

The Organization of Library and Media Services in Community Colleges

The learning resources programs of selected community colleges were studied to determine if differences in the organization of library and media services are accompanied by variations in the level of services provided. The institutions' organizational patterns for materials, catalogs, and staff were analyzed and compared. The patterns were then evaluated against the institutions' efforts to promote their services, their restrictions on use of services and materials, and their efforts to evaluate their learning resources programs.

ACCORDING TO STANDARDS promulgated by three national associations, community colleges, as a class, are characterized by "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."¹ These characteristics have led, in turn, to innovation and experimentation in the organization of learning resources materials and staff in order to serve the informational and instructional needs of the two-year college community.

Recent published literature on the community college library provides numerous examples of the variations in organizational structures. Especially noteworthy are the descriptive treatises of Fritz Veit, Sarah Katharine Thomson, and Doris Cruger Dale.²⁻⁴ Prescriptive patterns of organization are also presented in the literature, although much less frequently.⁵

Despite the wealth of descriptive informa-

tion, the literature seldom contains information analyzing or evaluating specific patterns of organization for their effectiveness in meeting the informational and instructional needs of the community. In their comprehensive examination of community college libraries, Harriett Genung and James O. Wallace identify the choice of organizational patterns as one of the current problems facing such institutions.⁶ The "Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs" emphasizes the need for research in this area.⁷ Connie R. Dunlap's review of organizational patterns in academic libraries underscores the importance of using a careful analysis of users' needs and the library's goals as a basis for determining organizational configurations.⁸

The purposes of this study, conducted during the 1975-76 academic year, were to gather general information on library and media services in community colleges throughout the United States; to examine specifically the multifariousness of organizational patterns that have resulted from efforts to bring information, particularly in a nonprint format, to the attention of the user; and to determine whether differences in organizational patterns are accompanied by variations in the level of services provided by the institutions' learning resources programs.

Twenty institutions throughout the

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United States were selected for the diversity of organizational patterns represented among them (see appendix). Each institution furnished numerous documents, including the college catalog, statements of philosophy for the learning resources program, organization charts for learning resources staff, budgets, maps and floor plans, and learning resources handbooks and guides.

Each institution was visited for from one to two full days, between October 15, 1975, and January 15, 1976. During each visit, informal interviews were conducted, when possible, with the head of the learning resources program, with the heads of major units within the learning resources program, and with other learning resources staff as time and their availability permitted. In some cases, persons responsible for major units of the learning resources program were not able to schedule interviews during the visits. In such instances, the author has relied on the information given in the furnished documents and on information provided by others on the staff.

The findings of this study are based upon information concerning the status of each institution's organization as it was at the time of the visit. Analyses of the institutions' organizational structures revealed common patterns for the organization of materials, catalogs, and staff. In tables 1, 2, and 3 the institutions have been grouped according to these common patterns into categories that are identified below.

ORGANIZATION OF MATERIALS

The manner in which a community college organizes, stores, and uses its collections, particularly with respect to print and nonprint materials, comprises one facet of the organization of its learning resources

program. In the twenty institutions studied, the patterns observed for the organization of materials form a series ranging from integration through various stages of separation (table 1).

In the three institutions in category A, print and nonprint materials, with few exceptions, were integrated physically, administratively, and by service staffing. The materials were cataloged similarly and were intershelved, and the collection was serviced by all "reference" staff collectively.

In the four institutions in category B, print and nonprint materials were integrated administratively and by service staffing but were separated physically. Print and nonprint materials were shelved in separate places but were considered part of one collection and were the responsibility of all "reference" staff collectively.

In the three institutions in category C, print and nonprint materials were integrated administratively but were separated physically and by service staffing. Print and nonprint materials were considered part of one collection but were shelved separately and were serviced by separate units of "reference" staff.

In the six institutions in category D, print and nonprint materials were separated administratively, physically, and by service staffing. Nonprint materials were the responsibility of a unit or units administered separately from that which was responsible for print materials. In many cases, nonprint materials were serviced by persons for whom training in librarianship was not required.

In the four institutions in category E, most nonprint materials belonging to the institution were not kept together as a collection and were found in various locations, in-

TABLE 1
THE ORGANIZATION OF MATERIALS

Category	Number of Institutions	Nonprint Materials Part of Collections	Materials Integrated Administratively	Materials Handled by Integrated Service Staff	Materials Integrated Physically
A	3	yes	yes	yes	yes
B	4	yes	yes	yes	no
C	3	yes	yes	no	no
D	6	yes	no	no	no
E	4	no	no	no	no

TABLE 2
THE ORGANIZATION OF CATALOGS

Category	Number of Institutions	Nonprint Materials Bibliographically Accessible	Print and Nonprint Accessible through One Catalog
A	8	yes	yes
B	8	yes	no
C	4	no	no

TABLE 3
THE ORGANIZATION OF STAFF

Category	Number of Institutions	Division by Function	Division by Geography	Division by Clientele	Division by Form
A	9	yes	no	no	no
B	1	no	no	no	no
C	3	no	yes	no	no
D	1	yes	no	yes	yes
E	5	yes	no	no	yes
F	1	no	no	no	yes

cluding faculty and departmental offices.

ORGANIZATION OF CATALOGS

The catalogs through which print and nonprint materials are made bibliographically accessible to users exhibit another aspect of the organization of a community college's learning resources program (table 2).

The eight institutions in category A provided access to all learning resources materials, print and nonprint, through one integrated catalog. In some of these colleges, additional catalogs were also maintained for distinct portions of the collection.

The eight institutions in category B provided access to all learning resources materials through two or more separate catalogs of print and nonprint materials.

The four institutions in category C provided bibliographic access primarily for print materials only. Most of the nonprint materials belonging to the institutions were not cataloged.

ORGANIZATION OF STAFF

Examining the organization of staff involved in the provision of learning resources services presents numerous problems.

In many institutions, learning resources services are not viewed as parts of a unified learning resources program, thereby making

difficult any organizational comparisons with institutions that do hold such a view.

Learning resources staff may be organized using a number of different factors, including form, function, subject, language, geography, and clientele.⁹ Although a single factor may be used as the primary one upon which the organization of staff is based, other factors appear as the bases for the secondary and tertiary levels of organization.

The terminology used to identify a specific unit of a learning resources program frequently does not appropriately reflect the actual functions or responsibilities of that unit. The term "audiovisual services," for example, may refer to a collection of nonprint materials, to an equipment distribution center, to a production unit, to an instructional development function, or to a combination of these.

This report presents an analysis of the factors which were used to organize staff and services at the primary level only (table 3). It was assumed that the institution's basic philosophy concerning its resources services would best be reflected at this level. Each institution's organizational design was analyzed by the functions and responsibilities delegated to each of its units and not by the terminology used to identify those units.

Nine of the institutions visited used function as the sole basis of division at the primary level of organization (category A). The following functions were identified by these institutions: utilization, processing, circulation and distribution, production, skills development, tutoring, instructional development and curriculum design, and administration.

The one institution in category B organized its learning resources staff as a faculty. Although certain staff members were responsible for supervising specific functions and forms, each staff member at the primary level was assigned responsibilities that cut across the lines delineating factors such as subject, form, and function.

In three institutions, geography was used as the sole determining factor in organizing staff at the primary level (category C). Each of these institutions belongs to a multicampus district. Certain learning resources services were organized on the district level and performed at a district headquarters; others were organized on a campus level and performed by the specific campuses.

In one institution, function and form and clientele were all used as factors in organizing the learning resources staff (category D). The primary-level units included those concerned with the functions of production and skills development; those concerned with the forms of print, nonprint, and computer; and those concerned with the clientele of students and faculty.

The five institutions comprising category E used both function and form to organize their learning resources services and staff. At the primary level of organization, units were established to deal separately with print and nonprint forms and with functions such as processing, production, and skills development.

The one institution in category F organized its learning resources staff on the basis of form. Its two basic units dealt separately with print and nonprint materials.

COMPARISON OF ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS FOR MATERIALS, CATALOGS, AND STAFF

Comparisons were made of the institutions categorized in tables 1, 2, and 3 with

respect to their treatment of materials, catalogs, and staff (table 4).

As might be expected, those institutions that provided a greater degree of integration of materials (categories A and B on table 1) also provided a greater degree of integration of catalogs (category A on table 2) and did not divide their staffs by form, clientele, or geography (category A on table 3).

Those institutions that provided a greater degree of separation of materials (categories D and E on table 1) also provided a greater degree of separation of catalogs (category C on table 2) and introduced the factors of form, clientele, and geography into the organization of their staffs (categories C, D, E, and F on table 3).

PROMOTION OF SERVICES

One of the most important documents a community college can provide to notify the community of its services is the college catalog. Information about a college's learning resources program, contained in the catalog, may provide a clue to the philosophy that the institution holds regarding its learning resources program and may serve as an indication of the institution's commitment to user accessibility and service.

A scale developed by Mari Ellen Leverence and revised by Doris Cruger Dale¹⁰ was used to rate the information on learning resources services that was provided in the 1975-76 college catalog of each of the twenty institutions visited for this study: for each institution, one point was assigned if the learning resources program is listed in

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF TABLES 1, 2, AND 3

Rank on Table 1	Rank on Table 2	Rank on Table 3	Number of Institutions
A	A	A	3
B	A	A	2
B	B	A	2
C	A	A	2
C	B	B	1
D	A	C	1
D	B	C	1
D	B	D	1
D	B	E	3
E	C	C	1
E	C	E	2
E	C	F	1

the table of contents; one point if it is listed in the index; one point if the description is under 225 words; two points if the description is over 225 words; and two points if the description includes information on services, philosophy, and/or staff (table 5).

The number of points assigned to an institution appears to correlate fairly well with the amount of integration observed in the institution's organizational design (table 6). In general, those institutions that provided a greater degree of integration of materials and catalogs and that organized their staffs on the basis of function earned higher scores (four to six points) in the rating of information contained in the catalog. In general, those institutions that provided a greater degree of separation of materials and catalogs and that organized their staffs on the basis of form, clientele, or geography earned lower scores (zero to three points) in the rating of college catalog information.

A study of table 6 reveals that there are several exceptions to the generalizations stated above. Two institutions ranked "AAA" received zero and two points respectively; an institution ranked "DAC" received five points; two institutions ranked "DBE" received four and five points respectively; and an institution ranked "ECE" received six points. No explanation for these exceptions has been suggested by the information provided in other college documents or during the campus visits.

It may be, as Dale has suggested,¹¹ that the college catalog is not used to its best advantage in many instances. It may also be that the college catalog is not, as currently utilized, a good indicator of the level of services provided by the institution's learning resources program. It should be noted that all of the institutions visited furnished other types of materials for promoting their learning resources services, and many offered formalized orientation and instruction programs in conjunction with regularly held class sessions.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF LEARNING RESOURCES SERVICES AND MATERIALS

According to the "Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs," "users of learning resources have the right to expect that facilities, materials,

TABLE 5
RATING OF INFORMATION IN COLLEGE CATALOG

Points Earned	Number of Institutions
6	4
5	4
4	4
3	1
2	5
1	0
0	2

TABLE 6
COMPARISON OF INSTITUTIONAL RANKINGS AND CATALOG RATINGS

Institutional Ranking on Table 4	Points for Catalog Information
AAA	6
AAA	2
AAA	0
BAA	5
BAA	4
BBA	6
BBA	4
CAA	5
CAA	4
CBB	6
DAC	5
DBC	2
DBD	2
DBE	5
DBE	4
DBE	3
ECC	2
ECE	6
ECE	0
ECF	2

and services are available to meet demonstrated instructional needs for their use."¹² One of the basic roles of a learning resources program as envisaged in the "Guidelines" is the provision of "an organized and readily accessible collection of materials and supportive equipment needed to meet institutional, instructional, and individual needs of students and faculty."¹³

Despite the indication of these guidelines, many community colleges placed restrictions on the use of their learning resources, which limit the accessibility of certain types of materials and services. It has already been noted that four of the institutions visited did not maintain organized, bibliographically accessible collections of

their nonprint materials (table 1, category E). These institutions, in effect, have denied access to these materials to the general populations they serve.

Only two-thirds of the twenty institutions studied permit the circulation of nonprint materials and equipment. Of the seven institutions that limit such circulation, two are among the colleges that comprise the first ten institutions listed on table 6, and five are among the colleges that comprise the last ten institutions on the table.

Half of the institutions visited did not offer production facilities and services to students. Of these ten, three are among those that comprise the first half of the list in table 6, and seven are among those that comprise the last half of the table.

EVALUATION OF LEARNING RESOURCES SERVICES

An attempt was made to correlate the results of this study with the results of each institution's own efforts to evaluate its learning resources services. It was disappointing but not surprising to learn that most of the institutions covered in this study had no formal procedures for evaluating their learning resources programs.

Many relied primarily on informal feedback: opinions expressed by students and faculty, the number of complaints directed to the head of the learning resources program, and the types of suggestions offered for improving services. Several institutions used questionnaires or surveys conducted either by learning resources staff or by personnel from the institution's office for re-

search. Many learning resources staff, however, felt that the results of such efforts do not provide enough hard data with which to evaluate the quality of services provided. Other measures used to evaluate learning resources services included the use of statistics, a comparison with the "Guidelines," and self-studies conducted in conjunction with accreditation visits.

CONCLUSIONS

The most significant finding revealed by this study is that an institution's philosophy concerning its learning resources program was displayed in organizational patterns and levels of service that were internally consistent.

Those institutions that exhibited a greater degree of integration of materials and catalogs organized their staffs solely on the basis of function; earned higher scores on the rating of information provided in the college catalog; and had fewer restrictions on the use of learning resources services and materials. Those institutions that exhibited a greater degree of separation of materials and catalogs introduced the factors of form, clientele, and geography into their organizational structures; earned lower scores on the rating of information provided in the college catalog; and placed more restrictions on the use of learning resources services and materials.

Based upon these findings, one may well be led to conclude that the organizational pattern chosen by an institution for its learning resources program does have an effect on the levels of service it provides.

REFERENCES

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4. Doris Cruger Dale, "The Community College Library in the Mid-1970s," *College & Research Libraries* 38:404-11 (Sept. 1977).
5. See, for example, Kenneth W. Allen and Loren Allen, *Organization and Administration of the Learning Resources Center in the Community College* (Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1973), p.12-22.
6. Harriett Genung and James O. Wallace, "The Emergence of the Community College Library," *Advances in Librarianship* 3:70-75 (1972).
7. "Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs," p.306.
8. Connie R. Dunlap, "Organizational Patterns in Academic Libraries, 1876-1976," *College*

- & *Research Libraries* 37:395-407 (Sept. 1976).
9. These factors are identified and described in Edward A. Wight, "Research in Organization and Administration," *Library Trends* 6:141-46 (Oct. 1957).
 10. Reported in Doris Cruger Dale, "Questions of Concern: Library Services to Community College Students," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 3:82 (May 1977).
 11. *Ibid.*, p.82.
 12. "Guidelines for Two-Year College Learning Resources Programs," p.315.
 13. *Ibid.*, p.307.

APPENDIX

LIST OF INSTITUTIONS VISITED

Moraine Valley Community College Palos Hills, Illinois	Miami-Dade Community College North Campus Miami, Florida
College of DuPage Glen Ellyn, Illinois	El Paso Community College El Paso, Texas
William Rainey Harper College Palatine, Illinois	San Antonio College San Antonio, Texas
Johnson County Community College Overland Park, Kansas	El Centro College Dallas, Texas
Penn Valley Community College Kansas City, Missouri	Bellevue Community College Bellevue, Washington
Bergen Community College Paramus, New Jersey	College of San Mateo San Mateo, California
Brookdale Community College Lincroft, New Jersey	College of the Canyons Valencia, California
Montgomery College Rockville Campus Rockville, Maryland	Los Angeles City College Los Angeles, California
Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus Annandale, Virginia	Mt. San Antonio College Walnut, California
Northern Virginia Community College Alexandria Campus Alexandria, Virginia	Golden West College Huntington Beach, California

POSTINGS TERM
 1 AGRIBUSINESS COUNCIL
 1 AGRICOL CHEMICAL CO.
 82 AGRICULTURAL ACT
 94 AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT
 1 AGRICULTURAL AND CONSUMER PROTECTION AC

UP N OR DOWN N?
 USER:
 DOWN 10
 PROG:

POSTINGS TERM
 1 AGRICULTURAL AND DAIRY EDUCATIONAL P
 1 AGRICULTURAL CENSUS AMENDMENTS ACT
 1 AGRICULTURAL CHILD LABOR ACT
 123 AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES
 2 AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY CONTROL
 5 AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM
 4 AGRICULTURAL COOPERATOR COUNCIL
 9 AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL OF ARKANSAS
 152 AGRICULTURAL CREDIT
 3 AGRICULTURAL FEDERAL RESERVE ACT (IT)
 1 AGRICULTURAL FEDERAL RESERVE ACT (IT)
 2 AGRICULTURAL FEDERAL RESERVE ACT (IT)
 18 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OVERSEAS DEPT (IT)
 2 DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE REORGANIZATION (IT)
 2 DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS (IT)
 2 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOUR (IT)
 2 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOUR (IT)
 2 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ORGANIZATION (IT)
 1 DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY SUPPLY AND NATURAL (IT)
 1 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (IT)
 1 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (IT)
 1067 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (IT)
 156 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (IT)
 12 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (IT)
 507 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (IT)
 106 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE (IT)

UP N OR DOWN N?
 USER:
 "NBR HEAD, M (WT)
 PROG:

POSTINGS TERM
 1 HEAD, GEORGE
 1 HEAD, GILES W.
 10 HEAD, MARGARET
 1 HEAD, MICHAEL
 5 HEAD, MICHAEL
 UP N OR DOWN N?
 USER:
 "FOR WILDERNESS SOCIETY (IT)
 PROG:

POSTINGS TERM
 1 WILDERNESS CAMPING MAGAZINE
 2 WILDERNESS RESOURCES COALITION COMRI
 171 WILDERNESS SOCIETY
 1 WILDMORN, SOPHEL
 189 WILDLIFE AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
 UP N OR DOWN N?
 USER:
 DOWN 10
 PROG:

POSTINGS TERM
 1 WILDLIFE COORDINATION ACT
 1 WILDLIFE EDUCATION PROGRAM
 1 WILDLIFE FEDERATION OF CANAD
 1 WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE
 1 WILDLIFE PROTECTIVE ACT
 24 WILDLIFE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

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