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Serials & E-Resources News

Report on the ACRL Scholarly Communications Roadshow Thursday, May 16, 2013 Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Illinois

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Sponsored by Illinois Wesleyan University and Illinois State University in cooperation with the Consortium of Academic Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), the ACRL Scholarly Communications Roadshow was hosted at Illinois Wesleyan University. The one-day workshop was presented by Stephanie Davis-Kahl, the Scholarly Communications Librarian at Illinois Wesleyan University and Molly Keener, the Scholarly Communications Librarian from Wake Forest University.

The workshop began with a discussion of specific projects demonstrating emerging opportunities in scholarly communication. These projects show the power and potential of open scholarship. The Polymath Project, for example, uses a wiki to allow open contribution to the solution of complex mathematical problems to a broad spectrum of mathematicians.

The second session focused on access issues. It began with an overview of the scholarly communication system and explored different issues that impact the system. The session concluded with a discussion of how these issues create problems and opportunities for libraries and other stakeholders. For example, institutional repositories can provide free access to taxpayer funded research, and therefore respond to the increasing pressure by state governments.

The third session addressed intellectual property issues by offering an overview of copyright and discussing how authors can manage and protect their copyrights. This was reinforced by a hands-on exercise examining copyright transfer agreements. One important point raised during this session was that many faculty members sign copyright agreements without reading them and are not aware that they can often successfully negotiate changes to those agreements. Librarians, however, can play a role in educating faculty regarding their rights and responsibilities as copyright holders.

Campus engagement was the subject of the final session of the workshop. During this session attendees learned why it is important to engage in conversations about scholarly communication. Both presenters and attendees shared ideas regarding how to engage different campus groups. Specifically, all participants discussed workshops and other formal events devoted to scholarly communication, but all concurred that individual relationships with faculty members and conversations about their research often provide the best opportunities to discuss scholarly communication issues.

Attending this workshop was a great introduction for librarians new to scholarly communication issues, but there were also plenty of opportunities for those with more experience to learn from their colleagues and share their own experiences. The presenters provided useful information and ideas and encouraged attendees to contribute to the conversation. In addition, the breaks and lunch offered opportunities to network with other librarians interested in scholarly communication issues. For more information about the ACRL Scholarly Communications Roadshow, go to http://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/scholcomm/roadshow.