

1 Executive Summary

Located in southern British Columbia, Selkirk College has nine campus locations across six West Kootenay and Boundary communities. The College offers more than 60 nationally recognized programs within seven schools that serve approximately 3,000 full-time students. Selkirk’s mission is “to support learners as they build remarkable futures...and... to provide the most relevant and current learning experiences and facilities possible that support high quality education and a quality of college life that each student expects.”¹

In pursuing Selkirk’s modernization and transformation through college facilities and infrastructure, understanding the challenges and opportunities of space on campus is paramount. Campus space continues to be in high demand so the achievement of effective and consistent space utilization across all the College’s facilities is critical. Accordingly, Selkirk College has undertaken a comprehensive Space Utilization Study to better understand current space usage and to inform future planning.

The Space Utilization Study scope of work included:

- Site visits to all campus locations and buildings
- A focus on the 28 buildings and 49 floors within the Castlegar, Nelson and Trail campuses (See Appendix A)
- The capture of building and room data and the resulting production of electronic “as-built” floor plans and imaging of all facilities in scope
- Extensive consultations with stakeholders representing all schools and administration departments
- A review of relevant College-provided input documents including, but not limited to, the 2020-2035 Campus Master Plan, 5-year Capital Plan, Strategic Plan 2019-2024, enrollment figures and forecasting, classroom schedules and Collective Agreements
- An occupancy study of campus buildings over a two-week observation period to gather actual space usage data
- A change management readiness assessment to identify potential impediments to the implementation of recommendations, and their mitigation
- A preliminary review of sample future scenarios against the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (MAEST) BC Universities Space Manual (2003) space standards Net Assignable Square Meters (NASM) calculations
- An analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to inform the final recommendations

Specific scope excluded from this study and its recommendations is:

- Building infrastructure
- Student housing
- Nakusp and Kaslo Learning Centres
- Grand Forks Campus
- Kootenay Studio Arts (KSA/Victoria St. Campus), Nelson
- Silver King workshops
- Trades buildings

¹ Selkirk College Campus Master Plan 2020-2035

- Daycare

FINDINGS

The Space Utilization Study has yielded several findings. Specific to Selkirk’s mandate and mission, the institution may be in a position to expand its programs, realize enrollment growth, and provide an optimal student experience if the College chooses to embrace shifts in how it operates, namely by implementing centralized, automated processes that support standardization across space types and usage, and reinforce the College’s role in managing its facilities.

Stakeholder consultations as well as data collection and analysis have led to these findings:

- Classrooms are highly under-utilized across the primary campuses of Castlegar, Nelson and Trail with an average utilization rate of 16% (see Section 3)
- Offices and meeting rooms are highly under-utilized with an average occupancy rate of 32% and 6% respectively (see Section 3)
- Utilization by space type is summarized as follows:

	Offices	Meeting Rooms	Classrooms	Computer Labs	Lounges	Exam Rooms	Library	Community Space
Number of Rooms/Spaces	249	12	86	19	14	2	13	4
Total Capacity	412	125	2161	409	388	7	317	38
Space Type Utilization								
Average Utilization	133	8	337	74	25	0	50	5
Minimum Utilization	79	0	97	24	1	0	34	0
Maximum Utilization	166	38	518	125	55	0	84	28
Average %	32%	6%	16%	18%	6%	3%	16%	13%
Minimum %	19%	0%	4%	6%	0%	0%	11%	0%
Maximum %	40%	30%	24%	31%	14%	29%	26%	74%

- Space requirements to achieve enrollment growth targets of 25% to 30% over the next 3 to 5 years can largely be accommodated within the College’s existing space; the repurposing and reassignment of space as well as new space management techniques would be required
- There are varying degrees of readiness for modernization among faculty and administration; change management will be an imperative for progress (see Section 6)
- Opportunities exist to optimize space and potentially rationalize the leased portion of the real estate portfolio, thereby maximizing usage of Selkirk-owned buildings; consolidation may also address fragmentation of staff and increase efficiencies (i.e., currently separate administration functions for each campus)
- Ubiquitous, modern technology is required to support student learning, faculty and staff productivity, and to realize space optimization and flexibility (e.g., classroom scheduling, sharing of workspaces across campuses)
- There is generally a lack of data regarding space usage and management, which should be instated to support decision making and ultimately funding on an on-going basis
- Formal policies are required to enable and reinforce Selkirk’s stance on accommodations (e.g., management of classroom timetables and scheduling; workplace sharing; requests for moves/adds/changes)
- There appears to be no constraints within the current Collective Agreements that would place limitations on the College in implementing modernization initiatives including, but not limited to, changes to classroom availability and scheduling

- Student-specific, tech-enabled spaces are required to enhance the student experience, including purpose-built spaces (e.g., to meet Indigenous student requirements, accommodate online learning while on campus, collaborate etc.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations are forthcoming from the Space Utilization Study:

1. Optimize classroom usage by: i) enabling and broadening access to classrooms across campuses; ii) implementing an effective and flexible classroom booking system; and iii) consider extending availability further by adjusting schedules into evenings and weekends to support program and enrollment growth as well as possible revenue/funding generation
2. The primary stakeholder group, namely students, will need to be formally engaged to provide extensive input regarding the current and target state student experience
3. Review and enable operational resources to support the (re)defined usage of all space types
4. Develop formal standards and policies to support Selkirk's modernization efforts and reinforce
5. Innovate, centralize and digitize key operational processes (e.g., facility requests, classroom scheduler, meeting room bookings)
6. Produce and implement the College's enabling Technology Roadmap that is aligned to the broader modernization efforts and initiatives
7. Leverage experimentation and/or pilot opportunities where possible to permit testing, feedback, validation and refinement of the space modernization principles and solutions
8. Identify KPIs and undertake ongoing facility/space data collection in support of the College's mission and objectives
9. Reconcile Space Utilization Study recommendations with Campus Master Plan and 5-year Capital Plan to (re)confirm priorities and sequencing
10. Undertake a change management strategy and its implementation to ensure the gradual, successful execution of Selkirk's transformation, with explicit and clear pathways to modernization
11. Create a dedicated management and governance structure to oversee the planning and implementation of the College's modernization

The preceding recommendations should be considered complementary to the 5-year Capital Plan and its seven priority projects, as well as the Campus Master Plan and its flexible planning framework. The following next steps may also be undertaken in parallel with existing projects, and in most cases will bring additional support to these ongoing initiatives and the pursuit of Selkirk's overarching objectives.

NEXT STEPS

The recommended next steps for Selkirk in pursuit of its space optimization are:

1. GOVERNANCE

Selkirk to establish an appropriate governance for the implementation of the modernization: appoint/confirm and announce an Executive Sponsor who is senior, active and visible and who will be accompanied by a senior level "sponsorship coalition" to both drive and sustain the change.

2. CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Selkirk to adopt an accommodation Change Management approach and implementation plan and deploy a structured Change Management methodology and toolset to effectively support the staff, faculty and students through the modernization of Selkirk.

3. OPERATIONAL READINESS

Selkirk to identify, plan and prepare the necessary operational infrastructure adjustments to accommodate identified modernization and change initiatives.

4. EXPERIMENTATION

Selkirk to embrace experimentation through the use of pilot projects: implement the approved recommendations in Selkirk facilities at the earliest opportunity to permit testing, feedback, validation and refinement of the modernization principles.

5. OBSERVATION

Selkirk to observe the type and frequency of usage of both its modernized and non-modernized facilities (classrooms, offices, meeting rooms, etc.) over time to collect utilization data and learn how its staff, faculty and students are using the space(s) and how they are enabled in Selkirk environments with a view to iterative improvement.

6. REFINEMENT

Selkirk to revisit its accommodation solution(s) and standards with a stipulated frequency and amend to reflect findings of space types and utilization, staff, faculty and student preferences, progressive teaching and working methods, and modes of enablement with a view to favorably supporting productivity, the employee and student experience, and the mandate of Selkirk.