

# **BROOKLYN COLLEGE LIBRARY**

## **MULTI-YEAR PLAN 2007-2012**

[The Multi-Year Plan: Background and Process](#) – 2

[The Brooklyn College Library Today](#) – 2

[The Recommendations of the Self-Study & the External Reviewers](#) – 3

[The Library's Preferred Future](#) – 4

[Fund-Raising](#) – 4

[Collections](#) – 4

[Services](#) – 6

[Online Teaching & Learning](#) – 7

[Technology](#) – 8

[The Library Building](#) – 9

[Staffing](#) – 10

[In Sum](#) – 10

[Self-Study & External Reviewers' Recommendations \(chart\)](#) – i

[Multi-Year Plan Time Line \(chart\)](#) – vi

---

## **APPENDICES**

Brooklyn College Library Self-Study

External Reviewers' Report

### THE MULTI-YEAR PLAN: BACKGROUND & PROCESS

The Library's self-study <[http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/about/self\\_study/2006/](http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/about/self_study/2006/)> was completed in June 2006 and updated in January 2007; all members of the full-time faculty and staff participated in the study; they were organized into three Primary Groups which analyzed the Library's programs, collections, and facilities in terms of how well we serve our three major constituencies, undergraduates, graduate students and faculty, and non-affiliates.

Our external reviewers were *Lance Query* (Dean of Libraries, Tulane University); *Michael Gorman* (Dean of Library Services, California State University at Fresno, and past president of the American Library Association); and *John Zenelis* (University Librarian & Associate Vice President, Information Technology, George Mason University). As library and academic IT leaders with extensive experience, they were well qualified for their task; they visited the campus March 21-22, 2007. The self-study and several other Library documents (annual reports, the 1996 self-study and external review report, etc.) were supplied to them in advance. During their time on campus, they met with the president, the provost, the associate provost, the head of Information Technology Services, Faculty Council's Committee on the Library, the Advisory Committee on Academic Computing, classroom faculty from all disciplines, many students (undergraduate and graduate) and, of course, Library faculty and staff.

The external reviewers submitted their report on April 27, 2007; it appears on the Library Web site at <[http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/about/self\\_study/library\\_external\\_review\\_2.pdf](http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/about/self_study/library_external_review_2.pdf)>. The report was shared with all Library faculty and staff; on May 10 a document inventorying all recommendations (self-study and external reviewers' report) was created and posted to the Library site <[http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/about/self\\_study/library\\_external\\_recommendations.doc](http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/about/self_study/library_external_recommendations.doc)>. During May and June, the Primary Group leaders met with the members of their groups to discuss the self-study, the external reviewers' report, and the combined list of recommendations, and to formulate priorities for a Library multi-year plan. On July 12 the chief librarian debriefed with the Primary Group leaders and the members of the Library Cabinet. Thus the Library's multi-year plan represents broad input and careful thought.

### THE BROOKLYN COLLEGE LIBRARY TODAY

President Christoph M. Kimmich has called the Library an article of faith. It is a satisfying experience to deliver an information program in a setting where the Library's centrality is seen with such clarity. Indeed, the Brooklyn College Library is much more than a beautiful building, or even a very good academic library: believing that student success and the educational experience incorporate experiences that occur beyond the classroom, we also deliver a robust series of cultural programs and provide spaces for many College events. Our art collection, with its catalog and audio tour, further distinguishes the Library as the cultural and intellectual hub of the campus.

The external reviewers gave the Brooklyn College Library an excellent assessment:

Overall, we conclude that the Library succeeds in its mission to support the students and faculty of the College. This is based not only upon the widely recognized standard of academic library assessment--the LIBQual + survey--but also on our meetings with students, faculty members, and administrators. Library collections--in both print and electronic formats--are adequate for a liberal arts college. A talented and manifestly

dedicated staff provides always responsive and often innovative user services. Facilities both in the Library and the Information Commons [Library Café] would be the envy of most academic institutions. We believe that the morale of the library faculty and staff is high and that the teaching faculty and student body hold the Library in high regard. (We should note that, having conducted a number of evaluation visits we have learned to spot and therefore are not overly swayed by cheerleading ringers). One theme we experienced throughout our visit was the uniform satisfaction with the leadership of Barbara Higginbotham over library and academic information technology services of the College. A comparison of the Library's situation as described in the 1994 external report with the Library of 2007 makes it apparent what the leadership advocacy of her administration and the concomitant support from central administrators have meant to the Library and the College. With some important qualifiers, we think the Library is well positioned to satisfy the increasing demands of an ambitious strategic plan by the college. It is also ready to respond creatively to an increasingly technology-savvy student body whose needs and expectations occasionally exceed the resources of any individual institution. (p. 1)

In other sections of the report the Library is praised for its strong service orientation (p. 2), innovation (p. 2), effective use of staff (p. 3), atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation (p. 3), and attractive/inviting/functional space (p. 4). The external reviewers conclude:

We are pleased to report that the state of the Brooklyn College Library/AIT is both strong and progressive. It is effectively led, well managed, well housed, service oriented, and efficient and creative in its use of information technology. It has a dedicated and productive faculty and staff and earned respect from the College community. We believe that it is poised to achieve even more, given targeted funding increases in support of agreed priorities and recognition of the central importance of the Library/AIT to the academic enterprise.

At the same time, the external reviewers make a number of recommendations which, if carried out, will significantly strengthen the Library's ability to serve the students and faculty of Brooklyn College, enhancing both student and faculty success. The multi-year plan presents several themes that will govern the coming years, with particular emphasis on areas where the recommendations of the self-study and those made by the external reviewers dovetail.

### **THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SELF-STUDY & THE EXTERNAL REVIEWERS**

- The attached chart *Self-Study & External Reviewers' Recommendations* illustrates the remarkable *congruence* between the recommendations found in the Library's self-study and those made by the external reviewers; the high degree of correspondence adds weight to the proposals.
- Many of the recommendations that appear in this chart have already been implemented. A handful of suggestions were set aside because they had been handled in some other manner, or were un-do-able. Some proposals (such as those related to Information Technology Services) are beyond the Library's scope. (These types of recommendations are marked in the attached chart).

The implemented recommendations include those related to the Assignments that Work! database, electronic course reserves, online reference service, an easy-to-use proxy service, and the display of new books.

- Finally, the external reviewers commented on their surprise at the lack of centrality for the Library in the College's strategic plan:

We believe that central administration understands and appreciates the Library's role in BC's reaching its academic aspirations. However, the administration's own plans give us pause. Where BC's 2005-2010 strategic plan lists as a goal: "Promote research and scholarship as a defining quality of a BC college experience," the library is not mentioned. The same document calls for renovation of offices and laboratory facilities; for humanists and social scientists libraries are largely their "laboratories." (p. 6)

This issue proved to be the thorn in everyone's side, yet it is easily addressed: Library faculty and staff want to see the Library accorded greater visibility in the College's strategic plan.

### THE LIBRARY'S PREFERRED FUTURE

The Brooklyn College Library's preferred future includes several major themes. Library **fund-raising** will be intensified and institutionalized. Spending for **collections** will be strengthened and regularized; it will also accommodate inflation in materials' prices. **Library hours** will be expanded in an economical, targeted fashion, and greater emphasis and resources will be applied to the **delivery of online services and content**. New human resources will strengthen **online teaching and learning**, an area in which both the College and the University wish to excel. Quality, sustained attention to Library issues by Information Technology Services will strengthen **technology-dependent services**. A new roof, heightened custodial presence, and maintenance plan will contribute to a **healthier, safer building**.

#### • **Fund-raising**

Many of the themes in the Library's multi-year plan are intertwined, and certainly the need for a more robust fund-raising effort is one such thread. The Library's budget has been cut—or, in "good years," has remained static—for a decade and a half: we have struggled with sharply decreasing purchasing power. At the same time we have received CUNY Compact funds, our regular tax-levy budget has been reduced.

Today, much of what we need to do in order to move to the next level requires new dollars, and fund-raising is one way to generate them. In terms of institutionalizing and promoting a series of opportunities for Library giving, **the external reviewers make several recommendations, including making the Library a check-off on every fund-raising mailing and assigning a development officer to the Library**. In the multi-year plan these recommendations are phased in gradually over the course of a five-year period.

#### • **Collections**

##### Strengthening Collections:

- Strong Library collections are mainstays of student success, faculty advancement, research, and excellent teaching. Certainly they are key aspects of the University's Decade of Science initiative and the central office's emphasis on globalism.

- As illustrated in the self-study, the Library's 07/08 budget request, and many other documents, **in funding library collections Brooklyn College falls significantly behind other CUNY campuses** (including other first tier colleges). If we hope to be a player in many University initiatives, including those associated with the Decade of Science, change is essential.
- In the spring 2005 all CUNY libraries participated in a University-wide survey about library collections, services, and facilities. While Brooklyn did very well in terms of services and facilities, **we received many negative comments about the book collection:** students and faculty in all disciplines complained about the lack of sufficient numbers of up-to-date titles in their fields.
- Before moving to the new building, the Library inventoried the print collections (a project recommended 12 years ago by the last team of external reviewers); missing volumes were removed from the online catalog and librarians made lists of those titles worth replacing. Though we have requested funds (most recently through the CUNY Compact initiative), **money to replace these valuable missing titles has never been allocated.**
- For a three-year period, University hold-backs/give-backs decimated spending for books (with reductions of about \$200,000 per year); both last year and this year the Library received a \$50,000 OTPS cut, one partially offset by Compact funding.
- Beyond an infusion of new money for collections, the Library also needs clear statements from the College about how it hopes or plans to participate in various University initiatives: at present, we are uninformed.

For all these reasons, both the external reviewers' report and the self-study recommend increased funding for print and electronic collections; from the external reviewers' report:

In our view, **BC should designate CUNY Compact and Graduate Investment Program funds on a basis at least comparable to the other senior comprehensive colleges in the CUNY system.** ... Further, on the subject of library research materials, at a minimum, we recommend that the College **fully fund materials inflation costs on an annual, continuing basis.**

In 2008 the Library will develop plans for strengthening spending for print and electronic collections which can be phased in over a five-year period.

**Archival Collections:** The new building has proven to be a *phenomenal* tool for attracting new archival collections—so much so, that we are now out of space in the archival tiers. Of course, space cannot be allowed to drive or dictate collection building, and for Brooklyn College the Archives is a distinguishing factor in the CUNY pantheon. Here the self-study and the external reviewers are in agreement: new space must be provided for the Archives. Fortunately, the Library has suitable, undeveloped space, and we will create and price a plan for its use for archival storage.

- Services

**Library Hours:** The Library offers many services that are available even when the doors to the Library are closed. These include 24/7 chat reference; catalog searches; access to electronic journals, newspapers, and books; online interlibrary loan requests; and electronic course reserves. The Library Café offers 24/7 access to PCs from which students can access all these e-services as well as a wide range of computer applications.

Nonetheless, the Library is also a *place*, a warm and beautiful one that students and faculty find most attractive. In the last 18 months, the Library has generated several different plans for expanding Library hours, recommending one that we feel makes the most sense. This option centers on expanded reserve reading room hours and the addition of new services during these hours--by adding paging, circulation, and printing services, the Reserve Reading room will become a mini-Library where students have access to the entire book collection as well as all licensed e-resources. They will be able to return books, charge out books (paged for them from the stacks), and retrieve books from other CUNY libraries requested via CLICS; these added hours and services will be especially helpful to graduate and evening students. (The preferred plan for extending hours also adds hours during summer sessions and intersession.)

On the topic of Library hours, the external reviewers say:

While [adding Library hours] will require additional resources, we believe there will be good return on investment, even if few or no staff-mediated services are offered. **Library administration has developed a plan to address this issue, and we recommend that the College commit funding for it.**

In the fall 2007 the College allocated \$20,000 to extend Library hours. The Library has committed \$8,000 to keep reserves open an additional 13 hours each week, but a major issue must be resolved before we can go further, that of one-for-one replacement funds for librarians taking contractually mandated released time: we cannot *add* Library hours while degrading either the existing service program or Library faculty morale. (For more on this, see below.) A secondary issue is that the \$20,000 seems to be a figure plucked from the air: it does not correspond with any of the options the Library has outlined.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the College and the Library will work together to: a) find the funds to ensure full replacement for librarians taking contractually mandated reassigned time; b) identify the most promising approach to extending Library hours; and c) fund the selected pattern.

**Electronic Services:** Reader surveys show enormous satisfaction with the scope and quality of on-site Library services. Now it is time to think seriously about expanded online content and services for readers who need help when the Library is closed, or who find it more convenient to consume services from their desktops, rather than by visiting the physical Library. (Online services and content are especially attractive to graduate students, who often hold full-time jobs and whom the College strives to attract in greater

numbers.) Already we have several arrows in our quiver, including online catalog searches, chat reference, and access to thousands of e-journals, newspapers, and books.

But, we should be providing much more in the way of online/downloadable instruction, content, and services, which are very popular with iPod-generation learners. The “podules” (highly interactive Flash-enabled learning tools) we propose can be distributed to MP3 players, PDAs, laptops, flash drives, smart phones—an array of mechanisms most students own. Podules will also sit nicely on instructors’ Blackboard sites. In a basic series we envision: Research Basics (narrowing topic, keywords, Boolean logic, etc.); CUNY+ (basic and advanced); Locating Articles; Locating Full Text; Proxy for Remote Access; Cite Your Reference; Using RefWorks, Evaluating Sources; Ethical Uses of Information (Avoiding Plagiarism; Copyright; Privacy and Information). The advanced series will include: Research in the Sciences; Research in the Social Sciences; Research in the Humanities; and Locating Statistical and Demographic Information.

The key resource needed here (proposed for spring 2008 recruitment/2008-2009 hire) is a second programmer/Web developer: we can do no more until staffing is strengthened. And, before this position is posted, we must resolve the issue of the proper job title/series of the programmer already on staff, so that both positions will be appropriately classified and remunerated.

In the following year, we propose to hire an e-learning librarian who will develop the content for our online instruction modules, as well as build and deliver an online Library instruction program. **The external reviewers recommend both positions, and the Library faculty give this new direction their highest service priority.**

### • Online Teaching & Learning

The College’s aspirations for online teaching and learning are clearly articulated in both its strategic plan and its performance targets:

***Strategic Plan: Academic Quality I.1.*** *Seek National Distinction as a Campus that Supports Outstanding Teaching.* Expand opportunities for faculty to employ technology to rethink how they teach and how to organize academic knowledge. Support faculty wishing to convert traditional for credit and non-credit programs into online programs directed at new student populations.

***BC Performance Targets 2007-2008: Goal 1: Raise Academic Quality: College Target 4:*** Use technology to enrich courses and teaching. *Proposed Outcome 4:* In 2006-2007, 2.4% of instructional FTEs were offered partially or totally online, with 1.6% partially online and 0.8% totally online. The percent of instructional FTEs offered partially or totally online will increase incrementally. The College will continue to advance the integration of appropriate technology into courses and teaching.

There is also ample evidence that the University expects much more from the campuses in terms of online teaching, a key element in the new University’s new master plan as well as the existing plan. In an April 2006 memorandum to College presidents, the chancellor underscored these goals.

*CUNY Master Plan 2004-2008: 11. Classroom Instructional Technology:* We will encourage faculty to go from using “web-assisted instruction” ... to online instruction that actually supplants classroom instruction and that provides truly enhanced learning, not just added convenience and access.

*Chancellor’s April 19, 2006 memorandum to the presidents re performance targets:* ... [Colleges should focus on] expanding online course and program offerings and using technology in other ways to enrich teaching among and across CUNY colleges. Colleges will be asked to count the number of courses and programs offered online and describe how they are using technology to collaborate with other CUNY colleges to offer a diversity of courses more efficiently.

Academic Information Technologies has a 10+ year history of helping faculty create course sites, hybrid courses, and fully online courses; however, the creation of fully online certificate and degree programs is a relatively new endeavor and one which should be furthered. Academic institutions engaged in building fully online course sequences typically use three-person teams (an instructional designer, a graphics specialist, and a programmer). In many settings there are several such teams; members design both credit-bearing courses, as well as revenue-generating continuing education courses. In sharp contrast, at Brooklyn we have *one* position; the incumbent not only does course design (*including* graphics and programming), but also faculty outreach for teaching with technology and that huge bugbear, Blackboard technical support. **To address the goal of “expanding online course and program offerings” will require resources beyond those presently available to us.** The external reviewers recommend that new positions (including this one) be created in order to achieve the College’s “stated aims of increasing online instruction, asynchronous learning, and Web-enhanced Courses”:

This will require three new positions in the Library/AIT in our estimation: a second instructional designer, a systems programmer, and an E-Learning Librarian. (p. 6)

### • Technology

The Library and Academic IT have *exceptional* computing power and skills. We are also fortunate in the degree of technological independence we are able to exercise: without this self-sufficiency, our large and complex organization could not provide the high levels of user satisfaction that it does. **That having been said, there remain important areas in which we need the assistance of Information Technology Services.**

- Intolerably slow Internet service and service interruptions prevent students from doing their research and Library staff from doing their jobs; we pay a great deal for licensed, academic-quality resources that readers can often reach only with great difficulty, if at all. Students give up in despair when trying to use our chat reference service and ask at service points, “Is there anywhere in this building where there are computers that *work*?” Were we running a reader satisfaction survey today, the results would be dismal.

- Meanwhile, technical issues prohibit desk-top delivery of articles requested by faculty via interlibrary loan. All in all, we need a higher and more consistent caliber of service from



ITS. The external reviewers learned enough about our issues from the self-study, their meeting with our constituents, and a meeting with the director of ITS, to recommend both a faculty advisory group and an external review of Information Technology Services, recommendations that we leave to be considered by the College administration.

- The Woody Tanger Auditorium was envisioned as a venue for teleconferencing, but despite the Library's many requests, this capability has never been installed. Teleconferencing was recently upgraded in the west end building, and there is no reason it cannot be installed in the WTA, giving the eastern end of campus convenient access to this valuable technology in a very attractive setting.

### • The Library Building

**The Roof:** It is not surprising that the Library's roof problems (translation: the safety of the collections) emerged as a top issue for the Library faculty and staff: the leaks, spreading and increasing in severity, have been a major source of anxiety. We are thankful that the University has allocated funds for a new roof.

**Custodial Services:** As one librarian said, "Healthy building, healthy readers, healthy staff." There is a great need for a second custodial pass through the building later in the day: Library and Library Café toilets become vile in the evenings. In many cases, students go to other buildings on campus—they will not use Library restrooms at night. Weekends present the same problem. And, if Library hours are increased, a greater custodial presence will be critical.

A further issue is the heavy use of Library spaces by other campus units. Custodians set up for these meetings, clean up after them, scrub the resulting coffee and food stains from the carpets, and so on. No additional custodial hours have been allocated to the Library, and more are needed.

**Building Maintenance:** The new Library is now five years old. Not only does the building function as a Library and the home of both academic and administrative IT, but its role in the life of the College has evolved into much more than anyone envisioned: the Library is a center for cultural events, an art museum, and a host to registration and countless other meetings, seminars, workshops, receptions, and conferences. This role is an exciting one for us, but it comes at the expense of considerable wear and tear on the facility. As construction continues on campus, demand for Library spaces can only increase.

As we begin our sixth year in the new Library, it is time to develop and fund a comprehensive maintenance schedule, preventing the possibility of the building's gradual slide into disrepair. If the Library is to remain the exceptional facility and source of pride that it is today, projects like painting and replacing worn carpets/broken furniture must be programmed and carried out systematically.

- **Staffing**

**The self-study and the external reviewers' report recommend three new full-time positions: a second programmer, a second instructional designer, and an e-learning librarian;** the cases for these lines appear earlier in the multi-year plan. **However, there are three other staffing issues which must also be resolved** if we are to implement our multi-year plan:

**Contractually-mandated reassigned time for library faculty:** The University provides full replacement costs for untenured classroom faculty entitled to released time, but not for Library faculty. It is impossible to hire a librarian for \$20.84 an hour, the rate at which the University is funding librarian released time, and the money must be found to cover this time. *A solution for this disparity must be found before Library hours can be extended.*

**Fill the line vacated by a Library faculty member denied tenure:** In their report, the external reviewers recommend three new positions, *in addition to those in place at the time of their visit, March 2007.* Since that time, one librarian was denied tenure. Filling his line is our top staffing priority, ahead of the three new positions: the multi-year plan recommends a spring 2008 search for a substitute.

**Re-classify the existing programmer's position:** Our programmer's position is incorrectly classified as a HEO: at the time the position was created, the Information Systems series did not exist and HEO lines were the only ones available to us. However, this position belongs in the IS series and must be reclassified, ensuring that the existing programmer is adequately compensated, that we retain his services, and that the new programmer recommended by the external reviewers is also properly classified. Other CUNY libraries have positions in the IS series: this should not be an issue for Brooklyn College.

### **IN SUM**

The process of self-study and external review has been an exhilarating one. We look forward to the many initiatives planned for the coming five-year period.