Library Policy and Operations Committee (2012-2013)

Report and Recommendations

Northeastern University Open Access

The Faculty Senate has been discussing open access (OA) policies since at least 2003. The earliest discussion was prompted by the inability of money budgeted for library expenditures to match the increasing costs of scholarly subscriptions. This concern, which continues to today, is complemented by a desire for Northeastern scholars’ work to be widely accessible. Also, funders continue to advance the requirement that supported research be available to the public. For example, the US National Institutes for Health requires this within 12 months after such research is published. In 2013 all federal agencies with research budgets in excess of $100M were directed to adopt similar policies. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/02/22/expanding-public-access-results-federally-funded-research>. Significantly, dozens of colleges and universities have adopted open access policies reflecting the importance of these issues. <http://www.arl.org/sparc/about/COAPI/> Hence, the Library Policy and Operating Committee (LPOC) recommends the following so as to ensure Northeastern is addressing the needs of its scholars, funders, and users of our work in a way that is actionable, clear, and consistent.

These recommendations cover (1) the depositing of faculty publications in Northeastern's institutional repository known as IRis (“green OA”), (2) funding for faculty publications in journals without access barriers (“gold OA”) but which may require author fees, and (3) the evaluation of faculty with respect to OA related activity such as publishing.

Information on Northeastern University's existing open access resources can be found online at <http://subjectguides.lib.neu.edu/openaccess>.
1. Open Access Repositories ("Green OA")

In 2008-2009 the Faculty Senate resolved that "all scholarly works published by University Faculty be henceforth made available on the Library-administered Northeastern University digital repository site IRis no later than twelve months after the original publication appears, subject only to those residual restrictions posed by publishers on the publication of such scholarly works." To further the goal of having almost all NU’s scholarly activity in IRis, the LPOC recommends that Northeastern adopt a policy in which faculty members grant the University (1) the right to collect all scholarly articles within IRis and (2) the (non-exclusive) right to make those articles publicly accessible. Non-scholarly writing (e.g., popular articles) and scholarly writings which generate royalties (e.g., textbooks and monographs) are to be excluded from this policy. To ensure that authors may place their scholarly articles in any Journal or publication, without restriction, if requested by a faculty member, Northeastern must grant a waiver of the public access right (i.e., a “dark deposit”) for a specified time or indefinitely. We recommend that this policy be completely specified via participation of faculty and other representatives of the University as appropriate, such as the offices of the Provost or General Counsel, based upon the Harvard model.

<http://osc.hul.harvard.edu/modelpolicy>

2. Open Access Journals ("Gold OA")

The greater part of the Library’s $5 million annual expenditure is still on subscription journals. In accord with NU’s overall goal of supporting open access to research, the LPOC proposes:

a. The Library set aside a fraction of its annual subscription budget to support faculty publication in OA journals, with criteria to be further specified with participation of faculty representatives (e.g., see <http://osc.hul.harvard.edu/hope>).

b. That fraction should increase in keeping with the extent to which scholarly activity migrates towards OA journals.
c. Where subscription journals must be dropped to pay for this shift, such journals should still be available to faculty via library consortia or other forms of access.

3. **Junior faculty.**

The Committee anticipates that an increasing number of faculty members’ scholarly publications will be in open access venues. This generational shift will affect junior faculty concerned with tenure and promotion. The Senate's minutes from 2008-2009 note that the implications of open access on tenure should be "thoroughly investigated by the Senate Committee for Academic Policy." To encourage junior faculty to consider OA, the LPOC suggests the Academic Policy Committee (and others) consider adding the following language either to the Faculty Handbook or to departmental guidelines on tenure:

a. To the extent permitted by College and Departmental policies, deposit, citation, and downloads of publications in a repository that gives open access to all is to be counted as merit towards merit review and at time of tenure.

b. Publications in reputable OA journals will not be discounted at time of merit review or tenure, compared to publication in closed (subscription-only) journals, solely because of OA status.

c. Service towards OA publications (such as reviewing or editorial work) will be regarded as having merit.

Respectfully submitted,

2012-2013 LPOC:
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