

OCC librarians ask staff, books, space

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Librarians unveiled an elaborate program to improve Oakland Community College's learning resource centers, recently described by experts as "retarded."

The two-part plan would:

- Cost \$8.2 million in "one-time" expenditures over five years, from 1988 to 1993.

- Raise ongoing expenditures from the current \$4 million a year to \$6 million.

"It is a parity plan. A parity plan makes us average. It does not achieve excellence," said Johanna Kobran, who chaired an eight-member task force which worked a year on the report.

"A WISH list," commented trustee David Hackett, senior member of the board. "Other departments have wish lists also."

"I don't see it as a wish list. I see it as something we want to do," commented trustee Judith Wiser, newest member of the board.

The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, which granted OCC its first full 10-year accreditation recently, nevertheless had harsh language for the librarians.

"The college has not adequately supported the libraries for an extended length of time," the NCA team wrote. "Only in the last year has the budget for non-salaried items been increased . . . the collec-

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— Librarians report

tions and services that would assist in the instructional processes have been significantly retarded."

KOBAN TOLD trustees OCC's libraries have fewer volumes per campus than such two-year institutions as Lansing, Macomb, Henry Ford, Schoolcraft and Washtenaw.

OCC's 257 periodical subscriptions per campus were lower than any other large community college except Highland Park (103). The area range was 722 at Schoolcraft to 375 at Wayne.

"University libraries are archival by nature," she said, meaning they store knowledge. But a community college library's function is different.

"Community college libraries must be current. We deliver information services to the whole academic community," Kobran said. She cited not only books and peri-

odicals but audio-visual aids, records, tapes, maps, microfilms and assistance to faculty, students, staff and the public as needs for a two-year college.

At OCC, the group said, there is a further problem — transmitting materials quickly between five campuses scattered across the county. These require automation and

telecommunication systems.

AMONG SPECIFIC solutions, Kobran's group proposed:

- Raising the book budget formula to \$3 per full-time equated student from the current \$2.50, at a cost of more than \$14,000 a year.

- Raising the periodical budget formula to \$2 from the current \$1.50, also at a cost of \$14,000.

- Allocating \$2,000 for basic library materials for each new academic program begun.

- Adding three librarians in the next year and one-half position annually for a total of 6½ people in five years. Cost: \$242,000 a year.

- At Orchard Ridge, the largest and most academically oriented campus, adding 3,500 square feet of space, a classroom, a periodical-microfilm room and a government publications reference room.

- At Southfield, the newest campus, adding 16,000 square feet of space.

MANY COMPLEX proposals called for automating the system of retrieving information. In one passage, the librarians said:

"In short, the business community has long ago escaped from the Stone

Age methods of retrieving information. They are the leaders.

"The old card catalog, printed indexes and reliance on the U.S. Mail puts librarians right back with the dinosaurs."

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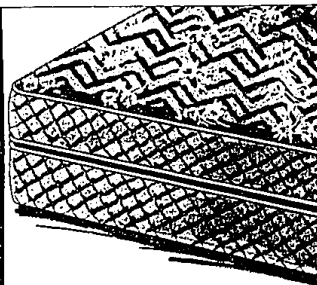
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