



ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES



Association of College
& Research Libraries
A Division of the American Library Association

Institute on Scholarly Communication

EXAMPLE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN FROM A SMALL COLLEGE

1. Background: Describe your institution with regard to its faculty, mission, student body, library collections, etc. (1 paragraph minimum, 1 page maximum)

Small College's mission statement is: Small College is a unique national university where liberal arts and professional programs complement each other. Small College educates men and women for a lifetime of critical thinking and strong leadership characterized by continued intellectual exploration, creativity, and imagination.

A Small College education enables students to interact daily with faculty who exemplify a passion for learning and a dedication to teaching and scholarship. Small College fosters a residential, co-curricular environment in which students develop intellectual maturity, personal conviction and strength of character, informed by a deep understanding of different cultures and diverse perspectives. Small College seeks to educate our students to serve the common good and to promote justice in ways sensitive to the moral and ethical dimensions of life.

With 3,350 undergraduates and 150 graduate students, we feel that we successfully combine the personal attention of a small college with the academic resources of a large university. We offer 54 majors and 64 minors in the liberal arts and sciences, engineering, management, music, and education. We have 291 full time faculty and 19 part-time. Nearly 96 percent hold Ph.D. or equivalent terminal degrees; 59 percent are tenured. No classes are taught by graduate students. Our student-faculty ratio is 11 - 1.

Although scholarly communication concerns are felt by all of us in the academic community, Small College pragmatically shows its commitment to faculty research in the University's strategic plan. The plan will reduce faculty's teaching load to a five - course load from our previous six course load, with the potential for giving faculty more time for research and scholarly activity. Small College has traditionally valued faculty scholarship and its important contributions to our students' academic experiences.

Information Services and Resources (ISR) is a merged organization combining the Library and computing services to facilitate working together to accomplish our mission of supporting the academic and administrative functions of Small College University. The book collection totals about 672,000. We have over 2,000 print journal subscriptions and full-text access to over 16,000 journal titles. Campus-

wide, students have available for their use over 570 networked computers in the library, computer labs, and classrooms.

2. Institutional Environment: How aware are faculty of issues such as problems with journal publishing, problems with monograph publishing, author copyright transfer options, how commercial publisher practices differ from not for profit publisher practices, open access journals, institutional or disciplinary repositories, etc.? (Talk about which issues seem to be of greatest visibility on your campus now.)

- Faculty are aware of open access issues, although it varies by academic department. At a minimum, open access issues are being discussed.
- Some faculty are concerned about archiving or the lack of archiving of electronic publications.
- Many faculty do not seem to be concerned about authors' rights although that again depends on the academic discipline. Many faculty just sign away their rights but with the belief that they get what they want from the transaction.
- Faculty are aware of the differences between not-for-profit publishing and commercial publishing.
- Faculty are somewhat skeptical of electronic-only journals, even when peer reviewed, especially for tenure and promotion concerns. Many of these journals are still too new and lack established credibility.
- They also do not think that they get enough "credit" for peer reviewing responsibilities.
- They also do not think that they get enough "credit" for journal editing responsibilities.

3. Preparedness: What has your library been doing to build understanding of scholarly communication issues and faculty perspectives among its own staff?

One of ISR's values is that we value our role in the academic mission of the University and we certainly see the challenges in scholarly communication as a part of that. In addition to the development of the Scholarly Communication Group in Fall 2004 and the enhanced understanding within that group, many other staff have been exposed to the invited speakers and reading materials that have been made available. Institute attendance will of course enhance the attendees' insight.

4. Outreach Efforts: What has your library been doing to actively work with faculty to raise awareness of scholarly communication issues and build support for actions that could improve the system of scholarly communication? (How are they responding?)

During the fall of 2005 Information Services and Resources (ISR) at Small College University began a conversation with faculty scholars and editors concerning the changes taking place in scholarly communication and publishing. Our project has included newsletter articles, informational pamphlets, and a bibliography of suggested readings; sponsored web cast panel discussions and invited speakers; and luncheon programs all aimed at increasing awareness of the sweeping changes occurring in scholarly publishing. A group "poster session" was prepared and two members of the group presented to a regional conference program on open access publishing. They also participated in a panel discussion. Our efforts continued in

2006 with the spring Knowledge and Information series speaker and with an outside speaker's presentation on authors' rights.

We highlighted some of the changes in scholarly communication and publishing in our ISR@newsletter, shared SPARC pamphlets, and distributed a bibliography of relevant readings and web sources.

ISR hosted several lunch discussions with an invited group of faculty editors. They shared their diverse experiences and some of the challenges of being editors and researchers. This prompted many questions, and a lively discussion among the editors and ISR staff. It also provided us with an opportunity to raise awareness concerning some of the current issues in scholarly communication and publishing.

For a number of years ISR has sponsored an annual "Knowledge and Information" lecture series. This series provides opportunities to focus on scholarly communication issues with engaging outside speakers. We have invited such varied guests as an author and futurist; and a College Librarian. We hosted the editor of an open access science journal with no print edition; and University Librarian and Library Director from a university in the region. An ILS vendor's President of Innovation was our spring 2006 speaker. A staff member from a library association gave a presentation on authors' rights. These credible speakers have helped raise campus awareness of critical topics in scholarly communication and publishing. They have paved the way for further discussions, and for faculty and administration support for innovation and change.

Small College and ISR have been SPARC supporters and a member institution since 1999. We will be joining Portico in the very near future. Our ongoing conversation on scholarly communication has been particularly successful with the Small College Biology Department. We subscribe to BioOne, BioMed Central, and the Public Library of Science OA journals. The next section, "Investment" lists additional subscriptions.

Our newly created Scholarly Communication website pulls together all of our efforts, with an overview of the issues, a review of trends and new developments, information on ISR programs and activities, links to resources, and the steps that faculty can take to influence the current publishing system.

5. Investment: What has your library been doing to promote new models of scholarly communication such as new forms of publishing, use of open access journals, promotion of institutional or disciplinary repositories, etc.

SPARC: We are a member of SPARC, the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition dedicated to the dissemination of scholarly information
Speakers: We have had several speakers talk about these issues.

Portico: We are joining with Portico, whose service offers a permanent archive of electronic scholarly journals, thereby providing protection against the potential loss of access to e-literature integral to a library's collection.

We subscribe to: JSTOR, Project Muse, and various SPARC partner project publications.