

Joyce L. Ogburn and Merinda Kaye Hensley

Bringing together the educator and the advocate

A report from the ACRL Task Force on the Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy

Imagine the power of merging our collective knowledge about information literacy and learning with our advocacy for scholarly communication. What might that look like?

ACRL took up this challenge and the 2013 ACRL white paper, *Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy: Creating Strategic Collaborations for a Changing Academic Environment*, launched a new project and initiative.¹ After its publication, the ACRL Board of Directors created the Intersections of Scholarly Communications and Information Literacy Task Force (referred to as the Intersections Task Force) to “promote the use of the Intersections white paper to the ACRL membership by monitoring and responding to reactions to the white paper and its use; as well as proposing and delivering sustainable professional development opportunities that build on the ideas and recommendations in the white paper.”

The Intersections Task Force wants you to know our progress and outcomes. We conducted a number of activities and built relationships to place the initiative on firm footing. Given that we had a fairly aggressive timeline for our work, we decided to concentrate our energy in activities that moved the initiative along and planned a future for its continuance after the task force concluded. Our efforts focused in four main areas:

- professional development,
- sharing information about the initiative and gleaned new ideas,
- informing the ACRL membership, and
- building relationships to sustain the initiative.

Primary activities and accomplishments

The Intersections Task Force has achieved success in each of these four areas. Beginning with professional development, we developed three webinars under the heading “From Awareness to Transformation: Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy in 21st Century Academic Libraries.” The first webinar, *Creating Strategic Collaborations—Starting the Conversations, Making the Connections, Taking Advantage of Opportunities*, gave advice on starting the conversation on campus about the potential intersections.

The speakers—librarians at different stages of this work and representing different kinds of institutions—covered strategies for forging connections through formal and informal channels. The second webinar, *Designing Job Descriptions for New Roles: Integrating Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy into Library Liaison Job Descriptions*, outlined liaison responsibilities and roles. The third webinar asked, *Is Copyright the Third Rail in Information Literacy, or a Common Denominator?* Attendance was very high, with a total of 71 individuals and 61 groups, and

Joyce L. Ogburn is dean of libraries and Carol Grotnes Belk distinguished professor at Appalachian State University, email: ogburnjl@appstate.edu, and Merinda Kaye Hensley is instructional services librarian and co-coordinator of scholarly commons at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, email: mhensle1@illinois.edu

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the participants also judged the webinars to be of high value.²

Several venues were used to share the initiative and garner new ideas, including project briefings at the spring 2014 CNI meeting and a panel discussion at the ACRL 2015 Conference in Portland. Both were well attended and gave the Intersections Task Force new ideas to consider and pursue. Over the course of two years, a number of visitors attended our meetings at the ALA Annual Conference and Midwinter Meeting and participated in the brainstorming process with us.

We have also witnessed an uptake in the profession of the ideas espoused in the white paper and in the 2013 ACRL publication, *Common Ground at the Nexus of Information Literacy and Scholarly Communication*, edited by Stephanie Davis-Kahl and Merinda Kaye Hensley.³ This uptake is demonstrated by 326 downloads of the white paper and 144 downloads of the book from the ACRL website.

In addition, the book has been downloaded more than 29,000 times (as of July 2015) from the authors' respective institutional repositories. Perhaps most importantly, we identified more than 50 citations, further demonstrating the influence of the initiative within the library and information science literature.⁴ We also made sure ACRL members were apprised of our work, publishing two reports in *C&RL News* and *ACRL Insider* in September 2014.⁵

The Intersections Task Force followed the progress of the creation of the new ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education with great interest.⁶ We were fortunate to have Merinda Kaye Hensley as a member of both task forces, and Kara Malenfant as ACRL staff liaison to both initiatives, to keep us informed and spark discussion about the Framework. Individual members of the Intersections Task Force offered comments and suggestions directly to the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education Task Force. We were pleased to see the final Framework include elements of the creative process and scholarly communication in relation to student learning. In addition, two members of the Intersections Task Force

served on an ACRL working group on data management, which led to a section on data literacy (drawn from the white paper) within the ACRL Scholarly Communication Toolkit.⁷

For future planning, the ACRL's Student Learning and Information Literacy Committee (SLILC) and the Research and Scholarly Environment Committee (ReSEC) have enthusiastically embraced the challenge of sustaining the work of the Intersections Task Force. One example of ongoing work is a new professional development opportunity for librarians. The Intersections Task Force chair in collaboration with the leadership of the two committees, jointly proposed a new professional development program, which was accepted by the ACRL Board at its June 2015 meeting. Sustaining the initiative will be achieved by having membership from the Intersections Task Force on the two committees (Merinda Kaye Hensley, chair of SLILC 2015–2016, and Mel DeSart, a member of ReSEC, 2015–17). In addition, five Intersections Task Force members are continuing to disseminate the results of the work throughout 2015–16 (Stephanie Davis-Kahl, Merinda Kaye Hensley, Mel DeSart, Joyce Ogburn, and Kevin Smith).

Exploring ideas

Over the course of our work, the Intersections Task Force gathered and generated many salient ideas that we did not have the time to pursue within the assigned timeframe. We share these ideas in order to offer a rich array of possibilities for committees or individuals to address. The ideas can be grouped into broad categories: outreach to colleagues and conversations, and content for such; engagement with a variety of stakeholders; engagement within ALA; and policy formation.⁸

1. Outreach to colleagues. First, we should turn our attention toward the curriculum of librarian and information science programs by articulating needs within academic libraries to innovate programming and instruction within scholarly communication and information literacy. Second, to continue this conversation with our colleagues across types of institutions, there is a need for outlining a

structure for local symposia or forums. Third, along the same lines, creating talking points for librarians will help them contextualize this movement within librarianships for campus constituents, including offices for accessibility; undergraduate research programs; centers for teaching excellence and work towards e-portfolio development; writing centers; distance education; student groups focused on activism, journal clubs, media, etc.; graduate offices and electronic theses and dissertations; and faculty development programs.

2. Engaging with external stakeholders. To gain the most impact, we should consider extending the initiative's influence beyond the library. This could include providing guidance on how to build standards into the work of local chapters for the American Association of University Professors. Next, we could explore relevant ideas that were raised at the June 2015 ACRL Leadership Council discussion on strategic goals, including identifying higher education association with whom to partner, examining higher education to see where we can be involved, continuing to examine copyright as a third rail, and discovering how libraries can be further involved within the publishing process.

3. Reach out to ALA. Prompted by the update on ACRL Insider, the Intersections Task Force received a comment that encouraged us to consider digital citizenship, "Digital citizenship would be a great opportunity to bring together libraries, residence hall education programs, and other student affairs efforts." Furthermore, it was suggested that there is "an opportunity to link scholarly communication education efforts across ACRL and AASL in the same way that the Interdivisional TF has done previously on other K-20 topics; it also suggests a potentially unique opportunity to link efforts with PLA, as such programs are also part of public library instructional programs."⁹ ALA has been watching for opportunities to bring together discussions of instruction across academic and public libraries. Two examples include financial literacy and digital citizenship. The members of the Task Force suggest that digital literacy and citizenship

be seriously considered. They appear to be areas that fall squarely within ACRL's strategic directions, and they are very intertwined with use of digital technologies for personal and scholarly purposes.

4. Policy formation. Librarians can also move our profession forward by considering and developing new promotion and tenure standards for librarians that recognize the changing nature of scholarship. Specifically, this would support the ACRL's goal: "Librarians accelerate the transition to a more open system of scholarship. Objective 1: Increase the ways ACRL is an advocate and model for open scholarship and evaluation processes."¹⁰

Immediate next steps

We are now sharing our results and ideas for the future. The Intersections Task Force has updated and enhanced the website for the *Intersections* white paper. The new content includes an Intersections Task Force report, a list of related resources, content from the webinars, and information about new professional development opportunities and other appropriate ACRL activities. For now, we see the website as an important anchor for our members and a resource for other interested stakeholders. In addition, the Intersections Task Force will talk to editors of existing ACRL toolkits and websites to add links to the *Intersections* content as appropriate.

Undoubtedly, there could be additional work responding to the new IL Framework. The Framework approach to student learning presents an enormous opportunity to construct talking points and instruction plans that incorporate the ideas presented by the *Intersections* white paper within the context of the Framework. This could potentially be place for the SLILC and the ReSEC to cooperate, perhaps in conjunction with the planning that is underway for the new professional development program.

Conclusion

We believe that the work of the Intersections Task Force has firmly established a new program for the ACRL community, one

that will become an important component of ACRL goals and planning well into the future. Interest by ACRL members and other professionals is demonstrated by presentation acceptances to conferences, attendance at meetings and presentations, downloads, and references in the literature. The nature of the initiative is interdisciplinary and supports all three areas of the ACRL Plan for Excellence. It also aligns with the growth of students as creators and library services, such as maker spaces.

We end with the observation that the work conducted by the Intersections Task Force reinforces the value of collaboration by bringing together the educator and the advocate to create more powerful and inclusive programs for our profession.

Notes

1. ACRL, *Intersections of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy: Creating Strategic Collaborations for a Changing Academic Environment*, <http://acrl.ala.org/intersections> (accessed August 27, 2015).
2. More information about the webinars can be found at <http://acrl.ala.org/intersections> (accessed August 27, 2015).
3. Stephanie Davis-Kahl and Merinda Kaye Hensley, eds. 2013, *Common Ground at the*

Nexus of Information Literacy and Scholarly Communication (Chicago: ACRL, <http://www.alastore.ala.org/detail.aspx?ID=4387> (accessed August 27, 2015).

4. Bibliography of Intersections, <http://acrl.ala.org/intersections> (accessed August 27, 2015).
5. Stephanie Davis-Kahl, Terri Fishel, and Merinda Kaye Hensley, "Weaving the Threads of Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy into Academic Librarian Roles," *C&RL News* 75, no. 8: 441–444; Joyce L. Ogburn, "Next Steps for Scholarly Communication and Information Literacy," *ACRL Insider*, September 23, 2014 (accessed August 27, 2015).
6. ACRL, Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, <http://acrl.ala.org/framework/> (accessed August 27, 2015).
7. ACRL Scholarly Communication Toolkit, <http://acrl.ala.org/scholcomm> (accessed August 27, 2015).
8. A full list can be found on the Intersections website, <http://acrl.ala.org/intersections> (accessed August 27, 2015).
9. See <http://webjunction.org/news/webjunction/digital-citizenship-and-public-libraries.html> (accessed August 27, 2015).
10. ACRL Plan for Excellence, www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/strategicplan/stratplan (accessed August 27, 2015). *~*

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