Amarillo College

Program Review
Form for Completion of Self Study

Non-Instructional

The ID number for this form is 67. You will need this number to update or edit your submission in the future.

Name of Division: Academic Affairs

Name of Department: Library

Name of Program: Library

This Program Review is being conducted during year: 2006-2007

I. Office's/Department's Purpose

A.) State the purpose of the office/department. How is this purpose within the mission of Amarillo College?

"Amarillo College, a public community college, is dedicated to providing educational, cultural and community services and resources to enhance the quality of life for the diverse population in the service area."

—Amarillo College Mission Statement

Our purpose is to
- empower our patrons to be self-sufficient information consumers and to possess critical evaluation skills;
- create a physical environment that encourages personal study, collaboration, and networking, and inspires creative and academic growth; and
- provide seamless access to the best information and tools customized for each patron.

Members of the college community have easy access to educational services, cultural exhibits, and information resources at our two locations, West and Washington Street campuses, and through the college's World Wide Web site and portal. Whether our patrons are physically able to come to the college campuses or not, they have access to over 100,000 books, 12,000 full-text periodicals, research assistance, project or collaboration tools, and library instruction. The library is also home to the "Southern Lights Gallery," featuring rotating photograph exhibits and our own first floor exhibit space. We believe our resources and efforts do enhance the education and quality of life for the college community.

B.) When was the last time the office's/department's purpose statement was reviewed/revised by faculty and staff in the office/department?

December 15, 2005

C.) Is this office/discipline required to receive approval from an external agency or organization in order to offer courses?

no

II. Office's/Department's Improvements based on Planning, Evaluation and Assessment

A.) Identify at least on example of an improvement/revision which resulted from the past five-years annual PET forms.

Objective from the library's 2005-2006 P.E.T Form:

"After taking a pre-test on one or more information literacy competency objectives and participating in an online or classroom library information literacy session covering the objectives, all participating students will improve their scores on the post-test by at least 50 percent, and 80 percent of the students will score at least 70 percent correct on the post-test."

Result (IA = Pre-test average percent correct; FA = Post-test average percent correct; PI = Percent improvement); n=number of students

Fall 2005 Spring 2006 Summer 2006 Fall2006
IA = 53% IA = 72% IA = 48% IA = 57%
FA = 66% FA = 90% FA = 77% FA = 76%
PI = 24% PI = 25% PI = 59% PI = 33%
n=509 n=372 n=20 n=194

Not every class that receives library instruction participates in the literacy competency assessment. Class size, time constraints, and instructor cooperation in administering assessments vary. Only in the Summer term did the library reach its goal of at least a 50% improvement between pre- and post-test scores. However, only in the Fall 2005 term did the post-test scores average below 70% correct.

Use of Result

Assessment Contruction and Administration

- Analyzed "Lessons Learned" and identified assessment construction and administration in Fall 2005 as areas that needed improvement.

- Made improvements with the result that only one problem occurred in Spring 2006.
- Will continue to improve classroom assessments and will explore ways to add assessment to appropriate online tutorials.

Competencies

- Analyzed initial assessment scores and identified that students lack the core competencies needed for research assignments.
- Analyzed assignments and focused instruction on the core competencies needed for each assignment.
- Will continue to improve instruction on the competencies needed most for research assignments based on analysis of individual assignments and consultation with professors. Will develop library instruction techniques suitable for learning communities.

B.) Identify at least one example of improvements/revisions which resulted from the last Program Review.

"There is a developing need for online tutorials for digital information-seekers who cannot come to the library (surveys show that over 80 per cent of our student body work full or part time in addition to carrying full or partial course loads) and who only have time to access information for the next day's assignments after 10:00 P.M." —Library Self-study Report, 2002

Improvement

The library now has 17 online tutorials available on the library Web site for our students. Here is a list of those available:

General Tutorials

Features of the AC Library Home Page
How to Log into Library Databases from Off Campus
How to Log into Library Databases from On Campus
Library Databases vs. Internet Web Sites
What Is a Library Database?

Database Tutorials

Academic Search Premier
CINAHL
CQ Researcher
Health and Wellness Resource Center
Literature Resource Center
MasterFILE Premier

Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center
Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection
Student Resource Center Gold

Research Skills Tutorials

How to Avoid Plagiarism (APA Version)
How to Read a Bibliography
Scholarly Journals Versus Other Periodicals

Improvement

"Given the exponentially increasing dependence of students, faculty, staff, and community on the Internet, we must continue development of the VIRTUAL Library and the digital resources available through licensing and leasing contracts connected with the Library Networks, membership in collaborations and consortia such as the Harrington Library Consortium, the OCLC/AMIGOS network, the LIEAN [sic] Consortium, and the individual Internet-delivered specialized databases needed for discipline-specific research." —Library Self-study Report, 2002

One example of cost-saving through membership with the Harrington Library Consortium this past year was the purchase of Student Resource Center Gold for $6,500. The purchase price for the library individually would have been $11,000.

Similar cost-savings have been possible through the Llano Estacado Information Access Network, AMIGOS, and TexShare over the past five years. Here is an example for TexShare:

FY2007
Cost to library for TexShare Databases: $4,774
Value of TexShare Databases (if licensed individually by AC library): $193,972
Savings per year: $189,198

C.) Identify at least one example of an improvement/revision that is a response to accomplish a strategy or tactical objective within the Strategic Plan 2010-2015.

"Strategy 8.1 Expand learning through technological innovation and delivery."

Learning Commons at the Lynn Library

Purpose

The Learning Commons brings together in one location services that enhance learning, writing, research, and technology at Amarillo College. Located on the second floor of the Lynn Library, this visible and accessible space recognizes the role of the library as

the central gathering place for students to study, engage in writing and research, and learn in collaborative settings.

The purpose of the Learning Commons is

- to foster critical thinking by careful resource evaluation;
- to teach effective information extraction from the most relevant resources;
- to integrate, process, and analyze new information and ideas;
- to provide support for increasing individual information competencies; and
- to bring technology, teaching, and information professionals together in order to enhance student learning.

A defining characteristic of the Learning Commons is its ability to apply the combined expertise from librarians, professional staff, peer helpers, and student consultants to meet the learning, writing, and research needs of students at any skill level. By working in collaboration, the Learning Commons partners are able to offer students a more coherent and integrated approach to support services. This partnership model positions the Learning Commons to serve as a change agent in the development, use, and assessment of new learning environments, tools, strategies, and curricular and pedagogical approaches to enhance quality learning on campus.

The Learning Commons recognizes the importance of technology by serving as a showcase for the library's investment in digital resources. With full-service access to computers and wireless Internet service, the Learning Commons is able to provide not only the tools, but also the skills to support students in the effective use of learning technologies in their academic studies.

The Learning Commons integrates the following services on the second floor of the library:

- **Learning Services** — Learning Services provides assistance and support to students at all levels who want to enhance their skills and performance and achieve their intellectual potential. We provide information, individual and small group assistance, workshops, and print and Web-based resources on a range of skills and issues, including:
    - information literacy
    - library research skills
    - source evaluation
    - software use
    - works-cited list assistance
- **Library Research Help** — Staff is available to help students with their course research requirements. We can answer questions about library resources and services and point students in the right direction. We have also prepared a number of online guides and tutorials to help students learn how to navigate the library and find what they need.

- **Reference Services** — We can answer fact-based questions and complete more complex reference tasks for college staff in support of research and writing projects.
- **Collaboration Partnership Program** — We will work with the eLearning Development Center and faculty groups to ensure that our programs are complementary to and supportive of the college curriculum and teaching outcomes and ITS and KACV to ensure availability of the latest technology.

D.) Provide names and titles of those who determined the assessment process used to evaluate the office/department.

Jana Comerford, Library Instructor
Marian Daniel, Circulation Coordinator
Mark Hanna, College Librarian
Kaki Hoover, Associate College Librarian
Sherri Hromas, Computer Systems Coordinator
Nan Kemp, Reader's Advisor
Casey McGee, Learning Commons Coordinator
Karen McIntosh, Associate College Librarian
Charmaine Powell, Senior Staff Assistant

E.) For client/student outcome assessments, review the five-year graph(s) *quantitative* results or provide a brief narrative summary of *qualitative* results.

Objective from the library's 2005-2006 P.E.T Form:

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Information Literacy Instruction
Percent Improvement* by Semester

Semester	Percent Improvement
Fall 05	24
Spring 06	25
Summer 06	59
Fall 06	33
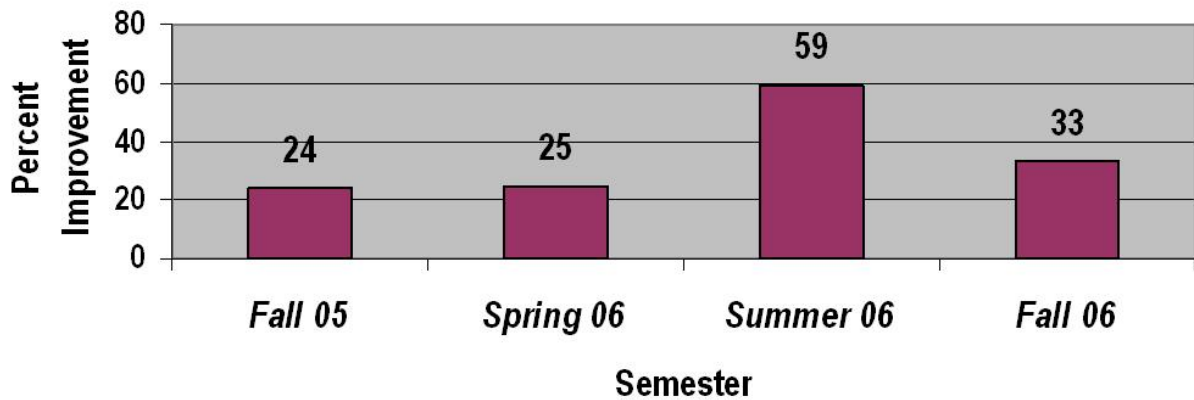
This chart documents information literacy score improvement by students who were taught information literacy competencies during the last four semesters. The atypical result in Summer 2006 is the result of a small sample size (two classes).

s

1. What changes have been made in the services of the office/department because of the analysis of these results?

Library instructors analyzed "Lessons Learned," a log of problems encountered that was started in Fall 2005, and identified two areas, assessment construction and assessment administration, that needed improvement. They then categorized the "Lessons Learned," which validated best practices and illuminated areas that need improvement. Below are some examples:

- Assessment administration techniques improved substantially after the first semester.
- Assessment content (questions) are continuously improved based on analysis of results.
- Students still need training in the core information literacy competencies.
- When post-assessment does not show improvement, the lesson content or delivery method is changed.
- Handouts are valuable and are updated as necessary.
- Faculty coordination is always a goal. When results are better or worse than normal, a "Lesson Learned" notation was included.
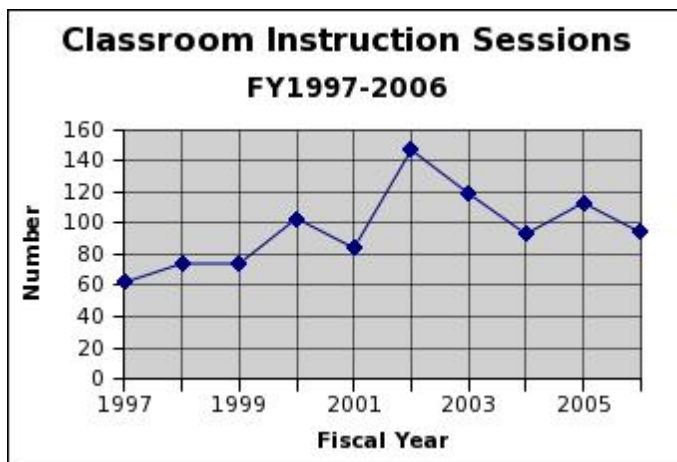
- Technical issues include local equipment problems, which are always addressed before the next class. They also include vendor database accessibility and vendor software bugs. Documenting these problems and communicating with our vendors help them improve their databases.
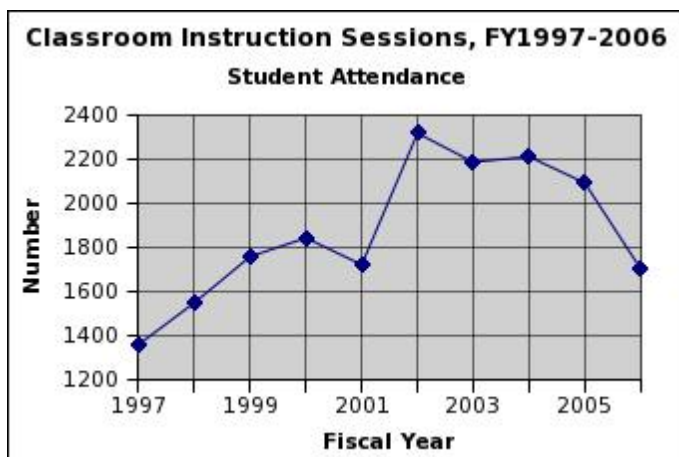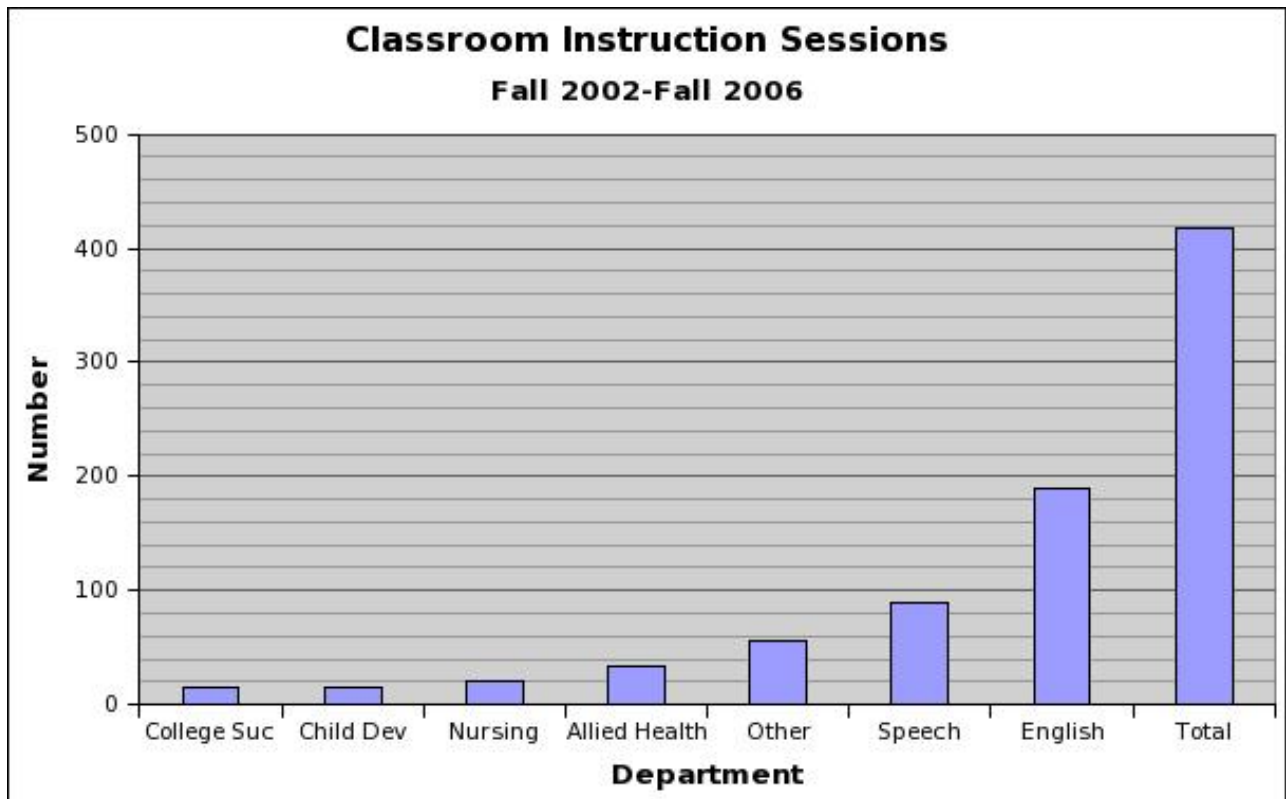
F.) Provide the five-year graph(s) indicating the demand for the office's/department's services.

1. Assess the need for the office/department

Library Instruction

Classroom

Classroom Instruction Sessions
Fall 2002-Fall 2006

Classroom Instruction Sessions, FY1997-2006
Student Attendance

Faculty for AC Speech and English courses in the core academic curriculum most frequently request classroom instruction by library faculty. Courses in divisions or programs for which professional accreditation is required are the next most prevalent group served. Library instruction is given on each campus.

**Information Literacy Competencies**

	Selecting search fields	Online catalog searching and library card privileges	Using reserves, interlibrary loan	Boolean operators and synonyms	Broader & Narrower terms	Databases vs.internet	Ethical Use of information	Web site evaluation	Citation Styles	Identifying type of source & original publisher	Scholarly Journals vs other periodicals	Information Cycle - from primary source to common knowledge	Use of database subject thesaurus index	Expert Techniques: Truncation symbols, wildcard
English-Comp1	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•		•
English-Comp2	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•				•
Speech-Interperso	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•
Speech-Public Spe	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
Nursing	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Child Dev	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•
College Success	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•
Psychology	•	•		•	•				•		•		•	•
Dental Hygiene	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
Medical Lab Tech	•			•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
Occupational Ther	•	•		•	•	•	•			•		•	•	•
Drama	•	•		•		•	•			•				•
Math	•			•		•				•				•
Medical Data	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•
Paralegal Studies	•	•		•		•	•			•				•
Radiography	•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•	•	•
Sociology	•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•	•	•
Business	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Criminal Justice	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•
Interior Design	•	•	•	•		•							•	
Physical Therapy	•	•		•	•	•	•		•		•		•	•
Dental Assistant	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Drafting		•	•		•	•			•					
Government	•	•	•	•	•					•		•	•	•	•
History	•		•		•	•					•	•	•	•
Indus.Maintenance	•	•	•	•	•	•							•	
Machining Technol	•	•	•	•	•	•							•	
Music	•	•		•		•								•
Radiation Therapy	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•		•	•	•
Records Managem	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•				•
Respiratory Thera	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•
Surgical Technolog	•	•		•		•	•			•				•

Library instructors use the Information Literacy Competency Standards developed by the Association of College & Research Libraries to classify the skills they teach during classroom instruction.

For each class they focus on the competencies required to successfully accomplish the specific class research assignment(s). This is done in cooperation with the faculty member. They use a variety of teaching techniques for the instruction. The skills gained are transferable to other classes and to work or personal research.

Pre-instruction assessments routinely indicate that students have not mastered the fundamental competencies needed, so the librarians continue to teach these competencies in core courses such as English and Speech. They also reinforce these fundamental competencies and add additional ones in upper-level courses.

Reference
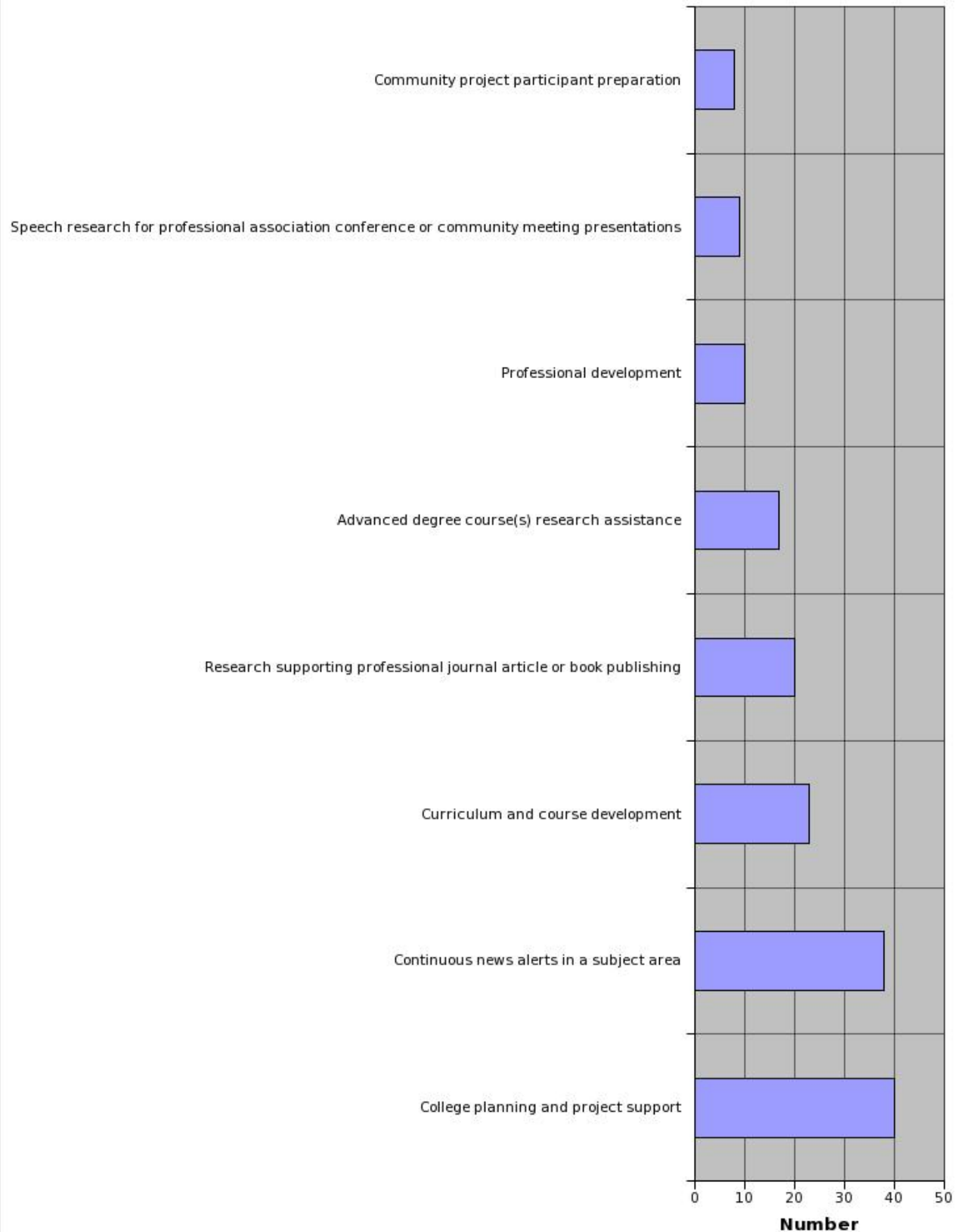
Reference Questions, FY1997-2006
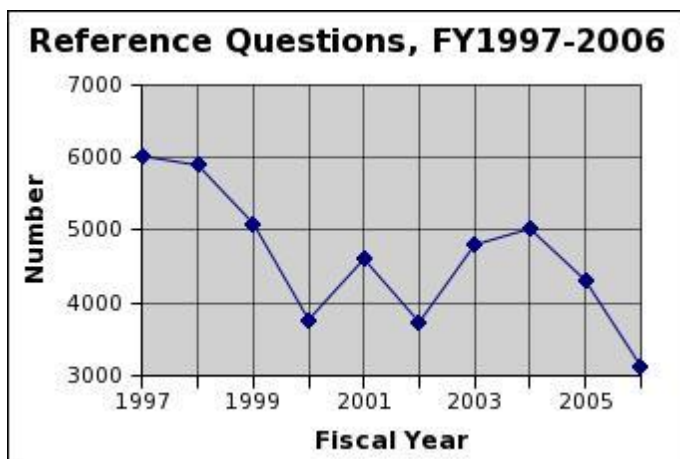
Ready reference formerly accounted for a majority of questions asked by our students. These are often factual questions that are asked repeatedly and can be answered quickly. Students can now find such answers for themselves more easily at their own desktop through the library's databases, subject guides, electronic books, and Google searches. However, some reference questions that are more involved are best answered with the help of trained reference staff.
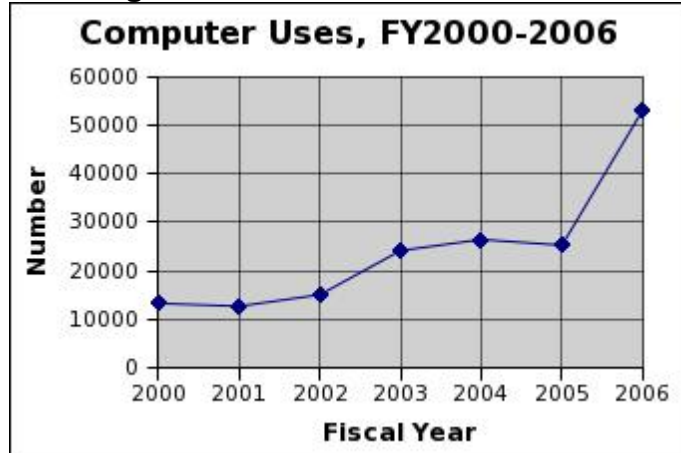
Students Instructed, FY2003-2006
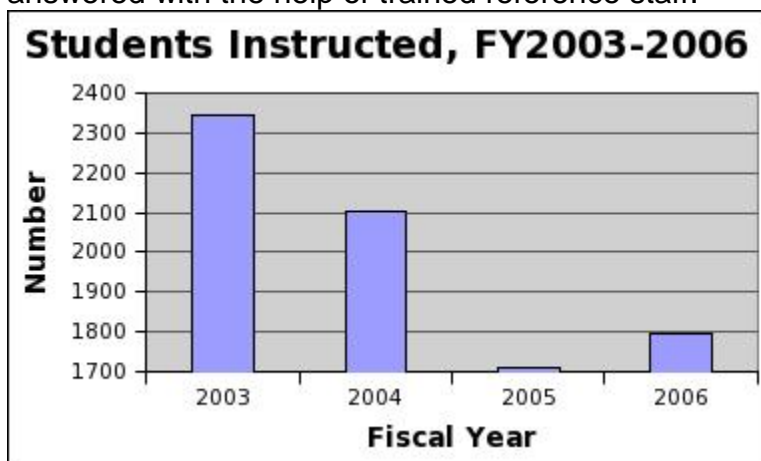
When students are unable to find the information they need or their assignments are more complex, they make appointments with librarians to help them. The library markets this individualized research service that gives us an additional opportunity for instruction. Statistics for this service are not included in reference statistics. This type of instruction is dependent in great part on faculty referrals. Two faculty members who use this service heavily have retired. Some of the library's online tutorials are now being recommended by faculty instead.

Our librarians spend more time on value-added research for faculty and administrators. Statistics for this activity are charted below.

Research Requested by Faculty and Administrators

By Category, Fall 2002-Fall 2006

Community project participant preparation

Speech research for professional association conference or community meeting presentations

Professional development

Advanced degree course(s) research assistance

Research supporting professional journal article or book publishing

Curriculum and course development

Continuous news alerts in a subject area

College planning and project support

0   10   20   30   40   50

Number

Learning Commons

Computer Uses, FY2000-2006

Computer uses reached a record level during FY2006. It more than doubled in one year. The primary reason was the expansion of the computer lab into the second-floor Learning Commons. The environment is more open with room for more computers, and students can now go to one place to receive assistance with their projects including research, software, and communication tools.

Library Learning Commons Comparison by Semester
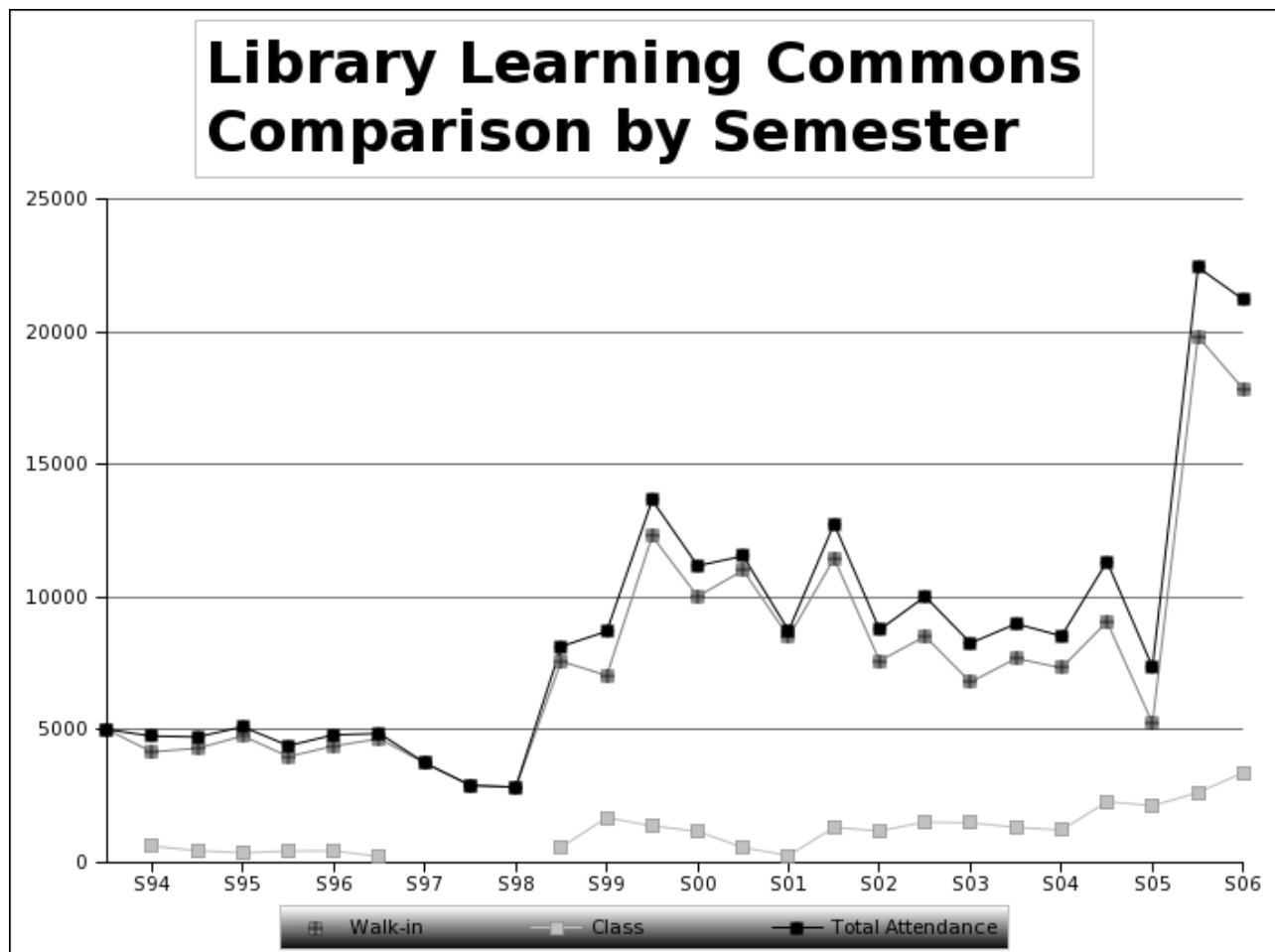
In Fall 2005 the CAI Center, Library Academic Computer Services, and the Science/Engineering Open Lab were combined to form the Library Learning Commons located on the second floor of the library. Use increased by 288% (7,360 to 22,447).

The visibility and effectiveness of the service have been improved by combining these labs into one entity. In addition, research assistance is also on the same floor, allowing students access to more services in one location. Before the merger, student and public populations used the second floor computer workstations together. Now those populations are separated with public patrons computer use confined to the fourth floor. All services formerly offered to students in both areas now complement instead of compete with each other.

There is an ongoing need to develop more effective training of student workers and to meet regularly with them to discuss issues, disseminate information, and brainstorm. As always, smaller budgets for student help hamper our ability to accomplish this goal.

The following is a narrative of the data from 1993 through 2006.
These data were included to make note of the impact equipment has had and continues to have on student use of this facility.
No equipment was replaced from Fall 1993 through Spring 1998.

During this time, usage steadily declined by 44% (5,007 to 2,821) due to our inability to support the majority of the academic or production software that had become standard across the campus.

Over the next year, beginning in Fall 1998, all units were replaced, and the Reading Lab was collapsed into the CAIC, representing a 32% increase in supported units (32 to 50). A 288% increase in Fall 1998 and another 36% in Fall 1999 (2,821 to 8,135) followed.

Between Fall 1999 and Fall 2001, the CAIC received three new units through a TIF grant to support Distance Education students. Use declined by 37% (13,657 to 8,735) through Spring 2001 and then rose again by 32% after 14 replacement units were received from a TIF grant for a Distance Education lab (8,735 to 12,759).
Use declined from Spring 2002 through Spring 2005 by 42% (12,759 to 7,360).

In Fall 2005 the CAI Center (38), Library Academic Computer Services (17), and the Science/Engineering Open Lab (12) were combined to form the Library Learning Commons located on the second floor of the library. Use increased by 288% (7,360 to 22,447).

A computer-equipped classroom in the Learning Commons has seen an increase in use. Need for more computer access in English classes and for additional space for computer-based testing caused the increase in use. English classes accounted for 45% of use in Fall 2005 and 46% in Spring 2006. Testing for Accuplacer represented 35% of use in Fall 2005. Reading classes accounted for 14% in Fall 2005 and 26% in Fall 2006.

Web Page and Databases
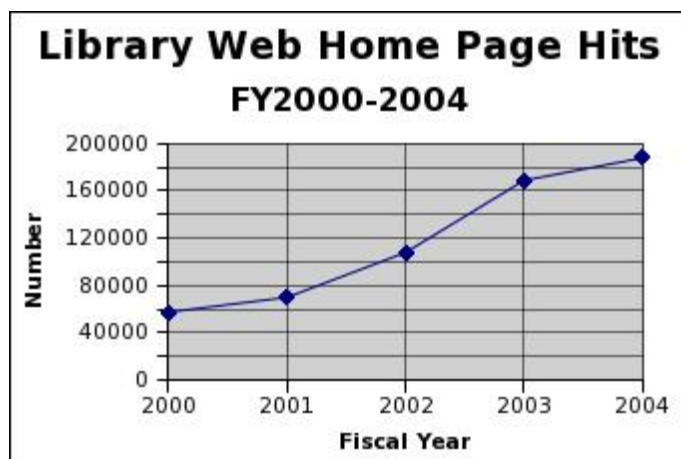
Web page hits grew almost 400% in just five years. Most of this activity probably was due to students accessing the proprietary databases for research assignments. Statistics for years 2005-2006 are not available because of the move of the web page to the college content management system.
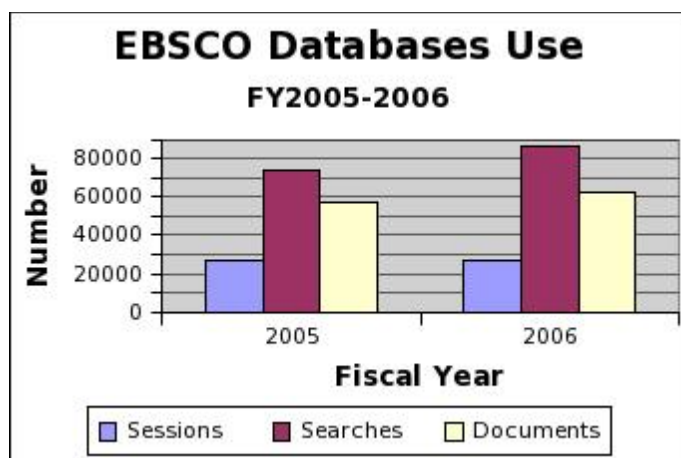

Library patrons are heavily using our proprietary databases. The above chart indicates the use of one (EBSCO) vendor's databases by the college community. EBSCO's databases are our most popular. In FY2006 clients retrieved over 60,000 full-text documents for viewing, printing, or emailing. That is an increase of about 5,000 from FY2005. Use of other database vendors' products are also growing.

Circulation

Collection Circulations, FY1997-2006
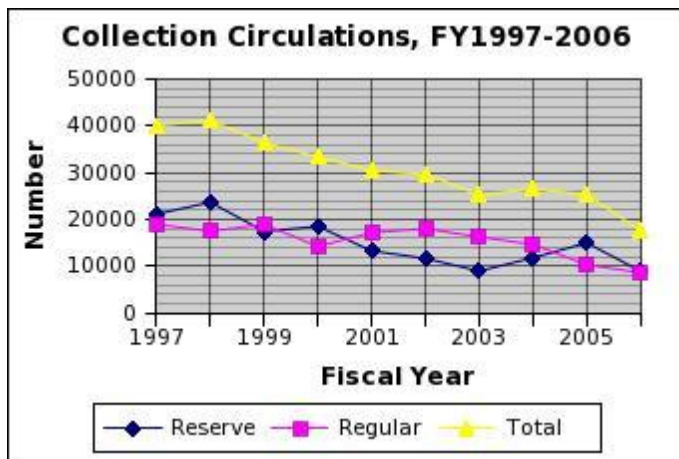
Print collections use declined steadily over the last ten years. Students now prefer to use the electronic databases for research for a variety of reasons: easy-to-use, powerful search tools; access from home; cut-and-paste quoting and a wide choice of periodicals and books. The library has not added to the regular collection as many new titles recently as in previous decades, so our print information is aging. It is also apparent that instructors are not requiring students to use reserve materials as much. In fact, both collections have decreased by over 50 percent in ten years.

Interlibrary Loans, FY1997-2006
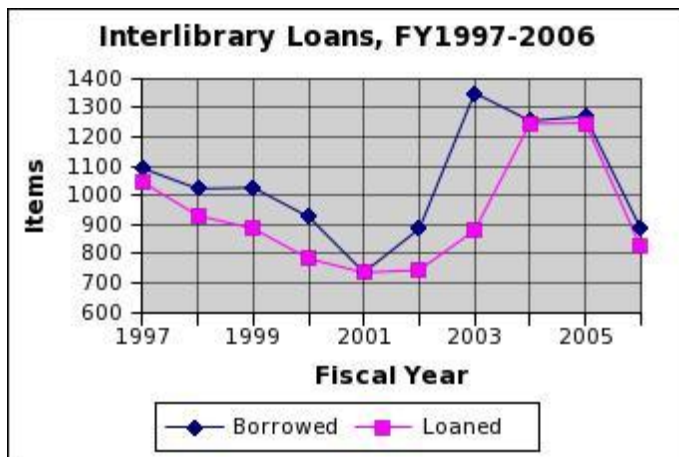
Interlibrary loan activity had trended down to a low point in FY2001. It almost doubled in FY2003-2005 due to faculty working on research for advanced degrees (see chart below). In FY2006 loans went back down to the level before the spike.

Interlibrary Loan Items Borrowed

By Borrower Type, FY2003-2006

Library Cards Issued, FY1997-2006
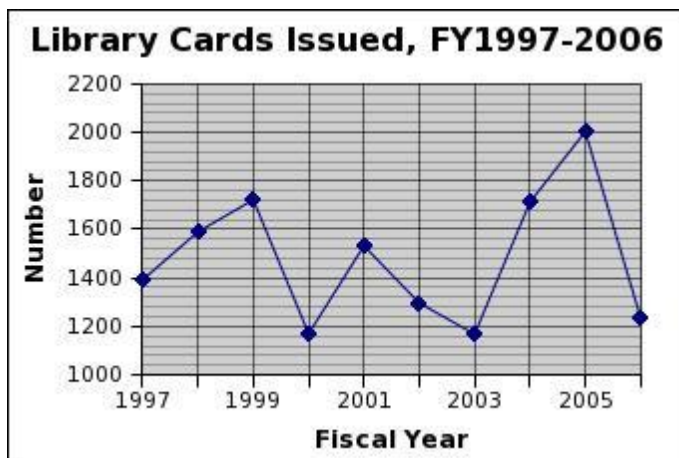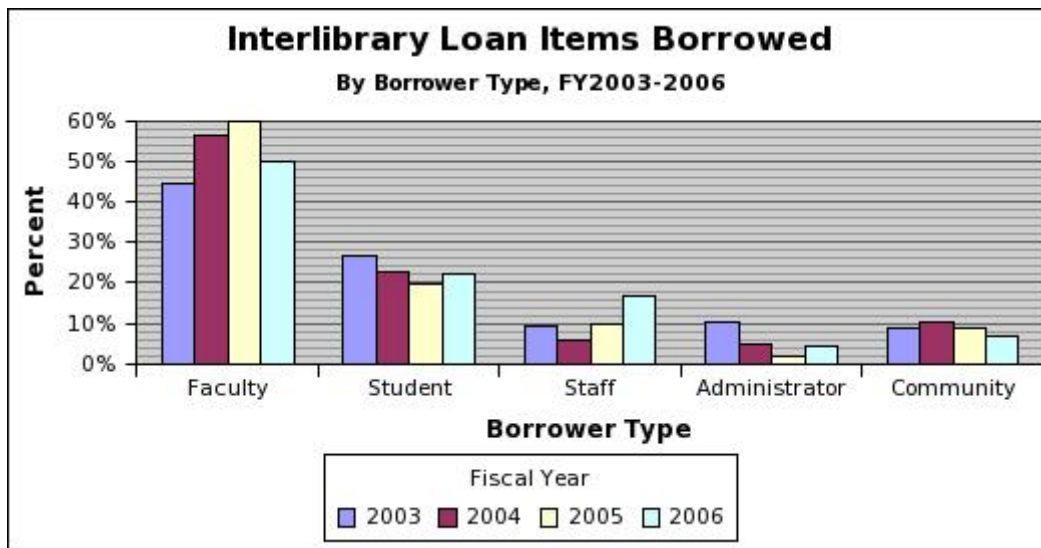
In 2000 when a dip occurred, the library quit requiring that students present a card to check out, and the staff started looking them up in our borrower database if they presented picture IDs. When someone came in without his card, we didn't issue another. Therefore, the count went down.

In 2004 when we had a peak, we started requiring a library card for computer use, but we abandoned the practice when the Learning Commons opened.

Assess the need for the office/department

The library's role is derived from the college's mission and strategic plan.

Strategy 8.1, "expand learning through technological innovation and delivery," fits what we do. We continue to innovate by delivering information to our clients using the latest technologies. This is a familiar strategy for us because the library began automating its services with a home-grown system back in the 1970s. Technology changes have been adopted regularly as funding permitted up to the present.

Even though acceptance of new technologies is familiar to us, three elements of the library's purpose statement are enduring no matter what changes in technology and methodology we use:

- empower our patrons to be self-sufficient information consumers and to possess critical evaluation skills;
- create a physical environment that encourages personal study, collaboration, and networking, and inspires creative and academic growth; and
- provide seamless access to the best information and tools customized for each patron.

Our college community, especially our students, needs instruction for productive information use. The faculty at Amarillo College knows this to be true. When asked what is the most important activity the library does, the Library Advisory Committee, consisting of almost all faculty members, agreed it is instruction in information use and source evaluation. The library has been assigned that role at the college and continues to do it better than any other unit.

Another important part of that assigned role is providing access to the best information possible. That access in the past was achieved by housing mostly print sources like books and periodicals. The paradigm in effect was "just in case." We would purchase items that experts and our faculty thought we must have "just in case" we need it. That has changed in just a few years. Now the paradigm in effect is "just in time." The best sources for most of our college community are digital in format and available "just in time" when needed.

As the charts above indicate, our clients now prefer using digital sources. Use of the Learning Commons has grown tremendously. It is obviously filling a need, and its use is the proof of it.

Our Learning Commons use also tells us that physical environment matters. The space is more open with fewer large shelves blocking views and hindering flexible arrangements of furniture and equipment. It is easier now for groups of students to do projects together. Equipment, computer software, Internet connections—both wired and wireless—and highly used print items are at their fingertips. Technical and research help is readily available so they can get their work done easier and faster.

Ideally, the library will be a center of innovation, collaboration, teaching, and learning into the future as we have been in the past.

III. Resources

A. Library

1.) Which of the following library collections/resources/services have been used by the staff and/or students within the past five years? (Select all that apply)

Chat services

Circulating collection
Classroom instuction
Electronic books
Electronic journals
Information profiles
Interlibrary loan
Meeting services
Personalized instruction
Proprietary databases
Reference collection
Reserve collection
Seminars/conferences
Tutorials/guides
Video conferencing
Other:

Future responses from all units of the college in this section will assist the library in assessing or discovering perceived or actual weaknesses. Because this is the first time this section is being used, there are no data yet. Once we have data, the library will establish evaluation procedures to find out where we stand, and we will make changes as a result. The library plans an ongoing assessing and evaluating process.

2.) Which 2 or 3 collections/resources/services should be improved to support Amarillo College's mission regarding teaching and service?

Reserve collection

Access to the reserve collection is limited to students who come to campus. Both distance learners and traditional classroom students would benefit if access were available to them at home. One goal of the library is to "increase access to print collections for distance learners through conversion to electronic format." The technical services staff plans to convert 100 percent of print reserve items that do not require copyright permissions to electronic format and make them available via the library's integrated library management system (Unicorn). Students will be able to access these items on the Internet.

Circulating collection

The library's circulating print book collection is still important for the college. Discipline accrediting agencies require adequate book resources in their standards. Therefore, one goal of the library published in our PET form is stated below:

"Print and electronic collections will be relevant and useful to students, faculty, and staff, especially for programs which require discipline accreditation."

For these programs, technical services staff will map 100 percent of readings and assignment sources in course syllabi against our print collections. They will make these sources—periodical articles, books, etc., but not textbooks—available to students by September 2007 and will measure their use on an annual basis.

Video conferencing

Today the learning culture in higher education is changing fundamentally and rapidly; students and staff must have ready access to new and developing technologies to complete projects. AC's library must be able to respond to these challenges and provide students with a physical environment that is flexible and accommodating for any project. Therefore, the library has renovated a space as a video/Web conferencing room as a part of our Learning Commons.

Through the new Learning Commons, the college community will be encouraged to master new skills and to use technology. Fulfilling the Library's purpose "to empower our patrons to be self-sufficient information consumers and to possess critical evaluation skills; create a physical environment that encourages personal study, collaboration and networking, and inspires creative and academic growth; and provide seamless access to the best information and tools customized for each patron," this addition to the Learning Commons will combine innovative technology, accessibility, and active participation.

Library and grant funds have been used to furnish and equip an existing space with necessary technology and furniture to encourage active participation. Located on the first floor of the library, the video/Web conferencing room will allow students, faculty, and the community to configure a room to serve their needs. Furniture is modular and easily movable. State-of-the-art technology diminishes the boundaries between facilitated learning, traditional faculty dictation lecturing, and lifelong learning.

The funds we have used to equip this room have made a good start in making technology available to students and staff, but the library has only partially completed the equipment needs for this room and two others. This is a good plan for the library that other institutions have embraced. This plan will position the library to be a more effective unit of the college.

3.) Does your office/department have an external approver (other than the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)?

No

B. Technology and Security/Privacy

1.) After assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the office's/department's access to technology, what improvements would ensure that the students have access and training in the use of technology?

Access

- Replace computers in the Learning Commons <u>classroom</u> with newer units. Currently, all units in this heavily used classroom are low-end machines rolled down years ago from other departments. Rolled-down computers should be no more than two years old for students to experience a reasonable level of timely technology.
- Upgrade <u>all</u> computers in the Learning Commons to equip them with current technology in storage devices, i.e., DVD/CD burner devices. Most have only CD-ROM drives, and many do not have burner devices at all.
- Upgrade all computers to maintain currency in multimedia devices and services, such as digital camera and portable communication device downloads.
- Install wireless access with strong signal strength on every floor of the library building.
- Transfer stewardship of the library database proxy server from Network Services to the Library Technology Coordinator to improve timely resolution of access problems and software configuration maintenance.

Training
- Increase the number of student assistants in the Learning Commons to provide more than one assistant during heavy-use periods.
- Provide training sessions for Learning Commons student assistants and selected library staff in use of software and equipment so they can better serve and instruct students who use these resources.
- Offer workshops to student clientele to instruct them in the basics of software and equipment provided in the Learning Commons.

2.) What improvements would ensure that students use technology?

- Market to the AC community and students so that our available technology is used more in "academic" pursuits.
- Install wireless access with strong signal strength on every floor of the library building.
- Transfer stewardship of the library database proxy server from Network Services to Library Technology Coordinator to improve timely resolution of access problems and software configuration maintenance. Database access problems discourage confidence in and use of a primary library service.

3.) Review office/department operations. Does any operation present the possibility for violations of security, confidentiality, or integrity of student records?

Yes

a. What changes need to be made to prevent violations of this nature?

C. Support Services for Students

1.) Which support services need to be strengthened to better serve the students in or served by this office/department? Explain what aspects of the services need to be strengthened.

- Provide more training to Learning Commons student assistants in basic skills regarding mechanics of database printing, direction of students to appropriate library handouts, and other limited tasks to support the Reference Desk function. Training sessions should occur when the assistants are not on floor duty, and the students should be paid for training time.
- Increase the number of student assistants in the Learning Commons to provide more than one assistant during heavy-use periods.
- Pay Learning Commons student assistants at a higher pay rate than other student assistants to reflect the higher levels of skills needed and the higher level of responsibility that they assume in the job.

2.) Describe any indicators or problems that prevent a healthy, safe and secure environment for staff and students of this office/department.

- High student traffic and the fact that the public uses the building as well mean that there are more opportunities for difficult or even threatening situations to arise. Evenings and Sunday afternoons are times when limited staff are the most vulnerable to these encounters because the campus police are not always immediately available on the Washington Street Campus.
- Due to reduced staff (both regular and student assistants), there is only a single student assistant at the main desk on the first floor for four nights a week and on Sunday afternoon. Generally, no other AC personnel are on the first floor during these periods. A visibly prominent surveillance camera would aid in the safety of that student assistant who is responsible for monitoring the building exit theft detection system.
- More than 50 percent of the computer units on the second floor use hard, non-adjustable wooden library chairs. Computer units all need to have adjustable-height chairs to accommodate student physical needs.

3.) Describe any indicators or problems that hamper adequate physical facilities, both on and off campus, to meet the needs of the office/department.

- Plumbing in the Lynn Library does not provide hot water—probably a health risk in a high-traffic environment where many people use the same keyboards, mice, door handles, etc. Having to wash one's hands in ice—cold water can discourage people from washing them at all.

- Elevators in the building are prone to malfunction.

IV. Budget

A.) Which office/department outcomes have resulted in budget requests to date?

None. The library did not have stated outcome objectives until this year as defined by the college's new outcomes assessment endeavor. In the past during R. E. Byrd's tenure, we were directed to submit flat budget requests or to make budget cuts each year.

B.) Project the office's/department's strategic initiatives for the next five years based on the office's/department's outcomes.

New strategic initiatives are difficult to fund with declining budgets. Library budgets have steadily lost purchasing power since 1991 (chart below). By 2005 the combined materials and technical services budgets had lost over half their value in constant 1982-84 dollars. The book budget has lost the most purchasing power during the 14-year period.

Library staff have felt compelled to put more funds into the increasingly popular databases. The database and periodicals budget is the only one to hold steady against inflation. The library's participation in Texshare (Texas academic libraries' cooperative purchasing program for electronic databases) has kept costs lower than the library individually could have done.

Purchase of non-print materials has been a low priority during this period because the academic departments have selected and housed these in their own offices. Non-print materials are predominantly used in classroom settings and are not used by individual students in the same way books or databases are to meet research needs.

The library staff anticipates that inflation for library materials and services will continue to erode our purchasing power if the budget is not increased.

We are making greater efforts to raise money through grants from government and private sources. This has enabled the library to add Web conferencing services, but, at some point, our effectiveness will cease.

Materials and Technical Services Budget
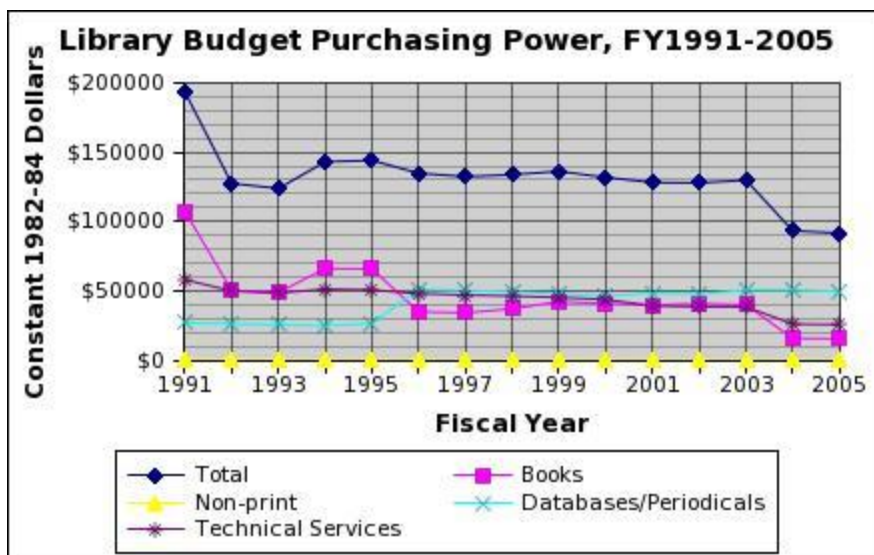
Source: Library budgets and *Statistical Abstract of the United States*

The Library Advisory Committee, which is composed of mostly faculty members, recognizes that the library will become ineffective in meeting the information needs of our college

community if purchasing power declines much further. During the library's latest strategic planning meetings, the committee was asked for what they would give up a salary raise. After much discussion, the committee members decided they would give up a raise for two things: library instruction and proprietary databases. Databases have been the library's priority for the last few years with more funds spent on them than on any other material format. This is the right thing to do now, but other format items are still needed by our patrons, especially because many classroom teaching faculty still require print sources.

Video/Web Conferencing (Learning Commons)

The library has renovated a space as a video/Web conferencing room as a part of our Learning Commons. Library and grants funds have been used to furnish and equip it with necessary technology and furniture to encourage active participation. Located on the first floor of the library, the video/Web conferencing room will allow students, faculty, and the community to configure a room to serve their needs. Furniture is modular and easily movable. State-of-the-art technology diminishes the boundaries between facilitated learning, traditional faculty dictation lecturing, and lifelong learning.

The funds we have used to equip this room have made a good start in making technology available to students and staff, but the library has only partially completed the equipment needs for this room and two others. This is a good plan for the library that other institutions have embraced. This plan will position the library to be a more effective unit of the college.

Library Instruction

Assessment of student learning will apparently be a priority for accreditation and will receive more budget support. The library will increase efforts with faculty and other academic libraries to better assess students' information literacy skills. We intend to use assessment instruments that have been validated and tested as benchmarks, so we can validly compare our students with others across the country.

We also need to improve
- our outreach to part-time faculty because they will be teaching more classes,
- improve the quantity and quality of professional development customized for our staff, and
- increase video- and Web-conferencing use to more effectively impact students at remote sites.

V. Publications

A.) If the office/department publishes any advertising or recruitment documents (electronic or paper), do the documents accurately represent Amarillo college and the program/department?

Yes

B.) Does the office/department publish any documents (electronic or paper) with references to SACS accreditation?

VI. Other

A.) State any additional comments/concerns which may impact this office/department during the next five years.

The Texas State Library has been coordinating library consortia purchases of online research databases at a substantial discount through their TexShare program. The library relies on this program to provide the extensive list of databases we make available for our students. If the Texas State Library's support from the Texas Legislature is reduced further, the AC library needs to join any new collaborative relationship with other Texas colleges and universities to continue without interruption database access at an affordable cost.

Library staffing issues

When library staff positions are eliminated with resignations, promotions, or retirements, there are consequences. Library hours had to be reduced at the Lynn Library and onsite service at the East campus was eliminated when Mark Hanna was promoted to library director. His former reference and instruction position was left vacant.

We will be unable to open the West Campus AC Library Services area on Saturdays when Amarillo Public Library's Northwest Branch Library expands its service schedule in 2007.

Not filling any more library reference and instruction positions in the future could result in the following additional consequences:

- Less time for the remaining instructor(s) to prepare material for online and classroom delivery. Classroom instruction is customized for each assignment and updated for every class.
- Conflicting obligations and multiple duties could result in much less interaction with individual students directly.
- Faculty members schedule library classroom instruction when it fits in best with their lesson plans. With existing staff, it is sometimes difficult or impossible to provide instruction for the day, time, and campus requested due to multiple requests. Having fewer library instructors would adversely affect student learning outcomes even more.

Not filling future open positions in other library service areas and/or a continuing reduction in budget for student help could adversely impact all library services for students, faculty, staff, and administration.

Eliminating faculty status and/or increasing the workloads for librarians hired in the future could result in the following consequences:

- A smaller applicant pool, possibly resulting in the necessity to hire less qualified librarians or no librarians at all.

- A number of faculty who use our library services have remarked that we are superior to all librarians they have encountered elsewhere, including other colleges and universities where they have worked. Hiring less qualified staff would diminish our effectiveness.

AC needs to remain a preferred employer to attract and retain qualified library staff.

Space issue

Out of a five-story "library" building, one room on the second floor has been set aside as the Quiet Study Room. We are concerned that this room will be taken over by another department, leaving no enforced quiet study space on the entire campus. Almost the entire fourth floor was formerly designated as a quiet study area until a loss of space on the first floor required us to merge two service desks and move them to the fourth floor.

Student focus groups we conducted for the library strategic plan emphasized that having a quiet place to study is very important because many students cannot study at home for various reasons. We have received expressions of gratitude from students who use this room.

Approximately 6,200 square feet have already been taken away from the library in the past few years (2300 square feet at Lynn Library and 3900 square feet at East Campus), and we really need to retain our Quiet Room that is so valued by students.

West Campus Library—Collaboration with Amarillo Public Library

The collaboration of Amarillo College West Campus Library with the Amarillo Public Library Northwest Branch has been and continues to be a very positive, amicable relationship. Each entity respects the boundaries established in the partnership and work together diligently to serve the public patron or student in the best manner possible. It is a cost saving project to both entities and the Amarillo taxpayer.

Amarillo College books that pertain to subject matter taught on the West Campus are integrated with the public library collection, giving access to both students and public patrons to all books. Priority sources required by individual program accreditation agencies are also part of the library collection.

There is a small reserve collection and some print periodicals. However most journal articles are researched in and found in the library's electronic databases.

A qualiffaculty status reference librarian (instructor) is on staff when the West Campus library is open. Services offered to the students include: reference services, library research skills training, software use, and work-cited list assistance.

These combined numbers show (from our opening in October, 2003 to August, 2006) a steady increase of activity at the West Campus Library.

West Campus Library Activity

FY2004-2006

Chart showing Number vs Fiscal Year (2004-2006) with series: Circulations, Borrowers, Computer Uses, Reference Questions.