

The Commons, University of British Columbia Okanagan Campus



LOCATION

Kelowna, BC

CLIENT

UBC Properties Trust

SIZE

62,400 SF

PROJECT TEAM

MTA:

Diarmuid Nash, Contracting Partner

Carol Phillips, Partner in Charge

Gregory Perkins

Boris Pavicevic

Camelia Melchiori

Mary O'Malley

Jay Zhao

Jay Patel

MQN Team:

Vicki Topping, Project Architect

Dora Anderson, Programmer and Interior

Designer

Adam Bouzane

Rhonda Gilchrist

Adam Bouzane

Linda Marriott

Shawn Van Boven

Julie Varrie

Ray Riguedell

SUSTAINABILITY

Target LEED Gold

UBCO Commons balances elegant simplicity with unique gestures befitting a Landmark building. Reflecting a snapshot of the vibrant, practical, regional and progressive culture at UBCO, the overall character of the building design is a bold but simple. Characterized by a rational plan, its strategic compact massing is distinguished by unique exterior gestures. A two-tiered Great Hall provides expansive exterior views, while windows cut into the north and east façades reveal the Galleria. Reflective metal cladding with areas of solid masonry at the base of the building display the colours of the ever-changing cloudscapes over the valley, mimicking the reflective surfaces of the lakes that are common to the area.

The building fulfills a critical student need for a multipurpose, technologically-enhanced, learning and research facility on UBC's Okanagan Campus. The new UBCO Commons provides much needed informal collaborative study spaces, café, quiet study areas, administrative facilities, a digital technology centre, recording room, VR room, and a 400-seat lecture theatre that converts into a collaborative teaching classroom for group work – the first of its kind in Canada. Other new spaces protect the Library Archives, including the school's collection of regional Okanagan art and rare documents.

UBCO Commons combines unique gestures befitting a true student hub. The design was strongly driven by student input and feedback; MTA worked closely with UBCO's Student Union in order to provide the kind of study and social space sorely lacking on campus. Central to the building and accessed at grade from two levels is a double height "Great Hall" for informal student collaborative study and gatherings, providing expansive exterior views to the Okanagan valley and generous natural light. These interconnections do more than just provide much desired natural light and vistas, they also announce to passersby the activities happening within the building; inviting them to join, meet, and work within the convivial and collegial atmosphere of The Commons.

*Moriyama & Teshima Architects in joint venture with MQN Architects