

Minutes of the Senate Library Committee
Meeting of February 18, 2021
3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

In Attendance: Mark Lynn Anderson, Jeff Aziz, Lauren Collister, Barbara Epstein, Jonah McAllister-Erickson, Clark Muenzer, April O'Neil, Mary Rautkis, and Marc Silverman.

Excused: Reid Andrews, Carrie Donovan, Seungil Kim, Lucy Russell, Ken Salzer, and Kornelia Tancheva.

1. Approval of corrected minutes from January 21, 2020 meeting of the SLC.
2. Anderson reminded the Committee of the approaching election season for the Faculty Senate, and encouraged members to seek out faculty colleagues who might be interested in the work of the Senate Library Committee (or other standing committees).
3. Anderson returned the Committee's ongoing consideration of how best to understand and promote Open Access (OA) in relation to social justice and anti-racism. He summarized that the Committee had approached the question in three broad areas: institutional policy, grants and internal funding, and professional development. He mentioned the recently instituted OA policy at Virginia Tech,* news of which Tancheva had shared with the Committee, and he indicated that while the Committee had bracketed OA policy as an effective means of promoting OA at the University at this time, the question was not off the table. He also pointed out the Virginia Tech policy explicitly tied OA to intellectual property, precisely one of the difficulties identified by the Committee as complicating OA promotion here, given the recent turbulence in the Faculty Assembly and elsewhere over IP policy.

Silverman added that he had found the Virginia Tech policy somewhat confusing since it contains the usual language about the institution's nonexclusive copyright on faculty scholarship but goes on to *grant the author a distribution license* for the same work, as if the author requires the institution to provide such rights. Members of the committee agreed that this was the sort of language that would aggravate faculty suspicions about motives.

Anderson said that there had been support on the Committee to pursue some sort of funding for Black researchers who are pursuing open-source scholarship and wondered how we might conceive of such funding and secure it. Epstein added that professional development is also an important consideration and that asking for funding for junior faculty and graduate students might be helpful. She also raised the difficulty of defining and specifying identities effectively in terms of blackness, BIPOC, etc. Anderson pointed out that the University has often rolled out identity-based initiatives such as the current anti-racist directive from the Faculty Senate with which the Committee is currently working; he also mentioned the University-wide solicitation

* The Virginia Tech policy reads: "*For Scholarly Articles: Authors grant to the university a nonexclusive license to copyright in their scholarly articles in order to provide open access (free, public, online access) to them via the university repository. An author may waive the license for a particular article or delay access for a specified period of time. Authors deposit in the university repository an electronic copy of their unformatted, post peer-review, accepted manuscript for each scholarly article within one month after the date of its publication. Upon deposit of accepted manuscripts into the university repository, the university grants authors a nonexclusive license to share accepted manuscripts elsewhere.*"

from the Provost's Office for requests to hire within a cohort of fifty faculty members over the next four years whose work, in some unspecified way, relates to racial justice.[†] Anderson maintained that the University currently seems poised to entertain requests for identity-based anti-racist projects.

McAllister-Erickson pointed out that we can leave out the details of any requests we might make, using a place-holder such as “minoritized scholar” or something similar. With respect to career development, he mentioned the ULS author-fee fund targeting junior faculty and graduate students, and he discussed how multiple-authored works that included an early-career scholar were also eligible for funding under this model. Collister said that we need to determine how much funding we might ask for to help us achieve our aims. Epstein wondered if asking for evidence of disadvantage would help in targeting the funding; Collister replied that such determinations are very difficult to make and adjudicate. Epstein also suggested that we might think about measuring outcomes that encourage open access across the University. Collister noted that the realization of such larger outcomes is where encouragement and promotion come into play, and Epstein agreed.

A short discussion followed regarding support for rewarding early-career scholars for work done outside of traditional venues or pursuing unconventional projects that supported and/or made use of open source technologies, platforms, or formats, or that contributed some way to OA culture. Anderson indirectly referenced the current hearings in the U. S. Congress on reparations in order to raise the concept of “reparative” as a way of thinking about our request. Muenzer suggested that rather than thinking about reparations, the Committee might leverage its request as a recruitment tool attractive to minority scholars. Rautkis pointed to the University's current Latinx cluster hire and how the person Social Work is seeking to hire will likely perform advocacy work and thus not participate in the traditional forums of scholarship. She said that the commitment to helping the cluster hires succeed in the academy is simultaneously an attempt to diversify the student body.

Epstein emphasized that such funding should be *new* funding and not come from existing library budgets. Silverman brought up the need to build-in some form of assessment where, once funding is secured, effective outcomes can be demonstrated. Collister noted that the Office of the Provost is already supportive and convinced of open access, mentioning its strong backing of the Open Educational Resource grant program that has issued approximately thirty grants since 2018.

Epstein maintained that there's a need to demonstrate that such funding helps not just the scholar but larger scholarly communities. Muenzer wondered if it might be useful to consider where the money should be directed, toward what types of research rather than specified researchers, asking whether such a strategy would capture the people the Committee is seeking to support. Anderson replied that he understood the logic of such an approach but didn't know how the two could be necessarily or effectively connected. Muenzer agreed that the connection is difficult.

[†] The vision statement of the **Race and Social Determinants of Equity and Well-being Cluster Hire and Retention Initiative** reads: “Initiative is to successfully identify, recruit, hire, retain and promote 50 or more faculty, across Pitt's campuses, schools, disciplines and departments. These faculty will work with, and build upon, the expertise of existing Pitt faculty to conduct research, educate students and engage in service designed to eliminate racial disparities in the social determinants of equity and to improve measures of well-being in the Pittsburgh region, nationally and across the globe.”

Collister noted that increases in citations and reuse have been a demonstrated boost to OA and that building-in a careful tracking instrument would be a new advantage. Epstein returned the committee to thinking about *depositing* as a crucial OA practice rather than publishing in OA journals. Collister agreed and said there are other things to fund besides APCs, digitization for instance. Collister concluded that whatever sort of funding we seek to establish, if the support hinges on making scholars' or artists' work OA, then they might also come to consider and appreciate the other benefits of open source communications.

The meeting ended at 3:59 PM.

Minutes compiled and submitted by Mark Lynn Anderson
Minutes corrected and approved in committee, March 18, 2020