At the beginning of the fall 2015 semester, the Learning Commons Exploratory Group was organized by Paul Gebb, CETL Director; Jenny Minsberg, Coordinator of Disability Services; and Victoria Swinney, Director of the Dulaney-Browne Library. The charge reads as follows: “This faculty and staff exploratory group will study the ‘learning commons’ metaphor to guide space and service planning, and marketing toward encouraging a more engaged/active learning model in the library and across the campus. Help us determine what active learning spaces will look like for OCU.”

The Learning Commons Exploratory Group took the challenge, met regularly, and accomplished the following:

- Began a series of meetings and brainstormed issues and challenges from the various perspectives of the members.
- Attended a webinar about learning commons areas.
- Conducted individual observations of learning commons areas on the OCU campus. Please see the compilation of observations in the addendum.
- Conducted small group observations of learning commons areas at UCO, OU, and the OCU Law School.
- Met with the Retention Committee and the Library and Information Technology Committee to gather their perspectives.
- Implemented suggestions immediately whenever possible.
- Conducted an initial survey at an OCU Student Government meeting. All of the students at the meeting completed the open-ended questionnaire. Please see the questionnaire and results in the addendum.
- Conducted an electronic survey of OCU students. The response rate was very high, with 261 students completing it. Please see the survey and results in the addendum.
- Received reports from each observation and survey group.
Authored this report and reviewed it at our final meeting on April 8, 2016.

Through the activities above, the Learning Commons Exploratory Group has identified the following goals.

Short Term:

- Develop a way to provide centralized information to students about all study spaces on campus.
- Create one or two spaces with more flexible furniture and space. Observe how students use the furniture and equipment before a large scale renovation.
- Look at additional spaces for late night study. Possible options: Sarkey’s student lounge, Student Government offices in McDaniel, specific quieter study areas of the residence halls.
- Continue the collaboration between Campus Technology and the library for late night student computer help. Fully train late night computer help students to provide high need assistance. From the data collected, the top priority with students is ensuring that they can print from their personal laptops to campus printers.
- Coordinate, advertise, and create workshops on writing, style guides, stress management, and study skills through modules on the website and in person.
- Incorporate all schools and areas of OCU into the Learning Commons. Ensure that services are not being duplicated to reduce cost to campus.

Long Term:

- Create more purposeful spaces on campus for engaging in learning outside the classroom setting. These spaces should be comfortable and modern, with natural lighting and easy access to power outlets, whiteboards, and internet.
- Improve coffee and snack service in the library.
- Include the Learning Commons as a budget item in Academic Affairs.
- Designate the Assistant/Associate Provost as the point person to coordinate and be responsible for ensuring this project moves forward because the areas most directly involved include the Dulaney-Browne Library, Campus Technology, Disability Services, Learning Enhancement Center, First Year Experience, and Global Engagement.
- Publish and maintain a list of software used by different academic programs. Include how to access the software and where to find support for it.
• Increase collaboration across campus to develop best practices for creating, using, and maintaining purposeful spaces, for providing academic services, and for increasing student learning in these spaces.

The purpose of developing our learning commons further is to carefully plan for effective learning and services to support our students in learning as much as possible. Quality learning spaces will support student recruitment and retention. It was invigorating for the committee to note that students were excited to complete the surveys, taking extended time to share their ideas of ways to enhance the learning spaces at OCU.

The Learning Commons Exploratory Group was comprised of the following members:

• Paul Gebb, Director of CETL
• Jenny Minsberg, Coordinator of Disability Services and the LEC
• Victoria Swinney, Director of Dulaney-Browne Library
• Amy Ayres, Dean of Students
• Dianna Bottoms, Clinical Assistant Professor of Nursing
• Kent Buchanan, Interim Provost
• Kristen Burkholder, Associate Professor & Access Services Librarian
• Robert Griffin, Associate Professor of TESOL
• Gerry Hunt, Chief Information Officer
• Beth Landon, Biology Laboratory Technician
• Kelly Perry, Assistant Athletic Director
• Terry Phelps, Professor of English
• Stephen Prilliman, Associate Professor of Chemistry
• Liz Willner, Professor and Director of Teacher Education

We are happy to discuss our findings with you. For further information, please contact Paul Gebb, Jenny Minsberg, Victoria Swinney, Liz Willner, or any other member of the committee.