

Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs (Revised)

PART ONE

Approved by the ACRL Board of Directors on June 30, 1981. These guidelines supersede and replace the previous guidelines which appeared in C&RL News, December 1972.

Association of College and
Research Libraries
Association for Educational Communications
and Technology

Two-Year College. Includes publicly-supported community colleges, privately-supported junior colleges, two-year technical colleges, and two-year branch campuses.

Learning Resources. Includes library, audio-visual and telecommunications and encompasses instructional development functions and instructional system components. (See Glossary for expanded definitions.)

Introduction. Two-year colleges constitute one of the most dynamic sectors in American higher education. They are probably the most diverse of all postsecondary institutions in the country, ranging from highly specialized technical or vocational schools to comprehensive multi-unit community colleges. In addition, there are two-year branch campuses of colleges and universities, proprietary institutions with similar missions, and other specialized institutions. A statement describing adequate learning resources and services has been difficult to formulate for such institutions because of factors such as the widely diversified purposes and sizes of the institutions—private and public, the high proportion of commuting students, the comprehensiveness of the curricula, the willingness of administrators and faculty to experiment unhampered by tradition, and the heterogeneity of background among those enrolled. Although the diversity among the institutional patterns makes the establishment of generally applicable guidelines difficult, all two-year institutions need qualitative recommendations based on professional expertise and successful practices in leading institutions which can be used for self-evaluation and projective planning.

The evolution of libraries away from their traditional function as repositories of books has been

parallel to the evolution of audiovisual centers away from their traditional function as agencies for showing films. There has been a confluence of accelerated development in both areas which is inextricably interwoven in the technological revolution in education. Contemporary Learning Resources Programs in two-year colleges are supportive of institution-wide efforts. Such programs should provide innovative leadership coupled with a multiplicity of varied resources which are managed by qualified staff who serve to facilitate the attainment of institutional objectives. Paramount to the success of such programs is the involvement of Learning Resources staff with teaching, administrative, and other staff members in the design, implementation, and evaluation of instructional and educational systems of the institution.

These guidelines are diagnostic and descriptive in nature. They have been prepared to give direction to two-year colleges desiring to develop comprehensive Learning Resources Programs. This document is designed to provide criteria for information, self-study, and planning, not to establish minimal (or accreditation) standards. Application of the criteria should be governed by the purposes and objectives of each college. Since they represent recommended practices, any variant procedures should be supported by cogent reasons directly related to institutional objectives.

Nothing in these guidelines should be construed as an effort to superimpose an administrative or organizational structure upon an institution. There is no expectation that every institution should be forced into the same mold. The guidelines are more concerned with functions related to the instructional program rather than with specific organizational patterns. Although it is expected that these functions will be grouped into administrative (or supervisory) units within the Learning Resources Program, the nature of grouping and the resulting number of units must be determined by the unique requirements, resources, facilities, and staff of the college. The degree of autonomy granted each unit will also vary considerably. In some institutions, perhaps because of size, the units may be fairly task specific, with supervisory (rather than administrative) heads, and with little budgetary autonomy.

Examples of such units include: an audio-tutorial laboratory; a bibliographic control center; media production; technical processes; etc. In other institutions, each unit may subsume a number of related activities, or carry out direct instructional assignments of a broad scope, and have an administrative head and a high degree of budgetary autonomy. Examples of such units include: an audiovisual center; a computing center; a library; a telecommunications center; etc. In all institutions, however, the units report to a chief administrator responsible for overall coordination of the Learning Resources Program. The extent of direct supervision of the units will be determined by the nature of the units and the degree of autonomy granted them.

Many aspects of traditional library and audiovisual services in the two-year college and the integration of these services have not been studied adequately for long-range projection of needs. Until such studies have been made these guidelines may serve as the foundations for research and for experimentation in organization, structure, and services.

The changing and expanding role of two-year colleges in America today may well result in institutions quite different from those in operation at the present time. These guidelines, therefore, may require significant upward revision when such institutions reach a new stage in their development. At that point, they may well need greater resources and greatly extended services. All concerned should be alert to this coming challenge.

THE ROLE OF THE LEARNING RESOURCES PROGRAM

Many diverse elements contribute to the quality of instruction as it contributes to the development of two-year college students. No one of these is dominant or isolated from the others. Faculty, students, finances, teaching methods, facilities, resources, and educational philosophy all play significant roles in the educational environment of the institution.

Education is more than exposure through lectures and rote learning to the knowledge, ideas, and values current in society. Education is a process for communicating means for resolving the range of problems continuously encountered by man in living and in pursuing an occupation. Students must be able to explore fields of knowledge which will enhance their potential and be relevant to them. The means of exploration include active participation in the classroom and the laboratory, self-directed study, and the use of individualized instructional resources. Trained professional assistance is necessary in the design of instructional systems which contribute to the enrichment of the learning environment as well as to the support of students and faculty. The design of the instructional system, utilizing a

configuration of resources, is a joint responsibility of administration, teaching faculty, and the Learning Resources staff.

The student's success in achieving instructional objectives is heavily dependent on access to materials. Both student and faculty member function at their best when Learning Resources Programs are adequately conceived, staffed, and financed. More than almost any other element in the institution, Learning Resources Programs express the educational philosophy of the institution they serve.

Because of its direct relationship to the institutional and instructional objectives, the Learning Resources Program has a fourfold role: (1) to provide leadership and assistance in the development of instructional systems which employ effective and efficient means of accomplishing those objectives; (2) to provide an organized and readily accessible collection of materials and supportive equipment needed to meet institutional, instructional, and individual needs of students and faculty; (3) to provide a staff qualified, concerned, and involved in serving the needs of students, faculty, and community; (4) to encourage innovation, learning, and community service by providing facilities and resources which will make them possible.

GLOSSARY

The terms listed below are used throughout these guidelines as defined.

Two-year college. Any postsecondary associate degree-granting public or private educational institution which serves one or more of the following purposes: (1) providing the first two years of college work in anticipation of transfer to another institution at the junior or third-year level; (2) providing vocational and technical education in preparation for job entry; (3) offering a comprehensive program of liberal arts, occupational education, general education, and developmental education; (4) offering readily-accessible lifelong learning opportunities of all types; and (5) providing, through branches or extension centers of four-year colleges or universities, the first two years of postsecondary education. Thus the term "two-year college" includes publicly-supported community colleges, privately-supported junior colleges, two-year technical colleges, and two-year branch campuses.

Learning Resources Program. An administrative configuration within the institution responsible for the supervision and management of Learning Resources Units, regardless of the location of these components within the various physical environments of the institution.

Learning Resources Unit. A subordinate agency within the Learning Resources Program sufficiently large to acquire organizational identification as distinct from individual assignment and with an administrative or supervisory head, and

which may have its own facilities, staff, and budget. How many of these units would make up the Learning Resources Program, and the functions assigned to each, will vary from institution to institution.

Instructional development functions. The solution of instructional problems through the design and application of instructional system components.

Instructional system components. All of the resources which can be designed, utilized, and combined in a systematic manner with the intent of achieving learning. These components include: persons, machines, facilities, ideas, materials, procedures, and management.

Instructional product design. The process of creating and/or identifying the most effective materials to meet the specific objectives of the learning experience as defined by instructional development.

Production. The design and preparation of materials for institutional and instructional use. Production activities may include graphics, photography, cinematography, audio and video recording, and preparation of printed materials.

Staff. The personnel who perform Learning Resources Program functions. These persons have a variety of abilities and a range of educational backgrounds. They include professional and supportive staff.

Professional staff. Personnel who carry on responsibilities requiring professional training at the graduate level and experience appropriate to the assigned responsibilities.

Supportive staff. Personnel who assist professional staff members in duties requiring specific skills and special abilities. They make it possible for the professional staff to concentrate their time on professional services and activities. Their training may range from four-year degrees and two-year degrees to a one-year certificate, or extensive training and experience in a given area or skill.

System(s) approach. A process for effectively and efficiently applying the instructional systems component to achieve a required outcome based on agreed-upon institutional goals.

Materials. Divided into three categories: written, recorded, and other materials (see below).

Written materials. All literary, dramatic, and musical materials or works, and all other materials or works, published or unpublished, copyrighted and copyrightable at any time under the Federal Copyright Act as now existing or hereafter amended or supplemented in whatever format.

Recorded materials. All sound, visual, audiovisual, films or tapes, videotapes, kinescopes or other recordings or transcriptions, published or unpublished, copyrighted or copyrightable at any time under the Federal Copyright Act as now existing or hereafter amended or supplemented.

Other material. All types of pictures, photographs, maps, charts, globes, models, kits, art objects, realia, dioramas, and displays.

I. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSES

A. *The college makes provision for a Learning Resources Program.*

The kinds of educational programs offered at nearly every two-year college require that adequate provisions be made for a Learning Resources Program, which should be an integral part of each institution. Learning Resources Programs should efficiently meet the needs of the students and faculty and be organized and managed for users. The effect of combining all learning resources programs under one administrative office provides for the maximum flexibility, optimum use of personnel, material, equipment, facilities, and systems to permit increased opportunities for the materials best suited for the user's needs.

B. *Learning Resources Programs have a statement of defined purpose and objectives.*

The need for clear definition of the role and purposes of the college and its various programs is highly desirable. Since Learning Resources Programs are a vital part, the objectives within the college they serve need to be defined and disseminated in an appropriate college publication. Within this framework, the following overall purposes of the Learning Resources Program are delineated:

1. *Learning Resources Programs exist to facilitate and improve learning.*

The emphasis is upon the improvement of the individual student, with a wide choice of materials to facilitate learning. Such emphasis requires a staff committed to effective management of instructional development functions and effective utilization of instructional system components.

2. *Learning Resources Programs, like the instructional staff, are an integral part of instruction.*

Students who discover by themselves, or who are encouraged by the staff or faculty to seek out, the materials appropriate to their curriculum sequence of courses should be provided options to regular classroom instruction to achieve credit for a particular course. *Such alternatives should be developed and made available to the students.* The staff provides information on new materials, acquires them, or produces them, working cooperatively with the faculty on instructional development.

3. *Learning Resources Programs provide a variety of services as an integral part of the instructional process.*

a. Instructional development functions, which include task analysis, instructional design, evaluation, and related research.

b. Acquisition of learning materials, including cataloging and other related services.

c. Production.

d. User services which include reference, circulation (print and nonprint material), transmission or dissemination, and assistance to both faculty and students with the use of Learning Resources.

e. Other services, such as the computer operation, bookstore, campus duplicating or printing service, the learning or developmental lab, various auto-tutorial carrels or labs, telecommunications, or other information networks might be included within the functions and purposes of the college's overall organization and objectives.

4. *Learning Resources Programs cooperate in the development of area, regional, and state networks, consortia or systems.*

Every two-year college, whether privately or publicly supported, has a responsibility to help meet the resource material need of the larger community in which it resides. Attention is placed on ways in which each college can serve that community; in turn, the community serves as a reservoir of material and human resources which can be used by the college.

If the internal needs of the college and its students and staff are met, then coordination of its resources and services with those of other institutions to meet wider needs is mandatory. Reciprocal participation in consortia with other institutions for the development of exchanges, networks, or systems provides the colleges with materials and services that otherwise could not practically be provided.

II. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

A. *The responsibilities and functions of Learning Resources Programs within the institutional structure and the status of the chief administrator and heads of Learning Resources Units are clearly defined.*

The effectiveness of services provided depends on the understanding by faculty, college administrators, students, and Learning Resources staff of their responsibilities and functions as they relate to the institution. A written statement, endorsed by the institution's trustees or other policy-setting group, should be readily available.

To function adequately, the chief administrator of a Learning Resources Program (whose title may vary in different institutions) reports to the administrative officer of the college responsible for the instructional program and has the same administrative rank and status as others with similar institution-wide responsibilities. These responsibilities are delineated as part of a written statement so that the chief administrator has adequate authority to manage the internal operations and to provide the services needed.

B. *The relationship of a Learning Resources Program to the total academic program necessitates involvement of the professional staff in all areas and levels of academic planning.*

Provision of learning materials is central to the academic program. As a result, the professional staff has interests which are broad and go beyond the scope of its day-to-day operations. The professional staff members are involved in all areas and levels of academic planning. The chief administrator and heads of Learning Resources Units work closely with other chief administrators of the college, and all professional staff members participate in faculty affairs to the same extent as other faculty.

The professional staff members are involved in major college committees. As far as possible, the professional staff members ought to function as liaison participants in staff meetings of the various departments.

C. *Advisory committees composed of faculty and students are essential for the evaluation and extension of services.*

As a rule, there should be a faculty advisory committee appointed by the appropriate administrative officer of the college, elected by the faculty, or selected by the procedure generally followed in the formation of a faculty committee. It should include representatives of the various academic divisions of the college and consist of both senior and junior members of the faculty, chosen carefully for their demonstrated interest beyond their own departmental concerns. The committee functions in an advisory capacity and acts as a connecting link between the faculty as a whole and the Learning Resources Program. It should not concern itself with details of administration.

A student advisory committee (or a joint advisory committee with the faculty) serves as a liaison between the student body and the Learning Resources Program. The committee should work closely with the chief administrator and should be used as a sounding board for new ideas in developing a more effective program of services.

D. *The chief administrator is responsible for the administration of the Learning Resources Program, which is carried out by means of established lines of authority, definition of responsibilities, and channels of communication through heads of Learning Resources Units as defined in writing.*

E. *Internal administration of a Learning Resources Program is based on staff participation in policy, procedural, and personnel decisions.*

The internal organization is appropriate to the institution, and within this framework is based upon a considerable amount of self-determination, guided by the need for meeting common goals. Regular staff meetings and clearly devised lines of authority and responsibility are necessary. All staff members share in the process by which policies and procedures are developed; all staff members have access to heads of Learning Resources Units and the chief administrator.

Each professional and supportive staff member is provided with a position description which clearly identifies the position duties and responsibilities, and superior and subordinate relationships. Each Learning Resources Unit requires a staff manual which provides policy and procedural statements, duty assignments, and other organizational matters, and items of general information which would compliment instructional policies.

F. *Budget planning and implementation of a Learning Resources Program is the responsibility of the chief administrator. (See Section III.)*

G. *The accumulation of pertinent statistics and maintenance of adequate records is a management responsibility.*

Adequate records are needed for internal analysis and management planning and to provide data for annual and special reports needed by the college, accrediting associations, and government agencies. Effective planning can be made only on the basis of available information. Statistics providing a clear and undistorted picture of activities, acquisitions of materials and equipment, utilization of materials, equipment and personnel, and annual expenditures are essential for federal, state, and college use. These statistics and records are collected in terms of the definitions and methods of reporting set forth in federal and professional publications. Appropriate data must also be collected and analyzed with regard to the instructional programs and the effectiveness of Learning Resources on these programs. Data of this type serve as the basis for important instructional decisions affecting the institution, faculty, students, and Learning Resources Program.

H. *Adequate management includes the preparation and dissemination of information to administration, faculty, and students concerning activities, services, and materials.*

The close interrelationship which exists with instructional departments on the campus demands that information about the Learning Resources Program be readily available. An annual report and other planned informational reports are essential for this purpose. Among other possible publications are bibliographies, acquisitions bulletins, current awareness lists, handbooks for faculty and students, releases to student and community publications through regular college channels, campus broadcasts, and utilization of other communications services which will reach students and faculty.

I. *Responsibilities for all learning resources and services should be assigned to a central administrative unit.*

Centralized administration is desirable in order to provide coordination of resources and services, to develop system approaches to needs, and to effectively utilize staff. Material and equipment, on the other hand, may be located in the areas where learning takes place. Inventory control of all materials and equipment should be the re-

sponsibility of the Learning Resources Program and its units. All such collections of materials should be considered the resources of the entire college and not limited in utilization to separate departments.

J. *Multicampus districts take advantage of the opportunity for close cooperation, exchange of resources, and shared technical processes while providing full resources and services for every campus.*

Each campus in a multicampus, two-year college district has its instructional and individual needs met on its campus. Learning Resources needed by off-campus programs are supplied by the campus sponsoring the program. There is no need, however, for duplication of routine technical processes and production facilities where these can be centralized more economically. Organizational structure within the district should facilitate cooperation and exchange of resources.

III. BUDGET

A. *Learning Resources Program budget is a function of program planning. It is designed to implement the realization of institutional and instructional program objectives.*

It is the responsibility of the chief administrator of the Learning Resources Program to see that each unit of a Learning Resources Program receives due attention in the budget and that the allocation of funds is based on appropriate data.

B. *Budget planning for the Learning Resources Program reflects the college-wide institutional and instructional needs, is initiated by the chief administrator, and is changed in consultation with him or her.*

Adequate budget, essential to provide good services, is based upon the needs and functions of the Learning Resources Programs in support of the institutional and instructional process.

C. *Separate categories are maintained in the budget for salaries, student wages, purchase and rental of all types of materials and equipment, production of instructional materials, supplies, external and internal direct costs (computer, fringe benefits, etc.), repairs, replacement and new equipment, travel of staff to professional meetings, and other related items.*

For management purposes, costs relating to the various types of materials and services are separately identifiable. Where specialized facilities and functions are a part of the Learning Resources Program, it is desirable that cost for these be identifiable as well.

D. *Financial records are maintained by, or are accessible to, the Learning Resources Units.*

Costs analyses and financial planning are dependent upon the adequacy of records, with sufficient additional information to enable comprehensive planning and effective utilization of all funds available. These records are not necessarily

the same records as are needed in the business office.

E. *All expenditures, other than payroll, are initiated in the Learning Resources Units with payment made only on invoices verified for payment by the staff.*

Purchases are initiated by the staff through preparation of purchase order or requisition. Institutional business operations require approval of all invoices by the operating departments.

F. *To the legal extent possible and within the policies of the Board of Trustees, purchases of materials are exempted from restrictive annual bidding.*

Materials often are unique items obtainable from a single source. Equivalent prices and speedier service often can be obtained by direct access to the publisher or manufacturer rather than through a single vendor. Satisfactory service requires prompt delivery so that the needs which determined their acquisition might be met; a larger discount might justifiably be rejected if it entails a delay in filling the order. Satisfactory service rendered by a vendor in the past may more than outweigh the confusion and interruption of service inherent in frequent changes of vendors through annual bidding requirements for learning materials.

G. *Purchase of materials is based on curricular requirements and other factors, and thus made throughout the year rather than annually or semiannually.*

Expenditures are based on need, availability and practical considerations such as processing time, rather than through fixed sequences which

inhibit the functions of the unit.

H. *Learning Resources Program equipment is purchased through a systems approach.*

The purchase of any Learning Resources Program equipment, like all functions of the Learning Resources Program, should be carried out through a systems approach based on well-defined institutional and instructional objectives.

I. *Development of performance specifications for Learning Resources Program equipment to be purchased for implementation of instruction is based on valid criteria.*

Performance quality, effective design, ease of operation, cost, portability, cost of maintenance and repair, and available service are among the criteria which should be applied to equipment selection.

Most important, however, is how the item or items will fit into planning for maintenance and improvement of curriculum programming as set forth in continuous instructional design plans. Responsibility for evaluating, selecting and recommending purchase of equipment is that of the Learning Resources staff.

J. *Cooperative purchasing of materials, equipment, parts, and services should be effected where possible.*

In an effort to secure the best materials, equipment, parts, and services at the lowest cost, cooperative purchasing should be developed with other area institutions.

Editor's Note: The Guidelines will be concluded in the February issue of *C&RL News*. ■■

The View from HQ

Hal Espo
ACRL Deputy Executive Director

Editor's Note: This month's column is continued from the December issue in which some of the duties of the ACRL Deputy Executive Director were outlined.

4) **Management of office administrative functions.** Now that the staff numbers nine and one half FTE, there is a great deal of coordination of administrative services required to allow the office to function effectively and efficiently. Nearly 100 pieces of mail are received daily which must be opened, sorted, date stamped and distributed. This process alone takes over an hour each day. Telephones must be answered. Filing our correspondence from the previous day at

times takes over an hour. Though ACRL has just moved into the new ALA Huron Plaza building, we have already nearly outgrown the space ALA has provided. Locating adequate space is an ongoing problem. With the addition of our word processing capabilities has come the responsibilities of making certain that the equipment is used efficiently and that the staff is adequately trained in its operation. Supplies must be requisitioned, maintenance must be arranged and staff schedules kept. The detail of keeping an office functioning smoothly requires a great deal of time and patience. Because we are no longer a two or three person staff, more of my time must be spent coordinating staff and their activities than was the case in the past.

5) **Coordination of activities vis á vis ALA.** Because ACRL is an organization within an organization one must take note of the relationship be-