Lindsay Robbins

INFO 5330

Spring 2022

Academic Library Profile: Keith Leftwich Memorial Library

This essay examines the library associated with Oklahoma City Community College in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. In order to effectively understand the library, its context and goals, the community it serves must be profiled and understood. Oklahoma City Community College is a large junior college located in south Oklahoma City. The institution seems fairly transparent about much of their data. Some basic demographic data is available, which helps describe the student body as a whole. The student headcount as of 2021 was 17,021.[[1]](#footnote-1) The majority of the student body attends part-time[[2]](#footnote-2) and just under half of the population is white.[[3]](#footnote-3) Just over half of the student body is 18 to 24 years old.[[4]](#footnote-4) The annual plan of the institution is made available through their official website and outlines their annual plan for 2022, as well as their overarching strategic plan for 2019-2023 which is titled Renewal, Change & Innovation.[[5]](#footnote-5) This strategic plan focuses on three major goals that prioritize “low-income, first-generation, and minority students”[[6]](#footnote-6) as well as increasing grants and more specifically, being conferred status as a Hispanic-serving institution by the U.S. Department of Education.[[7]](#footnote-7) As evident in the institution’s statistics available on ethnicity, it does seem that there has been a very small but steady increase in the amount of Hispanic students enrolled. Also included in their strategic plan are a list of values and initiatives which include elements such as diversity, stewardship, accountability, safety, workforce development and online learning.[[8]](#footnote-8)

The institution has one major library located in the center of campus—the Keith Leftwich Memorial Library, which supports the institution. The library makes their annual reports, mission statement and policies available publicly. They also provide their professional standards which are heavily aligned with the American Library Association as well as the Oklahoma Library Association. The mission statement of the library is brief and broad:

Oklahoma City Community College’s Keith Leftwich Memorial Library will support the mission of the College through the following goals: Provide exemplary services that foster information literacy and enhance teaching and learning, and by developing, organizing, and maintaining resources that provide for diverse perspectives and styles of learning and that support the instructional programs, research efforts and social responsibilities of the College.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The library is housed in a very large building at the center of campus, which also includes the clock-tower, making it very easy to identify from a distance as the tallest building in the area. This means that the library is in one of the largest buildings on campus, though it does not utilize the entire building. The physical layout of the building is somewhat intimidating. The building is a square with rooms on the edges and there are walls between many of the spaces, making it easy to become disoriented. The structure itself houses the library’s collections, administrative offices, classrooms and more. The first floor has an information desk at the center, with study and lounge spaces throughout. Some of the more heavily circulated material such as videos or reference materials are available in this central space. There are also over 80 computers[[10]](#footnote-10) which can be used by students or the public on this floor. The second floor is a quiet study space and has individual cubicle spaces as well as a meditation room which can be used for religious purposes. There are a large number of study rooms with eraser boards and seating which can be used by individuals or groups of students. There seems to be more focus on providing study spaces than providing access to collection materials. This is supported by the library’s more recent focus on making changes to their physical space. In a Facebook post from December of 2021, the library shared images of new laptop bars.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The college aims to emphasize online learning, and the library has responded by providing a large number of online resources. The library offers a large scope of both online and physical resources; however, they appear to see much more use of electronic resources than physical ones. According to their 2021 report, there were 2,282 instances of print materials checked out compared to 4,047 instances of eBook or audiobook use.[[12]](#footnote-12) This is reflected in their acquisitions as well, where it is shown that the library acquired only 419 new print materials compared to 744 digital ones in 2021.[[13]](#footnote-13) The amount of searches through EBSOHost alone is incredibly large with a total of 4,563,937 in 2021 which would account for the entire student body many times over.[[14]](#footnote-14) The main service that seems to be taken advantage of is certainly EBSCO. Even the number of pages printed at the library seems small in comparison at a total of 142,128.[[15]](#footnote-15) This is not surprising given that the overall trend in preference for digital materials has increased, however, and since there is no official housing on campus, all students must commute. A large portion of grading and assignment hand-in procedures have moved online as well, so in many cases, printing has become unnecessary.

In order to support the college, the library offers a number of options for classroom support for faculty members. Much of this is related to helping both faculty and students become more familiar with utilizing library resources, though faculty may also receive guidance with copyright or materials that are more subject specific.[[16]](#footnote-16) The library provides ILL services as well as a unique feature called OK-SHARE. To participate, users register for a card which allows them to check out items from other higher education institutions in the state of Oklahoma, and the list of participating colleges includes nearly every institution in the state.[[17]](#footnote-17) Users may also take advantage of other services offered by partnering libraries outside of just physical material access. This helps bridge gaps in funding and access for students who may not be able to afford higher tuition fees for larger universities while still being able to take advantage of their resources.

In addition to research aids, physical and digital materials, the Keith Leftwich Library also offers a number of other services. Enrolled students have the ability to check out internet hotspot devices which is an excellent resource for those who do not have reliable internet access at home. This service is also of benefit to those who commute or are unable to study at home and must go to a public space to do so. Laptops are available for checkout as well as various chargers for devices like cell phones. Other technology is available for check-out including webcams and calculators. These resources directly help low-income students, which helps the college meet its goal to aid students in this demographic. Most of the major electronic resources can be accessed outside of campus via student login.[[18]](#footnote-18) Study spaces called Huddle Stations[[19]](#footnote-19) have televisions with wireless capabilities for sharing or streaming material, making it a good space for students who have group projects. Some of these rooms can be reserved, while others are on a first-come first-serve basis.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Information regarding the status of staff tenure is not openly available online. The library does, however, provide some basic staff information on their annual reports as well as a directory of current employees. According to their 2021 report, there were 4.5 librarians, 2.5 support staff and 3.5 students.[[21]](#footnote-21) The directory lists nine individual staff members with their roles and contact information.[[22]](#footnote-22) The library has liaisons for the following subject areas: engineering and math; health professions; business and information technology; arts, English and humanities; and social sciences. These liaisons have guides for various courses compiled on the library webpage which provide links and resources available to help with related coursework. While their titles are official labelled as liaison, they all hold positions in the library in either circulation, reference, or other services. There are not separate profiles for these individuals as there are for other faculty and there does not seem to be an emphasis on publication for these individuals either. The college as a whole is not as focused on research and scholarly publication however, due to the nature of the institution. As indicated by the 2021 report[[23]](#footnote-23), the library has played a major part in aiding faculty in making the move to online course-work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Online materials were made available, though in-person services including ILL were still available.[[24]](#footnote-24)

Despite best efforts to combat potential issues, the library still faces a number of challenges in supporting the goals of the college. Many of these obstacles come from the nature of the building itself. The first floor provides many of the major services including the circulation desk, printers, computers, and study spaces, however the elevators to go to the upper floors are located inside the building as well. This creates a large amount of foot traffic throughout as students make their way to classrooms on the upper floors. Study spaces and shelving on the upper floor are also scattered around classrooms, offices, and other spaces with heavy foot traffic as well, so while it is a designated quiet floor there are still distractions. The building is fairly old and somewhat difficult to navigate for those who are unfamiliar, and the physical stacks can be difficult to locate if you are looking for something specific. There are some maps available online, but they are difficult to find and not optimal for viewing on a mobile device.

Overall, the library has clearly made a concerted effort to support the goals of the institution. They seem to provide a large number of resources that aid students who may not have access to technology or internet. It is easy to find information on the website, especially information regarding the library’s hours and contact information, which is available on every page. They also provide several methods of contact for individual staff members as well. They have a good online presence, and their social media is updated regularly—as can be seen through their Twitter page.[[25]](#footnote-25) As many libraries have done recently, the Keith Leftwich Library has also implemented an online chat assistant. A live staff member is available during library open hours and some staff online status is available. During hours that the library is not open, the chat assistant will direct the user to the FAQ page. They are reasonably transparent about information regarding the library in their annual reports. Overall, the mission statement seems to suggest that all of their goals are aligned with the college itself. The goals of the library to support diversity and information literacy also heavily align with the goals of the college. While they are making efforts to provide support for diversity, however, it is difficult to gauge the success of these efforts in more specific ways. One major goal of the college itself is to become designated as a Hispanic-serving institution, but it is not clear how the library is helping to meet this particular goal. Another area that could be improved is navigation within the library.

While major aspects of the building’s layout are difficult or impossible to change, implementing tools like a virtual interactive map could be helpful. There is a general map for the college and some smaller maps for inside the library building, but I could not find much information for what the inside layout of the building was like outside of personal experience. I am familiar with physical maps available on site, but I also know that navigating the building can be difficult, especially when looking for particular sections.

Having utilized several libraries at higher education institutions, I would be pleased to work at the Oklahoma City Community College Library. My personal beliefs and values tend to align closely with junior or two-year colleges, and they are also closely aligned with the goals of this institution and its library. There seems to be room for improvement in meeting some of the goals of the college, however there is clearly consideration in the decision making for the library.

Bibliography

“2020-2021 Annual Report.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022. https://libguides.occc.edu/about/annualreport2021.

“Credit Student Age Group.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022. https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/fall-term/Credit-Student-Age-Group.pdf

“Credit Student Course Load.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/fall-term/Credit-Student-Course-Load.pdf

“Credit Student Ethnicity/Race.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022. https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/fall-term/Credit-Student-Ethnicity-Race.pdf

“Faculty.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10th, 2022. https://libguides.occc.edu/faculty.

“Keith Leftwich Memorial Library.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 11, 2022. <https://www.occc.edu/catalog/regulatory/services-for-students/library/>

Keith Leftwich Memorial Library / Oklahoma City Community College. “Needing a spot...” Facebook. Accessed December 7, 2022. https://www.facebook.com/occclibrary.

“Library Mission and History.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022. <https://libguides.occc.edu/about/mission>.

“Library Staff.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022. https://libguides.occc.edu/about/staff.

“OCCC Library.” Twitter. Accessed March 11, 2022. <https://twitter.com/occclibrary>.

“Ok-Share Participating Libraries.” Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Accessed March 11, 2022. <https://www.okhighered.org/ocald/participating-libraries.shtml>

“RENEWAL, CHANGE & INNOVATION 2019-2023.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022. https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/aboutus/pdf/Renewal-Change-Innovation-2019-2023.pdf

“Ten Year Annual Student Headcount and FTE.” Oklahoma City Community College. Accessed March 10, 2022. https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/2021/Ten-Year-Annual-Headcount-FTE.pdf

1. “Ten Year Annual Student Headcount and FTE,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/2021/Ten-Year-Annual-Headcount-FTE.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Credit Student Course Load,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/fall-term/Credit-Student-Course-Load.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. “Credit Student Ethnicity/Race,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/fall-term/Credit-Student-Ethnicity-Race.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. “Credit Student Age Group,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/institutional-effectiveness/pdf/statistics/fall-term/Credit-Student-Age-Group.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “RENEWAL, CHANGE & INNOVATION 2019-2023,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/wp-content/legacy/aboutus/pdf/Renewal-Change-Innovation-2019-2023.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “Library Mission and History,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://libguides.occc.edu/about/mission [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. “Keith Leftwich Memorial Library,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 11, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/catalog/regulatory/services-for-students/library/ [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. “Needing a spot to study for finals or finish up that last project Oklahoma City Community College? Swing by the library to use our brand new chairs and laptop bars. #Finals #LibraryLife,” Keith Leftwich Memorial Library / Oklahoma City Community College, December 7, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/occclibrary/. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. “2020-2021 Annual Report,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://libguides.occc.edu/about/annualreport2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. “Faculty,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://libguides.occc.edu/faculty. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. “Ok-Share Participating Libraries,” Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, accessed March 11, 2022, https://www.okhighered.org/ocald/participating-libraries.shtml [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. “Keith Leftwich Memorial Library,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 11, 2022, https://www.occc.edu/catalog/regulatory/services-for-students/library/ [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. “2020-2021 Annual Report,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://libguides.occc.edu/about/annualreport2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. “Library Staff,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://libguides.occc.edu/about/staff [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. “2020-2021 Annual Report,” Oklahoma City Community College, accessed March 10, 2022, https://libguides.occc.edu/about/annualreport2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. “OCCC Library”, Twitter, accessed March 11, 2022, https://twitter.com/occclibrary. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)