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Open Access Week 2013 Materials

Ammerman, Jack

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Boston University
Thank you very much. So, I'll set the stage a little bit, before the other three presenters go into more detail. I'll give a very brief overview of open access, update you on the repository activities in the last year, and talk a little about funding agency open access requirements and how we can help you satisfy them.

1. Brief overview of open access

So, a brief overview of open access, or OA. It is access to academic literature that is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. Most, because OA is never about not attributing the work. At the very least, creators get credit—and there may be other restrictions. And speaking of credit: the definition I just gave you is by Peter Suber, who directs the Scholarly Communication Office at Harvard. Suber's book titled Open Access was published by MIT Press last year. Its text was actually made available online in its entirety, for free, a year after it was published -- but we also have paper copies right over there, that we encourage you to read and keep.

[slide] Open access is compatible with peer review. Not all OA work is peer-reviewed, just as not all toll-access work is.

And here's something else that may surprise you: OA is currently practiced or allowed in some form by most publishers. If you want your peer-reviewed work to be open-access, most likely you do not need to change the venue in which you publish. This does vary by discipline, and there's a lot of advocacy still to be done with publishers, but we're here to help with that—and in all disciplines, there's already a lot we can make openly available under the current publisher rules.

In a nutshell, the details go like this: most publishers allow some form of an article to be made publicly available, sometimes after an embargo, the length of which varies depending on the discipline and the publication. The version that's most often allowed is the author's final draft, after peer review but before copy editing and layout. This, confusingly, is called a postprint. Some publishers, most notably Cambridge University Press and University of Chicago Press but also others, actually encourage you to make their final version of the article, called the publisher's copy, available after an embargo period. If you're ever confused about the rules set forth for a particular publication, I'd love to help you figure them out—and the most productive time to do that is when you're in publishing contract negotiations. My cards are right over there, and you can always email open-help@bu.edu as well.

Back to the open access movement. It is not subversive: it exists entirely within the current copyright system, and does not threaten traditional publishing. And it's big. Let's look at some numbers. As of this month:

- [slide] there are over 9900 peer reviewed journals listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (these are just the journals that are open access from the very beginning);
- [slide] more than 2400 OA repositories like OpenBU are listed in the Directory of
Open Access Repositories

- [slide] PubMed Central, the open repository of the NIH and National Library of Medicine, has over 2.8 million articles, and 1332 journals are depositing all of their content into PMC
- [slide] arXiv, the subject repository established in 1991, hosted at Cornell, and covering physics, mathematics and other sciences, is approaching a million full-text articles

Open access is not without its objectors. [slide] Here are the most common objections I hear voiced. People say that open access means low quality. Not true. Whatever journals you've published in, chances are, they do open access in some way. But wouldn't OA put them out of business? Well, no; [slide BACK] publishing in physics, for example, is alive and well despite over twenty years of arXiv activity. [slide] In a few minutes, you'll hear more from Jack Ammerman about business models for open access publishing.

Well, ok, but I don't want other people stealing my ideas. Sure, there's a chance, and maybe putting your stuff on the open internet increases that chance as compared to closed publication. But the benefits far outweigh the risk. Your knowledge gets out there. People can, and will, cite it more. If you choose an official venue like BU's open access repository, then the date stamp attached to each item will serve as documentation of who came up with these ideas when. Besides that, Suber, in his book, makes the point that open access makes plagiarism easier to detect. And ultimately, the biggest deterrent to plagiarism in the knowledge work industry is not toll access. It's the loss of reputation if the plagiarist gets caught.

Finally, some folks say, don't tell me where to publish. This is partly because, in some people's minds, the words "open access" are equivalent to "open access journal"—which is by definition a different journal from most of the ones they've been publishing in thus far. If we keep in mind the real, much broader definition of open access, this objection falls away.

2. Update on repository activities including electronic theses and dissertations

And with that, I'd like to give you an update on OpenBU activities in the last year. [slide] As you know, BU's institutional repository was set up partly in response to the votes by the Faculty and University Councils in 2008 and 2009 respectively, saying, open access is a good thing. We should do it here at BU. The repository, which was then called Digital Common, went live in late 2009. Here are some current stats. [slide]

We have over 6100 items, nearly 2200 of them deposited this calendar year. Just over 2500 of them are historical theses and dissertations -- we're digitizing all of BU's theses and dissertations from the beginning through at least 1963.

We have 56 items in two special collections, one of African Ajami manuscripts from the Senegal area, and another of a recipe box research collection. This number is
deceptively small: together, these items contain *thousands* of images.

We have just under 350 issues of BU Center and Institute publications. We have around 850 items from the School of Theology, mainly their archives and special collections. And most of the rest are peer-reviewed articles and out of print books authored by BU faculty.

Last academic year, we began the transition to entirely electronic thesis and dissertation submissions. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences May 2013 cohort went entirely electronic with their submissions. This year, we're working on bringing Med, Theology, and perhaps Engineering on board. This is a *big* enterprise, workflows still in progress, but there’s been generally positive feedback from students and huge savings for both students and the university.

Most theses, once processed, will be immediately available open-access through OpenBU. However, embargoes *are* possible, just as they were with print works, upon submission of a letter cosigned by the student and their advisor. (These are GRS rules. Rules will vary with the school.)

3. How we are/will be helping faculty comply with funding mandates

Lastly, I'd like to mention government funding mandates. [slide] Many of you have heard of the presidential directives issued by the Office of Science and Technology Policy, having to do with open access. More and more federal agencies are requiring that the results of federally funded research be made publicly available within a certain period after their publication, usually a year. In a few minutes you will hear more about this, but what I wanted to mention is how we can help you fulfill funding agency open access mandates.

Now, those of you in the humanities, I know this says science and technology, but I do also know that the NEH has implemented public access requirements at least in some of its programs. So this is really applicable across all disciplines.

So. If you are in publication contract negotiations, you are welcome to email us at any point and ask us to clarify your publisher's open access policies for you. We will look them up and let you know what they allow by default. When your postprint, or final author's draft, is ready, you can always email it to us and let us know when it is slated to be published. It would also help if you mentioned the federal funding you've received, if any. We'll deposit it into the repository, and embargo it for the appropriate period. At the end of the embargo period, the article will automatically become downloadable, and you'll be in compliance with federal regulations.

You'll notice that the onus of initiating all these transactions currently falls on you. We're aiming to change that! Shortly you will hear from Bob Hudson about university-level policy changes we're working on. When those go through, we anticipate both our staffing needs *and* our available resources to change. And then we plan to get more
proactive about seeking out our faculty and helping you deposit new articles. We will pay particular attention to recipients of federal grant funding, but that won't be our only focus. We'd like to make it as easy as possible on *you* to deposit all the work you want to make publicly available and make it part of BU's research portfolio.

And with that, I'll pass the word to our university librarian Bob Hudson, who will update you on open access policy work at BU.