Library = Information Commons = Library

Libraries have a long history of embracing new technologies with the potential to enhance operations and service. The Information Commons concept is the next step in the evolution of library service. The aim of this concept is to provide an academic environment that promotes the integration of new technology into teaching, learning, and research. Most Information Commons (IC) implementations involve seven components: reference and open access workstations with appropriate tech support on-site; group work areas; technology enhanced instructional spaces; multimedia workstations; a writing and tutoring center; extended hours; and, lounge areas.
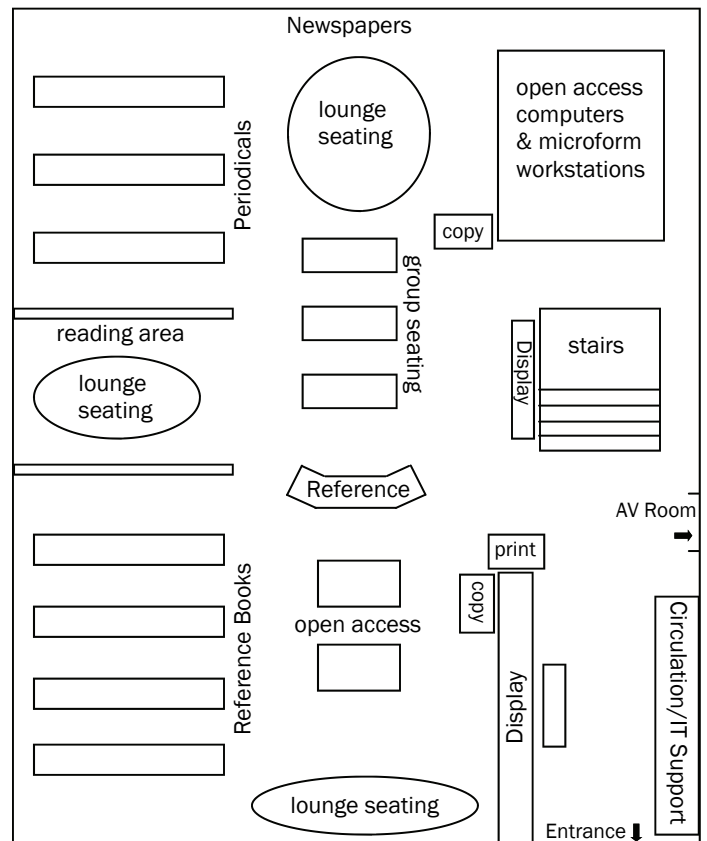
The Library has already incorporated several elements of the IC concept. The Library Café was created in Spring 2004 and is now open until midnight seven days a week. The Café offers a designated food and beverage space for the Library as well as a place to study or gather with friends. It is wireless accessible and has several network ports as well. In Fall 2005, we moved the juvenile collection to the lower level to make room for expanded instructional space upstairs. We also reconfigured the Reference Desk to integrate it more with various computing and study spaces, began replacing some of the study carrels with tables to facilitate group work, and moved the Circulation Desk to provide a more open and welcoming entry space.

In Spring 2006, the Center for Academic Support and Excellence (CASE) became an official part of the Library and the campus Instructional Technology Coordinator was reassigned from Information Technology Services (ITS) to the Library. Both of these moves fit right in with the IC concept as they bring learning-centered services under one roof and are a natural extension of "traditional" library activities.

As we move into the 2006-2007 academic year, more changes are underway. We just finished the installation of compact (movable) shelving downstairs which will let us free up prime space on the main level. Campus administration committed funds to support extending our hours (see related item below). ITS is assigning student assistants to the Library for late night tech support and has moved a large number of desktop computers from one of the Warner Hall labs to the Library. More network ports have been added on the main floor and wireless network access has been improved throughout the building. We've also updated the multimedia classroom on the top floor with some new equipment and fresh paint.

While we have accomplished quite a bit, several things remain to be done. A new reading area on the main floor will (hopefully) be completed this year. A planned tech-enabled classroom/conference room for the upstairs, enhancements to the children's area, and other changes will have to wait for additional funding.

ABOVE: One possible floor plan for the main level of the Library.

Library Hours E x p a n d e d

We are pleased to announce that the Library's hours have been expanded! We now close at midnight Sunday through Thursday. Saturday hours now start one hour earlier and end one hour later—10:00am to 4:00pm. All together, this gives you an extra 12 hours of high-quality time at the Library! Hours for the Library Café and for Fridays are unchanged.

Those of you who were here last fall will probably recall the ruckus that ensued when the Library started closing at 9:00pm instead of 10:00pm, even though it meant CASE was open an hour longer. It had a good result though—people hated the reduction in hours so much that they stood up and said so. Largely as a result of this public support, the campus administration found the funds needed to keep both the Library and CASE open until 10:00pm.

The campus continues to reap the benefits of that effort. The current expansion of hours would not have been possible without the consistent support of the students, faculty, and staff. When we all work together, we can bring about real and positive change. Thank you!

InfoTrac Out, Academic Search Premier In, and Other Online Database Changes

The Library is no longer making the InfoTrac OneFile database available to our users. Instead, we have Academic Search Premier. Academic Search Premier is "the world's largest academic multi-disciplinary database." It offers full-text access to over 4,600 periodicals, including more than 3,600 peer-reviewed journals.

Along with Academic Search Premier, we now have access to several other databases from the same vendor (EBSCO), including Business Source Premier, CINAHL Plus with Full Text, CINAHL Select, Education Research Complete, ERIC, MEDLINE, Military & Government Collection, Pre-CINAHL, Professional Development Collection, and Regional Business News.

Business Source Premier and Regional Business News serve to supplement Hoover's Pro (still available) and to replace Investext Plus (removed). Combined, they offer extensive full-text coverage in "all disciplines of business."

CINAHL Plus with Full Text, CINAHL Select, and Pre-CINAHL provide coverage of areas such as biomedicine, nursing, and various allied health disciplines.

Education Research Complete offers a large collection of full-text education journals. It covers "all levels of education from early childhood to higher education, and all educational specialties." The Professional Development Collection is aimed at educators and education researchers. It covers "everything from children's health to cutting-edge pedagogical theory and practice." When combined with ERIC (which we've had for years through another vendor), these databases provide a comprehensive resource for education research.

All of the new databases mentioned above are purchased through SUNYConnect (a joint effort of all SUNY libraries and the SUNY Provost). Several resources that used to be part of the SUNYConnect suite are now being paid for by the Library so that we can continue to provide access to them. These include Opposing Viewpoints, WorldCat, and FirstSearch, among others.

Website Improvements

The Library's website (www.cobleskill.edu/library) underwent some major revision over the summer. The organization of the site was changed to make navigation easier than ever. The main page in particular is now a great jumping off point for research. Links to our electronic resources and our online catalog are displayed right up front. There is also a 'quick search' feature that will do a basic title, subject, or author search in our online catalog.

If you've bookmarked any specific pages, please be aware that the addresses may have changed. Contact Peter Barvoets (barvoepd@cobleskill.edu or x5894) if you run into any problems.

Instructional Technology Assistance

As the Instructional Technology Coordinator, Jiang Tan has a variety of ways to help faculty use technology to support and enhance their classroom efforts.

Dr. Tan holds training workshops throughout the year on topics such as Excel Gradebook templates, Faculty Banner, and others. To see currently scheduled workshops and sign-up for any that you may find useful, please visit www.cobleskill.edu/itdesktop. She conducts occasional seminars on integrating technology into the curriculum as well. As liaison for the SUNY Training Center on our campus, Jiang also coordinates faculty development opportunities sponsored by the Center.

Jiang is also responsible for administrating the Blackboard (Bb) learning system. She provides assistance in designing and developing Bb courses, creates courses within the system, and troubleshoots course problems.

So, if you're interested in SUNY Training Center sessions, need advice on using course related software, or want to learn about other instructional technology topics, contact Jiang Tan at x5869 or tanj@cobleskill.edu.

Changes to Electronic Course Reserves

Electronic course reserves have proven to be a popular service. We've been doing this for a year now and, while the feedback has been very positive, we have determined that a central access point for e-reserves will simplify the process for students and faculty.

So, starting this semester, the Library has its own presence on Blackboard through which students can register for the electronic reserves "course." Content will be posted into folders according to course and instructor.

Please remember that putting course reserves online is not a way around the copyright laws. The Library will take care of securing clearance to use copyrighted materials for e-reserves when necessary. However, should large fees be required for an item—we may decide not to pursue electronic access in that particular case.

Any faculty members interested in using electronic course reserves for their classes should contact Gregg Kiehl at x5851 or kiehlgr@cobleskill.edu. Naturally, the Library still offers traditional course reserve services for those that prefer and for materials not suited to electronic delivery.

Library Program Review

The Library's 2005-06 program review is almost complete. The purpose of the review is to assess and evaluate the Library to ensure its relevance to the purpose of the College and its success in achieving its goals. The review will serve as a tool for continuous improvement and may impact our budget, staffing, and so forth. External reviewers Janet Potter (SUNY Oneonta) and Cerise Oberman (SUNY Plattsburgh) will be on campus Sept. 21st and will be meeting with faculty, staff, and students at various times during the day. The full review document is available for perusal on the Library's website (www.cobleskill.edu/library/about.asp).

Librarians must be like Krishna! And descend into the world to combat ignorance!
— Shiyali Ramamrita Ranganathan (1872-1972), author of The Five Laws of Library Science

Information Literacy—The Next Steps

As Cobleskill moves into it's 8th year of stressing embedded Information Literacy Instruction (research skills taught within a course and to a specific skill) we are taking our efforts to a new level.

The Information Literacy Task Force appointed by Dr. Anne Myers in 2005-06 has completed it's work (the final report is available on the Z drive) and now it is time to move ahead with their recommendations. Susan Zimmermann and Fran Apollo have been charged with carrying forward the College's efforts to truly integrate essential Information Literacy skills into each curriculum. They will be working directly with departments to identify where information skills are introduced and where they are built upon and strengthened as we all strive to prepare our students for their futures.

> *Integrated Information Literacy instruction → Improvement in the quality of student performance and in students carrying necessary research skills over into their other courses.*

Faculty can find assistance under "Instruction" and "Information Literacy" in the Services area of the Library's website (www.cobleskill.edu/library)

A new Professional Development Blackboard session has been set up as well. Each faculty member can simply sign up to find the valuable information that has been placed there. Also, the Library's Professional Development collection (on reserve at the Circulation Desk) has several new items to assist anyone interested in developing new assignments, incorporating active learning strategies, and creating more learner-centered situations.

More detailed information will be forthcoming in Department and School meetings throughout the semester. Fran will be meeting with the Early Childhood and Humanities Departments early in the fall. Fran, Susan, and the librarians look forward to working with all members of the faculty as we navigate this exciting new challenge in the year ahead.

Recommended Reading

Black Farmers in America
by John Ficara & Juan Williams

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane
by Kate DiCamillo

Secret Agents: the Menace of Emerging Infections   [Ebook]
by Madeline Drexler

Biodiesel: Basics & Beyond
by William H. Kemp

Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses
by Mary Huba & Jann Freed

The War for Independence & the Transformation of American Society   [Ebook]
by Harry M. Ward

Ravelstein
by Saul Bellow

Short Shorts: an Anthology of the Shortest Stories
ed. by Irving & Ilana Howe

An Inconvenient Truth
by Al Gore

Fall Book Sale—Showcase Weekend

Give us your books! Buy others to replace them! Seriously, our big book sale last fall was such a success that we're doing it again. We'll kick off the sale on Showcase Weekend (Sept. 29 – Oct. 1) and keep it running all through October.

Prices will be the same as our regular book sale: $1 for hardcovers, 50¢ for paperbacks. Big multi-volume sets, non-book items, and other special items will have their prices posted.

Just like last year, everyone is invited to clean out their bookshelves to help stock the sale carts. Simply drop items off at the Circulation Desk and we'll take it from there. Please try to get your stuff to us by Sept. 27th so we have time to sort through things.

We sold around 600 books last year—let's see if we can't beat that number!

ILL Enhancements

Getting the information Library users need to them as quickly as possible—that is the goal of Interlibrary Loan (ILL). Last year, we introduced ILLiad to facilitate electronic processing and delivery. This year, we have joined the IDS Project (Information Delivery Service Project). This is a cooperative undertaking of 18 SUNY libraries committed to providing easier access to our combined collections through enhanced borrowing and delivery services.

Through our efforts, we hope to achieve turnaround times of 48 hours for electronic desktop delivery of articles and 72 hours for books, if the item is held by a participating library. Visit our website (www.cobleskill.edu/library) and choose Services to learn more.

Check Out CASE

The Center for Academic Support and Excellence (CASE) performs a vital role in the education of Cobleskill's students. CASE is the primary student support services area on campus. It exists to help students in need of tutorial support, with disabilities, retained from suspension due to poor grades, and/or admitted under special circumstances through the MERITS program.

Students receive individual and small group tutoring, review for tests, study independently, use the open access computers and printers, and get academic guidance and skill instruction in such areas as time management, test-taking, and study skills. Students with documented learning and/or physical disabilities meet with disAbility Support Services and access those accommodations that are determined to be appropriate and plan for the semester with regard to equipment, test accommodations, tutoring, etc.

Faculty members are encouraged to recommend high achieving students to serve as peer tutor/mentors, as well as to steer students having difficulties to CASE for assistance.

This should be another busy year for CASE. Looking at last year, nearly 1,000 individual students used the various services and equipment in the Center during the Fall 2005 semester alone and over 25,000 hours of tutoring, computer use, and quiet study time were logged during the course of the academic year. Looking further back at the last several years, those numbers should only go up. For example, disAbility Support Services is expecting its largest group ever with about 150 new documented students and 170 returning students.

Improved Technology for disAbility Support Services

The office of disAbility Support Services received a Perkins Grant that has provided two new adaptive technology workstations for our students. The new computers have 24-inch flat screen monitors and are located in the main floor AV room at the Library and in Warner Hall, room 23. Two software programs that are loaded on the Library machine are the ZoomText magnification program and the Dragon NaturallySpeaking voice recognition program. These programs are available for use by all students.

A new telesensory magnifier was also included in the grant and is available at the Library. This piece of equipment magnifies books and other printed material for people who have vision difficulties. The grant also provided for a pocket magnifier that can be checked out from the Library and used for reading such things as a menu, a greeting card, or labels in a grocery store.

Lastly, the Perkins Grant renewed our site license for the Premier Scan and Read program. This program scans and then reads printed material aloud and is available to all Cobleskill students. Many people learn better by hearing the words so this technology is an avenue that we will be encouraging for our students. If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Abarno (abarnolk@cobleskill.edu or x5282).

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*Library Hours for Fall 2006**

Mon.-Thurs.	8:00am-12:00am
Friday	8:00am-5:00pm
Saturday	10:00am-4:00pm
Sunday	2:00pm-12:00am

* Library Café open until midnight— every night!

Calendar

Sept. 21
    Program Review Site Visit

Sept. 23 – 30
    Banned Books Week

Sept. 25-28
    MS Access workshops

Sept. 29 – Oct. 1
    Book Sale / Showcase Weekend

Oct. 4
    Poetry Slam

Nov. 7
    Election Day

Nov. 13 – 19
    Children's Book Week

Dec. 18-21
    Finals Week

Aleph Upgrade

The Library will be upgrading the Aleph software system the week before classes begin. While users should see no visible difference, the staff side will change quite a bit. We will do our best to minimize any impact on service but delays are possible. Please plan ahead for all of your Library needs (especially setting up course reserves) and excuse our "mess" as we undertake this process. Thanks!

E-Resource Spotlight: NetLibrary

NetLibrary offers online access to books on any number of topics, from Java programming to vegetarian cooking to organic chemistry—all in the comfort of your office (or wherever). NetLibrary is especially useful for things like verifying facts and reviewing short segments of text.

Cobleskill's NetLibrary collection can be found through the Library's online catalog just like regular books. If you'd like to access NetLibrary directly, simply go to the Library's website (www.cobleskill.edu/library), select NetLibrary from the resources shown there, and you're on your way!

Staff News

Lynn Abarno went to the Postsecondary Disability Training Institute in Burlington, VT this summer. She picked up several good ideas that she will be implementing here at Cobleskill.

Fran Apollo has been elected Vice President/President-elect and Program Chair of the Eastern New York Association of College and Research Libraries (ENYACRL).

Peter Barvoets has joined SUNYLA's Information Technology Committee. He is currently working on a wiki to showcase the use of new technologies in SUNY libraries.

Marina Brock has joined the CASE staff as an assistant to the MERITS/Retention programs where she will help provide support and guidance to our students. Welcome, Marina!

April Davies was elected Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee in Spring 2006. She presented a session on tech librarians in non-tech roles at the 2006 SUNYLA conference. April will be doing a session on cataloging workflow at the upcoming SUNY Aleph Users Group (SUNYAUG) conference in October.

Linda Greenwald had her poem "Peacock" accepted for publication in an anthology. She has also done several poetry readings in the area.

Kathy Johnson has been serving on the Steering committee for the Training Association of College Tutors (TACT). Cobleskill's group of tutors will be attending TACT's first conference in October at Fulton Montgomery Community College and will be leading two training sessions. SUNY Cobleskill is a sponsoring institution of TACT.

Gregg Kiehl received a Sylvia Chu scholarship from the SUNY Librarians Association (SUNYLA) which helped pay for his participation in the 2006 annual conference where he was part of a panel presentation on interlibrary loan issues. Gregg was also appointed to a SUNY-wide task force charged with studying sharing of materials between SUNY libraries.

Julie Lighthall will be on maternity leave for most of Fall 2006. Depending on when little Harley gets here, Julie should be back in mid-December. Congratulations to the Lighthall family!

Longtime Circulation Supervisor, Gail Pevlor, is leaving us to enjoy a well-earned retirement, effective August 30th. Gail has been with the Van Wagenen Library since the day it opened— she will be missed.

Jiang Tan attended the International Conference of Education in January where she presented two papers. She also did a session for the Conference on Computing in Agriculture here at Cobleskill in April.

Nancy Van Deusen was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Capital District Library Council (CDLC) and re-elected Secretary of the SUNYConnect Advisory Committee (SAC).