

Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians (CAPAL)

CAPAL's Statement Regarding the Proposed Reconfiguration of University of Saskatchewan Specialty Libraries

May 15, 2014

The Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians / Association canadienne des bibliothécaires académiques professionnels (CAPAL/ACBAP) recognizes and supports the concerns raised by the Canadian Association of Law Libraries and the Saskatchewan Library Association regarding the proposed reconfiguration of the University of Saskatchewan campus libraries to consolidate print collections and services. Specifically, CAPAL/ACBAP would like to express grave concerns about the impact that consolidating four specialty academic libraries will have on the availability of professional subject expertise. Academic legal research is a complex process that requires a deep knowledge of Canada's legal system, legal sources of information and a set of current skills in order to retrieve information effectively and efficiently. Law librarians specialize in this kind of legal research, and understand the legal bibliography and scholarship in law. University and academic libraries are charged with providing research support to students and faculty, and to members of the public and the legal community at large. CAPAL/ACBAP is concerned about the loss of professional legal research expertise if and when these library services are consolidated, and the inevitable move towards more generalist models of service versus the specialized approaches that are the *sine qua non* of academic legal research services.

The Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians is a national non-governmental membership organization representing academic librarians and the profession of academic librarianship in Canada. Our mission is to promote, advance and support the profession of academic librarianship for the advancement of research, teaching and learning at accredited post-secondary institutions and to further the professional interests of our members.

On behalf of the CAPAL/ACBAP Steering Committee