

Distance Learning

Distance learning library services and information resources are in place to serve students anytime, anywhere. The intent is to offer the same information and services no matter where the “classroom” is located. A commitment to teaching lifelong information literacy skills is reflected in the institutional priorities within the mission statement of the college: “Provide instruction in locating, evaluating and using information to become independent, lifelong learners.”

To achieve this objective, librarians have been and continue to be an active part of the distance learning committee. Because of this proactive planning, the LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center and their resources have been integrated into the distance learning program from the beginning.

The LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Centers’ staff and physical collections are on two campuses, Andalusia and Opp (MacArthur Campus), and a resource room is open on the Greenville campus. Andalusia and MacArthur each have an administrator with a master’s degree in library science. The Greenville campus has the support of its sister libraries and a written agreement with the nearby Greenville Public Library for assistance. To accommodate the needs of distance learning faculty and students, the libraries have flexible checkout and extended periods of time for use of materials. Within the buildings, collections are developed upon recommendations of faculty, students and librarians. **As of October 2005 the item count for the LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Centers is 35,730. This is an increase of over 6,000 items since October 2003. The above count does not include the e-book collection from netLibrary which includes 18,832 titles which can be assessed through the Internet.**

Reserve collections contain recorded lectures and other materials to enhance teaching. The media collections include CDs, DVDs and videotapes to be used by faculty and students. **The video collection on the Andalusia/Greenville campuses totals 847 items and on the MacArthur campus there are 518 items.**

Librarians are building collections in direct support of the curricula offered on respective campuses, as well as collections related to community colleges, teaching and distance learning. Delivery of needed items is available via a courier service among campuses and via mail. Checkout is a phone call away. When a distance learning faculty or student needs books and articles from another library, the LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Centers get the materials through an Alabama interlibrary loan program called STARS. LBWCC is a member of the Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET) and SOLINE which is a volunteer resource sharing program among libraries in the Southeast.

Easy, consistent access to both electronic and traditional resources requires that the librarians plan, develop and promote availability. For “one-stop-shopping,” the libraries have and continue to develop web pages. The libraries’ web page is the “gateway” to finding information resources and LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center services. From the front web page with one click, the distance learning faculty and students have access to the web catalog. The catalog is accessible 24/7 so that faculty and students are able to search for books and nonbook media by subject, author and title.

Another option on the web page is a link to the Alabama Virtual Library (AVL). The AVL includes more than fifty databases all of which are supportive of the programs at LBWCC and available 24/7 to LBWCC distance learning faculty and staff. Examples of databases specific to the technical programs include the Auto Repair Reference Center from EBSCO. Auto Repair Reference Center includes automotive repair information supplied by Nichols Publishing, the former publisher of the Chilton information. It contains information on most major manufacturers of domestic and imported vehicles, with repair information for most vintage makes starting as far back as 1954. Another database, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition, indexes and abstracts over 560 scholarly journals and includes full text articles for over **520 journals focusing on medical disciplines, especially nursing and allied health topics**. A database that provides comprehensive coverage is InfoTrac OneFile from EBSCO. A 'mega-content' database, it provides full text articles for **3,000 periodicals, 89 wire services and business press releases**. OneFile offers single source searching for news and periodical

articles on a wide range of topics: business, computers, current events, economics, education, environmental issues, health care, hobbies, humanities, law, literature and art, politics, science, social science, sports, technology, and many general interest topics.

From the libraries' web page, links to tutorials for classes, such as Business Skills Information and English 102 are available. Interactive tutorials cover the topic of plagiarism and web evaluation. Homework Help Alabama is a service that offers free homework help from subject specialists and is available everyday from 3:00 p.m. until midnight. For those distance learning students on or near campus, the LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Centers offer computer lab facilities. The LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center staff members coordinate with teaching faculty in order to give assistance with accessing distance learning courses and assignments. The librarians who serve on distance learning committees and orientation committees use the contact to be attuned to needs of both distance learning faculty and staff.

Services

The LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center has several strategies and activities to support work with distance learning students and faculty, specifically in regard to information literacy.

Selective dissemination of information

The LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center will notify faculty and/or students by e-mail of new resources (print and electronic, in the library, by subscription and on the Web) that match interests.

Orientation Sessions

The LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center will hold orientation sessions to introduce students to the LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center and Librarians. Tailored Programs -- The LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center will conduct programs tailored to specific needs (e.g., computer workshop series), whether the programs are at the LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center or in your classroom or online.

Curriculum Design	The librarians will be glad to suggest and research ways to integrate information literacy into a particular curriculum.
Speaking Engagements	The librarians are available to reach out to the community through speaking engagements.
Proctoring	The librarians are available to proctor tests and will organize information related to tests offered online.

Since LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Center services and resources for distance learning are heavily dependent on technical support, a strength of the LBWCC Libraries/Learning Resource Centers' services is the relationship with and the support of the Dean of Instructional and Information Technology and the rest of the IT staff.