

Background

Centralia College is a community college serving Lewis County and south Thurston County. The main campus is located in Centralia, with a satellite campus in Morton serving students from east county. State funded FTEs for fall quarter were just over 2,000, but actual headcount numbers near 6,000 students annually. Centralia attracts many students from rural areas of the counties, as well as the twin city areas of Centralia-Chehalis. Students are approximately evenly divided between academic transfer and professional/technical degree tracts. Fall 2005, a new RN will be launched.

Institutional Environment and Priorities

Current campus initiatives

Examination of the campus strategic plan reveals a number of initiatives. These include:

- Strategic planning/institutional effectiveness; assessment of teaching and learning;
- Marketing for student recruitment and retention;
- Development of a multicultural center and related services to serve an increasingly diverse population;
- Educational program growth including articulation agreements and creation of 2-year degree programs that can be completed via correspondence, online, or evenings/weekends; focus on development of a distance learning program;
- Strategic planning for technology; implementation of new technologies (e.g., wireless, electronic resources);
- Establishment of partnerships with business, industry, other educational institutions, and government.

Advancement of information literacy was listed among the campus wide strategic initiatives for academic year 2004/05 and will remain on the list for the coming year.

The college is also impacted by a number of statewide initiatives. For example, common course numbering is one area of discussion.

Collaboration environment

Librarian membership on committees contributes to a positive environment for collaboration. Librarians are members of assessment committee, instructional council, and technology committee. Starting fall '05 a librarian will be added to the diversity committee. Librarians also take part in campus and community programs.

The library enjoys a great relationship with the English/Humanities department. Library instruction is provided for most ENGL 098 and all ENGL 102 courses. We are currently working on an information literacy project with them to integrate IL to an even greater degree into pre-college English, English 101, and English 102 using a hierarchical model of skills development. As a team with English faculty, we have identified IL learning outcomes appropriate for each level. The faculty we worked with will present this draft model to their department fall '05.

The library also has a close collaborative relationship with faculty in the nursing program and a growing relationship with those in the science department.

Time is a problem for us in a several ways: faculty perception that there is not enough time to integrate library instruction into their courses; faculty not wanting to take time for assessment; and, few librarians to handle the workload required to increase outreach and provide instruction.

Another difficulty in working with faculty is that some of them can be very guarded with their assignments or syllabus (e.g., territoriality, academic freedom). Some questions might remain about faculty status of librarians and counselors. Librarians have to earn the respect that other faculty members are granted automatically. They will listen to us and work with us up to a certain point, but there can be barriers in going beyond a certain level of integration. I think that it's mostly easy to talk to them about library activities, but if it comes to talking to them about their own assignments and resources it can be a sensitive interaction.

Communication does present a challenge, particularly with adjunct faculty who are not on campus as many hours outside of class. Both the librarian and department faculty experience this communication gap. Department faculty may make a decision about the amount of IL that will be incorporated into a course, but this may not be communicated to adjuncts in a consistent manner.

How do adjuncts learn about work we're doing with their departments and the services the library can provide? Faculty is often unaware of the broad range of services that are available to support their teaching and student learning as well as the willingness of librarians to collaborate with them. For example, a chemistry instructor was contacted after several of her students came to the reference desk for help with an assignment. A librarian contacted the faculty member to brainstorm some resource ideas and library instruction was planned. The faculty member was thrilled with the result. However, contacting the library when creating the assignment was not a natural step in the process.

There are a number of likely partnerships that we plan to pursue in the coming academic year. As stated above, we engaged in an assessment project with members of the English/Humanities faculty to develop outcomes for the English courses. During phase II of the project we will identify the teaching methods and related exercises needed to help students achieve these outcomes. Also, we

plan to expand the work completed during the first phase to other courses offered by the department.

Thanks to a grant written by the Nursing Department faculty, the library will receive \$16,000 to develop a nursing collection. Inclusion in this grant was thanks to the close relationship that the library's nursing liaison has built over a number of years. In the coming year, the liaison librarians to the science faculty will capitalize on the interest that was expressed this year.

Increased outreach to the campus is a high priority. We will continue our work on campus committees as these help us to build relationships, learn about work that is occurring in other campus departments, and promote awareness of library services. We will also continue to work with campus administrators to encourage their use of the library. Other areas that we are beginning to work with include distance learning and student services. We are also interested in offering staff and faculty workshops or seminars. Fall '05 the library will launch a Virtual Reference Collection and related introductory workshops are already scheduled to be held during fall faculty days.

Organizational Placement of Library Instruction

The library falls under the instructional division and librarians have faculty status. The Associate Dean reports directly to the VP, Instruction. All librarians and the Associate Dean provide library instruction. During academic year 03/04, librarians provided instruction to 72 classes. This figure has remained about the same for the past 4 years. So, a basic program of instruction is in place, but it is not completely defined.

The library work plan for 04/05 included development of a faculty liaison model. In future the division of responsibility for instruction will be tied to this model. Each librarian develops her own instructional materials. We are gearing up for greater outreach and we need to develop overarching program elements. We have a mission and goals in place. An important next step is to flesh out our outcomes.

Strategic objectives are identified in our program review (Fall 2003). This plan is revised as we change and grow; work will continue to strengthen our foundation for outreach and collaboration. The librarians will take advantage of the many training and education opportunities provided through ACRL and CLAMS in order to master the skills that are necessary to attain program objectives. We seek out resources, seminars, and online workshops and learn from the work of other institutions.

At this time we have no way of measuring the information competence level of our graduates. The librarians have agreed on a definition of information literacy,

having accepted the ACRL definition of information literacy as the operational definition. However, the nature and meaning of IL is not as clear to the larger campus community. The campus has adopted a set of 5 learning themes. Information literacy could be part of all of them, but it's not explicitly identified. The "reasoning" theme seems to be the one that is most closely tied to information literacy.

Instruction Program Content

Types of instruction include: course-integrated, 2 credit online course, orientations for CC101, and workshops. Discussions with the English faculty have led to potential implementation of an online tutorial. The majority of our instruction is offered in collaboration with non-library faculty, either related to a course or integrated.

We are deliberating over whether or not to resuscitate the stand-alone IL course. The 2-credit online course has not been taught for approximately 4 years. Currently all of our instruction consists of faculty bringing their class to the library for a session or two, or the librarian going to the classroom. We would also like to investigate possibilities for co-teaching or offering a 1 or 2 credit class that is linked to a course taught in another department.

Selected elements:

The library staff completed the following SWOT in order to identify elements to be addressed in program planning. As a result of this exercise, the decision was made to focus (over the next year or two) on increased outreach to non-library faculty with the goal of identifying relevant IL outcomes for individual courses and integration of instruction developed to meet these outcomes.

STRENGTHS

- Constantly changing/updating what we present; culture of learning and assessment; openness to new ideas; self-reflection; acceptance and integration of feedback from instructors; collaborative development of assignments and instructional content
- Open to sharing, gathering new ideas
- Flexibility, willingness to change
- Experience of staff, varying levels of experience
- Years of developing relationships with faculty – history
- Relationships with faculty/departments (Nursing, English)
- Reputation – respect relationship
- Welcoming/friendly

WEAKNESS

- Communication with adjuncts, changing adjuncts; may not be UP on what we are doing and our role as faculty
- Not reaching everyone who we want to reach
- Duplication of info – no ladder of instruction
- Classroom space/lab space inadequate
- Communication about value of library instruction; concept of what IL is
- Lack of explicit integration into learning themes
- Size of the library staff; if we build the program we really want, how will we staff it and still offer other services? Would be nice to co-teach, but how to cover other duties
- Increasing number of students accessing library resources over the Web from home and other remote locations; we need to improve website, online instructional materials/help tips;
- Need to reflect on how best to meet needs of DL students
- Find ways to ensure that students don't walk away empty handed – either they feel comfortable to come to us for assistance or they have learned how to get the info themselves
- Sufficient funding to attend conferences (both locally and nationally)

THREATS

- Have institutional support for what we are doing with IL, but stagnate budget means getting additional faculty is difficult, if not impossible.
- Turf issues; breaking down barriers between library faculty and other faculty;
- Faculty status for librarians at issue on occasion; view of librarians as faculty not accepted by some
- Limited space; danger that, as we build online collections, don't need additional space or staff

OPPORTUNITY

- Make ourselves a full partner in the teaching and learning mission of the college
- Great opportunity for outreach; to learn about (what do they want?) and meet the needs of a larger audience
- Improved service to DL students as well as on-ground students, WSU, City U
- Build institutional support for what we are doing; recognition of our efforts and our successes
- Communicate/collaborate with others in the profession