DESCRIPTION
The Three Rivers Learning Resources Center (informally referred to as the LRC) is comprised of two main facilities: the library on the Mohegan Campus and the library on the Thames Valley campus (recently named the Donald Welter Library). The Learning Resources Center (including both locations) contains approximately 50,000 volumes and 424 journal and newspaper titles. It also houses a small collection of microfilms, sound recordings, videocassettes, and electronic resources on CD ROM.

The Mohegan Campus library is comprised of approximately 10,000 square feet of space for collections, reference, circulation, offices, and 91 seats in general study areas. It also includes a media room, a conference room, and a microform room. Currently the Tutoring and Academic Success Center (TASC) is also housed in the library. The Welter Library on the Thames campus consists of approximately 4,000 square feet including collections, circulation, reference, offices and 54 seats in general study areas. Libraries are open Monday through Thursday from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Friday from 8:00am to 4:00pm, and Saturday, on the Thames Campus only, from 9:00am to 1:00pm.

Both campus libraries serve students and faculty at off-campus sites--the Naval Submarine Base at Groton and Waterford High School in Waterford--, especially through electronic access. In addition, the off-campus sites are served by local community libraries including Groton Public Library, Waterford Public Library, the Public Library of New London, and the Otis Library in Norwich. The Submarine Base ordinarily provides its students a 24-station computer laboratory through which they can access electronic resources at Three Rivers and other locations. However, since the September 11 tragedy, Submarine Base classes have been temporarily relocated. Students enrolled in classes at the York Correctional Center have access only to the limited library collection in the correctional facility because of security considerations.

Three Rivers students who are residing in Connecticut have access to materials at all public libraries in the state through a statewide "Connecticard" system. Connecticard is a cooperative program among the state's public libraries, administered by the State Library, that allows any resident of the state to use the borrower card issued by his or her home public library to borrow from any other public library in the state, as well as from participating academic libraries.

Within the past three years, the LRC at Three Rivers has upgraded its computer facilities, providing a much broader range of resources to students on campus as well as to students in off-campus sites. Computer workstations have been installed in the libraries at both Mohegan and Thames, enabling faculty and students to have access to information available on electronic databases and through other Internet sources. A networked environment of 14 Pentium workstations, each of which has the capability to access all library electronic resources, serves the Mohegan campus. The Thames campus has eight such computer workstations. A networked printer is located in each facility. Administrative offices within these areas also have computer workstations and printers. In order to support the increased number of computers and services, the network infrastructure has also been upgraded.

Library information systems and resource sharing programs have been updated to better serve user needs and to more effectively interface with statewide resources. The previous LION
system of resource sharing (Libraries Online) has been replaced by LIBRIS, Library Resources and Information System. This is a consortium of the Connecticut Community College Libraries to unite all 12 Community College Libraries in serving students and faculty. The technology which LIBRIS participants use to provide system access has also been updated. The Endeavor Voyager integrated library management system was installed and implemented at Three Rivers in December 2000. It provides better access to the holdings of participating libraries, and expands the resources available to our students. Through the LIBRIS consortium and the Endeavor Voyager system, Three Rivers offers library users electronic access to the holdings information for all 12 of the Community College libraries in the system as well as our own holdings.

In addition to updating the technology of library management and resource sharing systems, electronic access to periodicals, newspapers, and various Internet information resources has been upgraded significantly. The InfoTrac system providing electronic access to periodicals, which was earlier in use, has been replaced by both iCONN (Connecticut Digital Library) and EbscoHost. As a participant in iCONN, the LRC has electronic access via computer to a variety of periodicals through services such as: Business and Company Resource Center, Expanded Academic Index, General Reference Center Gold, Health and Wellness Resource Center, and Lexis-Nexus. iCONN is accessible to students and faculty from both on-campus and off-campus sites. EbscoHost, a system that Three Rivers purchased to augment those provided by iCONN, offers a wide selection of periodicals, especially full text academic sources. In addition, the LRC participates in reQuest, an interlibrary loan database, and, through Nelinet, has access to OCLC, a national source of cataloging records and inter-library loan information. Through these various means, the Learning Resources Center provides students and faculty with information resources that support all programs of the College.

Besides offering in-house collections and electronic access to other information sources, the LRC also houses a small media center that provides equipment and services for the entire campus. Included in the media center are laptop computers, overhead projectors, cameras, camcorders, slide projectors and TV/VCR equipment. The media center schedules the use of the equipment and is responsible for its maintenance. At the Mohegan Campus, there is also available a small space for in-library viewing and listening. In addition, there is an area for reading of microforms with two reader/printers. To secure collections and equipment, the libraries on each campus are routinely patrolled by security as part of the College's facilities management plan. There is also an anti-theft system installed in the Mohegan campus library.

The LRC strives to support the academic programs offered by the College, and to work with faculty to build a collection that meets the needs of the curriculum in each discipline. It serves students not only by providing information resources, but also by teaching students how to use the resources, and how to access the information they need both for their courses and for lifelong learning. To do this, library staff conducts a series of activities to instruct both students and faculty on the use of library resources. Staff conduct group workshops, provide instruction to classes, create individualized programs for special needs of classes and instructors, provide one-on-one student instruction, and create and distribute instructional pamphlets and information sheets. The LRC also disseminates information about programs by means of its web page. Evolving almost daily, the Library's web page is becoming the means through which users access library information. The web page provides access to information on databases across the Internet and on local electronic resources.
The Board of Trustees of Community-Technical Colleges determines the budget allocation for the Three Rivers LRC. This allocation includes a funding base of $28,293 plus $20,000 of additional funds to support the library facility on a second campus. Added to this amount is a pro-rata distribution based on a three-year average of headcount and FTE enrollment, adjusted by the Revenue Adjustment Factor. The total pro-rata distribution amount was $220,681 in FY01, and $218,272 in FY02. This budgetary allocation is designated for expenses and acquisitions, and does not include any funding for personnel or capital equipment. Historically, this allocation has increased by 3% per year for FY99 through FY01 although the FY02 allocation was 5% lower than that in FY01. Nevertheless, it is still more than $11,000 higher than it was at the time of the NEASC interim report in 1998. This funding is distributed intact to the LRC, thereby providing financial support consistent with other colleges in Connecticut's community college system.

To conduct all aspects of its operations on both campuses, the LRC is staffed by 1 Acting Director, 2 part-time professional staff, 2 full-time technical staff, and 3 part-time library assistants, with varying numbers of work-study students helping out as available. The LRC maintains a clear collections policy with guidelines for acquisition of new materials and periodic weeding of materials no longer useful, and it uses clear and consistent standards for circulation. All of its procedures are consistent with policies and practices of community college libraries in Connecticut.

The LRC belongs to various local and national professional organizations and its staff members participate as time permits in the activities and programs of these organizations. The LRC is a member of Eastern Connecticut Libraries, one of four Cooperating Library Service Units in the state, whose purpose is to improve library service through coordinated planning, sharing resources, and developing programs too costly for any one library. As a member of this private, non-profit consortium, the LRC takes advantage of such services as discounts on books and library media, continuing education opportunities, and updates on the library community through a monthly newsletter.

Library staff also participates as time permits in the activities of the Council of Librarians of Connecticut Community Colleges (whose purpose is to develop communication and cooperation among libraries), and the Council of Connecticut Academic Library Directors (who make decisions about shared systems). Nationally, LRC staff belongs to the American Library Association, the Connecticut Library Association, and the Association of College and Resource Libraries.

**APPRAISAL**

NEASC, in responding to Three Rivers’ five year Interim Report in 1998, noted specifically the need to continue to address library facilities and services, providing whatever upgrades and enhancements were possible even before any move to a new, co-located facility. Three Rivers has continued to address library issues in a consistent, methodical manner and has made further improvements.

Three Rivers began an evaluation process to gain insight concerning how the library supported the curriculum and met student and faculty needs. A Library Committee composed of faculty and staff, including library staff, was convened. The first task the Committee undertook was to develop a comprehensive survey to gather information. In developing the survey, Committee members first conferred with other librarians who had used survey instruments, and with faculty in professional library programs to determine what instruments were available. Through this
process, it was decided that Three Rivers needed to construct a survey specific to our needs and concerns. The College's institutional researcher then joined the Committee, and worked with Committee members in constructing an effective survey instrument. The survey instrument was first tested with small groups, and then refined. Finally, it was distributed to all faculties and to a broad cross-section of students. (Survey instrument and results in APPENDIX.) The results were tabulated and with the guidance of the institutional researcher, the Committee analyzed the results and used them to develop a list of priorities that would guide the Committee's work.

The areas identified by the survey as needing attention were: computers and internet access in the LRC; the acquisitions process, especially the extent to which faculty were able to be involved in the process to insure that collections reflected current curricular needs; electronic access to full text of periodicals; the age and condition of audio-visual equipment and the storage and accessibility of media materials; library instruction and orientation programs for faculty and students; and the hours of library operation.

Survey results and areas of concern were initially discussed with faculty at Academic Division meetings, and with Curriculum Committee, Deans, and administrative staff. These initial discussions revealed that plans were already underway for installing computers and Internet access in the library, and that the Library Committee needed to do nothing more than encourage this effort. Secondly, further discussions indicated that the goal of extended hours of library operation would be difficult if not impossible to resolve at the time. Extending Library hours is an issue impacted by staffing and fiscal realities that seemed well beyond the influence and scope of the Committee. Consequently, the Library Committee narrowed its focus to four priorities: (1) providing electronic access to full text of periodicals relevant to programs and curricular needs; (2) providing more opportunities for faculty to shape library collections so that collections more directly support the curriculum; (3) encouraging the development of a wider range of library instruction options for faculty and students; (4) investigating other options for storage and circulation of media materials and acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment.

As a result of survey findings, a number of changes were implemented in the LRC. Computer terminals were installed in the library that were equipped to access information about our own holdings as well as holdings in the colleges participating in the resource-sharing consortium. In addition, computers were equipped to provide Internet access from the library, and to provide electronic access to periodicals databases. The newly installed Endeavor Voyager system is an efficient and up-to-date electronic library management tool, and it is consistent with other library facilities in the state.

Through iCONN and EbscoHost services, Three Rivers library patrons now have access to a wide range of periodicals than were previously unavailable. Many of these materials are available in full text, and support every area of our curriculum. The availability of such information resources means that student research is more productive, more valuable, and more in touch with current data in rapidly changing fields.

Faculty now has a more direct role in both the collection building process and the collection weeding process. As a result of changes made in 1999, each academic department has allotted to it $5,000 per year from the LRC budget. Each Department may order books and library materials up to $5,000. If a Department chooses not to use the entire amount, the balance reverts back to the Library general budget where librarians use it to support the additional book requests of other Departments or to support general reference needs. This system enables faculty to be
sure that collections reflect the specific needs of courses and programs in any given area. In addition, faculty has participated with librarians in weeding the collections, culling and discarding out-dated and unusable material, not only to make room for new material but also to make the collections more appealing and relevant to students. In the academic year 2000-2001 (July through June), 544 books were weeded and discarded; from July through September, 2001, when many faculty engaged in an examination of the collections, 1218 books were weeded and discarded. Between January, 2001 and September, 2001, 1,956 new books were added to the LRC's collection.

Concerning library instruction, librarians have developed a broader array of offerings including small group workshops, in-class instruction, one-on-one instruction, and specialized instruction tailored to faculty requests. Library staff publishes schedules of workshops offered each semester, and make a greater effort at outreach. They have a variety of new instructional pamphlets and guide sheets available, especially in the area of computer use. Library staff themselves have been trained on the new electronic databases and search tools now available at Three Rivers; this has become a primary focus of library instruction.

A number of options for storing and circulating media materials, especially video materials, were investigated, included the establishment of a separate media shelving section or room, where videos in particular could be more accessible, and better maintained and monitored. It was envisioned that such a space would also offer a more visible, more efficient, and more comprehensive in-house viewing/listening opportunity. One possibility that was investigated was moving TASC out of the LRC to a nearby space, thereby freeing space for a media collections room as well as for more computer space. This proved to be impossible because there was no viable space where TASC could relocate. The only change that could be affected here concerned media materials that support the Nursing Program. There had been consistent problems with these expensive and essential materials; they were relocated to newly constructed shelving behind the circulation desk and are more secure and readily accessible to students and faculty.

In the fall of 2001, a follow-up study was done to determine if, in the four priority areas noted above, faculty were more satisfied and noted improvements. A follow-up survey was sent to all faculty in September 2001; approximately 25% of the full time faculty responded. Though the responding group was small, the findings seemed consistent with frequently voiced faculty concerns and anecdotal evidence. Responses indicated that some progress has been made, especially in the areas of collection building, and electronic access to full text of periodicals. Faculty seemed pleased with their opportunity to shape library collections, and with the increasing availability of electronic access to periodicals on electronic databases and through other Internet sources. Concerning library instruction, faculty seemed to recognize the efforts made by library staff to work with class groups and individual students on library instruction, though more interactive instruction was requested. Faculty also seemed to recognize that efforts had been made to provide computer access in the LRC.

Clearly, however, more improvements are necessary. The areas that elicited the most concern were computer access in the LRC (approximately 60% of respondents expressed concern) and media resources (approximately 70% of respondents expressed concern). Concerns about LRC computer access were wide-ranging. Though much has been done in this area, it is apparent that the increasing need surpasses the resources available. Faculty comments pointed to the need for: more workstations, more system support, more student support, more
internet access, more periodical database access, more up-to-date equipment, and longer library hours so that computers are available for longer periods. Even in areas where faculty were generally satisfied, such as electronic access to periodicals and student instruction, the few concerns that surfaced centered mostly on how lack of computer access impacted these areas. More workstations are needed so that more students can have electronic access to periodicals; more and better workstations are needed so that student instruction can be upgraded. Adding additional computer workstations to the LRC, however, is very difficult in the present space. Librarians and administrative staff are examining possibilities for adding workstations and providing greater access to electronic databases, Internet, other research tools.

Concerning media resources, faculty seemed most concerned about inadequate facilities for video storage, maintenance and security of media materials; and about inadequate and inaccessible viewing/listening resources. Though these needs have been identified for some time, and though some efforts have been made to improve, notably relocating the nursing media collection and evaluating space reallocation options, it is impossible to alleviate the situation until Three Rivers moves to a new co-located campus with one comprehensive library and room to expand.

Finally, the staffing problems in the LRC impact the ability to provide better services, especially for the time-and-staff intensive one-on-one instruction concerning use of the computer as a research tool. Often there is only one librarian staffing the LRC on each campus including both circulation and reference. Until these staffing needs are addressed, librarians will be hard-pressed to find the time necessary for attention to program improvements.

**PROJECTION**
Three Rivers will address campus-wide the need for more computer access. The opening both of an open-access computer lab and of a writing center will help to alleviate congestion at computers in the Library. Also, a search is currently under way for a new Director of the LRC; filling this position on a permanent basis will enable opportunities for more direction and leadership in library planning. Although we will continue to explore options for more creative ways of using existing space to provide more computer access and better management of media collections, we need to begin to envision a new library facility. A newly appointed permanent Director will help us do so.
SUPPLEMENT ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

DESCRIPTION
The Information Technology (IT) resources at Three Rivers Community College (TRCC) have been expanded substantially since the last NEASC accreditation review. The following describes the current status of TRCC IT systems:

Thames Valley Campus:
Four PC computer labs of 24 stations each are available. There are also two other PC labs, one with 18 stations and one with 10 stations. The instructor station PC in each lab is connected to an LCD projector. Each lab has a high-speed laser printer. There are also three portable projection units with a laptop that faculty members can sign out from the library to display information from either the local laptop or from the Internet. Servers are available to provide each faculty, staff, or student account with networked file storage capabilities. Servers also provide email, shared printer, and web page hosting access. Servers also provide license management services for concurrent use of network based software licenses. All desktop PC and servers are connected to the college’s Local Area Network (LAN). This LAN is also connected by Wide Area Network (WAN) links to the CT Community College (COMMNET) network and to the Internet. A data communication link connects the Thames Valley LAN to the Mohegan LAN. Three laboratories have been outfitted with wireless LAN equipment. There were three “smart classrooms” implemented for the Fall 2001 semester. There is one Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM) laboratory, which includes a robotic controlled manufacturing simulator. The Thames campus hosts the college’s nuclear reactor simulator. Both the CIM lab and the nuclear simulator have been in place for several years and are expected to be upgraded to new equipment configurations provided that the programs are continued and adequate funding is identified. All full-time faculty members and most staff are provided a PC for their primary use. Two satellite receivers (one stationary and one moveable) are in place. There is a wide format ink jet printer available to allow printing of large computer aided drafting (CAD) civil engineering drawings. High quality color printers, along with a few lower quality ink-jet color printers, are available. There are also a few scanners and CDROM writeable drives available. The telephone switch is interconnected with the Mohegan phone switch and a single voice mail system physically located on the Thames campus provides voice mail services to both main campuses.

Mohegan campus:
Three PC computer labs of 20 stations each are available. There are also two other computer labs, one with 20 Macintosh stations and one with 15 PC’s used for faculty and staff training. The instructor station PC in each lab is connected to an LCD projector. Each lab has a high-speed laser printer. There are also two portable projection units with laptops that faculty members can sign out from the library to display information from either the local laptop or from the Internet. Server and network-based services listed for the Thames campus are also available to Mohegan users. Two Mohegan PC laboratories have been outfitted with wireless LAN equipment. There are four “smart classrooms” with three more planned for implementation for the Spring 2002 semester. Full-time faculty members share a PC with their office mate. Most staff members are provided a PC for their primary use. One moveable satellite receiver is in place.

Sub-Base:
One PC computer lab of 25 stations is available. The instructor station PC in the lab is connected to an LCD projector. The lab has a high-speed laser printer. The lab PC’s use
wireless networking equipment which is connected to the CT Community College WAN network. Staff members have access to PC’s at their desks.

APPRAISAL

Overall, TRCC is in good shape with regard to its existing IT resources. TRCC attempts to provide the newest equipment to its academic laboratories. When these labs are upgraded, IT resources are frequently reallocated to another location in order to maximize the organization’s return on its investment. As of the start of the Fall 2001 semester the minimum configuration for a faculty or staff member’s PC is a Pentium II 266 MHz CPU with 64 MB RAM, 3 GB hard drive, 100 MB removable zip disk drive, sound card, and network interface card. There are a few Pentium 166 MHz systems in labs that due not require high performance. The availability of portable projection carts and the implementation of “smart classrooms” have greatly improved the access to instructional technology resources. The college’s LAN equipment was upgraded during FY2001. Most network connections provide dedicated 10 Mbps switched access to the desktop with 100 Mbps connectivity of servers to the network backbone. TRCC is part of the Microsoft (MS) Academic licensing program. As of Fall 2001 this allows installation of the latest MS operating system, the Office suite software, client access licenses for its Back Office server suite, FrontPage and Visual Studio software development tools. TRCC primarily uses Windows NT as the desktop operating system. The CT Community Colleges are implementing Microsoft’s Exchange server software as the email application platform. The continued implementation of the BANNER Information system, which is managed at the System Data Center, has been progressing positively. The roll out of the BANNER web for students has been extremely beneficial in providing a much more user-friendly access method to student information. As of August 2001, the on-line registration module implementation is seen as an important long-term service to be available to Three Rivers students. There have been problems with the implementation of the on-line payment module, but it is expected that these issues will be resolved shortly. An evaluation license of the Blackboard Course Management Software (CMS) system has been available from the CTDLC since the Spring 2001 semester. TRCC does not currently have video tele-conferencing (VTC) capabilities. There has been a “system-wide” project to acquire and install VTC equipment at all of the CT Community Colleges, but this project has been slow moving due to lack of standards and uncertainty regarding requirements. Finally, there will definitely be some cost efficiencies realized involving IT resources when TRCC is able to consolidate its two primary campuses to a single location.

PROJECTION

The future of IT resources has a positive forecast for TRCC. It is anticipated that TRCC will continue to provide state-of-the-art IT resources to support the college’s mission for the foreseeable future. Some of the challenges that appear on the near horizon that will have to be addressed include:

1. Determine which CMS platform (if any) to support.
2. Determine support requirements for educational technology enhancements.
3. Determine distance-learning requirements including web development support for faculty.
5. Determine whether or not to upgrade the existing CIM and Nuclear simulator labs.
Respondents: 23 (full time 21; part time 2)  
(Mohegan 20; Thames 3)  
Options for responding included:  
a. meets needs very well  
b. adequate but needs some improvement  
c. inadequate.  
The summary below examines the b and c responses that express discontentment.

1. Computer Access (14 out of 23 expressed concern)  
   13 checked adequate but needs improvement  
   1 checked inadequate  
   Comments include: need for more workstations, more system support, more student support, more internet access, more database access, more up-to-date equipment, longer library hours so computers are available for more time.

2. Electronic Access to Periodicals (8 out of 23 expressed concern)  
   8 checked needs improvement  
   0 checked inadequate  
   Comments include: need for more workstations, more full-text access.

3. Shaping the Collection: Does library collection meet curriculum needs? (9 out of 23 expressed concern)  
   8 checked needs improvement  
   1 checked inadequate  
   Comments include: business collection needs upgrading; photonics collection needs upgrading; health collection needs upgrading.

4. Acquisitions and Weeding Processes (4 out of 23 expressed concern)  
   4 checked needs improvement  
   0 checked inadequate  
   Comments note that faculty who take initiative to evaluate collection and order new materials get what they ask for.

5. Student Orientation and Instruction (8 out of 23 expressed concern)  
   6 checked needs improvement  
   2 checked inadequate  
   Comments include: librarians helpful but resources lacking; librarians need better training on database searches; classroom visits from librarians need to be more interactive and illicit student participation.

6. Media resources--Does collection serve needs of curriculum?  
   (14 out of 23 expressed concern)  
   13 checked needs improvement  
   1 checked inadequate  
   Comments include: microfilm services not adequate; services for access to Discs and CD ROMs not adequate; video storage and viewing not adequate.
7. Media resources--Circulation, storage and maintenance of media materials (15 out of 23 expressed concern)
   7 checked needs improvement
   8 checked inadequate
   Comments include: media personnel do not understand equipment; equipment and collections too old/not in good shape; storage and circulation of videos not meeting needs.

8. Media resources--Viewing/listening resources (16 out of 23 expressed concern)
   5 checked needs improvement
   11 checked inadequate
   Comments include: staff needs to be more available, more responsive; students complain about lack of access; viewing and listening stations need to be more visible and more accessible