

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
FACULTY COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES  
MONDAY, November 3, 2008, 9:30-11:00 a.m.  
Petersen Room, Allen Library

Chair Charles Wilkinson called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

**Meeting Synopsis:**

1. Review and approval of minutes from meeting of Oct. 13, 2008
  2. Discussion of journal publishing in the humanities and social sciences and open archiving/open access: can they be compatible? – Marshall Brown, Professor, Comparative Literature, and Editor, Modern Language Quarterly; Angela Close, Professor, Anthropology, and former Editor-in-Chief, Journal of World Prehistory; John Rahn, Professor, Music, and Editor, Perspectives of New Music; Mel DeSart, Head, Engineering Library, and Chair, Scholarly Communication Steering Committee; Tim Jewell, Libraries Director of Information Resources, Collections and Scholarly Communication.
  3. Libraries update on the Summit migration – Lizabeth Wilson, Dean of University Libraries
  4. Report on Senate Executive Committee activities – Charles Wilkinson, Chair, FCUL
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**1. Review of approval of minutes from meeting of Oct. 13, 2008**

Chair Wilkinson called for approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved as submitted.

- 2. Discussion of journal publishing in the humanities and social sciences and open archiving/open access: can they be compatible? – Marshall Brown, Professor, Comparative Literature, and Editor, Modern Language Quarterly; Angela Close, Professor, Anthropology, and former Editor-in-Chief, Journal of World Prehistory; John Rahn, Professor, Music, and Editor, Perspectives of New Music; Mel DeSart, Head, Engineering Library, and Chair, Scholarly Communication Steering Committee; Tim Jewell, Libraries Director of Information Resources, Collections and Scholarly Communication.**

Wilkinson opened up the discussion by providing some background to the issue of open access at UW for today's guests. He noted the recent changes in scholarly publishing, the formation of the Scholarly Communication Committee, a joint committee with the Faculty Council on Research, and the issues of open access and archiving that affect disciplines differently among the sciences, arts and humanities.

Open access journals were described as journals whose authors make the content freely available through websites, a policy that may be appropriate for the fields of science but not necessarily for the humanities and arts. Wilkinson noted that open archiving is a little less controversial. He read from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) mandate and from the recent Harvard policy on open access.

Wilkinson next introduced his special guests, Angela Close, John Rahn, and Marshall Brown and asked everyone else to introduce themselves. Guest John Rahn opened up the discussion by noting that he had first heard about the idea of an open access policy at UW at the recent Senate Executive Committee meeting where they voted to approve the ad hoc committee. He said that the wording of the proposal was

problematic because researchers whose work is not paid for by research grants would suffer under an open access policy. Rahn described his role as a longtime editor of a small but important scholarly music journal. He inquired whether the committee's primary objective was open access publishing or archiving and pointed to the website of Peter Suber, an independent policy strategist who has written about open access. Rahn noted that he was philosophically opposed to the way the website portrays open access as a viable policy. His main concern is that as a business model it is unrealistic to support open access publishing with advertising. Wilkinson noted that the committee does not want to impose a specific business model on anyone. Guest Angela Close commented on the publishing industry's focus on making money and that they would not support an open access policy.

Wilkinson brought up the issue of copyright, and noted the Harvard addenda that were added to help preserve faculty rights in online publishing. Guest Marshall Brown remarked that Duke University Press has never published a journal without allowing authors the right to deposit manuscripts in their own institutional repository. However, they do not want to keep track of different agreements with faculty at different institutions. Therefore Duke University Press uses a "green publishing agreement" that they feel is generous enough that they shouldn't have to complicate their records with multiple agreements. Brown said the issue with images in publications is that each use has to be licensed separately. Publication licenses don't carry over into licenses to reprint or to archive. He said that he doesn't think the Harvard model is enforceable.

Brown was asked to give an account of the financial side of publishing. He recounted the history of the journal *Modern Language Quarterly*, from its inception in 1940 as a University publication until 1981, when Brown was asked to take it over and find a commercial publishing company because it was losing money. Duke University Press has since taken over publishing the journal. Brown noted the support Duke provides him and the profit the journal makes that helps to pay for a few conferences, modest research support, and acting instructors to replace his released time. He explained how their gross income, including permissions and reprint rights, was about \$50-70K a year, and that an open access policy would likely result in the loss of some or all of that profit margin. Council member Mark Kot noted the institutional rate for journals of \$200 a year and wondered if introducing a price threshold for open access would help journals in the humanities. Guest Rahn noted that music and other arts and humanities journal subscription rates would have to increase with an open access policy. He gave sample price rates for individual versus institutional subscription rates, noting that institutional subscribers outnumber individual ones and provide more income. Rahn stated that "open access" simply proposes to shift costs from readers to authors, and asked "who would you rather have deciding what is interesting enough to get published: the readers, the authors, or the sponsors of research?" He feels that who pays for publication is a crucial consideration in what gets published.

Council member Galya Diment addressed the issue of price versus field discount. She pointed out that open access discussions seem to address the damage it could do to the humanities and arts, but never the benefits it could provide. She asked if it would be possible to exempt certain fields from the open access publishing policy. Diment pointed to the worsening state of the economy and the fact that the humanities are on the cutting board of many university presses. Kot noted that certain scientific fields could also suffer some damage with an open access policy.

Guest Rahn explained in detail how publishers are asking for too much copyright control and why it is an unreasonable policy that goes against the current policy of almost complete copyright freedom. Presidential designee Betsy Wilson asked what can the university libraries do to make certain that scholarship is widely available. Guest Brown asked whose interests are at stake in this. He explained that he pays nothing for his access to journals, and that the journal would suffer if its value or readership were compromised. Brown noted that the end readership is not affected. Guest Close remarked on the effect open access would have on pure institutional presses, which are expensive due to the costs associated with the review process. A discussion continued on the different institutional practices in publishing regular books versus collections of articles and the effect of an open access policy on those publishing practices. When asked if an online option is provided for subscribers to his journal, Rahn replied that individuals can buy individual articles online but it becomes tricky because the subscription rate can't be more than the cost for individual articles. He described it as wider dissemination, but not entirely free. Guest Mel DeSart noted that there is not a current plan at UW for electronic publishing. Rahn said that on request he would send an article in pdf to the author only. Kot inquired if he lost revenue from reprints sent in these cases. Rahn replied that the issue was very complicated, but that so far, the practice had not resulted in loss in revenue.

A question was raised about what Harvard means by a "freely accessible" repository. Rahn was asked about costs associated with peer review, printing and mailing. He replied that if the costs were removed for printing, they would be replaced by costs for web development, and that 90% of publication costs are for labor, which remains the same for print or web publication. Galya Diment compared the plight of smaller journals with that of newspapers that are affected by policies that make content available online. She sees a decline in the value of newspapers as subscriptions decline resulting in fewer people creating the content. Rahn noted there was a categorical divide between research that is or is not supported by grant dollars because research grants could support page fees that would otherwise be borne by authors.

Council member Bill Seaburg inquired about online journals that are available on different web sites, and whether publishers get revenue from each electronic source. He noted the irony in that libraries must subscribe to multiple sites and pay more because of that. Guest Tim Jewell replied that the Libraries sometimes has access to the same journal for different reasons and from different vendors. For example, it subscribes to JSTOR for its archival value. That is, journal issues provided via JStor are generally at least 3-5 years old, since JSTOR's purpose is to serve as a permanent journal archive. The libraries also has access to many journals and newspapers from "aggregators" like Proquest, Gale and EBSCO, whose databases typically include the contents of thousands of journals, but can't pick and choose titles within these databases. While there is overlap between aggregator database coverage and the libraries' subscriptions, there is enough unique coverage within the aggregator databases for continued subscriptions to make sense economically.

Guest Close raised the issue of fewer new journals in anthropology as a sign of a broader problem in academia in which commercial publishers are extremely reluctant to start journals to cover newly emerging subject areas in the absence of a demonstrably large market for them. Close noted that it is not feasible for large publishing houses to take risks in unexplored markets because there is no money in it for them, and this retards the expansion of new fields of study. She said that she would like to advocate for the need to develop strategies for creating new journals, and that open access was one way. Guest Rahn

noted that he sees no barriers to journals that seek publication. Guest Brown remarked that large publishers are acquiring journals, electronic journals are being established, and that everything is in flux. Council member Peg Laird asked, "Would you be less likely to take my publication if you knew that I came from a university with an open access policy?" She was told that the university would have to provide her with a waiver if she could not find a publisher. Guest Rahn, in response to a question, said that if open access became the norm, his journal would have to forbid it in its copyright agreement in order to remain viable.

Guest DeSart spoke about a particular business practice of some journal publishers. He described how in high technology areas such as engineering, engineering societies will publish journal packages. When a new journal gets introduced into the package, the price goes up. If you were to cancel the package and purchase the journals individually, the cost for each journal would be higher than its proportional price as part of the package. It was noted that small journals are very vulnerable in this model. DeSart said that the new journal creation rate for 2008 was higher than that of 2005 which shows that the creation of journals is not stopping, but the long-term viability of many of these new journals is not clear. He pointed to the example of a number of university presses as publishers that are making content openly available as an experiment to see if putting up free content increases print sales, or would allow them to at least break even. He also noted that the publisher Springer has bought the largest for-profit open access publisher, BioMed Central. Springer will maintain open access publishing using a business model seen as profit making. DeSart said that reaction to the purchase has been mostly positive and serves as a validation of open access as a viable business model that is open to the end user and where the author pays to publish.

Betsy Wilson noted that the Libraries want to preserve its ability to pay for an open access environment in the face of an economic downturn. Guest Rahn pointed to predatory high subscription costs as the problem facing libraries. He said that he thinks the financial crisis will wash out some things that should be washed out, such as unnecessary journals, and that will help drive the costs down. Guest DeSart remarked that market/user demand for journals drives the Libraries provision of access to them. He pointed to some inexpensive first rate journals that exist alongside more expensive, lower quality journals. The Libraries subscribes to journals in both categories based on the needs of its users. Chair Wilkinson asked how to combat predatorily priced journals and maintain small journals on the margin at the same time. It was suggested that UW might be able to help journals find a new business model. Rahn, noting the earlier loss of direct university support for his journal, said that the university doesn't have the experience to help find a new business model. Diment inquired whether they could get a break down of the fields with the most predatory pricing, and those fields with the most expensive journals.

**3. & 4.** There was no time left to address these items.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

*Minutes by Melissa Kane, Faculty Senate, mmkane@u.washington.edu*

**Present: Faculty:** Bichindaritz, Cooper, Diment, Kot, Laird, MacLachlan, Mitchell, Retman, Seaburg, Wilkinson (Chair)

**Presidential Designee:** Wilson

**Ex Officio Reps:** Banerjee, Barker, Thornton

**Absent: Regularly Invited Guests:** Chamberlin

**Special guests:** Marshall Brown, Angela Close, John Rahn, Mel DeSart, Tim Jewell, & Phuong Nguyen, Director of Faculty, Administration, and Academic Affairs, ASUW