

**EBSS Open Access Current Topics Discussion**  
ALA Midwinter - Philadelphia

Date: Saturday, January 12, 2008 1:30-3:30 pm  
Location: Crowne Plaza Liberty C

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**Introduction and Overview**

This current topics discussion was prompted by marked interest in how EBSS and ACRL can further open access initiatives with their publications. The participants in the discussion were also very interested in what other libraries are doing to extend their endeavors in this area. The facilitator noted that the EBSS 2008 Program is Open Access in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. John Willinsky, Ray English, and Allison Mudditt been invited to be speakers. The Science and Technology section will co-sponsor in name only. A handout for “Open Access Selected Resources” was also distributed to the participants (also attached) that included background resources, models for e-publications, open access journal links and directories, and repositories/archives of open access.

**The discussion was organized by questions and summaries of those responses follow.**

**What one thing do you want to take away from this discussion?**

While most of the attendees expressed interest in hearing what ACRL, EBSS, and those attending were doing related to open access, several had specific questions or issues they were hoping would be addressed. They included:

- To learn more about the plans that ACRL and EBSS have for publishing, perhaps doing more hybrid projects like the Curriculum Materials Directory where there was a marketing survey done by EBSS to find the best publishing options. They decided to do a print version and a subset online.
- To hear what other people are doing and what kinds of issues are being raised. What are they doing with subscription databases? Are they looking out of the box for possibilities? What innovations are occurring that will help institutions to be on the cutting edge of open access?
- To discuss how libraries are using repositories and bringing in faculty to deposit items. How do they negotiate the conversations about the value of open access with faculty?
- To discuss the political and economic ramifications of open access.
  - One needs the infrastructure to be able to host open access publications. What do you need in order to publish and collaborate? Do you need a scholarly communication librarian? How do you sustain a journal and a website?

- The collection development librarians need to be educated in open access. What should one catalog and link to (is it worthy of staff time and attention?) What do they need to know for collection development?
- How does the library work with faculty to host a journal?
- What is open access and the minimum requirements and standards?
- Need a librarian task force related to institutional repositories for ideas to market and to bring faculty on board.

To frame the conversation , the above mentioned topics were discussed in segments.

### **What is Open Access?**

The Budapest Open Access Initiative [<http://www.soros.org/openaccess/index.shtml>] posts this definition: Open access resources are publications that have "free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself".

The group thought that adding “unrestricted use” to the definition was important. They also felt there should be some mention that Open Access “removes the price barrier (subscriptions, copyright and licensing fees, pay-per-view fees and permission barriers)” and could be added for even more clarity

### **What Challenges for Open Access Exist on Your Campus?**

**The tenure process.** There were several challenges that the individuals experienced on their campus. One of the biggest was with tenure. Participants recognized that younger faculty want to publish in top journals and perhaps don't trust open access or are fearful that these journals will not carry the same impact as those cited in ISI. There are studies available that show that open access journals are being cited, but not to the extent as those reported in ISI, so it becomes difficult to convince faculty to research and publish in these publications. A lot of effort is needed to open up dialogs with the departmental and campus promotion and tenure committees to help them value electronic (and open access resources, not just print. They should have the same judging procedures and standards as the print (peer review).

**Journal price gauging and faculty discussions.** Clearly, librarians have to help faculty understand the impact that journal price gauging has on subscriptions. In addition to presenting this information, as well as information about journal cuts, librarians can lead discussions about the benefits of open access journals, such as: open access provides more competition for vendors (which may help reduce journal prices); and more people are going open access, which should increase the scholarly recognition of these journals. However, for some vendors if you cancel the print version they increase the online access amount. This puts librarians in difficult situations. This is one area that needs to be addressed.

One participant in the discussion emphasized the need to help faculty understand that the role of print is changing and that librarians should have a conversation with faculty around what they need, how much of it, and for how long, and indicated the Yale Study (Print/Serials study: [see <http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=abstract&id=196730>]) for examples of declining use. Do we need redundancies in print/online? If there is a print archive version available some place (even if not on campus) is that sufficient if the online version is accessible? Conversations with the faculty should also include the political and social ramifications of information being so expensive—the cost of journals keeps going up. One result may be that undergraduates can't have access to something or only certain libraries may have the journal because of the cost. Increasing access to online journals can provide greater access to more individuals.

**Finding open access journals.** Decisions made by editors regarding open access affect the scholarly communication process. Journals may not be included in aggregators if they are open source (for example- Ebsco may not include them). That may then make them harder to find and can end up costing everyone more to find these and link to them. There would also be extra effort to make sure the journal gets priority linking in search engines like Google and that it is linked in SFX, and linked to the directories, repositories and archives of Open Access journals. Editors will need to work to make sure the journal is indexed in places that track who's citing whom. They will also need to make sure they have staff available to proof read and do the little things so that the editor is not solely responsible for it all.

**The need for a point person.** Another challenge mentioned was securing a position and support for a Scholarly Communication Librarian. Such a position is needed to coordinate efforts on campus; to serve as an outreach person; to maintain the website; to keep up with licenses, the literatures, conferences and the repository. This would be the individual who could serve as the institutional expert and who coordinates and shepards others through the process. Some universities provide money for a server. The Scholarly Communications librarian from Washington [<http://www.lib.washington.edu/ScholComm/>] sends out updates, pays attention to SPARC and scanning. The librarian works with contracts and letters and keeps tabs on various in-house versus hosted solutions.

**The value of open access.** A great benefit of open access journals may be that they can be made available much more quickly than print and other electronic journals. This may be a key selling point for faculty who need information quickly in order to advance in their careers. Some disciplines, like physics, recognize that there is urgency in their field for information. They embraced open access over a decade now. There is also the social justice aspect to this information. Faculty are opening doors to information on campus that they are creating. There's an attraction in being able to identify as an academic community and it is a viable way to get the research out quickly.

However, there are some challenges as well with open access. If an institution creates an open source journal it will need advocates through the faculty senate and union to get the

word out and should be supported by the dean or provost. A small digital group will need to be set up with a memorandum of understanding, as well as guidelines and formats and all of the other considerations one makes in creating a journal. Also to consider is who pays for the cost- the author, the editor, the institution, or the society?

### **What Opportunities for Open Access Exist on Your Campus?**

**Faculty.** Young faculty may be better informed about open source so librarians can work with them and then begin the process of reaching out to others. Librarians can work with faculty to raise awareness that as a scholar it's not just writing the article—but also making sure that people have access to the article. They can help them understand more about the potential of a wider audience if publishing in open access journals. Other areas that librarians can discuss are: how information is disseminated and if backed up by aggregators, and the difference between “renting” a journal and buying it.

Librarians are producing web sites pertaining to scholarly communication to assist faculty and also to help them understand copyright management and how they can retain some rights in contracts (creative commons...). Some of these are listed in the next section.

Various individuals commented on institutional repositories and their efforts in working with faculty to deposit their preprints, post prints, and presentations. Something that should be kept in mind is to start small and keep working.

### **What can we “in the trenches” do to further open access initiatives? What do we need to do to move forward?**

One of the main comments was to be more proactive in alerting the campus about scholarly communication and open access through better communications with the faculty, the faculty senate, and the provost. At the minimum, a scholarly communications web page should be created and maintained that provides topics such as: issues in open access and scholarly communication; cost of journals, copyright management (examples of contract modifications so that faculty can be informed of possibilities for retaining some rights—like with Sherpa <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php>); publishing models; what the institution is doing; what You can do; Repositories and Open Access Archives (and why faculty should deposit items such as preprints, post prints, and conference papers); and links to resources. If the library can designate an individual to be the point person for these efforts funds should be provided to allow them to attend workshops, conferences and institutes on scholarly communications.

Some examples of Scholarly Communication Web Sites are:

- ACRL Scholarly Communications Toolkit (with categories for administrators, faculty, and librarians)  
[\[http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/scholarlycomm/scholarlycommunicationtookit/toolkit.cfm\]](http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/scholarlycomm/scholarlycommunicationtookit/toolkit.cfm)

- Cornell University – [<http://www.library.cornell.edu/scholarlycomm/>]
- University of California:[ <http://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/>]
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign – [<http://www.library.uiuc.edu/scholcomm/>]
- University of Maryland:[ <http://www.hshsl.umaryland.edu/scholarly/>]
- University of Minnesota: [<http://www.lib.umn.edu/scholcom/>]
- University of Washington: [<http://www.lib.washington.edu/ScholComm/>]

Librarians should set examples for other faculty by actively depositing items in open access repositories and archives and taking the time to modify contracts to retain some author rights (examples like creative commons [<http://creativecommons.org/>]). They can create guides to assist faculty through these efforts, as well as the benefits. One of the key drivers, however, is obtaining the support from the administration, as well joining efforts with initiatives such as SPARC.

### **What Recommendations Do You Have For ACRL and EBSS Concerning Open Access?**

#### **Background Information**

ACRL published their first open access and hybrid (print and free downloadable) non-serial publications in the past year with the following four publications, with others under way:

- *C&RL News* has open access
- *A Guide to Writing Curriculum Materials Centers Collection Development Policies* (a publication from the CMC Committee of EBSS)
- *Global Evolution: A chronological annotated bibliography of international students in U.S. academic libraries* (compiler Kaetrena Davis)
- *Your Old Books* (a brochure put together by RBMS)
- and *Studying Students: the Undergraduate Research Project at the University of Rochester* (eds. Nancy Fried Foster and Susan Gibbons)

ACRL is also working on making the backfiles more easily accessible.

**What types of formats do you think ACRL/EBSS should experiment with for open access?** Should EBSS provide e-publications only (see [www.lockss.org/lockss/about\\_lockss](http://www.lockss.org/lockss/about_lockss) and [www.clockss.org/clockss/home](http://www.clockss.org/clockss/home) and [www.portico.org/](http://www.portico.org/)?)

There was no definitive consensus to this question. Although individuals recognized the value of providing e-publications, they also commented on the need to know the population and how they use the publications. A good example of this was the Curriculum Materials Directory, a publication of EBSS that went fully online in its previous version. Responses from a survey revealed that the online version was not as useful to librarians who needed to be able to flip through pages for information. As a result, the next directory reverted to the print version with a portion of it available online.

**What are some options and opportunities that ACRL/EBSS should explore to expand their offerings to members and to allow for content to reach an ever-widening circle of academic librarians?**

Some examples of material that the group thought ACRL and EBSS should include were: digital preprints (authors still hold copyright), post prints (70% of journals allow this), repositories, and all conference proceedings online. Monitoring the SHERPA publisher policies on copyright and archiving was also reiterated as being useful.

Other ideas for models for publishing and pushing out these materials included: institutional repositories; nonprofit and open access publishing ; blogs; wikis; ebooks; listservs; discussion forums; RSS feeds; P2P file sharing formats; and websites.

Although ACRL and EBSS have made great strides to provide more open access materials, the group felt that the following could also be a benefit:

- Work on an open access portal (that's affordable) and hire more people to work on it. The current Scholarly Communication Toolkit is a good start [<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/scholarlycomm/scholarlycommunicationtoolkit/toolkit.cfm>].
- Ask authors if they can distribute their articles
- Provide a table of contents and push out material through the table of contents.
  - Do more consciousness raising and get the information to all librarians in a transparent way – journals that are open access and quality journals. They might need to determine who would be the market? Some examples that could be included would be Jstor/Project Muse/Emerald or free online journals or those that come with memberships.
- Have someone on staff who could decipher copyright questions, decipher contracts, collect contract letters, provide examples of author addendums that could be attached to contracts, and do workshops
- Encourage publishers to use IP addresses, rather than individual passwords for electronic access.

**See also the additional handout with selected resources.**

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