

Dear Dean Tierney, Ms. Whitehead, Ms. Soini,

We write to you to make known some concerns and suggestions about library space, both for immediate action and longer-term consideration.

For the past few years, the Lederman Law Library has not been an optimal space for law students. There is a relative paucity of study space for a program that has famously intense amounts of studying work. Although the law library is the primary home of law students, and there is generally little reason for law students to seek materials in the other libraries, the law library, like all of the libraries, is open to all students and community members. The library should be a welcoming space for everyone: however, when non-law undergraduate students use the law library, they are using the space that is primarily intended for law students. Non-law students can study anywhere, but the proximity to law materials make the law library the logical choice for law students.

Of course, we do not believe that anyone should be policing which type of student uses one library or the other. Rather, we must make sure that there is enough space to meet the studying needs of all students. Busy spaces at Stauffer and Douglas are likely driving non-law undergraduate students to the Law library. This is not necessarily just an issue for the libraries: more study space anywhere on Main campus would contribute to alleviating the problem.

At issue is not only the amount of space available, but also when it is open. The Queen's Libraries have been very accommodating to student requests to keep (especially) Stauffer open later. The normal 1:45 AM closing time and the twenty-four hour open period during exam time are certainly welcome.

Notably, the brief early closing (8:45 PM) of the Stauffer Library on the Friday and Saturday before Thanksgiving this year caused some inconvenience. Macdonald Hall, where the Law School and Law Library is housed, also closes in the evening. We are looking to address that problem as well, but in the meantime, law students were finding themselves stranded with no convenient study space for the evenings during Thanksgiving weekends. Queen's is large enough a university that it has a great diversity of students with widely different study habits. Many students would have gone away for Thanksgiving weekend, or perhaps studied during the day and just gone home at five o'clock. But still others may have needed to get away from a busy home and studied at night. The Queen's libraries must accommodate as many students it can.

This is especially a problem for law students who are parents. Several SGPS members have complained that they need to be at home for family time around dinner and bedtimes, especially since they are usually away from their families during day. Their only opportunity to use the library is often after their children are asleep, and if the Law Library closes at 10 pm, this gives them sometimes less than an hour to use the library facilities.

It is also a problem for the many law students who are active in the community through the Queen's Legal Aid clinic, and through the various Pro Bono programs, including the Family Law Pro Bono Program, which represents otherwise unrepresented people at the Unified Family Court. These programs are of utmost value to the students, who gain practical experience, and to the greater community, as many of these legal needs would otherwise remain unmet. However, these opportunities all occur during the normal workday, sometimes until 9 at night. When the library closes at 10, it gives them little time to do their other work, and is a discouragement from participating in these extremely valuable programs.

We therefore recommend that the Library and Archives Master Plan improve the amount of law student study space. We also recommend that Queen's libraries, especially the law library, stay open longer during holiday times. We would also very much like to see the Lederman Law Library, in particular, stay open until at least 1 am on a regular, weekday basis. Of course, since it is study space at issue, it is not necessary for the circulation desk to be open all night. The only staffing requirement would be security, and therefore, costs would be contained.

Thank you for considering our concerns. We look forward to a productive conversation.

Best regards,

SGPS Council



society of graduate & professional students
CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS LOCAL 27

Dear Dean Flanagan, Professor Corbett, and Ms Emrich

We are writing at the request of law students to ask for increased after hours access to the law faculty, both the building itself and the library in particular.

The law program at Queen's is unparalleled in its quality of teaching, the camaraderie of the student body, and the success of the students in achieving articling placements and dignified careers. However, access to the building and the library is providing a challenge to students as we work towards excellence.

The lounge has recently been redone, and is beautiful. However, its availability is severely constrained by the regular operating hours of the Macdonald Hall, and so is the access to classrooms for group studies and the locker room for, well, not having to haul all those books around. More than once has a club been frustrated by its inability to host an event in the lounge on a Friday or Saturday evening, more than once has a study group not been able to find a place on campus for some not-so-tame scholarly discussions, and more than once has an individual wishing to drop off their belongings in the locker room after a late-night study or gym session been turned away by the shut doors of the Macdonald Hall.

In contrast to the Macdonald Hall not allowing after hours law student access, most other academic buildings on campus, home to professional schools and otherwise, have recently implemented an electronic lock system allowing their students to swipe in 24/7. The examples are abundant, including all students in the School of Medicine, and many students in the School of Graduate Studies.

Space and availability of the Lederman Law Library is a growing issue. As I'm sure you're aware, there seems to be an increasing amount of non-law students in the library, which has caused some tension. Additionally, the library closes at 10 pm on weekdays, and earlier on weekends. This is troublesome for many students. The library is an excellent resource and a peaceful place to study. Some of our students are parents, and after dinner and bedtime, can only return to the library and begin studying after 9 pm. Many students are involved in the community, through the clinical and pro bono programs, or through Queen's Legal Aid. This means that they are often providing legal services to the community during the times the library is open. The 10 pm closure of the library makes it more difficult for these students, and those who generally are interested in studying after 10 at night, to achieve the kind of success that Queen's law is known for.

In comparison, the Bora Laskin Law Library at the University of Toronto is open until 11 pm weekdays, as is the Brian Dickson law library at the University of Ottawa, and the Nahum Gelber Law Library at McGill University, notable, is open 24 hours with a student access card.

We ask that you arrange for a few things to help students achieve the best. First, please extend the open hours of the Law library to at least midnight, and preferably

1 am. Second, please arrange a method so students can access the lounge, locker room, and a few classrooms to use as study rooms 24 hours a day. Perry Conrad, the Area Maintenance Manager at Queen's Physical Plant Services, has given us an estimate that installing an electronic lock system would be a one-time cost of about \$5000 (a cost equivalent to less than one third the tuition fees of a single upper year law student).

Thank you very much for considering these requests. We know that you want the best for students, and trust that you will do everything you can to ensure that Queen's Law remains excellent.

SGPS Council

Cc: Dean Tierney

2012 SGPS Planning Coordinator Year Plan
Margaux MacDonald

The SGPS Social Team is looking forward to a great year filled with fun events for our graduate students. In the next few month's we'll be visiting Fort Fright, having a Karaoke night, and hosting some athletic events (before the weather turns too cold!).

As planning coordinator I will be working closely with our commissioner, Cassandra Kuyvenhoven, and our other team members to ensure these events are carried out successfully and with a strong turnout from our graduate students.

Our team is full of great ideas for upcoming events during the winter season, including a ski trip, a curling event, as well as the return of some old favorites – button making and speed-meeting, among others. We're planning on sitting down during the month of October and setting a tentative schedule for the remainder of the year.

Any suggestions or comments you have on our year plan are welcome.

Best,

Margaux MacDonald
Planning Coordinator

2012 SGPS Social Commissioner Year Plan

Cassandra E. Kuyvenhoven

In October, the Social Team has planned two Fall themed events, taking a trip to Fort Fright (and trying not to use participants as human shields because we are all super scaredy-cats) and going on a Haunted Walk.

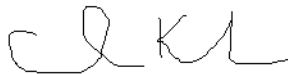
For November, we'll be planning a sporty event (like ice-skating or curling) and another infamous round of karaoke.

In the upcoming months, we hope to have another board-games night, some excellent athletics events, another button-making extravaganza, a February ski trip, and a few nights to watch some Winter sports. Taking feedback from Orientation week, we might plan another Speed-Meet night in the Winter semester for those of whom did not attend the Orientation week meeting.

Our goal is to sit down at some point in October and plan out the remainder of the Fall Semester to ensure that adequate promotion times are achieved. We will similarly begin to plan for the Winter semester mid-December.

If our contracts were to extend to next October, we would also look into planning Orientation events. This might be ideal, given that we've all had experience planning throughout the past year. I think that we would largely keep many of the events that we planned this year, with the exception of bowling after a bit of a kerfuffle with Cloverleaf Lanes and a low turn-out. Other than that, we feel that a year is nearly enough time to recover from the non-stop party-rush of Orientation September 2012.

If you have any questions or suggestions, we will be happy to accommodate.



Cassandra Kuyvenhoven
SGPS Social Commissioner