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Grand Opening of Technology Learning Center in Kresge Library

By **Katie Land**, news editor, and **The Fountain**

Kresge Library welcomed the OU community on October 22, 2009, to celebrate the grand opening of the Technology Learning Center. The new center boasts centralized academic units that focus on creative collaboration and innovation in technology-based teaching, learning and research.

The ambitious project has several elements. Of most interest to students, a brand new Information Commons was constructed on the second floor; it created a place to congregate and use computers and other information technology in a flexible-use setting. Also, the UTS Help Desk moved to KL202 to better provide public service with technology-related issues. The office of e-Learning and Instructional Support relocated to the fourth floor of the Library to help faculty with the development of online instruction, including various new technological tools for teaching and learning.

Nearly 200 people gathered to explore the center and to hear remarks from University President Gary Russi, Senior Vice president of Academic Affairs and Provost Virinder Moudgil, Kresge Library Dean Julie Voelck and Assistant Vice President of e-Learning and Instructional Support Cathryn Cheal.

The Information Commons is a state-of-the-art facility featuring computer workstations (both PC and Mac), laptops and netbooks, software, peripherals and media computers with large-screen LCD. The area offers a variety of types of seating from comfortable booths on the north end, to "pinwheel" individual computer workstations, to tradition study tables, as well as breakout rooms. Students will have convenient access to staff for computer assistance and librarians for research assistance. They also can take full advantage of the wireless network, digital library resources, Web 2.0 and other technologies at their disposal.

"The Technology Learning Center @ Kresge Library is representative of the tremendous changes that are occurring in academic libraries, and in the world of information," Dr. Moudgil said. "Students are not only using library services in the traditional way; they are coming to the library to take command of their own learning."

The Information Commons offers a vast technological and design improvement over the old lab and pushes OU beyond similar facilities at other universities, according to Dean Voelck.

"An entire wing of the library has been transformed from a storehouse for paper federal documents into a dynamic, technology-rich environment where students can work singly or in collaboration, and use information to the fullest," Voelck continued.

Student input and participation played a large role in designing the new center. Students and library administrators are collaborating on a plan to one day add a café to the center. Feedback from students and visitors will help determine the course of the TLC as it evolves.

"The library, enhancing its traditional role as the center of campus, is now more than ever, a place where people come together to foster and support active learning, teaching and research," Moudgil said.

For more information on the Technology Learning Center, call (248) 370-2486.

SUMMARY

On October 22, 2009, Kresge Library hosted the grand opening of the Technology Learning Center. Featuring the brand new, state of the art Information Commons on the second floor of the library, the relocation of e-Learning and Instructional Support to the 4th floor of the library, and the UTS Help Desk's move to KL202.

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