

**UT Scholarly Communication Committee**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**September 22, 2009**

Present: Gladys Alexandre-Jouline, Micah Beck, Eric Boder, Stephanie Bohon, Wayne Clatterbuck, Scot Danforth (Director of UT Press, guest), Bob Daverman, Barbara Dewey (Dean of Libraries, guest), Patrick Dunn, Mike Guidry, Rob Hardin, Sarah Gardial (co-chair), Marie Garrett (recorder), Mary Jane Moran, Ken Phillips, Linda Phillips (co-chair), Gary Pulsinelli, Greg Reed, Anne Smith, Ann Viera

***Introductions, Updates***

Sarah Gardial welcomed the group, noting that today's discussion is focused on ways the campus can get the best value for resources invested in publishing. The Committee can help the campus be well-positioned to have in-depth discussions about publishing investments. With changes in organizational structure to strengthen campus administration, the Scholarly Communication Committee now reports to Provost Susan Martin. Dr. Cheek, who was planning to participate in today's discussion until unexpectedly called out of town, is devoting as much time as possible to external issues.

***Scholarly Publishing Needs & Opportunities at the University***

Linda Phillips presented several illustrations of university publishing activities:

- Faculty research and creative work is published in peer-reviewed sources.
- Faculty serve as journal editors, peer reviewers, editorial board members.
- The promotion & tenure process rewards faculty who create high quality work. Many disciplines rely on citation counts and other use reports as one measure of impact.
- The university recently launched an institutional repository (Trace) to collect, showcase, and preserve locally produced scholarship and university creative work.
- Open access publishing (content accessible without charge to anyone using the Web) is consistent with the university's mission and is gaining traction at the university.
- The university publishes promotional and marketing journals, such as *Quest* and *The UT Alumnus*.
- Faculty and staff produce many information resources of value locally and globally.
- Students produce journals—e.g., *The Phoenix*, *Current*, *Undergraduate Research Journal*.
- The University of Tennessee Press was established as a scholarly publisher in 1940 by the University of Tennessee's Board of Trustees. Areas of emphasis include African American studies, southern history, Appalachian studies, material culture, and literary studies. The Press publishes 35-40 new titles each year.
- The University Libraries digital imprint, Newfound Press, demonstrates open access to peer-reviewed, specialized content that merits wide dissemination and preservation, but is unlikely to be published by a traditional press because of narrow focus or innovative format.
- The Press and Libraries are collaborating to provide open access to published content.
- UT staff create art work to accompany faculty publications.
- Faculty spend valuable time seeking permissions to use copyrighted works in their publications; some universities offer staff assistance to do this.
- Faculty and administrators frequently have questions regarding intellectual property rights, including contract negotiation.

- Some universities are creating policies that grant the university permission to “exercise copyrights” in faculty scholarly publications—i.e. to make them available via open access.
- The Office of Research and the University Libraries established and manage the Open Publishing Support Fund to promote open access publishing by paying article fees associated with some open access journals.

UT activities are typical of publishing investments at other research universities.

To a question about the extent to which UT’s Open Publishing Support Fund is being used, Greg Reed reported that not all the money was spent last year: the program is still in its infancy. Twelve requests were approved and half of the articles approved have been published so far. The Office of Research has added funding for FY 10.

Regarding university priorities for publishing, Barbara Dewey observed that there are multiple ways to promote discovery of UT research. Given economics and global communications, materials in digital repositories are more widely accessible than commercial publications where the user pays. Authors who publish in open access sources keep their copyrights, another asset in the information economy.

The group reviewed a recent report, *The University’s Role in the Dissemination of Research and Scholarship—A Call to Action*, (<http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/disseminating-research-feb09.pdf>) which refers to traditional publishing as a high cost/low value model. Because open access content makes scholarly work accessible to the entire world, it has the potential to transform the way the academy thinks about scholarship.

Committee members described publishing issues as seen in their disciplines. Many law faculty place their work in the disciplinary repository, *Social Sciences Research Network (SSRN)* which provides use counts in the item display. *SSRN* data suggests that UT law scholarship is used as often as that produced at Harvard. Law publishing encourages author retention of copyright, and journal costs are generally reasonable.

Princeton University Press is experimenting with making online content of some mathematics journals freely accessible; subscriptions have declined as a result. Disciplinary digital repositories are commonly used among young mathematicians to share scholarship. In mathematics journals are used less to disseminate knowledge, but rather for evaluation and certification of quality. Others agreed that this is also the case in their disciplines.

Universities have traditionally provided a portion of the income base for journal publishing—scholars on university payrolls generally provide peer review and editorial services. Committee members noted the complex economics involved in the unsustainable increases in journal subscription costs. Libraries are responding to preferences of scholars for digital access and can no longer afford to purchase both print and electronic formats.

Agriculture research results published with federal funding are open access. A major goal of authors is for the content to be discoverable. Although a campus digital repository can provide easy access to content, there are costs in the significant technology and human resources required. The university is currently outsourcing the technology platform for

Trace. Shifting the academic expenditures from purchasing subscriptions to supporting open access is a major cultural change and a discussion going on all over the world as scholars balance sustainability and access with authentication and evaluation. Some faculties are asking their university to retain non-exclusive rights to their scholarship to provide leverage for populating digital repositories with open access. Publishers are increasingly willing to give permission for authors to put preprints and postprints in campus repositories and on personal web pages.

Several members of the committee agreed that their colleagues would be willing to consider publishing in open access sources as long as promotion and tenure is not threatened. Leadership of prominent faculty in support of open access is meaningful. When renowned scientists are publishing in open access journals, others feel more comfortable joining in. Impact factors have significance beyond UT promotion and tenure applications. Being competitive for grants publication in well-regarded journals and evidence that publications have impact. The SherpaRomeo website compiles journal policies about depositing content in open access repositories. A win-win approach is to publish in prestigious journals and deposit postprints in campus and disciplinary repositories that make the content visible in a trusted archive. Lists of journals by discipline and their access policies would be helpful for faculty. UT's Management Department recently distributed a list of the top 40 business journals; knowing which permit repository archiving would be helpful to faculty desiring to make their work as visible as possible.

A recommendation to Faculty Senate or other faculty group could seek endorsement for faculty to publish all scholarly work in Trace. Peer review can be managed independently of journal publishing. Peer review adds significant value to the publishing process. However, peer review can be conducted independently of a specific publication. While changes will be gradual, technology supports such a model. Open access and peer review are highly compatible.

In sociology publishers have become less willing to negotiate about open access. While some publishers permit open access for specific articles if the author pays a fee, many are no longer offering that option. The inelastic nature of journal publishing presents an economic problem for scholarly societies and universities. Is the traditional journal publishing model sustainable? UT seeks worldwide visibility for its research results. Fostering such a model could be worth a modest investment from universities.

Professional accrediting agencies are interested in impact as demonstrated by citations and downloads; simply publishing in a journal does not demonstrate impact. The College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences requires several peer reviewed publications as minimum evidence of impact. Faculty are generally unfamiliar with practices across colleges. Further discussion is needed about scholarly and creative work that counts toward promotion and tenure, as well as awareness of new opportunities, such as Trace, for visibility of scholarly work and increased access to it.

How can the Scholarly Communication Committee make faculty colleagues more aware of these issues, so that they can consider their publishing options? Committee members support the creation of a "road show" to stimulate departmental faculty discussion. Because Trace is new, most faculty have not yet heard about it. Members predict faculty are unlikely to take the time to deposit content themselves, although they may favor the concept of making their work more accessible. A "road show" with compelling examples

of new models of scholarship should include the participation of subject librarian partners in the research process and demonstrate how open access can increase impact.

The two themes discussed today require different strategies. One theme is to make the work of UT faculty as visible and accessible as possible. A “road show” beginning with committee member departments is one strategy to increase faculty awareness.

Another theme is to stop paying outrageous prices for journals. As universities can afford fewer journal subscriptions, journals will disappear unless pricing structures change. Journals that are not currently available online should take advantage of opportunities to become digital for survival. To address the economic theme, a survey of university investments in publishing may suggest appropriate strategies. Some considerations include:

- The university subsidizes creation and purchase of digital content.
- UT Press is required to break even.
- Peer reviewers are faculty on university payrolls.
- Universities pay for the name-recognition of journals.
- Spiraling subscription costs over past decades lead to cancellation and possible cessation of journal titles.
- New economic models consider sustainability in paying publication costs and the potential for impact. An emerging model features a shift from on-going subscriptions to one-time payments for open access. Consider expanding the Open Publishing Support Fund to cover OA articles in non-OA journals.

### ***Next Meeting***

For its next meeting the Committee will expand on these topics by creating a presentation (aka road) show to illustrate open access visibility and inspire faculty discussion about evolving scholarly communication trends.

Other issues suggested for committee discussion include:

- Helping faculty feel comfortable negotiating publishing contracts, especially graduate students
- Given that faculty are overwhelmed with responsibilities already and don't have time to negotiate contracts or deposit content in campus repositories, what university support can be provided?
- Discuss ways to change the publishing culture to the advantage of faculty and the university.
- Faculty need to be assured that Trace isn't going to make life harder, that it's beneficial. Show how it will work for them collectively and individually. In Law, the notion of Trace being a supplement rather than a replacement for SSRN is important so that faculty see the benefit of additional visibility for their work.
- Take a more in depth look at impact. Some interesting measures of Trace impact might include who's using the content and how widely distributed use is around the world.

The next meeting agenda will include an outline of a road show which the Committee will help to refine. The goal is to meet with departments of committee members in Spring term. Linda will poll members via Doodle for a November meeting time.