

York College Library

Annual Report

1994-95

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Chief Librarian

Introduction

In the budget year 1994-95, the York College Library has striven to maintain services to the public while coping with unfavorable professional and support staffing situations. In following the Library's mission, the Librarians have continued to stress public service while deferring other professional Library tasks, including collection development.

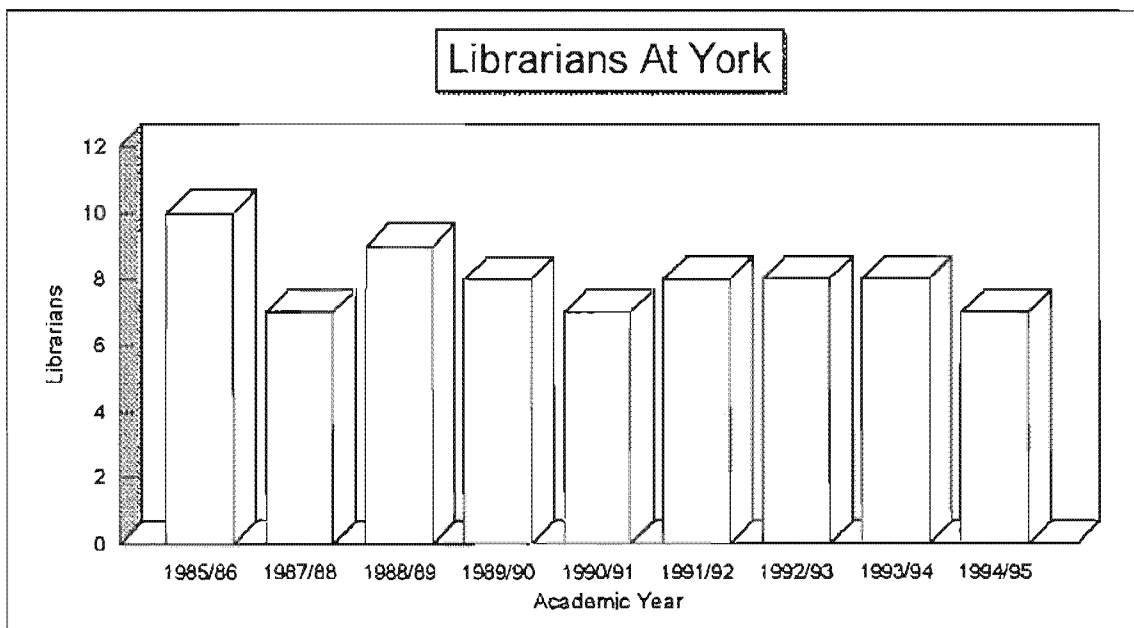
In addition to coping with an unfavorable professional staffing situation, the Library has had to cope with a minimal support staff situation. As with the professional staff, the non-professional staff has supported the Library's mission by being devoted to service to the public while sacrificing other needed Library functions.

Further complicating the Library's mission to serve the York College Library community is the Library materials budget situation. With a decreasing budget and an increase in the cost of Library materials, the Library has found itself severely limited in the quantity and quality of materials it can offer to the community.

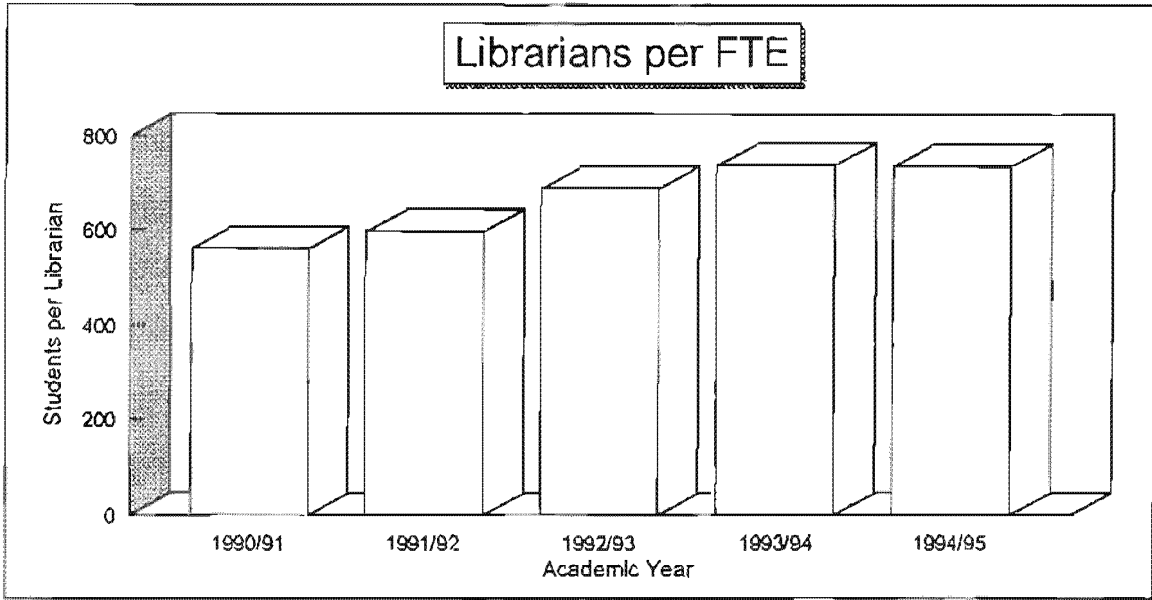
With this in mind, the professional staff of the Library has undertaken a major study of the use of periodicals in the Library. In identifying those periodicals which have not been used in the past three years, the Library intends to cancel subscriptions to a number of journals. In the initial phase of this project, journals that are received in both paper and microfilm will be studied; in the second phase of the project, journals received on microfilm only will be considered for cancellation.

I. Professional Library Personnel

An examination of the professional staffing patterns at the York College Library reveals that though the number of professional staff has remained constant over the past few years, the number has radically decreased over the past ten years. This decrease has serious implications not only for the professional staff but for the entire college community.

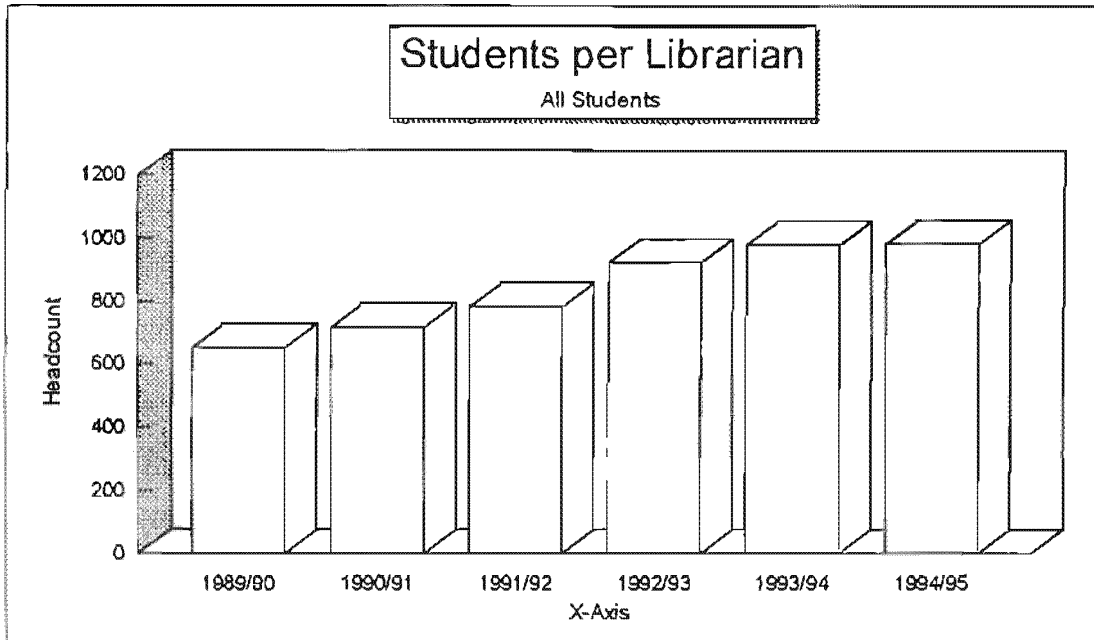


The above chart illustrates that the professional staff has decreased over the past ten years. At the same time, the ratio of full time equivalent students to Library faculty has increased, as can be seen on the following chart:

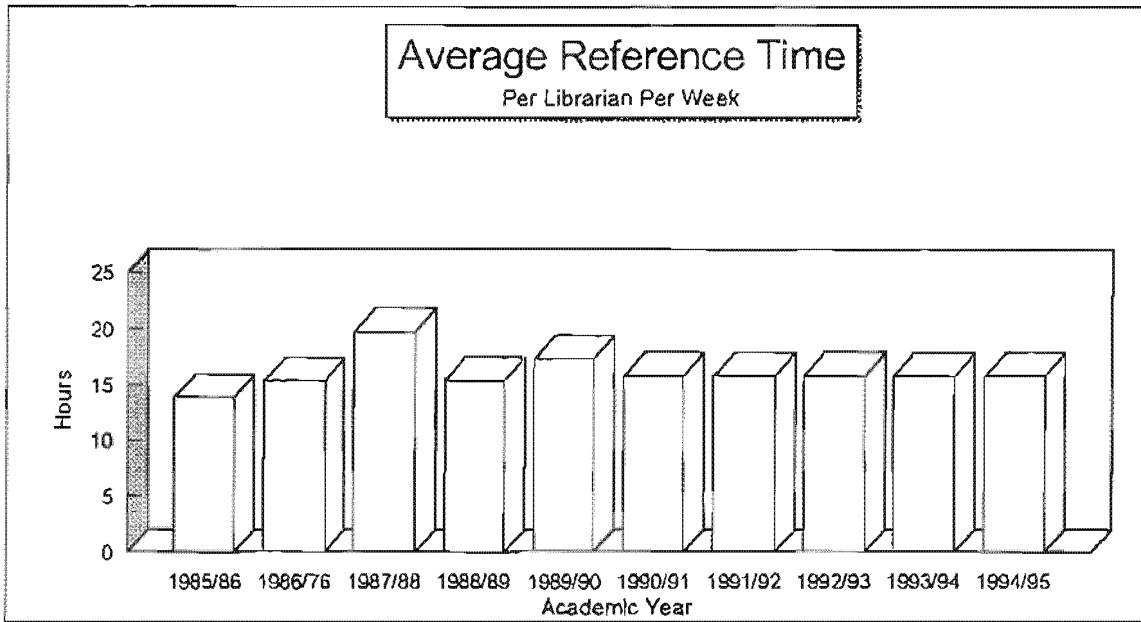


The Association of College and Research Libraries has detailed standards that academic Libraries should attempt to meet. According to the standards, by the size of the student body, faculty, and collection, York College's Library should have approximately double the number of full time faculty positions as it presently does. 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. 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:

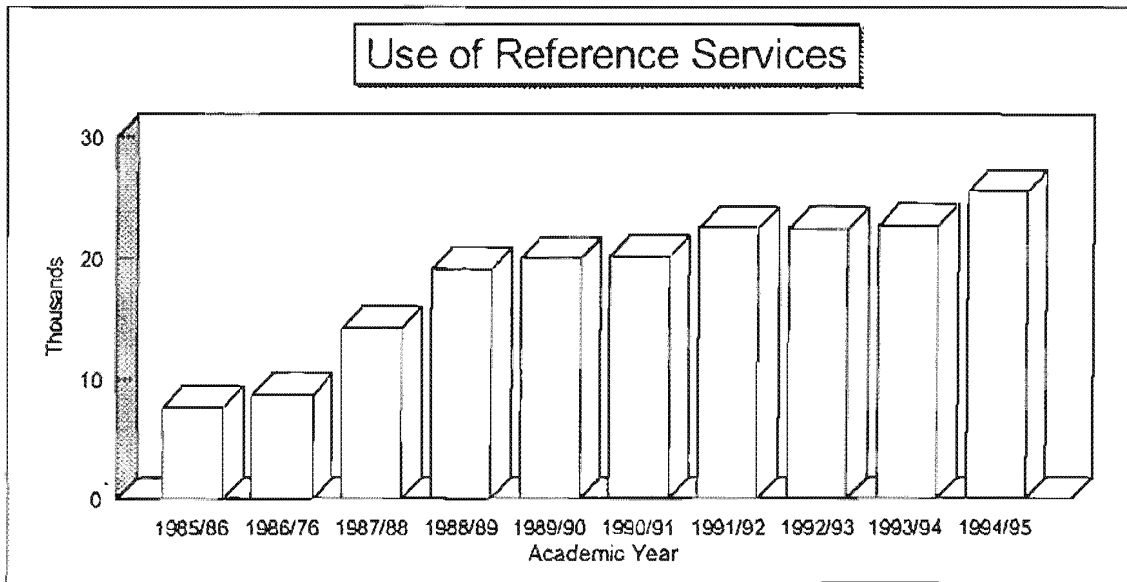


The Library continues to emphasize public service even though the professional staff is limited. Thus, each professional Librarian spends a great deal of his or her time staffing one of the two Reference desks. Other professional responsibilities, such as collection development and budgeting are accomplished as much as possible when the individuals are not scheduled at a Reference desk. The average amount of time that each professional Librarian spends in public service at one of the Reference desks can be seen in the following chart:

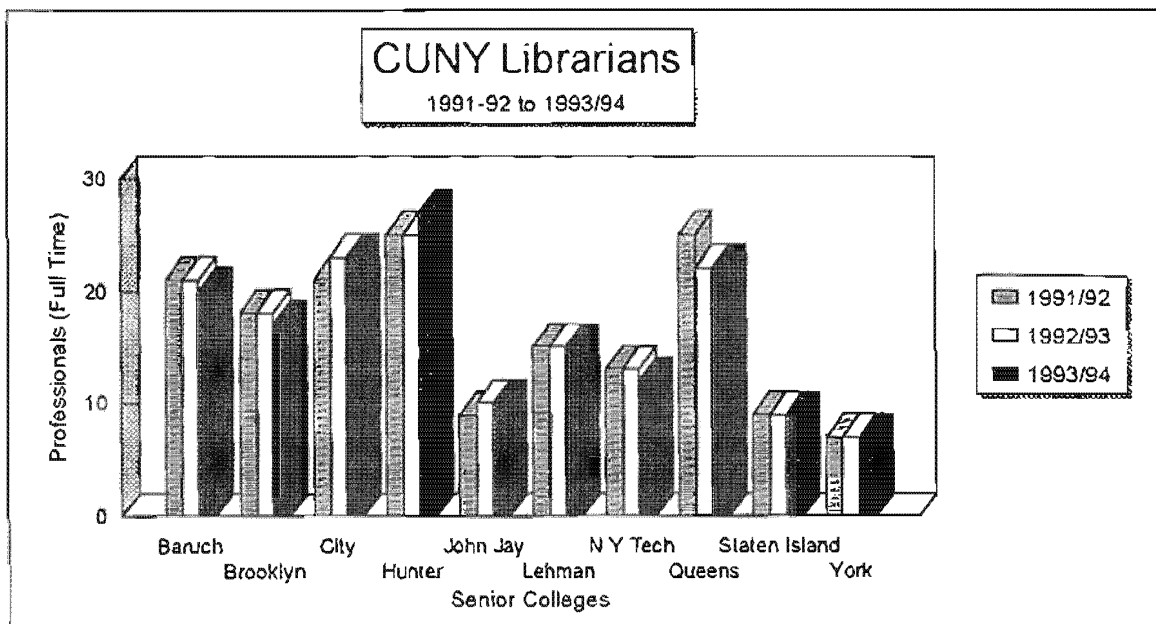


Though the Reference desk hours have been maintained during the past five years because of the Library's emphasis on public service, the hours that the Reference desks have been staffed have been decreased due to the lack of professional staff.

The hours that the Reference desks are not staffed have been selected after a study of usage patterns for several years. As the following chart shows, the shortened Reference hours have not impacted on the use of Reference services. In fact, the use of Reference services has increased as can be seen on the following chart:



In comparison with other CUNY senior colleges, York's Library is understaffed. As can be seen on the following chart, the staffing of the York College Library is smaller than for any other senior college in CUNY. The chart details the staffing for the academic years 1991-92 through 1993-94



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

II. Library 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.

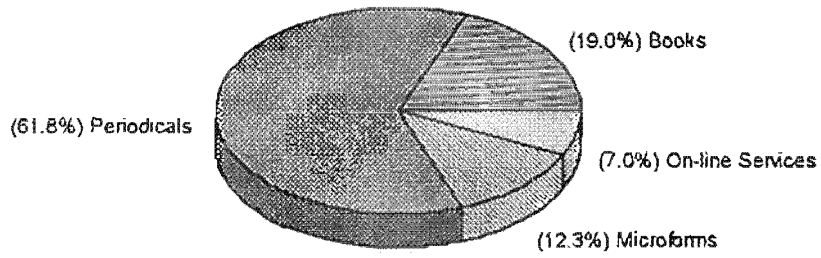
At the beginning of the academic year, the Library's OTPS budget was \$223,270. In the middle of the year, \$32,586 was cut from the budget. As annual subscriptions were paid prior to the mid-year cut, the majority of the cuts were taken from the acquisition of books.

The Library other than personnel services budget can be examined from two related 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 year due to midyear budget cuts, 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 inflation of the cost of periodicals, of course, there is an increase in the cost of books.

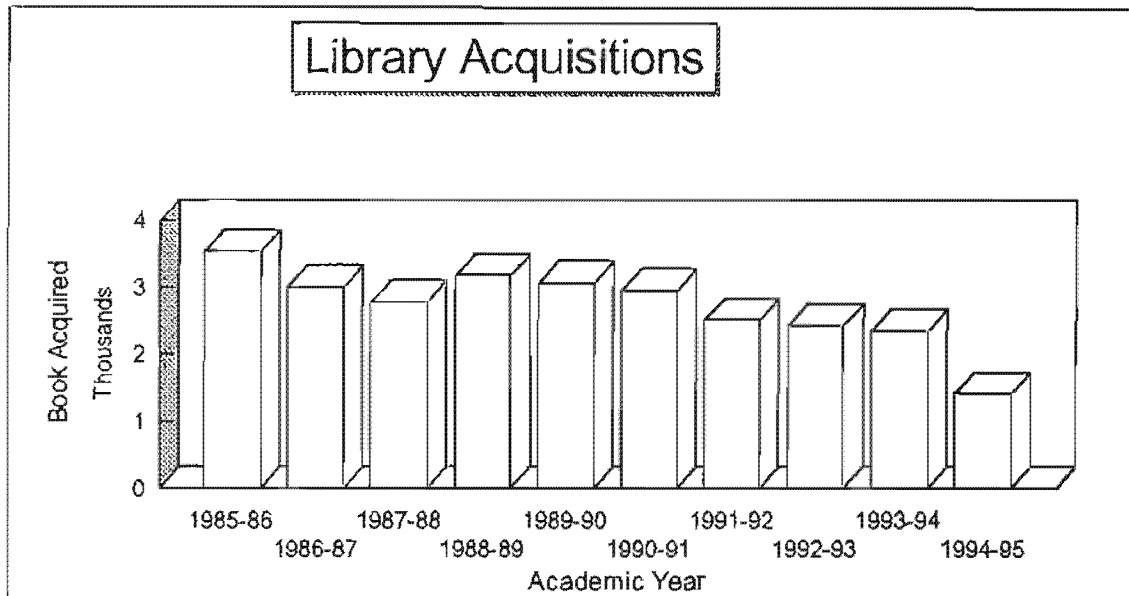
To be added to this equation is that as the college redefines its curriculum, the Library must redefine its acquisitions. In most cases, the newer fields that have been emphasized, such as biotechnology, have been ones with more costly materials than those which have been de-emphasized, such as Italian.

The following chart illustrates the Library's OTPS budget for the 1994-95 academic year:

Library Budget
1994 -1995 Academic Year



A. Books



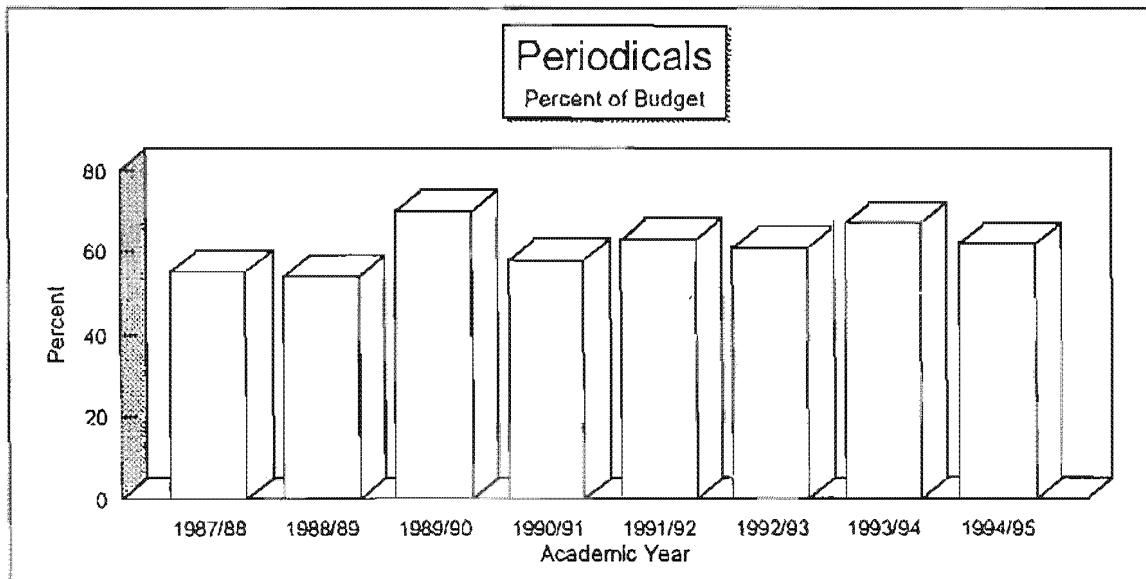
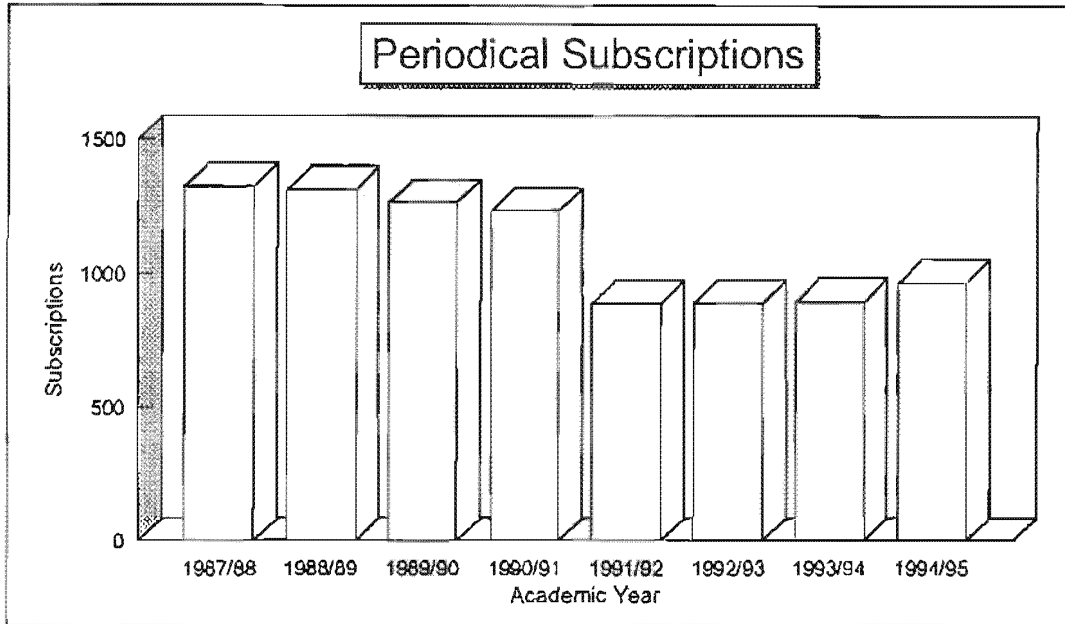
As the above chart illustrates, the book buying ability of the Library has shown a general trend downward during the past ten years. This can be accounted for by a number of factors, including:

- a relatively constant budget which decreased significantly in the middle of this academic year, in terms of total dollars, eroded in recent years by the necessity of paying for equipment, supplies, and to some extent personnel services 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 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 was based on a guess over fifteen years ago. As the complete York College Library catalog gets put into CUNY+, a more realistic number will be available, but it is likely that the collection is no more than 120,000 volumes.

B. Journals



At the present time, a major study of the use of journals in the Library is being undertaken. Subscriptions for journals that have not been used by the Library community in the past three years will be possible targets for cancellation.

III. Temporary Services Budget

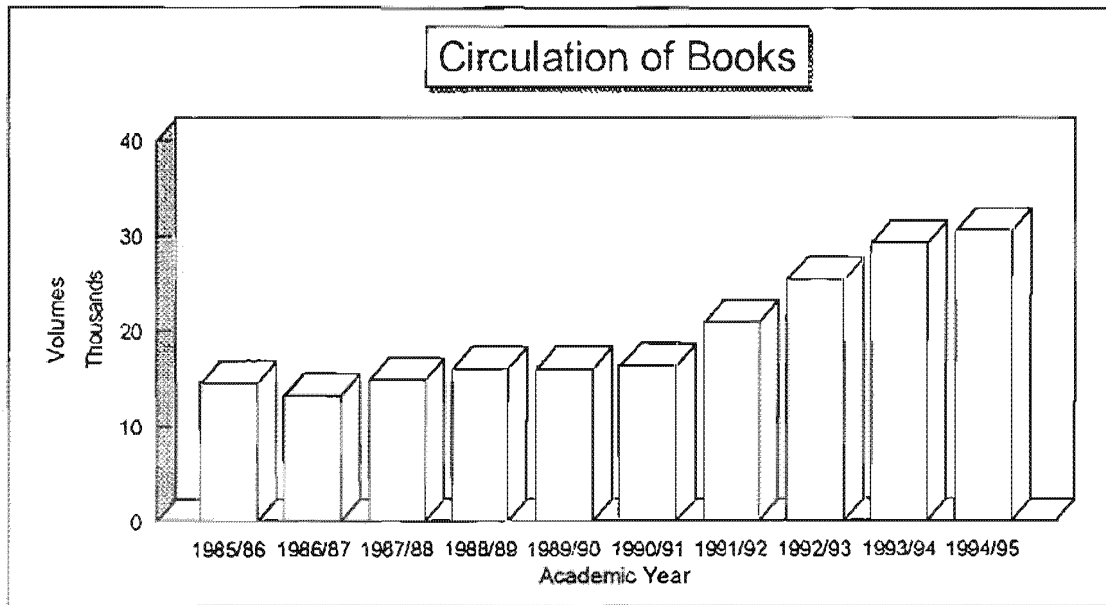
The Library's temporary services budget was cut in the middle of the academic year from \$90,000 to \$78,393. Some time thereafter, \$5000 was restored to the Library's temporary services budget. To cope with these losses, the Library faculty decided to maintain hours for the Library community through the two academic semesters, though the summer hours of the Library were shortened. The effect on Library users was minimal, as evidenced by the continued light use of the facility during the summer and the minimum number of complaints about the Library's shortened hours.

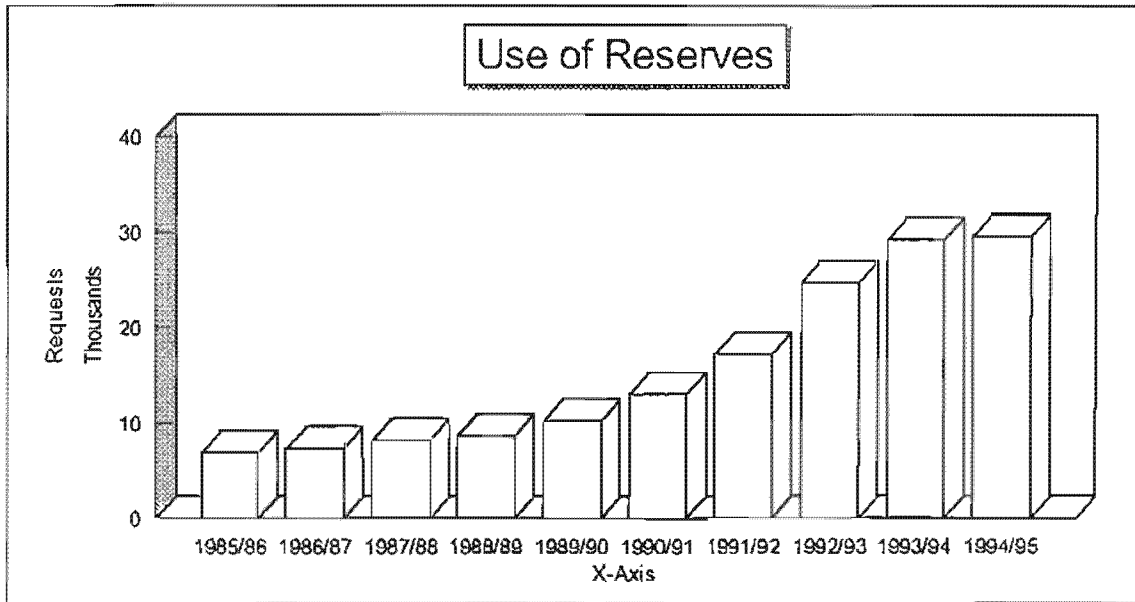
In addition, in December of 1994, the Library lost one full time College Office Assistant. The full time person was not replaced until the next budget year (July 1995), and temporary service personnel were used to cover the service provided by this person.

IV. Use of the Library

A. Books

The use of books has continued to grow in terms of both circulation and reserve, as can be seen on the following charts:

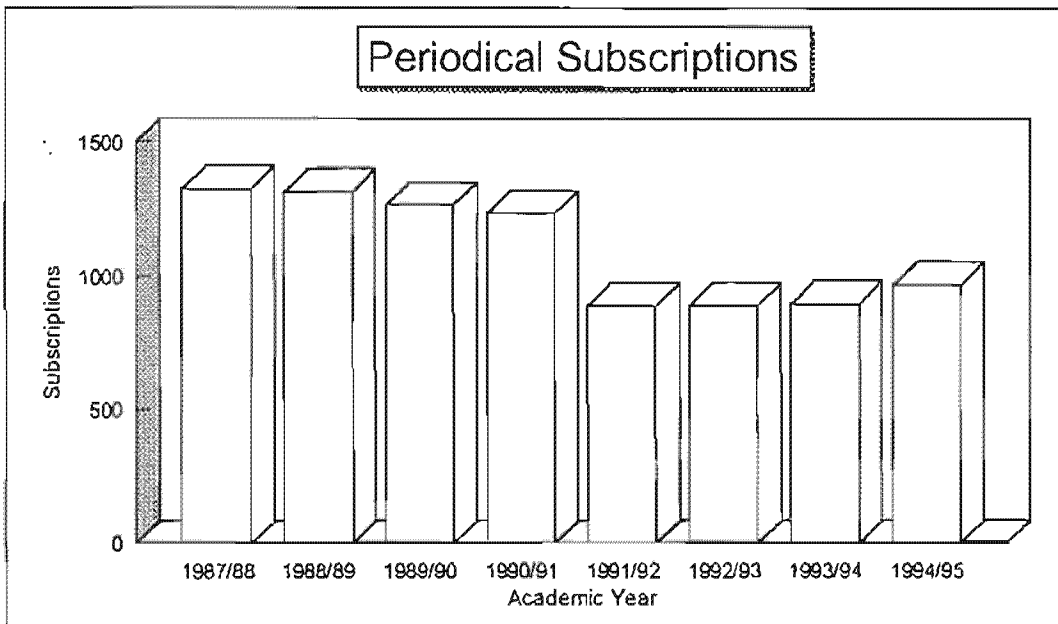




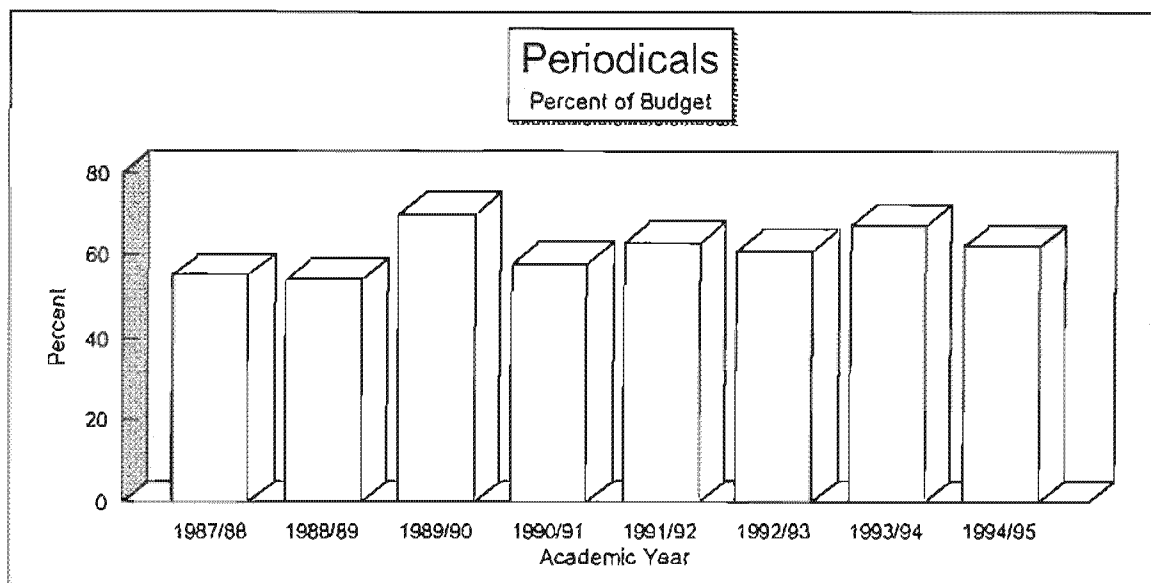
It should be noted that the growth in the use of the Library's book resources seems to be slowing although this may be a temporary fluctuation due to the change from a manual to an automated circulation system.

B. Periodicals

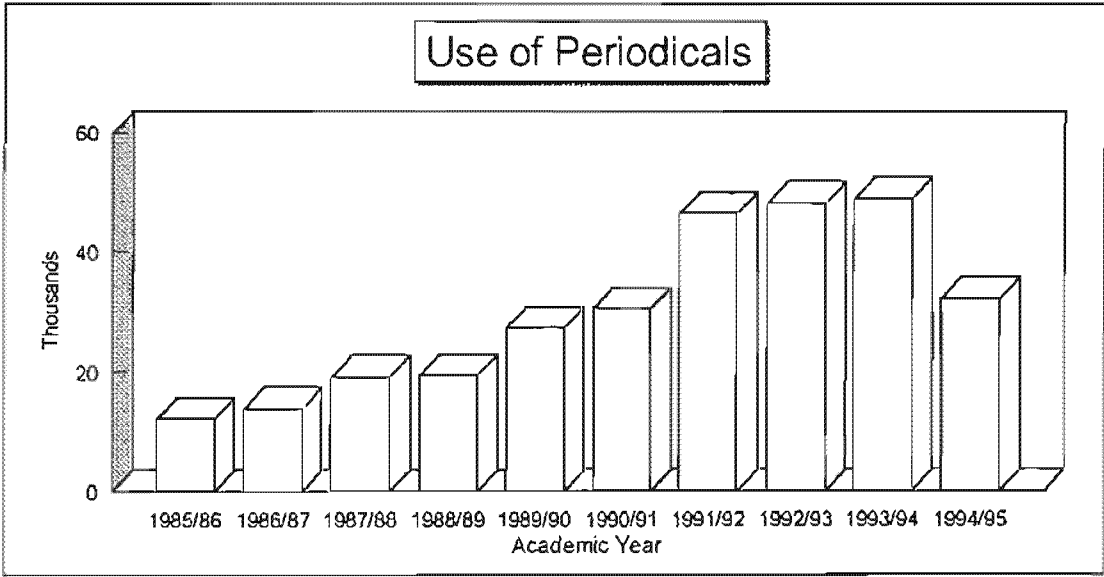
The number of periodical subscriptions has increased slightly as can be seen on the following chart. This increase can be accounted for by the increase in the number of subscriptions received in the Business Collection, a microfilm collection of reasonably current journals.



By relying on the Business Collection for a number of the Library's subscriptions, the cost of the periodical subscriptions has consumed a slightly decreased percent of the budget. It should be remembered that subscriptions were paid for prior to the mid-year budget cut, so the effect of these cuts were not immediately seen in terms of periodical subscriptions.



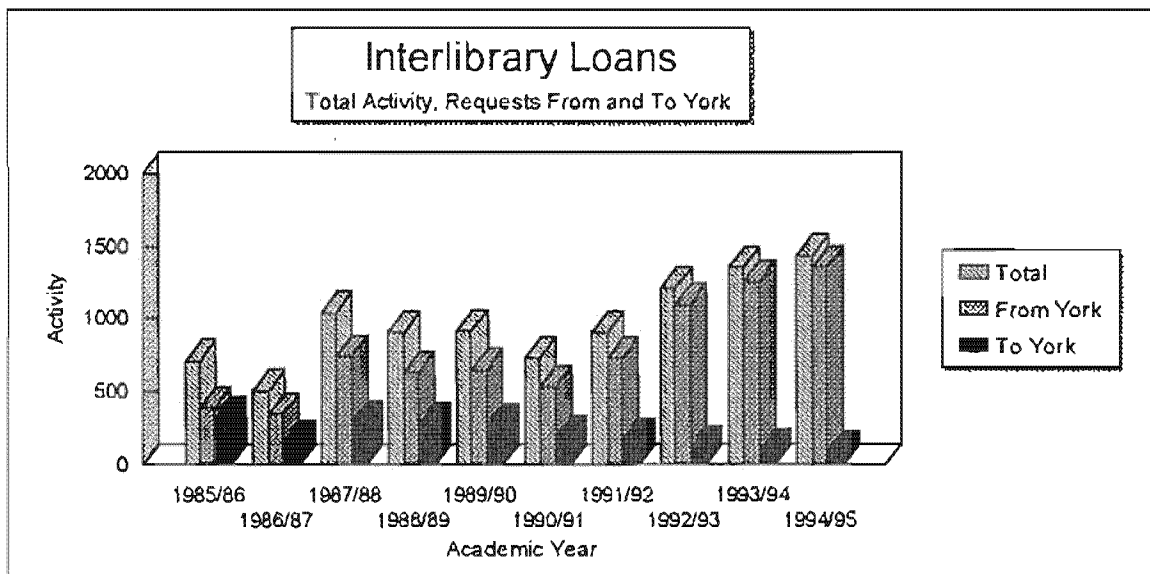
The use of periodicals decreased significantly in the 1994-95 academic year, as can be seen on the following chart. This decrease is due to the fact that a portion of the Human Relations Area File (HRAF) is now accessible on the VAX network, and thus the microforms room was used less frequently. In the 1993-94 academic year, the HRAF files were accessed 19,688 times; in the 1994-95 academic year, these files were accessed only 3398 times. In addition, the SIRS files, which were consulted by students, were out of date and thus no longer relevant to student researchers. Finally, because of the lack of a full time person working in the microforms room (the College Office Assistant was transferred from the microforms room at the beginning of December of 1994), the room was unavailable for certain times during the academic year.



C. Other Library Services

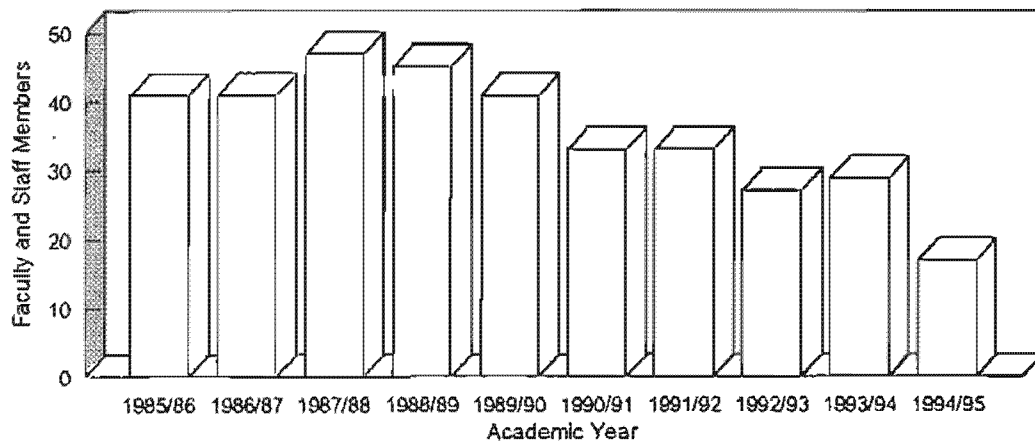
Some Library services are available primarily to faculty and staff of the college. These services include interlibrary loans and database services. It should be noted that interlibrary loan services are currently being offered to faculty, staff and students, though the student use is limited by the time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

As the following chart reveals, interlibrary loan services have increased dramatically in the past several years.



Database searches were used by some faculty and staff at the college, as can be seen on the following chart. The continuing decrease from the high in 1987/88 can be attributed to increased patron use of CD-ROM products and a decrease in the number of full time faculty. In addition, database searching was halted in February of 1995, due to the mid-year budget cuts.

Database Searches Faculty and Staff Utilization



Conclusion

Though the Library's budgets for both material and staff have been cut in the past year, the use of the Library continues to increase. The Library faculty continue to be concerned about the cumulative impact of budget cuts on the quality of service offered to the York College Library community and on the collection. This concern becomes increasingly relevant as York College's next Middle States assessment approaches. At the present time, the Library's staffing levels and collection have significantly slipped below the level of the Association for Research Libraries minimum standards for a college of this size in terms of students and faculty.