These guides are tools designed for library leaders to use for organizing a summer- or semester-long discussion series. Each guide offers a brief scoping statement, a suggested reading or resource to review, and a set of discussion questions to launch an hour-long informal conversation among library staff.

revised May 2008

Developed by the Association of Research Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication
The complete series is at www.arl.org/sc/brownbag/

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Launching the Conversation: How to Talk with Faculty

Discussion Leader’s Guide (revised May 2008)
The first session sets a tone and provides a foundation for further discussions among library staff of particular issues. Each brown bag session provides an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of a particular set of issues involved in the changing processes of scholars’ communication efforts. This guide is designed for a simple hour-long lunchtime discussion. Prework will be essential in creating common ground and providing a foundation for the conversation. Distribute the assignment at least a week prior to the session. A list of discussion questions are arranged in sequence below, but feel free to skip some if you want to spend more time on particular questions. It is not necessary to distribute the questions before the session; however, if you think it would be helpful to your group in launching discussion, consider sharing a couple of the questions in advance.

Scoping Statement
This discussion session is designed to launch a series of discussions on a range of topics relating to the ongoing changes in how scholars and researchers convey what they learn as scholars and researchers. While any changes in publishing practices or the development of new communication practices will affect the library, fundamentally the research communities in which campus faculty participate will shape these changes in ways that librarians cannot.

Ongoing conversations with individual faculty members are an important part of any effort to educate, engage, and partner with researchers and scholars in addressing the ongoing evolution of the practice of scholarly communication. It is often daunting to think about beginning these kinds of conversations. We may already have had some memorable conversations that didn’t go quite as we expected. As one library director noted, “My goal is now to have a conversation not a convert.”

Whether we want to build support for reallocating library resources, deposits of works into institutional or other repositories, authors’ management of copyrights in their works, or some other issue related to the effective workings of the scholarly communication system, we have to create strategies for capturing faculty member’s attention and launching conversations that address their needs at least as much as ours.

Goals
Participants begin to recognize when researchers and librarians may have different views and use different language when discussing particular aspects of change in scholars’ communication practices.

Participants develop new ideas for how they could launch conversations on a scholarly communication topic with an individual faculty member.

Optional Tools for Facilitating Discussion
- A flip chart or white board for brainstorming and gathering responses, particularly for the later questions.
- A handout of the home page for the Create Change Web site.

Prework for Participants
(Distribute prior to the session with the directions below.)

Review the Create Change Web Site, all sections, at http://www.createchange.org.

Read at least one of the faculty interviews at http://www.createchange.org/cases/scholars. Choose the one that interests you most. (Alternatively, ask everyone to read a particular interview.)

Discussion Questions

- The Web site highlights, among other things, that researchers and scholars are already using the Web to create sophisticated new kinds of publications; the frustrations a researcher might encounter in their use of even a large library in the course of doing their research; and what other researchers have said about changes in their field. What did you notice about the choice of topics or how “problems with scholarly communication” are framed?
- How are the topics discussed by scholars and researchers different from those you would highlight with a group of librarians?
- Researchers and librarians often see problems and opportunities in changing scholarly communication from different perspectives. What reactions did you have reading the researcher’s statements in the interview?
- Very seldom do faculty members simply agree with us when we first raise a scholarly communication issue that is a concern for librarians. What issues have you brought up in conversation with an individual faculty member? What concerns, objections, questions did that person raise?
- What do you think should be on a short list of scholarly communication-related topics that would successfully get at least some faculty members’ attention?
- Create a list of ways to lead into a dialog with a researcher on one of these topics. How might the researcher’s discipline influence the way you approach the topic?

Further Reading
http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3336451.0011.108

http://cshe.berkeley.edu/publications/docs/scholarlycomm_report.pdf