

University Library Committee

Minutes

December 6, 2000

ULC MEMBERS: Deb Carver, Becky Dorsey, Esther Jacobson-Tepfer, Dan Pope, Gina Psaki, Michael Raymer, Marc Vanscheeuwijck.

GUESTS: Barbara Butler, Acting Head Science Library; Faye Chadwell, Head of Collection Development; Diane Sotak, Science Reference Librarian; Paul Dasonville (Psychology); Matt Ginsberg (CIRL); Peter O'Day (Biology); Gordon Sayre (English).

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Gina Psaki, chair. Gina reminded everyone that during the Nov. 15th meeting it was suggested that the ULC put together a proposal for the Senate on how the university might begin to address scholarly publishing concerns. This meeting is to discuss ideas for that proposal.

Deb provided a brief summary on this subject. Some commercial publishers continue to increase their journal prices at an exorbitant rate, forcing libraries to cancel more and more titles. These publishers tend to inflate their costs more dramatically than other publishers, particularly the societies.

At the Nov. 15th ULC meeting, Matt Ginsberg shared his personal experiences with Elsevier Publishing. (see minutes at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~libcom/dir00/001115.html>) To summarize, Matt suggests that the library cancel all journal titles with Elsevier. He stated that he almost always is able to find an article on the author's web site, rather than going to a journal. He also recommends that the University ask faculty to not submit papers to Elsevier for publishing. In response to his proposal, several concerns were raised. For example, not all authors post their articles, and if they do, the article may not be the final or complete version. There was no consensus to cancel all Elsevier titles, but there was general agreement and support of the issues raised by Matt and the library.

Faye Chadwell distributed a handout summarizing Elsevier holdings at UO, OHSU, OSU, and PSU showing the number of duplicate titles. Gina suggested that when the library begins another process of cancelling titles, that these duplicate titles be considered first. Deb stated that we have started conversations with the other libraries about canceling duplicate titles and sharing journals. A discussion followed on the various document delivery techniques, including copyright charges.

Another question asked was if we could scan all journal articles and post them to a UO web site for UO use only. Deb's reaction is that this may go beyond the acceptable limits within interlibrary loan practices, even if we were to pay copyright fees. She suspects this kind of practice would be challenged.

Esther suggested that the library establish a web site that lists journals and their contents, which would be easily accessible for individual disciplines. The web site could list which library holds the title. Barbara responded that this would be relatively easy for the library to do. Matt suggested that the library tell commercial publishers, e.g. Elsevier, that "we will subscribe to your journal if you agree to let UO authors retain their rights." Deb feels this may be a good starting point. To take this further, we should renegotiate the wording on the publishers' contracts to say that it is agreed that the author can put the article on his/her web page, make copies for his/her own purposes, and be able to distribute copies to individual scientists.

Deb recommended that we contact ARL's Scholarly Communication Office for advice on implementing Matt's suggestion with regard to contract language - allowing authors to retain rights. It was suggested that UO legal counsel determine if there are any legal ramifications of the various ideas discussed today.

Paul and Dan expressed concern that these suggestions are not addressing the original issue of how to keep publishers from increasing their journal costs at such a high rate. Deb replied that the suggestions discussed today may not respond specifically to the increasing journal costs, but they might allow us to cancel some titles if the information/articles are obtainable directly from the authors. This in turn may force publishers to not increase their serial prices at such a high rate.

Gina stated that she and Deb will draft a summary, listing 3-4 recommendations that the ULC has discussed. The draft will be sent to the ULC for review, before forwarding onto the Senate. Deb added that it might be helpful to read the University of Wisconsin Library's report on this issue that was submitted to their Senate. It does a good job of articulating these problems globally and locally. (see http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/News/ULC/reports/98_99.pdf)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Submitted by Sheila Gray