

Minutes for Senate Library Committee
Meeting of October 15, 2020
4:00 PM to 5:00 PM
via Zoom

In Attendance: Mark Lynn Anderson, Jeff Aziz, Sharon Blake, Carrie Donovan, Barbara Epstein, Jonah McAllister-Erickson, Kathryn Gardner, Zach Horton, Clark Muenzer, April O'Neil, Mary Rauktis, Lucy Russell, Ken Salzer, Leah Santorine, and Kornelia Tancheva.

1. Unanimous approval of Committee Minutes for meeting of April 23, 2020 as submitted by Anderson.
2. Anderson announced that pro-tem member and co-chair Donovan will be serving out the last year of Aurea Sotomayor's term on the Committee.
3. Continuing discussion of the Senate Library Committee's further promotion of Open Access at the University began with Anderson suggesting three large areas where both OA and DEI¹ considerations intersect: issues related to *publishing*, including journal prestige, indexing, peer review, citation practices and reference support; issues related to *information management*, including cataloging, finding aids, and algorithms; and issues related to *infrastructures*, including library spaces and architecture, public art, and library personnel.

The question came up of the relation between OA and the University's current updating of IP policy. McAllister-Erickson expressed concerns over linking the two or pursuing them in tandem, as faculty perceptions and concerns over licensing IP could easily complicate the reception of OA practices and policy. Anderson mentioned that the Office of Research had already just obtained a majority vote for the new IP policy in the Faculty Assembly, and so if the SLC were to pursue further OA development through the Faculty Assembly, it would no longer be in direct relation to the University's formal IP policy, though IP remains a tricky issue for faculty with respect OA appreciation. McAllister-Erickson also suggested the possibility of starting by thinking through more concrete OA concerns regarding the digital divide, subscriptions, and computer access.

Muenzer mentioned how OA doesn't wrest copyright from authors, and said he'd like to see the issue of money included in any consideration of OA, particularly since a modality of OA is to encourage the production of open access research. Issues of continuing financial support of ongoing projects are important, and Muenzer mentioned the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* as an example.

Silverman explained that the situation at the Law School is quite different since it publishes its own journals, with most faculty uploading their work to SSRN (formerly known as Social Science Research Network). He did observe that non-participation in OA occurs with some publications such as textbooks.

¹ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Tancheva acknowledged Muenzer's points about the importance of money and pointed out that strongly recommending the use of the institutional repository is the easiest and most cost-effective means of promoting OA at present. She then mentioned how University strategic planning (Plan for Pitt 2025) should continue to support open science and open access publishing, with solicitation of community comments (including the surrounding local community). Rauktis asked about local community access to the databases and subscriptions of Pitt libraries. Tancheva explained that the community has full access to all information on-site but not via remote access.

Epstein discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic has created a somewhat exceptional situation with many high-level publishers making research freely available with preprints increasing rapidly. With respect to community engagement, she mentioned that HSLs receives National Library of Medicine funding for community programs that foster digital literacy and health literacy for underrepresented groups. Epstein also noted that the Centers for Disease Control has pronounced racism itself to be a continuing health crisis. Additionally, she mentioned *citizen science* as a democratizing initiative of knowledge production designed to promote greater community participation in science and medicine.

Epstein related an occasion of a faculty author who came to HSLs asking how one might purchase a journal to enhance the prestige of his scholarly society. This author published a journal as OA for a time, but now that title is published for twice the cost by Elsevier. Donovan inquired rather anyone had talked to University donors about endowing journals. Tancheva mentioned that a unsuccessful proposal was submitted seeking such support from foundation funding through University development offices. Anderson wondered if it were possible to seek support for Black authors. McAllister-Erickson found such an idea interesting with funding to support Black authors having OA as part of that coverage.

McAllister-Erickson also cited the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as the best example of a mandated requirement to publish OA. Tancheva returned to the problem of prevalent worries about IP and OA, stressing that authors can still opt out of a universal mandate and that the force of such a mandate was ethical rather than contractual. Epstein added that it's important to include *open data* in discussions of repository policies. Muenzer noted that the situation in the humanities is different with respect to monographs, single-author publishing, and journals with faculty invested in maintaining professional control over their research. Tancheva maintained that the situation isn't really different for the humanities since authors retain their rights in repository publishing; instead, it's mostly a matter of faculty education. Muenzer responded that textbooks are sometimes modest sources of income for humanities faculty. Silverman remarked that in law the textbook is often a major source of income, but he pointed to Harvard as a leader in the OA publishing of textbooks.

Donovan brought up a question of campus safety within library spaces as an issue to consider with respect to access since making a safe environment available to all users and library personnel affects access. Epstein asked for clarification, and Donovan supplied the example of a current lost-and-found policy that requires campus police to be summoned to retrieve last articles. Such a routine request for law-enforcement presence in the library may not make

everyone feel safe. Muenzer claimed that libraries were soft targets for criminal acts and that security was a real issue. Tancheva questioned whether security was an appropriate subject for the SLC to consider. Silverman related that security is something that Barco librarians think about all the time, noting the need to hire security guards to resolve recurring issues.

Tancheva suggested that we might proceed with our work by looking at OA policies of peer institutions, and Epstein added that it's important to find out how well those policies have been working.

Meeting ended at 5:04 PM

Minutes compiled and submitted by Mark Lynn Anderson
Approved in Committee, November 19, 2020