THE UNIVERSITY AS A LEARNING COMMONS

Stephen Riter and Adrian Gallagher
THETA, Hobart, 2013
The University of Texas at El Paso

• Founded 1914 as Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy
• Texas Western College in 1949
• UTEP in 1967
• From Mining, Engineering and Science to
  – Engineering, Business, Liberal Arts, Health Science Science and Education
• Undergraduate and MS Degrees in 67 areas
  – Doctoral degrees beginning in 89 in 16 Areas
• Model Public Urban University serving 22000 students
Whom Do We Serve?

• El Paso / Juarez Mexico – 2,000,000 People
• Primarily Low Income - $32,000 Median
• Students receiving financial aid – 16,000
• English Challenged
• Mixed Preparation
**UTEP’s Primary Commitment**

**Access**
- Student Support
- Entering Student Program
- Pre College High School
- Technology Support
- Academic Analytics
- Students as Staff
- Sticky Space

**Excellence**
- Doctoral Programs
- Strategic Research
  - Health & Biomedical Sciences and Engineering
  - Energy & Environment
  - Education for the 21st Century Demographic
  - National Defense and Border Security
  - Global Enterprise & Border Studies
VU plus UTEP
A Partnership Based on Shared Values

• Global Learning Communities
• Library/Learning Commons  Student Rovers/Tech Support
• Student Exchange - students as staff
• Academic Analytics- flag and follow
• Research Interactions - Health Science and Desalination
Drivers of change for the Learning Commons

• Impact of new pedagogies and curricula reform including blended learning
• Increasing shift to digital information resources
• Impact of mobile and related technologies
• Shift of educational support services to the online space
Learning Spaces in the Commons

Flexible design aimed to support a variety of discipline pedagogies
Spaces to maximize collaboration and participation
Spaces for supporting flipped learning with learning differentiated between online and physical environments
Victoria University Footscray
Nicolson Learning Commons –
Learning Terrain

Victoria University Footscray
Park Learning Commons –
Learning Space of the Future
## Tipping point - academic e-books

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VU Collection size</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2012</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Books, AV material</td>
<td>561,341</td>
<td>528,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Books</td>
<td>54,021</td>
<td>468,464</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal titles</td>
<td>61,479</td>
<td>79,782</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart](chart.png)
Services in the Learning Commons

Importance of student mentors in a transition pedagogy

Re-assessing the mix of educational support services

Making the transition to service in the online space
Questions?

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Our thanks to:
Ralph Kiel, Robert Stakes, Susan Young, Frank Poblano

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