From crisis to reform

University of Kansas Libraries sponsor campus dialogue

by Jeffrey Bullington and Richard Fyffe

In March 2000, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the Association of American Universities (AAU), and the Merrill Center for Advanced Studies at the University of Kansas (KU) sponsored an invitational meeting in Tempe, Arizona, for academic administrators, library directors, and teaching faculty to seek new ways to address rising journal costs and other dysfunctions of the current scholarly publishing model.

The document that resulted from that meeting, now known as the "Tempe Principles for Emerging Systems of Scholarly Communication," recommends new scholarly, administrative, and library collection development practices that are intended to control costs and broaden access to scholarly literature.

The Tempe Principles have been endorsed by the ARL, the AAU, and the academic officers of the National Association of State Universities & Land Grant Colleges; but they will produce real change only if scholarly authors, university administrators, and librarians incorporate them into their scholarly and administrative practices and decision-making. The Principles and their endorsers therefore call upon individual campus communities to begin local discussions on how to accomplish change.[1]

Purpose of the seminar

In response to this call, on November 8, 2000, the provost and the dean of libraries at KU jointly sponsored a campus dialogue on the Tempe Principles. One hundred fifty KU faculty members, graduate students, librarians, and colleagues from nearby colleges and universities met in Lawrence to collectively reflect on our present situation and future possibilities.

The meeting culminated with a set of small-group discussions on specific principles in the Tempe document, facilitated by KU subject bibliographers.[2]

Roster of presenters

Presentations by KU Provost David Shulenburger and ARL's Office of Scholarly Communications' Mary Case set the stage by describing the scholarly communications problem, some possible remedies, and the goals of the Tempe Principles.

A panel then presented several perspectives on the Tempe Principles. Panelists included: Mabel Rice, university distinguished professor of Speech, Language, and Hearing, KU, director of the KU Merrill Center, and a participant in the conference at Tempe; Victor Bailey, professor of History, KU; James R. Coffman, provost of Kansas State University;

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Editors' introduction

In a recent column ("Create Change," June 2000), Ray English and Lee Hardesty called upon academic librarians to promote increased awareness and dialogue about scholarly communication issues at their parent institutions.

The University of Kansas (KU) is one institution that is already well known for its efforts in this area through the activities of provost David Shulenberger and the support of the BioOne initiative. So when the editors learned last spring that colleague Richard Fyffe had been appointed assistant dean of libraries for scholarly communica-

tion at KU, we contacted him for a possible contribution to our column. The naming of this new position at KU seemed designed to further these goals.

In fact, we learned that KU was about to host a campus workshop on the Tempe Principles, a document meant to guide academic institutions in the quest for a more sustainable scholarly information system. Fyffe and colleague Jeffrey Bullington here share learnings from that session and offer suggestions to other institutions that may be planning similar local initiatives.—*Ivy Anderson, Gail McMillan, and Ann Schaffner*

Jim Williams, Dean of Libraries at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and current chair of the Big 12 Plus Libraries Consortium; and Richard Fyffe, KU's assistant dean of libraries for scholarly communication.

The panel was followed by a presentation on a discipline-based alternative to the current publishing model. Heather Joseph, BioOne president and chief operating officer, spoke on "BioOne: Building a Unique Online Publishing Collaboration."

Themes of the presentations

The seminar opened with the premise that our current situation is fundamentally a crisis of access, not of cost. Scholarly knowledge is a public good: it is the product of social collaborations funded directly or indirectly by the public. A larger community than individual publishers therefore ultimately owns it. The current unsustainable costs to universities of the acquisition of scholarly knowledge are a fundamental threat to broad access to that knowledge.

At present, universities give away their intellectual property to private firms and scholarly societies, which have found that they can sell it back at prices that will produce

large profits and/or support the cost of other activities. The Tempe Principles recognize the current crisis as a systematic or ecological one that must be addressed from several standpoints at once.

Mary Case pointed out that the crisis is global in scope and daunting in proportion. Nevertheless, there is a remarkable range of efforts to devise new models of scholarly communication. These efforts are focusing on creating competition, supporting not-for-profit publishers, distributing peer-reviewed works for free, developing and linking e-print archives, building acceptance of electronic monographs, and creating new models of scholarly community.

Furthermore, these efforts are building new kinds of partnerships between libraries and scholarly societies (e.g., the American Chemical Society's Organic Letters), libraries and individual editors (*Economics Bulletin,* a partnership of the editor and the University of Illinois Library), and scholars, libraries, and university presses (Project Euclid, a collaboration between Cornell University Libraries and the Duke University Press).

Efforts to revitalize the scholarly monograph, whose sales have been hit hard by

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library budget reallocations required to meet rising journal costs, include Gutenberg-e, a project of the American Historical Association, and the American Council of Learned Societies' History E-Book Project.

The key role of partnerships in addressing the crisis is especially evident in the case of BioOne, whose founders represent a collaboration of profit and not-for-profit institutions: the American Institute for Biological Sciences, an umbrella organization for 70 scientific societies; the Big Twelve Plus Library Consortium; SPARC (the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resource Coalition); Allen Press, a commercial printer; and the KU. Although BioOne was founded before the Tempe Principles were formulated, its Board has used the Principles to guide the project's development.

Scholars were reminded by Rice that their various roles—as consumers of scholarship, as producers, as evaluators, and as members of professional organizations—are significantly intertwined with several of the Tempe Principles, particularly those having to do with cost-control, electronic capability, and the process of scholarly review and evaluation.

As consumers, scholars want easy, timely, and systematic access to all available information. High costs are a barrier to fulfilling this need. As producers, they want to publish in journals with high scholarly impact and to see their work disseminated in a timely way. However, although scholarly publishing depends on a robust infrastructure of peer review and evaluation to maintain the intellectual standards of the disciplines, review and evaluation of scholarly manuscripts tend to receive little credit in the promotion and tenure system. New incentives and recognitions need to be developed to assure the vitality of this role.

Finally, as members of professional organizations scholars are well positioned to oversee the transition to new forms of scholarly publishing. A key aspect of managing this transition is determining the proper relationship between the society's budget for publications and its other activities.

Seminar participants were also reminded that high cost is not the only barrier to intellectual access. In the digital environment, new legislation and rulings are restricting the application of fair-use access to copyrighted works. As Jim Williams pointed out, just two weeks previously the Librarian of Congress ruled that the fair-use doctrine can be applied to just two narrow exceptions to the anticircumvention provision of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act (UCITA) will likewise affect the practice of higher education in a digital environment. The accessibility of scholarly literature will continue to be influenced by forces outside the academy, and it is critical that faculty and administrators engage, as citizens, in broader political and legislative efforts to articulate the academy's values.

The cost of the scholarly communications crisis is significant, but so, too, are the costs of proposed solutions. Electronic dissemination and use of scholarly literature impose large costs on universities, and it is critical that we seek opportunities to leverage our investment in computer and network infrastructure to assure the greatest return in scholarly and educational productivity.

Concern was expressed, moreover, that with their new focus on scholarly communication as a collaborative process, individual research libraries will lose a distinctiveness traditionally derived from the unique collections they built. The international scholarly community has been enriched by this diversity of collecting interest and responsibility. Electronic formats are not necessarily optimal for all scholarly purposes.

Finally, we were reminded that, in a digital environment, access to the scholarly literature will be controlled not just by the owners of intellectual property, but also by the owners of the code (software) that represents that literature in digital form. Use of non-proprietary software and open standards will be essential to the long-term availability of our networked intellectual heritage.

Themes from the group discussions

Participants in the seminar were invited to join one of four discussion groups to further explore the Tempe Principles and how they could be incorporated into academic practice at KU. What appears below is a synthesis of some of the comments captured from these sessions. Full transcripts are accessible on the seminar Web page.

• Systems of scholarly publication currently emphasize the journal as the primary unit, and publication within a certain journal connotes quality and prestige. We tend to focus on "journals" and secondarily on "articles." We need to think of the "article" as the truly important piece and the level at which "quality" is measured.

• Competition is almost an oxymoron in the scholarly communication environment. Each article, monograph, work is unique.

• Rethinking and re-fashioning scholarly communications practices will be closely intertwined with changes in the promotion and tenure and related review processes, to encourage use of alternative models and to reward participation in the peer-review manuscript evaluation process. This will require clear support from campus administration. Other evaluative systems, such as accreditation bodies and grant agencies, will also need to examine their processes and expectations.

• Libraries and campus administrations could do more to ensure that producers of scholarly communications (researchers and writers) are more fully aware of copyright law and what copyright entails, and to educate scholarly authors regarding journal subscription costs, licensing terms, and opportunities for negotiating more favorable terms in copyright transfer.

• Producers of scholarly communications could consider signing the open letter described at (http://www.publiclibraryofscience. org), wherein individuals agree to submit works for publication only to journals with more reasonable, less restrictive copyright and access policies.

• Campuses or scholarly societies/communities could consider creating electronic venues for their communities, wherein members could post works in progress and other kinds of scholarly work for initial review, idea-sharing, and long-term preservation. This would be analogous to the preprint server, but would be managed as a campus service incorporating all fields of study and endeavor of that campus.

• Emphasis on electronic formats as primary or preferred will continue to be a challenging issue. The acceptance of electronic formats varies across disciplines and from campus to campus. Electronic formats raise serious questions regarding ease-of-use and

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long-term preservation. Will the content be encoded in a format that will migrate as technologies develop? Should a multiplicity of formats—print and electronic—be encouraged to maintain a kind of "biodiversity"?

As may be evident from these comments, seminar participants did not emerge from the discussions with distinctly focused visions of the future or how to get there. Rather, we initiated a conversation, clarified some questions, and raised other questions. The work ahead will be to continue these discussions, engage a greater part of our community, and start to define focused attainable responses.

Looking ahead

Organizers of the KU seminar and other participants will review the results of the small-group discussions and other feedback to identify next steps for the KU community, and plans for a spring seminar are already taking shape. We encourage other campuses to undertake similar discussions, and offer the following organizational suggestions (some of them conceived in retrospect):

• Enlist the active involvement of chief academic officers, who are best positioned to authorize and encourage changes that may affect fundamental academic practices and policies. Maintain their visibility throughout discussion.

• Hold discussions in a university space—not the library—reinforce the idea that this is an issue for the whole university, especially the teaching faculty, to address and help to resolve.

• Engage multiple disciplines simultaneously and involve faculty in the planning process. Enlist faculty as leaders or facilitators of group discussions. The effects of the schol-

arly communications crisis are different in each discipline, but they are intertwined. The dialog is enriched by the opportunity for faculty from different disciplines to assess the consequences of proposed actions and solutions from their own perspectives.

The Tempe Principles recognize that high costs and restrictive licenses are symptoms of a deeper crisis in the scholarly communications system. Any one library or any one university working in isolation cannot resolve this crisis. Even so, discussions leading to collective determination to alter scholarly practice must begin at local levels, particularly among colleges and universities that employ most working scholars and set the standards for promotion and tenure. Libraries cannot be the primary arena in which those changes are enacted; it is vital that teaching faculty and researchers assume responsibility for resolving this crisis. However, libraries and librarians can act as an important institutional catalyst by initiating and sponsoring campus discussion.

Notes

1. The Tempe Principles are available on the ARL Web site at http://www.arl.org/scomm/tempe.html

2. Seminar materials are posted at http://www2.lib.ukans.edu/scholcomm/tempe/tempe.htm. ∎

• **SAS.** Software from the SAS Institute. *Access:* http://www.sas.com/.
• **Rice Virtual Lab in Statistics.** This site offers some nice reviews of statistical concepts. It includes HyperStat, an online textbook, and simulations that demonstrate how some statistics equations work. *Access:* http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~lane/rvls.html.

Note

1. At the time this review was written, data from the 2000 census were not available. ∎

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