

Scholarly Communications Officers Meeting  
November 29, 2005

Attendees: Gail Yokote (D), Co-Chair, Susan Starr (SD), Co-Chair, Cindy Shelton (LA), Janet Carter (LAUC), Catherine Candee (OSC), Lorelei Tanji (I), John Ober (OSC), Margaret Moody (SB), Margaret Phillips (B), Gail Persily (SF), Beth Remak (SC).

Guest: Donna Okubo, PLoS

1. PLoS : Donna Okubo gave an update on PLoS. They are actively marketing their journals, including 3 new journals, at professional conferences. The 13.9 impact factor for PLoS Biology has generated a large increase in submissions. They continue to print PLoS Medicine and PLoS Biology, but are only printing the first 6 issues of their other titles. They have a new CEO, Mark Grithen, who is looking at their business model. They have realized that it will take longer than the five years they originally estimated for them to become self-supporting Memberships account for only a small portion of their income. The membership program is intended more to generate support and assist with marketing than as a source of income. Two new titles, Clinical Trials and PLoS , will focus more on data; PLoS wants to “push the envelope” and use publishing to create new knowledge by exposing data so that scientists can manipulate it. While Ms. Okubo warned that the thinking is in early stages, PLoS may also begin to develop software for use by other societies that wish to publish open access titles.

2. Update on the Senate Committee on Scholarly Communication. This committee is currently scheduled to disband in December. John Ober described the five draft white papers currently being developed by the SCSC: “The Case of Scholars’ Management of Their Copyright,” the Case of Journal Publishing,” “The Case of Scholarly Monograph Publishing,” “Scholarly Societies and Scholarly Communication,” and “Evaluation of Publications in Academic Personnel Processes.” These papers will go to Academic Council for discussion at the Council’s December meeting. The SCSC is hopeful that the council will choose to send the papers through a council/senate review process with the possibility of eventual adoption/endorsement by the Assembly. The papers are written to a broad audience and none have detailed implementation plans. SCSC is developing a separate action proposal on copyright ownership that compliments the paper on copyright.

3. Outreach messages. SCO has been charged by SOPAG to develop an outreach program to increase faculty awareness on issues related to scholarly communications. SCO subgroups reported out on the messages and/strategies they had crafted with respect to a) unsustainable economics b) the role of scholarly societies and c) managing copyright. Issues raised included the need to provide convincing evidence of the economic difficulties libraries face, the need to focus on societies that were being innovative with respect to scholarly communication, the need to raise consciousness among the membership of what choices societies face, and whether copyright discussions should focus on awareness or urge faculty to take action. The mix between outreach goals of raising awareness and of supporting action may be informed by the OSC study last year that indicated a significant portion of the faculty lack information on the issues while others are informed but would welcome more information on the actions they might take. .

4. Next steps on outreach plan. The soon-to-be released white papers somewhat complicate completion of the SOPAG charge to SCO. We want the faculty to view the discussion of these white papers as their issue, not a library driven discussion. At this point, the timing and extent of the white paper discussion is not clear however, so trying to time our own campaign is difficult. In general, SCO feels that its role is to provide campuses with the tools they need to conduct an outreach campaign, rather than to manage one centrally.

**ACTION:**

- a. Each subgroup will develop toolkits for librarians to use in discussing issues in the 3 areas identified, using some of the materials they have already developed on messages.
- b. SCO members will read the drafts of the white papers and identify questions that they believe faculty might raise when presented with these papers. They will share them with the listserv.
- c. Conference calls were scheduled for February 3, 9-11 and March 3, 10-12 to discuss the toolkits. By then more information on the distribution of the white papers should be available.

5. Future agenda topics

- a. SCO has been asked to develop a “rapid response plan” to help CDL/CDC deal with publishers or hot issue topics.
- b. A formal plan/paper/framework for outreach is required by our charge and it should include the presentations and programs now ongoing on several campuses. Discussion on what works with respect to such programs, and what doesn’t, is required.