

Feather River College Library Program Review, 2009 **(October Revision)**

Mission/Purpose of the FRC Library

The primary purpose of the library is to provide instructional support for the academic programs offered by the college. Moreover, through its collection of print material, non-print media and electronic resources, the library exists to provide an environment for intellectual growth and stimulation to the students enrolled at the college.

Current State of the Library (October, 2009):

Hours of Operation (spring and fall semesters)

8:00 am – 9:00 pm Monday – Thursday

8:00 am – 4:30 pm Friday

Closed following last day of final exams in the fall semester until the first campus workday in January.

(Summer semester)

8:00am – 4:30pm Monday – Thursday, closed noon to 1pm for lunch.

Hours may vary due to classified employee contract provisions.

Physical Plant

Net assignable area (square feet): 3,308.

Seating capacity: 67.

Staffing

Permanent library staffing consists of one full-time (11 month) certificated faculty librarian (title: Library Director), one full-time (12 month) classified library assistant (title: Senior Program Assistant/Library) and one .45 (9 month, 18hours/week) classified library assistant (title: Library Assistant). Additionally, students are employed during the school year an average of 10 hours per week.

Resources

The library supports the college's instructional programs by providing the following resources:

-- a computer lab/group study area with eleven workstations, each of which has Internet access and the latest version of appropriate software applications for student use. Each computer has a DVD player. The room also has five round tables with four chairs at each table. There are two group study rooms with desks and chair accommodating six people.

There is also a “listening/viewing” room for patrons to view videocassettes or listen to audio tapes.

- a “reading/quiet study” room with four individual study carrels, 14 individual desks & chairs, three comfortable reading chairs and a two-person couch;
- subscriptions to twenty electronic databases;
- approximately 22,000 books;
- approximately 11,000 e-books;
- non-print media in the form of DVDs and VHS videocassettes (approximately 2,200 total);
- more than one hundred subscriptions to magazines, journals and newspapers in hard-copy.

Services include:

- selection/acquisition of all print and non-print material;
- cataloging of all print and non-print material;
- circulation of material for use both in and outside the library, including reserves;
- reference and related instructional assistance;
- interlibrary loans;
- classroom presentations by the Library Director on effective library research methods.

Funding (from all sources)

Funding for the library’s print media (books and periodical subscriptions), non-print media (videos in one format or another) and electronic resources (database subscriptions, shared e-book collection, and software related to the integrated library system) comes from four different sources: the unrestricted general fund, the Instructional Equipment/Library Materials Grant, state lottery funds, and TTIP (Telecommunications and Technology Infrastructure Program).

Critical Assessment of the Library, Including Implementation of Student Learning Outcomes for Appropriate Services

Mission/Purpose

The mission/purpose of the library is accurate and relevant. There is no need for modification, but it should be codified as an FRC *Board Policy*. Likewise, the various library procedures dealing with privileges, responsibilities, fines, hours of operation, etc. should be given a corresponding *Administrative Procedure* chapter and number and be included with all the other Board policies and procedures on the college’s website. These procedures are part of the old FRC *Board Policy Manual* but they have not been updated and incorporated into the new instrument with its policy/procedure distinction.

Hours of Operation

Currently, the hours of operation for full library service are satisfactory. However, an increasing number of on-campus students are enrolling in online classes and the need for weekend access to a computer lab and place to study is growing. The new library (discussed under "Physical Plant") has been designed to allow access to the computer lab alone, without opening the rest of the library. This would allow the college to hire an hourly employee with little or no library experience to staff the lab on weekends.

If and when the compressed calendar is implemented, library hours may change. Presumably, library services will be required year round to coincide with year round class offerings. While the daily hours of operation might remain unchanged, there may be a need to keep the library open during periods when it currently is closed: late December and early January, spring break, the week following spring semester final exams, and late July and early August. This will affect staffing needs as well (discussed below).

Physical Plant

In 2001 an in-house analysis of space usage throughout the campus revealed that the current library was 50% undersized according to standards maintained by the Chancellor's Office. A project proposal for a new, larger facility was approved by the Chancellor's Office in 2002 and funding for the new facility was assured with the passage of a bond issue on the November 2006 state ballot. Construction began in early fall of 2009 with completion expected twelve to fifteen months later. As of this writing, occupancy is anticipated for the spring 2011 semester. The new library will have greatly increased stacks space, a larger and more pleasing reference/reading area, a larger computer lab with 30 workstations compared to the current eleven, and a lobby that will have wall space for display cases. The facility will have wireless capability for laptops. The computer lab will have a separate door to the outside, allowing access to that part of the library exclusively. This will permit weekend or other off-hour usage of the lab with supervision by someone who does not have to be trained in the numerous elements of library service.

Staffing

The number of library staff has remained static for twenty years despite the doubling of students attending the college. If the situation were to remain as is, staffing for circulation, cataloging, technical processing, reference and classroom presentations would be adequate. If the library's hours of operation are increased, either through the addition of weekend services or the implementation of the compressed calendar, at least one more employee would be needed.

Computer support for the library is currently provided by the Information Services Department. There are two areas of computer support on which the library is dependent: network services and desktop support. The integrated library system (cataloging, circulation and public access catalog) operates through a server controlled by Information Services. Likewise, the research databases the library subscribes to are accessed by way

of a network server also maintained by Information Services. Support in this area has been adequate and should not be affected by the increased number of computer workstations in the new library.

Desktop support is a constant need. Hard drives fail, monitors go blank, mice stop working properly, printers won't print, etc. Rarely does a week go by in the library that desktop support isn't needed for one of the eleven student use computers or the three staff computers. (As of this writing, four of the eleven student computers are down). This need is expected to increase with 30 student workstations slated for the new library.

Although a computer technician for the library alone isn't warranted, it is a certainty that greater demands will be made on the Information Services Department for support in this area.

Resources and Services

Computer Lab. The computer lab has seen a dramatic increase in use over the past three years, due in great part to the increase in online classes being taken by FRC students on campus, but also due to the proliferation of social networking websites (MySpace, Facebook, et al.) and entertainment websites (YouTube, e.g.) available via the Internet. There are occasions when all the computers are being used and students either have to wait a few minutes or use the computers in the Learning Center, DSPS, or room 600. This problem should be alleviated when the new library is constructed.

Electronic Databases.

The library has paid subscriptions to 20 research databases, covering all the major academic disciplines. The databases are available to all students, faculty and staff 24 hours a day, except during weekends when the network server is performing its weekly backup. Access to the databases from the campus network is through IP authentication and requires no password. Patrons accessing the databases from any non-network (including wireless on campus) computers with internet access are required to provide their network username and password.

The 20 databases to which the library subscribes cover all the major academic disciplines and provide the full-text of articles, reports, news broadcasts, poems and other literary works. Remote authentication allows 24/7 access to the databases for students, faculty and staff from off-campus computers with an Internet connection. The subscriptions are paid for from the college's annual TTIP allocation of approximately \$36,000, earmarked exclusively for database subscriptions and related costs. The database subscription fees are negotiated through the California Community College Library Consortium and are based on the college's FTE. Due to FRC's relatively low FTE , the Library is able to subscribe to a large and varied collection of databases, rivaling those of some of the largest community colleges in the state.

New databases become available each year and the Library Director reviews the current subscriptions and evaluates new ones. A decision is made annually as to which subscriptions to renew and which might be discontinued in favor of new and more appropriate ones. This element of the library's resources is probably the strongest. However, TTIP funding was eliminated in the state's 2009-10 budget and is not expected to be restored, putting this area of library resources in peril. If the college expects to meet accreditation standard IIB, assuring equitable access to instructional support services for all of its students regardless of service location or delivery method, then funding for research databases will have to come from another source. Adding to this problem is the need to commit to database subscriptions in advance of their start date in order to benefit from the substantial discount negotiated by the Community College Library Consortium.

Books. The number of volumes in the library's collection is just over 50% of the number recommended by the American Library Association for a community college with a student population the size of FRC's. This number is a little misleading. If outdated, unused, inappropriate books are never de-selected ("weeded") from the collection, volume numbers may give a false impression of a collection's quality. The Library Director, in conjunction with faculty members in each discipline, weeds and updates the collection regularly, ensuring that the collection remains up to date, relevant to the college's instructional programs, and appropriate for a community college audience.

Nonetheless, the collection should be larger and needs more shelf space than is currently available to house the collection. This was one of the compelling arguments for a new library which led to the approval of funding for a new facility. In order for the collection to grow, there must be a satisfactory budget for the purchase of books. The book budget declined for several years beginning in 2001, but stabilized after the most recent accreditation site visit team criticized the reduced funding. For 2009-10 however, the book budget was reduced from \$10,000 to \$7,500. On a positive note, the Library Director was issued a college credit card to order books and media through Amazon and other similar vendors, which has resulted in lower book costs and much faster delivery time than before.

E-Books. Through the auspices of the California Community College Library Consortium, the Feather River College Library has been participating in the acquisition of shared e-book collections through NetLibrary, a subsidiary of OCLC (Online Computer Library Center, a not for profit computer service and research organization). Every year, NetLibrary compiles a collection of approximately 3,000 books selected by California community college and university librarians. These collections are offered to each community college in the state for approximately \$3,000 per college. This price is possible because only one person at a time can access the contents of any particular book. Thus, if someone at Ohlone College is viewing an e-book, no one else can view it at that time. There is a very brief timeout period for the books, so if no activity is detected, the book is put back into circulation for others to view.

The cataloging records for e-books are merged with the records for books in hardcopy, so patrons locate them via the Book and Media catalog as they would any other book – by author, title, subject or keyword. When a results list is produced, hardcopy books are identified by a call number while e-books are identified as an “electronic resource” and a web link is provided to access the text of the book. If the search is conducted from a computer on the campus network, NetLibrary recognizes the IP address of the computer and access is immediate. If patrons perform a search from either a wireless computer on campus or any computer off-campus, they are prompted for their FRC network username and password before they can access the text of the e-book. The FRC has purchased four e-book collections for a total of around 11,000 e-books. Due to budget cuts for 2009-10, the latest e-book collection offered through the Consortium will not be purchased.

Periodical and Newspaper Subscriptions. The number of periodical and newspaper subscriptions has remained relatively stable for a number of years. The Library Director reviews the subscriptions annually, and in conjunction with faculty, adds or deletes subscription titles.

The philosophy behind periodical subscriptions has changed with the availability of full-text articles from scholarly journals via electronic databases. Scholarly journals are the most expensive periodical subscriptions and they are rarely read by students or faculty unless those individuals are directed to a specific article through a database search. As a result, the library now focuses its “hard copy” subscriptions on those magazines and journals likely to be read by patrons out of genuine interest. There is little point in paying \$500 a year to subscribe to a journal that no one will ever pick up, especially when all the articles in the journal are available through a database. It is a better service to the library’s patrons to acquire titles in hard copy that will be actually read in the library. Magazines such as *Legacy*, *Hispanic*, and *Giant Robot* (dealing with African American history, Hispanic culture and Asian popular culture, respectively) now occupy shelf space formerly held by a single arcane journal, and at a fraction of the price. Every article in the journal, however, is still available through one of the library’s databases.

Non-Print Media. It was noted in the last program review that development of the media collection had slowed considerably. This was as a result of a legal opinion issued by the Chancellor’s Office legal counsel that due to provisions in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), only closed captioned videos (in any format) could be purchased by community colleges receiving federal funds for any purpose. Since that time, producers of educational videos have either captioned or subtitled the great majority of their newly produced material and the library has been able to once again provide this essential instructional support tool to instructors. However, the non-print media budget was reduced \$500 for 2009-10, from \$3,000 to \$2,500.

Reserve Material.

7/1/06 – 6/30/07: 1532

7/1/07 – 6/30/08: 1680

Interlibrary Loans. Interlibrary loans continue to be an invaluable service for students and faculty. As a member of the North State Cooperative Library System, the FRC Library has access to the collections of seven college libraries and thirteen county libraries in the northern third of the state. Free weekly van delivery of material loaned between libraries is provided by NSCLS.

Reference Assistance. Reference assistance can take many forms: Demonstrating how to find books using the online catalog; showing a patron how to search for information using a particular database or search engine; finding a fact, quotation, poem, definition, statistic, biography, law, work of art or music, or innumerable other bits of information.

Typically, students are seeking a range of facts and information to be compiled and analyzed for the purpose of writing a comprehensive research paper. These facts and bits of information may come from an array of sources: statistics from a government website, graphic illustration from a department at a university, background information from one or more books. The assignment may require that the student use scholarly journals for some of their sources. Very infrequently does a community college student have the technical preparation to perform this kind of research on his or her own. Moreover, a good percentage of community college students do not possess the verbal communication skills to accurately and succinctly ask for the information they are seeking. The exchange that occurs between reference librarian and patron to determine just exactly what is being sought is known as the “reference interview.”

Until recently, there hasn’t been an instrument to track either the number of reference questions received or their outcomes/resolution. A “Reference Log” was developed to address this. The logs are maintained in the Library Director’s office and in the Library Assistant’s office (see attached form). All reference questions are logged onto the form, along with the steps followed in responding to the question, as well as the level of satisfaction expressed by the patron at the end of the transaction. Library staff have been instructed to direct all reference inquiries to the Library Director. There are times, such as during the evening or when the Director is out of the Library when one of the library assistants has to field the question and then fills out the log form. The Director reviews the log daily and discusses the methods used to answer the questions with both library assistants. This constructive exchange helps all parties to better understand the nature of reference assistance and constantly improve service to students and faculty.

Classroom Presentations on Library Research.

Faculty who assign research projects to their students are encouraged to contact the Library Director for the purpose of introducing the students to the resources that will aid them in their research. The presentations are tailored to the assignment, but usually include the following elements:

1. An introduction to the library home page, including instructions for accessing it from off-campus.

2. A demonstration of searching the Book and Media (public access) catalog, including a discussion of the LC classification system and subject headings.
3. A demonstration of searching for topics on the World Wide Web. This includes a discussion of criteria for assessing the legitimacy and quality of any website (website's domain, purpose of website, qualifications of website author, source of author's material, etc.)
4. An introduction to and demonstration of the library's subscription electronic databases.
5. Information regarding the interlibrary loan process.

Feedback has been positive from faculty in whose classes library research presentations have been given. Student feedback has also been positive. In the spirit of identifying and quantifying student learning outcomes for this service to the extent possible, a form was created by the Library Director to be completed by the instructor of the class. It has two parts, one of which is filled out following the presentation, the other filled out after the assignment had been turned in by the students (see attached form).

Objectives and Goals, Including Budget

The library is serving the needs of its clientele very well through its resources and services. Changes in technology, enrollment patterns, distance education and the academic calendar will all require appropriate responses to maintain the quality currently achieved. Program review for the library should occur every three years and should be directly related to the instructional budget process.

Student learning outcomes are now incorporated into those services which lend themselves to such a process: reference assistance and classroom presentations. Other quantifiable data are gathered (number of books checked out per year, e.g.), but it is important to appreciate those quantifiable services in their proper light and not attempt to draw conclusions from mere numbers. For example, the number of books checked out during the year can be the result of any number of factors: the increase of material available through databases and the Worldwide web; the decrease of written research assignments by faculty; more material being used in the library and not checked out, and so on. Data will continue to be gathered and the methods for applying the data for the purpose of constantly improving library service will be reviewed and refined.