of digitized books, archival finding aids and non-textual sources should be made available to researchers through their main discovery services, and be as comprehensive as possible.

6. Implement a print preservation strategy

Recommendations:

- a. Establish a formal preservation program supported by adequately trained staff. While a conservator has been appointed on a three year contract and a lab area has been designated, the Library has not enacted the recommendations made in a 2010 Preservation Consultation Report.
- b. Affirm a set of collection and preservation priorities spanning the first five years of implementation and develop an initial preservation strategy to guide decision making.
- c. Establish standards and policies around retention of print materials when digital surrogates exist. Determine whether digital surrogates will meet future needs, and whether print versions should be retained.
- d. Establish partnerships locally, nationally and internationally for shared print services. Across Canada and the US, a growing number of projects are underway to archive and preserve print collections among multiple libraries in a region via print archive networks.
- e. As partnerships develop with regional and national consortia, establish UBC Library and the PARC facility as a key node on those networks.
- f. Coordinate local preservation decisions in the context of regional and national cooperative collection management programs.
- g. Document and develop enduring access strategies for digital information that the Library does not own or control.

The coming opening of Library PARC as a facility for the preservation and storage of print materials was the main driver for this consultation process. A commitment to storing print carries a corresponding commitment to investing in conservation and preservation to ensure the endurance of the key components of these collections for future generations of scholars.

The Library may not be able to afford to preserve everything in its collections, and must **strategically focus its limited preservation resources on carefully selected parts of its collections.**

Digital surrogates will be available in ever-increasing numbers and will impact decisions to retain certain print materials. A sustainable preservation and collection management alliance should be developed regionally, nationally, and internationally to help define criteria for retaining and preserving selected materials.

COPPUL SPAN and HathiTrust are two examples of such alliances. Failing to implement a formal, systematic approach to preservation decades ago, libraries have accumulated very great preservation and conservation needs that must be balanced with the looming challenge of digital preservation. Preparing to address both areas simultaneously presents a challenge, but also an opportunity.

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Appendices

I. PARC Campus Consultation Interview Questions

II. Collections Location Strategy Guidelines