Resources and Access

The Eileen T. Farley Learning Resources Center (LRC) in the center of the Fall River Campus is the largest of BCC’s three library facilities. In addition to print and other media resources, students also have access to the library’s 60 computer work stations and the Rodgers Cyber Café, which opened its doors in 2008. The Cyber Café has 13 computers, vending machines, and a seating area that serves as a lounge for student use. The Attleboro Center and New Bedford Campus have internet-accessible computer facilities and small print and onsite media collections. Taunton and Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical satellites have no physical library space, but students at those sites, as well as distance learning students, have remote access to online library materials.

The BCC libraries contain 62,000 print volumes (FY2012) and 27,240 electronic volumes (by subscription, FY2013). While most print resources are held at the Fall River Campus, the New Bedford Campus library has a print collection of about 800 titles for student use, as well as 16 computers for electronic resource access. Attleboro Center students can use the library’s 20 work stations and a collection that consists of 1,100 titles. All BCC students, including those in online courses, have access to the holdings of a regional public library network (SAILS) and the Statewide Virtual Catalog, which expands the number of titles available to students and patrons to more than 10 million. Students can also access more than 7,000 streaming videos via the Films on Demand database, as well as 27,000 ebooks via the eBrary database.

As indicated on the Standard Seven Data First Forms, BCC employs the equivalent of 7 full-time librarians and 8.8 other full-time library personnel across all three facilities. Libraries are managed by the Acting Director of Library Services. The administrator has a Masters of Library and Information Science (MLIS), and all professional librarians have an MLIS or Master of Library Science. Librarians and library assistants participate regularly in professional development activities.

Library staff members play an important role in supporting the College’s general education information literacy competency (see Standard Four: The Academic Program for a full discussion of the general education competencies). Librarians offer instructional classes at all three sites. Distance learning students can receive library instruction via online tutorials available through the library web page. The number of library instruction sessions has increased significantly from 155 in 2007 to 245 in 2012. The library makes public, through the website, recommended assessment tools for evaluating information literacy skills. One such tool, the CONNECT Information Literacy Rubric, was developed by a regional committee of college librarians that included BCC representatives. Other resources include links for students and faculty to items like the American Library Association’s (ALA) Information Literacy Standards.
The BCC libraries have an up-to-date website that provides database and catalog access, research help such as “Ask a Librarian” and information about curricular support services such as course guides and reserves. The site also details computer use and borrowing policies. In addition to policies publicized on the site, the BCC libraries have a mission statement and strategic plan tied to the College’s current Strategic Plan (2012-16). A LibQUAL Survey was conducted in spring 2007, and the findings have been integrated into this plan, just as the results of a new LibQUAL+ Lite survey conducted in spring 2013 will be analyzed and taken into consideration when library policies are revisited and revised. The BCC libraries have an updated (2012) Collection Development policy that describes how resources will be allocated and takes recommendations from the Educational Media Committee. This standing committee meets monthly and is comprised of members from each academic division. It evaluates data relevant to library services and suggests improvements. In addition, each division has a library liaison assigned to provide direct input into acquisitions for the collections.

Information and Technological Literacy

The following information and technology literacy skills are integrated or infused throughout BCC’s general education competencies:

1. Identify and assess the quality of supporting data/evidence and provide additional relevant data.
2. Select, evaluate, incorporate, and document research effectively and ethically.
3. Employ media and technology if appropriate to the communication context.
4. Critically analyze science-based issues in contemporary society.
5. Demonstrate basic familiarity with hardware and software, use the internet for research and communication, navigate an operating system, and identify and apply appropriate software packages to solve real-world problems.

Specific student learning outcomes are customized for individual academic programs, so students develop a level of proficiency with information and technology literacy that is in keeping with their chosen field or career track.

The instructional sessions offered by BCC librarians give students practical direction for researching and assessing scholarly material. These sessions, serving 1,727 students across all campuses, typically cover resources and services offered by the BCC libraries, effective use of the online catalog, basic use of databases, and evaluation of sources.

The BCC libraries function as part of the academic area; as mentioned earlier, divisional liaisons work with the academic divisions to acquire materials including databases. Faculty have access to assessment tools on the library website to evaluate information literacy skills including the CONNECT Information Literacy Rubric mentioned above. The College also oversees how programs utilize information and technology services through regular program reviews, through the College Outcomes Assessment Team for Student Success (OATSS), and through the College-wide Curriculum Committee (which assesses compliance with the competencies through recommending new programs or program revisions).

The libraries keep records of resource use including number of physical visits, circulation data, database usage, and numbers and types of materials requested physically and electronically. These data are evaluated to make recommendations about future acquisitions and subscriptions.
Resources and Access

**Helpful and Approachable Staff:** The BCC libraries serve as a strong foundation to support the information resource needs of the academic community and the community at large. The trained and helpful staff is routinely cited by the college community as a major strength, and they devote time, talent, and resources to be the go-to source for all information needs. The Noel-Levitz Survey conducted in spring 2012 indicates that students find library staff “helpful and approachable.” The spring 2013 LibQual+Lite reinforces this perception.

**Expanded and User-Friendly Spaces:** The libraries have expanded resources at the Fall River Campus. This site offers more than 60 computer terminals now, compared to 25 in 2007. However, the most noticeable improvement is the construction of the Rodgers Cyber Café. Designed in concert with the library’s staff, the Cyber Café opened in 2008 and provides access to 13 computers and a workspace with wireless internet access intended to encourage students to see the library as part of their social network. Changes to the space, including vending machines and comfortable furniture, have encouraged more casual use of the Fall River library.

As the New Bedford and Attleboro sites have grown in enrollment, the College has expanded resources at those sites as well. For example, in response to user perception of limited space in New Bedford, there are plans to move from a very small multipurpose facility on Union Street to a larger space at that same location during fall 2013. The proposed move will enable the libraries to transfer resources from Fall River to New Bedford, particularly concentrating on materials for programs only offered in New Bedford.

On the LibQUAL+Lite survey, respondents expressed some user dissatisfaction with hours of operation. For example, in Attleboro the library closes at 7:30 p.m. and is open limited hours over the weekend. Survey takers on all campuses asked for more late-night hours and longer weekend hours, as well as early access, particularly to print assignments for 8 a.m. classes.

Finally, on the Fall River Campus, librarians are sometimes challenged to deliver bibliographic instruction on the floor of the library during busy times of the day. The instruction can be difficult to hear, and as the instructor gets louder to try to compensate, it can contribute to the general noise level making it harder for students trying to study. A designated enclosed space, such as a classroom within A building, is needed.

**Faculty Awareness of Library Services:** On the 2012 NEASC Self-study Survey, three-quarters of full-time faculty (75%), a little over two-thirds of part-time faculty (69%), and a little over half of faculty teaching primarily online, reported feeling well informed about library services. Although these percentages are respectable, making sure all faculty members know of the many bibliographic resources available through the BCC libraries needs to be a continuing priority, including special targeting of eLearning instructors about the availability of online bibliographic instruction. It is also interesting to note that when asked how they learned about library services, 57 percent of full-time faculty reported learning about library services through the library’s website, and 57 percent said they learned about services through library staff presentations. Part-time faculty also reported high use of the library’s website to learn about services (49%), but lower numbers (28%) said they learned about library services through library staff presentations. This suggests part-time faculty might benefit from more communication about the library’s bibliographic instructional services. Survey participants offered specific suggestions regarding more frequent email communication from the library as well as more opportunities for faculty and students to engage in library orientation activities.

The libraries make improvements to services with support and advice from the Educational Media Committee. As a standing committee, it includes representatives from all the academic divisions as well as most administrative divisions. The Committee advises the Director and the Academic Vice President regarding policy, usage, acquisitions, and other pertinent activities, ensuring that users have a seat at the table for planning and delivery of resources and services.
New Positions Approved: Although the libraries have made great efforts to expand services available in New Bedford and Attleboro, the limited number of hours that MLS-trained librarians were available to students in New Bedford and Attleboro became a concern. These concerns were first noted as a result of the spring 2012 Noel-Levitz survey results, which indicated students were more satisfied with the adequacy of library resources and services on the Fall River Campus than they were with the same services at other BCC Campuses. In order to address these concerns, which were discussed again as part of the Self-study process, the College posted two positions for full-time librarians, one for Attleboro and one for New Bedford. These positions are slated to be filled by October 2013.

Tailored Bibliographic Instruction: BCC library staff members offer a robust schedule of bibliographic instruction that can be offered in classrooms, the library itself, or online. These sessions, which are routinely evaluated by the staff, may be tailored to specific learning outcomes as requested by faculty. For example, during fall 2012, the library piloted an “embedded” librarian in nursing hybrid courses to address a specific need. Related to this, librarians report that there is sometimes a lack of understanding about the amount of time needed to provide good bibliographic instruction for students, which takes an hour. This is more evidence that further communication between librarians and other members of the academic area would be useful.

Up-To-Date Policies: Collection development, borrowing, and computer use policies are current and appropriate, and they are directly tied to BCC’s Strategic Plan. Library users have access to more than one million titles through the SAILS Library Network, and titles are easily available through online cataloging and borrowing. For academic materials unavailable through SAILS, the College has an active and responsive Interlibrary Loan process. The collection development policies demonstrate their responsiveness in the changing nature of material media. For example, as enrollment in web and hybrid courses at the College has grown, the libraries have appropriately expanded online databases from 52 in 2007 to 86 in 2012. These holdings include more than 27,000 electronic book, journal, and reference titles, as well as over 7,000 streaming video titles.

Information and Technology Literacy

Information Literacy as an Independent General Education Competency: At this time, information and technology literacy are addressed separately in BCC’s General Education Program. The College cites technical literacy as a general education competency and cites the courses that satisfy this competency along with its delineated outcomes. The information literacy competency, however, is embedded within the critical analysis competency.

As part of the Self-study process, there was discussion of this approach. The College’s outcomes for the information literacy competency align closely with the NEASC standards for information literacy, and the resources and services provided by the libraries are robust and widely recognized as strengths of the College. Further, 70 percent of BCC students surveyed through the 2011 CCSSE instrument report that they are routinely asked to do work that requires the integration of ideas and information from a variety of sources, and almost 80 percent reported that they have done some work with the evaluation of “information, arguments, or methods.”

There is concern over whether embedding the information literacy competency within the critical thinking competency is unintentionally signaling that it is less prominent or important than it should be within the College’s General Education Program. For example, OATSS has identified courses that meet the critical analysis competency, yet none of the courses listed indicate information literacy as a specific learning outcome. A subcommittee of the OATSS has made recommendations for appropriate courses to meet the information literacy competency, but these recommendations are still under discussion and have yet to be accepted and published for students. The OATSS has also worked on defining the various levels of information literacy. BCC librarians welcome the opportunity to offer advanced bibliographic instruction to support students as they continue attaining an increasingly sophisticated level of information literacy.
**College-Wide Assessment of Information Literacy**: At this time there is not enough evidence that information literacy is being assessed College-wide, especially at the programmatic level. Some programs, such as nursing, have made recent revisions to their program, adding assessable information literacy outcomes. And some individual courses such as Composition I, have long-included information literacy outcomes. Yet the assessment of these course-level and program-level outcomes has yet to reach the scale required to ensure College-wide student competency and increasing sophistication of skills in information literacy. Coming to some consensus about these levels will require more departmental-level and academic-area discussions.

The academic area is poised to have these discussions in the context of participating in the Vision Project’s state-wide pilot of three Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) value rubrics (see Standard Four). The LEAP rubric for information literacy was not among the three that were piloted across the state, but as more faculty and staff at BCC are trained to use the LEAP rubrics, there is more interest in using the rubrics to help guide and/or inform the creation of BCC-specific rubrics used for assessment purposes.

**Projection**

1. During AY2013-14, OATSS will examine making information literacy its own general education competency and a specific characteristic of the BCC Educated Person. As a cross-disciplinary competency, this will raise its profile in academic design and delivery.

2. Faculty and librarians will use the LEAP value rubric for information literacy and other identified rubrics to collaborate on a BCC-specific rubric for assessing information literacy beyond the general education level. As a starting point, the libraries will be piloting use of the LEAP information literacy rubric as part of the College’s institutional-level assessment activities over AY2013-14.

3. General education and program-level information literacy outcomes will be assessed as part of planned College-wide outcome assessment activities.

4. BCC libraries will create additional communication strategies to further inform faculty about services and further enhance student access to available resources and services.

5. The BCC libraries will develop plans for continued expansion of services to eLearning, as well as the Attleboro Center and New Bedford Campuses, including space, hours of operation, and bibliographic resources.

6. To address the noise-related challenges of delivering bibliographic instruction at the Fall River library, the BCC libraries will work in conjunction with the Office of Academic Affairs to identify a solution by the end of AY2014-15.

**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Bristol Community College provides a broad range of learning resources for its students, faculty, and staff. These resources are accessible to the College community through a variety of delivery methods, supporting and enhancing all academic and co-curricular programs. Data collection and evaluation of library and information services are an important part of daily library operations. The BCC libraries rely on student and faculty data gathered from Noel-Levitz, CCSSE, and the LibQUAL+Lite surveys, as well as numbers generated by their own internal systems, to assess the quality and accessibility of library services on all campuses, including eLearning. As the College continues to grow, library services must continue to expand as well in New Bedford, Attleboro, and via eLearning. Enrollment growth also necessitates new communication strategies to be sure that all faculty are aware of library instruction services at introductory and higher levels. Finally, it is important to consider making information literacy its own general education competency rather than infusing it within the critical analysis competency; it may be needed to heighten awareness and further signal the importance of these skills.