

Open Access Task Force

May 7, 2014, 1:30-3:00 pm, Davis Library 214

TF Members Present: Baumgartner, Bohlman, Brophy, Caren, Curtain, Degener, Fraser, Gilliland, Hall, Heitsch, Hemminger, Hunter, Jones, Kimbrough (co-chair), Knafl, Lin, Linz, McGowan, Neta, Robin, Rubinstein, Shearer, Sherer, Singleton, Vision (co-chair)

Others Present: Caver (Faculty Governance), Elia (Office of the Provost) Kiel (Center for Faculty Excellence), Whisnant (Faculty Governance)

Welcome & Introductions

Following a welcome from co-chairs Kimbrough and Vision, Kiel reviewed the TF charge and status. The goal is to submit a policy recommendation in December. Two meetings so far, the first generated a series of key questions, the second was an expert forum at which some of those questions were addressed. The goal for today's meeting is to constitute a writing committee, generate key research questions to pursue over the summer, and generate questions for a survey for the entire faculty. We will break out into disciplinary clusters to generate the questions.

Vision described the role of the writing committee. The committee will formulate the proposals on which to vote, draft the document intended for the Faculty Council, and review the survey to be sent out to faculty. Since the TF charge includes looking at perspective from different disciplines, we aim for a small writing committee that can reflect the disciplinary breadth of the faculty.

Participants organized by discipline/affiliation into five breakout groups: Natural and Allied Health Sciences, Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Other Professional Schools (e.g. Law, Social Work, Education, SILS), and Library / Legal / Administrative. Each breakout group had 30 minutes to consider the following questions:

1. What were your 2-3 biggest take-aways from the expert forum?
2. What questions remain to be resolved -- generally, and specifically to your discipline/area?
3. How could you/we best go about getting answers to the remaining questions?
4. When we survey the faculty next fall, what do we need to ask?
5. Who from your group will serve on the Writing Committee?

Report-outs from each group follow.

Social Sciences:

- People will be comfortable with this once it is explained, but were concerned about low level of faculty participation at U California. For this to be successful, we need more

explanation of what the difference is between what we are proposing and what's already happening. How revolutionary (or not) is this, really? Faculty will need to understand this better and be better educated in order to make this work.

- Should this be a Chapel Hill only or a UNC system-wide policy?
- How would a faculty member go about acquiring the rights over each publication? Vision explained that just by virtue of being on the faculty after the resolution is passed, the rights specified would apply to all that you subsequently publish should you choose to exercise them, e.g. by depositing a manuscript in the repository.
- How does the university get a copy of the article, or even find out that the article exists? Vision noted that annual reporting is the only time we really "tell" our departments or the university that publication has happened, and this could be a time when this would occur. McGowan expressed concern that getting this information out of the reporting system might be technically difficult. Another worry to address is that this could be seen as a burden and lead to faculty pushback.

Natural and Allied Health Sciences:

- One lesson learned is that this is well trodden ground, and we have the opportunity to look at what policies other institutions have rather than creating one from scratch.
- Another lesson is that these policies are not only about open access, but about authors retaining the rights to re-use their own work. Authors inadvertently give away rights they don't want to give away and we would do well to raise awareness of that. The question for the policy is how best to craft the rights-retention language. Question about how to reduce the burden on scholars who are already publishing in open access journals -- that's an issue in our group as well as in the professional schools.
- Much infrastructure already exists in the biomedical & natural sciences for open access through journals, funder-mandated repositories, and preprint archives (e.g. PLoS, PubMedCentral, and arXiv, respectively). In NIH-funded fields, an institutional repository is largely superfluous, and an institutional policy would not be disruptive. Vision noted, however, that the rights retained could differ from those reserved by NIH through PubMed Central. For OA journals, funders can pay fees that cover peer review, again making a repository superfluous for dissemination. In implementation of this policy, how can we take advantage of the infrastructure and business models already in place to avoid unnecessary burden on those already publishing open access?

Humanities & Fine Arts:

- A key take-home message from the expert forum was that you as a faculty member are systematically reserving rights for later use and your university is backing you up. That may be somewhat separable from using a repository to make your work available for dissemination in the future.
- How to avoid damaging the sustainability of nonprofit and scholarly society publishers? If readers do not need to purchase subscriptions, what would be the business plan for continuing to support the costs of peer review?

- The idea was raised of allowing opt-out only for materials that are put in non-profit journals (or opt-in if they aren't). Concerns about trying to make distinctions between desired/undesired publishers were raised, and the complications of publishing relationships between nonprofit societies and commercial publishers.
- How to handle embedded copyrighted materials within a text that has been made open access? Is there an expectation that someone would negotiate/pay for rights to those materials and if so who?
- How to make sure the opt-out clause is robust?
- For survey, there is a desire to find out from humanities and fine arts faculty about their needs, expectations, and their publishing contexts and situations, in order understand whether/how their needs regarding the policy might differ from other disciplines.
- Should this be a Chapel Hill only or a UNC system-wide policy? How can we at least anticipate a system-wide effort? (The library group voiced agreement, noting the costs of separate vs combined infrastructure)
- Noted that it would be good to include in the report the reasons for open access, why people really want this and why they think it is good -- everything from use of public funds for research to predatory journals to whatever else -- the reasons vary.
- For the survey, try to determine those factors that affect whether someone likes or dislikes the policy, what are their fears, and what sorts of language would be useful to allay those fears.
- Would like to learn more about models in which universities pay directly for the costs of refereeing currently managed by scholarly journals. Others expressed concerns about the feasibility of this idea.

Professional Schools:

- Noted the small percentage of faculty participation in OA and questioned how this could be improved. Discussed the need for ease of implementation and incentives.
- Echoed point of Natural and Allied Health Sciences that many faculty already publish some works in open access venues. Can these can be harvested without requiring faculty effort?
- Further questions about costs, benefits, and the business plan for "green" open access. Noted that this is related to the university's business model.
- How does having the leverage of a university policy work/help for individual faculty members?
- A number of university presses are disseminating works freely online after an embargo period, allowing the press to recoup costs with initial sales. How will presses that are already doing this respond to a requirement from a university that something be deposited at point of publication? Vision noted that immediate deposit does not necessarily require immediate availability, and there are choices in how embargoes can be implemented. Which raises the question as to how best to implement such embargoes (Shearer suggests considering CDL as a model).

Library/Administrative:

- Noted that open access does not “rock the boat” for them. Noted the need for communicating to people to relax. It won’t be a huge change, anyone can opt-out, can publish where you were already planning, etc.
- Reiterated that the goal of rights retention by author, supported by the university, was a key takeaway from the expert forum.
- Noted that the change for individual faculty may not be great, but possibility exists for affecting publishers, in the broad sense, and faculty relationships with publishers. For some these are valued relationships while for other they are fraught.

Additional Questions for Research and Survey:

- How many people on this campus are already depositing in open access databases or publishing in open access publications?
- How do faculty prefer that we communicate with them? Town hall on these issues, online, email, or other?
- What would be the efficacy of doing a survey before there is a document to distribute, given widely varied levels of understanding of what open access is or what it means? The idea was raised that instead we survey once a policy draft is available.
- How do successful programs fund and resource this OA policy and repository service?

Writing Committee

Volunteers for the writing committee were solicited. The writing committee will consist of Caren, Gilliland, Hemminger, Singleton, and Watson, with co-chairs Kimbrough and Vision. Martin Caver, grad RA in OFG who will help with research and survey prep over the summer.

In closing, Vision urged the group to use the email list (openaccess@sakai.unc.edu) to exchange ideas and information outside of the task force meetings. He also urged TF members to speak with colleagues at UNC in their discipline, professional societies, and journals, and share those responses with us. This would help inform the report, and will inform a planned appendix that would provide the individual perspective from each discipline.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes drafted by Whisnant and Caver, revised by Vision.