

# Program Statement for a New Brookdale Library

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*Presented to the Board of Trustees: March 1997*

## **MISSION, PHILOSOPHY and GOALS**

This program statement for Brookdale's new Library draws its guiding principles from, and is driven by, the College Mission Statement and the Academic Master Plan.

By providing the best of current information technology and library resources in a facility designed for individual and collaborative learning and study, Brookdale's Library will continue to be a key component in the realization of the College's primary mission: "an academic center for Monmouth County devoted to quality and excellence."

Knowledge is power, and the surest way to knowledge is mastering the techniques of information access and analysis. As they learn to use the Library, Brookdale students develop critical literacy skills that are, according to the College Mission Statement, "necessary for personal and career success."

The College's commitment to "maximum access to... services through... use of current and developing technology" will be realized in the "electronic gateway" function of the Information Commons: onsite and remote access to worldwide information resources.

As a service open and available to all county residents, the Library makes an invaluable contribution to the College's promise to "serve as a leading cultural, social and recreational center for Monmouth County."

***"A philosophy that values the individual learner and promotes open access is best realized through a dynamic, collaborative approach to the educational experience."*** Brookdale Community College. *Academic Master Plan* 1996

This quotation from the Academic Master Plan guides the concept of the Library as a dynamic learning environment designed to foster student success. The key elements of the plan, including the focus on the learner, open access to educational opportunities, lively engagement of the intellect, pooling and connecting the resources, are reflected in the design objectives that follow.

## **NEW VISION: NEW NAME**

The College will adopt the term *Library* to describe what has been called the *Learning Resource Center* or LRC.

Nearly thirty years ago Brookdale Community College established a Learning Resources Center, known as the LRC. The mix of services included the Print Shop, the Instructional Materials Center, the Testing Center, Audiovisual Services, and decentralized libraries, collections of print and nonprint materials

Over time, the Instructional Materials Center, the Print Shop, the Testing Center and the Audiovisual Services were reorganized and moved to other administrative units. The decentralized collections were centralized to resemble what most colleges call a Library. But the LRC label has stuck. It is

confusing to students and misleading in its implication of broader services.

The definition of *library*, meanwhile, has expanded to reflect the technological innovations that have transformed the means of storing and accessing information. So that *library* now refers to not only the materials on hand, but also the means and the tools for accessing information anywhere in the world, from a century-old journal sitting on the shelf at Rutgers to a new web site documenting the latest images from the Hubble satellite telescope.

It may seem a contradiction to design a building that anticipates new technologies, then reach back into the past and call it a Library. But our clientele, students and faculty alike, have never become used to translating *library* into *LRC*. For many it will be a relief to give a direct answer to the question, "Where's the Library?"

## **TECHNOLOGY IN THE SERVICE OF LEARNING**

Two aspects of technology are particularly relevant to the overall concept of a new Library:

**CONNECTIVITY** is the key to the kind of library, the kind of information service we must provide. If we are to grow from an online catalog to networked information resources, the College must have in place an electronic infrastructure that allows access to any information resource, including the Internet, on any College computer

**REMOTE ACCESS**, which is also dependent on the electronic infrastructure, will mean that we do business differently. In addition to networked computers and databases in the Library's Information Commons, our clients will be able to access any of the services and resources from the College's learning centers and extension sites, home, businesses, and other libraries. At times, these remote clients will need to communicate directly with a librarian or an information assistant, someone to consult, someone to recommend and explain a database or a search strategy. It must be done in real time, with no compromise in service.

## **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 1**

***A user-friendly building, easily accessible and easily navigated.***

## **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

The first service point is a Help Desk and electronic information kiosk. From this point, signs and pathmarks guide the way to services and collections. At each point where a user enters a new level or service area, kiosks define and map the area, identify service for the college-wide information system. Colors can differentiate service areas, especially in large open spaces. Exhibit and display areas at various places in the building, but especially in the entrance/vestibule area, serve to educate and inform through printed graphics and multimedia displays.

- Ease of access from the megastructure as well as from the stand-alone buildings on the north end of campus
- Braille or raised-letter signage for the sight-impaired

- A hub or pivot point from which all services and areas are easily identified and located
- Provide a single point for theft prevention and security within the Library
- Public address system throughout the public areas of the building. This feature will be used only at closing times and in emergencies.
- Without sacrificing energy efficiency, the building must allow for natural ventilation at times when the HVAC fails or is curtailed by a power utility
- The HVAC system must be zoned so that areas can be shut down or adjusted for special conditions.

## DESIGN OBJECTIVE 2

***Traditional learning resources are integrated with emerging information technologies in a state-of-the-art facility, the Information Commons, which provides access to the most relevant information, wherever located, in a variety of formats, in sufficient time to meet the user's needs***

The defining image of the new Library will be a large open space known as the Information Commons, a merging of the traditional reference room and the open computer lab, staffed by librarians, application specialists, technicians, tutors. The salient feature of the Information Commons is the collaborative worktable for 6-18 students at six computers with network access to databases, documents, indexes, e-mail, and internet.

The concept and design of the Information Commons is based on the fact that electronic technologies have transformed the delivery of bibliographic information and the full-text resources traditionally stored in paper formats. The information resources themselves may be located on local area network servers or on remote sites accessed via the internet or in a book sitting on the reference shelves. Library research, correspondence, document and image processing, can all be done by navigating a suite of applications and access modes on the same networked device.

A second phenomenon drives the physical design. Collaboration, in small group settings or electronically, is a successful and increasingly preferred mode of learning. The College's Academic Master Plan specifically mentions a "dynamic, collaborative approach" to learning as the best way to serve our clientele.

- Worktables to accommodate 120 networked computers (maximum of 360 persons)
- 3 consultation/help desks with 2 staff at each (reference librarian, application assistant or technical assistant)
- 10,000 volumes (reference books, printed indexes) on counter height shelving.
- 35 file cabinets for pamphlets and ephemera
- 40 users stations (a mix of carrels and 3'x5' tables) built into or adjacent to the reference shelving
- Printer/document delivery area. Work done at the open workstations will be printed remotely on network printers. Texts and images downloaded from online sources via the world wide web will also be printed at this service point. 2 support staff at a central desk. Storage for supplies and equipment
- Photocopiers in sound dampened alcoves

### **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 3**

***The Library provides learning spaces which meet the curricular need to understand the research process: the concepts and means of information access, critical thinking and evaluative skills.***

#### **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

The success of the two-year pilot project of information literacy drives the need for specifically designed learning space as part of the Information Commons. The Academic Master Plan proceeds from the assumption that learning is "active, collaborative, interdisciplinary and competency-based." Information literacy is a core competency, a linchpin in the plan to focus curriculum development on learning outcomes.

Large group learning spaces will be designed as one element of the Information Commons. Skills learned in a formal setting will be put to use immediately in the collaborative learning environment of the Information Commons. The ebb and flow of the processes learned should be invisibly joined so learners feel movement from one to the other is natural. Such a design will meet the curricular needs of courses such as ENG122, REA095, SPH115, NUR161 and FIN151, all of which have strong research components.

Six large group learning spaces will be designed to accommodate 25 students each at networked computers, an instructor at a networked console, and an assistant or second instructor. Each space will contain a variety of presentation hardware/software (whiteboards, computer imaging, VCR, ITV, etc...) Each will have standard furnishings: clocks, coat racks or hooks, space for student gear, locked storage space, an instructor's workstation, reflective lighting (controlled from the instructor's workstation), HVAC control, adequate electric outlets, a telephone, and a reservations board on the outside of the space.

ADJACENCY: The rooms will be designed and located to be accessible for general use as part of the Information Commons when they are not scheduled for group learning.

### **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 4**

***The collections will be organized coherently and arranged for ease of use.***

#### **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

BOOKSTACKS. 100,000 volumes in a single sequence, broken only by the individual study stations and group study rooms mentioned in Design Objective 5

- The bookstacks must have a single, controlled entrance. We are considering self-check units, but a staff workstation at the entrance should be included as a backup
- Direct sunlight cannot fall on the books themselves. Stack lighting could be motion-activated
- Photocopiers at strategic locations

Information Commons kiosks in the bookstack area will give users access to the online catalog and limited network services. These need not be sit-down stations, other than the ADA requirement

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS. The Library is responsible for maintaining the integrity and accessibility of several special collections: the Reserve collection; the Photography collection; the New Jersey collection and the

Brookdale Archives collection and related historical materials. These could be housed in separately controlled areas within the bookstacks

PERIODICALS, MICROFORMS and NONPRINT MATERIALS. In the existing Library, these services are in closed stacks. Materials are retrieved by staff and used in controlled areas. In the new Library, these materials will be accessible in open areas. Users will retrieve the materials and use them on appropriate equipment. Support staff will be assigned to the areas to provide assistance on demand or to return materials to their locations.

- Storage requirement
- 600 periodicals titles for five years
- 10,000 reels of microfilms
- 10,000 nonprint items (videocassettes, audiocassettes, slide trays)
- Because these materials will soon be computer-based multimedia, this area must be easily converted to electronic network stations.

#### **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 5**

***The Library is a place to study quietly, individually, productively. It is also a place to work collaboratively, in pairs, small groups or whole classes.***

#### **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

In a recent survey of students using the Library, the most commonly identified need was differentiated study space. In the new Library study spaces will allow for different study styles. These areas will also be technology-ready, cabled and ported for potential use of the network services.

Students recognize the need for quiet study space in the existing Library. The new Library will provide 150-200 individual study spaces within the open bookstack area. These will be a mix of individual carrels, tables for two and lounge seating. The carrels will be equipped with network access ports and electric outlets.

The College Retention Task Force made a strong case for study groups as a key component of retention. The new Library will provide 20 collaborative study rooms in two sizes: 4-6 persons or 10-12 persons. Each room equipped with table and chairs, whiteboard, and network access port.

Group study rooms will be located in the bookstack area and near the Information Commons. Two or three special use rooms will be located in the nonprint service area and will allow groups to view and/or listen.

#### **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 6**

***The Library serves as a center for instructional research and design where faculty can explore ways of improving teaching and learning.***

#### **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

In the recently drafted Academic Master Plan, the section titled "Strategies for Change" identifies as a key objective the establishment of a Teaching, Learning and Technology Center "where seminars, dialogue, research and training can take place." Although the details have yet to be developed, the concept is well enough embraced to commit to the inclusion of a substantial facility for the professional development of faculty and staff.

Space requirements: Director and five technical and support staff; two conference areas, a demonstration classroom; a multimedia development room; and equipment storage. This area is self-contained, not a functional part of the Information Commons/Library complex. It can be open when the Library is closed. It should be secured when the Library is open and the TLC is closed.

## **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 7**

***The Library's working environment is safe, clean and healthy, encouraging staff productivity and well-being. Staff offices and work areas are adjacent to the relevant service areas, promoting an efficient workflow and staffing of the public access points. Each work area has appropriate storage space, natural lighting, and ergonomically designed furnishings.***

## **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

The Staff Work Area will accommodate all the functions related to the procurement and processing of materials for the collections and support for the public access areas. A single area, landscaped for a variety of functions and activities, will be adjacent to the service areas for the bookstacks and periodicals.

- 14 staff stations with network access and devices
- Conference area (8 persons)
- 20 booktrucks
- 10 sections of 15" deep double-faced bookshelves
- 4 4'x6' worktables
- 4 Storage cabinets
- Sink and countertop
- photocopier

Staff Lounge is a functional kitchen, 4 tables, lounge chairs, rest rooms. It should have natural lighting. It is adjacent to the Staff Work Area.

Manager of Media Distribution's office is an enclosed room just off the entrance to the Library, within sight and easy access from the Help Desk.

### **Media Specialists (Library Faculty)**

- 6 faculty in three shared offices
- Conference Room for Media Specialists (8-10 persons)
- 2 Support Staff

Administrative offices are in a suite of rooms:

- Director
- Systems Coordinator
- Conference Room for 20
- Reception area
- 2 Office Assistants, 10 file cabinets, 2 storage cabinets

#### **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 8**

*Through its capacity for adaptation and change, the Library will serve the Brookdale community's information and research needs well into the 21st century.*

#### **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

As a learning environment, the entire renovated building will have an electronic infrastructure that allows maximum access to the campus network and is designed for maximum flexibility. Areas that are planned for storage of print and other hardcopy materials will be ready for transition to new technologies and different uses when necessary.

Electronic resources and network server equipment will be centrally located in a secure area of the building and cabled to all user areas. Climate control will meet standards and specifications for computer rooms.

#### **DESIGN OBJECTIVE 9**

*The Library's facilities and resources are easily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.*

#### **COMMENTS AND DETAILS**

At a minimum, the Library will be designed in compliance with the specifications set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and its appendix. In the selection of materials and in the provision of technology for access to materials and resources, consideration is given to clients whose needs may require special content or presentation. No information resource shall be denied because of the client's disability.

## **CODA**

It is a library's nature to be simple and complex, or, as Gertrude Stein said of Paris, France: "peaceful and exciting."

### ***SIMPLICITY***

*"Simplicity of use by patrons, especially inexperienced patrons, must be the principal criterion by which the quality of any academic library building can be judged."*

David Kaser, "Current Issues in Building Planning," **College and Research Libraries**, 1989, p.303.

### ***COMPLEXITY***

*"To support free and open inquiry in an appropriate atmosphere, library facilities must adapt easily both to technological applications and to changing patterns of service and use. The library must promote social and intellectual interaction among faculty and students; foster quiet, individual reflection; and support collaboration in the scholarly process."*

Sarah Michalak. "Planning Academic Library Facilities: The Library Will Have Walls," in **The Dynamic Library Organization in a Changing Environment**, Haworth Press, 1994, p.105.

### ***COMMUNITY***

*"A library today is...a community of men and women with specific training in research methods and information systems -- a community that also values knowledge and culture, and is prepared to instill that appreciation in others. Like any community, it needs a physical setting to give it identity and to support its activities and services. The electronic revolution makes human encounters, which are the real basis of community, even more valuable and necessary, not less so."*

Craig Hartman "The Future of Libraries" **Architecture**, 84:10 (October, 1995) p. 43-47.