

**SOUTHWESTERN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

SYLVA, NORTH CAROLINA

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LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER

Quick Facts



The Learning Assistance Center occupies space that, from 1970 to 1983, was the College's first Learning Resources Center. When the LRC moved to its new building in February 1983, part of the former LRC space was converted to classrooms. Remaining space was used for the college's computer operations. [3.8.2-6](#)

In the summer of 2000, Computer Operations moved to new quarters in the Balsam Center, and plans were drawn for the Learning Assistance Center. Renovation of the Learning Assistance Center space began at the close of Spring Semester classes in May 2000. Work was completed in time for the beginning of Fall Semester classes in August 2000.

Renovation included adding three offices outside the LAC -- two for instructors and one for the Director of Developmental Education. The LAC space includes an office for the Coordinator of the Learning Assistance Center, an 875-square-foot Computer Lab, two 550-square-foot classrooms, six enclosed study carrels, and a Commons Area. Total space is 3,200 square feet.

Funds for renovation of the Learning Assistance Center were provided by Jackson County through the Annual Capital Appropriations. Total cost of renovation was \$142,000. Western Builders, Inc. of Sylva was the primary contractor.

Funds for computers, classroom workstations, computer lab workstations, study carrels, chairs for classrooms and computer lab, and furniture for the Commons Area were provided by a Title III grant.

Funds for reading, math, and English software programs were provided by a Perkins Grant.

Funds for an evening Learning Assistance Center consultant also were provided by a Perkins Grant.

Facility Design Specifications

- 3,200 total square feet (classrooms 550 square feet each, laboratory 875 square feet).
- Over 80 newly designed learning spaces.
- Indirect, non-glare lighting in classrooms and laboratory.
- Two 24-station computer classrooms. Computer work surface units for the classrooms are constructed of one-inch square, 16-gauge steel tubing finished with an epoxy powder coat paint. Designed and manufactured by Interior Concepts, the units have a unique two-tiered top design. Computer monitors are alternated in the recessed center of the units to allow clear sight lines

between students and the instructor with the writing or work surface at a height for normal use. The 'drop-down' feature puts the monitors at eye-level for each student to eliminate neck strain. Wiring and data cables for the computers are enclosed in an interconnecting passageway, or Chase system, below the workstations. Sliding doors provide easy access to electrical wiring and data cables. Computers are stored in free-standing pedestals below the work space between each student work station. Total cost of the four workstations was \$18,280.

- 16-station computer lab. The four-place workstations in the computer lab also were designed by Interior Concepts and constructed of the same material as the classroom stations. Dividers provide privacy for individual work; acoustical front and end panels help keep distracting noise to a minimum. All wiring is stored in an enclosed Chase system in the center of the units. Each unit has a computer and a 96-inch by 72-inch work area. Total cost of the computer lab stations was \$8,400.
- Six enclosed study carrels for individual study and tutoring. The study carrels also were designed by Interior Concepts and manufactured to space specifications. Each unit has a door and large window and a flat work surface inside to accommodate up to three people. Two of the units are handicapped accessible. Southwestern Community College is the only educational institution in the state that has such units. Total cost of the study carrels was \$12,400.

Computer Hardware and Networking Specifications

- 66 Dell Optiplex Gx110 model Minitower PCs
- 3 networked HP LaserJet Printer

PC specifications:

- Pentium III 667 MHz CPU
- 64MB of PC133 RAM
- 10GB hard drive
- 40x (or 40 speed) CDROM drive
- 32 bit SoundBlaster soundcard
- Integrated 3com 10/100mb Network Card
- 17" Dell Triniton video monitor

The SCC Computer Center staff installed all computer lab PCs with a customized "clean install" of Windows 98 downloaded to each PC from the network servers using Symatec's "Ghost" imaging software. The software is configured using customized settings that have been tested to provide an optimum balance of functionality, performance, and security. Much effort is given to provide students with a consistent desktop environment so that one computer looks, acts, and feels identical to others in the same lab.

The LAC computer labs are wired together using Category-5 copper cabling running through conduits in the floor to the first floor "Network Distribution Closet". There, the PCs are connected to three 100MB Cisco "Catalyst" workgroup switches. Those switches are in turn connected to the Bay "Excellar" Enterprise Backbone switch that ties the entire Oaks Hall computer network to the SCC Campus Gigabit Ethernet Fiber Backbone.

The Gigabit Fiber Backbone runs deep beneath the roads, parking lots, and lawns of the campus to connect each building to the SCC Computer Center located on the

third floor of the Balsam Center.

Like all of the Sylva Campus's file, email and Internet servers, the LAC's server is in the Computer Center "Server Room" in the Balsam Center.

File server specifications:

- Dell Poweredge 2450 server platform.
- 766mhz Pentium Zeon Processor
- 512MB RAM
- Integrated Intel 10/100mb network card
- Three 9GB SCSI hard drives configured in a RAID 5-configuration for 17Gb total with data redundancy
- The NOS is Novell Netware 5.0 for "File and Print" services

Staffing Specifications

- One full-time coordinator and learning consultant (40 hours/week)
- One part-time evening learning consultant (12 hours/week)
- Two part-time work study assistants (20 hours/week)
- Three part-time instructors in English, mathematics, and social sciences (22 hours/week)
- Learning consultant support provided by one full-time Reading instructor
- Instructional support provided by one full-time Science instructor
- Oversight and support from Director of Developmental Education and Developmental Education Advisory Committee

Programs and Services Specifications

Over 50 hours per week of individualized instruction from professional learning consultants; over 20 hours per week of individualized instruction from specialized instructors; academic workshops offering small-group instruction in effective learning strategies; modern facility for the nationally certified peer tutoring program provided by Student Support Services; academic skills review/extension software for English, reading, math, information literacy, and sciences; and more than 300 text and video resources for academic skills review and extension.

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