Profiles

Profile of Lisa Macklin, Director of Scholarly Communications Office, Library and Information Technology Services at Emory University and Vision Speaker at 33rd Annual NASIG Conference

Christian Burris, Profiles Editor

Photo courtesy of Lisa Macklin

Lisa Macklin will be one of three Vision Speakers at the upcoming 33rd Annual NASIG Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. She is the Director of the Scholarly Communications Office for the Robert W. Woodruff Library at Emory University in Atlanta. She has also collaborated with the Library Policy Committee and the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence in Open Access Conversations at Emory, and she helped to foster the adoption of Emory's Open Access Policy, the OpenEmory digital repository, and the Open Access Publishing Fund. Her interests include transformations in scholarship and publishing, including new models of scholarship in digital form and the Open Access

movement. My interview with Ms. Macklin was completed on Monday, February 19, 2018 by e-mail.

What led you into the field of scholarly communications?

I started my career as a serials librarian and found myself doing contracts as we began to purchase CD-ROMs and electronic journals. I realized that the large publishers had in-house lawyers who drafted these contracts. I went to law school in part to level the playing field in these contract negotiations. I also wanted to have a better understanding of the legal issues that impact libraries, including copyright. After I finished law school, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to move from electronic resources into scholarly communications at Emory's Libraries.

What are some of the challenges that you have seen in terms of scholarly communication?

I think one challenge is getting faculty attention at the right time and in the right way to build a good understanding of the nuances of publishing, including open access, their rights as authors under copyright, and the ongoing shifts and changes in the scholarly communication ecosystem. As scholarly communication continues to evolve, it can be difficult for faculty to keep informed in a meaningful way unless they encounter something new in producing or publishing their own scholarship. We now have opportunities for open peer review, Altmetrics, open research data sets, and open annotations, among other innovations. The implications of these innovations are not always immediately understood by our authors.

They also often don't understand they are the copyright owner of their scholarship until and unless they give away those rights.

Does open access have a role in the understanding of scholarly communication?

Absolutely, but I don't think scholarly communication is only about open access. While publishing open access allows authors to reach a wider audience, perhaps even a new and unknown audience, distribution is only a part of the scholarly communication ecosystem.

What are some of the open access initiatives that you have fostered at Emory?

Our first open access initiative was passing an open access policy, which resulted from a year of open access conversations with faculty across campus. After the policy was passed, we created the open access repository for faculty works called OpenEmory, which launched in the fall of 2012. At the same time we launched an open access publishing fund, which is ongoing, and serves as a fund of last resort for faculty and students. We also have an open data repository, Dataverse. In the last year we launched a new website for the Scholarly Communications Office and a new website for research data which pulls together all of the various research data services available at Emory. Finally, electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) moved into the Scholarly Communications Office several years ago, and we have just moved ETDs to the Samvera Hyrax repository platform.

Since it can be instructive to talk about things that you tried but didn't work out as you had hoped, I also want to mention the open education initiative we had for two years. We did mini-grants for faculty, and some really interesting work was supported, but it didn't lead to either the creation or use of OERs that we had hoped. We are now working on bringing together multiple groups from across campus to promote existing resources for affordable textbooks and teaching materials for faculty and students. I think this is an example of trying a new initiative, evaluating how well

it is working to meet your goals, and changing course if necessary. In scholarly communications there is always something new, and we should feel emboldened to experiment with the new services and tools we offer as well.

How have faculty responded to the OpenEmory repository?

When we were having the open access conversations with faculty prior to creating and adopting an open access policy, we frequently heard from faculty that they wanted the deposit in any open access repository to be a part of what they already do. When Emory began implementing the faculty profile system Symplectic Elements, we worked with Symplectic to make a connector between the faculty profile system and OpenEmory. We have seen an increase in faculty depositing into OpenEmory with no instruction or prompting from us. I think this is in large part because deposit in OpenEmory is now a part of what the faculty are already doing, and also because it is easy (only a few clicks and uploading a file).

What's the most interesting innovation or tool for scholarly communication that you've seen?

I don't know if it's the most interesting innovation or tool I've seen, but something I'm currently working on with others at Emory is an initiative to support faculty in creating open access long-form digital scholarship in the humanities. This initiative is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and began with a planning grant that resulted in the report on the Future of the Monograph in the Digital Era by Dean Michael Elliott. We began using the term long-form digital scholarship because the sustained argument we have come to expect in a monograph can be expressed primarily as text, like a print book, to a multi-modal digital publication that couldn't be published in print, and combinations in between. While we've seen the number of open access scholarly monographs grow on sites like OAPEN, and an increasing number of digital scholarship centers launched on university campuses, I personally don't think we have realized the potential

creative and scholarly benefits of open access digital publications in the humanities.

In addition, Emory is participating in the AAU, ARL, AUPresses TOME (Toward an Open Monograph Ecosystem) initiative and has pledged to pay subsidies to university presses for our authors' books to be distributed open access. Also available on this website is a version of the Model Publishing Contract for Digital Scholarship, which was developed specifically for monographs and digital scholarship which is open access.

Where do you see the field of scholarly communications in five years?

The easy answer is that scholarly communications will continue to evolve and change. The harder answer is in what ways. I think that the technological innovations in scholarly communication are just beginning, and the growing number of ways to create and share scholarship will continue to call into question scholarly communication norms. Often science research and digital scholarship in the humanities requires a team, which raises the question of who gets credit, and how is that credit counted? What does a high Altmetric score mean? What if you have your undergraduate students take part in creating your digital scholarship and therefore it is a pedagogical tool as well as scholarship? What counts as a scholarly publication, a journal article, a book, a digital project? We've seen how technology has enabled open access distribution, but what about technological innovation to enable people to work together to create scholarship?

Do you have any additional comments?

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the conflicts which continue to arise between the non-profit mission of the universities which employ and educate authors and the for-profit nature of commercial publishers. I think collective action at the highest level of university administrations is required to force a reconsideration of the current academic reward system which is a big driver of the scholarly communication ecosystem. I believe this type of action would be required to create significant, meaningful, and sustained change in the norms of scholarly communication. Whether this will happen, I do not know. However, I will note that in the recent past we've seen the power of collective action in our political and cultural spheres, so anything is possible.

(*Future of the Monograph in the Digital Era: A Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation* by Michael Elliott and published in Journal of Electronic Publishing, vol. 18, issue 4, Fall 2015. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0018.407)