

**MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAM REVIEW  
SELF STUDY**

**FOR**

**Library Services**

**2012 – 2013**

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**MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**Co-Curricular Program Review**

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## Middlesex Community College

### Co-Curricular Program Review

#### **SECTION I: INTRODUCTION**

Using background and/or contextual information please provide the reader with an overview/abstract of the program's evolution, progress, and direction. What is unique about this program? What does the future hold for the program? What are the major issues for this program? Connect us to your most recent program review where important, including information about previous findings, improvements, and unfinished items.

All libraries, including our own, are facing ongoing changes which affect every aspect of the way they function. Over the past several years our library has been challenged to respond to the external changes in publishing and delivery options as well as internal changes in the way our college delivers course content to students. In response, we have made a commitment to providing our users with greater remote access to materials and to transitioning to a more fully digital collection, reducing the size of the print collection, and freeing up more library space for other educational needs. As delivery of both the coursework and the resources needed to support them has moved to an online environment, we have worked to ensure that our library remains a place where students can find the technology, information resources, and professional assistance they need to succeed in their academic and life pursuits.

Our librarians play a central role in guiding students through the research process. While the shift to an online information environment has the appearance of simplifying searching and retrieval, it actually introduces a level of complexity which can challenge the most experienced searcher. We envision a future where a seamless Google-type search is the norm, but until that type of tool becomes available for academic research, we must continue to develop and implement resources to guide and support our students. At present, the very process of selecting the best materials available for students in all program areas often leads us to include online resources from different publishers, which has the unintended result of complicating the research process by introducing multiple search interfaces. In response, we designed the online research guides covering subject areas across our curriculum to help guide students in each program or discipline to the best resources for their course of study. This goal drives the development of our library's web content and functionality to ensure that our users are able to navigate the information universe open to them and access the materials they need, with multiple avenues to librarian support along the way. While not yet a truly seamless process, in working toward that goal, the librarians have developed the means to offer both face to face and online support to our users and have made it a priority to provide our students with the information literacy skills they need to be successful.

We believe that it is essential that students' needs receive the highest priority in our library, which has led us to make a commitment to operate within a "continuous improvement" model of library services. In support of that goal, we have completed several formal and informal assessments of our library services with students, faculty and staff over the past few years. Those included LibQual, a professionally developed and nationally normed survey administered in 2007, followed by several locally developed surveys of student and faculty satisfaction,

student response cards, physical and online suggestion boxes and feedback using a whiteboard in the library where students could write their suggestions. The results of those assessments have enabled us to successfully make the case to extend our library hours, increase the number of student computers, and provide wireless access within the library. The feedback received in this way has guided our efforts in advocating for improvements to the library and changes have been made in response to the expressed needs whenever possible.

With a library on each campus, the library staff has dedicated itself to developing facilities that have become the primary student-centered, active learning environments available at MCC. Responding to student requests, the library was given the funding to restore Saturday hours 4 years ago and we are now open 68 hours per week. During the fall and spring semesters, both libraries are open from 7:30 am to 9:00 pm Monday through Thursday, from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm on Friday and from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm on Saturday. The libraries are staffed with professional librarians who are responsible for the instruction, reference assistance, and selection of materials, and support staff who keep the collection in order and help with all aspects of the automated library system. In addition to these duties, the library staff is responsible for providing assistance with software applications and is the first line of assistance for students having problems with regard to computers, printers, logging into their accounts, Blackboard, college email, and wireless connectivity.

The libraries are both open the same hours, similarly staffed, and with the same amount spent each year on materials. With the exception of the half hour from 7:30 to 8:00 am, the libraries both offer reference and circulation services at all times that we are open.

### **Space:**

Thanks to the renovations that have occurred over the past ten years, both libraries are centrally located on their respective campuses and have attractive furnishing and equipment that support the needs of students for individual study, leisure reading, and computer use. Students, faculty members, and community visitors have praised the libraries on both campuses as beautiful and inviting places, and the usage numbers support our conviction that they are among the busiest spaces on campus.

Students at Middlesex have long expressed a need for both quiet and group study space on campus. The need for quiet study, especially in Bedford, was mentioned as an area of concern by the last NEASC accreditation team and library staff has long recognized this as a pressing need that we hoped to address as soon as an opportunity arose. However, the unique nature of the Bedford library building has presented a challenge in providing this type of space. Originally designed as a field house, it is an open building with a very high ceiling with many angles which were not intended to contribute to creating a quiet environment. In fact, the sloped ceiling angles makes it a very noisy space and has the effect of magnifying the volume of quiet conversations in far corners of the library and making them audible to everyone.

That said, the renovation of the Bedford library which took place during the summer of 2011, allowed us to accomplish many of the goals we had set for that library including:

- Providing a welcoming environment which showcases the library's materials and services;
- Library service points that are visible and approachable;
- An ordered environment with improved sightlines and visibility created by lowering the height of the reference shelving;
- Increased access to computers and printers and wireless access for students;
- An increase in seating capacity for reading and study

We had often hoped that one of the peripheral rooms in the library might become available for quiet study, but were unable to find alternative space for any of the people or functions occupying those spaces until the time of the renovation when coincidentally, an office became available in the Lowell library providing us with the opportunity to move the library technical services staff, which serves both libraries, from Bedford to the Lowell campus. This move, which would free up Room 7 within the Bedford library, would allow it to be repurposed as a quiet study area. Unfortunately, the college's new "Ramp Up" math program which was being introduced at that time required dedicated rooms which displaced the tutoring staff in the writing center in Bedford, thus requiring that they be moved into Room 7. Over the years, the other rooms within the Bedford library have been reassigned to other purposes, as a general purpose classroom, the Verizon classroom, office space, and the Teaching, Learning and Reflection Center (TLRC), leaving no other space available for quiet study.

While there are 3 small study rooms within the Lowell library which may be used for either quiet or group study, there are no remaining study carrels since all are now being used as computer furniture. As a result, the demand for quiet study in Lowell is also greater than the supply. The only location for quiet study in Bedford are ten study carrels in the back of the library, however the noise level in that library along with the acoustics in the building prevent any real quiet study in that area or any place else in the building during the busy times of the day.

To date, the library has not been able to find a solution to this problem.

### **Library Technology:**

Our library's ability to provide the core services and information that our users need is largely dependent on our access to effective tools for organizing and retrieving information in both digital and physical forms. Those include the Integrated Library System (ILS), the online content in all forms that we license on behalf of our institution, and the web presence that brings all our resources together in one place, authenticates our users, and allows us to deliver these services as seamlessly as possible.

The ILS, which is fundamental to our services, is a shared system provided through our membership in the NOBLE consortium (see appendix). A powerful system that would be far too costly for us to maintain on our own, it includes an online catalog of all physical and digital book and video titles we own or subscribe to and a shared catalog of the collections of all the NOBLE libraries. During the summer of 2012, NOBLE implemented a change to a new ILS, an open

source system which was selected along with two other Massachusetts networks to replace a more expensive and less responsive one. The preparation for and transition to this new system took many months of library staff work in planning, training, and adapting work flow in our libraries. As new functionality becomes available, it is our responsibility to continue to devote staff time to implementing these features which are critical to our mission.

The web catalog now includes complete checkout status of every item in our shared collection of over one million items, along with patron self-service capabilities of borrowing ebooks and renewing materials, and placing requests for items at other NOBLE libraries for delivery at our location. Connection is offered there to the Statewide Virtual Catalog, which provides direct access to the collections of hundreds of libraries across the state with delivery to our library.

NOBLE provides the hardware, software, training, and technical support for all of our catalog, circulation and acquisition services and also provides us with authentication services to access all our remote services including online databases and streaming audio and video. We also share a collection of downloadable ebooks and audiobooks through the Overdrive system. As members of NOBLE, we are full participants and work jointly with librarians from ten academic and seventeen public libraries in the process of maintaining the shared catalog, and developing new services for our community of users.

**Collections:**

While we continue to add print materials to our collections, there are many advantages to providing as many titles as possible in digital form, and our library has made a commitment to including as many high quality ebooks and streaming media titles as possible. As a result, our current ebook collection numbers several times the size of our print collection, but there are still many titles that are vital to our students that are not available except as print books. Therefore, a substantial part of the work of our library staff continues to be the selection, processing, cataloging and organizing these physical resources to optimize their use.

Physical Collections:	FY10	FY11	FY12
Print Volumes	43,449	43,630	43,854
Media materials	5,422	5,467	5,530
Periodical Subscript.	182	194	208

Our print collections are supplemented by those of the 27 other libraries within our library network, NOBLE, nine of which are academic libraries including three other community colleges in our region. The materials in the shared NOBLE catalog number over 1 million items and are made available through a delivery system which allows patrons to request any item from a NOBLE library for pickup at one of the MCC libraries.

All materials are inventoried annually and through judicious weeding, we are able to maintain a relatively new collection of relevant and timely materials. Our library collection compares favorably in size and currency to those of the other community colleges in Massachusetts. Although circulation of regular materials was down a little last year, the circulation of reserves (including textbooks) increased, so there is really not a trend apparent in either direction. Use

of library materials remains relatively stable and fluctuations may be partly attributable to variations in enrollment.

Circulation of all materials including reserves –

	FY10	FY11	FY12
Regular Circulation	16,534	16,739	15,391
Reserves Circulation	5,314	4,578	4,983

Our online databases are augmented by those purchased through the Massachusetts Library System on behalf of all state residents. We purchase access to those we identify as more complete academic databases for use by our college community across the curriculum in many program areas.

Over time, it is expected that more of our budget will be spent on high quality and academically relevant digital materials as they become available and students and faculty increasingly demand faster and greater access to resources regardless of their location.

	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
eBooks	29,503	32,679	37,139	107,148
Full text online periodical titles	19,652	20,888	21,340	22,457
Streaming media titles		11,569	12,692	12,862

In addition to these, our library has made a commitment to providing access to as many of our students' textbooks as possible, which has been well received by our students. Research has shown that the high cost of textbooks is a barrier to our students' success as many students have found their textbooks to be unaffordable and thus must do without. For each of the past three years we have set aside \$2,000 on each campus from the library's book budget to purchase current textbooks which have been supplemented by those donated by our faculty. With the open access movement, it is expected that free public access to information will continue to grow and students will get some relief from the expense of textbooks as freely available online alternatives are adopted for more of our courses.

In an effort to further reduce costs for textbooks, the library, in collaboration with the Textbook Committee, developed the "Textbooks Unbound" project. The proposal, based on the Open Education Initiative at UMASS Amherst, sought to fund five faculty members to develop innovative course materials which would be provided to the students in these courses at no cost to replace their traditional textbooks. Our project was selected for funding by the MCC foundation allowing us to offer stipends to faculty for five courses to be offered in the fall 2013.

## Web presence:

At the time of the college's transition to a new website last year, the library assumed full responsibility for the content and functionality of all our web pages through the LibGuides platform. The college recognized that the library website must serve as a portal to all its online content and resources both on campus and remotely, regardless of how that content was licensed and authenticated. The level of complexity and highly interactive nature of our site necessitates that the library have direct responsibility for maintaining its functionality.

A primary goal of our website is to duplicate the experiences of the physical library for those students who want to access library resources in an online environment. One of the key library services we sought to offer there was that of reference assistance, which has led to the integration of a number of online services onto our website which are maintained alongside the face to face assistance offered in our libraries. In addition to telephone services, we now provide students with avenues to chat, email, and text the librarians with questions which can be answered in ways most convenient to the student, through their computer or mobile device.

In an effort to offer library support 24/7, we now offer a library knowledgebase that is available to users in the form of a searchable FAQ database. In addition, our online research guides provide pathways to the key resources in each discipline, including online tutorials showing students the basics of searching for information, evaluating their results, and citing sources.

## Library Use:

Although the trend in academic libraries has become one of declining use, the libraries on both our campuses are very busy places often reaching close to our seating capacity in both libraries. The renovation in Bedford increased our seating by 36, bringing the total seating for both libraries to 318. This means our present seating capacity is approximately 5.5% of our FTE student enrollment. Although this is well below the ACRL recommended minimum of 10%, it is in line with most of the community college libraries in Massachusetts, many of which offer seating at around 5% of their student FTE. (See appendix.)

	FY10	FY11	FY12
Gate Count	253,871	251,423	241,916

While still very busy, our use appears to have diminished by 4.7% over the past 3 years which may be attributable to fluctuations in enrollment along with downtimes of our gate count devices.

Overall, our experience bears out general findings on the value of the "Academic Library as Place". For a time there was speculation throughout academe that the academic library was no longer relevant as a physical space and that with the transition of content to digital formats, the library building might be closed or redesigned for other use, but in recent years it has become widely acknowledged that college students value the library facility itself as a place where they continue to choose to complete assignments, get help with research, relax, and socialize. Our statistics support the idea that students continue to want to go to the library regardless of the number and variety of resources available to them online.

## **Student computing and printing:**

With the move to the new Lowell library in 2004 the computers and printers from the open computer labs on both campuses were moved to the libraries leaving all open student access to computing and printing on campus to the library. From that time on, library staff bore direct responsibility for student support of most computer applications questions, printing, email and basic Blackboard access. (Although for a few years there was a computer tutor scheduled for a few hours a week, that wasn't a successful model, and has since been discontinued.) At the time of this change in Lowell, a desktop computer was placed on every individual study carrel in the newly renovated library effectively eliminating these as places for quiet, distraction-free study.

Repurposing much of the library space as an open computer lab had a powerful impact on library staff. Student needs for assistance with computer and printing questions are time consuming and require immediate attention. Printing problems, including losing the printer installation have been frequent and repeated, requiring library staff to reinstall printers for every computer in the library classroom or to be stationed at the student computers to help every student who logs on to reinstall the printer. Computer and printer malfunctions have often not been addressed quickly and have taken hours or days to be corrected. Before the college implemented the "Deep Freeze" software, students were dealing with the additional problems caused by multiple users downloading and saving settings and software that prevented the computers from offering a consistent user experience. One of the most persistent computer problems our students still face is that of slow login times, a process that can take several minutes. It is not unusual for students who are new to the process to get up and leave the library or ask a staff member for assistance with login times on some computers of over three minutes.

Students enjoy free, unlimited printing in the library which has resulted in significant use of paper and toner over the years, but after a thorough exploration of Print Management Systems in use at other Massachusetts community colleges, vendor demonstrations and quotes, the decision was made to maintain the current plan. Fortunately, the cost of the paper, toner and equipment is not borne by the library, but is covered by other areas of the college.

Our library has welcomed the transition to having greater numbers of computers available to our students which are necessary to access our online resources and we are committed to helping them use the technology that the college provides. However, it is important to recognize that when the college moved the open computing to the library, the support of students needing assistance with using their email accounts, connecting to the wireless network, emailing attachments to their instructors, using a scanner, printing PowerPoint slides, and logging into Blackboard became the responsibility of the library staff whose numbers had already been diminished. Given this reality, it is no surprise that the library staff find it a challenge to maintain a high level of customer service to students, keep up with the regular operation of the library, and fully participate in the new initiatives at Middlesex in which we could and should have a role.

## **Staffing:**

The full time professional staff consists of the library director, one coordinator of public services at each campus and one coordinator of technical services/systems librarian. The full time support staff consists of one circulation assistant at each campus and one technical assistant in technical services. The members of our staff have demonstrated that they are knowledgeable, service-minded, and eager to adapt to new ways of thinking, working, teaching and learning.

Over the past several years the library has lost one full time professional librarian and three full time support staff members due to resignations and retirements. Although the part time budget was increased to cover many of the hours lost, the type and level of responsibilities of the part-time staff does not equate to full time staff. At the same time that our full time staff size has declined, the quantity and complexity of the work required has increased, resulting in the need to assign more and more duties to a diminishing number of staff.

Among those increases are those of library usage, the number of student computers and printers in the libraries, the work required as the library became responsible for developing and maintaining its own web pages, the changeover to a new ILS, and increasing digitization of content requiring more instruction time with students.

The library now has seven full time and fifteen part time staff members. (See appendix.)

Additional funding for part-time staff has been helpful, but low hourly pay rates have made it very difficult to attract and retain support staff which we rely on to help keep the libraries open in the evenings and on Saturdays. We have experienced an ongoing series of departures of trained staff that seems to be accelerating over time. In FY13 alone we have lost four staff in the Library Clerk position which has a starting hourly pay rate of \$10.00 per hour. This is the position for the circulation desk in the evening and on Saturday which is essential to keeping the library open during those hours. When these staff leave mid-semester, (which has been happening every semester for the past 2 years), we are often too far into the semester to have time to post the opening, interview, and hire someone before the semester is over, leaving us scrambling to find other staff to fill in. Sometimes full-time professional staff are working evenings or Saturdays to keep the library open, which means they are off during the day (when they are needed most) to make up for those hours worked. The rates of pay for part-time support staff do not compare favorably with that offered at area public libraries and fail to recognize the level of technical expertise required to successfully complete the tasks required. A recent review of the MBLC jobline revealed ten openings for Library Assistants with an average starting rate of \$15.20 per hour. The only opening listed at \$10.00 an hour was for a Library Page, a part-time position typically filled by a high school student.

The majority of our library professionals and support staff work in public services and those whose primary responsibility is technical services also fill in for the public services staff on a regular basis. So all staff in the library work directly with students, faculty and staff regardless of their other assigned duties. With so few full-time staff, cross-training is necessary and undertaken. That said, there are limits to the efficacy of this approach given the broad responsibilities we face along with the complexity of our programs and the needs of the community we serve.

## Library Instruction

Teaching is central to our mission to support our users in navigating today's complex information environment and we have made a commitment to providing a variety of learning opportunities for our students to acquire the information literacy skills critical to their success. We see our role as that of faculty partner in integrating information literacy throughout the curriculum. As the importance of these skills continues to grow, we must expand our support of this instruction in collaboration with faculty.

Students receive group instruction in information literacy as requested by their faculty member which takes place either in the library classroom or in the room where that class meets. For each class taught, librarians consult with faculty to ensure that students are offered help specific to the assignment given. Because each assignment is different, each class requires prep time on the part of the librarian to ensure that the best resources are covered.

	FY10	FY11	FY12
Total classes - Bedford	135	125	135
Students in classes - Bedford	2208	2183	2200
Total classes - Lowell	158	145	152
Students in classes - Lowell	2834	2748	2388

While the numbers of classes taught over the past three years is fairly flat, it is anticipated that the number of requests for library instruction will increase as a result of the first year experience courses, research courses, and infusion of information literacy into more of the general education courses through the written communication and critical thinking ISLOs. As the demands increase for instruction, so will the pressure on the library classroom on each campus which is currently used for meetings, faculty workshops and trainings as well as by classes needing a computer classroom occasionally throughout the semester.

Our key challenge is to find a way to reach greater numbers of students, to support faculty teaching these concepts across the disciplines, and ensure that all students leave Middlesex with a solid understanding of how to conduct library research.

## SECTION II: PROGRAM MISSION AND SUPPORT OF COLLEGE'S STRATEGIC PLAN

### 1. State the mission of the program.

The Middlesex Community College libraries provide our students, faculty and staff with the resources, technology, expertise, and space they need to be successful. We provide onsite and remote access to services and resources which support the college mission, advance the curriculum, and are designed to meet the needs of a diverse student population. We offer a welcoming, active, and supportive environment in which to study, read, think and collaborate which contributes to the quality of life on campus and in the communities we serve. We enhance student learning through instruction and provide personalized assistance in navigating a complex information world.

2. Middlesex Community College's Strategic Directions are listed below. Describe how your program's mission and the work that is done within your program supports one or more of these directions.

- *Improve access and advance student success by strengthening evidence-based practices and resource allocation.*
- *Foster greater college engagement through improved communication, personal connections and collaborative partnerships.*
- *Drive innovation, enrich community and broaden the learning experience for all by fulfilling our shared responsibility for diversity.*
- *Empower all members of the college community to be educators, mentors, advocates and life-long learners.*
- *Transform learning by integrating academic, workplace and global experiences to meet personal, professional and community needs.*
- *Build partnerships that stimulate innovation and address the educational, social, economic, and workforce development needs of our communities.*

***Improve access and advance student success by strengthening evidence-based practices and resource allocation.***

The Middlesex Community College library is dedicated to providing resources in support of the courses we offer that are current, relevant and authoritative and at a level that is appropriate for our student population. Through continuous self-evaluation and awareness of current directions of college libraries, we continue to expand the availability of library resources and services and evolve to meet the changing information needs of our users. As a result of our growing commitment to online access to information, and adoption of applicable new technologies we ensure equity of access to library collections and resources across multiple locations, 24/7. By partnering with the faculty, the library helps build information literacy skills which support the critical thinking and written communication ISLOs adopted by the college. The library encourages intellectual curiosity and life-long learning by providing convenient and effective access to the resources we own and by partnering with other libraries to provide access to collections beyond our own.

## SECTION III: OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

### Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

3. Identify your Program (Area) Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) – how students should change, what they should be able to do with the knowledge, skills, abilities and ways of thinking they have developed as a result of participating in your program? As appropriate, consult professional standards as you develop your PSLOs.

The librarians are active participants in the effort to infuse information literacy into the curriculum, and support faculty who choose to include Information Literacy as part of their courses by offering instruction in locating, evaluating, and citing information tailored to the assignment given. Since English Composition 1 is unique in being the only course at Middlesex that requires a research paper, and is required of all students, it offers us one avenue to bringing a consistent and universal opportunity to assist in the instruction of these skills. During the academic year 2011-2012 we taught approximately 65% of the Comp. 1 classes, but during the fall of 2012 that number had dropped to under 60%. Ideally, we would like to see all the Comp. 1 classes, but we have found it challenging to bring that about given the fact that information literacy is only one of numerous possible choices within the Written Communication and Critical Thinking ISLOs and there is no requirement that library instruction be part of any MCC course.

Beyond English Composition classes, the library provides instruction to an ever growing number of courses across the college. As a result of this instruction, students should be able to:

- recognize when they have a need for information
- retrieve resources that meet their information needs
- select the best resources from those found by evaluating them for authoritativeness and currency
- cite their sources correctly

The library seeks to develop a multilevel, curriculum-integrated information literacy program which would ensure that every student has the opportunity to practice these skills at several points during their coursework.

In the past few years the library has attempted assessment of our information literacy in three ways:

1. Faculty satisfaction surveys
2. Student response cards
3. Pre and Post-tests with English Composition classes

While each of these provided us with some information, the assessment we spent the most time on was the pre and post-test. We chose to begin this assessment of our effectiveness in the Comp. 1 classes, and after some exploration, determined that there was not an adequate instrument available that fit our needs for use with the classroom response system. As a result,

the test we used was a modified (with permission) version of one used by California community colleges that was administered one of two ways, either using a classroom response system or paper and pencil. To begin this process, our librarians selected a set of questions from that instrument and adapted them to reflect the competencies included in our information literacy rubric (see appendix).

During the course of the fall, 2011 semester, all Comp. 1 classes were assessed by using either the student response system (clickers), or paper and pencil pre and post-tests. Unfortunately, the results of this assessment were inconclusive and did not yield meaningful findings that could be attributable to more than chance. This was our first unified effort to assess student learning in the Comp.1 classes and its failure to provide us with the information we sought led us to propose that we work with faculty to develop a more effective means of assessing student learning in the Comp. 1 classes which we are about to begin.

We chose to focus the assessment of our effectiveness in the English Composition course. Over the past two semesters, librarians taught 96 of these classes, most of which were “one shot” library instruction sessions. Student feedback through response cards revealed that although the majority was satisfied with their instruction, there wasn’t enough time to cover all the material, and still provide an opportunity for them to begin their research. On the basis of that feedback and librarians’ observations, we plan to develop a pilot program that replaces the current “one shot” instruction sessions with an active learning model that will include a flipped classroom initiative providing online content that students will complete prior to the class session, thereby allowing the face to face time to be used to build on those concepts and enable students to practice these skills through guided learning activities.

**4. Identify your Program Outcomes as appropriate. Program Outcomes are goals for your program’s effectiveness. (Note: if your Program Outcomes result in changes in or impact on students, please rephrase them as PSLOs.)**

In order to promote student success and improve access the MCC library supports the college community by providing the following in quality and quantity adequate to meet the needs of our students:

- access to authoritative information resources sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, format, and currency to support student learning;
- operating hours which optimize use by our students;
- access to computers, printers and other technology necessary to complete assignments and access information;
- library personnel who are sufficient in number to meet the diverse needs of students and faculty, to function effectively in an environment of continuous change, and to ensure excellence;
- types of space and seating conducive to individual, group, and quiet study, and to meet the needs of class instruction and research.

5. Provide your program’s timeline for ongoing, annual assessment of its PSLOs and Program Outcomes (as appropriate).

2012-2013	Survey students on program outcomes listed above.
2014-2015	Implement an assessment of information literacy at MCC.

6. If applicable, discuss any changes you have made to your PSLOs and/or Program Outcomes since your last program review.

N/A

### MCC ISLOs

<p><b>Written and Oral Communication</b>  <i>For example...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written assignments</li> <li>• Oral presentations</li> <li>• Use of relevant information literacy skills</li> <li>• Effective use of technology</li> </ul>	<p><b>Critical Thinking</b>  <i>For example...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis</li> <li>• Synthesis</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Creative thinking</li> <li>• Development of logical conclusions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Quantitative Literacy</b>  <i>For example...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretation</li> <li>• Representation</li> <li>• Calculation</li> <li>• Application/Analysis</li> <li>• Communication of quantitative information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Multicultural and Global Literacy</b>  <i>For example...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intercultural knowledge</li> <li>• Global issues</li> <li>• Interactions that build diversity awareness</li> <li>• Diverse forms of creative expression</li> <li>• Aesthetic Appreciation</li> <li>• Historical, political, and economic perspective</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Responsibility</b>  <i>For example...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Civic engagement</li> <li>• Social justice</li> <li>• Ethical frameworks</li> <li>• Social policy frameworks</li> </ul>	<p><b>Personal and Professional Development</b>  <i>For example...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of academic goals</li> <li>• Career Readiness</li> <li>• Self Assessment</li> <li>• Responsibility for learning and personal development</li> <li>• Professionalism</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Wellness</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul>

## Assessment

- 7. Identify a question that your faculty/staff have or would like to investigate this year related to student learning and success as an impact of your program and/or program effectiveness.**

How well are we achieving our program outcomes as stated above with regard to providing library resources and services to students?

- 8. If your question relates to student learning and success, which of your program-level student learning outcomes (PSLOs) is this question associated with? If your question relates to program effectiveness, which one of your program outcomes is it associated with?**

- 9. Formulate a plan to investigate your question:**

What in particular would you like to know with regard to student achievement of this PSLO or effective program achievement of this Program Outcome? How can you get that information? Are any of the CCSSE data relevant to your assessment? If so, explain the data and how, as student perception data, they contribute to your understanding of student achievement. **(Note: The Institutional Research Office can provide relevant data for your use. Your committee is encouraged to develop questions that you expect to be able to answer with institutional data, as well as to develop and conduct alternative assessments.)**

1. The library developed a survey for students to respond to the outcomes listed above with questions addressing each of those outcomes. (See appendix.)
2. In addition we developed a survey for the library directors of the 14 other Massachusetts community colleges covering these areas. (See appendix.)
3. We developed student response cards to solicit student feedback from those attending library instruction as part of their Comp. 1 English class. (See appendix.)
4. The library developed a faculty survey on the effectiveness of our key services and resources. (See appendix.)

**Consider the following questions – to the degree to which they are relevant – in developing your plan:**

- How can you know? What would be the evidence that would help you to answer your question?
- Where can you get that evidence? Use your program's curriculum map as appropriate to determine courses from which evidence of student learning at different levels can be obtained.
- What is the range of evidence you want to examine - how many semesters back?
- In addition to looking at students' demonstrations of learning and/or student success data, is there a way to capture students' perceptions related to your question?
- How can you maximize your faculty/staff involvement in this project?

**10. Describe your process (use the following prompts as helpful):**

- What did you do?
- Which courses/activities contributed evidence of student learning and achievement?
- What was the evidence you looked at?
- Did you need additional information/data in order to answer your question?
- How did you select a cohort to study?
- What criteria did you use to assess student learning and achievement and/or program effectiveness?
- What is the professional CAS standard informing this outcome?
- Do you need to establish a benchmark in order to evaluate improvement in the future?

1. The library staff developed an online survey for students, which was approved by the Vice President for Institutional Research. The survey was administered through the library webpage during the fall 2012 semester. A notice was sent to the student newscaster which went to all student email accounts informing them of the survey and offering an incentive of an iPod touch to be given away on each campus. A total of 507 students responded with 51% of responses from students on the Lowell Campus and 49% in Bedford.
2. We developed a survey for other community college libraries in Massachusetts to determine how we compare to them in key areas under discussion. This was administered in the fall of 2012 and we received responses from all but one community college library director.
3. We developed student response cards which were administered in fall 2012 to all students attending Comp. 1 library instruction sessions. We have received a total of 327 cards completed during the fall semester.
4. We developed a faculty survey of those offering library instruction in support of a research assignment in the spring of 2011.

## 11. What Did You Learn?

What did your program learn about student achievement of this PSLO or program achievement of this Program Outcome?

We were able to learn a great deal from our student survey which could help direct our work in the library in the coming years.

### Library Hours

Eighty-five percent of respondents were either "very" or "completely" satisfied with the hours the library is open.

When asked which weekday hours would be best:

- 69% preferred the current hours, 7:30 am to 9:00 pm
- 17% responded that the library should be open earlier in the morning, at 7:00 am
- 13% responded that the library should be open later in the evening, until 9:30 pm

Of the number stating they planned to use the library on the weekend 69% preferred hours on Saturday over Sunday with the breakdown as follows:

- 30% said the current hours were best, Saturdays from 11 am to 4 pm
- 20% preferred Saturdays from 9 am to 2 pm
- 19% preferred Saturdays from 1 pm to 6 pm

Sunday hours were preferred over Saturday hours by 30% of respondents who wanted to use the library on the weekend or 24% overall.

***While the majority of students preferred the existing hours, the numbers requesting early morning hours or different hours on Saturday were high enough to warrant further investigation.***

### Collections

The textbooks that the library has on reserve for our students are very important to their success. Sixty percent said they depended on the library at least "sometimes" to provide these, with 34% saying they "Always" or "Often" depend on the library to provide their textbooks. Only 40% of respondents said they never depend on the library for the textbooks used in their classes.

Of those students who said they need the following resources for their coursework,

- 58% said the library provides the books they need to succeed.
- 66% said the library provides the magazines they need to succeed
- 87% said the library provides the online databases they need to succeed.

Although most students stated they did not need DVDs, Music CDs, or streaming video to succeed in their courses, of those that did, 58% said they library provides those needed for them to succeed.

Although nineteen percent of respondents said they never use the library to find books, that may be because research assignments typically require students to find journal articles. Of those remaining, only 38% said they either are willing to use ebooks or prefer them over print. Twenty-four percent of students responding said they don't like ebooks and avoid using them, preferring a print book and thirty-eight percent of respondents said they have never read an ebook, supporting our observations that most students avoid using ebooks and will reject them as an option preferring to wait for print book.

For those students who have read an ebook, 75% have read one on a library or home computer, a variety of handheld devices are in use by our students and some have begun using these to read ebooks.

When asked to name one thing our library does not own that they would like to borrow, of those responding, most wanted more textbooks or a mobile device.

Their responses were as follows:

1. More textbooks – 9
2. iPads – 8
3. Laptops – 4
4. More books – 4
5. Rosetta Stone language-learning software – 2
6. More course-related software on library computers – 2
7. Color printer – 1
8. Camera – 1
9. Video Camera – 1
10. Music – 1
11. Calculators – 1

***Expanding the availability of textbooks on reserve remains vitally important to our students.***

## **Space**

While many students commented favorably about the overall appearance of the libraries and furnishings, there were areas which needed improvement. When asked about space in the library, 56% of students say they are always able to find a place to sit and work on assignments, but only 47% say they are always able to find a place for quiet study and reading. Thirty percent say they are always able to find a space to work with other students.

The following is the percent of students answering “Never” to whether they are able to find space for these activities:

- Place to work on assignments – 1%
- Place for quiet study – 4.3%
- Place for group study – 5.5%

Thirteen percent of students say that the library needs improvement in providing a quiet space for students to study without distractions.

Nine percent say the library needs improvement in providing space for students to work together in groups.

***While these are not large numbers, there is still a recognized need for these types of spaces within the library.***

### **Computers and other Technology**

Seventy-four percent of respondents say the computers are “very important” or “essential” to their success as a student. Only 3% say they never use them.

When asked how long they usually have to wait to use the library’s computers, 72% of students report no wait, or only a few minutes wait, 22% report they usually have a long wait.

When asked whether they have problems printing from the library’s computers, 15% of students report they have trouble printing half the time or more.

Ten percent of students say the library needs improvement in providing the technology they need to complete assignments.

One of the biggest complaints from students has been the lengthy wait, sometimes over five minutes, once they have entered their username and password for the computers to complete the log-in process.

***The results of this survey show that when compared with all other aspects of library services, students express the most need and least satisfaction in the availability and effectiveness of the computing and printing services in the library, the areas that we have the least ability to impact directly.***

### **Library Staff**

While the majority of students find the staff to be knowledgeable, courteous, and willing to help, there were those who did not find them to be so. The percent of students who felt the library staff did not demonstrate those qualities are as follows:

- Knowledgeable – 17%
- Courteous – 18%
- Willing to help – 17%

On the other hand, those receiving help in completing an assignment were strongly positive. Of those students who had asked a librarian for help in completing an assignment, the following percent reported the librarian was “very helpful”:

- Finding a book – 84%
- Using the Computers – 76%
- Selecting an online resource – 83%
- Finding an article – 80%
- Citing sources with Noodlebib – 79%
- Printing – 82%
- Scanning – 73%

Sixty-five percent of students reported that they had received class instruction from a librarian and 94% of that group said that the instruction increased their understanding of how to find and cite information successfully.

Eighty-six percent of students report that they have gotten adequate help in solving computing and printing problems in the library.

***While the survey shows that students have a high level of satisfaction with the help they receive in the library, the numbers who express dissatisfaction are high enough to warrant further investigation and training.***

### **Top Ten Most Requested Improvements**

When asked to choose the most important 5 changes from 14 choices that students would like us to implement to improve our library, many of the top choices were related to technology and are listed below in order of the number of votes:

1. More Computers – 289
2. Wireless Printing from Laptops – 274
3. Color Printers – 242
4. More quiet Study Space – 193
5. Laptops to Borrow – 129
6. More Group Study Space – 101
7. Open Later – 94
8. Color Copiers – 87
9. More Books – 83
10. Open Earlier – 81

When forced to choose the single most important improvement they would like to see in our library, students chose as follows:

1. More Computers – 145
2. Wireless printing from laptops – 81
3. More quiet study space – 53
4. Color Printers – 48
5. Laptops to borrow – 28
6. Open later – 27
7. More books – 16
8. Open earlier – 15
9. More databases – 14
10. More group study space – 13

*Once again the technology needs were reportedly the most urgent, followed by requests for quiet and group study space, change in hours, and more books (textbooks).*

When we examined the student responses by campus most of the differences seen were very slight with the biggest difference being in the number of students requesting more computers. For students using the Lowell library, 69% listed “more computers” as one of the top 10 changes needed in our library. For students using the Bedford library, that number was 57%. The renovation of the Bedford library in 2011 increased the number of student computers there to 58, whereas there are only 44 student computers in the Lowell library. Please note that these numbers do not include the number of student computers in the library classrooms which are often used as open computing when not scheduled for classes. There are 12 in the Alcott Room in Bedford and 16 in the Kerouac Room in Lowell, bringing the total of all student computers to 60 in the Lowell library and 70 in Bedford.

## **12. How Can You Use What You Learned?**

What changes are planned within the program as a result of this assessment work (if any)? Please consult current research/best practice in the field to inform these changes, and note that information here. (These changes should be noted as part of your action plan in **SECTION V**, the Summary section of this document.)

Most of what we have learned through this process will require additional funds to remedy. We will be challenged to develop solutions to these problems within the confines of current library funding and staffing. Also, it is important to note that many of the changes most frequently requested by students are related to computers and printers. With the libraries providing the only open computing on campus, it is not surprising that students feel those are their highest priorities, however, the question remains as to whether that area should become the library’s primary focus, or whether supplementary space might become available on campus to help support this need.

**Hours:**

While most students are satisfied with the current library hours, if funding permits, it may be worthwhile to consider extending hours as a trial during certain times of the semester, possibly around midterms and final exams.

Since the early morning library users tend to only need computer and printing services, another solution that might be less costly in terms of staffing would be to open another location on campus with computers and printers, which would be available to students when the library is not open. This might also serve the students who are interested in longer hours on weekends.

Another possibility is for student workers to keep the library open at hours when most students just need computer access and a way to check out materials. That is a common practice across academic libraries and saves money by limiting the professional staff to hours when they are most needed.

**Technology:**

Many of the requested improvements to the library are in the technology area and while important, they raise the question of whether these needs for student technology should fall within the scope of the library to fill. The urgency of students who are completing work on the computers and printing assignments in the library combined with the service focus of the librarians has resulted in a situation where our staff feel compelled to put computing needs first, ahead of research assistance, circulation, and all others, to the detriment of other initiatives of the library and the library's mission, but with the recognition that these needs are important to student success and are not being met elsewhere on campus.

Students continue to request more computers and the library has requested laptops to lend to students, but up to this point in time, that plan has not been approved. While it might be beneficial to students, this solution would have the unintended consequence of increasing work for library staff who would be required to have a more involved system to check these in and out, assist students in their use, and maintain them in a secure area.

While the library will continue to advocate for additional desktop computers for students, especially in Lowell where there are fewer than in Bedford, the challenge will be to find adequate space and furniture to accommodate them. With limited study space now available and heavily used, it would be counter-productive to remove study tables in favor of computer stations but in Lowell there is existing space that could be used if appropriate furniture was acquired. We will need to explore how to best use that space to strike a balance between computer availability and study space.

Another solution would be to establish a computer lab, kiosks, or some configuration of computers for student outside the libraries on both campuses to complement the resources offered there. This space might be open longer hours than the library and not need as many staff to manage.

Over time, as more students have their own mobile devices which they carry with them, it is likely that the number of desktop computers needed in the library will decline. As that happens,

it will free up space in the libraries that is in such demand for collaborative work and quiet study space. Until then, the challenge is how to balance these needs to best promote student success.

### **Space:**

The student need for quiet study and group study space is urgent and ongoing. In Bedford, the library has lost two rooms to classrooms, one room to the TLRC, and one to the writing lab which are all essential to the college. As a result, unless one of these areas can be relocated, there is no available enclosed space within the Bedford library that could be used for quiet or group study without building walls within the existing space.

The need is not as great in Lowell because of the 3 small study rooms on the mezzanine, but as in Bedford, the library can be very noisy and it is a challenge for students who are looking for a place to work without distraction.

### **Staffing:**

The fact that most of our students do not see a need for increased staff and express satisfaction with the level of computing and printing support in the library is a testament to the hard work of the existing staff and the realization that students needing help in the library with any question, especially those most frequently heard on computing and printing issues, have become our priority.

While most students found the library staff to be knowledgeable, courteous and helpful, there were some who did not. It may be beneficial to offer the library staff professional development in the area of customer service and support to help improve in this area which is so important to us.

It is essential that we develop and implement a library staffing plan that allows us to excel in our roles in instruction and student support for library research and which adequately addresses the need for computer support in the libraries or elsewhere on campus.

## **SECTION IV: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION WITH A LOOK TOWARDS BEST PRACTICE**

**13. LOCAL:** Based on a review of other college catalogs, list the colleges in our general area that have similar programs and comment on significant differences from the ones we currently offer that bear further exploration. If appropriate, discuss steps that MCC could take towards implementing these best practices in this program. Also if appropriate, include steps in action plan of Section VII, Summary.

As a result of our survey of the community college libraries in Massachusetts, we were able to discover some interesting differences which are worth our consideration.

### **Hours:**

None of the other libraries surveyed are open before 7:30 am. However, it is important to note that with some classes running at 7:30 am at Middlesex, it may make sense to offer some kind of access to library resources or at least to computers and printers in the early morning for students who need to prepare for classes starting then. Library staff members opening the library at 7:30 have observed that there are often several students already waiting at that time for the library to open.

Only 2 community college libraries are open past 9:00 pm on the week nights. Although in our case, students express the desire for the library to be open later than 9:00 pm, the evening staff observes that most students using the library in the evenings leave at 6:00 pm when the evening classes begin. Those who do remain usually leave before 9:00 pm. Very few students are actually in the library at closing time.

As for the weekends, six Massachusetts community colleges are open more hours than we are on Saturday and three are open on Sunday as well. Overall, Saturday use of the MCC libraries is quite light and it is unclear whether changing the hours would have the desired effect of increasing usage. Most students still express satisfaction with the current hours.

### **Staffing:**

The survey of all community colleges in the state revealed that Middlesex is at the average with 4 full time professionals working in our library. In spite of our size and the challenges of dual campus libraries, there are five community colleges in Massachusetts with more full time professionals.

We presently employ 3 full time support staff which is average for MA community colleges.

There are four community colleges with a higher number. It is important to acknowledge that the library has had increases in its budget allocation for part-time staff in the library over the past several years that have allowed us to expand our hours and also reinstate hours on Saturday. This additional funding does make a difference and helps to keep the libraries on both campuses open 68 hours per week. However, even when the hours of several part-time librarians are combined to form the "Full Time Equivalent", the reality is that we cannot expect that there will be the same level of commitment to or depth of understanding of our institution, our students and our library resources.

The same survey revealed that Middlesex is the only community college in the state without a separately staffed open computer lab on campus, relying exclusively on the library to provide these services to students except for those areas with labs reserved for students in particular programs such as CAD or Graphic Design. The average number of open labs outside the library in community colleges across the state is two, but all others have at least one.

## Technology:

With regard to the technology our students have requested:

- Five of the fifteen community college libraries in the state circulate laptops to their students, with the average number circulated being 8.
- Three libraries also offer wireless printing from student-owned laptops.
- Not surprisingly, since the open lab is within the library, Middlesex has the most student computers in our libraries of any Massachusetts community college with an average of 58 per library. The average number within the other CC libraries is 26.

## Space:

Of the fifteen community colleges in Massachusetts:

- Ten have dedicated group study rooms;
- Seven have quiet study rooms for student use;
- Twelve have library classrooms that are used exclusively for library instruction and research.

**14. NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE:** Based upon research on institutions beyond our geographical area that have exemplary programs or are known for their ‘best practices,’ discuss significant similarities or differences at MCC and identify areas that bear further exploration. If appropriate, discuss steps that MCC could take towards implementing these best practices in this program. Also if appropriate, include steps in action plan of Section VII, Summary.

Beyond professional reading and conferences, our participation in regional groups including NOBLE, MCCLPHEI, and ACRL- New England have enabled us to follow educational, technological and publishing trends that drive innovation and see how other libraries in our region and nationally respond to those trends.

1. *Libraries are providing more online content and moving away from ownership and toward a system of providing instantaneous access without the limits of time or location.*

We will continue to build collections of print and digital materials that are best able to support the needs of our students with the expectation that we will move toward having more of the collection available digitally in a model of access rather than ownership – just in time and purchase on demand, and take advantage of all opportunities to partner with other libraries to extend instantaneous access to materials across the region and the globe.

- 2. Information literacy is widely recognized as critical to the educational experience of undergraduate students and has become a required component of general education courses on many campuses. Teaching has become central to the work of academic librarians who are developing partnerships with faculty to ensure that they have a more central role in that instruction.*

As the importance of information literacy continues to grow, we must expand our support of this teaching in collaboration with faculty. It is essential that we reach greater numbers of students to ensure that all students leave Middlesex with a basic understanding of how to access information effectively. We will need to encourage faculty in courses that include the written communication and critical thinking ISLOs to include assignments that allow students to practice information literacy skills, and promote their inclusion in courses throughout the curriculum.

- 3. Libraries are transitioning to providing more space within existing facilities for users while floor space needed for collections continues to decline. Space for quiet study, collaborative learning and group instruction is accepted as being essential to student success.*

We must continue to advocate strongly for quiet and group study space in the library and manage the collections so that over time, we are able to free up more space for users. We should explore alternatives to the current configuration of space which will better support the academic needs of students. Since collaboration is one of our core student success skills, it is essential that we provide space to facilitate that kind of work and locating it within the library would have the added benefit of providing access to all the services and resources we offer.

- 4. In response to ongoing changes in the information environment, libraries are supporting wider use of technology in accessing and using information and it is generally the role of community college libraries to providing the technological tools students need and to meet them where they are, to introduce new ways of accessing information and to complete assignments.*

It is essential that we expand access to student computers, and explore ways to provide needed color printing and scanning services while also introducing our students to relevant handheld devices that can support success in reading and study. We should continue to explore new means of using social media and providing mobile version of our website as research moves in this direction.

5. *Libraries today are focused on the importance of establishing partnerships with faculty that can drive student use of the library and lead to greater infusion of information literacy across the curriculum.*

We must increase outreach to faculty by developing effective communication tools designed to promote our message and offer ways for them to become more central to the work of the library. We should look for opportunities to communicate with all users in a way that is creative and engaging and demonstrates the connection between the library and student success, with a goal of reaching every student sometime during their course of study at Middlesex.

6. *Libraries have become increasingly aware of the importance of planning and assessment and the need to provide evidence of a true connection between the services offered and student success.*

Through our pilot project for the English Composition classes we will develop the means to assess student learning in those classes, and expand our assessment of the other areas of the library with a goal of continuous improvement.

**15. INNOVATION AND SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES:** Describe any innovative practices of your program that may not be described above, and how you are assessing effectiveness/impact. This could include making the learning explicit for students in your activities, providing opportunities for students to reflect on their learning as part of activities, partnering with faculty to integrate student learning experiences that connect in-class and out-of-class learning, etc. Include in your description, as appropriate, limitations to these practices and how those limitations might be minimized or improved.

N/A

**16. EQUITY:** Do all students in your program, regardless of campus, day/evening, and/or modality of instruction, have equal access to your services and learning/engagement activities and opportunities? If not, discuss how you can increase equity opportunities. (Include in your action plan as appropriate.)

The library provides equal access to staffing, collections and services on both campuses. There is a need to increase the number of student computers in Lowell by 10 to match the number available in Bedford.

**17. ABILITY TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM GOALS:** Discuss the program's ability to achieve its goals for student learning and program effectiveness with regard to staffing, facilities, equipment, etc. Be specific about deficiencies and/or needs and their impact on student learning. (Include in your action plan as appropriate.)

**Staffing** – Our ability to respond to the ongoing changes to library services and the demands of implementing the new teaching and assessment initiatives we are planning is seriously limited by our current staffing level with regard to the number of full time staff and the resulting workload issues brought about by the high turnover rate for the part time staff.

**Facilities** – We are challenged in our goal of providing quiet and group study space in the Bedford library by the competing needs for other types of space in that facility. It will require a strong commitment on the part of the college to enable us to reach this goal.

**Technology** – Funding priorities may prevent us from reaching these goals. Budget requests to purchase laptops for circulation in the library have been denied for several years. The current college policy of lifecycle replacement prevents one-time purchases of mobile devices that would support the library’s goal of introducing innovative technologies to our students.

**18. EXTERNAL CONSULTANT** (if applicable): After you have completed the self study and received feedback from an external consultant, please summarize that feedback, in terms of program strengths, areas needing improvement, and useful recommendations. Include a copy of the external consultant’s report in the Appendices for this program review, and incorporate relevant information into the Summary section on the next page.

The external consultant’s findings reflected much of what has been written here and are summarized as follows:

**STRENGTHS:**

- Attractive, busy, full-service libraries at each location
- Enthusiastic, committed library staff and administration
- Abundant computer resources at both campus locations
- Participation in the Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries in Student Success (AiA) grant from the American Library Association/Association of College and Research Libraries (ALA/ACRL)

**CONCERNS:**

- Assessment efforts do not include extensive measure of student learning
- Too few full-time library staff; high turnover for clerical positions
- Closing of computer labs across campus has resulted in a significant impact on the ability of librarians to provide adequate information literacy programming
- Physical space issues include overcrowding, noise, and lack of group study space

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Create a Learning Commons by adding IT staff to the existing Library/Computer lab space to assist students with their technology needs
- Focus professional librarians on supporting an integrated Information Literacy plan
- Identify spaces within the library for collaborative student use/quiet study
- Reach a mutually-agreed upon solution that benefits students' needs

The complete report of the external consultant is included in the appendix.

## SECTION V: PROGRAM EVALUATION SUMMARY AND ACTION PLAN

### A. Program Strengths

(Bulleted List with reference to the question(s) numbers in the program review where this strength is explained.)

- Collections in all formats that are current, authoritative, and appropriate to our curriculum
- Well qualified, helpful, and innovative staff
- Welcoming, attractive, and centrally located facilities
- Strong library partnerships that extend our services and collections
- A robust and interactive web presence that guides users to our resources and services
- An institutional emphasis on information literacy as evidenced by its inclusion in MCC's critical thinking and writing ISLOs

### B. Program Action Plan for Improvements, Budgetary Implications, Timelines

Program Review is both evaluative and forward-thinking, offering the opportunity to set future directions for the program.

# Middlesex Community College Library Strategic Plan 2013-18

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### **Introduction**

Our library begins its planning for the next five years in a time of dramatic change for libraries and the institutions they serve. The planning process lasted many months and involved a diverse group of stakeholders across our institution including students, faculty, library staff and other community members.

The goals and action items contained in this plan are a direct outcome of the work done for our program review and reflect our commitment to responding to the needs identified through that process. It will guide our work and help us to ensure that we maintain a library that is strong, vibrant and innovative, offering all those services essential to achieving the college mission.

## **Goal 1: Instruction**

We will partner with faculty to offer instruction that enables students to become skilled in the use of information resources supporting the outcomes of our ISLOs, integrate this instruction throughout all levels of coursework across the curriculum, and ensure its effectiveness through ongoing assessment.

### **Action items:**

- Together with the Library Instruction Team, plan and implement a program for the English Comp. 1 classes that supports the college ISLOs, provides online resources to allow a flipped classroom model of instruction and includes an assessment of student learning.
- Create the necessary online instructional tools including point-of-need video tutorials and research guides which will be used for the flipped classroom trial and to support all courses that do not participate in face to face library instruction. Adapt existing online tutorials for use with our students and make them available on our website to extend the reach of information literacy instruction beyond the classroom.
- Increase the number of face to face Comp. 1 classes participating in some form of library instruction to 75% in the first year, 80% in the second year and 85% in the third year.
- Experiment with offering faculty alternatives to the typical “one shot” library instruction session which would increase the time spent in active learning. One possible example of this innovation might be for a faculty member to ask students to attend a library workshop outside of class time to prepare them for the research tasks they will be engaged in during their subsequent library instruction.
- Partner with those faculty using either face to face library instruction or our online tutorials to develop effective and streamlined assessments of student learning and then use them for improvement.
- Develop activities and materials for use in those FYE courses that currently include library instruction without a corresponding assignment. This may include the development of active learning initiatives to create a more meaningful learning experience for those students by placing the library work in an academic context.
- Identify and reach out to faculty teaching general education courses supporting the written communication and critical thinking ISLOs to increase the likelihood that information literacy instruction is included.

## **Goal 2: Services**

We will find effective and innovative ways to optimize the successful use of evolving information resources and support all members of the Middlesex community by promoting the library as a center of teaching, learning and research.

### **Action Items:**

- Develop Pinterest boards in support of the college ISLOs that include resources in all formats and make them available to faculty teaching the general education courses.
- Explore collaboration with the Writing Center to more fully integrate their services with ours by offering regularly scheduled drop-in homework sessions which would include both a writing tutor and a librarian to assist students with all aspects of their writing assignments.
- Discontinue the practice of charging library fines to students with overdue library materials with the exception of reserve items including textbooks. Limit charges to the replacement cost of lost materials.
- Partner with other offices on campus to provide additional support for nontraditional students through library workshops offered early in the semester to welcome them and increase their confidence in using our resources.
- Explore the possibility of offering mobile reference services where librarians go to other floors within the library or to other buildings to assist students, bringing along the mobile technology necessary to demonstrate essential information literacy skills.
- Investigate implementation of an iRoam system of providing reference assistance which allows students to place a request for assistance and receive help from a librarian any place in the library.
- Include chat reference on the library's Facebook page. Develop a process for staff to monitor this along with the current chat reference and SMS the library offers.
- Offer workshops to faculty in collaboration with Professional Development to increase their knowledge about available resources in support of their discipline, to assist them with creating effective assignments, and encourage greater infusion of information literacy instruction throughout the curriculum.
- Partner with IT to develop a pilot project which brings IT staff to provide technology assistance at service points within the libraries.

### **Goal 3: Staffing**

We will seek to provide a level of library staffing that permits the librarians to attend meetings, develop new initiatives, collaborate with faculty, and participate more fully in campus-wide programs including professional development activities while providing adequate library coverage.

#### **Action Items:**

- Develop a realistic staffing plan for the library which reflects the evolving scope of our responsibilities, the changing needs of our students, and increasing demands of the college which is based on a comparison of peer libraries and includes a systematic replacement of the lost full time positions with new ones in light of the ongoing expansion of our roles as educational partners.
- Work with HR to establish and implement new pay rates for part time library support staff that more specifically reflect their level of expertise and responsibility and that align more closely with those paid by other area libraries. Explore the possibilities of hiring year-round part time support staff to ensure consistent staffing.
- Offer appropriate opportunities for professional development to all library staff that allow them to excel in their jobs and are relevant to their positions in the library. Identify and provide training to staff members based on changes in library systems and a review of workflows within the library.
- Provide an annual retreat for all library staff members, giving them the opportunity to share ideas, discuss the unique nature of their work, provide feedback about ongoing initiatives, and help set the course of our library for the future.

#### **Goal 4: Facilities**

We will create and maintain a physical space that is comfortable, safe and accessible, that is open the hours needed to optimize use, and that fosters student learning through individual study, one to one consultation, and group collaboration.

##### **Action Items:**

- Bedford - Explore options for creating quiet and group study space within the Bedford library. Prepare a report detailing those options along with costs for the consideration of college decision makers.
- Lowell – Examine ways to maximize space for student computers and study through the use of customized furniture on all three levels of the library. Provide display furniture for the Lowell library main level that is equivalent to that used in Bedford.
- Develop a plan to test the efficacy of having the library open additional hours. Secure funding to implement a pilot program for the fall 2013 semester to open the libraries at 7:00 am using student employees and to be open additional hours during the two weeks before finals. Base future decisions about hours on usage numbers during these trials.
- Investigate ways to transition more of our floor space to users by continuing the weeding of the reference collections in both libraries. Develop a plan for the reallocation of space as the need for reference materials diminishes and more stacks can be removed that is based on proposed new initiatives and needs for additional user space.
- Provide a more uniform and consistent look with signage that allows flexibility for changes while matching the look of the existing signs in each library.
- Explore the possibility of creating a micro-café within each library and new outdoor study areas adjacent to the libraries.

## **Goal 5: Collections**

We will provide access to the most current, relevant, authoritative resources available to support the curriculum and to expand and enrich the educational experience for our community of users.

### **Action Items:**

- Continue to build a collection that responds to the needs of our community and provides access to quality course-specific resources to students at the point of need by expanding the scope of online content in all formats.
- Expand immediate access to materials outside the scope of our current collections by implementing a system of on-demand purchasing of ebooks. Establish a collection of pre-selected items within our catalog that are available for purchase by the library at the time of student or faculty use.
- Develop a more strategic plan for the acquisition of textbooks for the library reserves. Work with faculty to keep these collections up to date and make them more comprehensive.
- Address the needs of new courses as they are developed by contacting the faculty members to ensure that our collection is aligned with their needs.
- Contact department chairs and program coordinators as resources continue to evolve to ensure that we continue to offer the best online resources available in support of each of their programs.
- Explore the idea of assigning some faculty members the role of selector for the library to increase their participation in collection development.
- Extend our purchasing power by participation in all appropriate opportunities to expand access to library materials offered by the state, or one of our consortia.
- Review and revise our collection development policy to ensure it reflects the changing needs of our library and the changing information environment.
- Explore the cost, workload, copyright and technical issues involved in digitizing and providing the metadata necessary to access our collection of college newspapers, yearbooks, and other materials now held in the library's supplemental archive collection.
- Participate as one of the "Pioneer Libraries" to help pilot the statewide Massachusetts eBook Project providing a broad selection of ebooks via a single discovery platform.

## **Goal 6: Technology**

We will affirm our commitment to the innovative use of technology to serve the information needs of our students and in offering students the opportunity to use new technology.

### **Action Items:**

- Provide one computer in the lower level of the Lowell library that is restricted to searching the library catalog so staff may assist students in finding materials without repeated trips upstairs to check the catalog when all student computers are in use.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Integrated Search tool now in use. Make changes in the number and type of resources included to improve its usefulness.
- Explore how best to assess the effectiveness of our current website from a usability standpoint. Make improvements based on user feedback.
- Work toward identifying the tools needed to develop and implement a more robust and intuitive web interface that will simplify access as it guides users to our online resources and services.
- Explore, implement, and promote mobile options for accessing library resources and services that are designed to work with our existing library software to provide a more seamless search experience to our users.
- Develop a plan to circulate iPads, eBook readers, and laptops to students.
- Increase the number of desktop computers in the Lowell library by 10 to provide an equal number to Bedford.
- Provide one additional student copier in each library to respond to the increased demand brought about as a result of the expansion of the textbooks available on reserve.
- Explore the benefits and cost of implementing a discovery search tool to replace our current integrated database search tool to offer a simpler interface and more seamless search experience.
- Partner with IT to ensure that evolving campus infrastructure and equipment are adequate to support the needs of students accessing our online content. Work with them to compare print management systems that might be appropriate for our college and are necessary to implementing the peripherals that students are requesting in the library.

## **Goal 7: Outreach**

We will provide innovative and engaging programs that foster a greater understanding of the library's role in student learning and greater use of the library and its resources, generating an increase in perceived value of the library and promoting further collaborations within our campus communities.

### **Action Items:**

- Host a faculty authors' event each year to highlight the work of faculty based on the successful "Speaking of Writing" event held in 2012.
- Provide a welcome event for new faculty that offers an introduction to library services and covers program-specific resources that the library offers.
- Email faculty through Deans to encourage information literacy infusion. Explain all the new active learning options available for including information literacy in their courses including the flipped class, short burst sessions, and pre-class workshops.
- Communicate with FYE faculty to promote relevant activities that enhance the educational experience of their students.
- Feature faculty reviews of books and movies on display in the library by focusing on two departments each semester. Include these reviews on the library website. Feature faculty with their favorite book on library "Read" posters.
- Continue to explore new ways of reaching students by meeting them where they are, using social media to inform them about our services.
- Explore offering popcorn to students in the library during national library week.
- Offer snacks to students in the library during the study week before finals.
- Hold an eBook expo every year to demonstrate what the library has to offer, and how they may be retrieved and downloaded to the student's mobile device.
- Hold a faculty brown bag lunch to introduce new products or databases.

## **Goal 8: Planning and Assessment**

We will continually assess and update library resources and services in response to technological advances and user expectations and improve our patrons' experience by collecting and responding to user feedback and statistics.

### **Action Items:**

- Develop and implement an assessment of student learning with the library instruction team as part of the English Composition initiative. Expand the use of that assessment to other courses where applicable.
- Review and revise the current library staff organizational structure to gain efficiencies and respond to changing academic needs and evolving technologies and services.
- Create and implement a plan for ongoing assessment of student needs and satisfaction based on the findings of the program review and the actions taken as a result.
- Complete a survey of faculty and staff to measure satisfaction and identify gaps in service expectations.

# Middlesex Community College Library Action Plan FY14

These action items come directly from the library's five-year strategic plan.

## **Instruction**

- Together with the Library Instruction Team, plan and implement a program for the English Comp. 1 classes that supports the college ISLOs, provides online resources to allow a flipped classroom model of instruction and includes an assessment of student learning.
- Create the necessary online instructional tools including point-of-need video tutorials and research guides which will be used for the flipped classroom trial and to support all courses that do not participate in face to face library instruction. Adapt existing online tutorials for use with our students and make them available on our website to extend the reach of information literacy instruction beyond the classroom.
- Increase the number of face to face Comp. 1 classes participating in some form of library instruction to 75%.

## **Services**

- Develop Pinterest boards in support of the college ISLOs that include resources in all formats and make them available to faculty teaching the general education courses.
- Discontinue the practice of charging library fines to students with overdue library materials with the exception of reserve items including textbooks. Limit charges to the replacement cost of lost materials.

## **Staffing**

- Develop a realistic staffing plan for the library which reflects the evolving scope of our responsibilities, the changing needs of our students, and increasing demands of the college which is based on a comparison of peer libraries and includes a systematic replacement of the lost full time positions with new ones in light of the ongoing expansion of our roles as educational partners.
- Offer appropriate opportunities for professional development to all library staff that allow them to excel in their jobs and are relevant to their positions in the

library. Identify and provide training to staff members based on changes in library systems and a review of workflows within the library.

## **Facilities**

- Bedford - Explore options for creating quiet and group study space within the Bedford library. Prepare a report detailing those options along with costs for the consideration of college decision makers.
- Provide a more uniform and consistent look with signage that allows flexibility for changes while matching the look of the existing signs in each library.
- Develop a plan to test the efficacy of having the library open additional hours. Secure funding to implement a pilot program for the fall 2013 semester to open the libraries at 7:00 am using student employees and to be open additional hours during the two weeks before finals. Base future decisions about hours on usage numbers during these trials.

## **Collections**

- Continue to build a collection that responds to the needs of our community and provides access to quality course-specific resources to students at the point of need by expanding the scope of online content in all formats.
- Expand immediate access to materials outside the scope of our current collections by implementing a system of on-demand purchasing of ebooks. Establish a collection of pre-selected items within our catalog that are available for purchase by the library at the time of student or faculty use.
- Develop a more strategic plan for the acquisition of textbooks for the library reserves. Work with faculty to keep these collections up to date and make them more comprehensive.
- Address the needs of new courses as they are developed by contacting the faculty members to ensure that our collection is aligned with their needs.

## **Technology**

- Provide one computer in the lower level of the Lowell library that is restricted to searching the library catalog so staff may assist students in finding materials without repeated trips upstairs to check the catalog when all student computers are in use.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Integrated Search tool now in use. Make changes in the number and type of resources included to improve its usefulness.
- Provide one additional student copier in each library to respond to the increased demand brought about as a result of the expansion of the textbooks available on reserve.
- Explore, implement, and promote mobile options for accessing library resources and services that are designed to work with our existing library software to provide a more seamless search experience to our users.

## **Outreach**

- Host a faculty authors' event each year to highlight the work of faculty based on the successful "Speaking of Writing" event held in 2012
- Feature faculty reviews of books and movies on display in the library by focusing on two departments each semester. Include these reviews on the library website. Feature faculty with their favorite book on library "Read" posters.
- Provide a welcome event for new faculty that offers an introduction to library services and covers program-specific resources that the library offers.
- Offer snacks to students in the library during the study week before finals.

## **Planning and Assessment**

- Develop and implement an assessment of student learning with the library instruction team as part of the English Composition initiative. Expand the use of that assessment to other courses where applicable.
- Complete a survey of faculty and staff to measure satisfaction and identify gaps in service expectations.

Appendices:

**NOBLE** - From the NOBLE website: <http://www.noblenet.org/about/>

Our mission statement is simple:

*NOBLE: the technology partner for libraries north of Boston*

The North Of Boston Library Exchange (NOBLE) is a cooperative effort of 28 area libraries founded to improve library service through automation. Seventeen public library members, ten academic libraries and one special library are members of NOBLE.

NOBLE was the first automated resource sharing network in Massachusetts and the first on the Internet. Since its founding almost thirty years ago, NOBLE has cost-effectively improved service to its libraries and their users through technology, in ways not possible at its inception.

Initially facilitating a shared database of library holdings, NOBLE was founded to improve library service by streamlining the identification and sharing of needed library resources among member libraries. In addition to managing and adding value to a shared library automation system, services have grown to include shared electronic resources — online periodical databases, downloadable audiobooks and e-books and a digital library. NOBLE also provides a gateway to other Internet resources and resources provided by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Massachusetts Library System.

NOBLE is governed by its member libraries who approve the annual budget, establish NOBLE policies and elect officers. An Executive Board, comprised of the four officers and five at-large library directors oversees NOBLE operations and our professional staff of librarians and technical staff. NOBLE is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit corporation recognized as a charitable organization by the Massachusetts Attorney General. We welcome donations to improve our downloadable ebook and audiobook services and other services.

The cooperative nature of NOBLE, coupled with significant grant funding provide technology and services that would be far out of reach for a single library. Working together through NOBLE, our libraries have been able to extend the reach of the library, becoming a 24-hour information source via the Internet.

NOBLE services have grown in recent years as our libraries' use of technology has grown to better meet the needs of member libraries and their users.

## **Gateway to Information**

Library users are no longer limited to the tens of thousands of works at their particular location. Instead, access is available to over three million items in NOBLE libraries. Likewise, all NOBLE library users enjoy access to an online periodical collection of over 4,000 titles in full text in general and specialized collections, many times larger than any single library's collection.

More recently, a growing collection of [downloadable audiobooks and ebooks](#) has been added bringing greater access to books on PCs, MP3 players, e-readers and other mobile devices.

Beyond NOBLE, access is provided to library catalogs and library resources across Massachusetts, and regional, national and international information sources through the World Wide Web. NOBLE provides a gateway to these other information sources.

### **EBSCO Periodicals Online**

NOBLE provides direct access to the EBSCO MasterFile Premier general periodicals database, and the Health Source Consumer Edition, Health Source Nursing/Academic Edition, Business Source Premier, Academic Source Elite and Newspaper Source databases for all members. The periodical databases now offer more than 4,000 periodical titles online in full text. The databases are updated daily, and are available at all member libraries and from homes, schools and businesses around the clock via the Internet with a valid borrower's card from a NOBLE library [here](#).

EBSCO access is funded by the libraries of NOBLE. Libraries can also license additional databases and services from the EBSCO catalog at a significant discount through NOBLE's group contract.

Over half a million full-text articles from EBSCO are viewed by NOBLE users annually.

### **Digital Resources**

NOBLE is helping our libraries digitize and make available their local history and institutional history legacy on the Web.

Thousands of long-hidden images have been digitized and are available through the [NOBLE Digital Heritage](#) website, linked through our catalog, and linked to the statewide Digital Commonwealth project.

Our collection of seasonal information and websites is available in our [Through the Year](#) pages. Seasonal booklists and sites of research and informational interest are collected for the ease of our users.

## **Web Catalog of Library Resources**

NOBLE's full-featured Web catalog is available in member libraries and on the Internet at <http://catalog.noblenet.org>.

Users can search and request library materials directly from home or at the library, and can renew their own books and check their accounts via the Web.

NOBLE's catalog combines the 3.1 million holdings of our public and academic libraries into one catalog. Our Web catalog also gives users the choice of searching one library, a subset of libraries or the entire database.

Keyword searching expands access to almost any word in the catalog record. Boolean searching, using a combination of search terms, is also available, as is limiting by format (videorecordings, books, etc.) and language.

## **Statewide Virtual Catalog**

Needed items not available in NOBLE can be directly requested through the [Virtual Catalog](#), which links systems like NOBLE throughout Massachusetts into one search and request interface.

## **Services to Member Libraries**

### **Library Management System**

NOBLE provides a shared, full-functioned integrated library management system to assist our member libraries in efficient operation. Circulation transaction tracking, hold and overdue management, cataloging with database maintenance and authority control, software to aid in acquisition of library materials and a system to automate the receipt of magazines, journals and other serials are all part of the integrated system.

Over 3.6 million items are loaned by NOBLE libraries annually.

### **Resource Sharing**

NOBLE was founded by member libraries to foster the sharing of books and other library collections among neighboring libraries through automation 30 years ago.

Currently over 800,000 items are shared among NOBLE libraries annually, through interlibrary transfers and walk-in loans to patrons of other NOBLE libraries. NOBLE's integrated systems facilitate the requesting and tracking of interlibrary loan materials.

### **Collection Management**

NOBLE libraries engage in a continuous program of collection assessment and cooperative collection development, to better meet the needs of the users of all our libraries. Given their mission, constituents and history, each library has particular strengths to contribute to the realm of NOBLE information.

## **Consulting and Training**

NOBLE offers a full-range of training and consulting opportunities to our libraries. Training takes place at NOBLE offices in a fully-equipped training facility or on-site. Training includes the use of our integrated system software (Millennium by Innovative Interfaces), our EBSCO databases, Internet resources and local technology.

We are always willing to meet with our member libraries to assist them in providing improved library service and taking greater advantage of the services we provide. Roundtable and other discussion opportunities allow librarians in NOBLE libraries to meet and share information about successful library operations and share expertise to improve library service.

## **Web Site Hosting, Editing and Design**

NOBLE hosts the websites of many of our member libraries and can provide website design and editing services as needed. We provide automatic linked booklists, monthly statistics and ongoing support to the web sites we host. We also provide a detailed web calendar program to all our libraries and mailing list software for e-mail newsletters.

## **PC Support**

NOBLE assists our libraries with PC support through discounted group purchases of PCs and software, PC consulting and with an optional onsite PC maintenance program.

## **Telecommunications and Networks**

NOBLE provides connectivity and Internet access to our public libraries and facilitates connectivity with our academic members. NOBLE manages our telecommunications network, which is monitored 24 hours a day.

## **Funding**

### **Operational**

Over 90% of NOBLE's operational funds are provided by our member libraries.

NOBLE also receives Federal E-rate educational subsidy on our telecommunications system costs for our public libraries and support from the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners, the state library agency, to subsidize library telecommunications and support cooperation and sharing of resources by member libraries.

### **Capital**

Capital funding for system upgrades are a joint undertaking of the member libraries of NOBLE and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the state library agency. The Board of Library Commissioners has provided start-up and continuing support through Federal Library Services and Technology Act and state funds. NOBLE libraries have contributed to a capital fund to provide for future technology upgrades as part of the annual assessment.

## **Looking Ahead**

NOBLE has provided a high level of service and technological expertise to our member libraries for almost 30 years. We will be improving access and efficiency while controlling costs through a new library management system and a new telecommunications network to be implemented over the next two years. Both projects are funded through a Federal Library Services and Technology Act grant administered by the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners and member libraries.

## **NOBLE Member Libraries**

### **Public Libraries:**

- Beverly Public Library
- Peabody Institute Library of Danvers
- Everett Public Libraries
- Sawyer Free Library, Gloucester
- Lynn Public Library
- Lynnfield Public Library
- Abbot Public Library, Marblehead
- Melrose Public Library
- Peabody Institute Library, Peabody
- Reading Public Library
- Revere Public Library
- Salem Public Library
- Saugus Public Library
- Stoneham Public Library
- Swampscott Public Library
- Beebe Memorial Library, Wakefield
- Winthrop Public Library and Museum

### **Special Library**

- Mass. Board of Library Commissioners Professional Library, Boston

### **Academic Libraries:**

- Bunker Hill Community College Library, Charlestown
- Endicott College, Halle Library, Beverly
- Gordon College, Jenks Library, Wenham
- Merrimack College, McQuade Library, North Andover
- Middlesex Community College, Learning Resources, Bedford and Lowell
- Montserrat College of Art, Scott Library, Beverly
- North Shore Community College Library, Danvers and Lynn
- Northern Essex Community College, Bentley Library, Haverhill and Lawrence

- Phillips Academy, Holmes Library, Andover
- Salem State University Library, Salem

## Massachusetts Community College Libraries Seating Capacities

MA Community College	FTE	Seating Capacity	Percentage	Notes
Cape Cod	2400*	345	14.4	102 seats for quiet study
Greenfield	1932	277	14.3	44 seats in 6 study rooms for quiet study
Berkshire	1557	182	11.7	Includes computer, ref/instruction, and group and quiet study seating
<i>ACRL Minimum Standard**</i>			10	
Massasoit/Canton	860	72	8.3	Excludes computer seating
Mount Wachusett	3000*	216	7.2	167 seats for quiet study and 49 seats for group study
North Shore	4759	324	6.8	84 seats for quiet study and 35 seats in classrooms combining Danvers and Lynn
Quinsigamond	5654	331	5.9	36 seats for quiet study, 46 computer seats
MassBay	3396	193	5.7	Combines Wellesley and Framingham
Holyoke	5000*	267	5.34	Includes computers and group study rooms
Northern Essex	4255	255	5.28	Includes group study, computer and soft seating
Roxbury	2600	123	4.7	48 quiet study seats, 75 group study
Bristol/Fall River	4400*	185	4.2	65 computer seats
Massasoit/Brockton	5069	96	1.9	Excludes computer seating

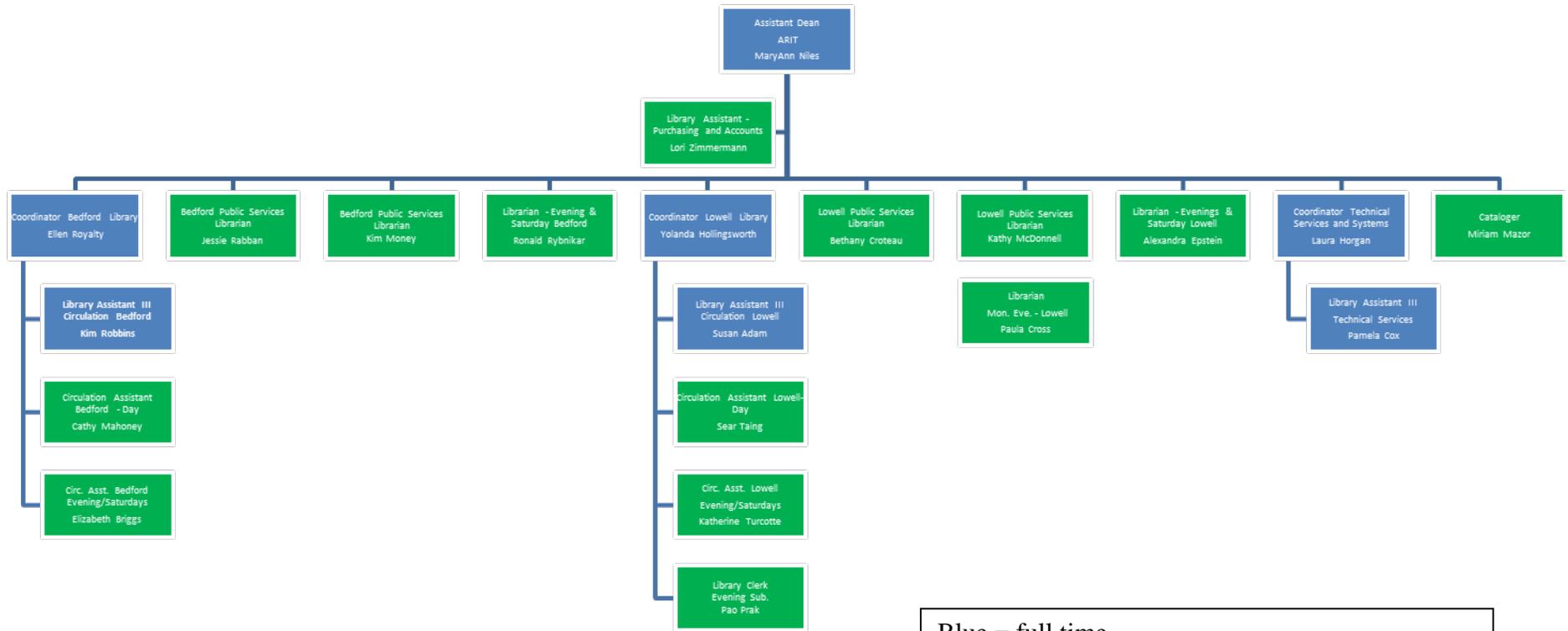
\*estimate

\*\*ACRL Standards for Community, Junior, and Technical College Learning Resource Programs. Standard 7.1

### Explanation

The above table looks at seating capacities of Massachusetts community college libraries and examines whether they meet the ACRL minimum standard of having available seating for 10% of their FTE. Two schools meet and exceed the standard. Data was self-reported by institutions who responded to an information request email posted on the MCCLPHEI list.

## Middlesex Community College Library Organizational Chart - 2013



Blue = full time  
Green = part time

## MCC Information Literacy Rubric

Ability	4	3	2	1
Recognizes a need for information	The student is able to articulate a question and identify the relevant, authoritative and academically valid sources needed to answer it.	The student is able to formulate a question. At least some of the sources chosen are relevant and authoritative.	The student is unable to formulate an adequate question.  -or-  The sources used to answer the question are not authoritative or academically valid.	The student is unable to phrase a question or select the sources needed to answer it.
Locates information	The student formulates and carries out an effective search strategy taking advantage of the search tools unique to the selected sources.  Understands the use of keywords, limiting and Boolean searching. Collects a great deal of information as it relates to the topic.	The student develops a search strategy which demonstrates a basic understanding of how to retrieve information from the sources selected.  Collects some basic information, most relates to the topic.	The student is not fully able to formulate an effective search strategy.  -or-  The student does not have the skills to locate all the information needed to answer the question.	The student is unable to construct or implement effectively designed search strategies appropriate to the discipline or question to be answered.  Does not collect any information as it relates to the topic.
Evaluates information	The student clearly articulates and applies evaluation criteria to both the information retrieved and the sources of that information for both scholarship and bias.	The student articulates and applies evaluation criteria to some of the information retrieved.	The student inaccurately articulates and/or applies evaluation criteria to some information and sources.	The student is unable to articulate or apply evaluation criteria to the information or sources.

<b>Cites sources</b>	The student demonstrates a clear understanding of the ethical use of information and the importance of acknowledging the work of others through accurately citing sources.	The student demonstrates some understanding of these issues by acknowledging most of the sources correctly.	The student demonstrates little understanding of these issues by failure to acknowledge most sources used.	The student does not demonstrate an understanding of the ethical use of information, fails to acknowledge the work of others or openly plagiarizes.
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## Pre-Test

1. When doing research what is the best source for reliable and free, full-text articles?
  - a. Wikipedia
  - b. Yahoo, Google etc.
  - c. Library book catalog
  - d. Library databases: Gale, EBSCO etc.
  - e. I don't know
  
2. Which terms would you use to search online for information for a paper on media violence?
  - a. Media
  - b. Violence
  - c. Media and Violence
  - d. Television and guns
  - e. How has TV covered violence in the media?
  - f. I don't know
  
3. Which of these would be a reliable source for your paper on children and media violence?
  - a. Article from the journal Early Childhood Research
  - b. Wikipedia entry "Media Violence Research"
  - c. Blog article "Media Darling" (a college student)
  - d. The website of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
  - e. I don't know
  
4. Why should you cite your sources?
  - a. To avoid plagiarism
  - b. To show the credibility of your research
  - c. To give credit to the author of the work you have cited
  - d. To give the reader of your paper a place to go for more information
  - e. All of the above

## Post-test

1. When doing research what is the best source for reliable and free, full text articles?
  - a. Library book catalog
  - b. Google
  - c. Library databases such as Gale or EBSCO
  - d. I don't know
  
2. Which 2 of these would likely be the best sources for your paper on the impact of violent TV on the behavior of young children?
  - a. Article from the journal Early Childhood Research
  - b. Time Magazine article from 1991
  - c. Blog entry entitled "The Glorified Gangster"
  - d. The website of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
  - e. Wikipedia entry "Media Violence Research"
  - f. I don't know
  
3. Which terms would you use to search online for information on the impact of violence in the media on children?
  - a. Media and violence
  - b. Media and violence and children and impact
  - c. Television and guns
  - d. How does violence in the media impact children?
  - e. I don't know
  
4. Which one of these is not a component of a correct citation?
  - a. Publication date
  - b. Title
  - c. ISBN
  - d. Author

**External Consultant Program Review Report  
Library Co-curricular Program Review**

Bedford/Lowell, Massachusetts  
April 23, 2013

In Middlesex Community College's (MCC) program review process the role of the external consultant "serves as an objective, discipline-based expert who provides an external perspective on the department's demonstrated effectiveness in the areas supporting student success and academic achievement, productivity and resource management...". The following report provides that perspective based on information provided in the self-study submitted by Mary Ann Niles, Assistant Dean of Library Services, and corroborated in a site visit conducted on April 23, 2013 which included interviews and extended conversations with administrators and staff.

The initial contact in any self-study process is the document itself which lays the foundation for the evaluator to understand the institution and the program and on which the inquiry is based. This self-study was thorough, well-written and candid. It provided the data necessary to understand the issues, including those institutional decisions that impacted the library. Dean Niles did not seek to sugar-coat the areas that seemed problematic and was forthright in her assessment of the situations. It was abundantly clear that Dean Niles was very proud of the MCC library and was eager to share all aspects of it during the visit.

The external evaluator visit began with a candid conversation with the College Administration including Provost Phil Sisson, Assistant Provost Clea Andreadis, Dean Elise Martin and Assistant Dean Mary Ann Niles. From the beginning of the discussion it was clear that the Administration had read the self-study document thoroughly and was aware of their institutional library situation, as well as the current issues in academic libraries across the nation. It was also clear that as a group they supported a common vision for the library, exemplified by their work together in identifying and securing a prized Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries in Student Success (AiA) grant from the American Library Association/ Association of College and Research Libraries (ALA/ACRL). Their continued communication about issues in the library, especially as they relate to Information Literacy, will be critical as the institution engages in this highly influential and prestigious grant opportunity.

In addition to the strong support from the Administration, there are a number of additional strengths to mention. Specifically:

- The Library provides full-service libraries at both of its campuses. Both are attractive, well-kept spaces with adequate print collections. As described in the self-study, both libraries are busy, high-energy areas with abundant numbers of computers for student use.
- The Library staff members, while few in number, are committed to providing high-quality library service and they work remarkably well as a team despite the distance between campuses. The part-time librarians actively participate in efforts to improve library service and instruction, their expertise is highly-valued in the library and they have been included in the discussion about library

instruction and curriculum design. There is ample evidence that all librarians are willing to work with others outside the library, when time is available, and they actively seek solutions to the problems impacting the student experience in the library.

- The Library budget is regular and adequate. Despite budget restraint throughout the institution, the library has not suffered from deep cuts and they have been able to maintain collections, including the popular textbook reserve collection. The growth of electronic resources allows a possible reduction in purchase of print materials and consequently could ultimately have an impact on the use of space.
- The consortial relationship with NOBLE is an important one and one that MCC staff has contributed to significantly during the transition to an Open Source LMS. These contributions have provided an opportunity to shape the new LMS and provide the college with heightened input and access to the database, all of which can ultimately help to serve students better.
- As one of only eight academic libraries in New England, and 75 in the nation, it is commendable that MCC has been chosen to participate in Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries in Student Success (AiA). This important initiative which “supports the design, implementation and evaluation of a program to strengthen competencies of librarians in campus leadership and data-informed advocacy” will place this library in a strong position to support student learning. Although the library is in the very beginning of the program implementation, the opportunity for growth is enormous at the institutional level and ultimately will lead to the opportunity to inform practice at the national level.

As stated, there are many reasons to applaud the work in the department; however, in order to change the role of the library in the institution and assure that it is a vital part of the learning process, some concerns should be highlighted.

- Assessment of Information Literacy (IL) concepts at MCC is limited. Satisfaction and other surveys have been completed, but little was focused specifically what students are learning as a result of instruction in the library. This focus on assessing learning is a fairly new trend in academic libraries and one that is now prominently reflected in the revised NEASC Standards for Accreditation (2010). The revisions to “Standard 7 Library and Other Information Resources” have significantly increased the emphasis on Information Literacy and reflect the fact that colleges across the nation recognize that students are ill-prepared to navigate the complex and rapidly-growing world of electronic information. While they are the “experts” librarians alone cannot tackle this wide-ranging,

institutional issue and must partner with other academic colleagues to move this important initiative. MCC's role in the AiA should address this.

- One of MCC's strengths is the library's committed staff and yet, simply put, there are just not enough of them. With a handful of full-time staff members, the library administration has worked diligently to keep the library open for 72.5 hours per week and relying heavily on part-time personnel. Compensation for the clerk-level personnel (\$10. pr hr. without benefits) does not inspire commitment on the part of the workers and, as a result, turnover has been great. This has had a negative impact on the existing full time staff and resulted in both the Asst. Dean and others working overtime at the circulation desk. This is a poor use of valuable full-time professional librarians' time.
- The discussion about staffing at the MCC libraries would not be complete without also including conversation about the profound changes in the services that have taken place in the library. The decision to eliminate the computer labs on campus and assign that task to the library without seriously including the library in the decision-making process is of serious concern. This decision suggests a lack of understanding about the role of libraries and information literacy in the academy and undermines the work of the professional librarians--redefining their role as computer lab assistants. This puts the entire institution at risk as it jeopardizes the college's ability to support an Information Literacy initiative. If librarians at MCC are spending a majority of their time answering computer technology questions and dealing with printing and computer connection problems, then there is little time left to lead a robust IL program. While the decision to combine the two areas may have had some advantages for other areas, in many respects it has had a deleterious effect on the library.
- It is no surprise that this shift has also had an effect on the physical space within the library. As the libraries have become computer labs, seating and lack of space for students has become a real problem. During the recent tour of the Bedford library an informal scan indicated that there was not a single empty table available to students and that fewer than 20-30 seats were available in the entire room. The ambient noise, while not deafening, was certainly loud enough to affect those students seeking a quiet study space. Surveys and student complaints bear this out. The Bedford campus also lacks group study space in which students can collaborate without disturbing other students. The Lowell campus had similar issues with crowding and noise, but to a lesser degree. Most academic libraries now seek integrated spaces that support both robust

technology presence as well as adequate group/quiet study spaces. MCC's needs are no different.

Fortunately, some of these concerns can be easily tackled and addressing the dual role of computer lab/library is the first step in sorting out the issue. Many academic libraries incorporate aspects of IT/technology into a single campus location, often calling it a Learning Common(s) rather than Library. MCC can easily adopt the Learning Commons model by adding IT staff – either new or existing-- to the Library to help students with their technical/hardware/software issues. This gives the students the expert computer support that they need and also allows the librarians to serve in the students' best interest: as information literacy specialists. Alternatively, adequate numbers of new full-time library staff with technology skills could be hired, again, allowing the professional librarians to work pursue the AiA initiative and information literacy in general.

While space is at a premium across the campus, it is imperative for the institution to recognize the students' need for group study and to create/free up some spaces for students in the library to work collaboratively or, conversely, to work quietly if the noise of the library is too distracting.

The success of the solutions outlined above is grounded in open communication and collaborative planning between the Library, the Academic Administration and decision-makers in Information Technology and Space Appropriations and should result in mutually-beneficial solutions to these complex issues. With students best interest at heart, it is possible to provide a vibrant Library/Learning Commons with abundant numbers of computers for research and other purposes, adequate technology support and an active information literacy initiative.

#### STRENGTHS:

- Attractive, busy, full-service libraries at each location
- Enthusiastic, committed library staff and administration
- Abundant computer resources at both campus locations
- Participation in the Assessment in Action: Academic Libraries in Student Success (AiA) grant from the American Library Association/ Association of College and Research Libraries (ALA/ACRL)

#### CONCERNS:

- Assessment efforts do not include extensive measure of student learning
- Too few full-time library staff; high turnover for clerical positions
- Closing of computer labs across campus has resulted in a significant impact on the ability of librarians to provide adequate information literacy programming
- Physical space issues include overcrowding, noise, and lack of group study space

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Create a Learning Commons by adding IT staff to the existing Library/Computer lab space to assist students with their technology needs
- Focus professional librarians on supporting an integrated Information Literacy plan
- Identify spaces within the library for collaborative student use/quiet study
- Reach a mutually-agreed upon solution that benefits students' needs

Respectfully submitted by External Reviewer:

**Ruth A. Sullivan**

Dean of Learning Resources

Community College of Rhode Island

May 18, 2013

	Berkshire	Bristol	Bunker Hill	Cape Cod	Green
<b>Hours</b>					
This library is open before 7:30 am on one or more week days.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
This library is open after 9:00 pm on one or more week days.			✓		
This library is open more than 5 hours on Saturday.			✓		
This library is open on Sundays.			✓	✓	
If open on Sundays, how many hours?			8	4	
Comments:				E	
<b>Staffing</b>					
Total no. of full-time librarians across all campuses including Director.	2		5	3	
Total no. of full-time library support staff across all campuses.	2		1	4	
Library is sometimes open without professional on duty.	✓				
Comments - See below	A			F	
Library is sometimes open with fewer than 2 on duty.	✓		✓		
Comments - See below	B		S	G	
<b>Technology</b>					
Number of open computer labs at your main campus outside the library	1		1	1	
Number of open computer labs at your 2nd campus outside the library			1		

Number of student computers in the library - main campus	11		50	30	
Number of student computers in the library - 2nd campus					
Library circulates laptops to students.					
Number of laptops circulated					
Library offers wireless printing from student owned laptops					
Library has a print management system					
<b>Facility - Quiet Study</b>					
Library quiet enough most of time. Doesn't need reserved quiet area.	✓				
Library has quiet areas without dividing walls, marked with signs.			✓	✓	
Library has one or more quiet study rooms.	✓			✓	
Library has group study rooms that may be used for quiet study.	✓			✓	
Library still looking for good solution to offering quiet study space.				✓	
Other comments:	C			H	
<b>Facility - Group Study</b>					
Library doesn't offer rooms. Group study is at regular library tables.	✓				
Library has group study rooms.	✓			✓	
Other comments:			T		
<b>Facility - Library Classroom</b>					
Library has a classroom used exclusively for library classes.	✓		✓	✓	
Library has a classroom but it is also used by other areas of the college.					

Has library classroom - also does instruction in rooms outside the library.	✓		✓	✓	
Number of student computers in library classroom.			15		
Other comments:	D				
<b>Comments</b>					
<b>Comments - Hours</b>					

E Sunday 1-5,  
Saturday 9-1

Comments - Staffing					
	A	Support staff with lengthy library experience (two staff. Work-study never cover the library by themselves. While two on duty is the standard minimum, we have someone else is unexpectedly absent.			
	B	Never!! This has always been our policy.			
	F	The minimum is 2, one in reference (professional) cases of illness on the weekend.			
	G	5-10 pm Monday-Thursday and 8-4 pm on Saturday in Framingham only			
	I	After 5pm on weekday evenings and on weekends.			
	J	Evenings only if the p/t librarian is out			
	L	We have 1 p/t evening librarian and 1 p/t evening other is alone. Saturdays 1 p/t librarian only			
	M	Saturday staffing is a professional staff librarian times only one staff member is on - generally for a library assistant opens library at 7:30 am 4 days a week.			
	P	Library Assistant is here by himself until 8:30.			
	Q	Only one person working Friday night from 5 to 4PM and Monday to Thursday 8PM to 10PM.			
	S	Very very rarely, and only if I can avoid it. But I am alone (usually for a very short period of time)			
	U	At Lawrence Campus, when the Coordinator goes to campus meeting and Director is not on campus			
	V	At Lawrence Campus, we have one Professional unless a work study is present. Generally there			
	W				
Comments - Technology					

R The room is dedicated for library instruction. We  
future so that library instruction always has priority

Comments - Facility

C We have signs saying certain tables and areas  
areas may be better for quiet individual work.  
D We use laptops for library instructional sessions  
(study, research, tutoring) when sessions aren't  
H Stacks are for quiet study. Groups meet in one  
reference) We have great demands for enclosed  
K Areas we formerly had dedicated to quiet study  
departments. I keep fighting to get it back.  
T We have an area for dedicated group study that  
signage and by the tables in the area.  
X We have one group study room in  
Haverhill. None in Lawrence.  
Y Only the Danvers Campus has a room for group  
must be reserved ahead of time.  
Z One computer in the Lynn classroom;  
12 in the Danvers classroom

### Student Survey – Fall 2012

1. The library I use most often is the
  - a. Bedford Campus library
  - b. Lowell Campus library
  
2. Please tell us where and when your classes are this semester. Check all that apply.

- a. Weekday Bedford
- b. Weekday Lowell
- c. Evening Bedford
- d. Evening Lowell
- e. Saturday Bedford
- f. Saturday Lowell
- g. Sunday Bedford
- h. Sunday Lowell

### **Library Building and Equipment**

- 3. How satisfied are you with the hours the library is open?
  - a. Not at all
  - b. Somewhat
  - c. Very
  - d. Completely
  
- 4. On the weekends I would like to use the library in
  - a. Bedford
  - b. Lowell
  - c. I don't need to use the library on the weekends.
  
- 5. If the library can only be open 5 hours during the weekend, which day and time would be the most useful to you?
  - a. The current library hours are best: Saturday from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
  - b. Saturday 9:00 am to 2:00 pm
  - c. Saturday 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm
  - d. Sunday 9:00 am to 2:00 pm
  - e. Sunday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
  - f. Sunday 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm
  - g. Sunday 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm
  - h. It doesn't matter to me because I don't plan to use the library on the weekend.

6. On Monday through Thursday the library is open from 7:30 am to 9:00 pm. Which option below best describes your feelings about the library hours?
  - a. The current hours are fine.
  - b. The library should be open earlier in the morning – at 7:00 am
  - c. The library should be open later in the evening – until 9:30 pm
  
7. When I come to the library I am able to find a space:
  - a. To sit and work on my assignments
  - b. For quiet study and reading
  - c. To work in a group with other students
  - d. To hang out and talk with friends
  
8. How important are the library's computers to your success as a student?
  - a. Essential. I prefer to use the library computers for my assignments.
  - b. Very important. I use the library computers often.
  - c. Somewhat important. I use the library computers on occasion.
  - d. Not very important. I seldom use the library computers.
  - e. Not at all. I never use the library computers.
  
9. How long do you usually wait to use the computers in the library?
  - a. No wait
  - b. A few minutes
  - c. A long wait
  - d. I don't use them.
  
10. I am able to print without any problems from the student computers in the library:
  - a. Almost all the time
  - b. About half the time
  - c. Almost never

- d. I don't print in the library.
11. Please indicate how well this library meets your needs for each of these: (Superior, Satisfactory, or Needs Improvement)
- a. Quiet space to study without distractions
  - b. Space to study and work on projects with a group
  - c. Technology needed to complete assignments
12. Other comments about the library building and equipment.

### **Library Staff**

13. I have found the library staff to be (Strongly Disagree, Mildly Disagree, Mildly Agree, Strongly Agree)
- a. Knowledgeable
  - b. Courteous
  - c. Willing to help
14. I have been in a class at Middlesex that received instruction by a librarian.
- a. Yes
  - b. No
15. The instruction I received from a librarian increased my understanding of how to find and cite information successfully.
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I have not received this instruction.
16. If you have had help from a librarian to complete an assignment, please rate how helpful this was to you. I had help in: (Very helpful, Somewhat helpful, Not very helpful, I haven't asked for help with this.)
- a. Finding a book
  - b. Using the computers
  - c. Selecting an online resource
  - d. Finding an article
  - e. Citing sources with Noodlebib

- f. Printing
- g. Scanning
- h. Other

17. I have gotten adequate help in solving computer and printing problems in the library.

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. Other comments about library staff.

### **Library Collections and Access**

19. I depend on the library to have the textbooks required for my courses on reserve for me to use in the library.

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Never

20. This library provides the materials I need to succeed in my courses.

(Almost always, Almost never, I don't need these for my courses, I buy them myself)

- a. Books
- b. Magazines
- c. Online databases
- d. DVDs
- e. CDs
- f. Streaming video

21. The library collection now includes thousands of eBooks. Please tell us how useful they are to you.

- a. I have never come across an ebook in the library catalog
- b. I don't like ebooks and avoid using them. I always look for print books instead.
- c. I use both ebooks and print books. I don't have a preference.
- d. I really like ebooks and prefer to use them whenever possible.
- e. I never use the library to find books.

22. Please select all the devices you have used to read eBooks:
- a. Library computer
  - b. Home computer or laptop
  - c. iPad
  - d. iPod
  - e. Kindle
  - f. Nook
  - g. iPhone
  - h. SmartPhone
  - i. I have never read one.
  - j. Other
23. The one thing that our library does not own that I would like to borrow is:
24. I have used the library's website this semester to: (Haven't tried, Wasn't able, Some success, Completely successful)
- a. Find a book in the library
  - b. Find an article in an online database
  - c. Place a request for a book from another library
  - d. Renew a book I have checked out
  - e. Find a recommended website
  - f. View a research guide for my subject area
  - g. Other
25. Please choose up to 5 changes you would like us to implement to improve our library:
- a. More computers
  - b. Color printers
  - c. Laptops to borrow
  - d. More quiet study space
  - e. More group study space
  - f. Open later
  - g. Open earlier
  - h. More staff to help with computers and printers

- i. More staff to help with finding information
- j. Wireless printing from laptops
- k. More copiers
- l. Color copiers
- m. More books
- n. More databases
- o. Other

26. Of the ones chosen above, the change that would help me most is:

- a. More computers
- b. Color printers
- c. Laptops to borrow
- d. More quiet study space
- e. More group study space
- f. Open later
- g. Open earlier
- h. More staff to help with computers and printers
- i. More staff to help with finding information
- j. Wireless printing from laptops
- k. More copiers
- l. Color copiers
- m. More books
- n. More databases
- o. Other

27. Please use this space to tell us anything else you would like to say about the library and its services:

### **Faculty Survey of Library Instruction – January 2012**

1. During the fall semester how many of your classes came to the library for instruction by a librarian?
  - a. 1
  - b. 2
  - c. 3
  - d. 4
  - e. More than 4

2. Even though I may have had library instruction on both campuses, for the purposes of this survey, the instruction I am rating took place in:
  - a. Bedford
  - b. Lowell
  
3. In considering one of your classes which had instruction, please answer the following: (Completely agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Completely disagree)
  - a. The librarian presented the class content in a clear, understandable and organized manner.
  - b. The specific resources covered in this session were well suited to help students complete their assignment.
  
4. Which parts of the library instruction session would you like us to spend more time on?
  
5. Which parts could we spend less time on without jeopardizing your students' success?
  
6. As a result of their library instruction on searching for information:
  - a. Most of my students selected relevant materials of the type I specified.
  - b. Some students were able to do this correctly, but many didn't understand the difference between a popular or scholarly source.
  - c. Most of my students were unable to find the required number and type of resource for this assignment.
  - d. I do not require my students to find a specific type of resource.
  
7. As a result of their library instruction about evaluating their sources:
  - a. Most of my students used credible and authoritative sources.
  - b. Some students selected good sources, but many used unverified web sites.
  - c. Most of my students didn't choose the best sources.
  
8. As a result of their library instruction about citing their work:
  - a. Most of my students cited their sources correctly.
  - b. Some of my students cited their sources correctly, but many still struggled with this.
  - c. Most of my students had difficulty citing their sources correctly.
  - d. My assignment doesn't require students to cite sources.

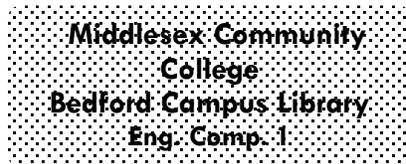
9. What could we do to improve the library instruction your students receive?

10. Are you likely to request library instruction in the future?

**Student Response Card – Given to all students in Comp. 1 classes who received library instruction  
Fall 2012**

**How are we doing?**

What was the most helpful thing you learned in this class?



What did we forget to show you today that you wish we had covered?

As a result of this class, I understand how to:

	Clear	Unclear
Decide what information I need to complete this assignment.		
Choose a database for my research		
Find good articles in a database		

Suggestions that would help us improve our library instruction:

Overall, how helpful was this class in preparing you for your research assignment?

Poor     Fair     Good     Excellent