



Atlantic Provinces Library Association
SIM, Dalhousie University
Kenneth C. Rowe Management Building
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Halifax, NS B3H 4R2

Marilyn Luscombe
President and CEO
New Brunswick Community College
Smythe Street Center
P. O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5H1

July 9, 2012

Dear Ms. Luscombe,

The Atlantic Provinces Library Association (APLA) represents the interests of Librarians, Library Technicians and Information Professionals throughout Atlantic Canada. Our members are extremely concerned about the removal of Librarian positions from the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC), specifically the Moncton and Woodstock campuses, and more recently the Saint John campus, which has been without a full-time Librarian since July 1st of this year.

The library at the Saint John campus of NBCC holds in excess of ten thousand books, manages NBCC access to online databases containing citation and full text access to scholarly and trade journals, and serves as the audio-visual facility for the campus. The library is open 60.5 hours per week, providing access to collections and training for faculty and students in the use of information resources. The Library is the heart of the campus, providing collections, facilities and services essential to a modern education.

Students of NBCC are living in an age of extreme information overload where access to authoritative information in their course work, and ultimately the workforce, will determine their success. The expertise of Librarians in information selection, organization and research is needed more than ever to help students learn to be efficient and responsible users of the vast amount of information available. Today's students must learn to critically select and evaluate information and avoid educational pitfalls such as plagiarism. Without librarians who are specifically trained in these areas, NBCC risks serious deterioration of the level of education offered its students.

Librarians offer NBCC other valuable skills, such as expertise in licensing and management of electronic information resources. Longstanding relationships with vendors of subscription online resources will be lost if Librarians are removed from the staff of the institution. The skills required for selecting, managing and training students and faculty in the use of these resources are not readily replaced by staff outside of the library profession.

Under the new staffing arrangements there will be no librarian available to assist students in the Allied Health Sciences programs. Programs such as Respiratory Therapy, Practical Nursing or Pharmacy Technology require a level of academic rigor that makes library services essential. As Canada and the world become more insistent on evidence-based practice in health care, this arrangement seriously compromises the education of students who choose to study these subjects at NBCC. Evidence-based health care insists on using the best available information when practicing in the health professions. Without proper training in information literacy skills and the selection and use of quality information, graduates of NBCC Health Sciences programs will be unable to contend in an increasingly competitive job market.

APLA respectfully asks you to reconsider the elimination of this Librarian position, and to re-assess the value of library staff positions to the New Brunswick Community College campuses.

Sincerely,

Lou Duggan
President
Atlantic Provinces Library Association

Cc: Hon. Martine Couombe, Minister of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
Hon. David Alward, Premier
Hon. Victor Boudreau, Leader of the Official Opposition
Chris Toole, Regional Director of Saint John Campus
Bill Best, Vice President Academic and Student Development
Linda Boyle, Regional Student Services Coordinator, Saint John