
Learning Resources Concept Position Paper

NCCCLRA Position Paper Committee

Learning Resources Concept

Community and junior colleges have been in the forefront in the establishment of the concept of learning resources in higher education. Due to the widely divergent learning needs of its heterogeneous student body, in a world of rapidly changing technologies, the comprehensive community college demands a multi-dimensional approach to education. The North Carolina Community College Learning Resources Association (NCCCLRA) has developed this paper to state the Association's position relating to the learning resources concept and its effective application for North Carolina community colleges, technical institutes, and technical colleges.

The Past a Foundation

The importance of the learning resources concept began to emerge in the late Sixties, as the role of the library in instruction received increasing acknowledgment and emphasis. The term "learning resources center" was first used officially at a conference in 1967 which was jointly sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA), the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC), and the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). A committee representing ALA and AAJC, later to include the Association of Education Communications and Technology (AECT), developed a set of guidelines which were approved and adopted by all three national organizations in 1972. These Guidelines are a milestone in the history of the philosophy and concept of learning resources. The North Carolina Community College Learning Resources Association endorses the "Guidelines" as descriptive standards for an effective Learning Resources program.

North Carolina Trends

In North Carolina, librarians and other media personnel had become professionally aware of the emerging philosophy during the Sixties, and were already working with their local community colleges and technical institutes to expand their services to support changing techniques of instruction to serve an "open-door" clientele. In the early and middle Seventies, a majority of the libraries in the North Carolina Community College System evolved into learning resources centers, beginning with the addition or combining of the audiovisual component and/or the learning laboratory with the library.

The history and philosophy of the North Carolina Community College Learning Resources Association has followed the pattern of the evolution of the learning resources concept. The North Carolina Community College Library Association, organized in 1967, changed its name to the North Carolina Community College Educational Media Association in 1969 to reflect the integration of all types of media. In 1973 the Association adopted the learning resources concept and changed its name to the North Carolina Community College Learning Resources Association. In 1985, NCCCLRA is renewing its commitment to the concept. No particular configuration of components is endorsed, as such evolution depends upon the needs and objectives of the particular institution. Future implications and directions will open new vistas of change and challenge for community colleges in this computer/communications era of an information society.

Learning Resources Programs

A Learning Resources program is an instructional support system—learner centered—which provides materials, equipment, people and services to support and implement the college's instructional program. In an attractive environment which emphasizes learning, a comprehensive Learning Resources program is a cooperative, college-wide effort to provide a diversity of

Members of the NCCCLRA Position Paper Committee are Mertys Bell, Chairman, Jim Foster, Betty Lawing, Karen Noel, Ron Plummer, John Thomas, Ed Shearin, ex officio, Marjorie Whitaker, and Larry Wolfe.

options for study, research, and cultural development of students, faculty, staff, and the adult community. In addition to the integration of various types of media, the learning resources concept implies a systematically developed program which allows materials, equipment, and techniques to be efficiently and effectively used. The Learning Resources program assists faculty in the use of all forms of instructional media (print and non-print), provides continuity in individualized instruction, and ensures centralized access to the materials and services.

A chief administrator, who centralizes and coordinates the various services of the learning resources center, is essential to the management and success of the learning resources program. This administrator 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 institutional-wide responsibilities.

As stated in the "Guidelines for Two-Year Learning Resources Programs," 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; and (4) to encourage innovation, learning, and community service by providing facilities and resources which will make them possible.

Learning Resources Centers

The expansion of the traditional library to include a variety of the components of the instructional process has generally resulted in changing the name from "Library" to "Learning Resources Center" (or "Educational Resources Center" or "Library/Learning Center") to denote its increased instructional support services. The Learning Resources Center is an administrative configuration within the institution which applies a systematic approach to the supervision and management of certain learning resources components, regardless of the location within the physical environment of the college. The Learning Resources program is more a concept than a place, and is most concerned with functions. Such an integrated approach varies with institutions.

Each Learning Resources Center is developed harmoniously within the local pattern of organization and institutional goals. There is no universal model. The Learning Resources program has as its core the library and audiovisual services, and may also include various other instructional services such as the individualized learning center, tutorial services, career center, computer lab, or instructional development center. Flexibility is the key element as colleges and their instructional objectives change to adapt to curricular needs and emerging technologies.

Advantages

There are clear advantages in a centralized Learning Resources program: more efficient management of learning resources and services; greater flexibility in the utilization of budgets, staff, and facilities; financial accountability; coordination; and cooperation. Consultation and planning with administration and faculty to assist students to achieve their individual educational goals is both simplified and enhanced with such a structure. Whether the need is for basic education, a diploma, a certificate, an associate degree, or for upgrading skills, a strong Learning Resources program provides for all levels of academic abilities. Offering appropriate resources (print, non-print, and human) with instructional services enhances the entire educational program of an institution.

Through its basic **library** component, the Learning Resources Center provides instruction and access to learning materials at all levels and in all forms (books, periodicals, films, slides, video and audio cassettes, computer software, reference service, research assistance, interlibrary loans, and bibliographic instruction).

The **audiovisual** component supplies, maintains, and distributes supportive equipment (film and slide projectors, tape recorders/players, video recorders/players and monitors); produces media for instruction, including graphics and photography; and may be responsible for telecommunications (video production, closed circuit and cable television, telecourses) and instructional design and development.

A variety of additional **instructional services** may be included: a learning center; tutorial services; individualized instruction in reading, writing, and math; computer skills; testing; self-instructional courses; and instructional design and development. The individualized instruction center or instructional services component may serve several areas of instruction, including credit and non-credit courses.

The Future a Challenge

The potential of a Learning Resources program is far-reaching, including services to adults pursuing lifelong learning (especially Adult Basic Education and GED programs), services to the business and industrial community, and participation in consortia (area, regional, statewide) for resource and information sharing.

The Learning Resources Center is a catalyst for innovation, introducing new information and delivery systems, and new instructional technologies.

In summary, a comprehensive Learning Resources Center is a dynamic and unique asset to a college, capable of enriching, vitalizing, and personalizing the educational program for faculty, students, and community



Joseph Ruzicka-South, Inc.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A BINDERY?

- Your collection deserves the binding excellence attained through 226 years experience.
- Certified by the Library Binding Institute, we offer you a choice.
- Select Class "A" binding or try our Superflex.
- Both are fully guaranteed in materials and workmanship.

SERVICE, QUALITY, AND FAIR PRICES... THE RUZICKA WAY.

Come by for a personal tour of our facilities.
Call or write for particulars.

911 Northridge Street • P. O. Box 21568 • Greensboro, North Carolina 27420
Telephone (919) 299-7534

An Equal Opportunity Employer