

***UT Scholarly Communications Committee
Meeting Notes
November 14, 2007***

Present: Micah Beck, Teresa Berry, Marie Garrett, Susan Martin (co-chair), Carol Parker, Linda Phillips (co-chair and recorder), Jane Row, Jennifer Siler, Jay Whelan

Discussion focused on scholarly publishing. Documents previously distributed included:

Brown, Laura, Rebecca Griffiths, and Matthew Rascoff (preface by Kevin Guthrie). *University Publishing in a Digital Age*. New York: Ithaka, 2007. (<http://www.ithaka.org/strategic-services/university-publishing>). Brief version included in *ARL Bimonthly Report 252/253* at: <http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/arl-br-252-253-intro.pdf>.

Guédon, Jean-Claude. *In Oldenburg's Long Shadow: Librarians, Research Scientists, Publishers, and the Control of Scientific Publishing*. Washington, D.C.: Association of Research Libraries, 2001. (<http://www.arl.org/resources/pubs/mmproceedings/138guedon.shtml>). Brief version at: (<http://www.arl.org/resources/pubs/br/br218/br218guedon.shtml>).

UT Press Director, Jennifer Siler, introduced *University Publishing in a Digital Age*, noting that one of the authors was formerly director of Oxford University Press. The report was compiled from surveys of university press directors and interviews with press directors, librarians, provosts and other university administrators. While the study initially focused on university presses and their role in scholarly publishing, it evolved into an assessment of the importance of publishing to universities.

The authors discuss the impact of technology on scholars and publishing by university presses, observing that scholars are advancing while presses are falling behind. Increasing disconnection of the press from the university mission, a struggle to make the transition to electronic publications, and the lack of resources and capabilities are caused, in part, by limited budgets, image, little or no technology staff, and general lack of campus support. Collaboration among libraries, presses, and academic computing centers can enable universities to refocus their publishing program on the strengths of the university. Increased attention should be given to publishing works in areas of faculty research. One strategy to achieve this vision is for the university to invest in a technology platform that stimulates innovation towards a university-based, mission-driven publishing agenda.

The Committee talked about ways that universities could become more actively involved in publishing local scholarship, citing increased investment in the university press, as well as experimentation with the library's digital press. An

area of potential collaboration between the library and the press is publishing on demand. The Newfound Press Editorial Board has a particular interest in publishing multimedia works; demonstration of new ways to present and provide access to scholarship could increase opportunities for the UT Press. The group discussed the potential impact of doubling resources allocated to the Press, as well as alternative financial models for local scholarly publishing. With a \$1.5 million operating budget the Press could afford to go all electronic. Participants agreed that collaboration between the press and the library would be valuable when projects draw on the unique skills and assets of the staff.

Actions recommended for universities by the report include:

- take a more active role in publishing
- develop effective strategies for scholarly communications
- create organizational structures necessary to implement these strategies
- create models that scale/collaboration across universities
- develop online publishing capacity
- invest capital strategically
- provide leadership

The report also offered recommendations for press directors, including:

- tell a compelling story by clarifying the role of the press and being persuasive to the academic community
- create a strategic plan
- realign with the university
- refocus the publishing program on campus priorities
- reframe conversations with development offices so that a publishing component is included in development campaigns
- collaborate with libraries to co-develop tools and programs

Committee members recognize that the mandate for the press to be self-supporting may not be a financial model compatible with the Ithaka report recommendations. Jennifer announced that she will retire in January 2008 and that a search has begun for a new UT Press director.