

Open Access Discussion Points

This was developed as background information for the discussion on December 7, 2009 in the Academic Senate on Open Access by Sarah L. Shreeves, Associate Professor, University Library.

What is Open Access?

Open access literature is that which is “digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. What makes it possible is the internet and the consent of the author or copyright-holder.” (Peter Suber, *A Very Brief Introduction to Open Access*, <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/brief.htm>) Most conversations around open access focus on journal articles but it can refer to all types of published and unpublished research and research data.

Peter Suber provides an excellent and very complete overview of open access here:

<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm>

Why Open Access?

There are a number of reasons why researchers, funders, and institutions have promoted open access, including:

- **Research that is openly available tends to have a greater impact than that behind paywalls** (see <http://opcit.eprints.org/oacitation-biblio.html>)
- **The flow of information and scholarly knowledge is hampered by paywalls.** This is especially true for institutions that cannot afford access or to participate in interlibrary borrowing programs.
- **Research that is federally funded by taxpayer dollars should be openly available** (also referred to as *public access*).
- **Institutions and funders invest heavily in the production of research and scholarship.** The current scholarly communications system requires institutions to buy that research back—often at hefty prices. Open access publishing can put pressure on the players to reexamine prevalent business models.

How is Open Access to Research Achieved?

Open access to research articles can be achieved through two main means:

- **Publication in a journal that provides open access from the outset.** A list of open access journals is maintained at the Directory of Open Access Journals at: <http://www.doaj.org/>. Open access journals are supported through a variety of means including institutional support, author pays models, and others. See <http://www.arl.org/sparc/publisher/incomemodels/> for more information on business models.
- **Publication in a subscription access journal and deposit of the article (generally the final manuscript) into an open access repository.** IDEALS (<http://www.ideals.illinois.edu/>) is the Illinois repository, but others include discipline based repositories (arXiv and SSRN) and funder supported repositories (PubMedCentral). In order for deposit to be possible, the author must negotiate the right to do so with the publisher. Many publishers allow this as a matter of course; you can find publisher policies here: <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/>

Recent Developments in Open Access

Funder policies:

- An increasing number of funders, particularly in Europe and the UK, are requiring that grantees make their research results openly available. See <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/juliet/>
- In 2008 the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) established a Public Access policy to ensure that the public has access to the published results of NIH-funded research. NIH-funded research must be made available in PubMed Central after a 12 month embargo.
- Currently there is a bill in Congress called the Federal Research Public Access Act (S1373) that will require that agencies that fund more than a \$100 million in research provide open access to that research after a six month embargo. This has been supported by 41 Nobel Prize winning scientists.
- The National Science Foundation is currently funding a project to examine establishing an open access repository for NSF funded research.

Institutional policies:

- An increasing number of institutions worldwide – most at the prompting of their faculty – have policies that journal articles be made openly available via their digital repositories, like IDEALS. Generally, the institution establishes a policy that gives the institution non-exclusive rights to make available and distribute the work.
- U.S. institutions that have established such policies are: Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Graduate College of Education, School of Government, and Harvard Law School; MIT; University of Kansas; Stanford School of Education; Oberlin College; and Trinity University.
- A resolution in support of open access was proposed at the University of Maryland but failed. See <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/crlnews/2009/oct/pyrrhicvict.cfm>.
- The Compact for Open Access Publishing Equity (COPE) formed in the fall of 2009 to commit to the "establishment of durable mechanisms for underwriting reasonable publication fees for open-access journal articles." Signatories include Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, MIT, and UC Berkeley. See <http://www.oacompact.org/>.

What Illinois is Doing Around Open Access

- 2001 to date: The University Library has maintained a newsletter and then a blog to communicate about scholarly communication.
- March 2003: The Faculty Senate approved a resolution that endorsed the Tempe Principles which urged increased use of electronic capabilities for scholarly communication to improve access.
- July 2006: Provost Katehi joins 25 provosts in support of FRPAA (explained above).
- Fall 2006: The University Library in collaboration with CITES opens IDEALS, the digital repository for research and scholarship through the support of the Office of the Provost. IDEALS currently has about 13,000 items and over a million downloads and can be found at <http://www.ideals.illinois.edu/>.
- April 2007: The Faculty Senate endorsed the CIC Provosts' Statement on Publication Agreements that urges faculty to retain need rights on their intellectual work when publishing. See <http://senate.illinois.edu/lb0701.pdf>
- Winter 2009-2010: The University Library is participating in the CIC Environmental Scan to better understand the scholarly communication environment in the disciplines represented on our campus and on the campus itself.