

Deborah Ludwig

# Open access at the University of Kansas

## Toward a campus initiative

*Column editor's note:* This issue's column provides us with more lessons on the development of institutional open access policies. Deborah Ludwig, assistant dean for collections and scholar services at the University of Kansas (KU) Libraries, explains how KU became the first public university in the United States to pass an institutional policy requiring faculty to make research articles available through an open access repository. Ludwig also looks forward to the implementation of the policy at KU, a topic that has not received as much attention.

**O**n April 30, 2009, the KU faculty senate passed a faculty-initiated university-wide open access policy<sup>1</sup> for deposit of scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles in the university's repository KU ScholarWorks. In doing so, KU became the first public university to pass an institutional mandate for open access deposit. The initial policy was crafted to allow a subsequent planning period for policy implementation with a period of vetting and review by campus faculty. Faculty conversation over a nine-month period culminated in a revised policy and implementation strategy, which passed faculty senate on February 11, 2010.<sup>2</sup>

Three key elements ultimately contributed to the success of KU faculty in passing and revising the open access policy: significant institutional support for open access scholarship built over more than a decade; leadership by faculty and for faculty in developing a policy and accompanying implementation strategy; and deep

engagement of faculty across disciplines in educated discussion and debate about the implications of open access scholarship over time. These factors were vital to the passage of our open access policy, and they continue to be important as we move beyond policy development and past the initial stages of implementation.

### **Institutional support for open access scholarship**

The KU faculty senate first endorsed open access in a March 2005 resolution, which called upon faculty and departments to seek amendments to copyright transfer forms and to deposit articles in KU ScholarWorks or other open repositories.<sup>3</sup> The resolution further encouraged faculty to become knowledgeable about journal business practices, encouraged administration and departments to provide incentives to support sustainable models of scholarly communication, and called upon the university libraries to provide resources to help faculty understand their options. Then provost, David Shulenburg, announced the resolution in a memo to faculty<sup>4</sup> with the admonition that because "the price and volume of scholarly literature far outstrip the capacity

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of the KU library (or any university library) to acquire all important material, we cannot take for granted the accessibility of scholarly literature.” Shulenburg was an early and influential leader in promoting open access to scholarship and illuminating the potential consequence of a constricted gateway to scholarship through the library budget. Notably, KU administrators since Shulenburg have also been supportive of faculty efforts to build momentum for open access scholarship and accompanying services.

KU has enjoyed a rich institutional history of supporting open access through various initiatives. KU was a founding partner in the open access collaboration at the tail end of the 1990s that became BioONE.<sup>5</sup> KU libraries was an early U.S. signatory of the high-energy physics open access initiative, SCOAP3,<sup>6</sup> and also served as a campus partner in developing support and resources for NIH open access compliance. The libraries are the digital home for several open access journals through the Journals@KU digital publishing program. Together institutional leadership, faculty, and libraries have invested nearly 15 years in the strategies for open access and these have contributed to an environment ripe for the successful development of a university-wide approach to sharing KU scholarship openly with the world.

### **Leadership by faculty for faculty**

The groundwork for implementing KU's open access repository extends back to 2003, when early adopters were recruited to test and provide feedback on the first KU repository interface. A series of conversations with selected faculty, deans, and research center directors took place concerning the implications of open access and key policy questions.<sup>7</sup> As KU ScholarWorks moved from a concept and test environment into full service at the university, a faculty advisory group formed and met with library and technology leadership.

In September 2008, a specific charge was given to the Research Committee of

the Faculty Senate, and a small ad hoc committee led by distinguished professor Town Peterson was appointed to “Develop a policy designed to promote open access to KU scholarship. The policy would outline a process to collect, preserve, and disseminate scholarly articles of KU faculty through KU ScholarWorks.”<sup>8</sup> The ad hoc committee developed the first policy passed by the senate. Between passage of the first policy in 2009, and the passage of final revisions in 2010, a program of outreach to faculty to ensure broad understanding and discussion of the policy and plan for implementation became the work of an implementation task force chaired by scholarly communication librarian, Ada Emmett.

### **Engagement of faculty**

Over the course of about nine months, the implementation task force met with 230 faculty through departmental and open brownbag meetings and gathered many more comments by e-mail, providing updated information and feedback to the faculty senate along the way.<sup>9</sup>

Even with the institutional history and focus on open access scholarship over many years at KU, the faculty was not universally familiar with the principles behind such a policy, and the tireless efforts and excellent leadership of Emmett, Peterson, and the task force represented a crucial effort to win the hearts and minds of faculty through patient and open discussion. Faculty articulated a number of concerns that needed to be addressed with factual information and a broad understanding of how faculty in various disciplines conduct research and publish journal literature. These concerns can be generalized as:

- Is the university assuming my copyright and taking my rights away?
- Doesn't this policy damage academic freedom?
- Will this policy interfere with or duplicate my efforts to participate in other open access repositories, such as arcXive, PubMed, or SSRN?

- Can a faculty member opt out once and permanently decline participation?
- Will the KU open access policy force editors of small society journals to give away the assets upon which they depend for sustaining the society?
- Will open access diminish the value or the prestige of KU faculty scholarship?
- Won't open access will damage or eliminate peer-review?
- Will departmental chairs be burdened with policing this policy and ensuring deposit?
- Why can't nonfaculty researchers publish in KU ScholarWorks? (Nonfaculty researchers can deposit in KU ScholarWorks. The policy, however, is specific to peer-reviewed journal articles of faculty.)

Emmett and Peterson were an effective faculty duo leading efforts to address these concerns and champion open access. They presided over a series of meetings with departments and open meetings of faculty, providing resources and discussion points to address the issues. They developed resources that included a list of frequently asked questions with answers, slide show presentations, and a Web site with regular communications on progress for the campus. Equally important, they not only led the implementation task force, which consisted of representatives from the faculty, administration, and campus IT, but they were also able to galvanize the task force members into an effective team able to speak comfortably and knowledgeably about the issues. If there is a lesson learned, it is the value in identifying and supporting strong faculty leadership (including librarians) who can effectively move policy from the theoretical level to real discussion of the very pragmatic concerns of faculty.

In hindsight, KU faculty attitudes about research, scholarship, and open access, gathered both anecdotally and in a formal survey, closely mirrored recently published findings of faculty attitudes found through other studies.<sup>10</sup> Beyond the immediate and sometimes personal concerns that faculty ex-

pressed about open access, there was clearly tension centered around the perception that open access might diminish the prestige and scholarly value of publication within systems of open access. While faculty stated their natural desire to see their research made widely available and cited, they also valued publication in the premier literature of their discipline. Tenure-seeking faculty were necessarily concerned that their publications be aligned with departmental promotion and tenure requirements. Of lesser interest for faculty was the pressure of closed access scholarship on the library budget. Arguments about the diminishing capacity of libraries to make scholarly journals available within the economic constraints of closed access systems may be powerful arguments for overhaul of scholarly communication in speaking to librarians and university leaders, but they were less tangible concepts for most faculty.

The very positive advantages of open access scholarship from a faculty perspective were reflected in a recent quote by KU Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Department Chair Marc Greenberg:

In our area, we typically publish in journals and anthologies that have a small specialist readership, but often what we have to say is of wider interest to historians, literary scholars, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, and linguists. Our works are now read more widely in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, as well as places we would not normally expect to be read, from Albania to Zimbabwe not to mention the U.S., where we have the highest number of hits.

One of our faculty received an invitation to give a distinguished guest lecture in Louisiana after an administrator (from a different field) had viewed her KU ScholarWorks piece on Russian culture. Recently I found my own work cited by scholars in Japan, Germany, and Norway, and I

have received e-mail from scholars in Iran, Hungary, Spain, Argentina, and Indonesia responding to my work. I attribute much of this to the availability of my work through open access.<sup>11</sup>

### **Moving beyond policy adoption**

As we now begin to move beyond policy development and the initial planning for open access implementation, two advisory groups, serving at the administrative and operational levels of the organization, will consider a number of strategic and pragmatic issues. Such issues include fostering the principles of open access beyond peer-reviewed journal articles as well as considering how to measure the impact of open access as the repository is more fully populated with all that KU can offer freely from its research endeavors.

At the upper level of university administration, an executive steering team, led by the dean of libraries, will be assembled to ensure that our open access strategies are aligned with KU's priorities for advancing research, teaching, and service. A faculty advisory group will also be formed with some continuing members from the initial policy implementation task force. They will focus on advancing open access principles and ensuring that repository services are easily integrated with the conduct of faculty research so that KU constructs a meaningful and enduring corpus of scholarship. In addition to journal articles, KU ScholarWorks holds monographs, conference proceedings, theses and dissertations, and interviews and oral histories. It is slowly expanding to include data sets. Expansion requires consulting and support services for faculty as well as technologies for easy deposit of newer forms of research along with accompanying tools for analysis and interpretation or other contextual artifacts.

At KU, as at other universities, the development and debate of an institutional open access policy has created a timely opportunity for discussion of the future of faculty scholarship. More experience and

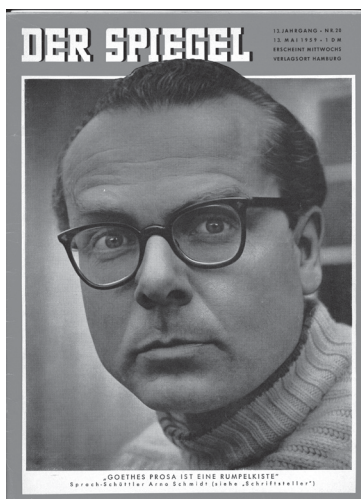
monitoring of open access at the institutional level will be required to know the extent to which such policy corresponds with actual success in opening up university research to the world. KU's early resolution encouraging faculty open access deposit has now moved to a stronger mandate in the form of policy, albeit one that is generous in allowing faculty to waive participation. A similar move by NIH to move from encouragement to a mandate for open deposit makes it clear that encouragement alone may not suffice. It will be our challenge to mature KU's early efforts into greater visibility of KU research through substantive growth in the rate of faculty deposit of peer-reviewed journal articles and through integration of the repository and the library role with the greater fabric of university management of research in its many forms.

### **Notes**

1. KU's open access policy is found at <https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/OpenAccess.htm>.
2. Ada Emmett and Town Peterson, "Achieving Consensus on the University of Kansas Open Access Policy" in Association of Research Libraries, "Strategies for Opening Up Content: Laying the Groundwork for an Open System of Scholarship," *Research Library Issues* 269, May 2010, [publications.arl.org/pdfdownload/s6944/view](http://publications.arl.org/pdfdownload/s6944/view).
3. The March 2005 KU faculty senate resolution: <https://documents.ku.edu/policies/provost/ScholarlyInformation.htm>.
4. Provost Shulenburg's memo: <https://documents.ku.edu/policies/provost/Provost-MemoScholInfo.doc>.
5. Marilu Goodyear and Adrian Alexander, "The Development of BioOne: Changing the Role of Research Libraries in Scholarly Communication," <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0005.302>.
6. See [http://scoap3.org/scoap3us\\_chrono.html](http://scoap3.org/scoap3us_chrono.html).

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radio-program guides, publisher blurbs, magazine articles and other materials, Schmidt sent the items over a period of 30 years to his older sister, Lucy Kiesler, who lived in the United States. The collection's value for Schmidt scholarship and research lies in the potential for philological investigation into the nature of his work. The family history of the collection also may provide resource material for a future, comprehensive biography of Schmidt. The collection was donated to the Portland State Library by Lucy Kiesler's daughter-in-law.



German author Arno Schmidt on the cover of *Der Spiegel*, from the collection of materials donated to the Portland State Library.

**A collection of 100 artists' books by 79** book artists has been received by the Oberlin

College Library. The collection was donated primarily by the individual artists in honor of Ruth Hughes, Oberlin Class of 1985 and chief cataloger at the Library Company of Philadelphia. An exhibition of the collection entitled "Show and Bestow: The Ruth Hughes Collection of Artists' Books" was on view at the Free Library of Philadelphia from November 20 to December 30, 2009 and at Oberlin from April 5 through June 10, 2010. An online exhibition of the collection as well as a PDF of the collection catalog are available from the collection Web site at [www.oberlin.edu/library/exhibits/ruth\\_hughes/ruthhughes.html](http://www.oberlin.edu/library/exhibits/ruth_hughes/ruthhughes.html). *ZZ*

("Open access...", continued from page 363)

7. For context, see program abstract and presentation for the 2004 Spring membership meeting of the Coalition for Networked Information: <http://www.cni.org/tfms/2004a.spring/abstracts/PB-implications-fyffe.html>.

8. "Final report of the faculty senate research committee for FY-09," [www2.ku.edu/~unigov/research09fr.pdf](http://www2.ku.edu/~unigov/research09fr.pdf).

9. See for example faculty senate minutes for October 27, 2009 at <http://www2.ku.edu/~unigov/fx102709min.shtml>.

10. See Roger C. Schonfel and Ross Housewright "Faculty Survey 2009: Key Strategic Insights for Libraries, Publishers,

and Societies," Ithaka S+R, April 2010, <http://www.ithaka.org/ithaka-s-r/research/faculty-surveys-2000-2009/Faculty%20Study%202009.pdf> and also Diane Harley, and Sophia Krzys Acord, Sarah Earl-Novell, Shannon Lawrence, C. Judson King. "Assessing the Future Landscape of Scholarly Communication," University of California, Berkeley, Center for Studies in Higher Education, January 2010, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/15x7385g>.

11. Press release on KU ScholarWorks at <http://www.lib.ku.edu/news/ku.scholarworks.ranking.shtml>. *ZZ*

("Mobbing in the library workplace," continued from page 366)

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