Open Access Panel Discussion
Navigating the ever-changing world of scholarly publishing can be daunting for seasoned faculty, not to mention newer faculty who are still trying to find their place in the campus community while juggling research requirements with teaching loads and service commitments. To make this balancing act even more challenging, faculty are expected to stay current, not only with trends in their own fields, but with the changes in scholarly publishing – such as Open Access (http://www.openaccessweek.org/) and digital copyright – that affect how their research is created, evaluated, and disseminated.

With this in mind, we have decided to devote a special section of this newsletter to publishing trends that are particularly pertinent to new faculty at UCF. These trends include but are not limited to publishing in Open Access journals, managing research data and other outputs, understanding copyright and other intellectual property issues, and meeting requirements of certain funding agencies. Through this forum, we hope to explore the tension that exists between the need to more quickly disseminate cutting edge research and the metrics traditionally used to evaluate research impact for tenure and promotion.

To begin the discussion, UCF Libraries (http://library.ucf.edu/) hosted a panel discussion about the Libraries’ efforts to keep up with this constantly shifting landscape. Those in attendance were:

**Dr. Penny Beile**, Associate Dir., Info Services & Scholarly Communication; **Lee Dotson**, Digital Librarian; **Athena Hoeppner**, Electronic Resources Librarian.

### What are some of the key issues facing faculty in today’s publishing climate?

Demonstrating impact of your research on academic and practitioner communities as it relates to promotion and tenure decisions. How do you do this in an Open Access journal or another “alternative” publishing venue? One of the appeals of publishing in Open Access journals is that you have the potential to reach a larger audience more quickly than is possible through traditional subscription journals. However, most OA journals don’t have the same kind of tradition and reputation behind them, so how do you compare the impact of the two? Not only do you need to be able to track citations, but you need to determine how people are citing your work, which is much harder in an Open Access forum. Further, there is a move toward a more robust method of measuring the impact of published research that seeks to establish a standardized metric for tracking impact at the article level. [1]

The importance of citation counts (and h-indexes) varies from discipline to discipline, of course. Some fields are more citation intensive than others. It is not unusual to see discrepancies between the hard or social sciences and the humanities, and this can lead to a lot of debate about impact of research, and therefore assumed quality, among reviewers from across a number of disciplines. Anyone seeking promotion and/or tenure would do well to indicate, at minimum, the number of citations to their work and the average number of citations, or H-index, by discipline or journal. This provides some indication of impact relative to the field. One such service is AltMetrics (http://altmetrics.org/manifesto/)

### What should people look for when considering publishing in an OA journal?

Evaluate an OA journal using the same criteria you would for any journal in your field: Journal prestige, fit of the research to the readership, and acceptability of the journal for promotion and tenure decisions. Is it an association or university publication?
Where are they ranked on an accepted list of core journals in the field? What kinds of papers do they publish? What is the quality of those papers? Do they charge a fee? What kind of license agreement do they offer? How long have they been in existence? Where are they indexed? And mainly, prioritize submitting to journals deemed of sufficient quality by your department or college. If there isn’t a list, speak with your department chair about acceptable publishing venues. We’ve created a website (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/Default.php) that includes a lot of information about scholarly publishing including information about author rights (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/ScholarlyPublishing.php#AuthorRights) and negotiating publisher agreements (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/ScholarlyPublishing.php#WhereToPublish), ‘marketing’ your published research, citation metrics (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/ScholarlyPublishing.php#CitationMetrics) and even a list of “questionable (http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/)” OA publishers that’s maintained by Jeffrey Beall (http://people.auraria.edu/Jeffrey_Beall/home) from the University of Colorado at Denver.

In order to stay current with these challenges, the Libraries recently created an Office of Scholarly Communication, which is run by Dr. Penny Beile. I asked her to tell us a little about what the goals are for the office, and what’s been done so far.

The goal of the office is to advocate for a more comprehensive service model to support the scholarly endeavors of our faculty. In addition to creating our new website, we have created a model of the research lifecycle (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/Default.php) that highlights campus-wide research support services currently available to faculty as well as needed services. The Research Lifecycle was developed with input from other campus units represented on the model, including ORC (http://www.research.ucf.edu/index.html), FCTL (http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/index.php), and IST (http://www.ist.ucf.edu/).

(https://illuminations.library.ucf.edu/files/2013/05/Life-Cycle.jpg)

It is our hope that by creating this visual map, and by presenting it to different departments on campus, we can provide a clear representation of what support services are still needed here and, hopefully, get the funding needed to fill in the gaps. We have two kinds of needs: infrastructure and staffing. What is currently most needed in terms of infrastructure is long-term data storage and an institutional repository. ‘Grayed out’ buttons on the lifecycle need additional staffing in order to go ‘live.’ We hope also to encourage collaboration by connecting researchers to appropriate service points.

Where have you presented this so far? What has been the reaction?

Most recently, the Research Lifecycle has been presented on campus at the FCTL Institute, at an ORC-hosted Grants Day workshop, and to the Nursing faculty. During its development the RLC was vetted by faculty from a variety of disciplines (History to Digital Media to Biology to Business, and in between), with two outcomes. First, comments from the faculty helped refine the graphic, and second, everyone agreed that the model held true for the type of scholarship that they produced.

https://stars.library.ucf.edu/illuminations/vol1/iss1/5
Comments from faculty:

“Every incoming faculty member should have a copy of the Research Lifecycle!”

“Every graduate student in the program will have a copy of this by the end of the day!”

“I didn’t know the library provided these services!”

The RLC also has been presented at a number of conference venues and has received critical acclaim and interest from librarians and faculty at other institutions. It is licensed under Creative Commons and therefore is freely adaptable.

What are your goals moving forward?

We are seeking support for a full time Scholarly Communication Officer position. Right now the office consists of a small percentage of one person’s assignment supplemented by interested people from around the library. Of course, having a repository that would house the intellectual work produced at the institution is a huge need, as well as a solution for hosting data that helps researchers meet funding mandates.

We also hope to build on the success of the Research Lifecycle and use it as a catalyst for discussion and change. While researching campus needs and services the group that developed the RLC found a lot of silos, where some colleges provided some services to their faculty and graduate students, and other colleges would have competing services for their faculty. We really hope to arrive at a campus-wide solution for researcher support.

Finally, the RLC was developed, ostensibly, to identify gaps in research support services. While we have used the graphic to advocate for staffing and infrastructure, there have been two other unforeseen outcomes. The first was the collaboration among campus research support units in developing the graphic and the response to it from faculty, and the second is the opportunity to use it as a teaching and outreach tool. Librarians are hosting workshops and presentations to faculty and graduate students about research services by request through the ORC, Graduate Studies, and academic departments.

[1] note that there are new citation management tools starting to emerge that attempt to move beyond traditional assessment and take into account newer forms of scholarly communication and publishing.

Further Reading:

For more information about Open Access, please see the Scholarly Communications website, which includes more detailed information about Copyright (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/Copyright.php), Digital Scholarship (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/DigitalScholarship.php), Faculty Senate Resolutions (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/SenateResolutions.php), Funding policy Requirements (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/FundingPolicyRequirements.php), and a page of Latest Developments (http://library.ucf.edu/ScholarlyCommunication/LatestDevelopments.php).