

State colleges launch virtual academic library

Faculty and students at colleges and universities throughout the state will have increased access to books and academic materials through a partnership that involves more than 50 academic libraries around the state.

The USC-based partnership, known as PASCAL (Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries) has created the S.C. Virtual Academic Library, a two-part initiative that will reshape the way students, faculty, and researchers at colleges and universities in the state acquire information, enhancing research and learning.

Research materials will be delivered to faculty and students through the Internet and by other electronic statewide delivery systems. The virtual library will expand access to more than 12,000 publications in core academic subjects, as well as the health sciences and business to faculty and students.

The library also will feature universal borrowing, which gives students and faculty members at the participating schools virtual access to almost every book in every academic library in South Carolina, usually within 24 hours.

Rick Moul, executive director of PASCAL, which is headquartered in USC's Thomas Cooper Library, said the agreement is a win/win situation for everyone involved.

"The size or location of the institution does not matter," Moul said. "Whether it be a technical college in Williamsburg or the University of South Carolina and its other campuses, the schools will have more than 12 million volumes readily available. Equally important, PASCAL was able to reduce by more than \$2 million the amount that each institution would have been spent if it had acquired these resources independently."

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