AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

<u>Donna L Reed</u> for the degree of <u>Doctor of Philosophy</u> in <u>Education</u> presented on
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Title: <u>Leading the Comprehensive Community College Library: Defining,
Aligning, and Supporting Innovation and Change</u>

Abstract approved:

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Darlene F. Russ-Eft

The purpose of this multi-case study was to describe how library deans and
directors at large comprehensive community colleges strategically advocate for
and support instructional and technological innovation despite the reality of
limited resources and the stress caused by recurring funding crises in higher
education. It further sought to examine how directors articulate the role of the
library at the institution, prioritize support for new initiatives, and provide
meaningful professional development opportunities for librarians and library staff
members involved in the development of new innovative instructional and
technological initiatives. The following foundational questions guided the
research: (a) How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new
library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite
funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services?
(b) How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for
librarians and library staff members who are involved in creating innovative
services or programs?

The focus of the study was comprehensive community colleges in the *very large 2-year* (VL2) size and setting category of the Carnegie Classifications. It included a preliminary survey to verify the importance of issues, recruit participants, and conduct interviews with six library directors. Although participant directors worked at large community colleges, there were structural organizational differences between institutions. Organizational structures were (a) multi-campus district/multiple libraries/one director; (b) multi-campus district/multiple libraries/one director per library; and (c) one campus/one library/one director. Four of the participants had the title *dean*, and two were classified as *directors*. The majority of the librarians at the colleges had some form of faculty status, and four of the six colleges were unionized. In all cases, regardless of organizational status, the reference librarians had instructional duties.

The study indicated that the library directors were involved in various types of strategic planning including library-related, campus-specific, institutional, consortial, and state-level efforts. Directors, librarians, and staff members used a number of methods to share information with and get input from institutional partners. The directors reported that they also spent time responding to and participating in change due to State-mandates.

The findings indicated that the directors were focused on providing support for initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation. Librarians at all colleges in the study were heavily involved in instruction. The directors spoke of the need to provide learning opportunities for librarians and staff members in order to keep up with the fast pace of change in librarianship and the educational arena. Funding was by far the most significant challenge, but all libraries in the study made training a priority. The results of this research provided insight about high-impact practices in library-related strategic planning and organizational learning and identified areas in need of additional research.

Leading the Comprehensive Community College Library:

Defining, Aligning, and Supporting Innovation and Change

by

Donna L. Reed

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APPROVED:

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Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Donna L. Reed, Author

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DEDICATION

  This dissertation is dedicated to my sisters Joanne and Deborah and my daughters Rosa and Ivy. It is also dedicated to those who practice community college librarianship everywhere.

CHAPTER ONE: FOCUS AND SIGNIFICANCE

Community colleges seek to serve the top 100 % of American students…

they are preparing the next generation of students to be successful in

society…and to be lifelong learners.

Martha Kanter, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, 2010

The comprehensive community college is often described as being "all things to all people" (Cejda & Leist, 2006; Levinson, 2005; Morest, 2006) because of its commitments to precollege, college transfer, career and technical education (CTE), workforce development, and community education as well as its open access enrollment policy (Agbim, 1992; Bailey & Morest, 2006). Due to these multiple vibrant missions, the community college changes continuously in response to input and demand from its community. It is also impacted by stress due to intermittently recurring fluctuations in funding for higher education (Costanzo, 1992; Karp, 2006a). The community college must be prepared to make strategic changes that allow it to serve identified priorities during good times and bad. To do this, it must connect with the entirety of its community, and it needs to involve stakeholders in ongoing planning activities.

The community college library is a microcosm of the institution it serves, and as such, it is impacted by organizational change and stress due to funding issues. It is also linked to changes in academic librarianship and often has collaborative relationships with consortia and information networks outside of its institution. To be effective the community college library must be nimble and able to support the development of innovative programs and services despite ongoing changes in the academic and information environment, and the reality of economic constraints (Godin, 2006). The library director's role is to align library initiatives with institutional priorities, to define and market library services throughout the institution, and to support an environment that nurtures creativity, innovation, and continuous improvement and learning.

Deiss and Petrowski (2009) identified three key drivers impacting planning in academic libraries as: the economic reality in higher education; student expectations about service delivery; and changes in technology. A key challenge to those leading planning efforts in community college libraries is to ensure that the library's priorities are aligned with those of the institution as well as the students it serves and that library planning takes place in context of the wider academic environment. The library director[1] serves as a translator between the library and the college and as an administrative advocate for the resources needed to provide responsive library programs and services. In this role, the library director is charged with connecting the library to the college, defining the library's role within the institution, and procuring resources needed to support librarians and staff members in an environment of unrelenting instructional and technological change (Cox, 2008). Failure to do so can have a negative impact on the library's ability to fulfill its instructional role.

Research Problem

The role of the academic library has changed substantially over the past 15 years due to the information explosion brought about by the emergence of the Internet, increased access to networked information resources, and advances in information storage (Budd, 2005; Radford & Mon, 2008). As a result, the focus of library services has shifted from collection maintenance to instruction, and today's community college library provides instructional and technological leadership on its campus (Gilchrist, 2007; Kezar, Chambers, & Burkhardt, 2005). Librarians[2] now routinely form collaborative partnerships with instructional faculty[3] (Caspers & Lenn, 2000; Raspa & Ward, 2000) in order to help students gain the skills needed to use information effectively. Libraries and librarians are key partners in

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[1] Throughout this study, library director refers to the director, dean, or administrator in charge of the community college library.
[2] Community college librarians are typically classified as faculty. For clarification throughout this study, they will be referred to as librarians.
[3] Throughout this study, the term faculty will refer to non-library faculty.

supporting student success and completion and in encouraging students to become lifelong learners.

Despite evidence of this shift found in the current practice of academic librarianship and in academic library literature, the community college library's role is not always clearly defined or understood within the institution it serves (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Economics, student expectations, and technological changes provide significant challenges to the library's capacity to innovate (Deiss & Petrowski, 2009). Libraries at large comprehensive community colleges are challenged to meet the diverse needs of the institutions they serve and to remain innovative in an environment of unrelenting instructional and technological change and fiscal constraint. The library director must be able to articulate the library's role within the college, align library initiatives with institutional priorities, and provide support for those engaged in innovative activities. This study examined the library director's role in leading and supporting these three activities.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this multiple case study was to describe how library directors, at large comprehensive community colleges, strategically advocate for and support instructional and technological innovation despite the reality of limited resources and the stress caused by recurring funding crises in higher education. It further sought to examine how library directors articulate the role of the library at the institution, prioritize support for new initiatives, and provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members involved in the development of new innovative instructional and technological initiatives. The results of this research provided insight about high-impact practices in library-related strategic planning and organizational learning and identified areas in need of additional research. This study is useful to library directors, college administrators, librarians, and instructional faculty.

The focus of this study was on comprehensive community colleges in the *very large 2-year* (VL2) size and setting category of the Carnegie Classifications.

See Appendix A for a list of VL2 schools as of 2004. The scope included library integration with precollege, college transfer, and career and technical education (CTE) programs, but excluded workforce development and community education, because community college libraries are rarely funded to support those programs in any systematic way.

Research Questions

This study investigated the following foundational questions:

1. How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services? Rationale: Libraries often face an abundance of unfunded mandates due to added requests for instruction brought about by the addition of new or redesigned programs and a desire to meet students' expectations around service delivery and information technology. This question seeks to ascertain what processes library directors use to strategically support creativity and innovation in the realm of instruction and technology. It seeks to understand why specific initiatives are selected for support and how they align with institutional priorities. The results of this question may identify high-impact practices that could be shared through a national community of practice[4].

2. How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff who are involved in creating innovative services or programs? Rationale: New library initiatives are often generated in response to programmatic changes at the college or shifts in student expectations. This question acknowledges that that library personnel working on new initiatives often add these tasks to a full set of operational duties. It seeks to discover how library directors provide support for the learning associated with new initiatives, and it focuses specifically on projects related to instructional or

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[4] In an organization, a group that consciously supports organizational learning around a specific topic with the goal of sharing that information in order to improve service.

technological innovation. The results of this question will be useful to library directors whose role it is to provide instructional leadership that supports learning at their institutions.

Terms and Concepts

  Comprehensive community college. A community college that offers academic, career and technical (CTE), pre-college, workforce development, and community programs (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

  Faculty. Instructional faculty.

  Information literacy. The ability to find, evaluate, and use information effectively, and to form an opinion about the content of that information (Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), 2007).

  Librarian. Although many community college librarians are classified as faculty, this paper uses the word librarian in order to differentiate between library faculty and instructional or content faculty.

  Library. Community colleges sometimes refer to their libraries as *learning resource centers* (LRCs). Although this trend has faded, it is still in use. This research uses the term library synonymously with LRC, learning commons, and information commons.

  Library director/director. Most urban community colleges use the title dean or director to designate the administrator in charge of the library across the system, and the majority of the library administrators in this study were classified as deans. For simplicity, this study uses the term *library director* or *director*.

  Library staff. It is not uncommon for those outside of the library community to refer to everyone working in a library as a librarian. For the purpose of this study, *library staff* refers to all library employees except library managers and librarians (as defined above). This represents a broad group of job classifications and includes employees with diverse educational backgrounds.

Research Significance

      The following three reasons provide significance for this study: (a) a need to examine how community college library directors articulate the library's role at the institutional level; (b) a gap in the literature about how library directors strategically align library initiatives with institutional priorities; and (c) my personal interest in contributing to this discussion.

      Articulation of the library's role. It is widely accepted that the role of the academic library has shifted in response to unrelenting changes in the information environment and that community college libraries are now key providers of instruction supporting information literacy and lifelong learning (ACRL, 2007; Cox, 2008). In a position statement on information literacy, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) provided evidence of its understanding of the impact of this shift on the community college and of the library's instructional role in supporting students in this information-dense environment (AACC, 2008b). Despite this formal recognition by AACC and ACRL, there is still a lack of understanding at the institutional level about the role of the 21st century community college library in the provision of instructional support and in bridging the digital divide for its students. The latest edition of *The American Community College*, for example, devotes only two pages to the *learning resource center*, and the instructional role is entirely omitted (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). This study investigated how library directors work with the college to define the role of the library at the institution and will possibly illuminate high-impact practices that could be considered for adoption by others.

      Strategic alignment with institutional priorities. Although much has been written about specific practices in academic librarianship, there is a gap in the literature about how large 21st century community college libraries strategically and holistically align with institutional priorities. This study addressed that gap, and it attempted to create a framework that could be used by library directors and college administrators to support creative library-related instructional and technological innovation. A limitation of this study, which may have implications

for future research, was its focus on the large community college. Although the results of this study may have significance in smaller settings, findings may not be applicable to all community college environments because of the exclusion of small and mid-sized colleges in the research design. Further research may be needed in order to determine if the findings are generalizable to smaller comprehensive community college settings.

        Personal interest. Finally, as an urban community college library director and a community college advocate, this topic is personally significant and at the center of my professional interest. I believe that comprehensive community colleges are important first responders to the educational needs of the communities they serve. They are known for their innovation in providing affordable academic services to students with a wide variety of educational needs. They are complex, ever-changing institutions, and I believe that it is important for their libraries to be positioned to innovate and change in response to their evolving educational priorities. It is my hope that this study will provide a framework that will help library directors build connections between the library and the college and that it will highlight some high-impact practices to support the organizational learning needed to nurture instructional leadership and technological innovation. I hope to continue this exploration with my national and local colleagues well after the publication of this study.

Chapter Summary

        The intent of this study was to examine how library directors, as leaders at large comprehensive community colleges: work to define the role of the library within the institution; strategically align library initiatives with institutional priorities; and provide support for organizational learning needed by employees involved in the design of new and innovative instructional and technological initiatives. It sought to examine how these issues are addressed despite the reality of resource constraints found in higher education.

The study was based on the following foundational questions: (a) How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services?; (b) How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff who are involved in creating innovative services or programs?

The study examined these activities in context of each other. It further sought to develop a framework that could be used to support library-related instructional and technological innovation at the community college library.   Its findings are useful to library directors, librarians, and college administrators seeking to make decisions about library resources at their institutions.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

[Speaking of community college libraries] ... library resources are not frills. Our students don't have computers, and they don't have the resources... [libraries are] an essential institution for an educated society. Libraries need to address the realities of a diverse student population ... the investment makes a profound difference in students' lives... The first time you hear a student stand up and say 'now I have a career and I have hope'—the library is integral to that.

Mary Kay Rudolph, VP of Academic Affairs, Santa Rosa Junior College (2010)

The role of the academic library has changed substantially over the past 30 years, largely due to the information explosion brought about by the emergence of the Internet, increased access to networked information resources, and advances in information storage (Budd, 2005; Radford & Mon, 2008). The focus of the academic library has shifted from activities that support the organization and maintenance of the physical collection to activities that support student learning and academic completion and success. Today's academic librarians are no longer intermediaries between library users and the collection. They are instead full academic partners providing instructional leadership across the curriculum (Gilchrist, 2007).

During this era of unrelenting technological change, community college library leaders have needed to be diligent about connecting library services to institutional priorities and defining the role libraries play in the 21st century academic environment. This challenge has been especially significant at community colleges where libraries were not as well established during the early years of the information explosion as their university counterparts (Levinson, 2005). Although community college libraries have often been early adopters of technology due to their relationship with online information sources and their frontline instructional service to students and college faculty, their institutions

have not always had a clear understanding of how technological advances have impacted the services they deliver. It has been incumbent upon library directors to communicate to the institution about the library's value as an instructional partner. This literature review sought to examine how library directors, as instructional leaders, help align library services with institutional priorities.

The purpose of this literature review was to gather, evaluate, and critique current research and professional literature relevant to the topic of the 21st century library at the large comprehensive community college. It provided historical context about the evolution of the community college library, and it sought specifically to examine literature that defined the role of the community college library in the context of its institution and of the surrounding economic and political environment. It also sought to identify leadership issues relating to the administration of the large comprehensive community college library. This literature review was significant, because it defined the role of the 21st century academic library at the comprehensive community college for those, including non-library college administrators, seeking to make institutional decisions about library services. In addition, the review identified research about current issues, leadership challenges, and promising practices for all involved in community college leadership and administration.

Although there was substantial literature about various aspects of the community college library, there was a gap in the literature about the role of the library at the large comprehensive community college. It was also evident when reviewing handbooks and histories about the community college that the library's role has been neglected or omitted entirely from many of these publications (e.g. Baker, Dudziak, & Tyler, 1994; Cohen & Brawer, 2008). These findings indicated a need for further research and professional literature about leadership issues facing today's comprehensive community college library directors.

This review was also significant, because it highlighted the need for research evaluating the impact of library services on broader issues of importance

to community colleges such as student retention, completion, and success. The Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CCSC) and the Community College Research Center (CCRC), for example, support and coordinate research related to community colleges (CCRC, n.d.; Floyd & Antczak, 2010). They focus on nationally targeted areas of interest such as developmental education, data-driven reform, and student outcomes. Although the community college library is not a current focus area, it could be a potential research partner due to the fact that its services are found throughout the curriculum and its programs support a wide array of institutional priorities.

Approach to the Literature

Articles were retrieved from a multitude of databases including Academic Search Premier, ERIC, Computer Source, Education Research Complete, Library**,** Information Science & Technology Abstracts, and open access journals. Dissertations were identified in Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI). Search terms and phrases included combinations of: academic library, community college, community college librar*, mission statement, library administration, library management, library leadership, organizational change, and outcomes assessment. In addition to keyword searches, subject terms in article records and author links were traced for articles of high relevance to the research, and tables of contents from relevant professional and scholarly journals were systematically reviewed for appropriate material. Monographs and non-serial literature were obtained through searches of the Oregon State University/Summit library system, and professional documents were obtained from websites of relevant library and education professional associations. References from Dr. Kanter's speeches were obtained from a transcript requested from her office and from the U.S. Department of Education.

Literature was chosen for its appropriateness in supporting the goal of the review and an attempt was made, where possible, to focus narrowly on community college library literature. Much of the literature was derived from professional

journals which, while peer-reviewed, are not necessarily based on scholarly research. Additionally, information from the websites of professional organizations was used to provide background and context. Literature supporting issues such as strategic planning, management, and leadership was excluded unless it was explicitly tied to academic librarianship.

Setting Context: A Brief History of the Community College Library

This brief history of the community college library sets context for those unfamiliar with its evolution. It provides background for those seeking to learn more about the community college library in order to make informed decisions about support for the provision of modern library services in a large community college setting. This is important because, for a number of reasons, including the rapid evolution of the comprehensive community college from a grassroots organization to a complex learning organization (Rusk, 2006), the role of the library is sometimes misunderstood or poorly articulated at the institutional level.

The number of community colleges in the United States skyrocketed from 1960-1980 with the addition of 662 new public institutions (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Although growth patterns have stabilized since this era, institutions have continued to increase in size and complexity. Community college libraries have evolved alongside their institutions to meet the diverse needs of students in the global information age (Holleman & Peretz, 1992). Despite their importance, community college libraries have, at times been overlooked and have been resourced almost as an afterthought. It is not uncommon to find that the contribution of the library is barely mentioned, if at all, in campus initiatives (Grimes, 1998). For example, *The American Community College 5th* devoted fewer than two pages to information about learning resource centers (LRCs)

Growth of community colleges
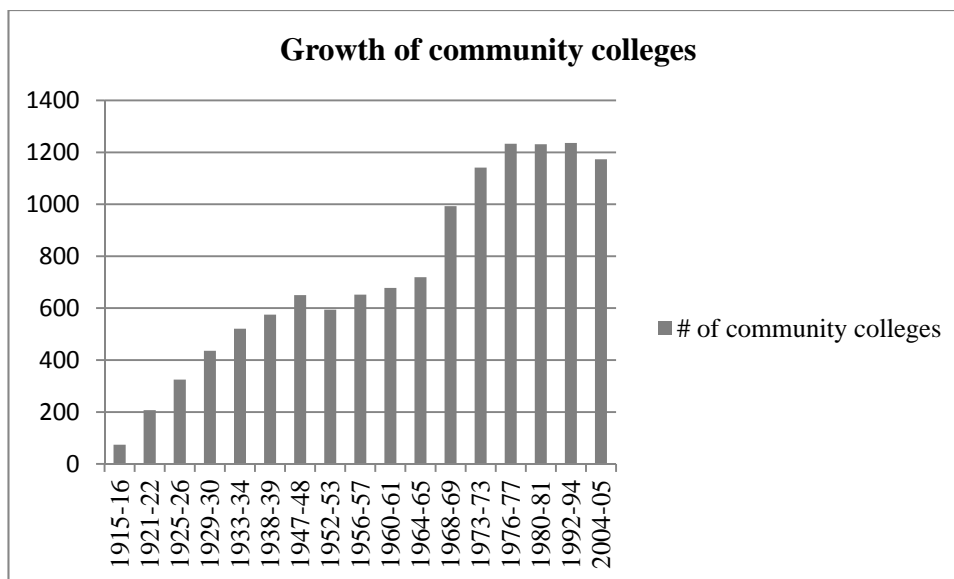
Figure 2.1. Growth of community colleges. Adapted from Cohen and Brawer (2008), p. 17.

(Cohen & Brawer, 2008) and did not acknowledge the significant changes that have occurred in the field of librarianship and information delivery over the past 20 years. The following chronology provides a thumbnail sketch of the history of the community college library from 1960 forward.

The 1960s. Approximately 467 new community colleges emerged in the 1960s (Levinson, 2005). Many of them evolved from programs that had previously been embedded in secondary educational institutions. By necessity, college leaders focused first on creating administrative and academic structures, and early community colleges often relied on decentralized departmental book collections in lieu of libraries (Guernsey, 1989; Levinson, 2005). Libraries were often added later, sometimes due to pressures from regional accrediting bodies (Platte & Mattson, 1978). This is very different than the early development of universities where, from the outset, academic programs were tied to the library and its collections, and libraries were often referred to as the heart of the institution (Grimes, 1998).

This asynchronous development pattern meant that many community colleges were seeking resources to support full-fledged libraries well after academic programs had been established (Blocker, 1968; Gipson, 1967; Tanis, 1967). In this environment, libraries were seen as competitors for precious resources rather than as educational partners. An unintended consequence of this situation was that early library services were often not fully integrated into instructional programs or aligned with institutional priorities.

Early community college librarians were often recruited from secondary education. Many did not possess the library education of their counterparts in four year institutions and may not have been equipped to partake in wider institutional conversations. As community colleges grew and libraries became established, librarians became professionalized (Levinson, 2005). Community colleges began to routinely hire professional librarians to meet the standards and recommendations of accrediting agencies.

The 1970s. The 1970s was a time of limited resources (Chan & Krieger, 1976; Gwinn, 1977; Thompson, 1979). The emergence of the online catalog in the late 1970s revolutionized the library profession (Chan & Krieger, 1976; Thompson, 1979). Much of the cataloging, previously done manually by professional librarians, was now automated. This shift meant that the bulk of cataloging could be relegated to paraprofessionals. The realm of the library was beginning to expand beyond its physical collection (Rader, 1977), and library employees were challenged to learn new skills in the changing information environment.   Also in the 1970s, concurrent with the emergence of early digital media, community college libraries staged a quiet but well-recognized revolution (Platte & Mattson, 1978). Librarians turned their eyes towards the mission of the college and began to find new ways to support the academic experiences of the students they served.

This new focus on student learning caused librarians to rethink how information was delivered to students. They began to consider how new formats

could be used to bring information to the diverse community college clientele (DeAngelis, 1987). They sought media that took into account students' backgrounds, languages, abilities, and learning styles (Niederer, 1977; Smith, 1978). They supported activities that encouraged students to create information and were early adopters of the experiential learning movement. During this era, many libraries became known as *learning resource centers* (LRCs). These learning centers housed "non-traditional formats," and for the first time, the focus was on the learning experience, not just content delivery (DeAngelis, 1987).

The 1980s. By the mid-1980s many community colleges were using automated systems to process and manage the library collection (Ray, 1989). This was a challenging time for many in the profession, because their duties, not their jobs, were becoming obsolete (Bechtel, 1986; Brown, Smith, & Scott, 1984; Weintraub, 2004). For the first time, community college libraries did not have large backlogs of books waiting to be processed (Dubin & Bigelow, 1986). There was trepidation that automated systems would replace people and that the library would become a faceless, mechanized entity (Brown et al., 1984). In hindsight, from an administrative perspective, many of these changes were not as radical as they may have seemed. Issues in librarianship were not changing; technology was simply providing new opportunities to address them.

The role of the librarian was rapidly evolving from mediator to instructor. Library administrators sought to hire librarians with new skill sets (Dumont, 1989). Students could now independently find library materials using keyword searches to access library records from multiple data points (Dubin & Bigelow, 1986). For the first time, there was the possibility that students would find too much rather than too little information. As a result, the role of the librarian and the library began to shift (Dale, 1988; Educational Resources Information Center & McCabe, 1983; Ray, 1989). Librarians began to teach strategies that would allow students to manage information overload and become independent information seekers (Holleman & Perez, 1992).

The 1990s. The 1990s was a time of fast-paced change in the information environment and for the most part, the library community embraced it wholeheartedly (Jenkins, 1999; Kalick, 1992). Librarians were being challenged to learn new skills, and library usage was up due to the popularity of the Internet (Affleck, 1992; Johnston,1994a; Kalick, 1992). For a brief period, it looked like the term *cybrarian* might replace librarian (Lewis, 1994; Ojala, 1993; Redmond, 1994). Much of the information that users would take for granted by the end of the decade did not exist or was not accessible at its beginning.

Although the Internet had existed prior to the 1990s, it did not begin to emerge in its graphical form until that time. Librarians were quick to exploit its power by providing open access to the library catalog, subscription databases, and instructional materials (Jenkins, 1999; Johnston, 1994a). They extended the library to the Internet by creating virtual reference services and content that supported information literacy efforts (Rusk, 1999; Ryer & Nebeker, 1999).

Instructional faculty struggled to integrate these new resources into their teaching, and librarians reached out to support them and their students. In a mixed method study about faculty perceptions of student library use, Baker (1997), reported that faculty members were concerned with teaching pedagogies and wanted to work collaboratively with librarians on library instruction, especially where technology was involved.

During this time of rapid technological change, there was confusion about the role of the library. Some suggested that Internet resources would replace the need for libraries, while others focused on the technology and viewed the library as an extension of the school's IT (information technology) department. Library administrators scrambled to set library services in context and to support librarians in the development of the skills needed support the school's students and faculty (Tompkins, 1996). More than ever, library directors were challenged to communicate about the state of the library to their institutional peers, faculty, and college boards (Johnston, 1994b; Kania, 1992).

The first decade of the 2000s. By 2000, many library-sponsored information services were delivered electronically (Ryer & Nebekker, 1999). For the most part, library staff members no longer differentiated between local and remote users. Many community colleges were members of library consortia which allowed them to share materials collectively. This caused the focus to continue to move away from the physical collection and towards direct patron interactions and instruction (Ashe, 2003; French, 2004). Community college librarians accelerated efforts to support information literacy (Opperman & Jamison, 2008). An increasing number of libraries offered credit classes, and requests for embedded instruction rose as well (Opperman & Jamison, 2008). That they strategically tied these efforts to institutional discussions is not readily apparent in the professional literature.

The early 2000s brought a plethora of new, customizable tools for information storage and communication (Eden, 2007; Opperman & Jamison, 2008; Stephens, 2007). Users could now publish content, often free of charge, on computers they did not own or control. This concept, known as cloud computing (O'Reilly, 2008), was widely embraced by the library community. Community college libraries viewed Web 2.0 tools as a way to publish content in the virtual spaces where the students "hung out" (Eden, 2007; Stephens, 2007; Voeller, 2008). They developed library presences on Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Delicious, and embedded RSS feeds into their catalogs and content. Where possible, they made college collections viewable via Google Scholar. Despite the increased usage of technology, the library was seeing a large increase in foot traffic (*Academic library building renovation benchmarks.* 2008; Twait, 2009). Since that time, the library has emerged as a hub of activity that supports learning in all of its shapes and sizes.

Summary. This section of the literature review provided a brief history of the evolution of the community college from the 1960s through the first decade of the 2000s. Its purpose was to set context for those seeking to better understand the

role of the library in order to make effective administrative decisions. The literature review described the fast paced growth in the numbers of community colleges in from the 1960s through the 1980s. It noted that community college libraries were often sometimes after the establishment of the college, often in response to pressure from accrediting bodies.

This historical account described early libraries as being focused on the collection. In the 1970s there was a revolution in community college libraries due to efforts to focus on student learning activities. At this time, community college libraries were often referred to as Learning Resource Centers, and the focus shifted from the collection to instruction. The review chronicled the technological changes due to the advent of the online catalog and the emergence of widely accessible information networks. It finally discussed the emergence of the library as a hub of collaborative learning and academic activity.

The Community College and its Library

In order to understand issues and leadership challenges at the comprehensive community college library, it is first important to understand the role of the organization it serves. The comprehensive community college is often described by both critics and advocates as being "all things to all people" (Cejda & Leist, 2006; Levinson, 2005; Morest, 2006) because of its commitments to precollege, college transfer, career and technical education (CTE), workforce development, and community education, as well as its open access enrollment policy (Agbim, 1992; Bailey & Morest, 2006). Due to these multiple vibrant missions, the community college changes continuously in response to input and demand from its constituency.

Martha Kanter, Under Secretary of the Department of Education, referred to the multiple missions in a keynote address delivered at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) 2010 Annual Conference, when she spoke of community colleges as "having a goal of providing educational opportunity for the top 100% of all American college students" (M.J. Kanter,

personal communication, April 18, 2010). She also discussed the important role of community colleges in supporting the Obama administration's ambitious goal of having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world by 2020 (a.k.a. the 2020 Goal) (Kanter, 2010; M.J. Kanter, personal communication, April 18, 2010). This call to action came at a time when community colleges, who have been serving as first responders during the existing economic crisis, have been experiencing an unparalleled growth in enrollment as unemployed workers flock to their doors seeking training for new jobs (Fry, 2009). This phenomenon is relevant to this literature review, because it offers an extreme example of the ways that community colleges respond to community demand, and it opens the door for an examination of how library leadership handles challenges during stressful times.

The community college library is best understood as a microcosm of the institution it serves. Although sometimes referred to as a hybrid between a public and academic library (Johnson, 2009), a more apt description might be that of a hybrid between a high school and a university library. Regardless of the characterization, library services are tied to the college's mission, and the library is impacted by organizational change and economic stress. Libraries at comprehensive community colleges must be prepared to serve a wide range of programs. The effective community college library must be nimble and be able to support the development of innovative programs and services despite ongoing changes in the academic and information environment, and the reality of economic constraints (Godin, 2006; Massis, 2010; Rusk, 2006). This is perhaps the greatest challenge to library directors at comprehensive community colleges.

Accepted roles of the community college library. Three position papers issued by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) provide an excellent starting point from which to examine the role of the 21st century community college library. They are endorsed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) as being useful tools for decision makers at all levels,

because they have been vetted by the AACC and are therefore less likely to be perceived as being internal or self-serving (ACRL, 2004). The first of these position statements defined the community college library as being "indispensable to the teaching and learning mission" of the college. It acknowledged the library's long history of providing creative instructional leadership. It further identified the library's role in the provision of instruction supporting information literacy and aligned the library with the college's role in the development of the independent lifelong learner (AACC, 2003). Although this statement constituted an important recognition of the library's academic role at the college, it provided only a first step. There is still a need for research correlating library instruction to stated institutional and national priorities such as student success, degree completion, and the development of citizens with the skills to become lifelong learners.

The second statement augmented the first but was focused on library and student services provided to distance and off-campus students (AACC, 2008b). While it was significant that AACC recognized the importance of providing these services to off-campus students, it is notable that current campus-based community college students expect (Cox, 2008) and receive online services as part of their academic experience. Viewed only five years after its writing, it seems unimaginable that an urban community college would not provide online services to any student regardless of the format of his/her classes.

The third position statement focused on information literacy. It encouraged classroom faculty to partner with librarians to provide "information literacy outcomes in credit and noncredit instruction" (AACC, 2008a). Although the literature is replete with examples of such cooperative endeavors, there is still sometimes tension between instructional faculty and librarians perhaps because of differences in their pedagogical approaches to instruction. Gilchrist (2007) conducted a phenomenological inquiry with librarians and instructional faculty who were participating in an initiative to transform assignments and curricula to include research-based learning in courses. The purpose of the study was to learn

about the experience of the participants and to share the findings with all types of academic libraries. Although the findings were not strictly applicable to the community college environment, the study was useful for those seeking to nurture collaborative instructional change between librarians and faculty.

Standards for Libraries in Higher Education, published by ACRL, was another respected source of principles and guidelines that illuminate the role of the academic library (ACRL, 2004). Unlike earlier versions, these standards were crafted to support all types of academic libraries and are useful to community college academic administrators seeking guidance when evaluating the library program. They have been used by community colleges from various accrediting regions as a framework with which to build outcomes and assessment measures for local program reviews and accreditation reports. Research about these efforts indicated that benchmarking against these standards provided a useful way to build a structure when regional standards were vague or lacking quantifiable inputs (Heu & Nelson, 2009; Malone & Nelson, 2006; Morrison & Nelson, 2007). This research holds promise for library directors seeking to use a tool to define the library's role and to align library services with institutional priorities.

Confusion about the library's role. Despite AACC's position statements and the ACRL standards, there is still often confusion at the community college about the role of the library and the services it provides. This is not surprising given the community college's early history as a grassroots organization that emerged with multiple, sometimes contradictory, missions (Rusk, 2006). Evidence of the lack of understanding of the library's current role is apparent in its exclusion or neglect in many handbooks and histories of community colleges (e.g. Baker, Dudziak, & Tyler, 1994; Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Levinson, 2005).

CCSSE (Community College Survey of Student Engagement), an annual survey that measures engagement of community college students, had no questions about community college libraries in the 2009 survey, despite the fact that the survey sought to measure the quality of community college students' educational

experiences and the ways in which colleges intentionally "made connections with students online, in the campus, and beyond" (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2009b). This was an interesting oversight given that distance education is sometimes found in the library director's portfolio and the leadership role that most community college libraries take on through the provision of Web 2.0 and social networking tools and their role in supporting information and media literacy. This omission provided evidence about the continued lack of understanding of the library's role in supporting mission-critical initiatives. In this author's opinion, it highlighted the need for library directors to be more involved in the national community college research agenda.

Similarly, SENSE (Survey of Entering Student Engagement), a companion survey seeking to measure engagement of entering students, included questions about students' interactions with faculty and advisors but excluded library interactions (Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2009a). This exclusion was puzzling to leaders in the library community, but again it highlighted the need for more library involvement with the community college research agenda.

The academic library community is aware of the importance of having a clear understanding about the library's role at the institutional level. It has made a concerted effort to market library services, to educate the academic community about the role of the library, and to advocate for appropriate library resources. ACRL, an arm of the American Library Association (ALA), describes itself as an organization "dedicated to enhancing the ability of academic library and information professionals to serve the information needs of the higher education community and to improve learning, teaching, and research" (ACRL, 2010a). On its website, it tracks trends of importance to the academic library communities and the institutions they serve (ACRL, 2009b).

A survey of 130 leaders in academic affairs at multiple types of colleges and universities indicated that the work of ACRL members and others involved in

library advocacy/education may be beginning to bear fruit (Fister, 2010). Results of the survey indicated that these executive-level administrators valued institutional libraries and understood their function within the organization. Despite the encouraging findings of this survey, there is still a need for additional research about the community college library.

Summary. This section of the literature review set context for the study by describing the role of the community college library in relation to the institution it served. It described the comprehensive community college as an institution with multiple missions due to its commitment to precollege, college transfer, career and technical education, workforce development, and community education. It further described the library as a microcosm of the institution and discussed the need for libraries at comprehensive communities to be nimble in designing innovative services for students.

The literature review discussed factors leading to confusion at the institution about the role of a community college library. Issues included the failure to include the role of the library in community college handbooks and the omission of the library in national student-satisfaction surveys. It highlighted efforts by the AACC and ACRL to help define the role of the academic library and highlighted evidence that such efforts are bearing fruit.

Alignment and Strategic Prioritization of Library Initiatives

Like their parent institutions, community college libraries operate in an atmosphere of constant change (Cawthorne, 2010) and therefore they plan, innovate, and support staff development in a challenging environment. It is incumbent on the library director to find ways to support innovation and organizational learning despite these challenges. A common method used for effective strategic planning in community college libraries is to prioritize support for library activities that most closely align with the institution's mission and to discontinue activities that are no longer effective (Vierthaler, 2006; Wood, Miller, & Knapp, 2007). Karp (2006a) suggested that community college libraries should

match library benefits to stated institutional outcomes such as grade point average (GPA), semester to semester retention, and higher graduation rates. A consequence of this strategy might be that the library's contribution to the academic mission would become more visible to the organization, and the library would therefore be more likely to gain adequate funds to support institutional priorities. On the other hand, it would be difficult and expensive to systematically measure this type of success, and the results might lack validity due to the number of intervening variables that impact student success.

Community colleges are increasingly using data to build evidence to support decision-making (Petrides, 2004). Their libraries have the same obligations to be accountable as they do. In *Viewing Library Metrics from Different Perspectives: Inputs, Outputs, and Outcomes*, Dugan, Hernan, and Nitecki (2009) discussed in detail how academic libraries use metrics to prove accountability and effectiveness from library, customer, institutional, and stakeholder perspectives. Although this book focused on the university environment, it provided applicable background information and a framework that could be adapted to the community college library setting. This is another area ripe for additional research.

A key challenge for library leaders attempting to align new library initiatives strategically with institutional priorities is making strong sustainable connections at the college level. Wood, Miller, and Knapp (2007) discussed the need for library management to create structures that support change and endure beyond the tenure of a given director or academic administrator. Much of the general literature about community colleges that includes information on current trends around planning does not mention the library. *Community Colleges: A Reference Handbook*, for example, covered academic and student services but there was no explicit mention of the library. Although this can be seen as a deficit, the creative library director can use it as an opportunity to define library services where there was no prior articulation.

Summary. This section of the literature review found that, despite the importance of strategic planning, there was a lack of research that specifically focused on the large comprehensive community college library in relation to its community and the institution it serves. This literature review supported the need for targeted research that: (a) Identifies challenges facing community college libraries and examines how library directors respond to them; (b) Evaluates how community college library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation; and (c) Examines how library directors provide learning opportunities that support organizational learning and innovation.

Chapter Summary

This literature review sought to evaluate and critique current research and professional literature pertaining to the 21st century large comprehensive community college and its library. In order to provide context for non-library readers, it included a brief history of the community college library. The bulk of the review focused on research about the role of the large comprehensive community college library in context to the institution it serves, the field of librarianship, and literature and research highlighting administrative and leadership issues. It included literature pertaining to general academic librarianship but gave priority to publications focused on the community college environment.

It synthesized position statements and documents issued by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) supporting the role of the community college library and providing standards for academic libraries. It found that, despite these efforts, there is still a lack of clarity about the role of the community college library and noted that the library is routinely omitted from community college handbooks and manuals. It also noted recent promising research from ACRL indicating an increased awareness of the value of the community college library at the executive

level and called for greater participation in the community college research agenda by library leaders.

This literature review was significant, because it sought to define the role of the 21st century academic library at the large comprehensive community college for those, including non-library college administrators, seeking to make institutional decisions about library services. It also identified research about current issues in academic librarianship, leadership challenges, and promising practices for those involved in community college library leadership and college administration. It noted a lack of research targeted at the community college library and supported the need for targeted research that : (a) Identifies challenges facing community college libraries and examines how library directors respond to them; (b) Evaluates how community college library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation; and (c) Examines how library directors provide learning opportunities that support organizational learning and innovation.

CHAPTER THREE – DESIGN OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to describe how library directors, at large comprehensive community colleges, strategically advocate for and support instructional and technological innovation and change despite the reality of limited resources and stress caused by intermittent recurring funding crises in higher education. It further sought to examine how library directors work to interpret the role of the library and academic librarianship to the institution, to prioritize support for new library initiatives, and to provide learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members undertaking new and innovative projects. The results of this research provided insight about practices in library-related strategic planning and organizational learning and identified areas in need of additional research. This study is useful to library directors, college administrators, librarians, and instructional faculty. It should be applicable to planning and prioritizing processes throughout the college.

This section of the study described: (a) the philosophical approach; (b) the research method; and (c) the procedures for conducting the study. Since I have a personal connection to this study, this section also contained a statement detailing my personal research perspective.

Philosophical Approach

The philosophical approach for this study was the interpretive social science (ISS) research methodology. This section of the paper describes this approach, setting it in historical context and discussing its appropriateness for this inquiry. It also lays a foundation for the methods and procedures and assures that the methodology truly supports the intent of the study.

In keeping with the interpretative tradition, I offer my personal perspective at the outset of this study. I am a strong advocate of the community college and the role it serves in higher education. As a library director at a large community college, I hold dear to my heart the roles that the library and librarianship play in the community it serves. I believe that librarians are valuable academic partners

and that they contribute to student completion and success through the support they provide to instructional faculty and the instruction they provide to students. The community college library has undergone many changes in the past three decades, and its role is sometimes misunderstood or poorly articulated at the college. Through this study, I seek to interpret the role of the library to its institution and to the students and faculty it serves.

I am also a proponent of organizational learning[5] as a means of supporting continuous improvement and of nurturing innovation and creativity. I believe that organizational learning is compatible with the value of lifelong learning, a concept often found in mission and value statements at community colleges. I was curious to learn through this study the ways in which community college libraries foster instructional leadership and support technological innovation and changes in librarianship.

As a community college library director, I think about the questions posed in this study on a regular basis. My personal involvement with the subject could be a source of bias. I strove to counter this by being open to new information and by noting any information with which I disagreed. I attempted to move forward with a clearness of purpose and to describe all that I discovered accurately.

Purpose of this approach to research. ISS is a philosophical approach to research that is related to *hermeneutics*, a theory of meaning in which the researcher becomes the interpreter or translator (Neuman, 2003). In this paradigm, the researcher seeks to examine people's behaviors and actions in their natural settings. Interpretive researchers are particularly interested in describing and understanding meaningful social action, or social action with a purpose (Newman, 2003). A key purpose of this approach is for the researcher to understand the experiences of others and to develop protocols to analyze and interpret the data collected (Creswell, 2008). Using this approach, the researcher seeks to build a time and context body of knowledge about the research topic that describes how

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[5] The act of consciously and systematically committing to ongoing learning within an organization, often accomplished in teams. (Senge, 2006)

people construct meaning from their experiences (Neuman, 2003; Stage & Manning, 2003).

Interpretive researchers acknowledge that their research is rarely free of bias, and thus they typically include a statement describing potential bias and personal perspective. Hence, such a statement was included in this study. Another characteristic of this approach is that the researcher may take on the role of an advocate in presenting the findings of the research (Creswell, 2008). This is especially appropriate, given that a key role of the researcher is to act as an interpreter who translates information from within the context of the setting in which its activities are taking place to those outside of the setting seeking to understand phenomena related to the subject of the study.

Major assumptions about truth and reality. ISS is situated in the constructivist or naturalistic[6] paradigm and therefore puts significant weight on the participant's perspective (Creswell, 2008). Unlike the positivist approach to research which assumes that there is an absolute truth or an answer to the question, interpretive researchers believe that there are multiple truths and that none are more valid than the others (Merriam, 2009; Neuman, 2003; Stage & Manning, 2003). ISS researchers believe that facts are fluid and that they change depending on their context. Max Weber, a major proponent of this theory, described reality in terms of understandings built on layers of meanings. He recognized the appropriateness of asking multiple questions in the pursuit of understanding (Albrow, 1990).

In the interpretive paradigm, social life is described as being made up of social interactions and social meaning systems. The researcher is less interested in actions than in how actions impact experience based on how participants share social meanings. To the interpretive social researcher, internal reality may not map to what is happening externally and therefore it is important to understand how participants construct meaning from their experiences (Neuman, 2003).

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[6] The constructivist paradigm is based on the theory that people construct truth through their understanding of their social context.

Unlike the positivist approach which seeks to discover truth, the interpretative approach defines truth as being what people construct it to be.

How this approach relates to this research. Since this study seeks to understand the experiences of a social group (i.e. library directors) in the context of the community college environment, it is an ideal candidate for the ISS methodology. In this study, I was concerned with learning how participants experience specific activities, define what they are doing, and decide upon what they hold to be relevant. These are all characteristic qualities of interpretive research (Neuman, 2003).

Albrow (1990) listed "organization constrains and provides opportunities at the same time" (p.7) as a principle used by Max Weber to construct social theory. This construct directly supported the purpose of this study in that I sought to describe how library directors strategically support innovation and organizational learning despite constraints due to funding cycles and to community perceptions about the role of the library. As anticipated in the research design, interviews elucidated anticipated and unanticipated themes that provided clues as to other areas for future investigation.

In the role of the researcher, I sought to interpret and translate findings pertaining to key themes in ways that made sense to both the internal library community and the wider community of community college educators and administrators. I acted in the hermeneutic tradition through this translation and assumed the role of advocate as well as interpreter.

History and major authors. ISS is a major branch of the constructivist research paradigm. The theory is associated with the work of the German sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920), the German philosopher Wilhem Dilthey (1864-1911), and the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009; Neuman, 2003). It is related to hermeneutics, a theoretical school that positions the researcher as translator or interpreter (Neuman, 2003).

ISS was created in part as a rejection of the positivist perspective, and Weber and Dilthey hoped to put naturalism on equal footing with natural science through the development of hermeneutics (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Describing this theory, Weber said, "Interpretive sociology considers the individual and his action as the basic unit of its 'atom'…" (Weber, Gerth, & Mills, 1958, p. 55). Since its inception, ISS has become a major school of modern sociological research.

Research Method: Multiple Case Study

This study used the multiple case or multi-case study research method to explore the ways in which community college library directors strategically advocate for and support instructional and technological innovation and change, despite the reality of limited resources and stress caused by intermittent recurring funding crises in higher education. The purpose of this section is to describe the case study method, to present a rationale for the research method, and to introduce the research design.

Purpose of the method. The purpose of the case study method is to contribute to the knowledge of individual, group, or social phenomena (Yin, 2009). It allows the investigator to use a holistic perspective when analyzing organizations and behaviors. It is often used in educational research and is known to be useful when describing managerial behaviors and processes (Yin, 2009). Another characteristic of the case study is that it allows the investigator to conduct an in-depth analysis using rich descriptions to explore the underlying questions. This study sought to describe how library directors align the library with the goals of the college, strategically prioritize new initiatives, and support librarians and library staff members involved in the development of innovative instructional and technological initiatives despite stress caused by resource constraints.

Key concepts of this method. The primary goal of a case study is to convey an understanding of a bounded phenomenon or phenomena in the context in which it is occurring from the perspective of an involved individual or

individuals (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 1993). In educational research, it is sometimes used when the boundary between the context and the phenomena are unclear (Yin, 1993). The multi-case study can be used to understand a phenomenon that has multiple cases, parts, or members (Stake, 2006). Using this method, the researcher focuses on the quintain[7].

In this study, open ended interviews with library directors (the cases) were used to explore phenomena from the perspective of the participants. Having multiple cases added variability to the study and allowed the investigator to dig deeply into the questions and to provide thick descriptions that strengthened the credibility of the study. Readers of this study can participate in the interviews from the perspective of those being interviewed and can make meaning of the study based on their personal perspective.

Rationale for selection. The case study method is a widely accepted research design. Yin and Stake are important authors and advocates for this method. N.K. Denzin, E.G. Guba, and Y.K. Lincoln also have also contributed to literature about the case study method in conjunction with their writing about qualitative research and the interpretive social science perspective. According to Yin (2009), "a case study is an empirical query that investigates contemporary phenomenon in depth within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (p.18). This study was an ideal candidate for this method, because it met key criteria for the case study, specifically that it sought to investigate a current phenomenon in depth within its real-life context (Yin, 2009).

In deciding whether or not a phenomenon is intrinsically bounded, a key criterion for a case study, Merriam (2009) suggested analyzing if there is a limit to the number of people who could be interviewed. If there is a finite number, the study is a candidate for a case study (p. 41). Since this study sought to investigate a class of people (library directors at large comprehensive community colleges),

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[7] The collection of cases in a multiple case study (Stake, 2006).

the number of candidate participants was finite. This further strengthened the argument for the case study approach.

This study also had three features characteristic of case studies. According to Merriam (2009), case studies are *particularistic*[8] in their specificity of focus and are therefore ideal designs for studies having a practical focus (p. 43). This study focused on the practice of library directors and as is typical of case studies, its questions were practical in nature. Case studies are *descriptive*, yielding thick, rich descriptions of the holistic experience of the participant (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2006). This study described the experiences of library directors in the context of their professional settings. Finally, this study was *heuristic*; it shed light on the reader's understanding of the phenomenon and created an environment that welcomed the reader's previous experience.

I initially considered a quantitative approach using existing datasets from National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) and Association of College Research Libraries (ACRL) to provide descriptive evidence of trends in community college libraries. I ruled out this approach because there were too many intervening variables within the datasets due to inconsistencies in how data were reported and because the data would not have answered the research questions. I also considered phenomenology, an approach that focuses on the interpretation of the lived experience of the participant (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Although this study sought to provide interpretive information, the case study application was more appropriate, because it provided a way to answer the practical "how" questions at the center of the research design. Ultimately, the case study method stood out as the appropriate approach.

Research Procedures

This section describes the major steps, data needs, collection techniques and procedural requirements that were used in this study. Following tradition, there were four key components to this research design (Yin, 2009). They were:

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[8] Having a particular focus on a situation, event, or phenomenon (Merriam, 2009).

(a) the research questions; (b) the units of analysis; (c) data gathering process; and (d) the criteria and interpretation of the findings. Arguably, the research questions were the most important aspect of the design. It is imperative that the researcher capture questions that support the propositions of the study (Stake, 2006; Yin, 2009). The questions brought to light to the perspectives the directors, who in this study were the units of analysis or cases.

There were no propositions about the outcomes of the study other than based on the initial literature search, that there might not be a widely agreed-upon community of practice[9] around this topic. Through this study, I was able to share promising practices and to suggest areas for further research. The multi-case method allowed me to cross analyze findings from individual cases in order to identify themes identified throughout the quintain.

Case selection. For the purpose of this study, a case was defined as a library director at a comprehensive community college library in the very large two-year (VL2) size and setting category of the Carnegie Classification. The intent of this criterion was to use typical case sampling[10] (Lichtman, 2010; Stake, 2005) to narrow the scope of the study to libraries with similar issues due to their size and complexity. I acknowledge that there were differences between the institutions due to their organizational structures and the position of the library director within the administration. Those differences were described in the findings.

At the outset of the study, a small survey was sent to all library directors in this classification. *Library director* was defined as the administrator in charge of a library or library system for a community college. Such administrators had various titles, but library director was used generically throughout the study. A list of candidate institutions is found in Appendix A. The intent of the survey was to

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[9] A working fellowship of shared situated learning that takes place in organizations and across disciplines (Brown, 2002; Hildreth & Kimble, 2004).

[10] Selecting cases that appear to be similar to each other (Lichtman, 2010).

verify the credibility of the research questions and to seek participants for the study.

Cases were selected from the list of candidate participants who responded to the initial survey and indicated that they would be willing to participate further in the study. Of the 71 candidate participants surveyed, 35 responded to the survey and 27 indicated a willingness to participate further. Although geographic diversity of accrediting regions was not listed as being a significant criterion for selection, I chose library directors from a variety of states. This was done to ensure that external factors due to state-specific issues did not overly influence responses across the quintain. Once the six potential cases were identified, the list was reviewed in order to ensure that participants still met the criteria outlined in the research design.

Study participants. Six participants were invited to participate in the complete study as interviewees. Two of the six were replaced with others due to non-availability, and a third withdrew from the study prior to being interviewed due to concerns about the potential for being recognized in the study by administrators from her institution. All unviable participants were replaced with candidates from the similar institutions. In the end, all participants met the following criteria:

1. All were library directors at comprehensive community colleges in the very large two-year (VL2) size and setting category of the Carnegie Classification.

2. All were willing to participate in an interview and to respond to follow up questions if needed.

Data needs. Case study data can be collected from a number of sources including transcripts, interviews, and documents. Data for this study included: (a) data extracted from the initial survey (See Appendix B for survey questions); (b) recorded interviews based on a common set of open-ended questions (See Appendix C for a list of interview questions); (c) verbatim transcripts of the

recorded interviews; (d) supporting documents provided by participants; (e) responses to follow-up questions; (f) comments and verification by participants about the accuracy of the interview transcripts; (g) results of coding and data analysis; and (h) information gleaned from the journal and written observations.

Data collection techniques. At the outset of the data collection process, I conducted a pilot interview with a non-participant library director using the proposed questions. Results of this interview verified the trustworthiness of the tool. The pilot participant reported that the questions resonated and would provide a valuable guide going forward. I then conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with the six participants using the set of questions as a guide. The interviews were conducted via telephone. They were recorded and transcribed. Verbatim transcripts were provided to participants for review and comment.

Initial interviews lasted approximately one hour in length. Follow-up communication was used when I needed clarification or verification about an issue. During the interviews, I asked for copies of documents that may support the evidence being collected. For example, if an interviewee mentioned the existence of a document related to current initiatives, I requested a copy. I reviewed organizational charts and studied documents readily available of each institution's website. Additional member-checking was done by asking directors to review and comment on the findings about their cases. This ensured that I was reporting their information accurately and allowed them an additional opportunity to provide input.

Having multiple sets of evidence facilitated triangulation and enhanced trustworthiness of the results. It is important to note that the interview transcripts were by far the most significant piece of the study as they provided the foundation for the analysis and the basis for the coding. Table 3.1 describes how various data sources supported the research questions.

Table 3.1

Research Questions and Data Sources

Research question	Data sources
How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services?	- Preliminary survey - Interview questions - Organizational documents
How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff who are involved in creating innovative services or programs?	- Preliminary survey - Interview questions

Data analysis. Data from interviews was systematically analyzed using a process based on recommendations by Creswell (2008, 2009). Table 3.2 lists the steps and describes the data analysis process. Data gathered from the structured questions on the survey were tabulated and presented in the findings. They provided a means with which to triangulate differences and unexpected evidence received in the interviews. Documents gathered from interviewees were described and used as evidence to support information gathered through the interview process.

Strategies to ensure soundness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend the following tests to increase trustworthiness of qualitative research, including case study designs: (a) credibility; (b) transferability; (c) dependability; and (d) confirmability (p. 202). Table 3.3 indicates how these tests were applied in this investigation.

Table 3.2

Data Analysis Process – Step by Step

Step	Process
Organize data	Data were sorted, reviewed, and subdivided order to get a sense of the findings as a whole.
Evaluate one document	Reviewed one transcript searching for key themes. Took detailed notes and cycled through the transcript iteratively. Listened to the recording multiple times adding notes to the transcripts about nuances and possible intent.
Repeat process	Repeated the process above for several more documents. Recorded key themes and ideas that emerged from the recordings and transcripts.
Code data	Abbreviated the list and used it to code the whole of the data. Looked for major and minor themes. Classified expected themes, unexpected themes, contradictory information, and difficult to classify themes.
Perform lean coding	Began the process of lean coding or grouping similar codes into categories. This lessened the number of categories making analysis more efficient and prepared the data for the eventual cross-case analysis. Noted that many themes overlapped across multiple categories.
Seek saturation[11]	Saturation was achieved after six interviews
Finalize codes	Made final decisions about the abbreviations of the codes and organize the codes alphabetically.
Analyze data	Layered themes and highlighted interconnections. Used triangulation to insure trustworthiness. Documented response patterns and created tables to support the cross-case analysis.

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[11] In qualitative research, saturation is the point when data collection ceases to yield new information. This signals that the sample size is adequate (Patten, 2009).

Write report	Summarized findings in a report that described key themes and included excerpts of exact words from respondents' interviews.

Table 3.3

Tests for Trustworthiness

Test	Action
Credibility	• A non-informant audited interview questions in advance of the interviews • A non-informant underwent the interview in pilot mode to assure that the tool was valid and accurate • Member-checking - informants reviewed their transcripts and a draft of the case study report and provided feedback • Triangulation of data from multiple sources of evidence
Transferability	• Provision of rich interviews using a typical case sample
Dependability	• The researcher maintained a detailed audit trail/ chain of evidence[12] documenting procedures and research methods. • The researcher coded and recoded findings to assure that groupings can be replicated
Confirmability	• Reflexivity – the researcher maintained a journal chronicling reflections on the process and included reflective comments in the findings.

Strategies to protect human subjects. I gave careful consideration to the protection of human subjects throughout this study. I gained approval from the Oregon State University Human Subjects Review Board before contacting

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[12] In case study research, a clear path that an external observer can follow in any direction to discover how evidence was handled at every step of the study (Yin, 2009).

subjects, and all participants consented to the research, following the protocol outlined in the approval form in advance of the interviews. Subjects' names and the names of their institutions were altered in order to provide confidentiality. All subjects were referred to as Library Director regardless of their actual title. Participants and colleges were given fictitious names and participants' gender did not necessarily correlate with their real-life gender. All data collected was kept in a secure location. Regard for participants' privacy was of utmost importance to me.

Summary

This section of the study identified the philosophical approach, the research method, and outlined the research design. The philosophical approach for this study was identified as the interpretive social science (ISS) research methodology. ISS represents a tradition in which the author offers a personal perspective at the outset of the study. In keeping with that tradition, I identified myself as being a strong advocate for the community college and the role it serves in higher education. I believe that librarians are valuable academic partners and that they contribute to student success through the instruction they provide. This section further described ISS as a philosophical approach related to hermeneutics, a theory of meaning in which the researcher becomes interpreter or translator (Neuman, 2003). This study was consistent with this methodology because it sought to understand the experiences of a social group in context of its environment.

The method chosen for the research was the multiple case or multi-case study analysis. The purpose of the case study method is to contribute to the knowledge about individual, group, or social phenomena (Yin, 2009). The rationale used to justify the use of the case study was that the study had three features characteristic of case studies. According to Merriam (2009), case studies are: (a) *particularistic*[13] in their specificity of focus and are therefore ideal designs for studies having a practical focus (p. 43). This study focused on the practice of

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[13] Having a particular focus on a situation, event or phenomenon (Merriam, 2009).

library directors and its questions were practical in nature. Case studies are additionally: (b) *descriptive*, yielding thick, rich descriptions of the holistic experience of the participant (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2006). This study described the experiences of library directors in the context of their professional settings. And finally case studies are: (c) *heuristic*, shedding light on the reader's understanding of the phenomenon and creating an environment that welcomed the reader's previous experience.

The research design included four characteristic components of the case study: (a) the research questions; (b) the units of analysis or cases; (c) the data gathering process; and (d) the criteria and interpretation of findings. The cases were chosen from a list of library directors at comprehensive community colleges in the very large two-year (VL2) size and setting category of the Carnegie Classification. Directors were interviewed by telephone and were allowed to verify verbatim transcripts of their interviews before the data analysis phase of the research. Strategies were used to ensure the trustworthiness of the data, and I followed Oregon State University's IRB protocol in order to protect the human participants.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of data collected in this multiple case study. This purpose of this study was to investigate the ways in which library directors at comprehensive community colleges in the very large (VL2) setting of the Carnegie Classification support instructional and technological innovation and change despite the reality of limited resources caused by intermittent recurring funding crises in higher education. The chapter is divided into four sections. Section one provides an analysis of information and data received from the introductory survey. The survey results were used to support the credibility of the findings from the subsequent interviews and as a means of recruiting interviewees. Section two provides evidence of the soundness of data, analysis, and interpretation by describing tests for trustworthiness. Section three provides a profile of each participant (case) including information about the Director and a description of her or his institution. It also presents charts depicting key characteristics of each institution and setting. Section four summarizes the results of the interviews in relation to the research questions: (a) How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services?; (b) How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members who are involved in creating innovative services or programs? It also provides a cross-case analysis of each question by examining key themes across the quintain.

Results from Introductory Survey

At the outset of the study, a small survey was sent to all candidate library directors in the VL2 Carnegie classification. *Library director* was defined as the administrator or professional employee in charge of a library or a library system for a community college. A list of candidate institutions is found in Appendix A, and survey questions are available in Appendix B. The intent of the survey was to

provide evidence of the credibility of the research by providing information that triangulated against subsequent interview results and to recruit participants for the eventual study. Thirty-six of the 71 candidate participants responded to the survey. Below is an analysis of the findings of the survey including tables depicting the results. The results of these questions were used to verify that colleges fit the criteria and to assist in the selection of study participants.

Geographic distribution of survey respondents. Library directors at candidate institutions were invited to participate in the survey. Table 4.1 displays the numbers and percentages of responses by accrediting region. The variance in the numbers of responses was in accordance with the size of the region and the numbers of candidate institutions in those regions. There were no candidate institutions in NEASC and only two in NWCCU. Although geographic diversity was not a key criterion for inclusion in the study, I used this data to ensure that interview participants were fairly geographically distributed and that results were not biased due to practices tied to a specific region. In order to protect interviewees' identities, the accrediting regions of their institutions were not disclosed.

Table 4.1

Geographic distribution of survey respondents by accrediting region

Accrediting Region	# responses	% responses
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS)	2	5.5
New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)	0	0
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA)	8	22
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)	1	3
Southern Association of Schools and Colleges (SACS)	14	39
Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)	11	30.5

Number of physical libraries managed by each respondent. The majority of directors reported that they were in charge of one physical location. As explained later in this study, this meant that they were either employed at a

large single-campus institution or they were in charge of one of multiple libraries in an administratively decentralized multiple-campus institution. This question did not capture those library directors who also managed library services at remote locations without physical libraries. Nuances about this element were explained further in the case profiles.

Table 4.2

Number of Physical Libraries Directors Manage

Libraries per college	Responses	Percent of total
1	26	72%
2 to 4	4	11%
5 - more	6	17%

Faculty status of librarians. In the survey, 78 percent of the library directors reported that the librarians at their institutions had faculty status. This was equivalent to the ratio found at the institutions whose directors participated in the full study. Although the majority of institutions in the survey reported that librarians had faculty status, there was variation in the terms of their contracts and of what it meant to be a faculty librarian. Additional detail about this issue is found in the case profiles.

Importance of key issues. Directors regarded all of the key issues identified in the survey as being either extremely important or fairly important. *Funding* and *continuous improvement* were the most pressing issues. Funding continued to be by far the most pressing issue in the open-ended question and that theme was present throughout the interviews as well. *Instructional leadership* and *organizational learning* were among the least important issues. It may have been that these phrases did not resonate with the directors. They are phrases that are found in the professional literature but that may not be as present in daily practice. I noticed during the interviews that I often had to clarify the phrase instructional leadership for participants. *Training* was ranked as *fairly important*. This was surprising to me given the rate of ongoing change in the information environment

and librarianship. I would have expected the directors to report this as extremely important. This result may have been because the directors were struggling due to the lack of funding to support professional development during the constrained economic environment at the time of the study. Over 10 percent of the library directors reported that *strategic planning* was unimportant, and it did not show up as an important element in the open-ended question. However, full participants spoke extensively about a number of types of strategic planning efforts. Figure 4.1 provides a visual depiction of the survey results. It was notable that no topic was ranked as unimportant or not applicable.
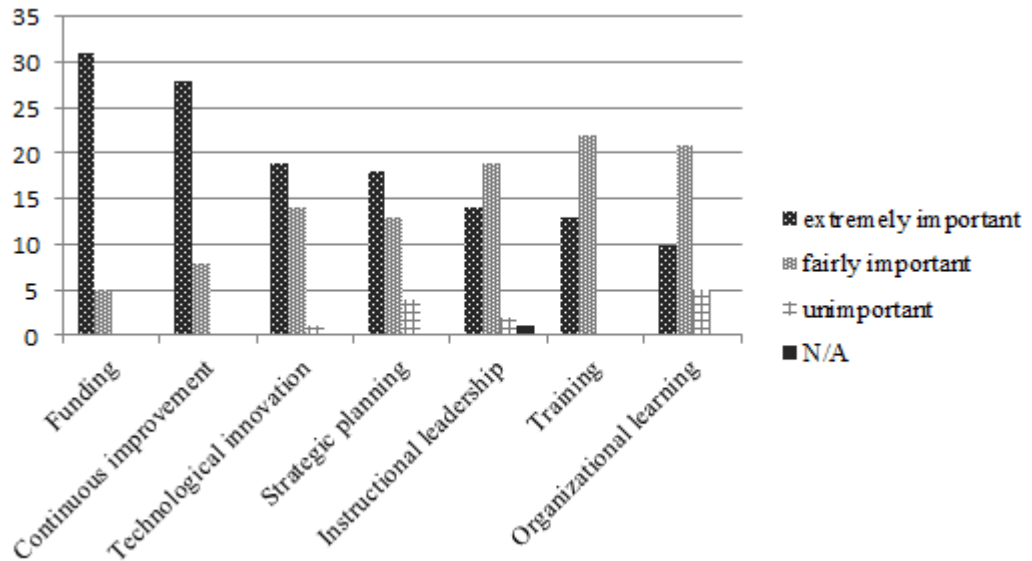
Figure 4.1. Importance of key issues to community college library directors

Analysis of open-ended question. In addition to the ranking matrix, I included one open-ended question about challenges that library directors face. In order to get a handle on the key themes of importance to respondents, I analyzed the open-ended comments. To do this, I listed the comments verbatim and assigned key words which characterized the intent of the comment. For example, funding, resources, and budget were coded as *funding*. Comments could have multiple codes. As an example, the comment "Maintaining adequate funding for

resources, technology and personnel" was coded as *funding*, *technology,* and *staffing*. Doing this allowed me to establish a controlled vocabulary and to weight themes by areas of importance. A complete list of the comments and themes can be found in Appendix C. I placed the themes in a visual organizer called Wordle (http://www.wordle.net/) and created a graphic depiction[14] that visually illustrated the importance of the themes. The results of the display can be seen in Figure 4.2. It was clear, based on the number of occurrences, that funding was a key concern to library directors. Some of the issues were so insignificant that they were not legible in the graphic.

Figure 4.2. Visual word cloud created from responses to initial survey

In addition to funding, the directors were concerned about growth, staffing, facilities, and technology. Interestingly growth did not emerge as a key concern during the interviews. There was concern about the challenges in the ability to provide *value* or *quality* given the stress caused by unprecedented growth. Technology and staffing were sometimes coupled in the comments. One director in the survey noted, "Keeping my staff on the cutting edge while maintaining funding and service at current levels…" as a key challenge. Facilities also

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[14] Word cloud

emerged as a concern in the survey, although it did not emerge as a key issue during the interviews. The union was mentioned twice during the initial survey as a constraint to innovation. It emerged again later during the interviews. One survey participant said, "In a large institution with a unionized faculty, it is difficult to always satisfy contracts and make the best decisions for the institution."

Summary

This section described the results of the preliminary survey. The purpose of the survey was to provide evidence of the credibility of the findings of subsequent interviews and to seek interview participants. A majority of the directors reported that they managed one physical library and a majority of librarians were reported to have faculty status. Details about these elements were explored through the interviews. Funding emerged as a key theme in the issues section of the survey and in responses to the open-ended question.

Profiles of Study Participants and Their Institutions

This section contains profiles of the cases (the directors), their institutions, and the librarians they manage. Although all institutions were in the same Carnegie classification (VL2), there were variations in their organizational and administrative structures. Table 4.3 describes organizational differences between institutions.

Table 4.3

Types of Organizational Structures of Participant Institutions

Type A	Type B	Type C
multi-campus district	multi-campus district	single campus
multiple libraries	multiple libraries	single library
	one director per	
one director	campus	single director

For the purpose of this study, each community college and its director was given a fictional name. The directors' names do not correspond to their real-life gender. Table 4.4 outlines the fictional names, the type of college (based on Table 4.3), the title of the director, and his/her reporting structure.

Table 4.4

Characteristics of Directors and Their Institutions

College	Director	Title	Reports To	Type
Aspen	Arlene	Director	Vice President Academic Affairs	A
Beech	Bill	Director	Campus president	B
Cedar	Cecille	Dean	Vice President of Academic Affairs	A
Dogwood	Dan	Dean	Vice President of Academic Affairs	C
Elm	Emma	Dean	Vice Chancellor	A
Fir	Fran	Dean	Associate Vice Provost	A

Although the status of librarians varied somewhat from campus to campus, librarians at all institutions had instructional duties. I had not initially intended to examine whether or not librarians were union members, however unionization emerged as an unexpected theme in the early interviews. This theme possibly emerged due to national conversations about faculty federations that were forming during the time of these interviews. As a result, I asked all directors who did not disclose during the interview, about union status at their institutions. This helped to determine whether or not the directors felt that union membership impacted the organization's ability to innovate or to nurture instructional leadership. Findings of this investigation are found later in this study.

Table 4.5

Description of Librarian Status and Contract

College	Faculty	Union	Contract description
Aspen	Y	N	12-months / 40 hour week
Beech	Y	N	12-months / 40 hour week
Cedar	Y	Y	Allied faculty
Dogwood	Y	Y	9 months
Elm	Y	Y	10 months/30 hour week
Fir	N	Y	12-months/40 hour week

Director Arlene. Director Arlene was the administrator in charge of all libraries at Aspen Community College (ACC), a large comprehensive community college with three campuses and multiple satellite locations which the library served remotely. Technical Services[15] was located on the largest of the three campuses. ACC had originally been a technical college but had added comprehensive offerings over the years and now had a few three and four-year offerings in health-related fields. In speaking of the college, Director Arlene indicated that despite having three campuses, the college viewed itself as a system and strove to provide uniform services across the District.

Director Arlene reported to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VP) and mentioned that the VP was generally supportive of library services and genuinely concerned with library issues. Director Arlene said that she and the VP communicated closely during planning cycles. The library was involved in library-based strategic planning, collegewide planning, and planning for statewide academic libraries including community college, university, and state college libraries. Director Arlene stressed that the State was currently suffering from terrible budget cuts and that there was the possibility that some smaller colleges could be closed in the near future. Budgetary issues were a constant theme

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[15] Technical Services is the unit of the library charged with the acquisition, cataloging and processing of library materials.

throughout the interview but Arlene used phrases such as "we'll get through it" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011) and "hopefully in two years we'll come out of the tunnel" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011) to indicate a belief that these times were extraordinary and temporary. Her tone was practical and she was clearly prepared to batten down the hatches and weather the storm. She was an experienced director and seemed calm in the face of extreme budgetary adversity.

The librarians at ACC had faculty status and most worked under a 12-month non-union contract[16]. Director Arlene and the librarians considered the 12-month contract to be desirable in terms of the ability to serve students year round. Their contract was identical to that of instructional faculty, and it included a tenure process. All but two of the librarians had instructional duties (i.e. they taught and were involved in instructional leadership efforts). The two that did not teach were in charge of digital projects and technical services. Although several of the directors expressed a passion for instruction, Director Arlene was the only administrator in this study who reported that she also taught library classes.

Director Arlene reported that one of the greatest difficulties was having to rein in "wonderful new people, literally right out of library school" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011) who brought new ideas to the college but were constrained from implementing them due to having to compete for scarce funds. She spoke highly of their wealth of ideas and saw her role as providing a reality check about what could be done in the current economy. Director Arlene mentioned the surprise of new librarians in finding out that not everyone valued the library as much as library staff members did, and discussed the "internal dialog" within the library profession about where libraries were going. She said, "Every day we are reminded that there are a lot of people who think that this [the library] could be expendable… that books are dead" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). She followed this with a comment about the strength it took to

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[16] One librarian worked under an abbreviated contract.

continuously build a case for libraries but ended on a positive note saying, "I still think that libraries and librarians deliver information better than anyone, we always will" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). She ended this thread saying, "the greatest challenge…is taking people who are new in the profession and letting them discover, despite the obstacles, what a really great profession it is and how we really do have opportunities for impacting higher education and student success" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011).

Director Bill. Director Bill was in charge of the second largest of four libraries in the Beech Community College (BCC) District. BCC was known nationally for its innovative services and Bill spoke highly of its programs supporting continuing education for its employees. BCC's structure was highly decentralized, and each campus had its own administration. During the course of this study, BCC changed its name to reflect that it was now offering limited four-year programs in health-related professions (Personal communication, June 11, 2011). Although Beech was still primarily a comprehensive community college, the new name did not include the word community. For the sake of consistency, I did not change the fictional name.

Director Bill reported that programs at BCC campuses varied, and that two of the campuses were significantly larger than the other two. Like other colleges in the study, BCC was suffering during the economic downturn. BCC seemed to be more impacted by State mandates than other colleges in the study. A State-level strategy was to find efficiencies where possible through the sharing of resources by community colleges and universities. For example, the State was in the process of mandating a unified catalog for all public academic universities and colleges, and there was a new statewide mandate around information literacy.

As the result of a reorganization that happened during the course of this study, Director Bill began to report to the campus president. BCC was a very large community college and its campuses operated somewhat independently. Each campus had its own library and its own library director. The Technical Services

department was located at Director Bill's library and employees in that department reported to Director Bill. Unlike other directors and deans in this study, the library directors at BCC were not classified as administrators. Although they worked closely with deans, faculty, and other administrators the library directors were in a State-designated "professional classification." Peers included other campus directors such as lab directors, the director of assessment, and so forth. Director Bill characterized this unusual organizational structure as being "awkward but not unlivable" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011). He added that he had a positive relationship with his administration and that the decentralized model afforded him the autonomy to make good local decisions.

BCC college libraries operated independently. Hours and service levels were set locally. For example, at the time of the interview, Director Bill's library was the only library that provided chat reference through a consortial Ask a Librarian[17] service. Director Bill's librarians participated in this service in order to extend the reach of the library, but there was no expectation that all BCC libraries participate. Conversely, Director Bill's librarians could eliminate this service without consulting other campuses. Indeed, during the course of the study, another campus library decided to participate in this service (Personal communication, June 10, 2011). Despite this independence, all libraries shared the same library catalog, and directors worked collaboratively where it made sense – data gathering was provided as an example. Although campus collections reflected the local curriculum, the college thought of its collection as a whole and shared materials across the district.

Librarians at BCC were tenure-track faculty. Unlike instructional faculty who worked a ten-month year, librarians worked a 40-hour week and had a 12-month contract. BCC was non-union, but librarians had fairly strong protection, especially compared to that of the Director classification which operated under an annually renewed contract. One characteristic of BCC was that while seeking

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[17] This refers to a chat-based reference service.

tenure, all faculty including librarians went through a formal program designed to strengthen their teaching skills. The coursework of this interesting program was built around pedagogy, and faculty traveled through the program as a cohort. This could possibly have had a positive effect on new librarians' ability to develop long-term professional relationships with their instructional counterparts.

Director Cecille. Director Cecille was the library dean at Cedar Community College (CCC), a two campus institution with a large main campus and a much smaller branch campus. Each campus had its own library. Like ACC and ECC, CCC was a traditionally affluent community college located within commuting distance of a large metropolitan area. As with other colleges in this study, CCC was feeling the effect of the current economic downturn. Some statewide initiatives around information literacy were also impacting the library program. The library was in the process of strategizing ways to adjust to the new environment.

Director Cecille was fairly new in her position (less than a year) at the time of the interview. Despite this, she had accomplished a substantial amount in terms of moving the library forward technologically. She mentioned that the library had a strong instructional program when she arrived at the college, but that it lagged technologically. She had begun to move the library forward and was pushing an emphasis on digital initiatives. She appeared to have strong technological and instructional backgrounds, and as a result she seemed at ease proposing solutions in both areas of the library program. For example, she mentioned revamping the server structure and also referred to instruction as "my baby" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011). This comfort with both areas may have contributed with her apparent productivity. Like several other Directors in this study she still had a notable passion for the practice of librarianship.

The librarians at the college were faculty and were represented by a union. They were strongly involved in instruction when Director Cecille arrived but were not uniformly up to speed in technical areas. The library offered a one-credit class

to students, which was a requirement for graduation, but due to a shift in focus from the State, the *required* status was under fire. According to Director Cecille, the legislature and the taxpayers were now focused on career technical education (CTE), transfer, and basic skills. The librarians, under the leadership of the Instructional Coordinator and the Department Chair, were working to advocate for ways to keep the credit class viable. One creative idea for incentivizing students to continue to enroll was a proposal to give priority registration to students who had taken the library research class.

Director Dan. Director Dan was the Library Dean at Dogwood Community College (DCC), a very large one-campus community college library located within commuting distance from a large city. The building was approximately 100,000 square feet, and it served the college and its regional centers. The library's physical collection was located in the library building, and the centers were primarily served by electronic resources such as ebooks and database subscriptions. College administration had traditionally supported library services, but as with others in this study, the library was feeling the impact of the economic downturn. Director Dan mentioned that the current president was very fiscally minded and required him to justify every purchase over $500. This was very time consuming given the number of high-cost database subscriptions and purchases that are made at an academic library.

Director Dan was initially hired to be in charge of the library but over the years had been put in charge of a number of other departments. His department was now called Learning Resources, and it included the library, tutoring, testing, online campus, centers for independent living, and staff development. As a result of having these added duties, an Associate Dean was now responsible for managing the library faculty. This structure caused Director Dan to be somewhat more distant from daily operations but allowed him to have a voice at the Dean's Council where he could advocate for libraries and communicate about new and ongoing initiatives. He mentioned that he had a passion for, and expertise, in the

area of information literacy. As a result, he participated on the instruction committee. He reported that the librarians found this odd at first but that they had come to accept him in this role. He lamented the gap between administrators and faculty and noted that library faculty did not always realize that he had come from instruction and had expertise in that area. This sentiment was voiced in different ways by other Library Directors in the study, and it is something that I experience as a library administrator. I noted also that a number of the Directors were truly passionate about the profession of librarianship.

The librarians at DCC reported to the Associate Dean. They had faculty status and worked in a union environment. They worked on a nine-month contract but most also worked through the summer for extra pay. Librarians acted as liaisons with the various disciplines and subject areas. Part of the strength of the program was librarians' ability to cultivate relationships with instructional faculty, and through those relationships to build connections to the library. As subject liaisons, librarians supported collection development and provided library instruction for their assigned subject areas. They shared responsibility in high-enrollment areas such as Reading, Writing/Composition, and English. Two of the full-time librarians did not have liaison roles but focused on technical services functions and on website maintenance.

Director Emma. Director Emma was a Dean at Elm Community College (ECC), a very large, traditionally wealthy, multi-campus college. Her institution had five campus libraries, and she and the Technical Services Department resided in locations that were not integrated into libraries. Her office was located at a District administration building along with other districtwide deans. This was the only instance in this study where the library director was housed outside of a library building. Director Emma described ECC as being a very unionized environment. Part of the rationale for the remote location of her office was so that she would remain neutral and would not become overly involved on any one campus.

Of the colleges in this study, ECC appeared to have undergone some of the most drastic budget cuts, and Director Emma was anticipating another 20-50% of reductions in operating costs for the upcoming fiscal year. In talking about the budget situation Director Emma said, "Now that the bottom has fallen out of the economy, no one has a lot of direct control over their budget" (Personal communication, April 5, 2011). Fortunately, the college was not projecting staff layoffs, and this meant that there were still employees available to support innovation. In fact, ECC was involved in an impressive number of innovative initiatives (ECC, document, April 6, 2011).

Director Emma appeared to have a strong project management background. She spoke extensively about planning processes and stressed the need for communication and marketing in any project plan. She also mentioned the value of doing post project assessment and was the only director in the study who explicitly mentioned *matrix management*[18] as an option for stretching resources. A key theme in Director Emma's interview that related to her management style was that of constant communication and collaboration. She appeared to work diligently to keep a strong communication channel in place across a very large district. Similar to Director Arlene, she saw her role as helping those around her see what was possible given the current fiscal environment.

The librarians at ECC worked 30 hours per week, 10 months per year. Director Emma described the contract as being extremely favorable to faculty. For example, she reported that the faculty at ECC did not have job descriptions. Their project work was done on a voluntary basis. As a result, the ability to innovate was dependent on whether or not librarians would volunteer to be involved in a given project. Director Emma mentioned that there were usually adequate numbers of volunteers for projects.

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[18] A form of management used in organizations with multiple projects that cross departmental boundaries. In this setting organizational managers have authority over routine organizational duties, and project managers lead projects of limited duration (Verzuh, 2008).

At ECC most of the reference desk assignments were done by adjunct faculty so full-time librarians had more time than at some other colleges to participate in projects. The librarians at ECC were each a part of a local department made up of librarians and professional staff members from the tutoring and testing centers. Each department had a faculty chair which may or may not be a librarian. The faculty chair had a leadership role within the department. Additionally, the librarians were part of a districtwide discipline group made up of only librarians. The discipline chair did not have a real leadership role and spent substantial time on administrative and scheduling duties.

One unusual characteristic of library instruction at ECC was that the library-sponsored research class was run through the college's Library Technician program. The one-credit class was part of a team teaching effort. Students
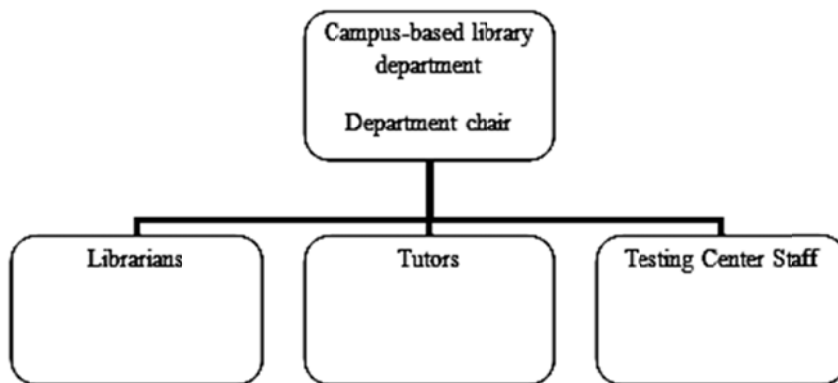
Figure 4.3. Diagram of a campus-based library department at ECC

enrolled in it concurrently with other classes. As with other programs at ECC, the Library Technician program was run out of one campus but the classes were offered districtwide.

Director Fran. Director Fran was a Library Dean at Fir Community College (FCC), a very large college with two campuses. The college appeared to be somewhat resource-constrained. When looking at the organizational charts I observed two vacant dean positions, and the two libraries had fewer than three

full-time reference librarians between them. (FCC document, April 5, 2011).
Despite this, the library had evening and week-end hours and was a member of a
large library consortium which significantly enhanced the breadth and depth of its
collection.

Director Fran had extensive experience in the library profession, and she
appeared to have a strong background in library technology. She was in charge of
two libraries, each of which had a Library Manager, and she oversaw the audio-
visual department and the archives. She seemed to be less connected to the
librarians than the other directors in the study. This was possibly due to the
structure of the organization and the lack of human resources. Organizationally,
Director Fran reported to the Vice Provost. She mentioned that she was very
grateful that the library was positioned on the academic side of that house. Some
libraries in her state were under IT departments. Regarding this point, she said,

> …I feel that libraries are more closely aligned with the academic areas
> whereas people who report through the IT area feel like they are more of a
> technology support service. And they don't get the type of support from
> the college that they would like to see. For instance, if there were to be
> new developments, I would have a lot easier time justifying those through
> the academic services rather than through the IT service. (Personal
> Correspondence, April 5, 2011)

The librarians at FCC were non-tenured members of the faculty
association. They were

> …lumped together into a group of non-teaching members of the
> association. That group includes people like lab technicians for science
> labs, computer technicians, child care technicians, so they're a group that is
> considered to be part of the faculty association but not really faculty status.
> (Personal Correspondence, April 5, 2011)

Director Fran reported that the library was stretched thin, and the numbers of
librarians supported this assertion. She described the librarians as having
reference duties as well as technical service duties. Additionally, the Library

Managers scheduled them to teach the library's *one-off classes[19]* in collaboration with instructional faculty.

Summary

The purpose of this section was to present descriptions of the library directors (the cases), their institutions, and the librarians. Although the directors worked at very large comprehensive community colleges, there were structural organizational differences between the colleges that impacted the placement of libraries in the organization. The profiles identified three basic organizational structures; (a) multi-campus district/multiple libraries/one director; (b) multi-campus district/multiple libraries/one director per library; (c) one campus/one library/one director. Four of the participants had the title *Dean*, and two were classified as *Director*. Their duties were largely the same except that two were also responsible for other departments and Director Bill was in a non-administrative professional classification but had the title of Director. The majority of the librarians at the colleges had some form of faculty status, and four of the six colleges were unionized. In all cases, regardless of organizational status, the reference librarians had instructional duties.

Evidence of Soundness of Data, Analysis, and Interpretation

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend the following tests to increase trustworthiness of qualitative research, including case study designs: (1) credibility; (2) transferability; (3) dependability; and (4) confirmability (p. 202). This section describes how the findings of the study met each of the above listed tests.

Credibility. In a qualitative study, credibility is tested by triangulating multiple forms of data against each other in order to gain an accurate portrayal of

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[19] This refers to one-time instructional sessions provided to students taking a given class by a librarian. One-off classes are often developed collaboratively by the faculty librarian and the instructional faculty member who requested library instruction.

the *story*. In a multiple case study, the researcher looks inside each case and also triangulates data across the quintain in order to be able to reach broader conclusions. The researcher can incorporate knowledge about the topic that he/she has through life experience, but it is the researcher's duty to make every attempt to avoid bias. Credibility for this study was gained through the tests that follow.

Several knowledgeable non-informants previewed the proposal and the questions and provided feedback about the applicability of the questions to this study. One non-informant underwent an interview in pilot mode and verified that the tool was valid. As the interviews proceeded, I performed member-checking in the following ways: (a) all participants were given verbatim transcripts of their interviews and were invited to add information or correct inaccuracies; (b) in several cases, when an interview was incomplete or when a new theme emerged, I contacted individual directors to seek clarification or added information; (c) participants were given copies of their profiles and of the summaries of their responses to the key questions in order to ensure that I had accurately understood and recorded the descriptions of their organizations; and (d) participants were given a draft copy of the case study report.

I collected multiple forms of data including interviews, documents, and information gained from institutional websites. I triangulated data internally within cases and externally across the quintain to determine whether or not the findings were credible. As an interpretive researcher I was also able to incorporate what I knew from professional experience. I used this knowledge to look for dissonance but was careful not to exclude information that was new to me or lacked resonance based on my personal experience. When I heard something new or unexpected, I sought to find other data sources to verify its validity. Exploring new concepts was one of the most rewarding aspects of the process.

Transferability. External validity or transferability refers to the process of ensuring that the findings of a study can be applied to or are generally applicable to other situations (Merriam, 2009). For this study, I chose a non-random class of

candidate cases (library directors at very comprehensive large community colleges) and surveyed potential participants. I used a typical case sample selection process to select library directors from the class to invite to participate in an interview process. I knew at the outset, based on the survey results, that although the cases were similar, there would be some differences amongst the participants and their institutions. I carefully detailed the differences and interviewed directors seeking to draw out rich descriptions that set context and provided a meaningful portrait of the directors' interactions with their settings.

In a case study, the reader's experience is also a testimony of the transferability of the research. Each reader or user decides whether or not the study applies to his/her experience or situation and therefore the researcher leaves the extent to which the reader experiences transferability to the person in that situation (Merriam, 2009. p226). To support the reader's experience, I attempted to describe in rich detail the particular details of each case and to analyze the findings across the cases in such a way that others could decide for themselves if the findings were generalizable to their situation.

Dependability. Dependability refers to the process the researcher undertakes to document his/her methods and to establish an audit trail that an outside investigator could use to retrace the steps of the research process. I kept a detailed journal of the process that began with the Internal Review Board (IRB) process and continued throughout the study. This helped me keep track of where I was in the research and served as a to-do list throughout the project.

I analyzed the findings of the initial survey by coding the responses to the open-ended questions. Details of this process were described in the study and additional evidence was provided in the appendices. I created verbatim transcripts of the interviews and used them to create an initial list of themes. These were recorded and then organized into categories using a process known as lean coding. I marked up the transcripts highlighting potential quotes and noting themes and anomalies. I also created a table listing all questions that supported the two key

questions and extracted responses from each interview that corresponded with the questions. Since the interviews were open-ended, interviewees sometimes answered questions before they had been asked. When that happened, I made sure to record their responses alongside other similar responses.

Once the coding had taken place, I systematically analyzed the cases creating profiles and tying responses to the key questions. In the analysis, I made use of direct quotes from the directors and referred to documents they provided. I tied the findings together by using a cross-case analysis to examine the results as a whole.

Confirmability. In the interpretive social science paradigm, an important aspect related to the integrity of the study is that the researcher critically engages with his/her position or role as a human investigator (Merriam, 2009). This is also referred to as reflexivity. As part of the audit trail for this study, I kept a journal (described above) of my process. I also embedded thoughts, comments, and reflections throughout the journal. Additionally, I peppered reflective comments throughout the profiles. Any reader should be able to easily find my reflections throughout this study.

Summary

This section described how the study met the trustworthiness criteria outlined in the design as it related to collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. To do this, I provided evidence that steps had been taken to preserve: (a) credibility; (b) transferability; (c) dependability; and (d) confirmability. The study relied on data from multiple information sources to support credibility. The case descriptions and cross-case analyses provided rich detail. Their findings were used as evidence of transferability. In keeping with the interpretive tradition, the analysis was written in such a way that readers could assess whether or not the report was transferable to their individual situations. Dependability was achieved through the maintenance of documentation. This provided an audit trail that could allow an investigator to retrace the steps of the research process. Confirmability

was provided through reflective notes peppered throughout the journal and findings. These provided evidence of the researcher's critical self-analysis.

Findings in Response to Research Questions

This section describes participants' answers to the two key questions posed in this study: (a) How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services?; and (b) How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members who are involved in creating innovative services or programs? To answer these, the directors participated in open-ended interviews. They responded to scripted questions and added other topics as relevant to their individual situations. As the investigator, I followed their lead.

Research Question 1: Strategic Support for New Initiatives

This section describes on a case-by-case basis how library directors plan and support new initiatives despite resource constraints and increased demand for services. It also provides a cross-case analysis of the findings. The case summaries build upon the profiles found earlier in this chapter. The first question acknowledged the reality of resource limitations in higher education and attempted to identify common administrative challenges at the urban community college. The rationale for this question was that the results of this inquiry may indicate patterns or relationships among the challenges that could be used by college and library administrators to prescribe effective and sustainable solutions that support instructional and technological innovation.

Director Arlene. Director Arlene reported that ACC mobilized strategic planning and budget prioritization for staffing and library services around an annual planning cycle. At the end of each year, Arlene reviewed data and assessment reports for all aspects of library services and began to plan for the upcoming academic year. When planning for new initiatives Arlene noted that the library conducted an environmental scan and reviewed literature to better see how

new initiatives would fit into the planning process. All departments submitted strategic plans to the Vice President of Academics, and they measured progress throughout the year. At times budgetary issues impeded progress. Arlene reported, "…we thought we had a good plan this year that would be fairly stable and then… horrific budget issues have hit us so our library initiatives are going to be a little more complicated to support…" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011).

Director Arlene mentioned two types of initiatives – technical and instructional. She described a push to switch the collection towards the electronic format saying that their collection was now 70% electronic and 30% print. She said, "…we're having to deal with that and… [the shift] is an ongoing issue" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). Regarding instructional initiatives, Arlene mentioned that faculty members were focusing on developmental programs[20] and that the librarians were working closely with instructional faculty to bring active learning into the curriculum. She also discussed a pilot project to develop and use web-based guides, assignments, and tutorials. Given the resource constraints, she commented that librarians were "working on how we can more methodically do a train-the-trainer program in terms of information competency skills with our faculty" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011).

When speaking of how new initiatives are chosen, Arlene spoke about the challenge of prioritizing technical projects in a fast moving environment. One strategy ACC used was to try to align the library's technology with that found at the local university system in order to provide a seamless interface for the students who take classes in multiple institutions. She mentioned the importance of bringing technical resource needs early into budget negotiations and that the timing of budgetary planning has been shifting due to the impact of the economic situation on the State's ability to settle on a budget. She also commented that outside accrediting bodies tied to specific programs could influence budgets due to

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[20] This refers to programs for students who are not ready for college-level work.

requirements for the library to provide specific program-related resources. Director Arlene appeared to be resilient given the tough budget crisis in her state and said, "… we really are in a terrible spot…I guess we'll get through it… but we have to plan for it" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). This sentiment was consistent with what I have experienced when working with budget challenges in higher education.

When asked about how the library decided to eliminate a service, Director Arlene mentioned the strategy of dropping services when the library was no longer "…getting the bang for our buck… [or] the results we had hoped for" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). She used the example of dropping chat reference which was time-intensive and difficult to use effectively. She said that the library might revisit the decision at a later date.

ACC library had a strong team structure based on communities of practice. For example, Director Arlene mentioned instructional, (web) content, marketing, and physical resource teams. This structure allowed the library to leverage internal talent and interest in specific practice areas to further innovation. Director Arlene also described a strong student-focus in the strategic planning process.

> As long as what we're doing translates to successful students, we're moving forward… If it's just something to keep us trendy [we don't do it]… we really have to have confidence that it is going directly back to our students. (Personal communication, April 28, 2011)

In terms of leadership around new ideas, Arlene noted that staff members often bring new ideas to the table and she described her role as being to "show them what is possible" [given the resource constraints] (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). There were additional details about the challenges around this in the profile earlier in this chapter. Director Arlene mentioned that instructional leadership was a high priority and that it was a team-run effort. She was the only director in the study to report that she also taught library instruction classes.

Director Arlene mentioned that her college tried to take a districtwide rather than campus-based approach to the provision of services. She reported

several strategies to gain input from the college when planning for new initiatives. Those activities included faculty surveys, involvement with the academic council "which is all the deans and directors from both student services and the academic side" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011), and academic chair meetings. She also mentioned that the library faculty served on the faculty senate, so they were "always out and about" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). This strategy was present at other libraries, throughout the interviews.

Director Bill. Director Bill spoke of three levels of planning for initiatives – local, district, and state. He mentioned that much was done locally and said that the process was "to bring all stakeholders together, introduce the idea, trial it, run it, and decide [whether or not to implement it]" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011). Collegewide decisions were made under a consensus shared governance model, and for those types of decisions, "buy in has to be broad and deep" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011). The tenured or tenure-track librarians would need to come to consensus in order to launch a new initiative. More than any other participant, Bill mentioned that the State Department of Education was involved in local higher education and that directors tended to work together to respond to State demands and mandates.

As with other colleges in the study, new initiatives tended to focus around technology and instruction. At BCC, processes were either driven from the ground up or mandated by the State. Information literacy and single sign-on[21] to the research databases through the college web portal were examples of new initiatives. Director Bill described the process of adopting single sign-on as being very collaborative with widespread acceptance collegewide. The information literacy initiative was being mandated by the State but each college was deciding how to roll it out. At BCC, "library faculty are working with our teaching faculty to find appropriate ways to integrate it into the curriculum" (Personal

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[21] Using one set of credentials to sign-on to all of the college's services including authentication to library-provided services.

communication, April 17, 2011). Interestingly, Bill mentioned that the roll out might vary from campus to campus at BCC.

When planning, Bill mentioned the importance of being "in tune with" the college's strategic plan. Bill indicated that the director should ensure that the library was involved in the planning process. He said that BCC library's annual plan was tied directly to the college plan and that his college used an online tool to measure progress against established markers. When scoping and planning for new initiatives, Bill described a process of scanning the literature and professional blogs. "Finding out what's the new du jour hot item without being too trendy… some things die just as fast as they come on board" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011). Bill reported that the State purchased most of the database subscriptions. When asked about stopping an activity, Bill responded that this was usually done "slowly and incrementally" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011). He provided an example of how the library changed long-standing Interlibrary Loan processes to use resources more effectively. He also spoke of the difficulty of dropping activities when others are counting on them. Bill gave an example of his library's participation in a consortial chat reference program that was straining local resources but in high demand by students.

Regarding assigning librarians to projects, Bill said that the librarians in the system were very self-motivated and that most got involved in initiatives on their own. He explained that collection development[22] was a decentralized activity but that librarians came together to discuss topics such as ebooks. Many of the projects involving technological innovation seemed to be in response to State mandates. As an example, Bill reported that the State was asking all public academic libraries (i.e. state, university, and community) to migrate to one library catalog in what most library administrators would consider to be a very ambitious timeline.

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[22] The process of selecting resources (books, databases, films, and so forth) for the institutional library collection.

Director Bill was astutely aware of data that had been collected to describe the library instruction program. He depicted a vigorous instructional program at his campus that was delivering approximately 310 instructional sessions per year. As a director who works with similar data, his assessment of the vitality of the program resonated with me. Bill also mentioned that the library on his campus was fortunate to have two dedicated electronic classrooms. He further noted that librarians taught in their liaison areas but that they divided up high-enrollment classes such as English Composition. This practice could have contributed to the apparent success of the library's instructional program.

When planning new initiatives, the library at BCC sought input from the college by being involved as members of various college councils. Director Bill commented that BCC had a strong consensus-based shared governance structure saying "[it] is like fingernails on the blackboard to a lot of people who are coming new [to the college]" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011). In addition to traditional marketing methods, he listed councils and college connections as a means to get the word out about library initiatives. He noted communication as a challenge saying, "sometimes we are our own worst enemy… we are a light under a basket… a beautiful light but…no one knows we're there… Often times we are astonished and stunned about how little our faculty know about our services" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011).

Director Cecille. At CCC all programs participated in an annual planning and review process during which departments established goals and objectives for the upcoming year. As a new director, Cecille had inherited her predecessor's plan and was gearing up to begin her first planning process. Early on she recognized that technology systems had been neglected. She began her tenure addressing technological issues and revitalizing the college's database subscriptions. She was looking forward to developing her first plan. To that end she hoped to,

> …position ourselves to play a much more central role in terms of student persistence and student success and … reach out to staff … and discipline

faculty and to make sure that connection is made. (Personal communication, April 4, 2011)

Although many of her new initiatives were digital in nature, their focus was in support of student success and instruction.

Director Cecille mentioned that the library had a number of ongoing initiatives including an overhaul of the library website, development of a mobile website, trial testing a discovery interface, an advanced trial of a new database suite, and the upgrade of the ILS (Integrated Library System). She additionally reported trying some innovative outreach/marketing efforts including creating Quick Response (QR) codes[23] for focused information delivery from the library website and student newspaper, and the development of invitational salons where instructional faculty could learn more about databases with librarians. She said,

> In these challenging times, the faculty librarians … and myself have been working collaboratively on creative, out-of-the-box solutions to continue to promote student success and add value to the institution as a whole. Even with the reduction of 1 FTE faculty librarian, I have been able to do some repurposing of faculty librarians and staff… under the leadership of …[the new Electronic Services Librarian] we have been able to carry out a series of new digital initiatives and start building a non-traditionally excellent academic library… (Personal communication, April 2, 2011).

She reported that there was a large focus on student learning outcomes at the college and spoke of the leadership role the librarians had taken on in carrying out learning assessments. She said that the library's credit class had been a requirement for graduation, but that the State was beginning to move towards a transfer model curriculum and "… the legislature and taxpaying public want us to focus on transfer, on CTE (career and technical education) and maybe a little bit on basic skills" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011). She was the only director in the study to bring up the perspective of the taxpaying public. The result of this change was that the library's credit class may no longer be mandatory. To

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[23] QR codes are patterns or barcodes that can be linked to web pages that provide information about a service or topic. They are sometimes used by libraries to allow users to scan information about library services directly on to cell phones.

counter the impact of this decision on enrollment in the library's class, the library had creatively proposed that the college give priority registration to students who had taken the library class. This would incentivize students to enroll in this valuable instruction. In making the case to the college, Cecille presented data-based evidence, including input from students, about the value of the class to students in the college's current focus areas (i.e. CTE and basic skills).

When asked about finding new resources [in the current economy], Cecille mentioned the need to shuffle and repurpose staff positions in order to shape the types of positions needed for the current environment. She said that she had only been able to fill one of two vacant positions and that she had reshaped an existing position in order to meet the needs. When asked about how she decided when to stop an existing service, she reported using data to make decisions based on the impact on students. One method that she had for assigning librarians to new projects was to leverage tenure projects as a means to explore innovative solutions. She said that she was fortunate to have new staff members who were interested in developing such projects.

Under Cecille's management, the CCC library had rapidly undergone an incredible amount of change. She joked with library staff members saying, "I've probably implemented more changes in nine months …than they've experienced in the past nine years" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011). She said that she was a pretty "open administrator" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011) and that she listened to the librarians and staff members before putting together a project plan. Possibly because of the amount of change in her tenure, she frequently spoke about change. She described the change process as follows:

> So I had to do a lot of meetings. I had to do a lot of communication in order to make sure that people understand that their job is not going to be cut, but that… ultimately this is the direction that the library is going, there is no going back. I am open to listening to their fears, I'm open to processing with them to co-processing with them… but the bottom line is we're moving forward. (Personal communication, April 4, 2011)

Her leadership style appeared to have a blend of practicality, open communication, and commitment of purpose. The library appeared to be highly productive, and Cecille did not mention that she was working in a union environment until asked.

Director Cecille was unquestionably passionate about technology and instruction. She was concerned that the information literacy program was under attack by state-level curriculum mandates. She encouraged librarians to talk with instructional faculty about the issue and was also involved in conversations with the Vice President to whom she reported. To build a case, she collected student comments. This demonstrated the benefit of the library class to CTE and basic skills students. Cecille explained that the library received input from the college by participating in the academic senate and by being involved in collegewide shared governance committees and resource work. She also reported using email as an effective way to communicate about the library to college employees.

Director Dan. When deciding on what new projects to support, Director Dan reported that he worked closely with the curriculum committee. As a dean, Dan sat on the Dean's Council and that provided him with a conduit for institutional communication. He mentioned that some current library-related projects were tied to recommendations from a recent accreditation visit. Dan stated that because of the accreditation recommendation the college was working to better define general education outcomes.

> Thankfully the library was at the table and we were able to say…there are a couple of overarching ones [outcomes] like critical thinking, information literacy, and communication… we were part of the bigger conversation. (Personal communication, April 4, 2011)

This work on education outcomes had become the backbone of current initiatives. Dan discussed the creation of electronic modules that could be inserted into Blackboard.[24] He also mentioned that there was going to be a library remodel in order to create a learning commons space that was more useful for the various

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[24] A brand of Learning Management System (LMS) used to deliver online courses and as a place to store class materials for face to face classes.

types of collaborative learning processes that many current students were engaged in. He said that planning for such initiatives was done through an early budgeting process.

Director Dan acknowledged that decisions about cutting services could be political and that, when possible, he used data to support such decisions. He stated that he had the support of a very practical Associate Dean. Like others in the study, he noted having the ability to retool positions in order to economically meet current needs. When asked about how he eliminated services, he discussed the process of eliminating non-effective services as they "atrophied" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011).

In terms of assigning staff members to projects, Dan mentioned that the library worked on a team structure and that librarians participate in teams based on their expertise or their roles. He also reported that librarians had liaison roles with various subject areas. This allowed librarians to reach out to disciplines and to provide support with instruction and collection development. He added that high-enrollment subjects such as English were shared amongst the library faculty.

Director Dan mentioned that he did not lead innovative projects personally but that he was involved in the planning and that he participated at college deans meetings. He also reported that he met with the librarians every two weeks in order to "discuss practical issues". He reported that each fall the library had a "kickoff … of what we're going to focus on" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011). Dan additionally said that he had a background in and passion for information literacy that allowed him to bring "renewed energy" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011) to that area of practice. This passion was notable throughout the interview.

Regarding innovation, Director Dan said,

> …working with unions [librarian and faculty] can be challenging. You get the feeling that you are being treated as advisory. You have to make sure that you are consistent and you lead and people understand that you also have expertise… I think sometimes the librarians forget that you were a

faculty librarian and that you do know what is going on. (Personal
communication, April 4, 2011)

He suggested several strategies for minimizing the impact of union divisions on innovation: (a) build on successes and get people excited; (b) avoid getting "bogged down" (Personal communication, April 4, 2011) in the politics; and (c) focus on the impact to students. Dan described instructional leadership as being run by an instructional committee. He said that he sat on the library's instructional committee as a participant, because of his interest and expertise in instruction (this was somewhat unusual for a dean). He reported that technological innovation was also supported as a team effort.

Director Dan noted that the library was outside of a strategic plan at the moment but that the library team was in the process of writing a 2-5 year plan. He mentioned a number of creative ways to get input from the college including: sitting on councils and committees; conducting surveys; and setting up flip pads in the front of the library so that students could record what they needed from the library. Dan also described more traditional marketing methods such as fliers, communication through the college portal, and email. He highlighted the importance of visibly responding to student requests. When communicating to the college about library initiatives, Dan mentioned email, fliers and communication through committees. He reported that knowing whether or not the library was reaching the college's many adjunct faculty members was a challenge. This comment strongly resonated with my experience as a library director.

Director Emma. Director Emma reported that ECC had undergone some "drastic cuts" (Personal communication, March 25, 2011) to the supplies and services budget during the recent fiscal year. This had impacted her level of control over the library budget. She said that finding resources for new projects was currently difficult and talked about prioritizing cuts around things that were not mandatory but that were "good to have" (Personal communication, March 25, 2011). She spoke of her ability to regain some control by transferring funds between budget lines. For example, "we could decide to spend less money on

books or periodicals and retain more of our electronic resources or to subscribe to new electronic resources" (Personal communication, March 25, 2011). Emma listed library groups, consortia, students, staff members, and faculty as sources of ideas for new initiatives. In speaking of innovation, she said,

> I have a strong belief in the necessity of "bottom-up" projects to ensure the people who are working directly with students are involved in significant decision-making. (Personal communication, March 25, 2011)

Despite budgetary constraints, Emma provided a number of creative examples of projects that were pushed forward by cooperative efforts (ECC, document, April 6, 2011).

Director Emma described a "very unionized" (Personal communication, March 25, 2011) environment. She said that faculty librarians did not have job descriptions, and therefore project assignments were classified as "voluntary" (Personal communication, March 25, 2011). Although participation was usually not a problem, she reported that she began each new initiative with a discussion to recruit volunteers. Her strategy was to try to generate enthusiasm and to "hope that people step up to the plate" (Personal communication, March 25, 2011). She stressed that the environment was highly based on a shared governance model and that decisions were made by consensus. Similar to other the directors, she saw her role as taking ideas and letting librarians know what would and would not work. She mentioned that she trusted the opinions of staff members who have frontline experience and said that the volunteer model generally worked well.

The librarians at ECC were very involved as instructional leaders in the collegewide assessment plan. They used the same methods (listed pre-test and posttest as examples) as classroom faculty to assess student learning. Emma was a strong supporter of the library's instructional program and appeared to be an instructional leader herself.

Director Emma mentioned that the college was in the midst of a strategic planning initiative and that the library and other departments would "develop a strategic plan that fit within the college plan" (Personal communication, March 25,

2011). She also reported that there had been a delay in strategic planning due to turnover in the executive administration at the college. She said, "…it's unfortunate because it is really hard to set direction and not just react when you don't have a strategic plan" (Personal communication, March 25, 2011). Emma explained that the library primarily received input from the college about its planning efforts via communication with the Vice Chancellor. She characterized the Vice Chancellor as being the person who would push relevant information upward in the organization. Another way that the library got the word out to the college community was by embedding publicity into every project plan. Emma specifically mentioned bookmarks, table tents, and social media as communication tools. She also commented that the printing budget was constrained.

Director Fran. Director Fran mentioned that new library initiatives were directly tied to the college direction. She underscored that the library tried to focus on support to the academic area. More than any other director, she repeatedly tied the library's role to the academic functions of the college. Although the library was not involved in any large new initiatives at the time of the interview, Director Fran noted that a library school student had recently created a Facebook page. There were plans afoot to update it and the library website over the summer. This was the only mention in this study of the use of library master's students for special projects. The only other initiative that Director Fran mentioned was one that was selected because of a need to cut costs. It involved charging students for printing.

FCC did not appear to use project planning techniques to scope new projects. Director Fran described the planning process as,

> …library staff will discuss what the project is going to be, what are the potential ramifications of the project, what are the pitfalls and then we proceed from there. (Personal communication, April 5, 2011)

Like others, Fran scanned library professional literature when selecting new projects. She noted that the library made use of Foundation-funded mini-grants to support new projects.

Director Fran appeared to be less directly connected to library projects than the other directors. This was possibly because she was in charge of multiple departments and organizationally there were branch library managers between her and the librarians. She described "delegating authority to other staff members to empower them to be able to take the lead initiative in many cases" (Personal communication, April 5, 2011). Concerning instructional leadership, Fran said that the library managers assigned instructional duties to librarians. She mentioned that the library was stretched thin in terms of staffing. FCC had a total of two full-time reference librarians at its campuses. This was the fewest number of any of the colleges in the study. Most colleges had 2-3 full-time reference librarians per campus. The directors reported augmenting these through the use of additional part-time librarians.

Regarding receiving input from the college when planning new initiatives, Fran commented that the librarians contacted the chairman of any departments that might be affected by a change at the library. For collegewide initiatives, Fran reported, "we put out announcements on the internal news mechanisms" (Personal communication, April 5, 2011). Fran mentioned an electronic newsletter, a television channel, and getting feedback through the use of surveys. She said that the library did not typically include people from outside the library when planning library-specific projects.

Strategic Support for New Initiatives: Cross-case Analysis

This section describes the ways in which participant directors strategically provide support for new initiatives despite the ongoing reality of funding challenges. The intent of this discussion is to reveal and compare methods used to nurture innovation in a resource-constrained environment. It seeks to analyze patterns amongst common methods and creative anomalies, used by the directors, to prescribe effective and sustainable solutions that support instructional and technological innovation.

This question was broad and complex. In order to address all aspects of the question, I conducted interviews made up of scripted supporting questions [see Appendix C] and enriched by open-ended conversations. Four unsurprising key themes emerged as a result of this investigation: (a) planning and organizational communication; (b) instructional leadership; and (c) technological initiatives. Additionally, (d) governance, and (e) student-centeredness emerged as unexpected themes. This section provides a cross-case analysis the findings of conversations about these themes.

(a) Planning and organizational communication. Directors reported being involved in a number of types of planning efforts including formal and informal strategic planning processes. Libraries were involved in library, campus, college, consortial, and state planning efforts. Table 4.6 describes types of planning reported by each director.

Table 4.6

Types of Planning by College Library

	Library	Campus	College	Consortia	State
Aspen	x	-	x	x	x
Beech	x	x	x	x	x
Cedar	x	x	x	-	x
Dogwood	x	x	x	-	-
Elm	x	x	x	x	x
Fir	-	-	x	x	-

Library. When planning at the library or college level, many directors mentioned that planning was done collaboratively and that it involved wide input from stakeholders. Directors tended to serve as information conduits between librarians and the college or campus. They facilitated communication in multiple directions and added that librarians supported communication efforts through their participation in college committees and governing bodies.

When working with librarians, the directors described their role as one of providing support, vetting ideas, and defining the parameters of what could or could not be done due to resource issues. Limitations were usually tied to budgetary constraints. Although the directors spoke favorably about librarian participation in new projects, there was frequent mention of the dance between the administrative and faculty roles that sometimes impeded or slowed innovation. Director Cecille stood out in her willingness to take a strong stance on initiatives that needed to happen. She mentioned willingness to process and communicate about change but was firm in setting a strategic direction for library initiatives.

Campus. Campus planning was in evidence at Beech, the one type B college in the study. Bill reported a level of planning that was tied directly to local campus initiatives and priorities. Since Bill reported to the campus president, he had direct contact with local planning activities. He communicated at a campus-level about decisions about such things as library hours, library participation in services (chat reference was an example), and library support for campus-based programs. Although there was some amount of district-level planning, decisions at Beech were made at the campus.

College. The directors highlighted the importance of aligning library initiatives to the college mission and of being at the table when college decisions were being made. They tended to keep an eye on the big picture and almost all of the directors mentioned the practice of scanning professional literature as a means of bringing new ideas to their systems. They spoke of bringing library-related budgetary issues to the college planning process at the earliest possible moment. Technology and funding for resources (books, databases, ebooks, etc.) to support accredited programs were two examples of items they regularly brought to the table.

Consortia. Four directors mentioned being involved in consortial efforts. The types of consortia varied and libraries were sometimes members of multiple types of consortia. These were used to strengthen purchasing power, share

resources, and expand the library's ability to provide continuing education to its staff members. Of the libraries in this study, only Fir reported being a member of a multi-type library consortium for the purpose of sharing the library collection. Although libraries tended to join consortia as a District, Beech was the only library in its system to participate in the efforts of a specific consortium. This topic was not explored in depth in this study, but it would be interesting to conduct further research on the ways that large community college libraries are participating in library consortia.

State. Some directors mentioned State-related planning, but such efforts tended to be tied to finding ways implement or respond to State directives. State mandates around information literacy instruction, for example, had an impact on the planning processes at Beech and Cedar. However, there was not a uniform approach to the implementation of such mandates. The various types of approaches appeared to be dictated by the college's organizational structure. At Beech for example, each college in the system was free to design a local solution to a State mandate. On the other hand, Cedar implemented a districtwide solution in response to a change in how colleges were to implement information literacy instruction.

(b) Instructional leadership. Instructional leadership was a high priority for five of the six participants. Most of the directors had an unquestionable passion for instruction and/or issues related to information literacy. They were very aware of discussions about these topics happening at their institutions. Director Emma, who also managed other departments, reported that her librarians were surprised when they first learned of her interest in participating on the instruction committee, but said that they had come to include her in the conversation. Director Fran, who appeared to be the least directly connected to instruction, was also in charge of other departments on multiple campuses and had the fewest number of instructional librarians. Because of this, I suspected that the

instructional conversation at that college happened at a lower level in the organization, and was possibly led by the department manager and librarians.

All of the directors spoke of instruction as being a team effort. This was the area where librarians were most likely to have a formal or informal community of practice. Although there was evidence that librarians were engaged in assessment activities, there was no evidence of a set of commonly accepted best practices. When the library instruction program at Cedar was threatened due to State-level curriculum changes, its library faculty members used assessment techniques to gather data to defend the program. Since CTE (career and technical education) and basics[25] were State priorities, the library responded by demonstrating its usefulness to the students in those areas.

One challenge that libraries reported was not having the ability to connect with all instructional programs given the limited number of librarians at the college. A common strategy used to address this was to assign librarians to serve as liaisons to specific subject areas. The definition of liaison varied, but this was seen as a viable way to stretch resources and to maximize the impact of outreach efforts. Several of the directors mentioned that all librarians participated in instruction for high-enrollment classes. The directors reported that librarians provided instruction directly to subject faculty in a loosely defined train-the-trainer model. It appeared that, as of this date, no library in the study had fully developed a highly effective program. Cedar library seemed to be the most creatively engaged in launching this type of initiative. It was interesting to note that Cedar had the least amount of funding to support continuing education.

(c) Technological initiatives. When speaking of new projects, a number of the directors suggested that library initiatives typically revolved around instruction or technology. The directors reported that supporting technological innovation was challenging, because not all librarians, including younger ones, were comfortable with technology. Several directors mentioned scanning the

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[25] Pre-college coursework that prepares students for college-level classes.

literature to find out about new innovations, but they also noted the importance of ensuring that they avoided trendy technologies and focused on technology that would truly have a positive impact on student success.

The directors reported several strategies for supporting technological innovation. At institutions where librarians were involved in the tenure process, new librarians with technological skills took on projects as part of their tenure portfolio. This seemed like a creative way to encourage tech savvy librarians to contribute, but in order to be sustainable it would need to be coupled with other practices in order to survive during times when there were no tenure-track librarians.

Several directors reported that they had been reshaping positions in order to create new ones that were compatible with the current technological environment and/or changes in librarianship. Most libraries had one or two non-teaching librarians who were dedicated electronic resource or digital librarians. They worked on digital collections, database management, and web-related projects. Three directors reported the need to upgrade their college's library website and talked about the difficulties of accomplishing this in a resource challenged environment. One director had a strong technical background and reported that she was able to support the redesign and implementation of a new website in less than a year of being hired. As a library director with a technical background, I understand that due to politics alone, accomplishing this in one year was a remarkable accomplishment. I also noted that community college library websites are often substantially less user-centered than those found at university libraries.

(d) Organizational communication. Generally speaking, the directors valued two-way communication with the institution as a means to gain input about library initiatives and planning efforts. They encouraged librarians and library staff members to become involved on committees and councils in order to learn about college priorities and to seek input about library initiatives. It appeared that libraries tended to seek input frequently on initiatives related to the college's

mission or budget. There was less discussion about seeking input on library-specific initiatives. Fran indicated that she tracked email from a committee that she did not attend in order to gain insight into college plans. Table 4.7 depicts forums and venues the directors and library staff members use to get college input into library planning processes.

Table 4.7

Methods Library Directors Use to Get Input from the College

	Surveys	Councils	Committees	Meetings	Senate	Manager	Email
Aspen	x	x	-	x	x	x	-
Beech	-	x	x	x	x	x	-
Cedar	-	-	x	x	x	x	x
Dogwood	x	x	x	x	-	x	x
Elm	x	-	x	x	x	x	-
Fir	-	-	x	x	-	x	x

The directors reported that they also used many of the above methods to communicate outwards to the college about new library initiatives and services. They tended to refer to outward communication as marketing or publicity. In addition to the list above, they noted the use of print and electronic media to enhance communication. When speaking to the directors about outbound and inbound communication channels, the subject of communication to students arose. Discussion about this aspect of communication was discussed later in this section.

(e) Governance. This study did not seek to examine faculty status, unionization, or governance structures. The issue of unionization materialized briefly in the survey. Unionization and shared governance emerged early on as unexpected themes in the interviews. This was possibly due to national conversations about teachers' unions that were forming at the time of the interviews. To confirm my hypothesis, I tracked back and asked each director who

had not indicated during the interview, whether or not the librarians at their institution had faculty status or were in a union environment.

The directors indicated that, regardless of a union presence, all colleges in this study where librarians had faculty status had some form of shared governance model. Interestingly, Beech, a non-union college, appeared to have the strongest shared governance structure in the study. In a shared governance model, many decisions, particularly those related to academic endeavors, are decided upon by consensus. Moreover, by its nature, the collaborative decision-making process moves slowly. In a shared governance setting, the success of initiatives often depends on the participation of those involved. This can be challenging to those wanting to push forward innovative projects in a given timeframe or in order to quickly respond to a known or emerging need.

It appeared from the interviews that frustration over the ability to innovate or to promote change in a timely manner was attributable to the complexity of the decision-making process in a consensus shared governance model rather than to the presence of a union. Throughout the study, this issue was noted and analyzed where it appeared in the interviews. Although this particular issue was recorded in the findings, it was not a central theme of this study. Given the complexity of today's educational environment and the rapid pace of change in education and librarianship, this could be an important topic for further research. There is possible merit in investigating the roles and responsibilities of management, staff, and faculty team members in designing and supporting innovative technological and instructional efforts in a shared governance environment

(e) Student-centeredness. Another unexpected theme that emerged through the interviews was that of student-centeredness. It was not surprising to me that libraries were student-focused, but the degree to which the library directors focused on the impact to students when making spending decisions in a resource-constrained environment was unexpected and exciting. Given the extreme economic constraints some colleges were reporting, the directors discussed

looking at the impact on students as a key criterion for making difficult decisions. The directors reported prioritizing projects that had the most likelihood of improving student success. When at a loss, the directors tended to use the student experience as the focal point of a decision. They reported valuing "bottom-up" projects designed by staff members who have regular student contact.

A number of the directors discussed the ways in which they got input from students when making decisions about services or programs. Dan commented on the importance of responding to input from students when asking their opinions. There was also evidence throughout the interviews that libraries were trying to communicate using modes that were likely to be accepted by students. Cecille indicated using student feedback to provide evidence of the efficacy of a program that was being threatened. This theme was outside of the scope of this study but its emergence suggested that it might be a rich area for future investigation.

Summary

This section contained a case-by-case and a cross-case analysis of the first question of the study. The question investigated the ways in which library directors at large comprehensive community colleges support innovation despite the reality of a resource-constrained environment. The first question was intentionally broad. I used interviews containing a series of scripted underlying questions that were complemented by open-ended questions that explored complex aspects of the main question and teased out unexpected information. These interviews revealed three unsurprising themes and two that were unexpected.

The expected themes were: (a) planning and organizational communication; (b) instructional leadership; (c) technological initiatives. The interviews revealed that the directors were engaged in informal and formal planning at multiple levels. They reported participating in internal, campus, collegewide, consortial, and state planning efforts. The degree to which they participated in each type of planning varied depending on the structure of their institution. The directors further indicated that most new initiatives fell into two

categories – instructional and technological. They identified methods of supporting both in a resource-lean environment and they acknowledged the importance of multiple streams of two-way communication between the library and the organization.

Two unexpected themes – unionization/governance structure and student-centeredness – emerged throughout the course of the interviews. Although the directors spoke favorably about the participation of librarians, some reported frustration with the slowness of progress when using the consensus-based shared governance model. I observed that shared governance appeared to be linked with faculty status rather than unionization, and that although possibly important; this topic was not a central theme of the study. I recommended further research in this area due to its potential as an important issue.

I also observed that during rough financial times, the directors tended to focus closely on the impact to students when making tough decisions. There were a number of ways in which students were included in decision-making processes. Although this was not a central theme of this study, it was interesting and potentially merited further research.

Research Question 2: Providing Learning Opportunities for Those Involved in New Services

This section describes on a case-by-case basis how library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members who are involved in creating innovative services and programs. It also provides a cross-case analysis of the findings. Libraries often face an abundance of unfunded mandates due to added requests for instruction brought about by the addition of new or redesigned programs and a desire to meet students' expectations around service delivery and information technology. The rationale for this question is that it seeks to ascertain what processes library directors use to strategically support professional development for those involved in technological and instructional initiatives.

Director Arlene. At ACC, much was driven by the evaluation process at the college. Librarians relied heavily on educational programs provided by professional associations such as American Library Association (ALA) and Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Arlene's philosophy was that staff learning fueled the strategic plan. She said, "…the more we know, the more we seek out new ways of doing things and that translates into moving the whole department forward" (Personal communication, April 28, 2011). She mentioned that, because of fiscal constraints, training was a challenge and that webinars were a primary vehicle for the delivery of staff development opportunities. She also noted that staff members generously supported each other with flexible scheduling to accommodate each other's training needs and that they made training and professional development a priority. I admired her ability to carry on and move forward despite the bleak economic reality.

Director Bill. In this study, BCC was one of the most actively committed colleges to continuous education. Bill reported that through the tenure process, new faculty members began employment as part of a three-year cohort that focused on pedagogy. Although the college had few resources for travel, BCC had a generous budget for local training and continuing education. Bill commented that many librarians and library staff members took part in the local offerings but bemoaned the fact that some of the more experienced librarians no longer wished to add to their skillset and were not open to continuing educational opportunities. Regarding technology, Bill mentioned, "not all of the librarians, even the young ones, are comfortable with technology" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011).

Director Bill reported that the increased enrollment was presenting a challenge to the library's ability to make time for employee training saying, "it takes the back burner when you're in the heat of things" (Personal communication, April 17, 2011). He reported that since the librarians were on a 12-month contract in a non-union environment, there was more flexibility than at colleges with a shorter contract year.

Director Cecille. Director Cecille reported being disappointed at the level of resources committed to continuing education at CCC. She said,

> I am a believer in professional development especially when you talk about close integration between libraries and technology and how things are constantly changing…I made a commitment to them [staff] that I would find creative ways of providing training and development. (Personal communication, April 17, 2011).

She has done this by harnessing in-house expertise and by setting aside some time each week to support staff learning. On the day of our interview, she was preparing to teach a class that was open to all staff members. She suggested that I check back in a year to see how this was going. Like other deans in the study, Cecille reported that resource constraints were the biggest challenge.

Director Dan. DCC was committed to staff development and provided substantial resources to support the effort. Dan reported that each librarian was given $1,800 per year for conference attendance or tuition reimbursement but noted funding for travel was tight. Despite this, librarians at DCC appeared to be able to participate in conferences. Their proximity to an urban area with many library-related conferences was also helpful. Like Arlene, Dan mentioned that librarians worked collaboratively to find time to support their colleagues' training efforts.

Director Emma. Despite budgetary woes, ECC appeared to be committed to professional development. Per the contract every employee was required to take a certain number of continuing educational credits per year. They were given three days for this activity and librarians could flex their schedules to accommodate their training needs. Director Emma said that the college sent people to library trainings sponsored by state and regional associations, and that she brought people to the library for in-house trainings. She listed funding as the greatest challenge to being able to provide training for those involved in new innovative projects.

Director Fran. Similar to others, Director Fran mentioned that, due to budgetary constraints, the college made heavy use of webinars or local training

opportunities. She indicated that librarians could sometimes attend national conferences if they took place in-state or in an adjacent state. One method for supporting professional education without impacting service to students during the academic year was to stagger the training schedule across the calendar so that everyone would have an equal opportunity to participate. Director Fran mentioned that librarians had varied interests "… so it's very diverse and everyone is curious as to what's going on so that when someone brings back information, the information is well received by everyone". (Personal communication, April 5, 2011). Not surprisingly, she also cited funding as the greatest challenge to being able to provide opportunities for continuing education.

Providing Learning Opportunities for Those Involved in New Services: Cross-Case Analysis

This section analyzes the ways in which the directors in the study support learning for those involved in the creation of new services and programmatic innovation. The strongest theme in this story was that the directors and their institutions were striving to provide educational opportunities during bleak financial times. In some cases funding for travel had been largely eliminated. The directors reported that librarians were taking advantage of local and regional conferences as well as national conferences happening in their region. There was substantial reliance on webinars and online training. Table 4.8 depicts the types of learning opportunities various colleges were supporting at the time of the interviews. Webinars and conferences were the most frequently reported learning modalities.

Table 4.8

Types of Learning Opportunities Available to Librarians and Staff

	Webinar	Tenure Process	In-house	Stipend/Tuition[26]	Conference
Aspen	x	x	-	x	x
Beech	x	x	x	-	-
Cedar	-	-	x	-	-
Dogwood		-	-	x	x
Elm	x	-	-	x	x
Fir	x	-	-	-	x

When asked about how librarians and staff members made time for professional development efforts, the directors overwhelmingly indicated that library staff members understood the importance of development and that they worked cooperatively to ensure that professional development opportunities were distributed equitably. Several of the directors mentioned that not all librarians were interested in professional growth. One institution embedded accountability for professional growth into the performance evaluation process. Cecille, the director at the institution with the least amount of support for professional growth, had creatively instituted an in-house train-the-trainer program.

Summary

This section contained a case-by-case analysis and a cross-case analysis of the second question. That question investigated the ways in which the directors in this study and their institutions provided professional development opportunities for librarians and library staff members involved in new innovative instructional and technological initiatives. Resoundingly, the directors reported that professional development funds had been cut and that overnight travel was in many instances non-existent. They identified a number of ways in which professional development was still occurring despite funding woes. Those

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[26] These funds could be used to pay for conference registrations and/or credit classes at the college or other educational institutions.

methods included webinars, conferences, in-house training, tenure processes, and stipends or tuition reimbursement. The directors also reported that librarians and staff members were supportive of each other's efforts to stay up to date and that they arranged flexible schedules to accommodate training needs. A number of directors mentioned that some librarians and staff members had reached a point in their careers where they no longer wanted professional development and that this was a challenge given the fast paced rate of change in instruction and librarianship.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this multiple case study was to describe how library directors, at large comprehensive community colleges, strategically advocate for and support instructional leadership and technological innovation despite the reality of limited resources and the stress caused by recurring funding crises in higher education. It further sought to examine how library directors articulate the role of the library at the institution, prioritize support for new initiatives, and provide meaningful learning opportunities for library staff members involved in the development of new innovative projects. This chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to the literature and the ways in which the findings are in agreement with or contrast to the results in the literature review. It also discusses the implications for practice, identifies some limitations of the study, and provides recommendations for future research.

This study focused on comprehensive community colleges in the very large 2-year (VL2) size and setting category of the Carnegie Classifications. Its scope included library integration with precollege, college transfer, and career and technical (CTE) programs. It acknowledged that the role of the academic library has changed substantially over the past 30 years due to the information explosion and technological advances (Budd 2005; Radford & Mon, 2008) and sought to define the library in context to the community college environment and the national community college research agenda (CCRC, n.d.). Additionally, this study depicted community college librarians as academic partners who provide instructional leadership across the curriculum (Gilchrist, 2007) and discussed the importance of strategically aligning library priorities with the institutional mission (Vierthaler, 2006; Wood, Miller, & Knapp, 2007).

Summary and Discussion

This section discusses the findings of the research questions in relation to the literature review in Chapter Two and other relevant literature. The foundational research questions for this study were:

1. How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services?
2. How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff who are involved in creating innovative services or programs?

This study took place during a time of extraordinary economic upheaval due to an economic downturn that caused unemployment in the United States to rise significantly. During this period, community colleges were faced with severe funding cutbacks while being charged with serving unprecedented numbers of students who flocked to their doors seeking education and training in order to reenter the workforce (Fry, 2009). The findings of the interviews predominantly agreed with the results of the literature review and supported the need for further research targeted at community college libraries.

The philosophical approach to this study was interpretive social science, and the method was multiple case study. Participants were chosen using a typical case selection process. Data were gathered from: (a) a preliminary survey used to select participants and to verify that candidate participants met the qualifications of the study; (b) telephone interviews; (c) follow-up questions; and (d) documents submitted by participants. Quotes from participants were used throughout the study, and in the tradition of interpretive social science, I commented about aspects of the study that resonated personally based on my professional experience as a library director at a candidate (non-participant) institution.

Research question 1: *How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services?*

This section presents an analysis of the first research question in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, the preliminary survey, case profiles, interviews, and the cross-case analysis found in Chapter Four. The section is divided into two sub-sections. The first sub-section focuses on case-by-case results using interviews and case profiles found in Chapter Four. The second sub-section provides a cross-case analysis of the findings throughout the quintain, or set of cases, comparing the cross-case analysis in Chapter Four to the literature review in Chapter Two.

Summary and discussion of individual case studies. Funding, growth, staffing, and technology emerged as key themes of the preliminary survey based on an analysis of the responses to the open-ended question. Growth did not persist as key theme throughout the interviews, nor was it heavily represented in the literature review. Its prominence in the survey possibly reflected the directors' concerns at the time of the survey about the impact of enrollment spikes at their institutions that had been caused by the recent economic downturn (Fry, 2009) and knowledge of growth projections due to the Obama administration's 2020 goal (Kanter, 2010; M.J. Kanter, personal communication, April 18, 2010).

AACC has identified the role of the community college library as valuable in the provision of instruction supporting information literacy and indispensible to "the teaching and learning mission" of the college (AACC, 2003). All participants in the study identified instruction as a top priority and spoke at length about ways with which to support innovation and organizational learning in this area. In all but one institution, librarians had faculty status. There was evidence that librarians were involved in conversations pertaining to instruction at all institutions.

AACC has also identified the library's supporting role in the provision of service to distance students (AACC, 2008b), and the literature reflected the

importance of shifting services to meet student expectations (Cox, 2008). Most of the directors spoke of service to online students, and all spoke of using technology to reach students in new ways. Technology and instruction were frequently cited as the top two areas of active, on-going innovation. This was evident in discussions about budgeting, strategic planning, and in examples of ongoing and recent library initiatives.

The literature review noted an omission of substantive discussion about the community college library's current role in handbooks and histories of community colleges (e.g. Baker, Dudziak, & Tyler, 1994; Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Levinson, 2005). Directors in this study were aware of this, and one mentioned fatigue due to having to repeatedly fight for resources and advocate for the role of librarianship. There was clear evidence throughout the interviews that the directors were using a number of strategies found in the literature to proactively involve libraries in institutional conversations and to align library initiatives with institutional priorities (Vierthaler, 2006; Wood, Miller, & Knapp, 2007). These strategies included active involvement in institutional strategic planning, encouraging librarians to participate on non-library college committees, surveying students and stakeholders, and actively marketing the library to internal and external customers. Community colleges are increasingly using data to make decisions (Petrides, 2004), and the libraries in this study were no exception. Library directors were using library data (e.g. circulation, gate count, web statistics, instructional sections, etc.) and institutional data to make decisions. Directors in the study reported making data-based decisions about services and focused on the impact to students when making difficult decisions in response to resource constraints.

Summary and discussion of cross-case analysis. Three key themes emerged in response to the first question. They were: (a) planning and organizational communication; (b) instructional leadership; and (c) technological

innovation. Additionally, (d) governance, and (e) student-centeredness emerged as unexpected themes.

It was evident throughout the study that the directors were engaged in library, campus, college, consortial, and state-level planning as well as organizational communication. All directors reported being involved in college-level planning, and as reflected in the literature, they spoke of making sustainable connections at the institutional level (Wood, Miller, & Knapp, 2007). Although much of the literature about strategic planning for academic libraries was aimed at university libraries, it appeared that publications such as *Standards for Libraries in Higher Education*, which is geared at all types of academic libraries (ACRL, 2004), may be effective in supporting community college library planning efforts. Although not covered in the literature review, it was apparent that the directors were using college planning tools and processes to integrate library services into the wider college plan.

The term *instructional leadership* did not resonate with a number of the directors, but it was evident from the interviews that instruction was a key focus of every library in the study. The directors described credit classes, one-off instruction, and face to face and virtual instruction from the reference desk. They also mentioned the role librarians played in supporting instructional faculty in the creation of assignments with effective information literacy outcomes and of creating digital learning objects that faculty and students could use independently. Findings indicated that community college librarians were truly accepted as instructional partners as indicated in the literature (Gilchrist, 2007). Another face of instructional leadership appeared in the work being done by the *instructional committees* described at most of the colleges. Librarians were clearly involved in conversations about teaching, learning, and assessment, and were seen as instructional. This was encouraging because it reflected practices depicted in the literature about 21st century academic librarianship (Lankes, 2011).

The literature review painted a landscape of unrelenting change due to the impact of the information explosion caused by advances in technological innovations that have increased access to information resources (Budd, 2005). It chronicled the history of technological advances over the past 30 years, and described new customizable tools (i.e. Web 2.0) for information storage and communication (Eden 2007; Opperman & Jamison, 2008; Stephens, 2007). Lankes (2011) described today's librarian as being both an information scientist and a library scientist due to the significant overlap between the various aspects of the profession (p. 171). Correspondingly, the directors in this study were as concerned about providing support for technological innovation as they were about instructional leadership. They spoke of a constant need to reshape technical job descriptions in order to meet changing technological demands, and they valued having the ability to leverage technological resources through participation in consortial or state-driven projects.

The topics of governance (e.g. shared governance) and student-centeredness emerged as unexpected themes in the interviews and were therefore, not addressed in the literature review. Governance had the potential to be a relevant topic for exploration and was addressed further in the section about implications for future research. Similarly, it was invigorating to see the library directors actively placing students at the center of decisions about resource allocation. This theme also had merit for further exploration and is mentioned later in the study.

Research question 2*: How do library directors provide meaningful learning opportunities for librarians and library staff who are involved in creating innovative services or programs?*

This section presents an analysis of the second research question in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, the individual interviews, and the cross-case analysis found in Chapter Four. The section is divided into two sub-sections. The first sub-section focuses on the case-by-case results using interviews and case profiles found in Chapter Four. The second sub-section provides a cross-case

analysis of the findings throughout the quintain, using the cross analysis in Chapter Four and the literature review in Chapter Two. Although this question was given equal weight to the first question, in some senses, it played a supporting role, and there was less of a focus on it in the literature review.

Summary and discussion of individual case studies. An interesting aspect of professional librarianship is that like some other disciplines, there are no formal requirements for continuing education (Lankes, 2011) and no certification requirements. However, because the profession is constantly changing due to technical advances and the fact that the focus of the practice has shifted from collection maintenance to instruction (Ashe, 2003; French, 2004) and knowledge creation (Lankes, 2011), there is an implicit expectation that librarians will engage in self-directed continuing education. There are many well-known local and national professional organizations that support library-related continuing education, but the focus of this question was on how library directors supported continuous learning in a resource-constrained environment.

Each director in the study indicated that continuing education was a high priority, and all described efforts to support an equitable distribution of opportunities to all librarians. Even the most resource-challenged library director was actively engaged in providing learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members.

Summary and discussion of cross-case analysis. Having the ability to provide quality learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members emerged as the one common theme throughout the interviews. Although this may seem obvious to those in the library community, proof of the importance of continuing education was reflected in the wide variety of methods for accomplishing it. Table 4.5 depicted the types of training and learning opportunities found across the quintain. While it was noticeable that all institutions provided continuing education, it did not appear that there was a

systematic effort to design a training plan that both benefitted individuals, and filled institutional learning gaps.

Although the directors described librarians as primarily being actively involved in their professional education, most mentioned the phenomenon of librarians who were no longer engaged in professional growth or continuing educational activities. In a time of resource constraints, one or two non-engaged librarians could seriously stifle a library's ability to innovate. Lankes (2011) described this as "the inertia of colleagues unwilling to change" (p. 1). This study did not seek to examine this issue, but it could be an important topic for future research.

Summary

This section discussed the major findings of the study, and tied the results of the interviews and cross-case analysis for each of the questions to the literature review. The analysis largely showed that the results of the study aligned with the findings of the literature review. The section further found that all of the themes that emerged from the initial survey, except growth, aligned with the literature review. It showed that the library directors were heavily involved in planning and organizational communication activities that were tied to institutional initiatives and that there was strong support for professional development and continuous education for those involved in the development of new instructional and technical initiatives.

Two unexpected themes emerged that were not a part of the initial study and were not addressed in the literature review. They were governance (e.g. shared governance) and student-centeredness. These themes showed promise as areas for future research and were addressed during that section of this study.

Implications for Practice

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which directors at large comprehensive community colleges strategically advocate for and support instructional leadership and technological innovation despite the reality of limited

resources and the stress caused by recurring funding crises in higher education. It further sought to examine how library directors articulated the role of the library at the institution, prioritized support for new initiatives, and provided meaningful learning opportunities for library staff members involved in the development of innovative new projects. Motivation for the study arose out of a curiosity about the ways in which library directors support innovation and change and a desire to learn if there was a shared community of practice around planning, support, and continuous learning that could be used as a framework by others.

The seeds for this study began to germinate when I first noticed that community college libraries were neglected or omitted in many of the community college handbooks. When speaking to instructional faculty and community college administrators, I noted that the profession of the academic librarianship in the community college setting was often misunderstood. Additionally, when talking with colleagues and scanning a national library-related community college listserv, I observed that there was a disconnection between some community college libraries and their institutions. I saw through publications and activities sponsored by ACRL that there were concerted efforts to help academic library leaders position libraries at their institutions and that community college librarians were included in that discussion. I also noted ACRL's focus on continuous learning, scholarship, and technology in its strategic plan (ACRL, 2009b; ACRL. 2011) and the work of the National Council for Learning Resources (NCLR), an affiliate council of the AACC dedicated to increasing awareness of library-related issues within the AACC (National Council for Learning Resources (NCLR, n.d.). I was curious to know if these efforts had been incorporated into common practice in the areas of strategic planning, instructional leadership, technological innovation, and support for continuous learning. This section is divided into four parts, each addressing the implications for practice in these identified areas.

Strategic planning and organizational communication. It was evident throughout this study that the directors were involved in strategic planning and

organizational communication at many levels. They clearly understood the importance of connecting the library with the college and of aligning library initiatives with stated institutional priorities. Table 4.6 indicated that the library directors were involved in strategic planning at library, campus, college, state, and consortial levels. The directors mentioned that they valued efforts that got the library involved in the early stages of planning discussions. It was also clear that they were involved in institutional discussions and that there was an awareness of a need to plan regardless of the funding climate.

Although this study was based on a small number of cases, practical implications derived from the findings of the interviews revealed that the library directors were using many of the suggested best practices from professional organizations (e.g. ACRL and AACC) to shape their strategic planning processes. There was however, a lack of focus in the professional literature on community college issues. One strategy to increase the effectiveness of these efforts would be to work collaboratively as a community of practice to create a community college focused toolkit that could be used nationally to help library directors improve planning efforts.

This work would align with ACRL's current strategic agenda through its *Plan for Excellence* (ACRL, 2011). It would also support the first goal of that plan, "*Academic libraries demonstrate alignment with and impact on institutional outcomes.*" Most importantly, it could support the work of directors, college administrators, and librarians in designing and providing excellent services to students.

I offer the following unanswered questions to those thinking about library-related strategic planning and organizational communication in the large community college. These questions arose in response to this limited study and are intended to serve as a conversational starting point rather than as a comprehensive list.

1. How can library directors most effectively align library initiatives with institutional priorities and ensure that library leadership provides proactive input during institutional planning initiatives?
   a. What role should library directors play in institutional planning?
   b. What can academic librarianship contribute to the overall planning process at the institution?
   c. How should library directors prepare themselves to be able to contribute to this conversation?

2. How can library directors effectively leverage planning done through partnerships and collaborative initiatives to support stated institutional goals and objectives?
   a. What role do library directors play in library-related planning efforts which happen with external collaborative partners such as library consortia?
   b. To what extent do library directors participate in the decision-making process with external funding sources, such as State agencies?
   c. What are the ways in which community college library directors plan and communicate with other community colleges in the state or region? With regional universities?

3. How can those involved in community college library leadership develop a community of practice to support the need for on-going strategic planning in a relentlessly changing educational environment?
   a. How are the issues facing community college library leaders different than those of their university counterparts? How are they similar?
   b. To what extent is there a national community college-focused community of practice around the issues of strategic planning and organizational communication?

Instructional leadership. The library directors overwhelmingly reported that support for activities connected to instruction was a top priority. Activities tended to align with assessment efforts, outreach to distance students, support for instructional faculty, and the integration of information and media literacy into the curriculum. The professional research was generally targeted at specific aspects of instruction, and there was a gap in the literature about broad-based instructional leadership in the community college environment.

Although the results were based on a small set of cases, the findings implied that there were areas of practice that merited improvement or continued evaluation. Given the fast-pace of change in the instructional arena, libraries need to constantly assess the effectiveness of instruction delivery. Fortunately libraries are accustomed to rapid change and are therefore ideal partners for collaborative educational design projects. This study indicated that directors should leverage existing instructional programs and seek ways to nurture the library's role as an educational leader at the college.

I offer the following questions for those thinking about ways to support library-related instructional leadership in a community college setting. These questions arose in response to this limited study and are intended to serve as a conversational starting point rather than as a comprehensive list.

1. How can library directors provide instructional leadership to ensure that library instruction programs are responding to the changing needs of students and faculty?

   a. In what ways should library directors support library faculty in responding to instructional change?

   b. In a shared governance environment, what are the roles and responsibilities of library directors in ensuring academic excellence in library programming? What are the roles and responsibilities of the cohort of faculty librarians at the college?

    c. To what extent is there a national community of practice about library-related instructional leadership in a community college setting?

2. How do community college libraries get input about library instruction from their instructional partners and how is that input incorporated into instructional efforts?

    a. In what ways do library faculty get feedback from students? From instructional faculty?

    b. How is feedback used to improve instruction?

    c. What is the library director's role in supporting continuous improvement?

Technological innovation. Technological innovation was frequently cited by the directors along with instructional leadership as being a top priority for library planning and support efforts. All of the directors in the study recognized the importance of implementing appropriate technological solutions and of delivering services to students in formats of their choice. The directors' responses were in alignment with the professional literature about library technology.

Although this study focused on a small set of cases, it was evident that in the community college environment, fiscal constraints, an aging workforce, and the ability to support continuous learning efforts provided significant challenges to directors. Given the fast-paced rate of change in the educational environment, these findings merit notice. Their implications indicated that if community college libraries are to continue to participate as leaders, library administrators will need to be able to make effective decisions about the deployment of information technology.

I offer the following questions for those thinking about the impact of technological innovations on community college librarianship. These questions arose in response to this limited study and are intended to serve as a conversational starting point rather than as a comprehensive list.

1. How do library directors prioritize support for technological innovation?

    a. What considerations impact the adoption of new technologies?

    b. How are librarians and staff members included in the adoption process?

    c. To what extent do student needs and demands drive technology-related decisions?

2. How do library directors assess changes in technology and instruction?

    a. To what extent are library directors scanning conversations about the future of education delivery?

    b. How are library directors preparing existing librarians and staff to participate in technology-related discussions in librarianship?

    c. How are these changes impacting hiring decisions?

Continuous learning. Without exception the library directors discussed the importance of continuous learning and ongoing professional development for librarians and other staff members. In every case, regardless of the availability of financial support for professional development, directors stretched to provide learning opportunities for librarians and library staff members. Table 4.8 depicted the types of training and learning opportunities that were available to employees.

While there was a wide array of formats for learning, none appeared to be more prevalent than others. It was not clear through the study that learning opportunities were being systematically linked to instructional needs or to changes in academic librarianship and education. With the exception of one college-sponsored program that was tied to the tenure process, there were no examples of systematic training plans or requirements for librarians to acquire prescripted skills. The implications for these findings are vitally important given the changing

nature of the educational environment and the lack of resources to hire additional staff.

I offer the following questions for those thinking about the role of continuous learning in community college librarianship. These questions arose in response to this limited study and are intended to serve as a conversational starting point rather than as a comprehensive list.

1. How do library directors and librarians design programs to support continuous learning and professional development in a rapidly changing environment?
   a. Who is accountable for designing professional development programs?
   b. What is the responsibility of the library director in supporting professional development?
   c. In what ways are librarians responsible for their own professional development?
2. How do library directors and librarians decide upon what skills are needed fully participate in next-generation librarianship?
   a. What is the responsibility of the director in designating required skills?
   b. What responsibility do faculty librarians have in identifying and obtaining needed skills?
3. How well do current training and learning opportunities enable practicing librarians to gain needed skills?
   a. What are the most effective ways to provide meaningful learning opportunities?
   b. What barriers do librarians face when attempting to update their job-related skills?

Limitations of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the ways in which library directors at large comprehensive community colleges strategically advocate for and support instructional leadership and technological innovation and change despite the reality of resource constraints. Findings of the study were drawn from a literature review, a preliminary survey, profiles of participants and their institutions, and the results of interviews with six community college library directors.

This study had several limitations which are highlighted here in order to fully disclose appropriateness of the research and to reflect upon areas for possible additional research.

1. This study focused on very large comprehensive community colleges and therefore its findings may not be applicable to smaller institutions or technical colleges. Additional research on colleges in a variety of size settings would contribute to this discussion.

2. The colleges in this study had various organizational structures (see Table 4.3) which may have caused some findings to be more applicable than others. Additional research focusing deeply on colleges with similar organizational structures would possibly extend this research.

3. This study looked at a small number of cases. Therefore its results might not fully reflect the national picture. A more inclusive study might reveal additional information.

Topics for Additional Research

This study revealed a need for further research in the following areas: strategic planning and organizational communication; instructional leadership; technological innovation; continuing education and professional development; and student-centeredness.

Strategic planning and organizational communication. While there was active research pertaining to strategic planning and organizational communication in academic libraries, there was a gap in professional literature specifically targeted at the community college library. Due to similarities between university and community college settings, much of the literature geared towards four-year and research institutions was useful. However there are significant differences in the instructional and research roles in these environments. These impact the funding-levels and the ways in which community colleges plan for and situate library services. There is a need for additional research and professional conversation aimed at supporting community college library leaders in the areas of strategic planning and organizational communication. It should include conversations about relationships with internal and external partners, and discussions about ways in which to plan for library services in a changing educational setting. Also, although the topic of growth fell away as a key theme, it might be productive to study how community college libraries plan and innovate during times of increased enrollment.

Instructional leadership and technological innovation. Although this study focused on instructional leadership and technological innovation as separate areas of practice, it became apparent throughout the research that the two were highly interconnected and that additional research about instruction would, by necessity, need to include technological innovation. Given the complexity of today's educational environment and the rapid pace of change in education and librarianship there is a strong need for research supporting best and emerging practices in library-related instructional leadership as it pertains to the changing technological environment.

This study found that there was a gap in the professional literature about the general issue of instructional leadership in the community college environment. There appeared to be much activity in the area of instruction, but there was some tension around topics related to the assessment of instructional

effectiveness and the response to instructional changes taking place in higher education. This study recommends further research and conversation about the roles and responsibilities of library directors and library faculty in supporting academic excellence in a shared governance setting.

The study found that while technological innovation was important, to some extent, in a resource constrained environment, it was not always fully supported. Although this research did not attempt to identify best practices in this area, it was evident that the directors struggled because of a lack of fiscal and human resources. There is a need for additional professional literature targeted at community college librarianship and linked to technological issues. Many of these issues are in alignment with those found in general and academic librarianship. I encourage library directors and librarians to participate in conversations about new librarianship such as those initiated recently through the publication of The *Atlas of New Librarianship* (Lankes, 2011).

Continuing education and professional development. The study revealed that the directors took seriously the need for continuing education and professional development opportunities. They acknowledged the importance of providing on-going learning opportunities to support staff development in a constantly changing instructional and technological environment. It was less clear through the study, that libraries were creating targeted training plans that supported the development of skills and fluencies needed to flourish in the changing educational environment or that aligned with gaps in institutional learning. It could be worthwhile to research roles and responsibilities of library administrators and library faculty with regards to professional development.

Although there is research that was outside of the scope of this study about the effectiveness of library-related masters programs, there was a lack of research about the effectiveness of content and modalities used to support the practicing librarian or library employee. There is a need for research targeted at community

college librarianship that focuses on effective ways to support meaningful continuous professional development.

Additionally, the library directors spoke of librarians who were no longer interested in participating in continuing education. It could be productive to investigate this phenomenon in order to diagnose its cause and to discover if there were possible interventions.

Student-centeredness. Although it was not a focus of this study and not covered in the literature review, student-centeredness emerged repeatedly in conversations with the library directors. When making difficult decisions, the library directors routinely reported that they focused on the impact of cuts to students. It would be interesting to pursue this investigation further by studying ways in which to explicitly design services that systematically revolve around students at the outset of all planning and instructional design efforts. Doing this might reveal information that could be used to improve services to students and to simultaneously gain efficiencies.

Acknowledgement of Participants

I undertook this study because I was interested in learning more about the ways in which community college library directors at large comprehensive institutions supported innovative instructional and technological leadership despite the reality of constrained resources. This study took place during a time of unprecedented change in academic librarianship primarily due to developments in emerging information discovery systems that were impacting library instruction models. I was very pleased that 50% of the library directors contacted agreed to take the initial survey, and that of those, over half were willing to participate in interviews. This indicated to me that library leaders were willing to model openness to learning and to public self-reflection.

As mentioned earlier in this study, many of the directors interviewed were navigating through severe budget cuts and resource constrictions. I was impressed by their leadership and the positive tone of their message. They were clearly

connecting with their institutions and assuring staff members that the library would survive these turbulent times. The directors in this study were all experienced librarians and educators who were passionately dedicated to the delivery of instruction and service to their institution's students. They were ardent supporters of librarianship and strong advocates for the librarians at their institutions. I was heartened to see their dedication to the student and to the delivery of student-centered services. I was immensely appreciative of their willingness to participate in this study and I learned an enormous amount through my conversations with them.

Personal Reflection

In the tradition of ISS, I offer this reflection at the end of my journey. This study has given me the opportunity to holistically think and learn about a number of issues that frequently collide in my overlapping roles as community college advocate, college administrator, library director, educator, and practitioner of librarianship and to compare them with the experiences of others. Throughout this study, I have been honored to learn from colleagues working in this complex environment. My learning has extended beyond the confines of this study into the worlds of those who steward today's community colleges and their libraries. I am amazed by developments taking place in the practice of education and find that the line between librarianship and education is becoming blurry as aspects traditionally associated with librarianship begin to be spun into the strands that make up the educational fabric.

The community college agenda, through the work of the AACC and related professional and research organizations, has at its heart, an underlying philosophy of putting students first. Students are at the center of all that we do. The conversations about how to support students change over time. Community college educators including library professionals improve upon ways to serve students in a fast-paced, complex educational arena that is impacted by federal mandates and the demands from the workforce. The conversation is iterative, but

students are always at its center. It has morphed from a focus on access, to a focus on success, and most recently to a focus on completion. With each change in focus, there is an acknowledgement of the need to carry forward previous conversations, and there is usually also self-reflection on the part of those – the critics and the advocates – involved in designing and implementing educational systems. What is good for students? What is the role of failure? What is success? What is the relationship between quality and completion? What do students really need?

In viewing conversations about the future of education, I am struck by the discussions going on up and down the educational pipeline, about the need to rethink how we are teaching and to look at models that embed 21st century skills such as learning and thinking, information and media literacy, and life and career skills into the curriculum (Gut, 2011; Kay & Greenhill, 2011). According to Treadwell (2011), "Schools must now focus on innovation and setting the highest standards, continually pushing the limits and adapting constantly to the world we live in. This will involve a risk but a far greater risk is doing nothing" (p. 8).

These conversations sound a lot like those happening in the field of librarianship. In *The Atlas of New Librarianship*, author David Lankes calls for a participatory conversation (Lankes, 2011) in order to build upon the way we think about librarianship and information delivery. Like the students we serve and the institutions we support, librarians have rolled up their sleeves and are participating in the messy business of designing more effective tools to facilitate conversations between people who are seeking to create or consume information (Lankes, 2011). Those practicing librarianship today know that change is afoot due to a radical paradigm shift in world of information discovery and resource sharing. Librarians are shoulder deep in collaborative partnerships to create tools that are useful to today's students and information creators. They will also be charged with bringing learning about these changes to their institutions and will need to be comfortable with ambiguity and with learning alongside their students and colleagues. In terms

of magnitude, some compare the upcoming paradigm shift to that of the transition from the physical card catalog to the online environment. Fortunately, librarians know how to navigate change.

As library directors, we need to make sure that we are providing support for these changes. We need to participate in institutional conversations and collaborative efforts. We also need to find ways to support librarians and staff members as they learn about and participate in conversations about these shifts in practice. We should do all that we can to ensure that our workplaces are open to continuous improvement and that failure is accepted as part of the learning process. Much of the work that is happening now is being driven from the ground up. These efforts are complex, and there are roles for people with multiple types of expertise and experience. I encourage everyone to get involved and for this inclusive conversation. This is an exciting time, and we are fortunate to be working in the midst such good company.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Community Colleges in VL2 Category as of 2004: Carnegie Classifications

Name	City	State
American River College	Sacramento	CA
Austin Community College	Austin	TX
Broward College	Ft Lauderdale	FL
Central New Mexico Community College	Albuquerque	NM
Cerritos College	Norwalk	CA
City College of San Francisco	San Francisco	CA
College of Dupage	Glen Ellyn	IL
Collin County Community College District	Plano	TX
Columbus State Community College	Columbus	OH
Community College of Allegheny County	Pittsburgh	PA
Community College of Baltimore County,	Catonsville	MD
Community College of Philadelphia	Philadelphia	PA
Community College of Southern Nevada	North Las Vegas	NV
CUNY Borough of Manhattan Community College	New York	NY
CUNY Kingsborough Community College	Brooklyn	NY
Cuyahoga Community College District	Cleveland	OH
De Anza College	Cupertino	CA
Delgado Community College	New Orleans	LA
Diablo Valley College	Pleasant Hill	CA
East Los Angeles College	Monterey Park	CA
El Camino College	Torrance	CA
El Paso Community College	El Paso	TX
Florida Community College at Jacksonville	Jacksonville	FL
Fresno City College	Fresno	CA
Fullerton College	Fullerton	CA
Georgia Perimeter College	Decatur	GA
Glendale Community College	Glendale	AZ
Grossmont College	El Cajon	CA
Hillsborough Community College	Tampa	FL
Houston Community College System	Houston	TX
	Overland Park	KS

Johnson County Community College		
Kirkwood Community College	Cedar Rapids	IA
Lansing Community College	Lansing	MI
Long Beach City College	Long Beach	CA
Macomb Community College	Warren	MI
Mesa Community College	Mesa	AZ
Miami Dade College	Miami	FL
Milwaukee Area Technical College	Milwaukee	WI
Monroe Community College	Rochester	NY
Montgomery College	Rockville	MD
Mt. San Antonio College	Walnut	CA
Nassau Community College	Garden City	NY
North Harris Montgomery Community College District	The Woodlands	TX
Northern Virginia Community College	Annandale	VA
Oakland Community College	Bloomfield Hills	MI
Orange Coast College	Costa Mesa	CA
Owens Community College	Perrysburg	OH
Palm Beach Community College	Lake Worth	FL
Palomar College	San Marcos	CA
Pasadena City College	Pasadena	CA
Pima Community College	Tucson	AZ
Portland Community College	Portland	OR
Riverside Community College	Riverside	CA
Sacramento City College	Sacramento	CA
Saddleback College	Mission Viejo	CA
Salt Lake Community College	Salt Lake City	UT
San Antonio College	San Antonio	TX
San Diego Mesa College	San Diego	CA
San Jacinto College-Central Campus	Pasadena	TX
San Joaquin Delta College	Stockton	CA
Santa Ana College	Santa Ana	CA
Santa Monica College	Santa Monica	CA
Santa Rosa Junior College	Santa Rosa	CA
Sierra College	Rocklin	CA
Sinclair Community College	Dayton	OH
South Texas College	McAllen	TX

Southwestern College	Chula Vista	CA
Suffolk County Community College	Selden	NY
Tarrant County College District	Fort Worth	TX
Tidewater Community College	Norfolk	VA
Valencia College	Orlando	FL

Appendix B

The library directors from the comprehensive community colleges identified in

Appendix A will be asked to take a brief online survey using the questions below.

The purpose of this survey will be to broadly identify issues of interest to library

directors and to identify those willing to participate in follow-up interviews. It

will also be used to verify the credibility of the interview questions listed in

Appendix C.

College name - this will be kept confidential but will be used to track responses

and ensure that there is only one response per institution.

Director's name - this will be kept confidential but will be used to track responses

and send reminders if necessary.

Your college's regional accreditation agency (dropdown box listing accrediting

regions)

Full-time enrollment for academic year 2009-2010 (textbox)

Number of physical libraries you manage: 1 | 2-4 | 5- (choose one)

Number of full-time (FTE) librarians at your institution (textbox)

Do librarians at your college have faculty status? Yes/No

Please indicate how important the following issues are to you in your role as the

director of an urban comprehensive community college library: [this will be a

matrix with the following rankings: *extremely | fairly important | unimportant | not*

applicable]

Continuous improvement

Funding

Instructional leadership

Organizational learning

Strategic planning

Technological innovation

Training

What us your greatest challenge as a library director? (textbox)

Would you be willing to participate further in this research by being interviewed

confidentially? Yes/No

If Yes:

Contact information

Appendix C

The sets of questions below will be administered during the interview phase of the research. All interviewees will be asked these open-ended questions and follow up questions will be added as needed. The foundational questions will not be included in the interview. Details of the interview process are outlined in Section 3 of this proposal.

Foundational question #1: What are the challenges facing urban community college libraries, and how do library directors address them? Supporting questions:

1. What is the greatest challenge you face as a library director at an urban comprehensive community college?
2. How do you address this challenge?
3. What other challenges do you face?
4. How do you address them?
5. How do you communicate about these challenges?
6. How do you advocate for library services?

Foundational question #2: How do library directors strategically prioritize support for new library initiatives involving instructional and technological innovation despite funding instability, limited resources, and increased demand for library services? Supporting questions:

1. How do you decide upon new library initiatives to support?
2. What types of new projects or initiatives is your library involved in?
3. How were these projects selected?
4. What methods do you use to scope and plan for new projects?
5. How do you find resources for new projects?
6. How do you decide when to stop supporting a service or activity?
7. How does the library assign staff to new projects or initiatives?
8. How do you lead and support innovative projects?
9. How is instructional leadership supported at your library?
10. Does the library have a strategic plan?
11. How does the library get input from the college when planning new initiatives?
12. How do you communicate about new initiatives at the college?

Foundational question #3: How do library directors provide organizational learning opportunities for librarians and library staff who are involved in creating innovative services or programs? Supporting questions:

1. What are the ways in which librarians and staff at your institution learn new skills and update their education?

2. How do librarians and staff make time on top of regularly-assigned duties to participate in training and continuous learning?
3. What is the greatest challenge in this area?
4. How do you address this challenge?