

YORK COLLEGE LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

2002 - 2003

Robert Machalow
Chief Librarian

Introduction

In the 2002-2003 budget year, the York College Library has continued to maintain services to the public while continuing to cope with budgetary and staffing challenges. Unlike several recent years, though the budget allocation began with a sum that barely covered subscriptions and required services, the administration has added to the budget in several ways throughout the year. Furthermore, the High School for the Sciences at York College has managed to increase the book buying power of the Library, as well as adding an adjunct. The adjunct has been hired to be a liaison with the High School, but often she aids at one of the Reference desks.

In this budget year, the Library has, in addition to its opening allocation for Library materials, received:

- a. At least \$35,000 for the acquisition of books from the High School (this money has been used to acquire books specified by the High School faculty, books suggested by our Library liaison, and books for the general collection of the York College Library). It should be noted that a separate collection has been established for the High School, and those books are cataloged in the Dewey Decimal system. Any item that cannot be cataloged in Dewey is cataloged in the Library of Congress classification system. In either case, the general collection of the Library has been added to.
- b. At least \$6000 in special encumbrances to fill needs in the Nursing and Physician's Assistants programs.

- c. The administration added \$40,000 to the Library's book budget to try to keep up with Library needs.
- d. The Library received a grant of \$20,000 from the Technology Fee. The money was used to acquire access to several databases, including: The Oxford English Dictionary, the Oxford University Reference Services, InfoShare, Social Work Abstracts, Opposing Viewpoints, and the journals of the American Chemical Society.
- e. The replacement of the Library security system (at the front doors of the Library). The old systems were so old that the 3M Company, which maintains the equipment, notified us that they would no longer maintain the equipment as it was so old.
- f. The York College Alumni Association has provided funds for the Library to offer access to the Encyclopedia Britannica Online and Black Studies Database: Kaiser Index.

As the budget year draws to a close, the Library has contracted to offer a system to permit printing from all the computers in the Library that are connected to the World Wide Web. In addition, at least one word processing program will be available on each computer attached to the Web. This will allow students to either search the web and print or edit papers and print from nearly all the computers available in the Library.

Furthermore, the Library has offered late study opportunities with full Library services on the G wing of the Library from 8:30 P.M. till 10:45 P.M. on

Monday through Thursday during the fall and spring semesters when classes are in session. The Library hours were increased on Saturdays. They are now 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on the G wing and 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on the H wing.

Still, the Library has a minimum of professional and support staff. With this minimum, the Library continued to stress services to the public. In an effort to supply needed Library materials to the public, interlibrary loans were offered to all Library users, something that is not provided by most CUNY schools.

In this academic year, the Library has made more computers available to Library users. Many of the computers were available for word processing only, without access to printers. As the new budget year begins, the Library plans to make nearly every computer connected to the World Wide Web have at least one word processing program, and be connected to the printing system which is to be installed.

More computers have been made available and more study areas have been created. Carrels have been moved from other parts of the College and installed in the Library. Additional seating has been purchased toward the end of the budget year.

In the academic year, some space was converted by the College administration to classrooms. The specific area used was on the third floor H-wing of the Library. Previously, a small portion of this area was the Faculty Resource Room. Three classrooms were constructed in this area, which has taken away study space from Library users. The furniture that was in that area has been relocated so that the Library users did not lose study seats, but at the present time

the study areas are more compact than they had been. In addition, further moving must be accomplished to better utilize this portion of the Library.

A discussion has been on-going about the Assistive Technology Room which is in the Library. At the present time, the room is too small, and plans are being formulated by the administration to convert a portion of the Library presently used for housing indexes and abstracts and used by Library users for study and the pursuit of academic information into a larger area for the Assistive Technology Room. This will necessitate moving of Library resources, but will free up another small group study room.

In this academic year, the CUNYPLUS system, which is the Library system for the City University of New York, was changed. A new vendor was chosen, and all Library functions were frozen in mid-September. When the system actually came up in January, there were several problems and challenges to the central administration. One of the challenges was to load the tapes of recent Library acquisitions onto the system. As of the beginning of June, these tapes have not been successfully loaded, and no Library materials can be made available to the public until they are on the system. Thus, it seems that the Library of York College did not acquire many Library materials even though a significant sum of money was transferred to the Library for acquisitions. This will be corrected in a future report.

It is hoped that the increased Library hours will be supported in the coming academic years. It is also hoped that the base budget of the Library can be at least maintained in the current budget crisis, and even increased if possible.

This would permit the Library to acquire Library materials to support the academic needs of the Library users. It is hoped, further, that the High School will continue to contribute to the Library, as the High School students, faculty, and staff use the Library.

Professional Library Personnel

In the 2002 / 2003 academic year, the Library's professional staffing remained small. After one faculty member's contract ended, a full-time substitute was hired for the fall semester. The Library hours were increased, and an adjunct was hired to serve Library users during the extended hours. During the academic year, the Queens High School for the Sciences at York College was opened, and an adjunct Librarian was hired to help facilitate Library services to the High School, both faculty and students. During the spring semester, when a search for a replacement Librarian was unfruitful, an adjunct was hired to serve evening / weekend library users. The search for a replacement Librarian continued during the spring semester.

With all this in mind, it is difficult to compare the staffing of the Library during the 2002 - 2003 academic year with its predecessors. It is safe to conclude, however, that the Library was not better staffed professionally during the academic year.

The Association of College and Research Libraries has detailed standards that academic Libraries should attempt to meet. According to the standards, by the size of the student body, faculty, and collection, York College's Library should have approximately double the number of full time faculty members as it presently has. The formula is used to calculate the optimum number of professionals to deliver quality service to the Library user community.

Furthermore, as the College is beginning a graduate level program in occupational therapy, the Library requires better staffing. The Association of College and Research Libraries states that increased staffing is necessary to support graduate programs.

Non-Professional Support Staff

During the 2002 - 2003 academic year, the level of support staff in the Library has remained the same as in the past. This level is smaller than it has been in the past, and is barely adequate.

In terms of College Assistants, the Library has been given approximately the same budget for College Assistants as it has in the past. Unfortunately, the minimum salary for the College Assistants has been increased while the budget has remained basically constant, causing the Library to hire fewer College Assistants than it has in the past. This has caused a reduction in service in the Library, impacting on Library users.

Budget

The Library's materials budget (OTPS) can be viewed in several different ways. One way is to analyze the budget by the percent spent on different types of Library materials, most important being books and serials (including microforms and the World Wide Web abstracting and indexing tools). These parts are closely related in that as the cost of one increases, the amount that can be expended on the other decreases given a stable budget. As always, the price of serials has increased, but unlike other years, the Library's OTPS budget, though beginning at the level of the year before, was increased several times throughout the budget year.

The increases included a special allocation of \$40,000 for the purchase of needed Library materials, the encumbrance of \$5000 for resources related to the Physician's Assistants program, \$1000 for the acquisition of materials related to the Nursing program, and over \$35,000 for resources to be utilized by the College community but earmarked for the High School.

The expenditures of the Library for books verses serials can be seen on Chart 1.

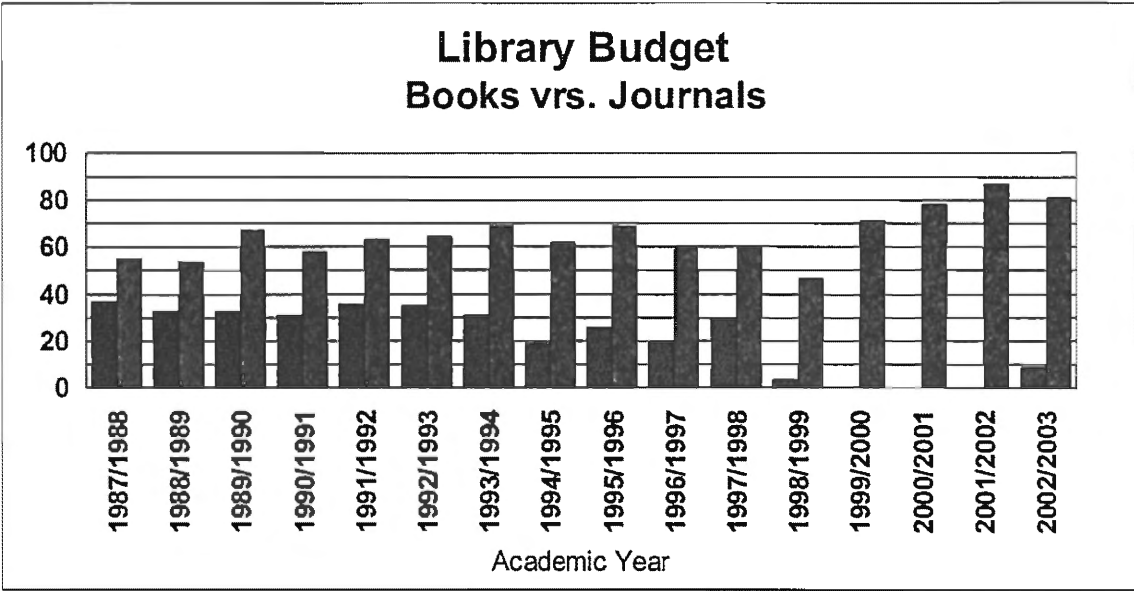


Chart 1

This information can be viewed from an historical perspective on Chart 2:

Academic Year	Books	Journals
1987/1988	37	55
1988/1989	33	54
1989/1990	33	67
1990/1991	31	58
1991/1992	36	63
1992/1993	35	64
1993/1994	31	69
1994/1995	19	62
1995/1996	26	69
1996/1997	20	59
1997/1998	30	61
1998/1999	4	47
1999/2000	0	71
2000/2001	0	78
2001/2002	0	87
2002/2003,	9	81

Chart 2

Clearly, the percentage of the budget expended on books has increased in the 2002 - 2003 academic year.

Use of the Library

The Library has many resources used by the Library community. These include books, journals, requests for aid at the reference desks, circulation of books, in-house use of Library journals, interlibrary loans, and Library instruction. Each of these will be examined separately.

Books

The acquisition of books during the 2002 - 2003 academic year was encouraging, though there were several problems with the acquisition of books. The most important is that the City University of New York changed Library systems for the CUNYPLUS system at the beginning of the Fall semester. Because of the change, records of acquired materials were not loaded into CUNYPLUS and there is no accurate way of ascertaining the volume of additional materials at this point. At the end of the academic year, tapes from the various colleges were beginning to be loaded, but as all the tapes have not been loaded, it would be impossible to accurately state the volume of acquisition.

On the other hand, Library materials that were added and confirmed by the Library Technical Services department can be numbered. Items added by the Technical Services department totaled 1241 for the academic year.

It should be noted that some of the acquisitions were the result of requesting largesse from other Libraries.

According to the standards of the Association of College and Research Libraries, the York College Library should have a total of over 200,000 volumes, based on the

number of faculty and students at the College as well as the number of majors. At the present time, the Library has a collection estimated to be fewer than 180,000 volumes, though this estimate is an extremely high one, as it is based on a guess made approximately twenty years ago. According to the records of CUNYPLUS, the York College Library collection can be more realistically estimated at little more than 100,000 volumes.

The standards of the Association noted above do not include the graduate program soon to be offered at York. Considering the needs of the graduate students and faculty, the York College Library should be at a level far above the 200,000 volumes noted above.

An inventory of the collection has never been performed, and this would help to indicate the true size and nature of the collection. An inventory would require a large number of well-trained temporary workers, something that is not likely to be permitted given the College's and the Library's on-going budget shortages

Journals

The number of subscriptions to periodicals has declined over the past several academic years. This decline in subscriptions has been somewhat eased by the availability of full text journals online through paid access to various databases, including EBSCO and Lexis-Nexis. Journal subscriptions have been suspended based on the use by York College faculty, students and staff. An on-going study of the use of periodicals is continuing and further cancellations are possible. Journals that are available in resources that the Library or CUNY pays for that are available in full text on the World Wide Web

are also being considered. Subscriptions to other online tools are being considered when full text journals are available.

A number of full text electronic resources are available to York College Library users. These include Lexis-Nexis, EBSCOHost, HRAF, the Health Reference Center, and the journals of the American Chemical Society.

Reference

The Library faculty at York continues to emphasize public service at the expense of other professional activities, even though the professional Library faculty is limited. Thus, each professional Librarian spent a great deal of his or her time staffing one of the two reference desks in addition to serving on College-wide committees and engaging in scholarly activities. The average amount of time each Librarian spent at one of the reference desks has remained constant because of the addition of adjuncts and the addition of time, as well as the appointment of one adjunct to cover the evenings and weekends while a full time Library faculty member was being searched for during the spring semester.

Because the Library faculty has remained significantly constant, the increase in the headcount of Library users has caused the ratio of students to Librarians to increase. Thus Library users could expect Librarians, devoting an increased amount of time to an increased Library user community, to be unable to perform other non-public service duties in as timely a manner as in the past.

Reference services at the two reference desks of the York College Library can be analyzed in several different ways. The number of reference interactions at the two

reference desks during the academic year was 18,870. This is down from 20,509 in the 2001 – 2002 academic year, and down from 26,019 in the 2000 – 2001 academic year. In terms of the type of reference question, the Library records three: professional, computer / World Wide Web, and non-professional. In the 2002 – 2003 academic year, there were 10,682 professional questions (as compared to 11,104 in the 2001 – 2002 academic year), 5114 computer / World Wide Web questions (as compared to 6460 in the 2001 - 2002 academic year) and 2974 non-professional questions (as compared to 3045 in the 2001 – 2002 academic year). Clearly, the Library had questions that required professional, trained, and informed Library personnel's assistance.

Reference questions can be examined by semester. Summer usage was slight, related to the low enrollment of students at York during the summer semester. During the summer semester, there were 469 reference interactions. In the 2001 - 2002 academic year, it was 418. In the fall semester, there were 10,007 reference interactions. In the 2001 - 2002 academic year, there were 10,275 reference interactions. In the spring semester, there were 8294 reference interactions. In the 2001 - 2002 academic year, there were 9919 reference interactions. Clearly, the busiest semester for reference interactions was the fall. There was a drop off in the spring semester this year. When examining the type of question asked in relationship to the semester, it is clear that professional and computer / World Wide Web questions were most frequently asked and answered in each of the semesters.

Reference services can be examined in relation to the day and time of day that reference interactions occurred. Most heavily used were Monday through Thursday, followed by Saturday and then Friday. Reference interactions occurred most between

10:00 A.M. and 6:30 P.M. followed by 6:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. and then 8:30 P.M. to 10:45 P.M. Questions asked between 8:30 P.M. and 10:45 P.M. are slight, totaling well below 10% of those occurring between 6:30 P.M. and 8:30 P.M.

Circulation of Books

The use of the Library can be examined in terms of the circulation of Library materials including the use of reserve materials. Chart 3 details the circulation of Library materials.

Circulation	
1985/1986	14480
1986/1987	13116
1987/1988	14897
1988/1989	15965
1989/1990	16048
1990/1991	16397
1991/1992	20873
1992/1993	25300
1993/1994	29127
1994/1995	30483
1995/1996	32094
1996/1997	70491
1997/1998	63118
1998/1999	68178
1999/2000	70437
2000/2001	77582
2001/2002	84780
2002/2003	95158

Chart 3

This information can be viewed graphically in Chart 4:

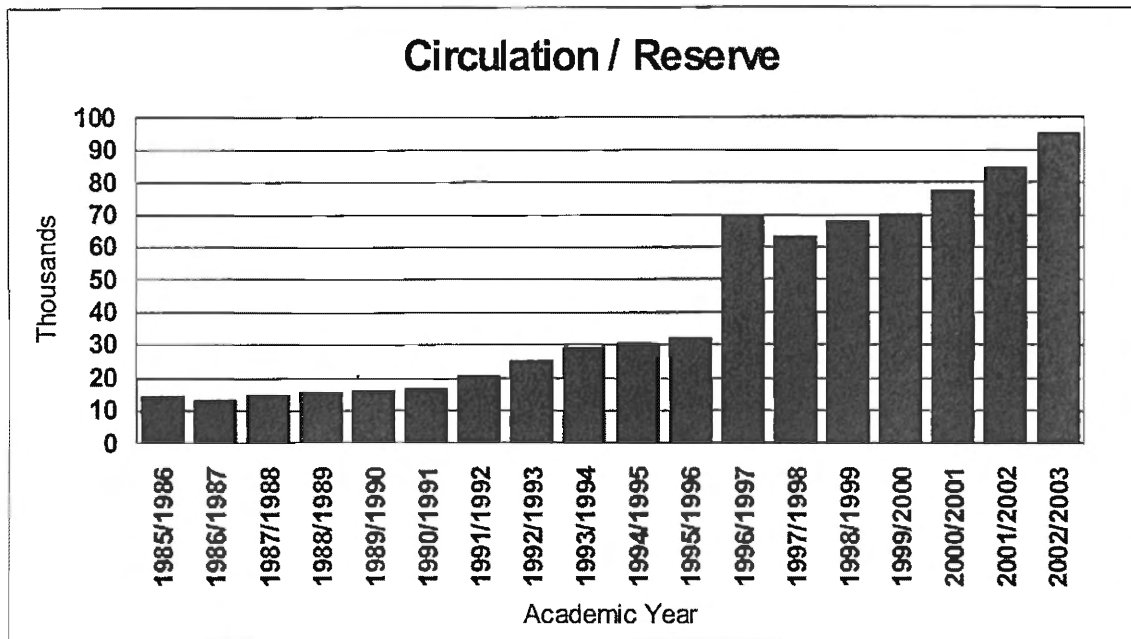


Chart 4

As can be clearly seen, the circulation of Library materials has substantially increased over the years. The most recent statistics include the circulation of books as well as the use of reserve materials: the CUNYPLUS system is unable to discriminate between the two transactions.

Use of Periodicals

The use of periodicals and microformed periodicals has declined significantly in recent years. The use of journals, including full text journals, has increased on the World Wide Web. The reason for this is that many more titles are available in full text in resources paid for by York College or CUNY. In addition, the Human Resources Area File (HRAF) is now more available on the World Wide Web, and this resource was heavily used in the microforms room.

The use of the periodicals collection and microforms can be seen in Chart 5:

Academic Year	Current Periodicals/ Microforms
1985/1986	12123
1986/1987	13876
1987/1988	19142
1988/1989	19248
1989/1990	27280
1990/1991	30506
1991/1992	46420
1992/1993	48161
1993/1994	48970
1994/1995	32195
1995/1996	29661
1996/1997	24903
1997/1998	23134
1998/1999	20033
1999/2000	12456
2000/2001	7271
2001/2002	7110
2002/2003	4907

Chart 5

Graphically, this can be seen in Chart 6:

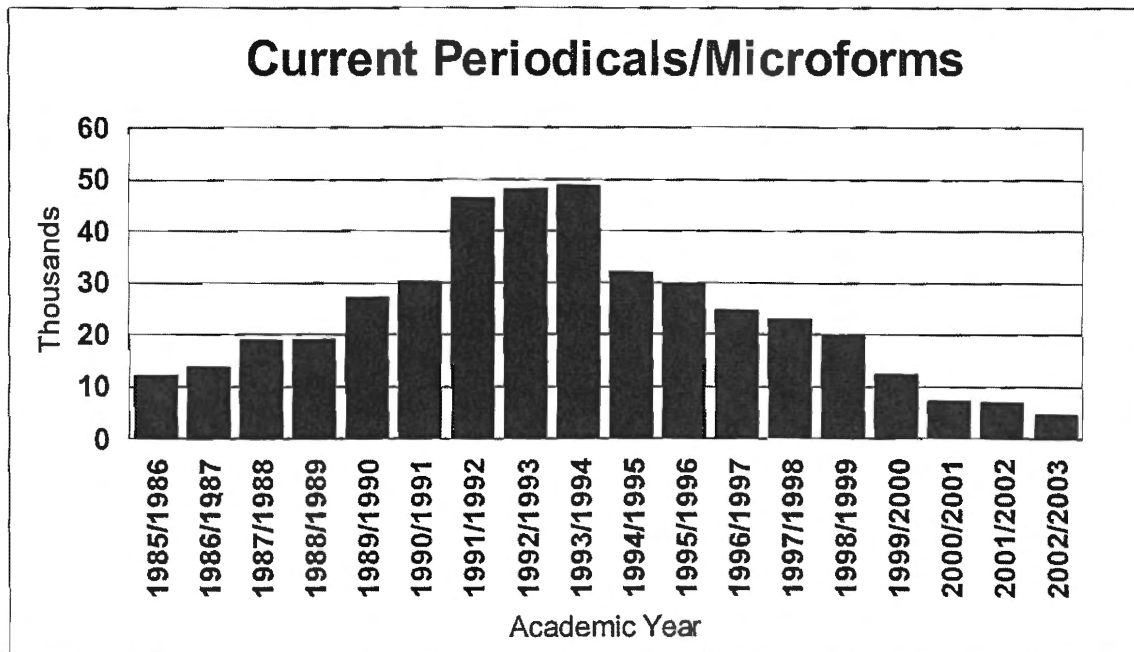


Chart 6

During the 2002 - 2003 academic year, the Library subscribed to 835 journals, including those in paper and on microfilm (during 2001 - 2002, the Library subscribed to 732 journals in all formats). In print, the Library subscribed to 320 (in 2001 - 2002, 549 journals). Subscriptions have been suspended based on the usage of journals and faculty recommendations as well as on the cost of subscriptions, which continue to rise as the Library's budget remained constant. Journals that are available in full text on the World Wide Web are also considered for suspension in print and on microfilm.

Chart 8 details the number of subscriptions of the York College Library. As more full text of various journals is available online the numbers may be somewhat misleading.

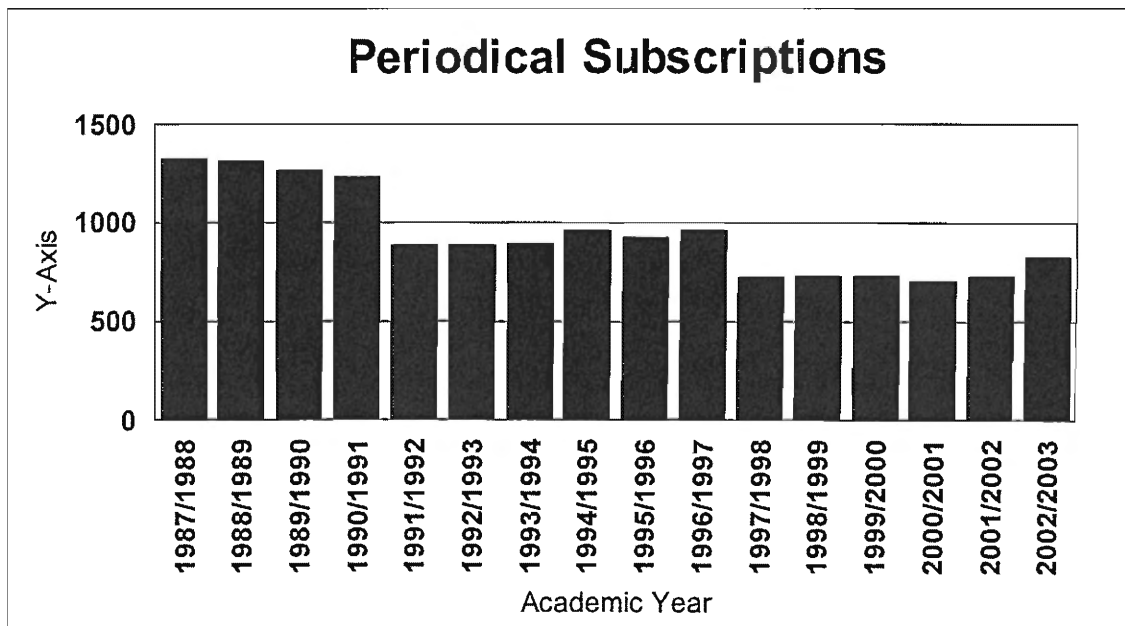


Chart 8

Interlibrary Loans

Some Library services are more heavily used by the faculty and staff of the College. One of these services is interlibrary loan. Though it is available to all Library users, the average amount of time to obtain interlibrary loan materials is often too long for many students to wait. Chart 9 shows the interlibrary loan activities during the 2001 - 2002 academic year.

Year	Total	Requests From York	Borrowed From York
85/86	714	392	322
86/87	506	348	158
87/88	1043	745	298
88/89	907	630	277
89/90	915	649	266
90/91	730	534	196
91/92	907	733	174
92/93	1215	1098	117
93/94	1358	1257	101
94/95	1437	1354	83
95/96	1635	1464	171
96/97	1346	1269	77
97/98	1467	1364	103
98/99	1507	1411	96
99/00	1951	1846	105
00/01	1981	1894	87
01/02	1958	1903	55
02/03	1421	1011	21

Chart 9

As the chart reveals, interlibrary loan activities have remained strong over the previous years. The vast majority of activity represents requests made by York to cooperating Libraries for materials not owned by York. This could be expected given the purchasing power of the York College Library.

York College is unlike many other CUNY schools in that it offers interlibrary loans to undergraduates. Within CUNY, most colleges offer interlibrary loans only to graduate students, faculty and staff.

Interlibrary loans are a very labor-intensive procedure as well as being quite time-consuming in terms of staff time. If the Library's budget were increased so that more Library materials could be obtained, our dependence on interlibrary loan would be decreased and services to the Library community could be increased.

Library Instruction

Due to a shortage of Library faculty, during the academic year 2002 – 2003, Librarians did not conduct a formal Information Literacy program. Instead, Library faculty instructed classroom faculty on the uses of the World Wide Web to obtain information. During the academic year, four workshops for faculty were held. In addition, 49 Library class visits were conducted, for a total of approximately 1003 students.

Conclusion

Though the Library continues to suffer from shortages in both personnel and dollars, the use of the Library has continued to remain strong. The Library faculty continues to be concerned about the cumulative impact of budget shortages on the quality of the services offered to the York College Community as well as on the collection. It is hoped that the Library's base budget will be increased so that the Library's collection can be expanded to better meet the needs of the York College Library community. An increased professional Library staff would permit the Library to better serve the Library community.