

---

# The Writing Centre in the Commons

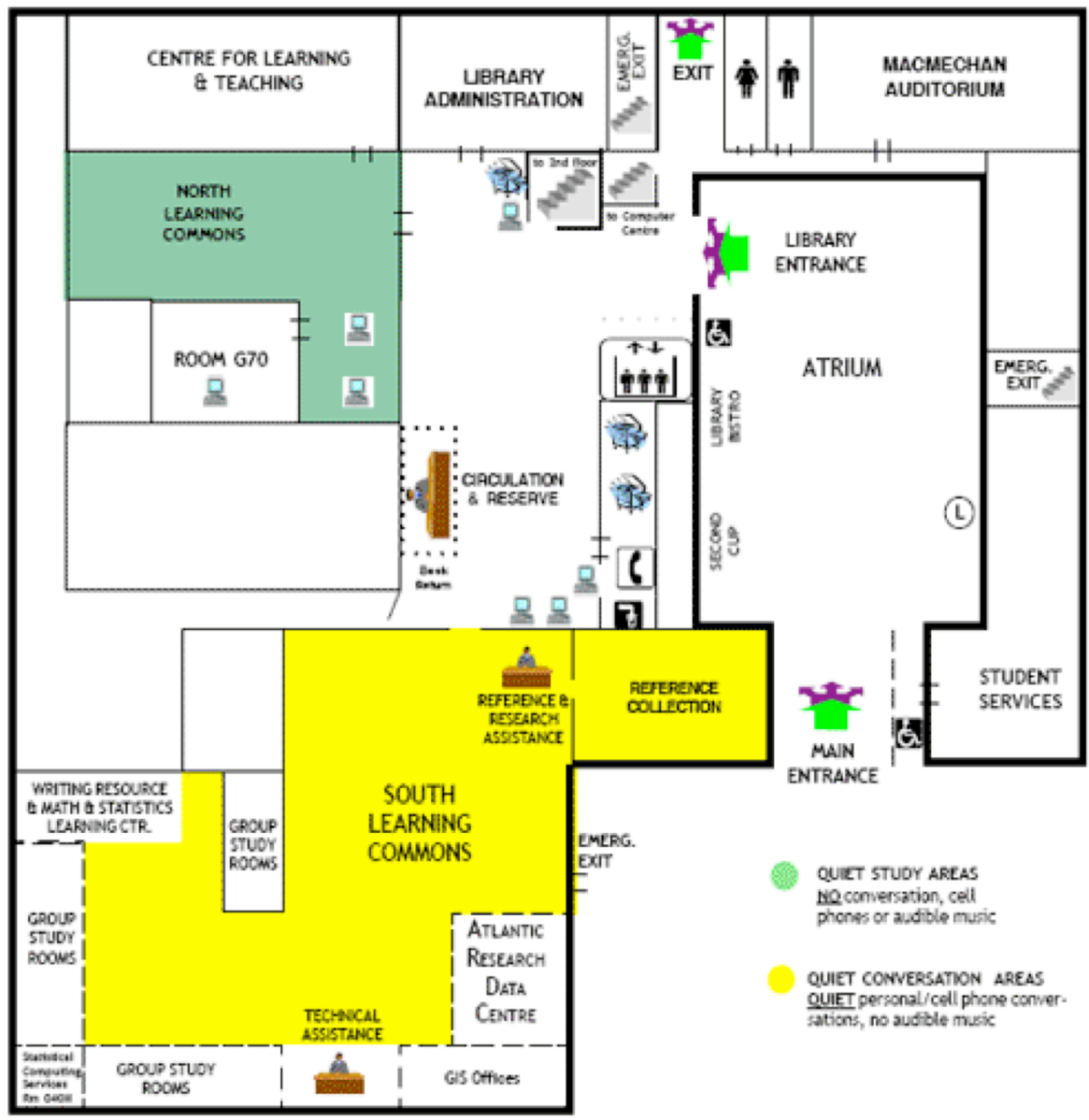
---

The Dalhousie University  
Writing Centre Experience

---

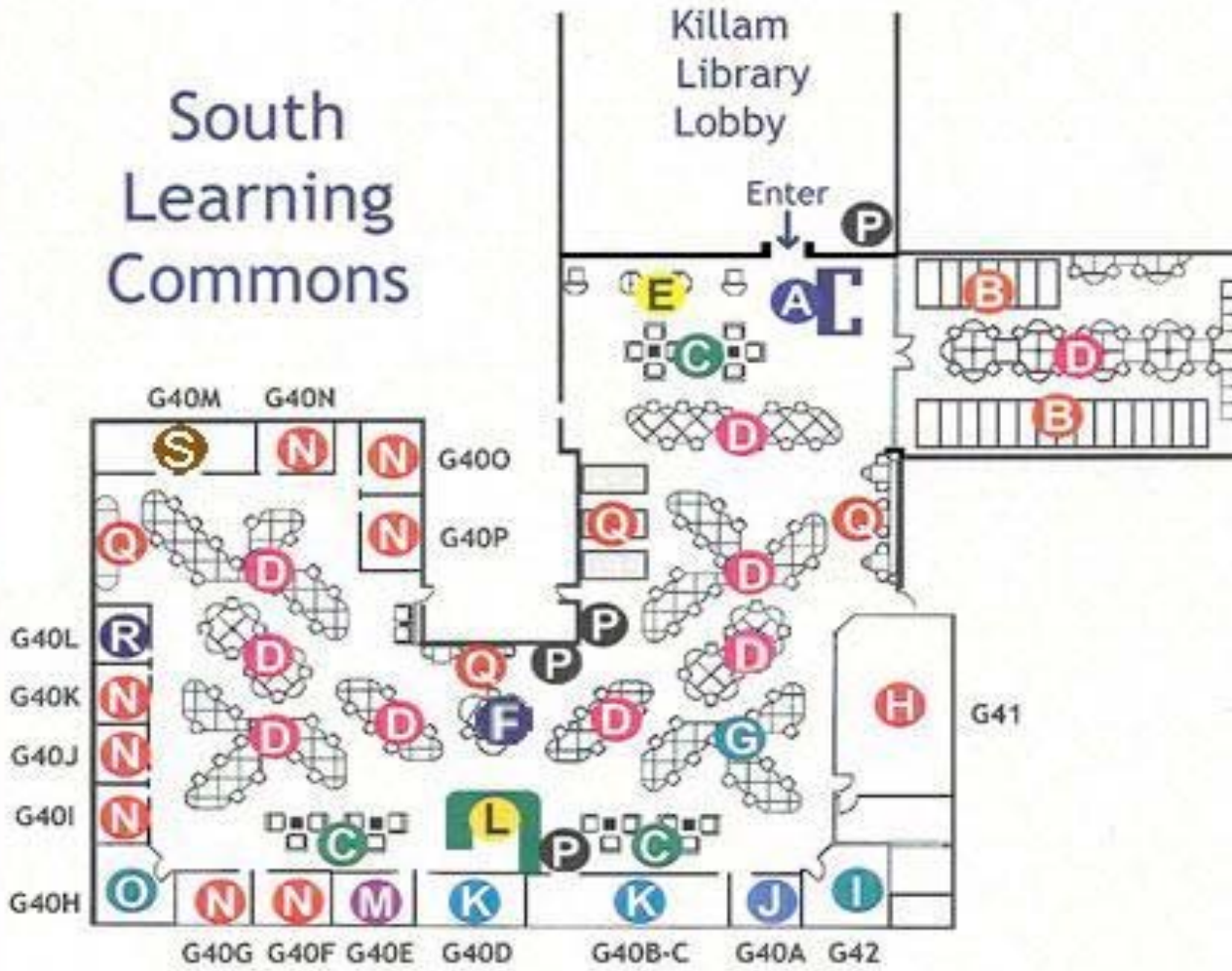
# The Dalhousie Learning Commons

- Established in 2002
  - First LC in the Maritime region
  - \$1.2 million project
  - 160 workstations; Group Study Rooms
  - Support Services:
    - Reference Information Desk & Reference Room
    - Writing Centre / Math and Stats Support Centre
    - Geographic Information Systems Office
    - Atlantic Research Data Centre
    - Statistical Computing Services Office
-



University Ave.

# South Learning Commons



---

# History of the Dal Writing Centre

- Resided long-term on 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl of Killam Library
    - one small office; one full-time faculty member.
  - Moved to LC in 2004
    - one office in LC for Coordinator; 8 tutors.
    - maintained 3<sup>rd</sup> fl office
  - 2005: expanded to G40M
    - maintained G40A as Coordinator's Office
    - gave up 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl office
    - space in G40M for three tutors
    - space shared with Math and Stats Centre (evenings)
  - 2007: added Writing Advisor and office (G40N)
-













---

# How It Works for Students (or not)

## Advantages

- Close to students  
(work and social space)
  - Convenience
  - Visibility
  - Demystifies the WC
  - WC review as part of process
- Easy referrals to and from  
reference librarians and other  
Student Services

## Challenges

- Noise
    - Internal
    - External
  - Privacy issues
  - Visual distractions
  - Access
    - Physical and technological  
barriers
    - Limited student pool
-

---

# How It Works Administratively (or not)

## Advantages

- Physical separation from Student Services offices = considerable degree of autonomy
- Productive relationships with Library administration and staff
- Relationships with other services in the Commons

## Challenges

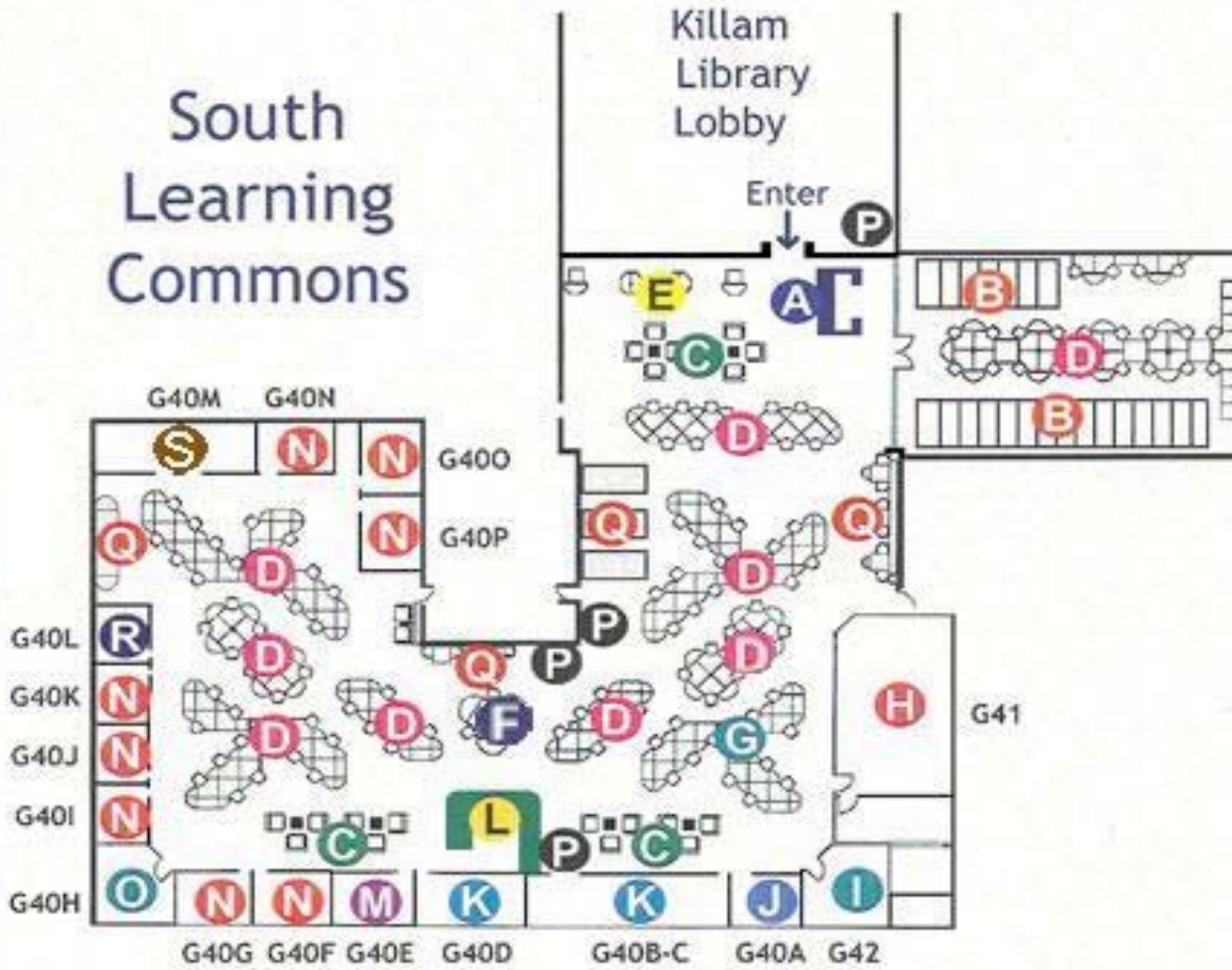
- Reduced awareness in Student Services of WC activity and needs
  - Issues of responsibility over space & resources; cultural differences
  - Limited space in Commons affects the number and variety of services available.
-

---

# The Future of the Writing Centre in the Learning Commons

- June 2008: moving to new offices in the Learning Commons
    - G40A—Coordinator's Office
    - G40B,C,D: Writing Advisor + room for 3-4 tutors
    - Student Services Study Skills Advisor in part of D office.
-

# South Learning Commons





---

# Addressing the Challenges

- **Benefits of the Move:**

- Noise reduction; Improved space, visibility, and access
- Closer relationship to Student Services
- Move reflects positively on relations with Library

- **Other Strategies**

- Expansion of satellite writing centres
  - Development of online resources and online tutoring in the Writing Centre
  - Improved discipline diversity among Writing Centre staff
-