

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

ACADEMIC SENATE

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION
TELECONFERENCE MINUTES – JUNE 1, 2006**

Present: Ben Crow, Elaine Tennant, Dan Greenstein, Ami Glazer, Nick Jewell, Dick Terdiman, John Ober, Larry Pitts, Karen Butter, and Todd Giedt [*Note: Ben Crow chaired this meeting.*]

I. Next Steps

ISSUE/REPORT: Larry Pitts said that the copyright policy proposal has been approved by the Assembly. He expects that President Dynes will assign the task of assembling a Senate-Administrative group to review the policy to Provost Rory Hume. The Senate-Administrative task force will most likely begin meeting in September 2006.

DISCUSSION: Members emphasized the need for legal expertise on this task force. Specifically, they mentioned Pam Samuelson (UCB) and Peter Manels (UCB) as possible candidates. Larry remarked that Mary McDonald will most likely already be on the task force as the representative from the Office of General Counsel (OGC).

Professor Pitts also briefed committee members on the CIRM issue. He said that the language for the draft regulations was changed without his knowledge, and now only requires that a 500-word abstract of published CIRM-sponsored research to be placed on the CIRM website within 60 days. He is drafting a response that would add language, which stipulates that within six months of publication, all published CIRM-supported research results should be placed in a non-commercial open-access online repository.

ACTION: Professor Pitts will distribute the response to the CIRM draft regulations to SCSC members for additional comments.

A. Monograph Subventions

ISSUE/REPORT: Dick Terdiman introduced the proposal. It suggests that there ought to be negotiations between UCORP and UCOP to set a level for subventions, which would be administered at the campus level. The proposal also recommends that individual applications for subventions would be made to the divisional Committees on Research (COR's). The COR's would make their decisions on the applications after consultation with the relevant dean.

DISCUSSION: Members noted that this seems to be targeted for first-time authors, as opposed to junior faculty members progressing towards tenure. It confuses the disciplinary publishing problem with the tenure problem. While subventions should primarily be reserved for junior faculty members, publishing in certain technical fields does not get easier after the first publication. The formulation in the white paper was to support “faculty, particularly junior faculty”, which is less specific than this proposal. One possibility is simply to offer subventions to faculty publishing in peer-reviewed presses. Members suggested that the wording might be rephrased as “subventions in

support of faculty, particularly non-tenured faculty...” While members agreed that publishing monographs in certain technical fields is particularly difficult, some members did not think that solving this problem should be the objective of this proposal. On this point, Dick Terdiman reminded members that UC already provides \$1,000 per year in subventions for books in certain scientific fields published by UC Press. Members agreed to the phraseology above, and they felt that these subventions could be applied towards the publication of monographs beyond a faculty member’s first book.

Members also discussed how this policy would work on the divisional level. One member cautioned the committee against dictating to the divisions how to execute this policy. Instead, he argued that the policy should be stated generally, which would allow the COR’s to gather the appropriate expertise to properly evaluate whether certain projects are deserving of subventions. While most members agreed with this argument, they noted that in practice, divisions may select different committees to make the subvention decisions. One member stressed the importance of insisting that the divisional COR’s be charged with making these decisions. He said that since the COR would be consulting with the cognisant dean anyway, it only needs to be empowered to decide if any given project fits within the subvention guidelines. On this point, Consultant John Ober made an observation on quality. He said that the subvention cannot be used unless it meets the publisher’s quality marker. Dick projected that about 85% of the projects would meet the guidelines, with judgment necessary on the marginal 15%. One member remarked that most projects could be evaluated on an administrative level since the guidelines would be fairly straight-forward. The COR’s would only have to look at those applications that were either rejected or marginal. After further discussion, members agreed that subvention decisions should fall under the jurisdiction of the divisional COR’s.

Members also briefly discussed vanity presses. They stressed that the subvention proposal should not encourage publishing in the so-called vanity presses.

ACTION: Members charged Lynne Withey and Dick Terdiman to rewrite the proposal with the following additions: (1) Rather than stating that subventions are for first books only, it should be rewritten to read “subventions in support of faculty, particularly non-tenured faculty...” (2) Under the “subvention decisions” section, it should be rewritten to read that “applications would go to the consignant Dean and in case of any complications; the applications would go to the divisional COR.” And (3) under the “problem” section, language will be added addressing publishing in so-called “vanity presses.”

B. Responding to Journal Practices

ISSUE/REPORT: Consultant John Ober reported that a group of senior staff in the UC libraries have developed a model for value-based pricing of journals. This model uses the number of citations per article to appropriately price a journal. This is a refinement of the standard ‘impact factor,’ which takes into account the current pricing of journals and uses as a benchmark the median price for a citation or article from non-profit publishers within a disciplinary domain. Therefore, the model allows the university librarians

(UL's) to determine a price point would be for all other journals within that domain, or how far away the list price actually is (from the prices of non-profit journals). Based on this model, it does seem possible to align the willingness to pay with measures of value.

DISCUSSION: Members asked about possible push-back from publishers. John mentioned that they are using this model in negotiations with a publisher right now. He added two points. First, as this modeling becomes more sophisticated, a factor for usage may need to be added as long as that factor does not have a linear relationship with usage. For example, as usage increases, UC could negotiate around increased usage, but not in a linear manner. Second, value-based pricing will operate in tandem with a set of principles, which state that UC does not wish to be charged for the extras that publishing companies make available on their websites. One member expressed his concern that journal publishers could manipulate usage factors (i.e. 'hits'), which would have the effect of artificially raising journal prices. Another member worried that solely using the number of citations could also prove to be problematic, especially if it seeps into the academic personnel review process. He said that usage is important in the measure of value, even if it cannot directly be used in the negotiation process.

Members also discussed how this value-pricing model would fit in with the copyright policy. While it may be that UC simply sets a standard that most journal publishers will simply follow, one member suggested that it might be possible to identify journals that currently don't have an open-access type copyright policy, and approach them earlier with regards to pricing. Professor Pitts remarked that he recently met with the journal editors of Nature and Science. He reported that Nature already gives copyright back to the authors after six months and encourages them to put them into an open-access format. Elsevier allows authors to post their accepted manuscript (but not the final published version) in an open-access repository after a certain amount of time. Consultant John Ober noted that while both of these commercial publishers are moving in the right direction in terms of open-access, they continue to price their products higher.

ACTION: Consultant John Ober will draft an announcement of value-based price model for journals, which will be forwarded to UCOL and SCSC for comments.

C. Academic Personnel Evaluation

ISSUE: Chair Crow asked how issues of academic personnel evaluation should be addressed on the basis of the white paper deliberations.

DISCUSSION: By and large, members agreed that it would be appropriate to simply communicate these issues to divisional CAP chairs. This could easily be done at the Academic Senate fall retreat. Another possibility is inviting the UCAP chair to the fall UCOL meeting to discuss these issues further. Members noted that there is a perception that CAP members simply defer to the well-known and prestigious journals in making tenure decisions. It may only be necessary to remind CAP members of this perception.

ACTION: Ben Crow will invite the UCAP chair to the fall UCOL meeting; UCOL members will also try to go to the divisional CAP meetings (or invite divisional CAP Chairs to divisional library committee meetings).

D. Scholarly Societies

ISSUE: Professor Pitts suggested that once the copyright policy is formally established, SCSC should send a letter to the presidents/chairs of scholarly societies, informing them of the new policy.

DISCUSSION: Consultant John Ober mentioned that the Office of Scholarly Communication is creating a mock-up web page on scholarly societies, called “Society Best Practices.” The page examines about a dozen societies and rates their performance according to the criteria outlined in the scholarly societies’ white paper.

II. Charge and Membership of the Proposed UCOLASC Task Force

ISSUE: Chair Crow noted that UCOL will meet by teleconference a couple of times over the summer and it will begin to assemble a task force to address scholarly communication issues. He said that while the standing committee represents the divisions well, it does not represent the range of experience and expertise that is present on the SCSC. Finally, the Committee on Committees (COC) must approve all members of the task force. He invited SCSC members to become members of this task force.

DISCUSSION: One member addressed the issue of the longevity of the task force and the turn-over of its members. He suggested that this task force should have varying tenures (i.e. members with one-, two-, and three-year membership terms). Members also briefly discussed the budgetary implications of this task force. While this task force will utilize teleconferences (thereby minimizing the budgetary impact), members recognized that additional face-to-face meetings may need to be scheduled (and paid for out of the UCOLASC budget).

ACTION: Chair Crow will contact SCSC members by email who would like to serve on the UCOLASC task force.

III. Outreach to Faculty (FAQ's, Website)

ISSUE: Chair Crow noted that the FAQ is being developed by Analyst Todd Giedt and Consultant John Ober. The FAQ is being developed from the article on copyright that Todd is writing for the Senate Source.

DISCUSSION: Members briefly discussed where the FAQ would be posted. One member suggested that it could be posted on the “reshaping scholarly communication” website. Consultant John Ober explained that there is a UC-wide “Reshaping Scholarly Communication” website that is produced by the Office of Scholarly Communication. The divisional libraries also have similar websites. However, if the FAQ will be owned by the faculty, it makes some sense to post it on the UCOL or SCSC websites. Announcements of this FAQ could also be made at the divisional library meetings.

Regarding general faculty outreach, members suggested that congratulatory letters should eventually be sent to new UC journal article authors, informing them that their article will be posted in the e-scholarship repository unless they object. Consultant Dan Greenstein clarified that the technology necessary to facilitate this is not ready yet. He said that his office is currently engaged in planning on how to best do this once the copyright policy is in place (probably by Fall 2008).

ACTION: Consultant John Ober will draft FAQ; Analyst Todd Giedt will send out the Senate Source article to the SCSC.

IV. Communication with Publishers/Outreach to other Universities and Coalitions

ISSUE: Chair asked for suggestions on communication with publishers, along with ideas on outreach to other universities and coalitions.

DISCUSSION: One member suggested having short discussions with some publishers whenever their representatives travel to Northern California. Consultant Dan Greenstein thought that it is best to decouple discussions between the University and a publisher and the library and a publisher. There are a couple ways to do this. One is to convene some one-on-one meetings between UCOL and publishers. Another option is to plan a summit to showcase the ideas contained in the white papers. Such a summit could also be multi-institutional. Members agreed that both options are not mutually exclusive however. They stressed that the cooperation of faculty and administration (especially university librarians) is important in these efforts. One member cautioned that it may be prudent to wait on a summit until the proposed policies are in place.

ACTION: UCOL Chair Ben Crow will write a letter to Council Chair Oakley suggesting such a summit. Ben Crow/Elaine Tennant will establish contacts with faculty at other institutions who are involved in scholarly communication initiatives.

V. White Papers

ISSUE: Chair Crow asked for suggestions for refining the existing SCSC white papers.

DISCUSSION: One member suggested that different SCSC members/consultants be assigned to certain white papers for this purpose. That person could review the comments received for that particular white paper and make the necessary revisions this summer. Members briefly discussed publishing these papers in a publication such as the Chronicle of Higher Education. However, after further discussion, they agreed that it may be best to wait on publishing these white papers. Instead, scholarly communication may be better served by an announcement that President Dynes is assembling a task force that is finalizing the copyright policy.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Attest: Ben Crow, UCOL Chair/SCSC Member
Prepared by: Todd Giedt, Committee Analyst