



# DEPAUW UNIVERSITY

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To: Katie Kondry, Executive Vice President, DePauw Student Government  
From: Anne Harris, Vice President for Academic Affairs  
CC: Raj Bellani, Dean of Experiential Learning and Career Planning  
Dave Berque, Dean of Academic Life  
Ken Kirkpatrick, Registrar  
Carrie Klaus, Dean of Faculty  
Rick Provine, Dean of Libraries  
Carol Smith, Chief Information Officer  
Date: November 23th, 2015  
Re: Response to Resolution on the Availability of Study Spaces for Students

We want to thank you and your senators and representatives for bringing us the *Resolution Concerning the Availability of Study Spaces for Students*. As Vice President of Academic Affairs I convene a regular meeting of deans and other senior administrators. We dedicated one of our recent meetings to carefully considering your resolution. This response follows up on our discussion as well as on subsequent email exchanges.

Everyone involved in this discussion deeply appreciates your interest in fostering a serious academic atmosphere on campus for you and your fellow students as well as your specific interest in building a sense of community for upper-class students within the context of their majors.

We understand that the culture of our student body is shifting and that students are increasingly interested in studying after hours, especially in the two weeks before Midterms and Finals. To help determine how students might use after-hours study spaces, we propose a pilot program for the spring 2016 term that will let us gauge the demand for increased after-hours study spaces during some of the key times that are mentioned in your resolution. Specifically, we will provide the staffing necessary to keep the Roy O. West Library open until 10pm (instead of 6pm) during the two Saturdays immediately preceding the weekend that leads into spring break. We will also maintain regular hours of 7:30 a.m. - 10 p.m. on Fridays and 11 a.m. - 2 a.m. on Sunday during these weekends.

The gates at the entrance to Roy O. West Library will provide data about the number of people who visit the Library during this time. Depending on usage levels we can consider continuing these extended hours (for the two Saturdays immediately preceding the weekend that leads into fall break and spring break) in future terms. We can also discuss additional options after we see how this experiment goes.

We will also continue our practice of extending the Prevo Library hours during the week before final exams. For example, during the fall 2015 term, extended hours for the Prevo Library will begin on Saturday December 5th with hours that run from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (the Prevo Library is normally closed on Saturday). On Sunday December 6th, the Prevo Library will be open from 1 p.m. - 11 p.m. From Monday December 7th through Thursday December 10th, the Prevo Library will be open from 7:30am - 11 p.m. We will again offer 24 hour access to Roy O. West library during finals. Other extended exam-week hours for all libraries may be found here: [www.depauw.edu/libraries/about/hours/4](http://www.depauw.edu/libraries/about/hours/4). As usual, Academic Life will also arrange for extended study spaces in areas such as the Union Building Ballroom and the Julian Atrium during exam week. These options will be announced to the student body in the days after Thanksgiving break.

As we developed a response to your resolution we sought to balance your request against other competing concerns. These concerns include:

- As the number of after hour study spaces increase, there will be fewer students in each location. This makes it harder to ensure that students will feel safe in each location.
- Class attendance is well-known to be an important predictor of student success. Encouraging late-night studying could negatively impact class attendance.
- Late-night studying can lead to exhaustion, illness and sleep patterns that invoke stress and that are generally unhealthy and unsustainable.
- Lighting multiple all-night locations on campus could have a negative impact on sustainability efforts with regard to energy use.
- In the past, DePauw Libraries has offered extended hours on Saturday nights; however, these services were not heavily used.

As we considered your resolution, we were struck by the clause that reads: "while we recognize that the PCCM and Union Building are open to students after regular hours, these buildings are not conducive to studying nor built for the purpose of studying." In addition to the experiment described above, as a next step, we would like to hear more about how the PCCM and the Union Building are falling short of meeting student needs. Your input may help us consider changes to these spaces as funds become available. In addition, we will provide your input to the group that is discussing new study spaces that will be available in the Union Building after the Hoover Dining Hall opens.

If you have additional information to share, or if you have questions about this resolution in general, you are welcome to contact Anne Harris or Dave Berque. If you have questions about the extended Roy O. West Library hours for spring 2016, please contact Rick Provine, Dean of Libraries.

Once again, we thank you for the time and thought that went into your resolution, as well as for everything else you are doing on behalf of DePauw students and our community in general. We are fortunate to work with student leadership that is academically focused, thoughtful, and productive.