

Revamping an Academic Library with Users' Voice: A Pandemic Response

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Overview

Amid the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, our library entered a transitional phase by moving the library space to a much smaller area. The move was unavoidable due to the growing demand for clinical simulation spaces to supplement the learning needs of our students. The COVID-19 pandemic introduced a high degree of constraints, which heightened the complexity of our undertaking, necessitating greater adaptability. We aimed to center our student voices in the reopening plans and the transition phase, enhancing communication with the student population. We also attempted to connect the transitions with the university's strategic priority of *Exceptional Student-Centred Experience*. Lessons from this experience may apply to academic libraries going through similar changes.

Background

- Library operation was transition to online in March 2020
- Library space was moved to a new space by September 2020 and reopened to students by appointment.
- Students were partially back to campus with restrictions coupled with new challenges concerning the need for
 - refurbish space to meet the requirements of a small academic library,
 - staffing and scheduling to meet the new demands while dealing with the budget restrictions,
 - efficient room reservation system addressing space concerns,
 - instant communication channel for quick reference questions,
 - improved flexibility with website allowing to publish and share learning resources with students,
 - Resources to fulfill technology demands,
 - revised policy and new resources to meet technology lending demands
 - implementing physical distancing within the limited space

Methods

- A hybrid schedule enabled with Zoom and WOnline remote appointment features was utilized for meeting with users.
- Implemented LibAnswers services for chat and FAQs to meet the growing demand for reference questions
- Redesigned and implemented our learning commons website using the Springshare Libguide platform, enabling
 - enhanced flexibility for content management
 - dynamic content connecting with FAQs
 - blog for communicating library news
- Redesigned the room reservation system with WOnline utilizing the familiarity of the system
- New library guides are added based on student and faculty requirements
- Redesigned the library's physical space by acquiring new shelves, comfortable seating, and refurbished learning spaces
- Installed plexiglass sheets to ensure safety of library staff

- Acquired new digital devices, including laptops and iPads, and revised policy for short-term and long-term use
- Conducted a Survey at the end of 2020 to understand faculty and student feedback about our services and remodified services to adapt responses

Conclusion

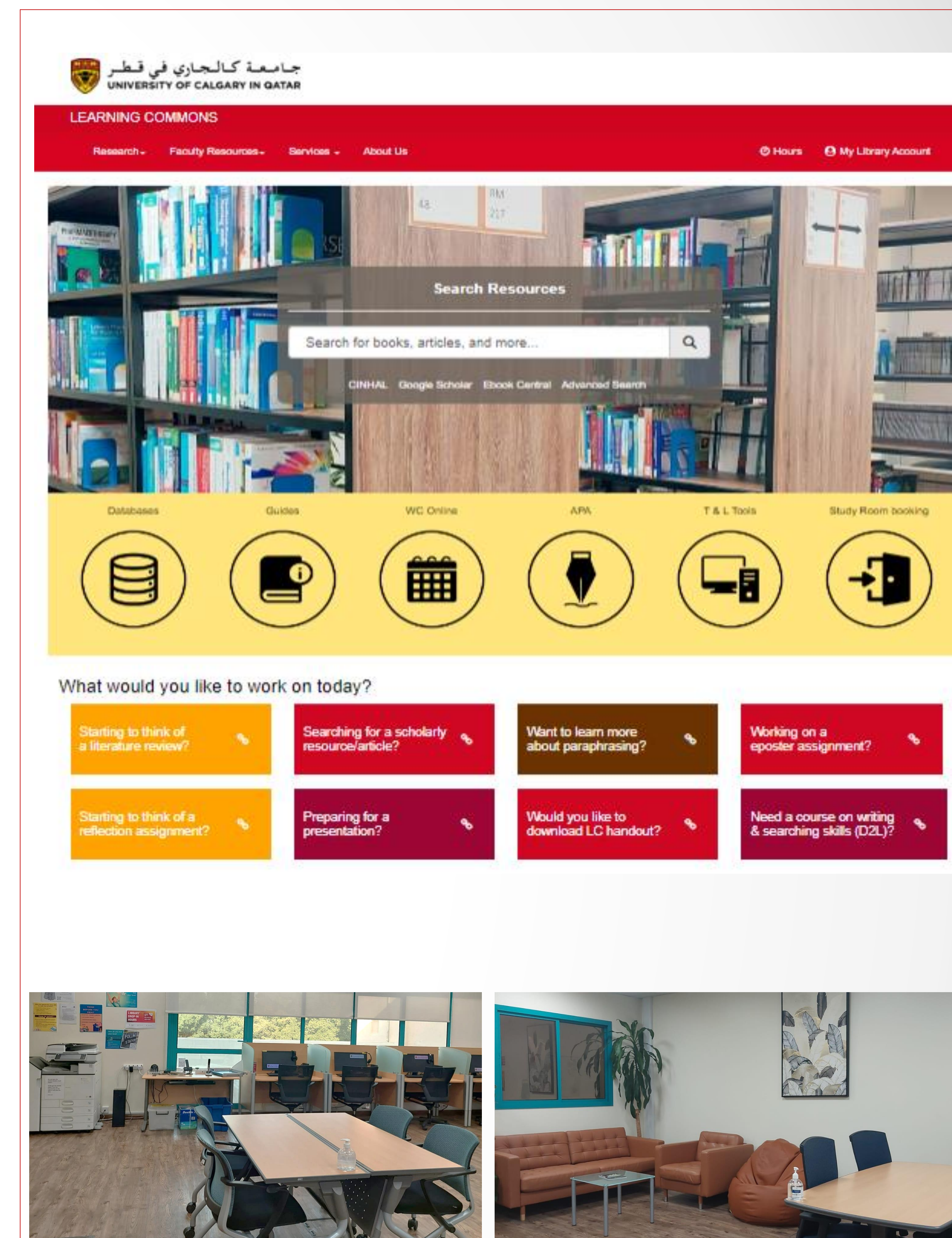
- The process is ongoing adjusting user feedback and course requirements
- The website and room booking system are launched and operational.
- User experience survey indicated that students were satisfied with
 - new website and guides
 - new room booking system.
 - Redecorated reading corners
 - spacious and tidy areas study spaces and computer lab
 - Hybrid meeting opportunities
 - Chat services

Future Directions

- Continue to create collaborative areas that promote active and participatory learning
- Integrate student voices through participatory approach
- Flexibility with the lending policies, particularly for digital devices.
- More digital devices for supplementing the learning needs.
- Extended operational hours for supporting students in clinical courses
- Positive reinforcement for adhering to the new standards and policies.

References

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- Lauseng, D. L., Rafferty, R. S., & Carpenter, K. H. (2022). Information Inputs and Influencing Factors in Administrator Decision Making: A Scoping Review. *Journal of Library Administration*, 62(6), 810-831. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2022.2102382>



Study Room Booking

October 18, 2021

Previous Day | Current Day | Next Day

Display Options

Show All Staff & Resources

Oct. 18, Monday	7:30 am	8:30 am	9:30 am	10:30 am	11:30 am	12:30 pm	1:30 pm	2:30 pm	3:30 pm	4:30 pm	5:30 pm
Study Room F2A											
Study Room F2B											
Study Room F2C											
Study Room F2D											
Study Room F2H											
Study Room F2I											
Study Room F2J											
Study Room F2K											

Previous Day | Current Day | Next Day