"Open Access Policies at ASERL Institutions"

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Introduction

The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) for the first time commemorated Open Access Week in October 2013 with a live interview[1] with international open access leader Peter Suber[2]. In this webcast, Dr. Suber, author of the definitive guide to open access[3], spoke with me about the current state of open access and its potential to help solve many of the problems currently plaguing the system of disseminating and accessing scholarly research. These problems include rising subscription costs, declining library budgets, disparate access to research, and loss of control over one's own research through one-sided copyright agreements. One of the means advocated by Dr. Suber to address these problems is the adoption of open access policies by academic institutions:

> "Every strong, new policy increases the likelihood of publisher accommodation, and when enough universities and funders have policies, all publishers will have to accommodate them. In that sense, every strong new policy creates some of the conditions of its own success. Every institution adopting a new policy brings about OA for the research it controls and makes the way easier for other institutions behind it....A critical mass is growing and every policy is an implicit invitation to other institutions to gain strength through common purpose and help accelerate publisher adaptation."[4]

Several ASERL member institutions have adopted open access policies.[5] These policies differ in their origins, requirements, and application. However, similar issues and questions arose for those involved in the drafting and promotion of the policies, and their collective experience is instructive to other institutions contemplating adoption of an open access policy.[6]

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[1] To view the recording of the interview, please visit http://bit.ly/GJz1mN.

[2] For more about Peter Suber, visit his home page at http://bit.ly/petersuber.

[3] Peter Suber. Open Access. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA 2012. The book is available open access in a variety of formats at http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/open-access. Additional updates and supplements to the text can be found at http://bit.ly/oa-book.

[4] *Id*. 94-95.

[5] For this article, I interviewed persons at the University of Central Florida, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Florida State University, Emory University, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Duke University. Where relevant, I have also included information from the University of Florida, where an open access policy draft is currently under consideration.

[6] For more information on drafting institutional open access policies, please see "Good Practices for University Open-Access Policies" at http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/hoap/Good_practices_for_university_open-access_policies. This guide was written and is maintained by Dr. Suber and Stuart Shieber for the Harvard Open Access Project.

Policy Formation

For many institutions that have adopted open access policies[7], the idea first formed within the institution's library. For some ASERL members, this was also true. For example, at the University of Central Florida, the idea of an open access policy was raised before that University's Faculty Senate by the library's collection development manager and this presentation served as the impetus behind a larger conversation that led to passage of a resolution supporting open access publishing. Similarly, at Florida State University, a research librarian and an e-science librarian raised the issue of open access with the Faculty Senate's Library Committee, which led to the charging of a task force to undertake the drafting and presentation of an open access policy to the larger Faculty Senate. In some institutions, the idea for a policy begins with a governance body charged with advising the institution's library. At Emory University, the idea for an institutional open access policy grew out of discussions the University's Senate Committee on Library Policy had on scholarly communications issues. Similarly, at the University of Florida, the Faculty Senate's University Libraries Committee took on responsibility for drafting an open access policy for consideration by the full Faculty Senate.

Other times the idea for a policy begins with faculty or a faculty group that is external to the institution's library. At Georgia Institute of Technology, a faculty member from the College of Computing brought the issue of open access to the forefront by facilitating presentations and town hall meetings where open access and the possibility of an institutional policy was discussed. At Duke University, the idea of an open access policy arose in conversations among the Digital Futures Task Force, a group appointed by the University's Provost after the University was awarded a Mellon Grant to develop strategies and infrastructure to support new models of digital information use, management, dissemination, and preservation. Dr. Suber strongly favors faculty-led initiatives. As he and his Harvard colleague Stuart Shieber instruct in the "Good Practices for University Open-Access Policies," the persons leading the campaign for an open access policy should be faculty, with support from librarians: "If the idea and initial momentum came from librarians or administrators, they should find faculty members willing to lead the effort. Because the policy will apply to faculty more than others, it should be a faculty initiative and should be perceived to be a faculty initiative. Otherwise, many faculty will suspect or object that they are being coerced."[8]

Concerns Raised by Faculty

It is clear that faculty awareness and buy-in are keys to successful adoption and implementation of institutional open access policies. Education and consensus building takes place through formal and informal conversations at department and college level meetings,

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[7] For a list of United States institutions that have adopted an open access policy, see the ROARMAP listing at http://roarmap.eprints.org/view/geoname/geoname=5F2=5FUS.html.

[8] See Adopting a Policy in the "Good Practices for University Open-Access Policies" http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/hoap/Adopting_a_policy

facilitated town halls, and more indirect forms of communication such as FAQs. These conversations give faculty and others affected by the policy opportunity to raise concerns about policy adoption and implementation. Dr. Suber identified many of these common concerns in the "Good Practices for University Open-Access Policies."[9] ASERL schools also encountered many of these same concerns in the conversations taking place on their campuses with respect to open access policies. ASERL members I spoke to frequently indicated that faculty expressed confusion about what open access was and what an open access policy required. Faculty equated an open access policy with a mandate to publish only in open access journals to the exclusion of all other publications. This misunderstanding requires an explanation to faculty of the difference between "green" and "gold" open access and a reassurance that faculty may publish in the journal of their choice with, depending on the policy's terms, a reservation of the right to archive a version of their articles in an open access repository.

Faculty at ASERL institutions also raised questions about the label assigned to the policy document. Many objected to referring to the policy as a "mandate." Even though the policies adopted at ASERL institutions essentially allow for voluntary participation by their terms or through provision of a waiver, faculty view the terms "mandate" or "mandatory" as hostile and an affront to academic freedom. Dr. Suber addresses this issue in his book, stating: "Unfortunately, we don't have a good vocabulary for policies that use mandatory language while deferring to third-person dissents or first-person opt-outs....The word "mandate" is not a very good fit for policies like this, but neither is any other English word." [10] Language was also raised as an issue in reference to the description of the version of an article to be deposited in a repository. Faculty at ASERL institutions reported unfamiliarity with the meanings of the terms "preprint" and "postprint." This confusion highlights the importance of addressing in pre-adoption conversations and in any accompanying documentation not only the distinction between a "preprint" and a "postprint" but also the role of peer review in open access scholarship. Although the preference for open access policies is to request deposit of postprints (the final peer-reviewed manuscript prior to publication), some open access policies and repositories focus on "preprints" (the manuscript version prior to peer review). It is important to distinguish for faculty that open access built on preprints is not a means of bypassing quality measures but rather is a means of making work available more quickly, thereby "creating new and earlier opportunities for citation, discussion, verification, and collaboration."[11] As Dr. Suber aptly notes, open access is "a kind of access, not a kind of editorial policy."[12]

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[9] See Talking About a Policy in the "Good Practices for University Open-Access Policies" http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/hoap/Talking_about_a_policy
[10] Suber, Open Access, 87-88.
[11] Id. at 102.
[12] Id. at 103.

Another common concern expressed by faculty at ASERL institutions is the belief that implementation of an open access policy will create a burden upon faculty. There is the perception that compliance with the terms of an open access policy will require a great amount of work. Some ASERL institutions have addressed this concern by developing workflows within the libraries to perform much of the work for faculty. For example, at Georgia Institute of Technology the library has utilized Drupal to create a form where faculty can upload their PDFs and have them loaded by the library into the institutional repository, SMARTech.[13] At Duke University, library staff have been involved in searching for citations and mediating deposit of articles when no conflict with published version appears. As a result of this direct assistance, Duke faculty have responded by locating additional materials to deposit into the repository.

Policy Implementation
In his book Open Access, Dr. Suber identifies four types of open access policies: encouragement policies, loophole mandates, deposit mandates, and rights-retention mandates.[14] ASERL institutions interviewed for this article have adopted policies representing three of these four types.

- The University of North Carolina at Greensboro[15], Florida State University[16] and University of Central Florida[17] have adopted encouragement policies. This type of policy is a resolution encouraging faculty to make their work available open access when it is feasible to do so. There is no grant of license to the institution nor other mandate or requirement to deposit one's work in an open access repository.
- Emory University[18] adopted a policy that is a deposit mandate. The Emory deposit mandate grants the University permission to deposit in its repository articles that are voluntarily published open access; however, for all other articles, the policy allows faculty to embargo access to the works where the copyright agreement with the publisher would not permit access.
- Both Duke University and Georgia Institute of Technology adopted rights-retention mandates. Through rights-retention mandates, the institutions are granted a nonexclusive license to deposit their faculty's works into the institutions' repositories, usually with a waiver provision which allows faculty to opt-out of participation. The policies at Duke and

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[13] https://smartech.gatech.edu/

[14] Suber, Open Access 78-81.

[15] University of North Carolina at Greensboro Open-Access Policy for Library Faculty
http://library.uncg.edu/services/scholarly_communication/open_access_policy.aspx

[16] Florida State University Open Access Resolution
http://guides.lib.fsu.edu/content.php?pid=228434&sid=1889920

[17] University of Central Florida Faculty Senate Resolution on Library Scholarly Literature
http://www.facultysenate.ucf.edu/resolutions/2004-2005/index.asp

[18] Emory University Open Access Policy
http://guides.main.library.emory.edu/content.php?pid=43389&sid=2144393

Georgia Tech both include waivers, and both have attempted to make waivers easy to attain. At Georgia Tech, for example, a request of a waiver through a simple form is all that is needed.

Next Steps

Adoption of open access policies is usually not the last step for institutions wanting to implement open access campuswide. Continued education about the benefits of open access and refinement of procedures to facilitate deposit of works into repositories are a couple of the activities that may occur once an open access policy has been adopted. ASERL members that have adopted open access policies are also engaged in further activities.

- At the University of Central Florida and Florida State University, activities are underway to revisit the issue of open access in their respective faculty governance bodies with the goal of moving from a resolution encouraging open access to a more formal policy, whether it is a deposit mandate or a rights-retention policy.
- The University of Central Florida will also be taking steps to develop an institutional repository, which will be a prerequisite to adoption of any policy requiring deposit of faculty works.
- The policy at University of North Carolina at Greensboro current applies only to library faculty and the next step is to move toward a resolution that is applicable to the greater faculty body of the University.
- Duke University is working to integrate compliance with the open access policy into the University's faculty reporting system. Duke recently launched a faculty reporting system called "Elements." Within that system, faculty will be allowed to upload their articles with a single click, and they will also have access to data from SHERPA/RoMEO[19] about the deposit policies of individual journals, which will assist them with determining what article version they are permitted to archive in the university's repository.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of his discussion of institutional open access policies, Dr. Suber asserts that in the arena of open access, universities have the opportunity to be leaders rather than followers by adopting open access policies.[20] Several ASERL institutions have established themselves as leaders by adopting policies that exemplify best practices for adoption and implementation of open access policies. Their experiences and available expertise can instruct other institutions within ASERL and beyond on how to open up a dialogue on their campuses about open access and progress toward adoption of a formal open access policy. As quoted above, "[e]very institution adopting a new policy brings about OA for the research it controls and makes the way easier for other institutions behind it." As more institutions educate their members about

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[19] http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/
[20] Suber, Open Access at 95.

the benefits of open access and facilitate, through policies and supportive mechanisms the opening up of scholarship to others, publishers will adapt to make research more open and accessible and the weaknesses in the current system of scholarly communication will be strengthened.