

***UT Scholarly Communications Committee
Meeting Notes, April 25, 2006***

Present: Linda Behrend, Ron Gilmour, Linda Phillips (recorder), Kurt Piehler, Jane Row, Molly Royse, Keith Stanga

1. Scholarly Publishing Resolution

The Committee reviewed the resolution that will come before the Faculty Senate on May 1. References to “open access” in earlier drafts raised many questions about its meaning. The Library Committee rewrote the resolution more in the style of the one adopted by UC Berkeley, and substituted more general terms for open access. The resolution advocates campus support for the judgment of creative and scholarly work on the basis of individual quality and scholarly content; supports the library’s efforts to provide appropriate increased access to research and educational resources; asks the UT administration to provide appropriate incentives and tools for faculty to establish alternative scholarly outlets and to participate in such ventures; and affirms that those involved in the process of academic review will not discriminate against non-traditional peer-reviewed venues for scholarly communication.

2. Open Access Definition

A logical next step for the Scholarly Communications Committee is to define “open access.” Points to be covered in a definition include:

- What is open access?
- How is peer-review connected to open access resources?
- Open access content has the potential to replace portions of scholarly publishing now in the commercial sector.
- Collaboration among universities in pursuing open access is essential.
- Important benefits of open access include wide availability of content and speed in dissemination.
- Current economic models for scholarly communications are not sustainable.

Collection Development Librarian, Linda Behrend, will prepare a definition for future discussion.

3. Scholarly Communication Initiatives at other Universities

Linda distributed a list of goals and programs at other research universities as examples of ways to advance campus awareness of the changing culture for scholarly publishing. The Committee noted that the following might apply to UT:

“We are poised to move from education to advocacy. We must create a sustainable program and structure for our scholarly communication efforts. We have to move from individual events (symposia, meetings) to ongoing engagement with our faculty. Specifically, we expect to: a) Create a sustainable Scholarly Communication program that engages more than a handful of staff in the library; b) Approach the faculty one-on-one and in groups to discuss the issues and make them understand how their actions impact the scholarly communication cycle/process; and c) Learn more about new publishing models and digital repositories and how we can create and promote local initiatives so that there is buy-in outside the library.”

Recognizing that the scholarly publishing culture is complex, that these are long-term goals, and that progress will be slow, the campus plan for UT should include measurable action items that can be accomplished. For example, UT might offer annual awards in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences for high-quality peer reviewed publications by faculty members or students in non-traditional venues. A scholarly communications program plan should include a focus on Newfound Press, the library’s digital publishing demonstration project.

4. Membership Rotation

Those present agreed that it will be beneficial for the campus if the Committee changes membership every couple of years. Among those for special consideration are newly tenured faculty, the next generation of scholars. Representation from UT Press and PhD students may be helpful. Senior faculty who have responsibility for evaluating colleagues for tenure and promotion should also be aware of the changing scholarly communications environment. The group recommended asking the current members if they wish to continue service, and to nominate others who may be interested in participating.