To: Dr. Erika Paterson

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Subject: Proposal for Determining the Feasibility of Maintaining an Online Ordering System at the Programme Resource Centre

**Introduction**

The Programme Resource Centre (PRC) provides resources and support to members of the Residence Life program at UBC. Residence Advisors and members of Residence Councils may visit the PRC to use services such as colour printing, banner printing, lamination, and die-cuts. The PRC also provides or loans out special equipment for residence staff to use when planning programming in their communities.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the PRC only provided services in-person. Recently due to pandemic health measures, clients must instead submit their orders online. When orders are ready, they may come to the PRC just to pick it up. The inevitable resumption of in-person services provides an opportunity for the PRC to re-examine how it provides printing services to the residence community. Maintaining the online print ordering system, and potentially making other changes to operations could make service more convenient and efficient.

**Statement of Problem**

Many current users of the PRC, including Residence Advisors, often experience difficulty trying to find time to come to the centre. The PRC is located in the Walter Gage towers, which is quite far from many major residences, including Totem Park and Orchard Commons. While at the PRC, printing posters and banners can often take quite long due to the limited amount of equipment at the centre and high volume of clients during busy periods.

**Proposed Solution**

When health protocols are relaxed and in-person services resume, the PRC should continue to offer some form of online order submission. Residence Life Staff and Residence Council Members should have either the option of visiting the PRC in-person to print, or to submit orders online for pick-up later. Such a system would provide additionally flexibility for users of the PRC, while also having the potential to make operations at the PRC more efficient.

**Scope**

To assess the feasibility of offering both online and in-person services at the PRC, I plan to pursue the following areas of inquiry:

1. Among Residence Advisors currently, would they prefer to have the option of online print ordering even after the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. Would the maintenance of an online print ordering system (in addition to in-person services), result in any additional costs or burdens for PRC staff?
3. How can the current online print ordering systems (using Qualtrics) be potentially improved to offer a more streamlined experience both for PRC staff and clients?
4. What are the limitations inherent in an online ordering system, and how can these limitations be addressed?
5. To improve the accessibility of the PRC, are there any additional measures which can be taken, such as extended hours, additional staff, or the establishment of a satellite PRC location in the southern part of UBC’s campus?

**Methods**

My primary data sources would include interviews with Mike Cheung (Manager, Residence Life Projects), and several members of the current Residence Life Management team. I will also consult with the two other staff members currently working at the PRC. An online survey hosted on Google Forms will be distributed to a number of Residence Advisors and Residence Council Members who are currently utilizing the services of the PRC.

Secondary sources which may be used would be the PRC Operating Policy document and any past documents available regarding operations of the PRC. I may also conduct a web search to determine the operating principles of similar facilities at other post-secondary institutions.

**My Qualifications**

I have significant experience working with the Residence Life system at UBC. In the past I have served on both the Totem Park and Marine Drive Residence Councils. In Marine Drive, I was the Marketing Representative, and as such made extensive use of the resources which the PRC offers. Last year, I also served as a Residence Advisor in Marine Drive. Since May 2021, I have also been working at the PRC as one of the three staff members operating the facility this summer term. This combination of experience, where I have both worked at the PRC and utilized its services as a client, provides me with a multi-faceted and comprehensive understanding of its operations.

**Conclusion**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an online ordering system replaced the traditional operational format of the PRC. While the return to in-person services is highly anticipated by many members of the residence community, the continued provision of an online ordering system alongside in-person offerings may offer certain advantages. By conducting further research on this topic, I am able to determine whether such a system should be kept, and if so, which modifications and improvements may be necessary in order to maximize efficiency and meet the needs of the community.