

Birmingham-Southern College

Proposal #1

## **Phase I - Development of an Information Services Support Model**

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### **Report for ACS Grant on Information Services Support Model**

**(a.k.a. Academic Resource Center, or ARC)**

**Website: <http://www.bsc.edu/library/arc/default.htm>**

#### **Meeting Dates:**

August 8, 9:00-12:00 & 1:00-3:00

October 16, 6:00-8:00

November 20, 3:00-5:00 (with students)

April 4 1:00-3:00

April 24, 3:00-5:00

#### **Review**

The participants in the ACS grant for development of an information services support model, which was granted to Birmingham-Southern College in Summer 2002, meet five times over the course of the 2002-2003 academic year. The participants who attended these meetings included representatives from the different components (including the library and the various centers and labs on campus) that made up the information services support model. This core group was joined periodically by Susan Hagen, the Associate Dean of the College, and students whom had been invited to the meetings for their feedback on the ideas being discussed.

At the first meeting (August 8, 9:00-12:00 & 1:00-3:00) was a genuine workshop. The participants first reviewed the grant proposal. Then we acquainted ourselves with one another's role at the college and how we each saw ourselves (our center or lab) fitting into the information services support model. We focused on what the needs of our students were in regards to information fluency and how each of our centers or labs helped to address those needs. We also discussed the philosophical and practical underpinnings of the project we were undertaking. By the end of the meeting, we had composed a tentative Mission Statement and had sketched out an organization for a website that would become the basis for disseminating information about the project to the rest of the college. We also brainstormed ideas for names for the project and finally settled on Academic Resource Center (or ARC).

The next meeting (October 16, 6:00-8:00) involved more strategic planning on the part of the grant participants. In addition to formalizing the website, we discussed organization, coordination, and promotion of the Academic Resource Center. In respect to organization, we had to figure out which parts of the model were integral to the ARC according to the interdisciplinary services they provided and which parts were supplementary to the model according to the discipline-specific service they provided. In the end, we recognized that all of the centers (Writing Center, Speech Center, Technology Center, etc.) provided interdisciplinary services while the labs (Language Lab, Math Lab, Accounting Lab, etc.) provided discipline-specific services. It was agreed that ARC would be organized (and promoted) to reflect this distinction. We also discussed the those parts of ARC that remained in the conceptual stage and the feasibility of implementing them. These include the Critical Thinking Center and the Data

Analysis Center. They also include the Technology Center to a degree, in that the computer lab housed in Education is essentially serving as the college's Technology Center, although we have yet to establish a permanent Technology Center. Finally, the participants discussed the best ways to promote ARC to students, faculty, and staff for the next academic year. To this end, we decided to invite about 10 to 12 students to the next meeting to solicit their feedback on the project.

The meeting with students (November 20, 3:00-5:00) made clear that students were not adequately aware of the academic resources that we available to them. They full endorsed the idea of the Academic Resource Center as a mean of connecting the various centers and labs under the rubric of information fluency—that is finding how the different resources complemented one another in achieving a comprehensive approach to their course work. The students also endorsed the idea of promoting ARC more thoroughly to the student body. They thought that such promotion was especially necessary given the lack of a single centralized location for the various centers or labs.

At the next meeting (April 4, 1:00-3:00), the grant participants discussed the college's wish to use ARC as its Quality Enhancement Plan for the SAACS accreditation review. The plan was approved, with stipulations that ARC remain centered on information services geared toward academics. There was further discussion on how to organize and coordinate the program, including talk of have a rotating director for the entire program from among the individual directors of the various labs and centers. (The model would be the 3-year renewable terms that division chairs at the college served.) This person would be in charge of promotion of ARC to students, faculty, and staff. He or she would also work with the individual directors to develop training for the student tutors and staff of the various centers and labs. And important part of this training would emphasizing the interconnectedness of the different services under the information fluency model. In other words, everyone would know what everyone else did and thereby would be able to refer students more effectively when they sought help on particular projects. We also focused on the need for an across-the-board system of records and assessment for ARC. Some centers and labs already have a system, to varying degrees, yet it was agreed that an umbrella system would have to be devised. We also discussed further funding opportunities, both from the college and from outside grants. Such funding would be especially necessary for the yet fully formed elements of the program such as the Technology Center and Critical Thinking Center. It was agreed that the Critical Thinking would not be housed in any one location but would offer pertinent literature in each of the ARC centers and labs.

The final meeting (April 24, 3:00-5:00) entailed discussion of the Critical Thinking Center and the Date Analysis Center. Two people volunteered to take charge of these two projects by contacting faculty who would be most interested in helping to develop the two centers and gathering literature, computer programs, and other relevant resources. We voted to give each person a summer stipend toward this end with the remaining grant monies. We then expanded and revised the Mission Statement and added a brief Implementation Statement and History Statement, all of which would be included on the ARC website. We also discussed developing the Webliography for ARC and other ways of improving the website. Finally, we consider how best to present the project to the faculty and students in fall and decided that we would hold informational sessions at both Freshman Orientation and Faculty Institute.

The original committee for the ACS grant has continued to meet throughout Fall 2003 to work on the Academic Resource Center in conjunction with the SAACS/QEP committee.