

Stephanie Davis-Kahl, Teresa A. Fishel, and Merinda Kaye Hensley

# Weaving the threads

## Scholarly communication and information literacy

Information literacy and scholarly communication are two major outreach activities in academic libraries. We believe these two areas require that librarians engage in conversations and actions related to strategically creating change in the roles of librarians within our organizations as well as within our campus communities. Two publications released in 2013 by ACRL discuss how these two areas can and should be blended in outreach efforts to faculty and students. “Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy: Creating Strategic Collaborations for a Changing Academic Environments”<sup>1</sup> is a white paper that was produced by a working group to articulate how these areas intersect. *Common Ground at the Nexus of Information Literacy and Scholarly Communication*<sup>2</sup> was also published in 2013 and was edited by Stephanie Davis-Kahl and Merinda Kaye Hensley. These works provide an excellent overview of the intersections of both subjects while providing conversational starting points for academic librarians at their institutions.

### Background on white paper

The Intersections white paper was the result of several converging initiatives within librarianship and within ACRL, including a rise of interest in “student as creator,” the momentum behind open access, questions of how librarians could best introduce students to scholarly communication topics, as well

as the new ACRL Plan for Excellence and the then nascent revision of the ACRL “Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.” The white paper was an effort to bring together librarians from information literacy and scholarly communication.

The catalyst for the creation of the working group was an ACRL Scholarly Communication Discussion Group meeting at the 2011 ALA Annual Conference, during which the conversation focused on changing roles for academic librarians. At that meeting, Joyce Ogburn coined the phrase, “lifelong learning requires lifelong access,” and later published a column in 2011 in *College & Research Libraries News* by the same name.<sup>3</sup> The working group, which was comprised of library administrators, public services, and collections librarians from a variety of academic libraries, met over the next two years to develop the content of the white paper.

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## Ongoing work

After the white paper was published in early 2013, 2013–14 ACRL President Trevor Dawes appointed the Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy Task Force with the charge to keep the momentum going. To that end, we are working to identify areas within academic librarianship that would demonstrate and strengthen connections between scholarly communication and information literacy, identify areas of high interest among librarians supporting these areas, and look for opportunities to address the need for professional development.

Data literacy has emerged as one such area, in addition to copyright education and the need to work more closely with ACRL Immersion faculty to develop content for instruction librarians working with scholarly communication librarians. The task force has also been working to identify librarians and libraries that are leading in these areas and that could contribute to future work. A series of webinars is planned for the 2014–15 academic year on topics including starting the conversation in your library, and incorporating scholarly communication into job descriptions, as well as copyright education. As the new ACRL “Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education” is further refined, we hope to engage academic librarians in a conversation at ACRL 2015 in order to generate ideas for further weaving these threads into the roles of all academic librarians.

The task force also presented to different audiences and gathered feedback on both the white paper and the continuing Intersections work. In April 2014, members of the task force had the opportunity to give a briefing on the white paper and the activities of the task force at the Coalition for Networked Information meeting in St. Louis. Mary Ellen Davis, ACRL executive director, and Joyce Ogburn, ACRL past-president, presented the big picture view of the Intersections work to date. Merinda Kaye Hensley and Stephanie Davis-Kahl discussed how their work on their respective campuses embodied intersections

as described in the white paper. Briefing attendees were invited to respond and provide feedback to help the task force expand their reach.

Each of the authors has had experience in blending these responsibilities at our own institutions and we would like to share a few examples.

## Our own libraries

*Illinois Wesleyan University: Stephanie Davis-Kahl*

Much of our outreach and progress has been related to our repository, Digital Commons @ IWU. We focused most of our efforts on creating collections that highlight our campus emphasis on undergraduate research, e.g., honors projects and student peer-reviewed journals. As Digital Commons gained traction with faculty, they requested specific collections to showcase excellent work in upper division courses, especially those that worked directly with community organizations. The courses require a high level of research, writing, and community outreach, and papers are selected by faculty to be included in the online collections. In the interest of accurately representing the variety of student work produced on campus, we also make a concerted effort to include fine arts in the repository, especially art presented and music performed at the John Wesley Powell Undergraduate Research Conference.<sup>4</sup>

Our librarians are in the process of building collections for our Action Research Center, the Undergraduate German Research Conference, and are also in talks with the new Center for Human Rights and Social Justice to archive their efforts. Our undergraduate journal publishing is also robust, and the scholarly communications librarian works with each journal in various ways to educate the students on open access and author rights. Each of the collections above represents a fair amount of outreach to faculty and students, and education about open access, author rights, copyright, and what it means to be a scholar in this digital age. The philosophy of Illinois Wesleyan University has been that

through educating our students, we educate our faculty (and ourselves), as well.

*Macalester College: Teresa A. Fishel*

We have integrated scholarly communication and information literacy into job descriptions for the library liaisons. We have been intentional in developing a guide for liaisons that provides suggestions for how they can share information on scholarly communication with faculty, referred to as the “five-minute elevator speech.” The guide provides specific talking points related to publishing, copyright, author rights, fair use, and open access. Each liaison librarian is also an advocate for promoting our institutional repository, Digital Commons, which provides access to our senior honors projects as well as student peer-reviewed journals and award-winning papers. Further, each library liaison teaches in our first-year program. As part of the required library component of every first-year course, about 35 courses each fall, we specifically include such scholarly communication topics as author rights, economic factors of scholarly publishing, and open access principles.

Building on our instruction program last year as part of Open Access Week, we set up tables in the science building and used the time between classes to share information on scholarly communication issues, particularly emphasizing why open access is important to students and faculty. We were pleased at the number of students who were familiar with open access, and taking our program to their building also generated a significant amount of interest among faculty. Because we had emphasized scholarly communication responsibilities for all librarians, they presented a unified effort in taking time to staff the information desk, answer questions, and assist with button-making machines that allowed students and faculty to create their own open access buttons.

Taking our show on the road turned out to be one of the best promotions we have done for Open Access Week, and it was possible because all of our librarians have a vested interest in campus outreach as well as

a responsibility to stay informed of scholarly communication issues.

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: Merinda Kaye Hensley*

One of our information literacy programs is an open workshop series, the Savvy Researcher.<sup>5</sup> Each semester, the librarians and campus partners teach more than 40 unique sessions, many of them addressing a variety of scholarly communication issues, such as how to create a data management plan, the basics of copyright and fair use, the changing publishing environment, scholarly publishing with WordPress, and creating and managing an online scholarly presence. The workshops reach more than 1,400 students per year and many are repeated from semester to semester. Each workshop also has an online learning component, often a LibGuide, extending learning outside the classroom.

Our most successful marketing strategy has been to partner with the Graduate College, which sends an electronic list message every Sunday evening about the upcoming workshops for the week. Perhaps most importantly, the workshops are marketed by the subject liaison librarians when they teach in the disciplines. The open workshops are meant to supplement traditional course-integrated instruction, extending the information literacy experiences to myriad scholarly communication issues.

In Spring 2014, the University of Illinois piloted a new competition, the Image of Research. Modeled after a similar competition at the University of Chicago, it aimed to highlight original student work by inviting undergraduate and graduate students to submit an image of their research, whether it be a photograph, a digital rendering, a drawing, or some combination of the three, accompanied by a short narrative explaining their research.

Images were submitted from across all disciplines, from engineering and chemistry to applied health sciences and sociology. Submissions were judged based on the connection between the image and the narrative,

the originality of the work, and the visual impact of the image. All submissions were printed on poster board and displayed at the campus undergraduate research symposium and at a special event for Graduate Student Appreciation Week. The top four images received recognition and monetary awards supported by a library gift fund. All entries are archived in the institutional repository and will be displayed in an online exhibit in Omeka. Similar to Illinois Wesleyan University, we are especially keen on looking for opportunities to showcase original undergraduate student work.

## Conclusion

There are clearly myriad strategies and opportunities for integrating scholarly communication concepts into different parts of students' academic lives. Formal instruction, exhibits, symposia, and including student work in institutional repositories can all play an important role in building students' knowledge about key elements of the research lifecycle, and position libraries to have a major role in the dissemination of original research produced by undergraduate and graduate students.

## Further readings

We hope we have provided some insights on how you can start conversations at your own library or with your own faculty members. In addition to the two works cited at the beginning of this article, the following resources are also noteworthy.

- Shan C. Sutton, "Time to Step on the Gas in Approaching the Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy," *Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication* (2013):1(3):eP1076. Accessed June 9, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.7710/2162-3309.1076>.

- Kevin Smith, "Meet me at the Intersection," Scholarly Communication@Duke, April 29, 2013, accessed June 9, 2014, <http://blogs.library.duke.edu/scholcomm/2013/04/29/meet-me-at-the-intersection/>.

- ATG Article of the Week, "Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Informa-

tion Literacy," May 4, 2013, accessed June 9, 2014, [www.against-the-grain.com/2013/05/atg-article-of-the-week-intersections-of-scholarly-communication-and-information-literacy/](http://www.against-the-grain.com/2013/05/atg-article-of-the-week-intersections-of-scholarly-communication-and-information-literacy/)

- Maria Bonn, "Tooling Up: Scholarly Communication Education and Training," *College and Research Libraries News* (2014) 75:3:132-135, accessed June 9, 2014, <http://crln.acrl.org/content/75/3/132.short>.

## Notes

1. "Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy: Creating Strategic Collaborations for a Changing Academic Environment," <http://acrl.ala.org/intersections>, accessed July 24, 2014.

2. Stephanie Davis-Kahl and Merinda Kaye Hensley, eds., *Common Ground at the Nexus of Information Literacy and Scholarly Communication*, (ACRL, 2013), open access version: <http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/bookshelf/36/> or <https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/42666>.

3. Joyce Ogburn, "Lifelong Learning Requires Lifelong Access: Reflections on the ACRL Plan for Excellence," *College & Research Libraries News*, 72(9), 514-515, <http://crln.acrl.org/content/72/9/514.full>.

4. John Wesley Powell Undergraduate Research Conference, Illinois Wesleyan University, <http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/jwprc/>, accessed July 24, 2014.

5. Savvy Researcher workshops, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, [www.library.illinois.edu/sc/services/savvy\\_researcher.html](http://www.library.illinois.edu/sc/services/savvy_researcher.html), accessed July 24, 2014. **ZZ**

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