

YORK COLLEGE LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT

1996-1997

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Chief Librarian

Introduction

In the budget year 1996-1997, the York College Library has attempted to maintain services to the public while coping with unfavorable staffing and budget situations. In following the Library's mission, the Librarians have continued to stress public services while deferring other professional Library responsibilities to some extent, including collection development.

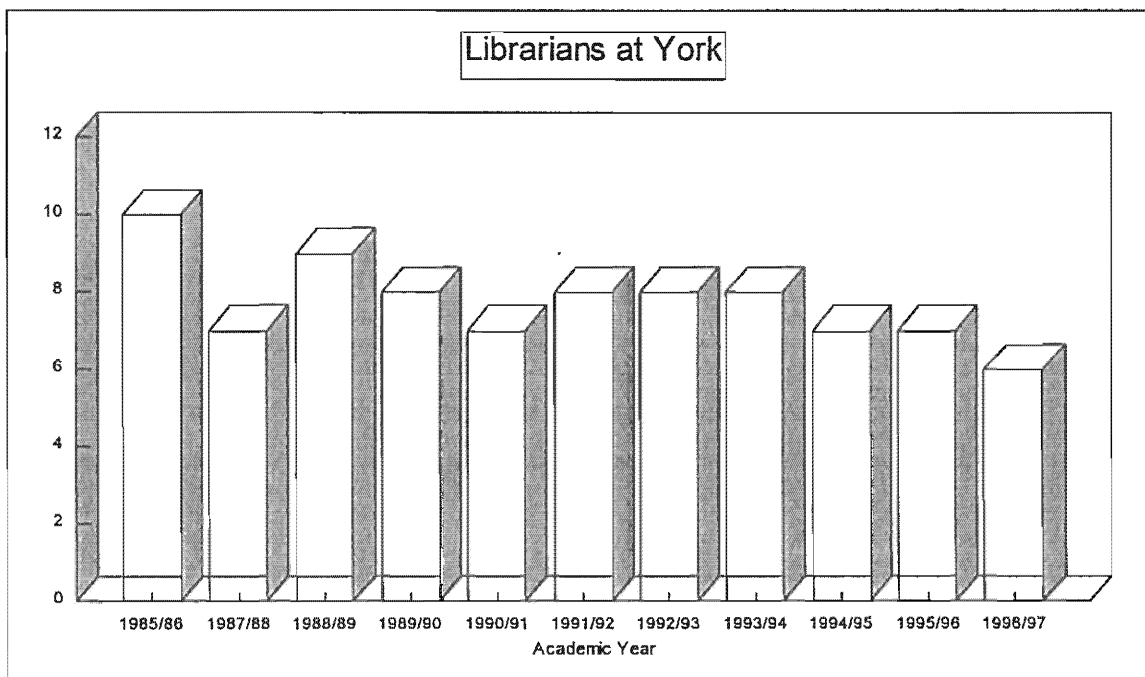
With a minimum of professionals supported by a minimum of support staff, the Library has continued to be confronted with a declining materials budget. As the budget has decreased in terms of adjusted dollars due to the increase in the cost of Library materials, the Library's faculty has continued to make decisions on which important Library materials to discontinue acquiring.

Once again, at the beginning of the budget year, the Librarians determined to discontinue subscriptions to a large number of journals. In addition, annuals were once again discontinued or suspended. Book titles in various subject fields are not being ordered, thus forcing the Library community to rely more heavily on other Libraries and interlibrary loan services.

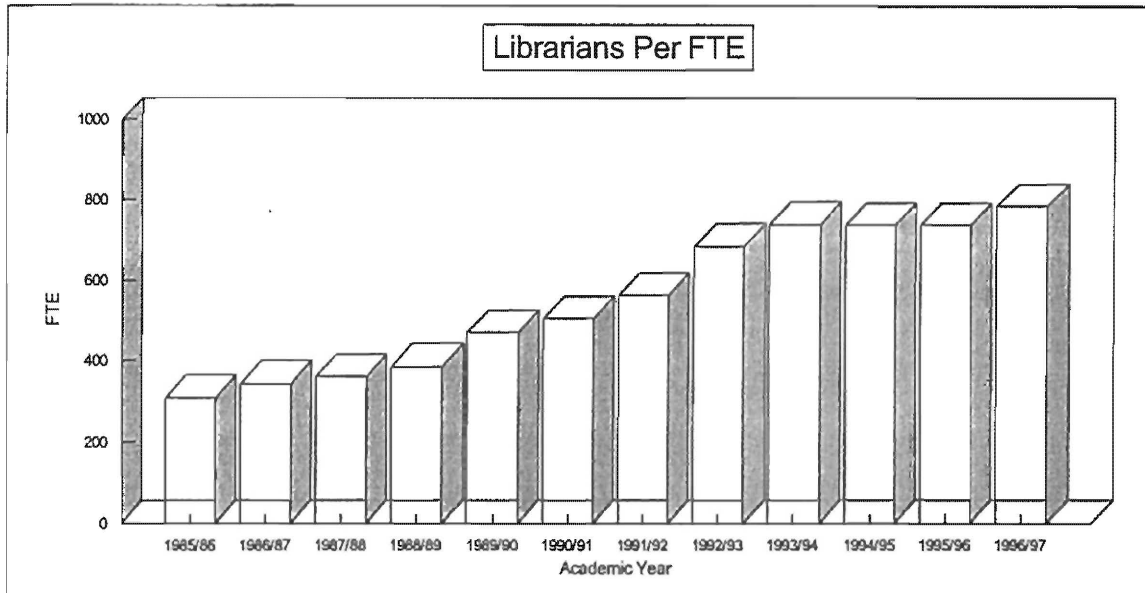
It is hoped that the budget situation for both the College and the Library will be reversed in the not too distant future, permitting the Library to better fulfill its mission to serve the needs of the York College community.

I. Professional Library Personnel

An examination of the professional staffing of the York College Library reveals a significant decrease in the past year. This is more evident when viewed over the past number of years, when the Library faculty has decreased significantly while the student body has increased even more significantly.

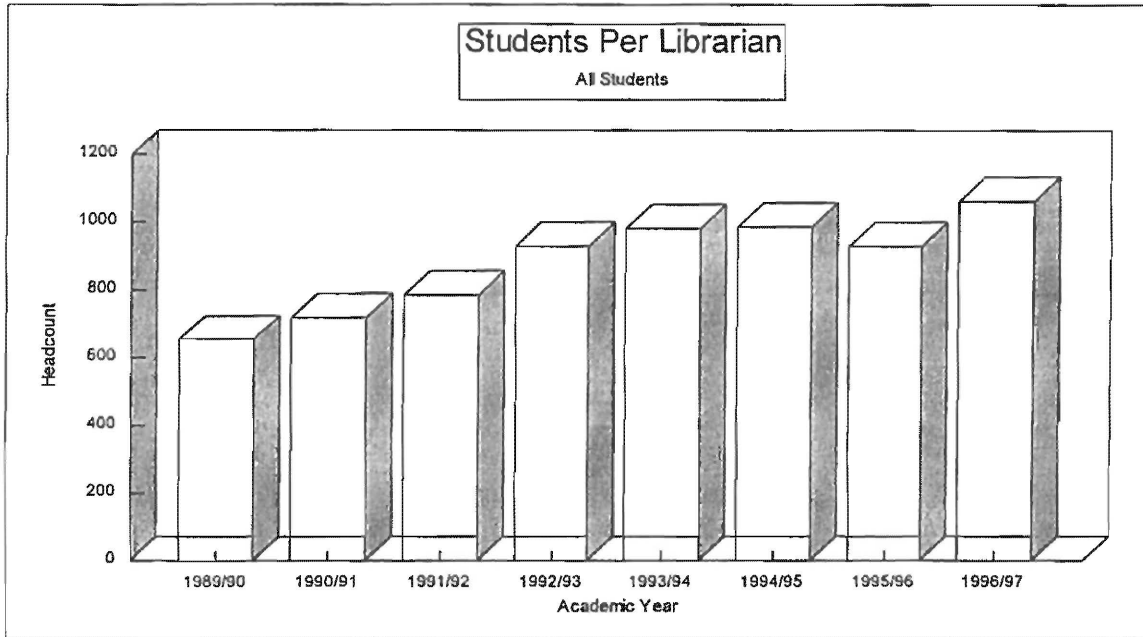


The above chart illustrates that the professional staff has decreased over the past 11 years. At the same time, the full-time equivalent students to Library faculty has increased substantially, as can be seen in the following chart:

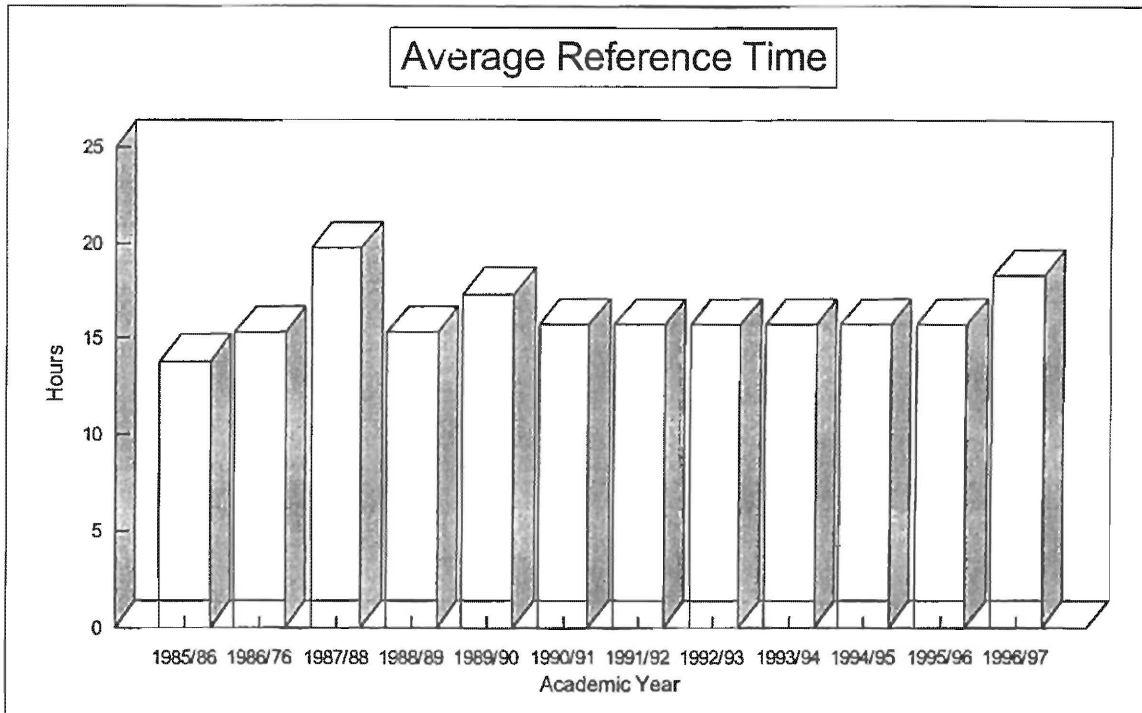


The Association of College and Research Libraries has detailed standards that academic Libraries should attempt to meet. According to the standards, by the size of the student body, faculty, and collection, York College's Library should have approximately double the number of full time faculty positions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

At York, it is significant to examine not only the ratio of FTE's per Librarian, but also the ratio of students per Librarian using the headcount of students. This is significant in the Library since a Librarian must be prepared to perform individual bibliographic instruction with each student who uses the Library. To accomplish this, the headcount at York can be used, as illustrated in the following chart:



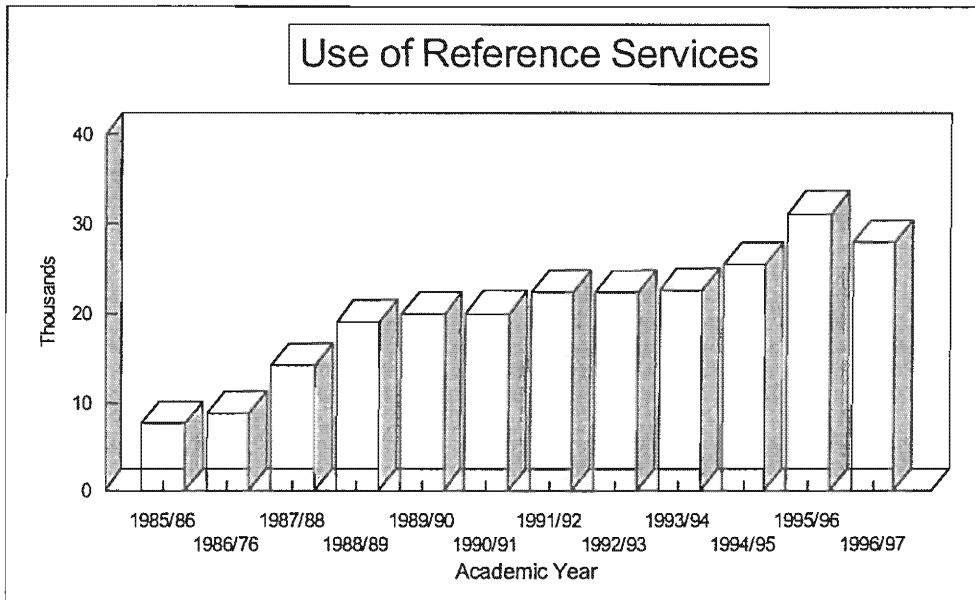
The Library continues to emphasize public service even though the professional faculty is very limited. Thus, each professional must spend a great deal of time staffing one of the two Reference desks. Other professional responsibilities, such as collection development, are accomplished as much as possible when the Librarians are not scheduled at one of the Reference desks. The average amount of time each professional Librarian spends in public service at one of the Reference desks can be seen in the following chart:



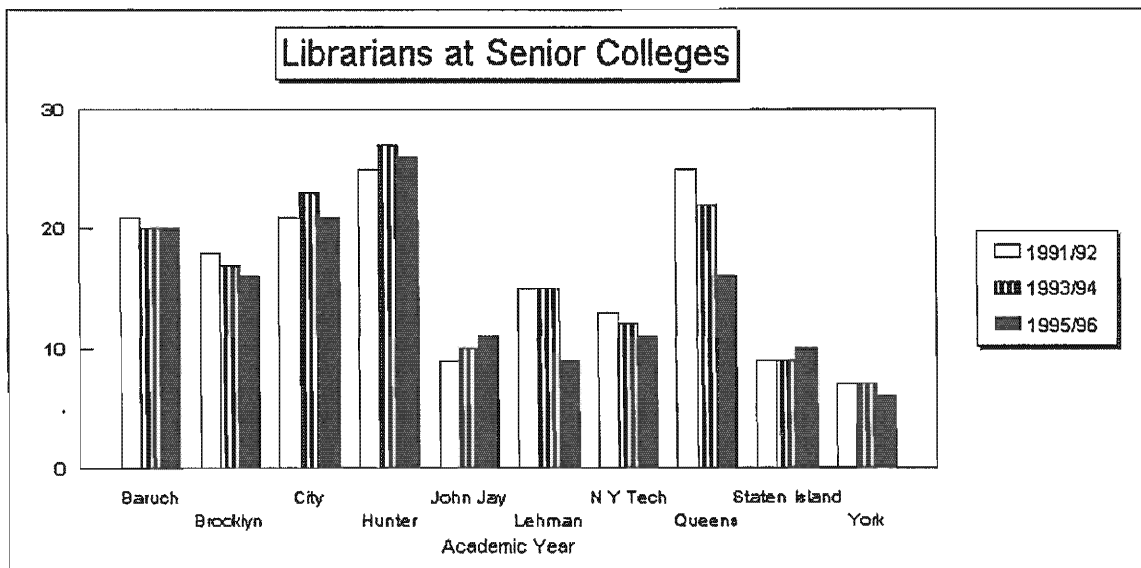
It should be noted that the increase in average reference time can be accounted for by the decrease in the number of professional Librarians and the fact that, unlike other academic departments, the Library is unable to hire adjuncts to make up for the loss of a full time member of the faculty.

Though the reference desk hours have been maintained during the past seven years because of the Library's emphasis on public services, the hours that the reference desks have been staffed have been slightly decreased due to the lack of professional staff.

The hours that the Reference desks have been staffed have been selected after a study of usage patterns for several years. As the following chart shows, the shortened reference desk hours have not impacted on the use of reference services.



In comparison with other CUNY senior colleges, York's Library is seriously understaffed. As can be seen in the following chart, the staffing of York's Library is smaller than any other senior college in CUNY. The chart details the staffing for the academic years 1991-92 through 1995-96.



As the chart shows, York's Library faculty has remained consistently at the bottom of the professional staffing for Libraries within CUNY's senior colleges.

II Budget

The Library has, in effect, two budgets: Library materials (OTPS) and temporary services. This portion of the annual report will discuss the Library materials portion of the budget; the following section will briefly deal with the temporary services portion of the Library budget.

The Library other than personnel services portion of the budget can be examined from two interrelated points of view: books and periodicals. They are related because if the total budget remains constant or decreases, which it has done in the past number of years, as the cost of one increases there is less money left to purchase the other. Thus, as the cost of periodicals has increased by approximately ten percent a year, the Library has been able to acquire fewer books with the remaining dollars. In addition to the increase in the cost of journals, there has been an increase in the cost of books as well.

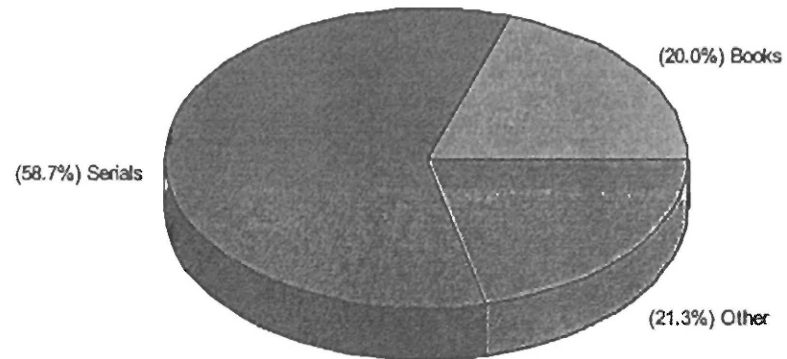
To further complicate the equation is that as the college redefines its curriculum, the Library must redefine its acquisitions. In most cases, the newer fields that have been added or discussed have been ones with more costly materials than those which have been discontinued or discussed for discontinuation.

In addition, Library supplies and contracts are also taken from the Library other than personnel services portion of the budget, which further reduces the amount of money to purchase books and journals. In the past, this was not the practice at York College.

The following chart illustrates the Library OTPS budget for the 1996-1997 academic year:

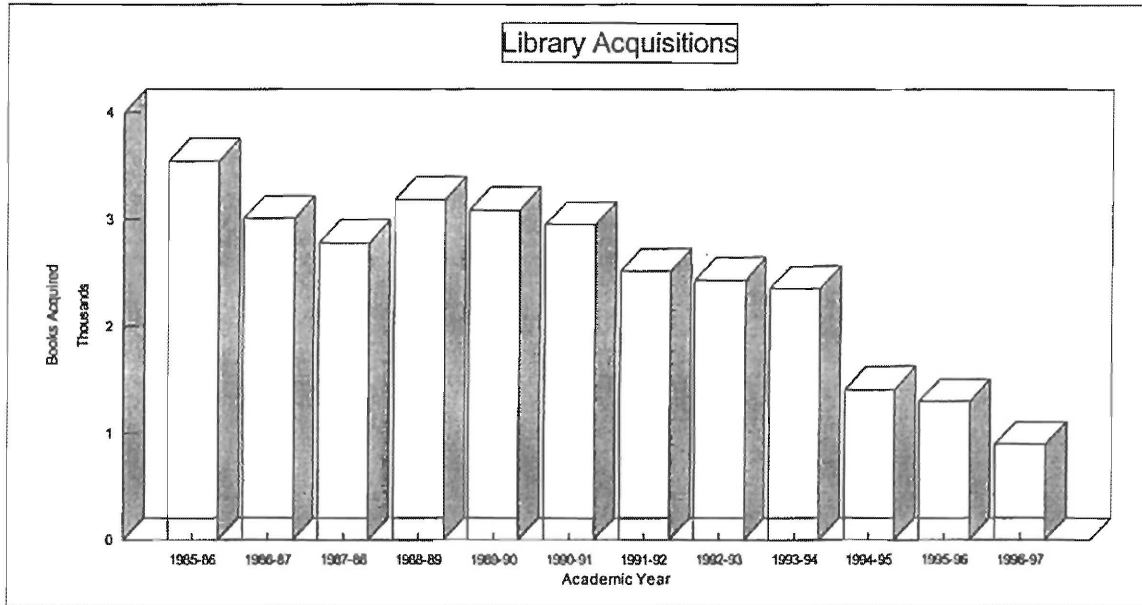
Library Budget

1996/97



The above chart reveals that the majority of the Library's OTPS budget is committed to the acquisition of serials. The amount of money spent on the acquisition of books is nearly equal to the amount of money spent on things other than books or serials, such as contracts and supplies.

A. Books



As the above chart illustrates, the book buying ability of the Library has shown a general trend downward during the past years. This can be accounted for by a number of factors, including:

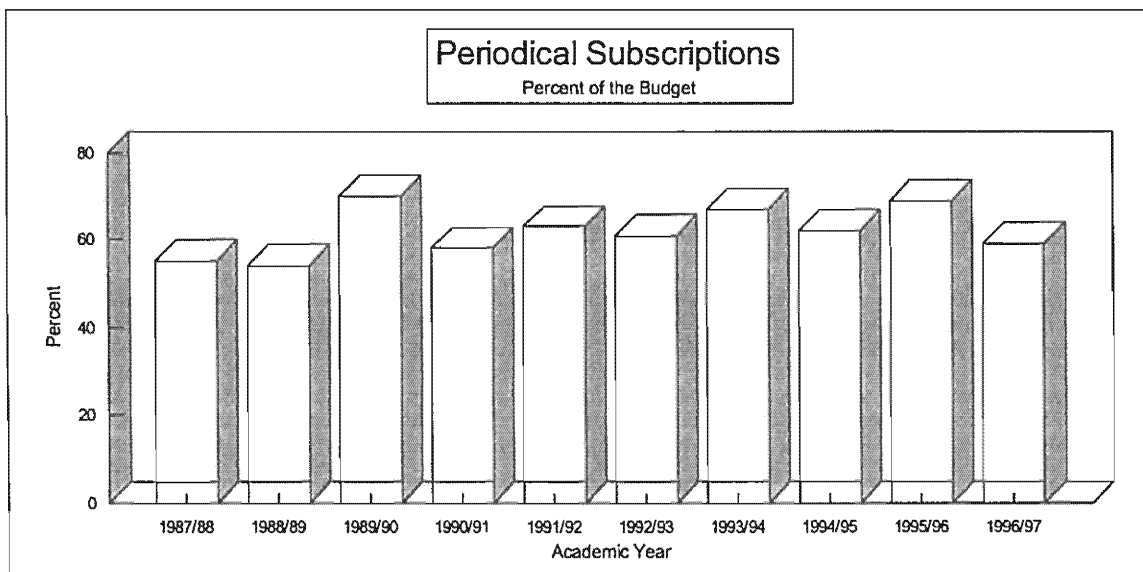
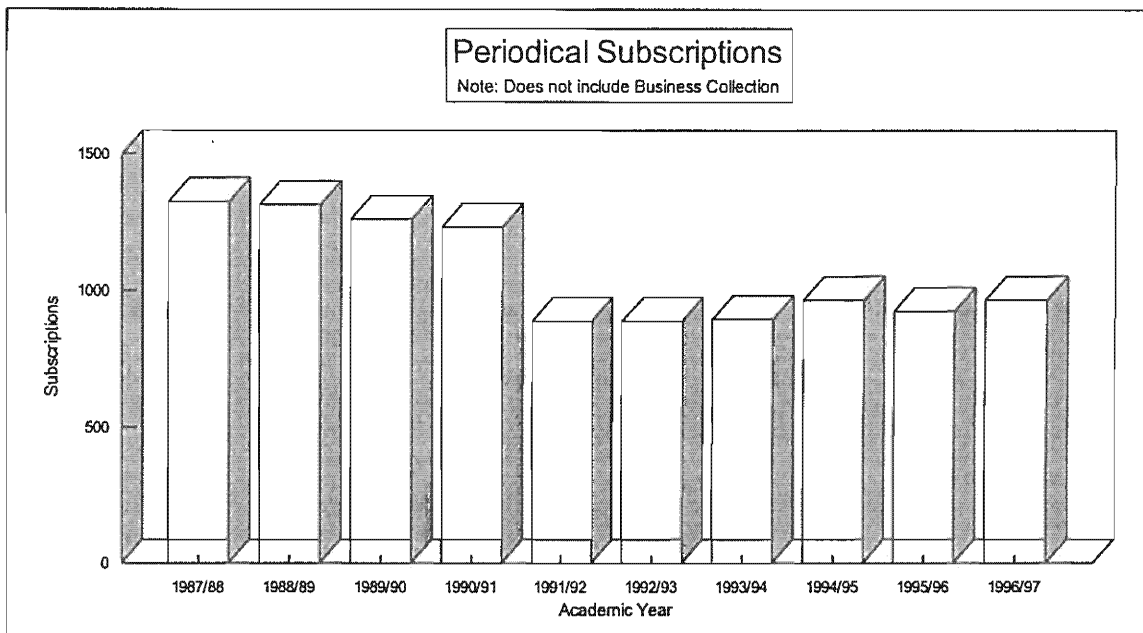
- a relatively constant budget eroded in recent years by the necessity of paying for equipment and supplies from the budget formerly reserved for books and serials;
- the rising cost of journal subscriptions;
- the inflation of book prices in general;
- the necessity to support new, expensive technology. These technologies include the internet's world wide web, and CD-ROM and database services.

According to the standards of the Association of College and Research Libraries, the York College Library should have a total of approximately 208,000 volumes, based on the number of faculty and students at the college as well as the number of majors. At the present

time, the Library has a collection estimated to be at approximately 160,000 volumes, though this estimate is an extremely high one, as it is based on a guess made over fifteen years ago. As the complete York College Library catalog gets put into CUNYPLUS, a more realistic number will be available, but it is likely that the collection contains fewer than 120,000 volumes.

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

B. Journals



At the present time, a major study of the use of journals is continuing. Subscriptions for journals that have not been used in any format (print, microfilm, or microfiche) by the Library community in the past three years have been discussed for

possible cancellation. Unfortunately, the effect of journal subscription cancellations is not reflected in the Library budget for over a year, as subscriptions are paid for at the beginning of academic years for a period in the future.

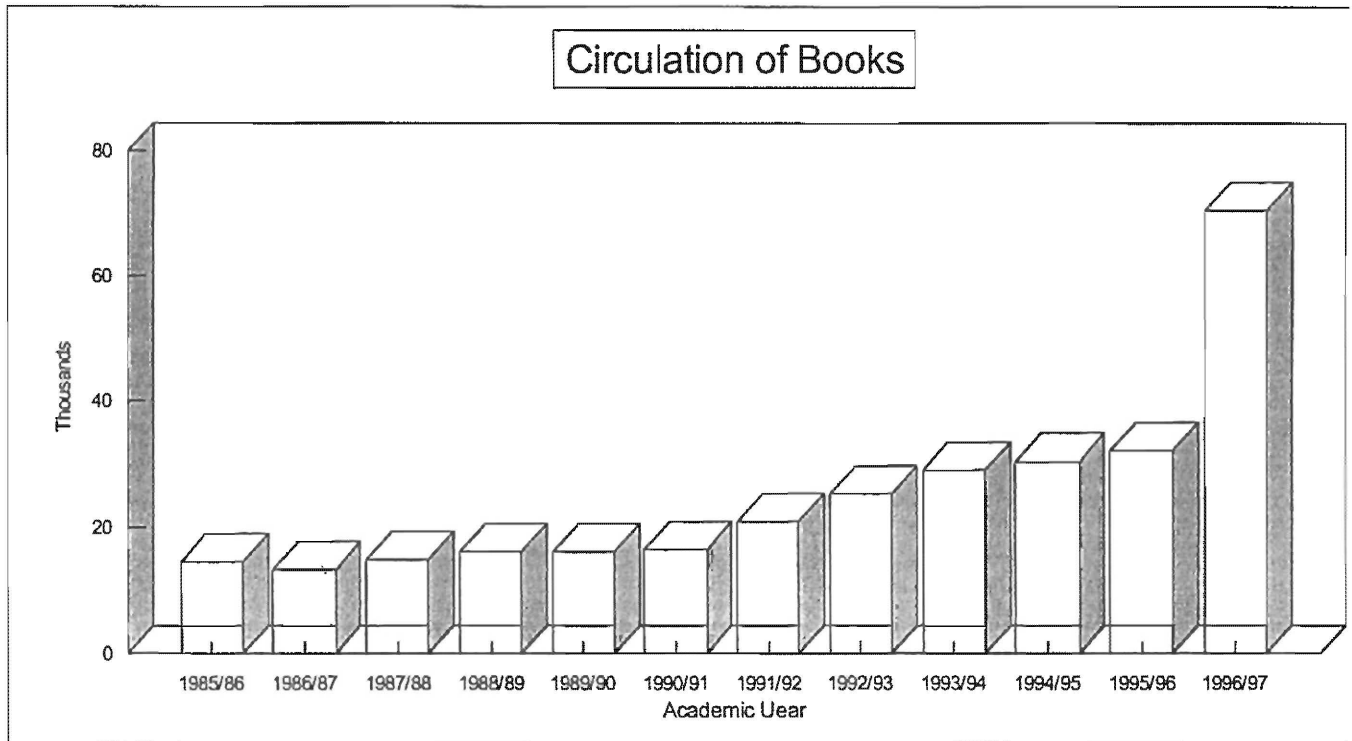
III. Temporary Services Budget

The temporary services portion of the budget for the Library has been maintained for the past few years. As in the past, the Library faculty decided to maintain Library services during the Fall and Spring semesters, but to shorten hours during the summer session. The effect on Library users was minimal, as evidenced by the continued light use of the facility during the summer as well as the minimum number of complaints about the Library's shortened hours.

IV. Use of the Library

A. Books

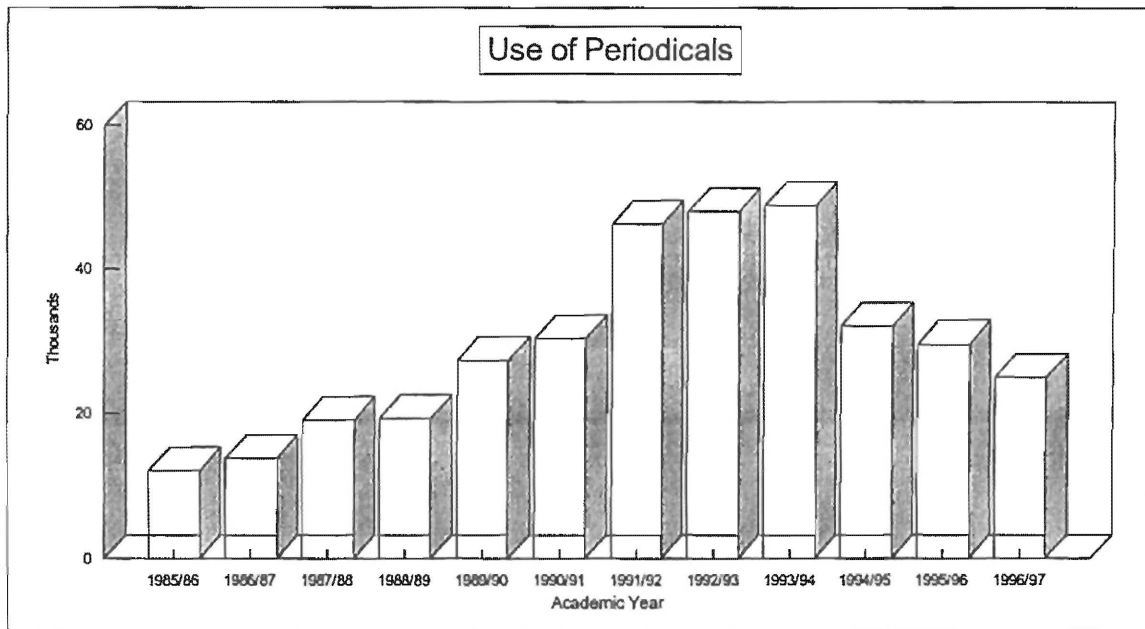
The use of the book collection of the Library has continued to grow, as can be seen in the following chart:



It should be noted that as most circulation transactions are now recorded on CUNYPLUS, the on-line Library system, both Circulation and Reserve transactions are combined for the current year, though not in the past. This will make a comparison

difficult. The combination of Circulation and Reserve transactions will be continued in the future.

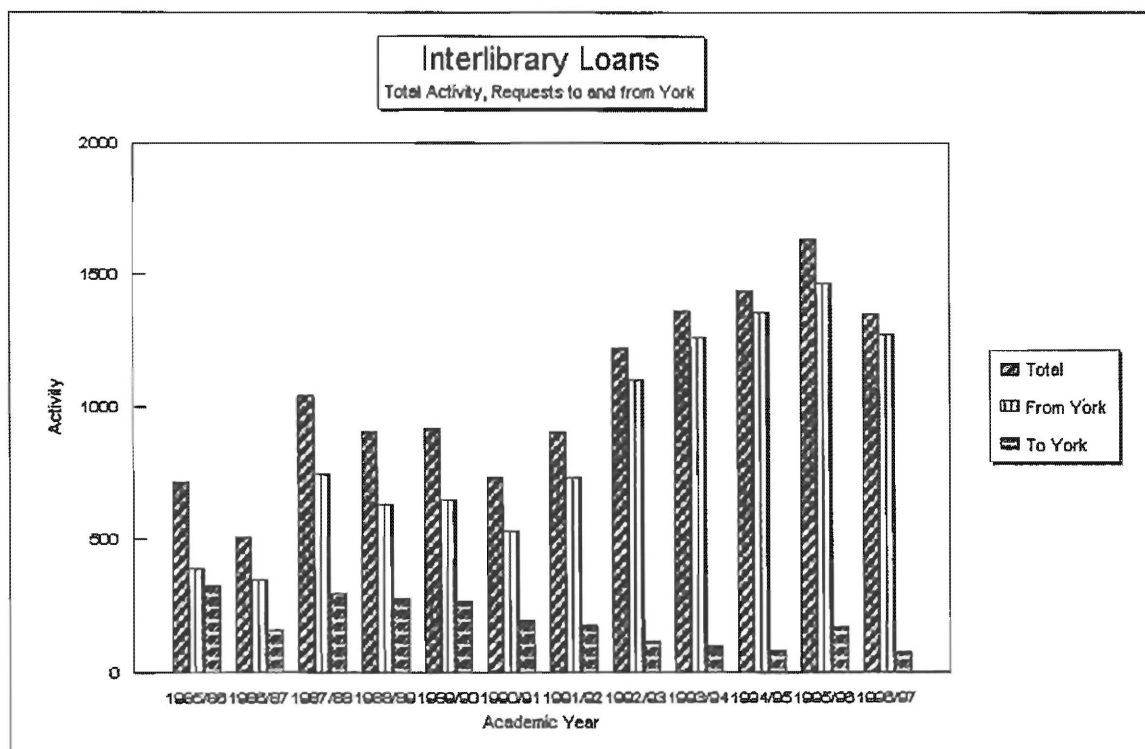
B. Periodicals



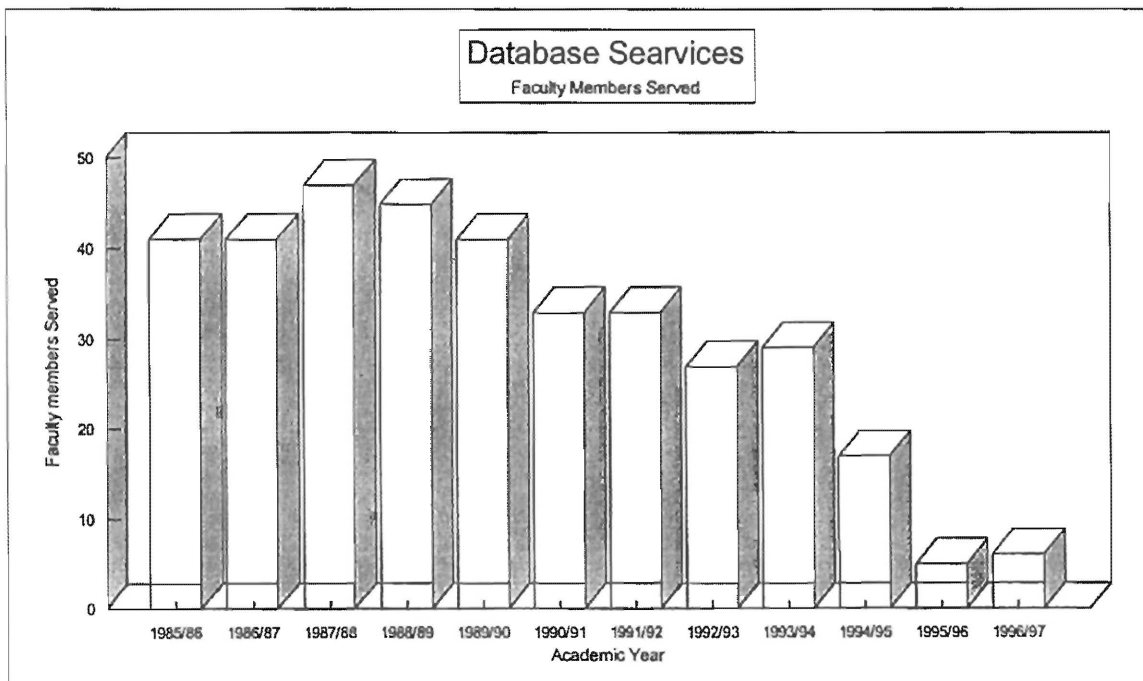
The use of periodicals has continued to decline in the past three years, as can be seen in the above chart. This decrease can be accounted for by the fact that a portion of the Human Resources Area Files (HRAF) is now accessible on the campus VAX network; thus the microfilms collection is less heavily used.

C. Other Library Services

Some Library services are available primarily to faculty and staff of the college. These services include interlibrary loans and database services. It should be noted that interlibrary loan services are currently available to all Library users, though student use is limited by the time interlibrary loans usually take and the students' desire for instant retrieval.



Database services were used by some York College faculty and staff, as can be seen in the following chart. The continuing decrease from the high in 1987-1988 can be attributed to increased patron use of CD-ROM products and the Internet as well as a decrease in the number of full time faculty. It should be noted that database searching was discouraged for the academic year.



Conclusion

Though the Library continues to suffer from shortages in both personnel and dollars, the use of the Library has continued to increase. The Library faculty continues to be concerned about the cumulative impact of budget cuts on the quality of services offered to the York College Community as well as on the collection. These concerns become increasingly relevant as York College's next Middle States assessment approaches. At the present time, the Library's staffing level and collection have significantly slipped below the level of the Association for College and Research Libraries' minimum standards for a college of this size in terms of faculty and students.