

Fact-finding underway for new residence project

The search for what makes a great university residence is on, with Student and Enrolment Services Division (SESD) taking a four-pronged approach to finding out.

Carisa Polischuk, SESD research analyst, said one prong will be an on-line survey to determine what students want in terms of room design, academic versus social space, price-point and even residence programming. As well as students now in residence, the survey will likely target prospective students and even parents.

Advice is also being sought from other Canadian universities. Polischuk said residence directors from Queen's and the Universities of Guelph, Alberta and British Columbia have been invited to Saskatoon for a consultation on "lessons learned". Each institution has been in similar circumstances as the U of S with aging residences, and each has undertaken new construction within the past five years, she said.

The research will continue with focus groups of students that will be asked to nail down the fine details after the survey results have been evaluated. This could include items like the actual floor-plan of a suite.

Finally, Polischuk said, members of the residence project steering committee hope to visit other campuses to explore various student accommodation options.

All the information must be collected and analysed by the end of November in order to meet construction timelines, she said.