
Bibliographic Instruction in Historically Black Colleges and Universities in North Carolina

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This study was undertaken for the purpose of ascertaining the existence of library orientation and instruction, the level of instruction, and present trends and future needs in historically black colleges and university libraries in North Carolina. Information on these items was collected through a survey conducted during the month of June 1980. The survey instrument used was a modified questionnaire of the Library Orientation Instruction Exchange at the Center of Educational Resources, Eastern Michigan University. A questionnaire was sent to each of the eleven historically black colleges and university libraries in North Carolina. Each institution responded.

Background Information

North Carolina has the largest number of traditionally black colleges and universities in the nation: five public and six private, with a total enrollment of 23,576 in 1978-79. Degrees offered by these institutions include the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Education, Master of Library Science, the LL.B. and Juris Doctorate degrees.

The mission of the historically black institution is to meet the needs of many disadvantaged students who require special help and guidance. For this reason, libraries in these institutions are a vital entity. Many additional services are beneficial to black students; E. J. Josey affirms this belief:

One vital aspect of special assistance to young Black students is the inauguration of special library counseling programs which could include unique orientation programs utilizing programmed instruction. The use of teaching machines should not preclude the personal aid that the librarians, serving as special counselors, can give in selecting suitable materials for students who have reading difficulties and who, in many instances, have not had the opportunity to use

good libraries. By providing this assistance to students, librarians can contribute immeasurably to a developmental curriculum program.¹

Library holdings in these institutions range from the Barber-Scotia collection with approximately 65,000 volumes to over 500,000 in the James E. Shepard Library of North Carolina Central University. There have been nationally funded instructional programs at two of these institutions, and a third program is presently in operation at Johnson C. Smith University.

The geographical distribution of these institutions is excellent, with every section of the state having at least one institution conveniently located for the higher education of its black population. North Carolina has been acclaimed a leader in the South in providing opportunities for higher education to black students.

A major reason for the existence of the historically black college and university in North Carolina is the segregation of blacks and whites throughout much of American history. Many of these institutions were established shortly after the Civil War through the leadership and philanthropy of northern liberal whites as a means of providing educational opportunities for newly freed blacks. Some of them may have been called colleges; however, they actually began as elementary schools or high schools and gradually added college work. They provided vocational training and educational programs designed to meet the needs of freed slaves. Instruction included enhancing moral character.

As the early black colleges expanded their academic horizons, emphasis was placed on preparing teachers and ministers. The institutions were also instrumental in placing black people in other professions. Since these professionals provide leadership for black people, it can be said that the black institutions were a primary force in creating an educated group of

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black leaders. The emphasis on religious training was considered necessary to assure that students who graduated from these institutions possessed certain personal qualities which were admirable and which would make them leaders and thinkers with the ability and experience to serve the black community.²

In spite of the severe problems incurred by inadequate funding, black institutions have managed not only to survive, but to prosper and provide educational opportunities for thousands of North Carolina's young people. Black institutions have had a great deal of experience in preparing many economically and disadvantaged black Americans for a productive life in middle-class society.

The writer affirms the views of John V. Monro that the black college has served the realities of America, as well as the American dream, commendably over the past hundred years. Its contemporary role is to help the country, the black community, the white community, and each and every person to work toward an equal and just society.³

Definition of Terms

The idea of library orientation and instruction has been with us for many decades. The terms orientation and instruction should be thought of concurrently. "Library orientation is an aspect of library instruction and as such is intended simply to familiarize the user with the physical plant and resources available. Library instruction is information given in some detail concerning specific sources."⁴ To many librarians, orientation is a quick tour and/or 1-hour lecture given to freshmen and transfer students at the beginning of each semester. Margaret Knox Goggin defined orientation as "the introduction of students and faculty to the library, to locations of essential areas and resources, basic elements of using the library, and the services provided by librarians."⁵ Millicent C. Palmer stated that "Instruction must be a concern of the classroom instructor who provides a need-motivation and expresses to the students the importance of acquiring quality sources. The library faculty provides the best possible knowledge in obtaining quality sources of information for students."⁶ There are numerous interpretations of orientation and instruction and in any given situation an instruction librarian may define and interpret it differently from any other.

Review of the Literature

The ideas of orientation and instruction have been with us since the beginning of the century. Interest in them appears to come in cycles. In library literature there is concrete evidence that a resurgence in bibliographic education has been growing with enthusiasm in the past decade. A new dimension in orientation and instruction was generated in 1971 when the first conference on library orientation met at Eastern Michigan University. Out of this conference came expressions of a need for materials on activities for library orientation and instruction programs. Later conferences covered such topics as faculty involvement in library orientation, methods of developing orientation programs for academic libraries, ways of motivating students to use the library, techniques of teaching proper methods of research, and evaluating library use instruction. Since 1978 the College of Charleston in South Carolina has sponsored an annual conference for Southeastern librarians on *Approaches to Bibliographic Instruction*. The purpose of these conferences was to acquaint librarians with trends in orientation and instruction and to identify model programs.

There have been a number of major surveys conducted on library orientation and instruction. James E. Ward conducted a survey of academic libraries in the Southeast.⁷ Sara L. Whildin in 1975 conducted a survey of 200 academic libraries in Pennsylvania to identify libraries which were involved in orientation and instruction. Ms. Whildin's survey assessed their programs and identified the persons involved in them.⁸ A survey has never been conducted, however, solely in and for the historically black institutions in North Carolina.

Two unpublished M. L. S. research projects at the School of Library Science, North Carolina Central University are related to this survey. Both studies deal with "Project Help," the formal instructional program in the James E. Shepard Library which was supported jointly for five years by the Council on Library Resources, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the University. Michael N. Nditange's research project was a detailed report of the activities, classes, and special program/events performed for the undergraduate student in the Shepard Library at NCCU, including "Project Help."⁹

The four-page instrument was designed to generate descriptive data on library orientation

and instruction in these institutions. A cover letter was mailed out with the multiple-facet instrument. The instrument included questions that were both objective and open-ended. Results of the survey of the historically black institutions give evidence that library orientation and instruction have always been present in the institutions.

Instructional program. Currently, nine of the eleven institutions have formal instructional programs with written goals and objectives. Montez Byers, formerly head librarian at Bennett College, stated that the Thomas F. Holgate library has had a form of orientation and instruction "since the library was constructed in 1939." At Shaw University, acclaimed as the "Mother of Negro Education in North Carolina" Bernice Rainbow affirms that librarians served unofficially as tutors for students in the mid 1930's. The librarians (tutors) provided individual guidance in basic etiquette as well as instruction in the use of library resources. This was a requirement for all students in this decade.

Method of Orientation. Eight respondents stated that they conducted the traditional library tour for all incoming students. Individuals in the other three institutions have prepared professional slide tape presentations on the staff, services, and resources provided by the library. According to Belinda Daniels, the Head of Reference Services at Winston-Salem University, "the slide-tape presentation was dropped in favor of the video presentation." See Table I for further methods employed.

Librarian's time devoted to program. Respondents stated that it is typical that the equivalent of fifty percent of one full time librarian's work is devoted to bibliographic education.

TABLE I
Materials & Methods Used In
Orientation & Instruction

Program includes:	
Individual Instruction	11
Lectures	10
Subject bibliographies	9
Tours	9
Exercises on Assignments	8
Handbooks	8
Term paper clinics	6
Tests	5
Filmstrips	4
Slide-tape presentations	3
Transparencies	3
Mini courses and workshops	2

Print and Non-print Material Used. A multiplicity of materials are used in various programs. Such materials used were: subject bibliographies, handbooks, films, transparencies, and exercises on assignments. Other materials used for orientation and instruction have been given in Table 1.

Instructional Sessions. The number of instructional sessions per year ranged from six (6) at Barber-Scotia College to two-hundred and fourteen (214) at North Carolina Central University. An average of 38.5 instructional sessions was conducted during the academic year of 1978-79. Outside of freshmen English courses, respondents listed advanced courses taught in physical education, music, history, business law, radio/television and film, philosophy, biology, historiography, urbanology, test and measurements, criminology and several other advanced upperclassmen courses were listed.

Audience of Orientation and Instruction. All of the institutions offer orientation and instruction to freshmen. With the exception of

TABLE II
Library Orientation And Instruction Questionnaire
Selected Responses

	YES	NO
1. Do you have a formal orientation and instruction program?	9	2
2. Has your library received special funds for orientation and instruction?	3	8
3. Does your library have an instructional librarian?	5	6
4. Do you have written goals and objectives for your program?	9	2
5. Individual to who orientation and instruction is given?		
freshman	11	9
sophomore	9	9
faculty	3	4
	7	3
6. Has your program been evaluated?	No Answer	1
7. What procedure do you use in publicizing your program?	Personal contact w/faculty	10
	Letter to faculty	6
	announcements	5
	personal contact w/students	4
8. Is participation in any library orientation and instruction activity required?	7	4

two institutions, instruction is given to upper-classmen. Less than half provide orientation and instruction to faculty and staff. See Table II for response of audience.

Evaluation. Seven respondents indicated that they work directly with faculty and students in their evaluation techniques. Techniques mentioned were (a) required exercise, (b) informal tests and (c) staff discussions of the program with key faculty members. Renee Stiff, Orientation and Instructional Librarian at Johnson C. Smith University, stated that "formal tests and attitude surveys that are statistically analyzed for effectiveness are the best methods of evaluation in the J. B. Duke Memorial Library." She also said that "attitude surveys give insight into how students and faculty feel about the program and provide the opportunity to them to give suggestions."

Publicity. Methods used for publicity for the orientation and instruction programs were: personal contact with faculty (10), letter to the faculty (6), announcements of program (5), and personal contact with students (5).

Further exploration for bibliographic education. Nine of the eleven responses were: computer assisted instruction, evaluation, bibliographic education for faculty, approaches to increase library patronage (research information), a method of presentation that would reach the largest numbers of students, cooperative ventures among others.

In determining the status of library orientation and instruction in the historically black colleges and universities in North Carolina, a questionnaire was sent to all eleven institutions. All questionnaires were returned. The results show significant benefits of bibliographic education related by the eleven institutions in North Carolina. Copies of the questionnaire are available from the author.

According to project reports and communications from the three institutions which received matching grants from the Council on Library Resources and the National Endowment for the Humanities, they stated that overall outcomes have been extremely positive. Due to the project's success at NCCU and NC A&T, the university administration at both institutions hired an instructional librarian after the project terminated. The programs have greatly helped students and faculty more fully to utilize resources and services provided by the library. The project at Johnson C. Smith University, which is in its final year, has improved its library program so that the library

has become fundamentally a teaching facility of the institution.

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