

REUTER CENTER FACILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND EXPANSION OPTIONS

The Reuter Center seems to be bursting at the seams almost every day, with a combination of College for Seniors classes, Special Interest Groups, committee meetings, and special events generated by our members and by community partners. For example, consider the following OLLI membership trends (using Excel's FORECAST function; forecast years are shown in bold italics):

| <u>End of Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Number of Members</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2010 | 1,613 |
| 2011 | 1,668 |
| 2012 | 1,690 |
| 2013 | 1,893 |
| 2014 | 2,121 |
| <i>2015</i> | <i>2,170</i> |
| <i>2020</i> | <i>2,790</i> |
| <i>2025</i> | <i>3,410</i> |

As a result, the OLLI Executive Director commissioned a Strategic Facilities Use Task Force (SFUTF) to address the issue. The purpose of the Task Force was to assess the current usage of the Reuter Center to establish patterns of use. Then various opportunities could be addressed that might resolve the issue, including:

1. Whether changes in schedule would make more effective use of the Reuter Center (e.g., 90 rather than 120 minute class sessions for the College for Seniors).
2. What an expansion of the Reuter Center would look like and how it would be funded.
3. Could OLLI use facilities other than the Reuter Center to hold classes and Special Interest Groups?

This report contains the results of items 1 and 2; a report for the 3rd item will be presented by the end of 2014.

OLLI Space Needs Assessment

There has been much discussion concerning a looming capacity shortage at the Reuter Center and what can and should be done about it. OLLI's SFUTF

leadership called for a “needs assessment” to be done. Wikipedia describes such an assessment as a systematic process for determining the gaps between current conditions and desired conditions. A needs assessment is typically an early step in the planning process. A small project team was assembled to do the work, and a project description and work plan was developed and modified as the project progressed. The project team consisted primarily of Matt Mengel, Leanna Preston, and Susan Poole.

College for Seniors

The College for Seniors (CFS) is the driving force for OLLI. The paragraphs below show three ways to approach scheduling the CFS within OLLI’s facility, the Reuter Center. Although OLLI does utilize other facilities, the Reuter Center (RC) was the focus of this needs analysis.

Three Options Considered

The *first option* relies on the CFS schedule we are using today: 2-hour increments, beginning at 9:00 AM, with ½ hour breaks. Friday afternoons are not scheduled for CFS, to accommodate Fab Friday and other community events. This results in the possibility of 91 CFS sessions per week.

The *second option* reflects an approach that is actively under discussion – starting at 8:30am and teaching 90-minute classes without breaks. If we are also willing to start Fab Friday events at noon rather than 11:30am, we could have 2 classes on Friday morning rather than 1. These changes would expand our capacity from 91 sessions per week (for CFS classes, committee meetings, Special Interest Groups, and community partners) to 126 sessions per week, almost a 40% increase. This “90 minute class option” could probably be executed with existing staff and University support, but would likely require additional instructors and all that entails (e.g., Curriculum Subcommittee activity and faculty support).

The *third option* aims to maximize utilization of the Reuter Center, including evening classes, as well as Saturday all day and Sunday afternoon. With this model, OLLI could schedule up to 203 sessions per week. This option would clearly require additional staff and other types of support, utilities expense, and the like, but it *would not* require expansion of the Reuter Center.

CFS Usage of OLLI – Spring Term, 2014

This section used several approaches to analyze the 2014 Spring term's utilization of the Reuter Center. In summary: CFS = 43%; non-CFS usage = 16%; Un-occupied = 41%.

Given an analysis of Spring 2014 (from Susan Poole's Spring 2014 spreadsheet):

- 1) Of the 106 classes scheduled that term, only 86 classes started during the first week; 16 classes that began that first week were not held in the Reuter Center; 5 classes had to be cancelled, but only 3 of them were to be held at the RC
- 2) $86 - 16 - 3 = 67$ classes at the RC x 2 hrs/class (average) = 134 hrs per week for CFS

Non-CFS Reuter Center Usage by Group

All groups using space at the Reuter Center must reserve the space through OLLI's Facilities Manager. They have full access to the a/v equipment installed in the rooms and technical assistance may be available for their event. Room rental fees are often waived. They are charged for food service, labor costs for special set ups, and they pay for any damages that occur during the event. OLLI will publicize their events in our catalog, website, email newsletter, etc. OLLI does rent space to outside groups on a space-available basis, if they fall within OLLI's usage guidelines.

| Category | Current numbers | Average participants per event | Average meetings per day | On-site mtgs per month | Annually |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| Special Interest Groups | 31 | 20 | 3 | 60 | 720 |
| OLLI Committees | 37 | 15 | 4 | 46 | |
| OLLI Special Events | 6-10 | 30-150 | varies | 3 | 31 |
| Community Groups | 12 | 25-200 | varies | 12 | |
| UNCA Groups | varies | 25-200 | varies | varies | 6 |

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

There are currently 19 SIGs with two of those main groups having multiple subgroups – bringing the total number of SIGs to 31. Of those 31, many meet at the Reuter Center on a weekly basis. If they meet at the Reuter Center on Monday thru Thursday, they start after 2pm; on Friday, they can begin at 1pm.

There is an average of 15+ on-site SIG meetings per week that require a room (= meeting space, not the atrium). Two groups always meet off site (Wine Tasting and Bowling), as do two of the subgroups. Attendance records are now being kept on these groups so we can have a solid idea of participation and not rely on anecdotal information. The SIGs will submit membership information bi-annually and attendance information quarterly. Some SIGs require space with a/v equipment or request specific game tables or rooms, such as Room 230 for art.

OLLI Committees

There are currently 11 OLLI Committees. Many of these committees have subcommittees (e.g. the CFS Curriculum Committee has 12 topic sub-groups plus Appalachian Studies and Small Group Learning). There are also ad hoc committees and task forces. This brings the total number of OLLI Committees requesting meeting space to 37 (in March of 2014). These committees all meet at the Reuter Center on a monthly or as-needed basis; there appears to be an average of 35 - 40 committee meetings per month. The meetings are widely variable (lasting from 1 to 3 hours with 4 to 30 people in attendance. Almost all committees request space with audio/visual equipment and sometimes require a/v support. Several committees plan their December meeting as a social event, with increased participation and food service.

OLLI Special Events

There are annual/bi-annual events along with lecture series and special training organized for OLLI members and CFS faculty. These include two OLLI Member Socials, three New Member Welcomes, one Town Hall meeting, four CFS Faculty Training/Orientation events, 21 Fab Friday lectures, 8 to 10 STEM lectures, and 4 to 6 author/music presentations in the summer. Almost all of these special events require a/v equipment and a specific arrangement of tables and chairs. Most have a food service element.

Community Groups

There are roughly a dozen community groups that schedule events/programs at the Reuter Center. Most of the community groups schedule monthly meetings in the Manheimer Room, with attendance ranging from 30 to 100+ or in Room 206 with attendance ranging from 25 to 54. Some of the community groups will have a program that draws a larger crowd and the Manheimer Room is set up for maximum occupancy. The Asheville Symphony regularly has a capacity crowd of 200 for the "Symphony Talk" events scheduled 6 to 7 times a year. All of the Community Groups need access to a/v equipment and many request special room setup of tables and chairs. A few of these events have food/beverage service with their events.

UNCA Groups

UNCA departments and programs schedule events at the Reuter Center throughout the year. We see the most from programs that want to hold a daylong meeting or evening event, with convenient parking and attendance that does not exceed 200. The Center for Jewish Studies and the Teaching Fellows programs schedule such events. The Reuter Center is particularly convenient for campus-resident population to walk up and for off-campus participants to park nearby. All UNC Asheville groups need access to the Internet and use our a/v equipment. The Center for Diversity schedules their monthly board meeting here.

Other Information and Considerations

1. Current Reuter Center classroom capacities:

102A 90 (102A + 102B can be combined to support about 200)

102B 35

120 20

205 24

206 54

207 20

230 35

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278 students

2. There seems to be agreement that rooms that comfortably seat 40 is an ideal room size for CFS now and in the near future, although we currently have none at that capacity.
3. Moving between buildings on the UNC Asheville campus (even to the Sherrill Center) can be difficult (walking, parking, shuttle service, etc.). Traveling off campus is yet more difficult, especially for those who do not remember back to times before the Reuter Center existed when it was "standard practice" to do so.
4. We need to consider the impact of our changing demographics. The annual OLLI member survey has shown that the membership is aging rather quickly. For example, the percentage of OLLI members 65 and older in the following years was:
 - 2010 – 63%
 - 2011 – 67%
 - 2012 – 74%
 - 2013 – 77%
5. We need to consider the rapidly increasing size of OLLI's CFS (in seat counts

per year):

Actual Number of Seat Counts per year (the number of members taking CFS courses times the number of classes taken, summed over a year):

- 2011: 6,872
- 2012: 7,571
- 2013: 8,559

Projected Seat Counts based on the previous three years (using Excel FORECAST function):

- 2014: 9,354
- 2015: 10,198
- 2020: 14,415
- 2025: 18,633

Reuter Center Expansion Possibilities

The purpose of this project was to investigate conceptual options and related costs for physical expansion of the Reuter Center. The individuals who participated in the project were:

- Neal Barille, retired architect.
- Barry Mundt, retired industrial engineer and management consultant.
- Leanna Preston, Facilities Manager for the Reuter Center.
- John Rogers, the original architect of the Reuter Center, ten years ago. John currently is fully retired.

Please refer to the attached floor plans of the Reuter Center, which include the expansion possibilities. There are two drawings, one for the lower level of the Reuter Center and the other for the upper level. They show the potential expansion to the west, as well as to the east.

Expansion to the West

The western expansion would have the following features:

- Potential for 12 additional classrooms, seating about 40 people each. This is considered the “sweet spot” for classroom size.
- Would provide an additional atrium, as well as two additional toilet areas (men’s and women’s) on both the upper and lower levels.

This option would require upgrading of the mechanical equipment (e.g., HVAC), and it may require additional parking spaces. But this option is the most likely alternative, as construction would cause the least disruption of Reuter Center programs.

Expansion to the East

The eastern expansion would have the following features:

- Potential for 10 additional classrooms, seating about 40 people each.
- Would provide a rather large atrium.

This option would require upgrading the mechanical equipment, if it were not provided for in the western expansion. It would also require decking of the lower level parking lot, as shown in the lower level drawing; that would add approximately 57 parking spaces.

Likely Costs

The total square footage of the current Reuter Center is 19,550, including the mechanical area. The square footage of the expansion to the west is 12,428, while to the east is 9,984. The cost per square foot ranges from \$200 to \$250, in current dollars. Therefore the cost of the western expansion would range from \$2.5 million to \$3.1 million. The cost for the eastern expansion would range from \$2 million to \$2.5 million.

In addition, furniture and fixtures for the western addition would be about \$250,000; the eastern addition would add about \$200,000. The parking deck would cost about \$2,000 per car, or approximately \$1,140,000.



