

Students encouraged to save PASCAL before July 2009

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PASCAL, which provides rapid book delivery and a myriad of electronic resources for 230,000 South Carolina colleges, universities, students and employees, is in danger of dissolution. Funding is obtained through membership dues and is supplemented with state monies, but South Carolina has recently cut 90 percent of its funding for PASCAL for the current term. If this trend continues during the next fiscal year, PASCAL will be forced to dismantle in July 2009.

To rectify this problem, Furman University's student government, the Association of Furman Students (AFS), passed a resolution to support the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education in its commitment to secure necessary funds and to urge the South Carolina State Legislature to restore this funding.

"To save this valuable resource, the best thing that students can do," said Director of Libraries Janis Bandelin, "is to tell their PASCAL story

on the website at <http://pascalsc.org/helpsavepascal.html>, to legislators."

"PASCAL Delivers accesses 10 million volumes available from colleges and universities around the state," said Bandelin. "It expands the knowledge base tremendously."

Furman's libraries have a combined 450,000 thousand volumes alone. Interlibrary loan functions as a back up for PASCAL's book delivery service.

In addition, without this service it would cost the university over \$85,000 to buy its way into all of the electronic resources that PASCAL currently provides. Multiplying this by the other 59 institutions around the state that use PASCAL demonstrates that the annual dues are a much more cost-effective method than buying everything individually. Furman pays \$6,000 dollars per year, out of the library budget, based on the number of people using PASCAL; Clemson, for example, pays more.

"Student will notice the difference if the most heavily used database [Academic Search Premier] is not fund-

ed," said Bandelin. "They may be using a lot of databases that they never knew were PASCAL-funded."

PASCAL has already drastically reduced its funding of databases and has cut by 40 percent the frequency of its courier service. Its staff salaries remain the same for stability's sake. PASCAL's survival this year has been dependent on \$200,000 dollars from the State Legislature versus \$2 million - the amount pledged each year previously. PASCAL increased its membership dues this year and had some supplementary funds from previous years.

Since 2004, PASCAL has been the primary source of cost-effective electronic databases on the university's library website, as well as the main provider of quick and physical delivery of volumes otherwise unavailable in James. B. Duke Library. The latter facet, PASCAL Delivers, was just created in 2006 and only brought to Furman last year.

Students interested in helping PASCAL survive should contact Bandelin.