

As UOIT has grown, so has its space needs. In its review of the preliminary 2013/2014 budget Academic Council Executive Committee became very concerned about the trend of spending an increasing proportion of our operating budget on growing our physical infrastructure at the expense of other academic priorities. Unlike other universities, UOIT funds a significant portion of our space through our operating budget, including the debenture on the original buildings, rent for buildings at the downtown location and the portables at the north location. The operating budget also covers faculty and staff salaries, IT, laboratory supplies, utilities and other items required to run the university. Thus, there is a trade-off between increasing space and making other quality improvement activities, such as hiring more faculty. The Executive Committee determined that business as usual is no longer an option and it needed to take immediate action to address our space needs. While our space problem was the impetus for taking action so quickly, it was felt that we should take this opportunity to begin to act on our Strategic Plan of preparing graduates for the 21<sup>st</sup> century by transforming learning strategies. We will start by revisiting our pedagogy and the way that we are offering our courses. Can we not only save space, but also improve the quality of our courses at the same time? The Committee believes that such change must be driven by the collegium at the level of the individual faculty member.

In November 2012, the Academic Council Executive Committee established a UOIT Task Force on the Transformation of Learning, in collaboration with Provost's Council. The Task Force is comprised of members of the Academic Council Executive Committee on a volunteer basis, and representatives of Provost's Council as designated by the deans. Its mandate is to:

- Recommend to the Committee and Provost's Council by December 17, 2012 specific strategies that will reduce by 10% the university's dependence on academic space for September 2013.
- Develop a plan for submission to the Committee and Provost's Council by April 30, 2013 that will lead to wide-scale learning transformation over the next three years, and at the same time resolve UOIT's critical space shortages through imaginative uses of technology.

To ensure the success of this effort, a portion of the 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 budgets will be made available for the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations to achieve the needed changes.

The Task Force is chaired by Mark Green (AC Exec and Science) and its members are: George Bereznai (Energy Systems and Nuclear Science), Jean-Paul Desaulniers (Science), Francois Desjardins (Education), Ron Hinch (AC Exec and Social Science and Humanities), Hossam Kishawy (Engineering and Applied Science), Gail Lindsay (AC Exec and Health Sciences), Meghann Lloyd (Health Sciences), Brad Maclsaac (Planning & Analysis), Bill Muirhead (Academic and IT), Olivia Petrie (Provost's Office/Student Life), Marj Rempel (Teaching & Learning), and Pamela Ritchie (Business and Information Technology).

Given that the preparation of the 2013/2014 budget is well underway, the initial recommendations of the Task Force are required within a few weeks of its formation. Unfortunately, this made it impossible to broadly consult the university community before the preparation of the first report. It is the Task Force's intention to undertake broad consultation before the preparation of the second report and this will be a continuous process over the next three years.

Through the latter half of November and the first part of December, the Task Force met several times to generate ideas and discuss solutions. The Task Force also invited feedback and suggestions from the Faculty deans and planning officers. In addition, Task Force members consulted among colleagues within their programs and units to elicit ideas and suggestions. Given the short notice not all faculties were able to reply, so for this report the Task Force worked with the data it had and will incorporate feedback from all faculties in its second report. Ultimately, the Task Force has identified several campus-wide initiatives that can be implemented for the 2013-14 academic year, along with initiatives that can be considered by individual faculties. The Task Force has also identified several longer term initiatives that will be examined over the winter term.

While the Task Force acknowledges that the space crisis has provided the motivation for its work, it also sees this as an opportunity to engage the entire university in an effort to improve both the quality of our courses and the overall student experience. An obvious solution to our space problem is to increase the number of hybrid and online offerings and, while this is a major component of our recommendations, it is not the only approach. We realize that hybrid and online delivery are not appropriate for some courses and students, so should only be considered in cases where it will improve course quality or provide students with more flexibility in their schedules. It was noted that each of these changes may have corollary effects which must be addressed, such as adequate development support and more student study space on campus. Other possibilities include probing how classroom time is used with the aim of reducing tutorials in upper year courses and re-examining course scheduling approaches that increase classroom utilization.

Several programs have already undertaken significant course re-design to make greater use of available technological tools, and that has provided the Task Force with helpful examples of the kinds of supports and structures that need to be in place and appropriately budgeted to support this activity. These include ensuring that:

- Appropriate recognition is given for the investment of time and effort that will be required of individual instructors and teaching assistants
- Opportunities are provided for training and collaboration in pedagogy and course re-design
- Effective supports are in place to ensure student success in the online environment
- Upgrades are made to the technical infrastructure as needed to provide a quality experience for both students and instructors, and
- These initiatives are championed and valued at every level at the university.

The Task Force does not view hybrid and online delivery as a way of reducing costs and increasing faculty workload. While online delivery can reduce preparation and lecture time, it increases individual student contact time. This should be taken into consideration when courses are assigned to instructors, either by limiting the section sizes for hybrid and online courses or by providing an appropriate level of

TA support. University wide guidelines need to be developed for section sizes for online courses, both in the case of individual instructors and the number of TAs that are provided for larger sections.

Faculties that actively participate in space reduction and the transformation of learning must be rewarded for their efforts. A space reduction in one Faculty must not be viewed as a space gain for another Faculty that is participating differently in the process.

Detailed metrics for the success of this project will be presented in the second report, but there are two obvious and easy ones that we will present now. The first is classroom utilization rates. The Task Force has examined the current utilization rates for our classrooms and found that the utilization rate varies considerably depending upon the size of room, day of the week and time of day. The existing utilization rates vary from around 30% to 100%. Our goal is to reduce the variation in utilization rates and bring them to an average level of 85% (for 8am to 5pm Monday through Friday). Second, the NSSE scores are a measure of student engagement and satisfaction, which can be used to track the overall impact of our changes in course delivery over time.

#### **A. UNIVERSITY-WIDE CHANGES TO TAKE EFFECT IN 2013-14**

The Task Force is recommending specific changes to the scheduling of undergraduate courses for the 2013-14 academic year that will achieve an estimated reduction of 5% in the use of classrooms across the university. These changes in combination with individual strategies undertaken by the Faculties will achieve the goals set out for the Task Force and provide the framework for ongoing improvements to programs and courses and in the student experience. The changes include:

1. Restricting teaching blocks to 60-minutes, 90-minutes and 3-hours only
2. Reducing all 2-hour teaching blocks to 90-minutes
3. Reducing all 4-hour teaching blocks to 3-hours and any exceptions will need to be justified in writing and approved by the Provost
4. Lifting all existing scheduling constraints and/or requirements that have been placed on specific courses, instructors and faculties (over the years a large number of constraints have been added to scheduling dealing with preferred teaching times for individual instructors and faculties, this is a luxury that we can no longer afford)
5. Making information about study space readily available to students through the web or by posting room schedules outside the doors
6. Restoring and refurbishing areas for student and group study wherever possible, including atriums, hallways, boardrooms, and poor quality teaching spaces while ensuring that the necessary caretaking, security, and noise control measures are in place to support the increased use
7. Optimizing all available classroom space for the scheduling of group presentations and/or exams, including the UED building when BEd students are out on practicum (i.e., from Nov 25-Dec 13, 2013 and from March 17-April 28, 2014)

## **B. FACULTY-SPECIFIC STRATEGIES FOR 2013-14**

The Task Force has identified a number of different options that Faculties may undertake individually and in combination to re-think the classroom experience and ultimately improve the utilization rates among classrooms, labs and tutorials within the different programs to accommodate more course sections within the same amount of space. The options are expressed as broad goals that we hope will provide individual Faculties with broad flexibility to implement changes that will be appropriate for their specific programs and the students they teach. Ultimately, it is anticipated that individual Faculties will reduce the overall number of in-class hours by 5% for September 2013, and by an additional 5% in January 2014. Possible options include:

1. Expanding and formalizing support for existing communities of practice to facilitate faculty engagement in course re-design at all levels, including content delivery, assignment design and alternative forms of assessment and evaluation
2. Assisting the scheduling of courses by pairing courses with bi-weekly labs and hybrid offerings, and developing set schedules for specific programs that will stand for more than one year
3. Re-designing lectures, tutorials and/or labs to implement a hybrid format that blends face-to-face instruction with a significant portion of online learning
4. Increasing the number of sections in existing online courses and ensuring that they are properly resourced
5. Developing or piloting new online/hybrid course offerings

## **C. LONGER-TERM OPTIONS FOR 2014-15 AND BEYOND**

The longer term mandate of the Task Force is to develop a plan that will lead to the wide-scale learning transformation as outlined in UOIT's Strategic Plan over the next three years, and at the same time resolve UOIT's critical space shortages through imaginative uses of technology. To that end, the group has also identified a number of strategies and initiatives that will be examined in the coming months, including:

1. Analyzing the purpose of tutorials, especially at the second third and fourth year levels with a view to offering different kinds of educational experiences for students where appropriate, such as offering them in different modalities, and/or utilizing different pedagogies or learning strategies
2. Exploring assignment design, active and experiential learning and student assessment and evaluation to transform our use of space, reduce our reliance on final exams and improve student engagement
2. Examining cognate courses in different programs where possible to bring students together from different programs
3. Assessing courses with high repeat rates to consider the kinds of supports students/instructors that may help to increase the rate of success among students
4. Establishing targets for classroom utilization and minimum class sizes for undergraduate courses
5. Reviewing courses at the graduate level that may contribute to the goals of this project

6. Reviewing office utilization with a view to making it more efficient. (e.g., move offices into labs, explore working from home, space for faculty to meet and mingle, virtually and in person)
7. Ensuring that new classrooms and classroom renovations are designed as flexible space
8. Enhance the current TA training program to provide our TAs with the skills required to participate in alternative delivery mechanisms and provide certification upon completion of the program
9. Establish a multi-disciplinary research group to study online tools and techniques for online learning from both the education and technical perspectives
10. Explore a standard set of technologies and services that can be used to support hybrid/online courses on a university wide basis

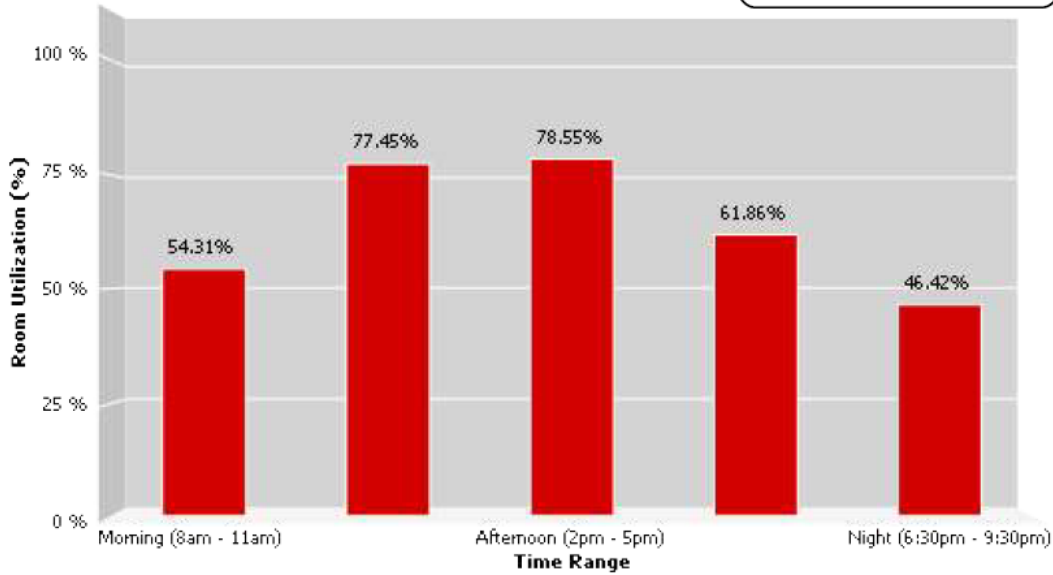
Appendix 1

Excerpts from Space Utilization Study

**Summary**

**Space Utilization**

**Room Utilization**  
63.93%  
**Total Rooms**  
39 Room(s)



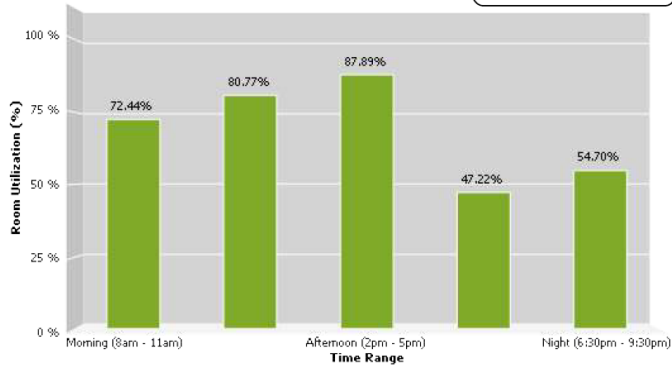
	Number of Rooms Used	Room Hours Available	Room Hours Used	Room Hours Free	Room Utilization (%)
Morning (8am - 11am)	39	7605.00	4130.33	3474.67	54.31%
Mid-Day (11am - 2pm)	39	7605.00	5889.83	1715.17	77.45%
Afternoon (2pm - 5pm)	39	7605.00	5973.83	1631.17	78.55%
Dinner (5pm - 6:30pm)	39	3802.50	2352.33	1450.17	61.86%
Night (6:30pm - 9:30pm)	39	7605.00	3530.50	4074.50	46.42%
<b>Distinct Totals</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>34222.50</b>	<b>21876.83</b>	<b>12345.67</b>	<b>63.93%</b>

**Capacity Range: 51-80**

**Monday**

**Room Utilization**  
70.98%  
**Total Rooms**  
12 Room(s)

**Space Utilization**

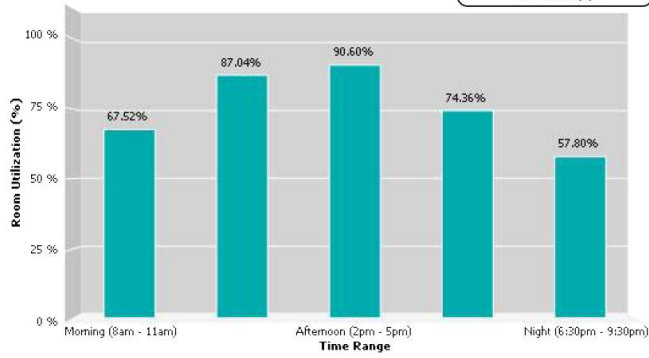


**Capacity Range: 51-80**

**Tuesday**

**Room Utilization**  
75.59%  
**Total Rooms**  
12 Room(s)

**Space Utilization**

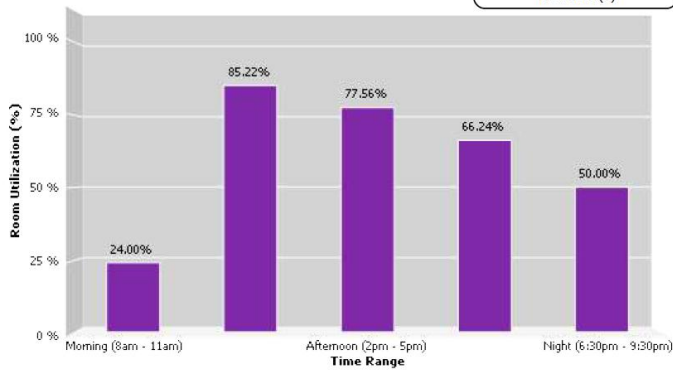


**Capacity Range: 51-80**

**Wednesday**

**Room Utilization**  
59.98%  
**Total Rooms**  
12 Room(s)

**Space Utilization**

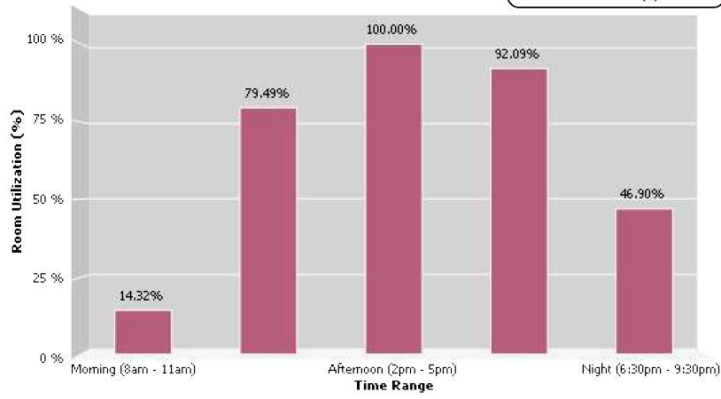


**Capacity Range: 51-80**

**Thursday**

**Space Utilization**

**Room Utilization**  
63.72%  
**Total Rooms**  
12 Room(s)

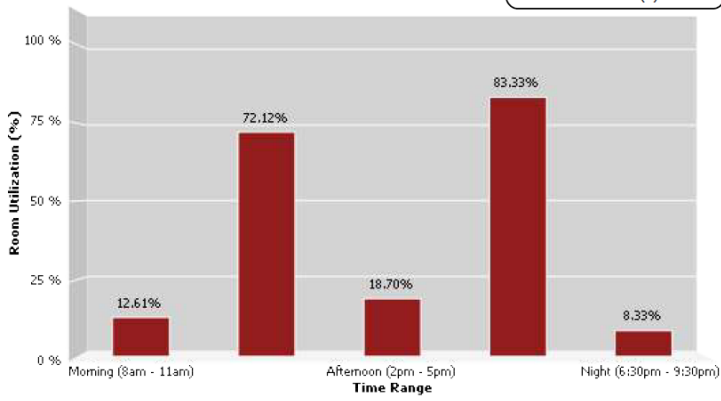


**Capacity Range: 51-80**

**Friday**

**Space Utilization**

**Room Utilization**  
34.09%  
**Total Rooms**  
12 Room(s)





Appendix 2  
Space Use By Faculty

<b>North Location Classrooms</b>			
<b>Dept</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Duration (Hrs)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>FESNS</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>7.2</b>
	LAB	95	70.9
	LEC	12	9
	TUT	27	20.1
<b>HLSC</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>12.7</b>
	L&L	20	8.4
	LEC	169	71.3
	TUT	48	20.3
<b>SSH</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1.1</b>
	LEC	13.5	67.5
	TUT	6.5	32.5
<b>EDU</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.3</b>
	LEC	3	60
	FLD	2	40
<b>FEAS</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>377.5</b>	<b>20.2</b>
	LAB	27.5	7.3
	LEC	222.5	58.9
	TUT	127.5	33.8
<b>FBIT</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>24.6</b>
	LAB	7.5	1.6
	LEC	371	80.5
	TUT	82.5	17.9
<b>SCI</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>31.6</b>
	LAB	39	6.6
	LEC	294	49.7
	TUT	257	43.4
	OTH	2	0.3
<b>Trent</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>2.6</b>
	LEC	39	81.3
	TUT	9	18.7

<b>North Location Labs</b>		
<b>Dept</b>	<b>Duration (Hrs)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
FESNS	42	3.6
HLSC	127.5	10.9
FEAS	389	33.3
FBIT	84	7.2
SCI	526	45

<b>Downtown Location Classrooms</b>			
<b>Dept</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Duration (Hrs)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>SSH</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>353.5</b>	<b>60.2</b>
	LAB	38	10.7
	LEC	301.5	85.3
	FLD	8	2.3
	TUT	6	1.7
<b>EDU</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>37.3</b>
	LEC	219	100
<b>SCI</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>
	LEC	3	25
	TUT	9	75
<b>Trent</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.5</b>
	LEC	3	100