



CLARION

from the University Librarian Should Our Graduates Be Able To Read?

by Bil Stahl

(A major part of this article appeared previously in the Western Carolina University Faculty Forum, vol. 14, no.5, February 1, 2002.)

Can a person be well educated¹ without being able to read? My conclusion and that of the colleagues I have polled over the years is that the answer is no. While media and computer technology can enhance learning and is good for some types of content delivery, it cannot replace reading.

More so than ever before, our students have to be prepared to be life-long learners if they are to succeed in a world that will require them to have several different careers before they retire. Good reading skills are essential to a people's ability to "reskill" themselves. Without well-developed reading skills, students will have little chance of long-term success. Historical analysis of educational requirements in society clearly indicates that demands for literacy continually increase.²

However, the literacy levels of many of our students do not seem to be keeping up. Stories are common around Western Carolina University and most other universities about students not being able to read effectively. Some of the WCU examples I have heard in recent months include: students who object to foreign films with subtitles because they can't read them fast enough; a student who could read but not understand Conrad's *Lord Jim*; and students who could not do simple lab procedures by reading the instructions and following the step-by-step diagrams. There are also many complaints about students' ability to write. This is not surprising because there is a direct correlation between a people's reading ability and their writing ability.

Continued on page 2



l to r: Dr. Richard Starnes, History Department, Bil Stahl, University Librarian, Carrie Holthouser, WNCCWRT President and Rick Plemmons, WNCCWRT Treasurer.

Civil War Round Table Donates Microfilm

by Dr. Richard Starnes, History Department, &
George Frizzell, Special Collections Archivist

The Western North Carolina Civil War Round Table (WNCCWRT) has donated to Hunter Library seven reels of microfilm containing the North Carolina sections of "Case Files of Applications from Former Confederates for Presidential Pardons ('Amnesty Papers'), 1865-1867."

The generosity of the WNCCWRT adds to the library's holdings of primary documentation on this crucial period in American history. The "Amnesty Papers" complement other holdings on the Civil War, such as the *Charleston Mercury* and *Official Records of the War of Rebellion*, and should be of interest to professional scholars, history students and lay historians.

A non-profit organization founded in 1997, the WNCCWRT is an active group of professional and lay historians seeking to promote the study of Civil War history from all perspectives. Its tie to the History Department is unique among round tables nationwide,

Continued on page 4

In This Issue

■ Interior Design Project.....2	■ Sue Ellen Bridgers 4	■ Commercial Library Service.....6
■ Food in the Library!!?.....3	■ Technology Assistance Center 4	■ New Staircase Seating 7
■ Hunter's 50th Anniversary.....3	■ Friends of Hunter Library Board 5	■ Friends Bid Cliff Lovin Farewell 7
■ New Director of Public Services.....4	■ Robert Balliot Remembered.....6	■ Hours 8

Should Our Graduates Be Able To Read?

Continued from page 1

One of the culprits in this lack of reading skills is "aliteracy." Aliteracy is generally defined as having the ability to read but lacking the desire to do so. Reading is a "use it or lose it" skill. People can become intentionally illiterate by failing to exercise their reading skills. Also, there are many levels of literacy. Simply saying someone can "read" is all but meaningless. However, many students do not know what they do not know when it comes to reading. Using Adler's terminology,³ the majority of people read at a basic "entertainment" level. Reading at this level does little to educate the reader. To be truly educated requires one to read well above the "entertainment" level – to read at Adler's "syntopical or comparative" level. We seem to be seeing the results of students who have not been reading increasingly challenging materials over the course of their education and are stuck at this entertainment level.

Based on many indicators, fewer and fewer people read, especially among our young people. Fewer than 50% of households in the USA subscribe to any newspapers, magazines or newsletters. A runaway bestseller is now defined as one that sells 50,000 copies to a population of potential readers of over 200 million people.⁴ Book titles are no longer part of our definition of "popular culture."⁵ There is not a common body of "classic" literature shared among people today.

Added to these trends are concerns about the content of the things being read. For example, while the number of magazine titles published has increased, many of these do not contain much intellectually challenging content. Also the writing in many newspapers and magazines is being written for lower and lower reading levels and often is now written at the 4th grade reading level.

It is important to note that while aliteracy has recently become a popular topic, it is not new. The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research held a conference, *Aliteracy: people who can read but won't*,⁶ in 1982. The conference panel was concerned about the effect our declining language skills will have on our democratic way of life. They concluded that if aliteracy was not addressed quickly, we would wind up with a small literate elite who will control the country.

If we are to produce well-educated citizens, it seems apparent that we need to put renewed emphasis on the importance of reading at every level of education. All evidence suggests that we can no longer assume that our students arrive on campus understanding this importance or come equipped with adequate reading skills. Teaching reading cannot be the sole purview of a tutoring center or a particular academic department. Students need to be taught

how to read the literature of the discipline being taught. For example, if they are taking a Biology course, they should be introduced to the writings of famous biologists. Textbooks need to challenge the students' reading ability and not simply be easy sources of facts. Classroom presentations should not be confined to material in the textbook. Library assignments need to require students to use multiple expository sources.

Faculty need to explicitly model good reading behaviors to their students, including talking about what they have been reading recently. It is probably important for students to hear from their teachers that "good" reading is not always easy reading, even for the teacher. All of this may require that we develop ways to help faculty learn how to teach reading within the context of their courses. These would be similar to the efforts initiated to help faculty teach computing skills in their courses. This is not to downplay the efforts to teach computer skills in the classroom, but it is increasingly apparent that we need to be doing better in teaching students how to read and its importance.

¹ Of course, we can argue about what "well educated" means, but for this discussion it means being able to develop reasonable expertise about virtually any subject, being able to synthesize ideas from a wide range of disciplines and being able to express one's own ideas well.

² Kibby, Michael. *Student literacy: myths and realities*. Fastback 381. Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation. 1995. (Hunter Library L 11 .F37 no. 381.)

³ Adler, Mortimer. *How to read a book*. Simon and Schuster. 1972. (Hunter Library PN83.A43 1972.)

⁴ Buckley Jr., William F. "Godforsaken books". *National Review*, July 12, 1999. Pg. 62. (Hunter Library)

⁵ Lindholdt, Paul J. "Animal energies and tribal rhythms." *Sewanee Review*, Spring 1993, Vol. 101, Issue 2, Pgs. 269- 278 (Hunter Library.)

⁶ Thimmesch, Nick, ed. *Aliteracy: people who can read but won't*. Washington. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. 1984. (Hunter Library Z 1003.2 .A43 1984.)

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Students Do Interior Design Project for Hunter Library

During the fall semester Professor Julie Temple's Interior Design class did a project to propose designs for the library's monumental staircase. The purpose of the design was to make the staircase a major design element in the library. Selected samples of the students' work are on display in the library along the back wall on the first floor between the Reference Desk and the elevator, next to the library's café. The students did great work. The library will use ideas from these designs to develop a long-term theme for the facilities improvement plan.



Karen Cody, Aramark Dining Services, makes change for a patron

Food in the Library!!?

Hunter Library now has a café in the library proper. Aramark, the company that provides food services for the University, agreed to try out a café in the library on a test basis. If it is financially viable it will become permanent.

The café is currently open Mon. – Thurs. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday 10-2, and on Sunday, 4 – 8 p.m. It is located on the main floor past the elevator and right beside the computer terminals.

Food is allowed anywhere in the library with the exception of Special Collections and the Electronic Classroom. So far the response has been very good.

In our initial checking with other libraries that have cafés, food has not posed a problem and, in fact, in most cases has been less of a problem than it was when it was prohibited. This has been our experience as well. It is interesting to note that in the 50s and 60s students could smoke in WCU's library, but not eat in it. Now we have just the reverse. We assume that the health risks from



second-hand food aromas are less than from second-hand smoke!

Bil Stahl, University Librarian, and Karen Cody, Aramark Dining Services, look over the café's service bar.

Hunter Library Celebrates 50th Anniversary

by Clarissa Fisher

During the week of **April 1-5, Hunter Library will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary.** It has been fifty years since the library moved out of a few rooms in the Joyner building into a dedicated library building, named Hunter Library. An interesting series of events has been planned for the week long celebration.

Monday, April 1st the pictorial timeline will be unveiled, depicting events in the library's history as well as the University's history and the growth of the collections. In addition, the **Library Café will donate 10 percent** of the earnings for that day to the library. **So come have lunch or tea with us.**

Wednesday will be an event filled day starting with a campus **reception from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.** Ms. Martha Lou Hunter, daughter of H. T. Hunter, the school's president from 1923-1947, will participate in the rededication of the bronze plaque honoring her father, for whom the library was named. The plaque is being moved to a location near the current front entrance of the library.

Kathryn (Kay) Stripling Byer, the recipient of the *2001 North Carolina Award in Literature*, will be reading from various works including her newly published work, *Catching the Light*. During the reception, individuals in the university community who have worked at Hunter Library, as well as those who have worked in other college libraries, will be recognized. The library is compiling a book of meaningful events that are currently taking place in the library and it will be available for perusal. Alumni of the university have been contacted to share their memories of the library and the campus. These comments will be located in a display case on the first floor.

Later in the evening on **Wednesday, starting at 6:00p.m.** there will be a meeting of the Friends of Hunter Library with a reception, music by the Carver Mountain Strings, book sale and speakers. If you would like to participate and are not a member of the Friends of Hunter Library, it is not too late to join. Call the Library Administration Office at 227-7307.

At 7:30 p.m. Kay Byer's presentation will be "**The Library, An Author's Perspective.**" Hunter Library's own **George Frizzell** will be presenting a Brief History of Hunter Library. This program is open to everyone.

On Thursday there will be a **Book Sale** in the Library Conference Room from **9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.** Please come and join us as we celebrate 50 years of progress and service at Hunter Library.

Student Technology Assistance Center Moves to the Library

During the first part of March, the Student Technology Assistance Center is moving into the Library. The library staff proposed this location for the TAC. Increasingly students need to incorporate information they find into computer software such as spreadsheets and presentation programs. The TAC provides both one-on-one and group instruction for students in how to use their computers and software. The TAC will be located on the main floor near the Reference Desk and close to the Hunter Computing Lab. Along with the Writing Center, having the Technology Assistance Center in the library provides the students with convenient access to these important library-related services.

Friends Board of Advisors Selects Sue Ellen Bridgers for 2002-2004

by George Frizzell, *Special Collections Archivist*

Friends of Hunter Library has selected Sue Ellen Bridgers to serve on the Board of Advisors for 2002-2004. A native North Carolinian and an alumnus of WCU, Sue Ellen is a nationally recognized author whose seven novels include such acclaimed works as *Home Before Dark*, *All Together Now*, and, most recently, *All We Know of Heaven*. She has received numerous awards and commendations, including American Library Association awards, the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award for Fiction for *All Together Now*, and Western Carolina's Distinguished Service Award in 1991.

Sue Ellen has commented that "recalling my work . . . I see these themes emerging: the importance of family, the ties to the land and its heritage, and a spirit of hopefulness." Her works have been the subject of two doctoral dissertations and a biography (Ted Hipple, *Presenting Sue Ellen Bridgers*) that explore these themes and also discuss Sue Ellen's place in Southern literature.

A long-time supporter of Hunter Library, Sue Ellen is a charter member of the Friends and was the speaker at the first Friends' event in 1992. The library also is honored that she has donated her manuscripts to Special Collections.

Director of Public Services

Deborah Paulson has been named Director for Public Services at Hunter Library. Debbie has previously served as Reference Department Coordinator at the University of Minnesota-Duluth,

2001 to present, as Information Services Manager for the Washington County Library in Cottage Grove, Minnesota, 1992-1998, and as Director of the St. Croix County Library Service in Hammond, Wisconsin, 1988-1992.



Debbie will be coordinating the public services areas of the library to increase quality customer service and patron interaction. In addition to her duties within the library, Debbie will also be involved in conveying the library's vision and services to the university community. She will be emphasizing interaction and collaboration between the library and the faculty to improve instructional support and learning outcomes. Debbie has had experience in all areas of librarianship including collection development, bibliographic instruction, reference, financial administration, grant writing, and planning and moving to a new library building, but her chief interest is delivery of quality service.

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Continued from page1

Civil War Round Table Donates Microfilm

and one of the reasons the WNCCWRT has been successful in its educational mission. A seminar on North Carolina's Civil War held in September 2001 was very successful, and boasted papers by the leading scholars in the field. The Round Table has attracted speakers of national reputation, and generally serves as a catalyst for interest in Civil War history in the region. The donation of the amnesty papers through the Max Williams Fund only lengthens their list of important accomplishments. All this from a group only five years old.

For more information contact Western North Carolina Civil War Round Table, P.O. Box 3709, Cullowhee, NC 28723, or visit their website at: www.wnccwrt.org.

Friends of Hunter Library Board of Advisors

by Bil Stahl, University Librarian

The Board of Advisors is the governing body of the Friends of Hunter Library. We have been blessed with a very committed and supportive group of board members. The Bylaws of the Friends calls for the Board to consist of at least 12 members. The term of office is three years, with 1/3 of the positions coming open each year.

Current Board Members

Name	End of Term of Office (terms end in June of year indicated)
Deborah Bardo	2004
Jo Anne Caruso	2002
Barbara Coulter	2004
Carol Hardman	2003
Nancy Joyner	2002
Bill Lee	2002
Cliff Lovin, President of the Board	2002
Sara Madison	2002
Scott McLeod	2003
Brian Railsback	2003
Jack Wakeley	2002

Appointed Positions

George Frizzell, University Librarian's Appointee
Perry Kelly, Chancellor's Appointee

Ex-Officio Positions

Cliff Metcalf, Vice Chancellor for Advancement and
Treasurer of the Board
Bil Stahl, University Librarian and Executive Secretary
of the Board
Linda Gillman, Staff – Secretary of the Board

Appointment of new Board of Advisors members

The Board of Advisors Nominating Committee (Cliff Lovin, Carol Hardman, Jo Anne Caruso and Bil Stahl) met in January 2002 to identify candidates to serve on the Board and to fill the offices of President and Vice President. We will be approving the appointment of new Board of Advisors members for the 2002 – 2004 term and the officers for 2002 – 2003 at the Friends' annual meeting on April 3, 2002. According to our Bylaws nominations can also be made from the floor during the business meeting.

The following people have agreed to serve on the Board for the 2002- 2004 term:

Sue Ellen Bridgers
Jo Anne Caruso – renewing her term
Bill Lee – renewing his term
Sara Madison – renewing her term
Jack Wakeley – renewing his term

The following are the candidates for the Board of Advisors' 2002 - 2003 officers:

President – Jack Wakeley
Vice President – Jo Anne Caruso



Western Carolina University

Board of Advisors Profiles

by Linda Gillman, CAE, Friends of Hunter Library

We plan to introduce one or two Board of Advisors members in each issue of the *Hunters Clarion*. We are starting the series off with two long-time members of the Board who have agreed to serve another term.

Sara Madison, who has served on the FHL Board for several years, has a long association with Western Carolina University and Hunter Library. Sara's father had a distinguished 30+ year career with WCU and her husband's grandfather was one of the founders of the institution. Sara's father encouraged her to work at Hunter Library during the summers when she was in high school. Sara later held other on-campus jobs, including coordinating the Transfer Program. Sara left the area to attend Duke University where she received her Bachelor Degree and Master Degree in Education. She and her husband moved to Indiana where Jim Madison was a professor at DePauw University. Sara taught school for a number of years before capping her career with a Ph.D. in College Administration. Sara has an abiding interest in higher education and a love of books.

Bill Lee is also renewing his commitment to the Friends Board of Advisors. Bill has background as a newspaperman-journalist and author. He, too, is an ardent lover of books and is the owner of The Time Capsule, located in Dillsboro. His bookstore sells rare and hard-to-find books, which explains why Bill loves working on FHL book sales! He just loves selling books to people who will treasure them. In addition to his role as a business owner, Bill is employed at Southwestern Community College where he works with the GED/ABE and Adult Literacy program. Bill has served two terms as president of the FHL board. During Bill's terms, the organization helped the library by funding several projects of note, including much of the work on the transcribing of the *Cherokee Phoenix*, which is housed in Special Collections. Bill is not only a "working" member of the board, but he is a real supporter of the Friends organization.

Our thanks to Bill and Sara for their many years of service to the organization and continuing support.

Reminder

This will be the last issue of the *Hunter's Clarion* to be delivered to Faculty and Staff who are not members of the Friends. To join the Friends call 227-7307.

Robert Balliot Remembered by George Frizzell, Special Collections Archivist

The library staff was saddened to learn of the death of Robert Balliot on January 22. Balliot had served as University Librarian at Hunter Library from June 1970 until July 1976. Remembered for his wit and humor as well as his professionalism, Balliot supervised the library during a period of change and growth in the 1970s.



Balliot received an undergraduate degree from Washington State University and a Master's in Library Science from the University of Michigan. A long and distinguished career at libraries nationwide followed. Prior to his arrival in Cullowhee, he worked at the University of Illinois, State University College in Fredonia (New York), the University of Iowa, Oregon State University, and Wesleyan University (Connecticut).

During his six years at Hunter, Balliot guided the library through a number of significant changes and addressed challenges and opportunities. Western had been named a regional university in 1967, but in 1972 it gained new status as a constituent member of the University of North Carolina system. Balliot worked to see that Hunter met the standards of a university library. During his tenure, there was significant growth in the collections. However, the growth in collections was coupled with constraints on physical space in the existing building. Ultimately, bridges to connect the mezzanines in the original section of Hunter were built to help simplify the flow of traffic on the mezzanines. As the stacks began to exceed their recommended capacity, new stacks were added, notably on the top floor (formerly 5th floor, now 2nd floor) in 1975. Balliot recognized, however, the need to maintain a "balance between reader and stack space" in order to provide students and faculty with study areas. Additional building renovations during this period included air conditioning.

Another major milestone was the beginning of automation. The ever-present computers of today made their presence felt during Balliot's tenure. The library's Cataloging unit began using terminals connected to the OCLC database and cataloged its first book online in June 1975.

Balliot left Hunter in 1976. He continued his career as library director at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford (Pennsylvania) for fifteen years. He retired from Bradford in 1995 after 35 years dedicated to library service.

*The following article about commercial information providers appeared in **Hunter Library News & Notes**, the library's on-campus newsletter. Since these commercial services don't limit their advertising to college students and professors, we thought you might find the article useful.*

"Chunks of Content" and Push-Button Bibliographies: the Promise of the Commercial "Library" Service

by Becky Kornegay, Reference Librarian

A short piece in the fall issue of *News & Notes* promised that Hunter's reference librarians would help our readers evaluate commercial information services that are selling the public access to electronic books and journals. In order to be able to fulfill that promise, I spent a good bit of time digging into those services, seeking the reality behind the clever tag lines.

What did I find out? Well, while the ad says "millions of documents at your fingertips," the actual journal content may go back only to 1998. And the service that calls itself "the world's largest online

collection of complete books and journal articles" has no content at all in business or the sciences. So what is the consumer to do? Ask lots of questions of Questia or XanEdu or (talk about an oxymoron) InstantKnowledge. Ask about the collection behind the service. Is there content in all subject areas? Rather than choosing materials to match the university's curriculum, as Hunter Library does, the commercial services sign on publishers and offer their content only. These are excellent, well-respected publishers, but their products cannot cover the entire range of topics researched at WCU. And the subject you are most interested in may not be covered at all.

How deep is the collection? Questia (\$19.95/month) is upfront about its journal titles, listing all 140 or so for us to see. But nowhere does it indicate how far back coverage goes. When we called its customer service to ask, no one could answer the question. InstantKnowledge (\$24.95/2-months), to its credit, was quite honest, stating that its journal collection goes all the way back to 1998. (Perhaps they should have been more cagey.)

Ask about the academic level of the content. Electric Library (\$14.95/month) has an impressive list of 600+ magazine titles, but the service began for school children. Is it adding scholarly

journals, but what percentage of its collection is appropriate for the kind of research done at a university? The most important question of all: does the service encourage academic rigor? Ad copy is only ad copy, but it does tell part of the story: "a few clicks away from anything you need to know." "With the click of a button, copy passages and let Questia insert footnotes in the format your prof requested." "Your query is then converted through proprietary algorithms into a set of statistical patterns or 'concept chunks' which are then used to find similar 'chunks' of content." Chunks of content?!

Ask Hunter Library the same questions. The answers will be quite different. We will certainly mention our collection of over 500,000 books and 2000 journal subscriptions, 110,000 maps, 300,000+ government documents...To the question of convenience and 24/7 access, we would remind you that we have over 9,500 full-text, Internet-accessible journals with coverage back as far as the 19th century. Not one of the commercial services can match that.

But a library is far more than its collections, be they stored on shelves or mouse-clickable. Everything we buy, organize, make available, and help people use is chosen with the faculty and students of Western Carolina University in mind. Through collaboration with faculty, our classroom teaching and one-on-one work with students, we support the academic mission of the university. And we assert that there is more to research than push-button bibliographies and cut-and-pasted chunks of content.

Now, having spent several hours on the web sites of Questia and XanEdu and InstantKnowledge, Madison Ave. lingo is starting to come more naturally to me. How does this sound?

A monthly fee? We wouldn't think of it.

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Friends of Hunter Library Gifts New Staircase Seating

The monumental staircase by the Hunter Library's entrance is surrounded on three sides by built-in seating. This seating provides a very popular gathering place for students and for classes. The cushions on this seating were the original ones from 1982. They were burnt orange to match the ceiling ducts and had been so heavily used that the foam in them had literally disintegrated into a sand-like compound. The Friends of Hunter Library funded the replacement of these cushions, which are much more comfortable with a high-grade foam. We also selected a royal blue fabric to blend with the new carpet and to de-emphasize the burnt orange color in the library. We have heard much praise and appreciation about the new cushions.

Board of Advisors Bids Cliff Lovin Farewell

by Bill Kirwan, University Librarian Emeritus

The other day I called Joe Ginn, who has been the office manager for the History Department for decades, and asked: "Joe, when is the best time to catch Cliff in his office?" His answer caught me by surprise. "Bill," he patiently explained, "Cliff has retired and he no longer has an office in the History Department." I knew Cliff Lovin had retired from teaching, so why was I surprised by Joe's response?



Because Dr. Clifford Lovin has been more than a scholar, author, editor and award-winning teacher. His just concluded service, as President of the Friends of Hunter Library Board of Advisors from 1998 through 2001, is only the latest of many contributions to the library and the university. He has been a member of the Advisory Board since 1993 and a member of the Friends since its inception. However, his active involvement in the development of Hunter Library precedes the establishment of the Friends. For much of his career at Western he served as the History Department's liaison to the library.

His service to Western Carolina University is impressive. From 1969 to 1973 he served as Assistant Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, as Chair of the Faculty, 1975-76, and as Coordinator of the Advanced Institution Development Program, a \$1.7 million grant which began in the 1970s and resulted in the development of the CAP Center, the Cherokee Center, and some of the departments which are now part of the School of Applied Sciences. He was the first Director of the Mountain Heritage Center, 1977-81, and Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, 1987-1993.

Given that record and the fact that I knew that Cliff was leaving the Advisory Board of the Friends, what Joe Ginn was really telling me is that, for the first time since 1966, Cliff Lovin will not be on campus in some capacity. That is news. That is to be noted and remarked upon. A solid campus citizen for thirty-five years has quietly retired to Caney Fork.

Thank you, Cliff, and best wishes to you and Barbara on behalf of all of Hunter's Friends. See you in the library.

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HUNTER LIBRARY HOURS Spring Semester 2002

SPRING BREAK

Friday, March 8	8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday, March 9	CLOSED
Sunday, March 10	CLOSED
Monday, March 11 to Friday, March 15	8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday, March 16	CLOSED
Sunday, March 17	Noon to Midnight
Monday, March 18 to Wednesday, March 27	<i>*Extended Hours*</i>

EASTER HOLIDAY

Thursday, March 28	8 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Friday, March 29	CLOSED
Saturday, March 30	10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sunday, March 31	4 p.m. to Midnight
Monday, April 1 to Thursday, May 2	<i>*Extended Hours*</i>
Friday, May 3	8a.m. to Midnight

FINAL EXAMS

Saturday, May 4	9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Sunday, May 5 through Friday, May 10	OPEN NOON -CONTINUOUSLY Close at 6:30 p.m.

COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, May 11	CLOSED
Sunday, May 12	CLOSED
Monday, May 13 to Sunday, June 2	8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CLOSED Weekends

Extended Hours

**Monday-Thursday
8AM-2AM**

**Friday
8AM-9PM**

**Saturday
10AM-9PM**

**Sunday
Noon-2AM**

Hunter's Clarion

<http://www.wcu.edu/library/whatsnew/clarion/index.htm>

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