

# Library Hours Recommendations

**Prepared by:** Department of Research and Advocacy, VP Academic Layla Alhussainy, VP Student Life Renson Alva

## Overview

Based on discussions with students and a consultation survey (October 1-11, 2024, n=1,551), the UASU offers the following recommendations for library hours.

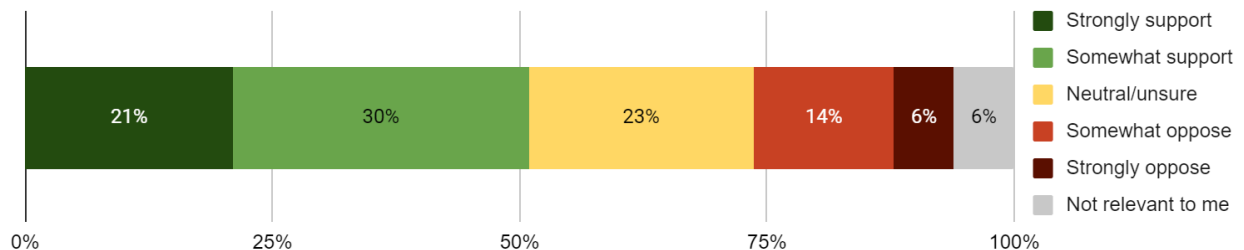
- A North Campus library should be available as close to 24/7; if necessary, through reductions in other library hours. However, based on CAUBO data, the UASU believes this can be accomplished without these tradeoffs.
- Several students noted that slightly earlier access to some libraries would allow for quiet studying before morning classes.
- Several students noted that longer evening/nighttime access would be beneficial for collaborative work, quiet study, safety, device access, and considerations around assignments due at midnight, especially related to instructors' use of online assignment platforms.

## Extended Library Access

After listing and explaining all library hours, our consultation survey asked:

"Would you support somewhat shorter hours for the libraries on North Campus if one of them were open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?"

n=1,551

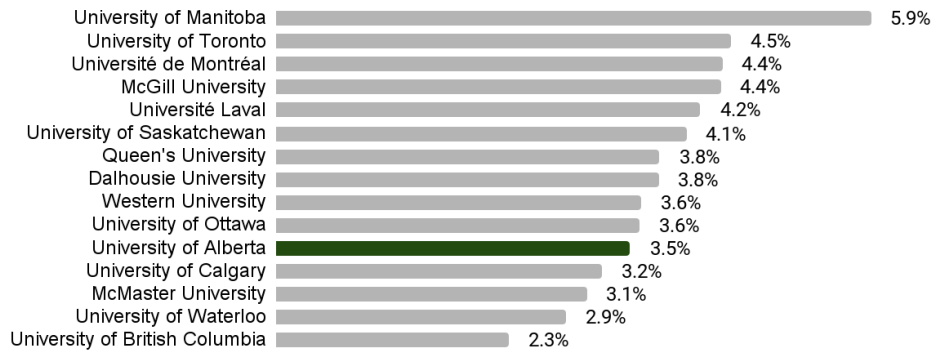


This level of support remained consistent by year of study and, largely, by faculty. The two exceptions were Law and Medicine and Dentistry, where opinions were more balanced. The UASU understands that librarians and libraries are not interchangeable, and this suggestion should be pursued only so far as it does not negatively impact librarians' employment. Care would also need to be taken to avoid reducing access to specialized libraries needed by professional faculties. *However, the UASU believes this tradeoff is likely unnecessary: making a library accessible 24/7 can be accomplished without significant reductions in other library availability.* The latest available [CAUBO Financial Information of Universities and Colleges \(FIUC\)](#) data shows that:

- The University of Alberta spends less on library services, as a share of operating costs, than most of the U15 (#11 out of 15, 9% below average; see chart on following page). In the Alberta context, it also spends less on library services, as a share of operating costs, than Grant MacEwan University, Mount Royal University, and the University of Lethbridge.

### Library as percent of general operating expenditure

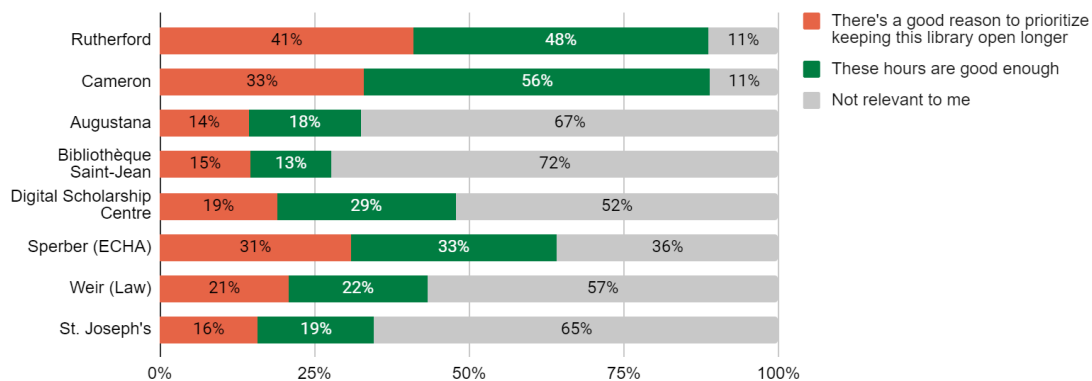
Data source: CAUBO FIUC (2022-23)



- While the University of Alberta's library expenditures per student are roughly average among the U15, they are still far lower than some comparators (e.g. 19% lower than the University of Saskatchewan, and 25% lower than both the University of Toronto and the University of Manitoba).

### Specific Libraries

After all hours are explained, students tend to believe that additional availability is appropriate. All libraries had strong advocates for longer hours. Between the multiple-choice question and text questions, Rutherford, Sperber, and Weir emerged as priorities for longer hours.



## "Are there any particular reasons for your opinions on library hours, anything you'd like to share?"

Students provided over 12,000 words of responses. The most common words included study or studying (336 mentions), longer (104), late (103), night (65), weekends (47), access (40), and Rutherford (40). Various mentions of libraries as safe and welcoming spaces were also common. Some noteworthy or representative responses:

- 10pm is a good time to close everyday. Closing too soon like at 6pm just means students who have classes that end at 4/5:00pm have limited access to study spaces.
- 11,000 extra students with no extra facilities is insane.
- 9 pm is late enough for most people. And having only one floor open during time works good because there are so few people in the library.
- A lot of people need somewhere to study later at night or for longer on weekends so having at least one library that has 24/7 access with a one card would be a good idea in my opinion.
- A lot of students don't have anywhere else to study or have a quiet place when they urgently need their work done.
- As long as the students' union building remains open 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, I don't see a reason for the other libraries to shorten their hours so one can remain open 24/7. The SU building has quiet places to study for late nights and early mornings.
- As someone who likes to study in a quiet and a safe environment, studying late at a library sounds like a really cool way to study.
- Certain students might need longer in the library depending on class materials/times of classes.
- Everyone's schedule is different, especially between students trying to find a time to study together. The more hours of operation, the more likely they are to find a time that works for both of them.
- For the Sperber library, I think it should stay open longer on Fridays (till 9 to match the other weekdays) and weekends (maybe till 7?) to accommodate for those who need a quiet space for studying. I know that some of the other libraries are open later, but the Sperber space feels a lot more 'clean' and makes studying more comfortable.



- Having a place to study and use printers late at night was something I loved and regularly used in my first year. I find it very frustrating that we no longer have access to this.
- Having somewhere to work before 8am classes would be a lifesaver and support my learning.
- I am a library staff member, and I used to be responsible for closing the library. Closing at 9:00 pm meant that I was already getting home quite late. If hours were extended, staff would have to work at fairly undesirable hours, and I would not wish that upon them.
- I don't think it is beneficial for me to be studying after 10:00pm and I don't typically work in the library anyway.
- I feel libraries that are open till only 5 should be open for longer as classes usually go on till 5-6 (most classes) and students might want to use these facilities after that.
- I just think that lots of people like to have a place to go to study that isn't home and some people need the evenings and weekends to be available for them to access these resources because of how the schedule in their lives works.
- I like longer hours since I like to study late at night but I understand it is difficult to keep all libraries open longer so maybe even if it's just one that'll be great!
- I like the hours the libraries I use (Cameron and ECHA) are open and I think it's suitable for me.
- I literally cannot study at "home" but I live on campus so please keep things open later.
- I never use any of the libraries cause I find them too loud for me to study in. I'm a weird little autistic and need silence and I find the libraries to be overwhelming for me. I'm not comfortable there much either.
- I personally try not to stay that long on campus because of safety and I don't like being out late as a commuter. The hours seem reasonable to me since I would likely never stay out past 9 and even that is a stretch before I would make my way home.
- It is good to have later hours for group studying and exam preparations. Or as a space to do work instead of having to go off campus.
- Libraries are good, safe and quiet spaces to be. It's nice to have a comfortable place to work late if necessary.



- Maybe make the library open for longer on the weekends for the library in ECHA especially because in my opinion it's the nicest one and students only really get that little bit of time to study on the weekends, and it's usually in the evenings past 5:00pm.
- Maybe the libraries can open a little earlier for students who like studying early in the morning.
- Most quizzes/assignments are due midnight, and I do things last minute, so I stay pretty late on campus to finish (cause libraries are quiet, ppl studying around u is motivating to stay on track, and bus-lrt ride is 1hr 30min so is rather spend that time finishing the assessment first).
- Need more access to libraries and buildings on campus which have computers that are loaded with software required by my courses on weekends, because my MacBook cannot run a lot of the software packages that are required by my courses.
- Not for me personally, but I know a lot if students like studying deep into the night. It's healthier for them not to be doing that in the room as it makes sleeping harder. If there was a space for them to go I think it would really benefit them.
- Not really, more than the hours it's the availability/booking of study rooms that I'd like to address.
- Often times it's easiest to get together with groups to study on weekend, and although the study rooms work well there aren't any computers in there for students without laptops to use.
- Rutherford has better vibes than Cameron and it is devastating to have to move libraries when I'm trying to buckle down.
- Since a lot of professors have moved to online platforms for assignments like Achieve, a lot of students are accessing libraries more so I think they should be open longer if someone needs to do the assignment late.
- Students pay a lot to attend university and have access to comfortable, well-lit, and safe places to study. When you close libraries early you force them to find corners in narrow hallways or remote, less occupied study rooms where they are more likely to be cornered alone. Keeping libraries open offers one place where many students can come and study with peace of mind.
- The hours are pretty good, if libraries like Cameron could open maybe slightly earlier it would be nice to study before classes.

- The Sperber library is the closest to Lister residence, and is where a lot of Lister students choose to study, and being able to study later would be very nice. Especially being able to study during weekend evenings.
- The St. Joseph's College Library is my favorite place to study, but it is difficult as I like to study in the morning and it's not open until noon. I would love if mornings, even if only on certain days, could be opened!
- They all sound pretty reasonable and the closing times force students to prioritize themselves and sleep or do things other than studying. I think it makes sense that it closes early Friday because lots of kids like to go out Friday night - Saturday morning but there are kids who would prefer/benefit from them being open until 9pm on Fridays as well.

### **"Are there any buildings (library or other) that you wish were open longer? If so, why?"**

Students provided over 8,000 words of responses. The most common words included library or libraries (173 mentions), Rutherford (144), study (102), Cameron (82), CCIS (47), Sperber (42), weekends (30), CAB (18), Law (14), ETLC (14), and HUB (13). A few representative or noteworthy responses:

- Access to ECHA can sometimes be harder after hours especially with exams being held there sometimes. I guess ensuring ONEcards work at the doors would be great.
- Agricultural building fully locks later in the day and it should stay open to one card access because people in the ALES faculty have to travel through SUB then through the pedway then to their lockers. Also I only support libraries losing hours for one to remain open if it is Sperber library because of the large amount of space, silent and collaborative spaces and many study rooms.
- Agrifor, makes access easier. Katz - that pedway would be lovely.
- All of them, it gets dark very early and is very cold here I should be able to walk safely and warmly around campus at 6pm there is no reason doors should be locked so early. And onecards should actually work. Please do something about this it is incredibly frustrating and is actually dangerous.
- Any of the health sciences buildings. Great study spaces and often many many students stay late on campus for things such as labs.
- As mentioned above, I would particularly prefer if Cameron library were open much longer and possible by extension CAB and other main student "hubs" like CCIS, etc. I

mention these buildings in particular because they are central focal points on Campus and are more likely to be taken advantage of more if they had extended hours.

- CAB - it's a good shortcut to the LRT once the weather gets colder and we try to avoid being outside for long.
- CAB, HUB as they're common buildings used to access libraries and other buildings on campus.
- Coming from midterms in CCIS in november. It is really annoying when Gunning-Lemieux is closed and I have to walk the length of it through the snow.
- ECHA. A lot of students in healthcare professions have classes till 5/6 pm. They like to stay on campus and study after their classes.
- ECHA and Weir - these are my two main libraries because it's close to work and to my classes. I often find myself wandering 1 hour a day just to find a place to sit to study (or even eat). Regarding the question below about shortening library hours but extending one library 24 hours a day - some libraries are just better than others and there's no going around it. Some are nicer and some have natural light. I would be annoyed if the library that I prefer to use shortened their hours. What's difficult is the new booking rules - I usually book throughout the day because I have classes that interrupt a continuous booking, now I can't even book a room with this new rule and because there's too many students booking in advance (I book 7 days in advance and I'm still not getting the rooms I need for my study groups).
- ECHA because the weekend hours are insufficient. I love the new extension on hours for Rutherford main level with card access it has made a huge difference.
- ECHA on weekends. It's got great sunlight and studying in there is easier than in other buildings. So if it were open longer, I would probably use it more.
- Entrance to HUB from Humanities should be open for longer. With winter coming and studying late/having late classes having that entrance available for longer is much more convenient even if it requires ONEcard rather than having to walk outside at night.
- ETLC's Elko garage. Would be nice to be open during late mornings so I can do quick jobs before my afternoon classes.
- Generally the science buildings. Wish they were all open at 7am so I don't have to guess which doors will open.
- Hanson fitness & lifestyle gym on weekends for slightly longer.





- HUB, especially in the winter so waiting for buses is more bearable. Because there's wifi in HUB and the LRT building attracts strange individuals.
- I arrive on campus early and take advantage of the SUB hours but I typically transfer to quieter spaces as they open up and the SUB gets busy. It would be nice to have a library open earlier.
- I feel that Rutherford or Cameron should open at 7:30am instead of 8am to allow for students to use library resources before 8am classes for last minute things. Although 8am is still very good and I really appreciate the early opening and late closing hours.
- I know in previous years, I have wished that the Katz building and the CCIS buildings were more accessible on weekends with OneCard access. Oh and the pedways between Katz, ECHA, and Education. Sometimes there would be clubs or events after school hours. But it's so cold during the winter, I wish most students could tap their OneCARD. For CCIS, I would've liked access to my lab's computer to work on stuff.
- I wish Carruthers was open longer on the weekends. The Carruthers Student Commons is one of the best study spots on campus since it has the new technology (ex. the TVs) available in the study rooms. Since it closes at 5 pm, I cannot utilize that technology and to my knowledge, there is no other building on campus that offers that.
- I wish Saint Jean could have weekend hours, cause studying isn't just for weekdays.
- I'm a commuter so usually am not effected much by building hours, but limited access to things in some late evenings is a little inconvenient. For example, navigating ECHA/katz pedways in the evening.
- It would be nice to keep Rutherford open longer on Monday - Thursday, and Friday too. Sometimes students will grab food from HUB and then go cram an assignment in the library. Assignments are usually due at 11/11:59PM so it'd be beneficial if they could stay later.
- Just the libraries! [Several such responses.]
- Katz and education because those are spot myself and a lot of other people choose to study in at night. Katz is especially frustrating to access because it closes so early and if you need to leave to get food or access a microwave, you can't get back in.
- Medsci, I have late labs and all the doors always lock by the time I'm getting done.
- No, I am especially content with the current hours for Rutherford and Cameron.

- No, I think SUB being open 24/7 allows students to always have a place to go on campus if they need one.
- Nope I try not to stay on campus too late for safety concerns.
- Not necessarily places, but more so expanded OneCard access for some of the larger buildings after hours like CCIS and ECHA to name 2.
- Open longer is a bit iffy, but I do think having onecard after-hours access is good (just wish that I can use my onecard on other buildings). I would want them to be open longer so that I can have a free quiet private space to work after the libraries close.
- Please keep the 2nd floor of Rutherford library North open past 6pm on Fridays and past 5pm on weekends. I value the treadmill desks. Also keeping the 1st floor open later than 9pm.
- Probably CCIS, because I have an evening lab and I have to wait to be picked up and I'd prefer waiting inside, closer to the parking lot between chem and CCIS.
- Rutherford and the Rutherford pedway. I like the quiet space in rutherford south and I think the general vibe there helps me get things done, and I'm a late-night study person.
- Rutherford or Sperber libraries. They're the most easily accessible from transit and so it's more comfortable when leaving after a long night of studying to go home, especially in the winter.
- Sperber - really beautiful and nice to study in.
- The Donadeo Innovation Center for Engineering, specifically the 8th floor common area because of the focused environment that helps when studying, allowing students to take a break and leave for dinner and then return to working in that common space without having to hope that someone else opens the doors for them.
- The law library is a great library with terrible hours.
- The law library, my favourite library to study in, but I can't be there for too long since my classes end late
- The SJC Library should ideally open at 10am so people have a place in SJC to study and be welcomed within the faculty.



- There are a lot of events in the Faculty of Business (i.e., case competitions, pitch competitions) that occur on Saturday with the preparation day being Friday. This means that a lot of students need somewhere to collaborate on this work together late night on campus. This is the most applicable to Rutherford and Cameron.
- Triffo hall, because it is a good place to destress, but it closes so early. Also Katz because the bridges to medical sciences close at 5 and if you use the bathroom without knowing this, you get your stuff locked on the bridge.
- Yes, absolutely. The complete lockdown of all engineering buildings after 5pm is completely unacceptable. There are times I'm forced to find my way in the dark from Ag Forestry to my vehicle in Windsor. And why on earth can't I get from the Windsor parkade into DICE after hours? I have to go through the sketchy parkade stairwells and all the way around to the ETLC main doors, it's ridiculous and NOT safer than just allowing access from the parkade, contrary to the excuse we're given for the restricted hours. Engineering students often have late labs or assignment turnins after hours. We should be able to scan into DICE from Windsor with our onecards (this has never worked for the 3 years I've been here). I once forgot my key card and really needed to get into ETLC, I called security but they put me on hold for over 10 minutes so I hung up. It was dangerous for me to be stuck outside in the dark, alone. I pay a lot to attend this university and the buildings I need should be ACCESSIBLE when I need them.
- Yes, like Rutherford, Cameron, CCIS, SUB, and the engineering buildings. Sometimes I stay very late to study, or sometimes I'm outside late in the wintertime and I'd like to go inside the buildings to stay warm
- Yes, simply because I find that I study better at night, and during peak hours tends to be very busy and I have trouble finding somewhere to sit to study.