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.

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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The Changing Roles of Scholarly Societies in Knowledge Exchange

Discussion Leader's Guide
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 discussion questions before the session; however, if you think it would be helpful to your group in launching discussion, consider sharing a couple of the discussion questions in advance.

Scoping Statement
Scholarly societies have largely been created to foster the exchange of new knowledge among members of a research community. In pursuing this common mission societies have developed a wide range of activities adapted to the practices of the research areas they serve. As the means and mechanisms for communicating new knowledge shift significantly, societies are confronted by the need to reevaluate their role in the scholarly communication process.

Researchers and scholars are deeply invested in their societies and many perform leadership roles where they may increasingly be confronted by the need to reevaluate their role in the scholarly communication process.

Goals
Participants explore perspectives of two scholarly societies that have invested in significant evaluation of new publishing models.

Participants consider how public statements from scholarly societies provide opportunities to initiate discussion with faculty about scholarly communication issues their societies raise.

Optional Tools for Facilitating Discussion
• A flip chart or white board for brainstorming and gathering responses, particularly for the later questions.

• Copies of the two statements from scholarly societies.

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

Read one or both of the following recent statements from scholarly societies:

American Society for Cellular Biology

American Philological Association and the Archeological Institute of America. Task Force on Electronic Publications
http://www.apaclassics.org/Publications/e-publishing.html

Discussion Questions

② What do you notice is similar in the two statements?

② Sometimes organizations are motivated by the possibilities of new opportunities; sometimes they are looking for solutions to specific problems. What do you think motivated these societies to undertake their analyses of their scholarly communication efforts?

② What is your reaction to the ideas the American Philological Association offers? Which ones do you think might be appealing to scholars and researchers in disciplines with which you work?

② Where faculty on your campus are members of scholarly societies making these kinds of statements, how interested and involved are they in learning about their society’s projects or programs? What are the kinds of recommendations you feel most strongly relate to campus scholarly communication concerns?

② If you brought a statement like one of these to the attention of faculty on campus, what reactions might they have?

② How might the recommendations in these reports affect faculty in the corresponding disciplines on your campus?

② What effects might these recommendations have on the library’s activities?

② Some societies are better prepared than others to take on new activities in the scholarly communication arena. What might be the hallmarks of well-prepared organizations? What might be first steps?

Further Reading
http://www.arl.org/newsltr/242/scholsociety.htm

http://web.sfn.org/content/Publications/NeuroscienceNewsletter/index.htm

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