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Speaking as One: Supporting Open Access with Departmental Resolutions

Madeline Cohen *Assistant Professor and Head of Reference, Lehman College, CUNY*

Maura A. Smale *Associate Professor, Information Literacy Librarian, New York City College of Technology, CUNY*

Jill Cirasella *Associate Professor, Associate Librarian for Public Services and Scholarly Communication, The Graduate Center, CUNY*

Cynthia Tobar *Archivist, Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, CUNY*

Jessie Daniels *Professor, Public Health, Sociology, and Critical Psychology, Hunter College and The Graduate Center, CUNY*

Abstract

Library faculty at the City University of New York (CUNY) have engaged in promoting and advocating for open access publishing at each of our campuses as well as across the University. Inspired by the passing of a faculty senate resolution in support of the creation of an open access institutional repository and associated policies, many CUNY librarians felt the need to raise their level of commitment. In this article, the authors—four library faculty members and one faculty member from outside the library—share their experiences creating and approving open access policies in the library departments of four CUNY schools and promoting open access beyond the libraries. They offer practical advice and guidance for other librarians and faculty seeking to encourage the embrace of open access publishing in departments or other sub-institutional contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Recent years have seen steady growth in awareness of and advocacy for open access publishing, a form of scholarly communication that makes journal articles and books available at no cost for all to read and share. During 2012 there was a 33% increase in the number of open access journals and a 28% increase in the number of open access institutional repositories (Morrison, 2012), and the Directory of Open Access Books launched in July 2013. Although support for and availability of open access content is on the rise,

open access publishing is not yet a universal convention for academic researchers and authors. Some disciplines are more amenable to embracing free distribution of scholarship than others, a fact which has contributed to the uneven progress of open access.

To encourage faculty and researchers to publish in open access venues or deposit their publications in an institutional repository, many colleges, universities, and other research institutions around the world have passed open access policies or mandates. The movement to pass such policies gained critical recognition and

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momentum in the U.S. with the actions of Harvard University. In February 2008, Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences approved an open access policy that "requires faculty members to allow the university to make their scholarly articles available free online" (Guterman, 2008); by early 2013 an open access policy was in place at seven schools across the University (Harvard University Library, 2010). However, creation and approval of an institutional open access policy by faculty and administrators is a nontrivial undertaking, especially at a large institution. Librarians and other open access supporters often find themselves creating and adhering to their own, personal open access pledges while working within a larger campus structure to promote broader open access initiatives.

This model, of both individual action and incremental collective advocacy, has been followed by many library faculty at City University of New York (CUNY). CUNY, founded in 1847 as the Free Academy, has always been committed to providing a democratic higher education to a broad and diverse student body in New York City. The University has been at the forefront of public higher education debates in the U.S., struggling with the critical issues that lie at the core of its mission, including expanding access of higher education to women, promoting greater equality of opportunity in college admissions, championing academic freedom of its faculty, and addressing economic and social barriers to education for all the city's residents.

For CUNY library faculty and the broader CUNY community, access to scholarly literature is another social justice issue: it affects the cost of education, the quality of library services, and student academic success. Recently, emboldened by the many positive developments in open access and increasingly convinced that CUNY, a public university funded by taxpayers, has a responsibility to make the knowledge produced there available to the public that funds it, several CUNY librarians felt compelled to move beyond their personal commitments to open access and advocate for the establishment of open access policies at their respective campuses. This article shares the experience of creating and approving open access policies in the library departments of four CUNY campuses and promoting open access in two other academic departments within CUNY. We believe that the lesson of our experience offers practical advice and

guidance for other librarians and faculty seeking to encourage the embrace of open access publishing in departments or other sub-institutional contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of articles published between 2005 and 2012 on the role of academic libraries in advocating for open access policies at their universities reveals a plethora of reasons why librarians are in a strategic position to lead the effort to implement open access policies for university libraries and academic departments. Highlighted in this review are two open access resolutions passed by U.S. university libraries; they are comparable to the grassroots advocacy that led to open access resolutions at the CUNY libraries.

In a 2006 national survey of academic librarians, 74% of respondents believed that libraries should play a leading role in shaping the future of scholarly communication and should educate faculty about open access (Palmer, Dill, & Christie, 2009, p. 324). Given these findings, it is not surprising that Radom, Feltner-Reichert, and Stringer-Stanback (2012) reported that "overwhelmingly, libraries are leaders in organizing scholarly communication efforts at their institutions. This leadership is highly collaborative. Librarians' roles as educators, liaisons, and digital preservationists are well-established" (p. 18). This only confirms earlier observations from noted open access scholar Peter Suber about librarians' leadership potential in this area: "[O]n average, [librarians] understand the issues better than any other stakeholder group, including researchers, administrators, publishers, funders, and policymakers" (Poynder, 2001, p. 37).

Importantly, library leadership in open access is not purely educational—librarians are leading by example as well. A recent study offers encouraging data on academic librarians' participation in open access publishing of their own research: Mercer (2011) analyzed articles published in English-language peer-reviewed library and information science journals in 2008 and found that almost 49% of academic librarian authors' articles were available open access, which is higher than self-archiving rates reported in previous studies (p. 447). As more academic librarians engage in open access publishing or self-archiving, they will be in a better position to advocate for the adoption of open access policies at their institutions.

In addition to personal publishing and archiving practices, establishing library department policies can be a crucial step in open access advocacy. Baker (2010) advised librarians to establish a library department policy first if they do not consider an institutional policy feasible: “If you think that adopting a university-wide policy could take many months of groundwork and negotiation, but one department seems ready to adopt a policy much earlier, it may make more sense to start small. Moreover, a working policy in one department can serve as an example to others” (p. 21). Fister (2012) offers similar advice, suggesting that aiming for departmental mandates when the institution is not ready for a campus-wide faculty mandate is an effective strategy (p. 3).

As of July 2013, the Registry of Open Access Repositories Mandatory Archiving Policies, or ROARMAP (<http://roarmap.eprints.org/>), a directory of open access policies and mandates from institutions around the world, listed 11 U.S. university library departments as having adopted sub-institutional mandates. Two case studies of such library department policies are highly instructive: Oregon State University Libraries and the University of Northern Colorado Libraries. In March 2009, Oregon State University librarians became the first library faculty in the world to pass an open access policy (Oregon State University Library Faculty, 2009). Thanks to considerable groundwork, which led to a thorough understanding of the issues among library faculty before the policy was brought to a vote, the policy was passed unanimously by 42 library faculty, both tenured and tenure-track (Wirth, 2010). Wirth explains that the policy committee overcame library faculty objections to the word “mandate” by changing it to “policy” before the vote. Importantly, the committee reassured library faculty that they remained free to publish in journals of their choice. In addition, the committee discussed the ways that library faculty could negotiate their rights as authors with publishers. After the library department adopted the policy, two other departments at Oregon State adopted similar policies.

The University of Northern Colorado Libraries adopted the “think globally, act locally” principle to guide its development of an open access policy. According to Rathe, Chaudhuri, and Highby (2010), “While we were not ready to lobby for a campus-wide resolution, we felt equal to the task of organizing our immediate peer group. We knew our fellow librarians had a high awareness of open access issues and thus comprised a realistic target

group” (p. 165). The intent of the library faculty resolution was to provide a positive example for the campus community and other Colorado academic libraries. In addition, they sought to use the policy to promote their institutional repository, to give library authors leverage when negotiating with publishers, and to make librarians’ scholarly work more accessible. In November 2009, the Libraries passed an open access resolution in support of open access principles and prompt deposit in Digital UNC, their institutional repository. Authors’ rights and individual choices were addressed by resolving “to seek publishers whose policies allow us to make our research freely available online. This resolution, however, gives us the latitude and individual discretion to publish where we deem necessary, given our career goals, intended audience, and other reasonable factors” (p. 166).

OPEN ACCESS PLEDGES, POLICIES, AND MANDATES

In considering the possibilities for an open access policy at CUNY, we and our colleagues drew on the experiences of the U.S. colleges and universities that have recently made great strides in promoting open access. Because CUNY is a public institution, we were especially interested to learn of the open access policy passed in November 2009 by faculty at the University of Kansas, the first public university in the U.S. to adopt such a policy (KU News, 2009). As at private colleges and universities, faculty at public institutions often receive grant funds from taxpayer-funded government agencies, and there is a strong argument to be made in support of making the publications resulting from that funding available for all to read. Moreover, at publicly funded colleges and universities there is an even greater imperative for open access to research. The institutions themselves, along with the salaries of faculty and staff who teach and conduct research there, are at least partly taxpayer supported. Dissemination of research and scholarship produced at a public college or university is consistent with the mission of public education, and Kansas is to be commended for having the first public university to commit to providing open access to its research.

While CUNY as a whole is a large institution, it is composed of 24 campuses that operate somewhat independently. Thus, we were also interested in open access policies recently passed at smaller colleges and universities. In October 2009, Trinity University became the first small liberal arts university in the U.S. to adopt an open

access policy for faculty scholarship, with Oberlin College following suit the next month (Oberlin College, 2009; Trinity University, 2009). In 2011, Emory University and Bucknell University also committed to open access for faculty research and scholarship (ROARMAP, 2013). Reading the policies of these institutions along with the press releases, news, and blog posts about the process of creating and approving these mandates has been valuable as we have worked to advocate for open access at CUNY. All of the policies and mandates discussed thus far share a common component: Each college or university has created an institutional repository in which faculty and staff deposit the publications resulting from their research. While many educational institutions provide a repository for faculty scholarship, many others, including CUNY, do not. We were thus keenly interested in the open access policy created by faculty at Princeton University in September 2011. Princeton approved an open access policy without a repository in place, though the policy encouraged the University to commit to building a repository for research and scholarship (Howard, 2011). As CUNY does not yet have an institutional repository, we were encouraged to see that the lack of a repository at Princeton was not an impediment to the successful passage of an open access policy.

While these examples illustrate that the adoption of open access policies by faculty in colleges and universities is becoming more common, some faculty are still hesitant to embrace such policies (especially those that not only mandate self-archiving, but encourage publication in open access journals) because of misperceptions about the quality and rigor of open access publishing. Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) deserves special recognition for addressing this issue. In December 2010, the VCU faculty senate voted to approve a statement assigning greater weight to open access publications in tenure and promotion decisions than to those in toll-access journals (VCU Faculty Senate, 2010). We imagine that wide adoption of similar policies would help allay many faculty fears about open access and encourage more faculty to publish their work in open access venues.

Although a university-wide policy like those at Kansas or Princeton is ideal, we determined that it would be more expedient to create and approve a department-specific open access policy than one for the entire college or university, especially at large institutions. College- or university-wide policies like those cited above may be

lengthier and more complex than a department policy, as they must accommodate a wide range of disciplines and associated conventions of scholarship. Given the large scale of CUNY, we and our colleagues have begun by advocating for open access policies at the departmental level.

OPEN ACCESS AT CUNY

CUNY is the largest urban public university in the U.S., serving over 260,000 undergraduate through doctoral students at 24 colleges and graduate schools throughout the five boroughs of New York City (City University of New York, 2013). Librarians in the 21 CUNY libraries are members of the faculty, and each library is an academic department of its school.

Needless to say, there are many librarians at CUNY and just as many moments at which they became aware of open access literature. However, there was a single event that galvanized interest in open access among CUNY librarians: “Scholarly Publishing and Open Access: Payers and Players,” the 2005 installment of the LACUNY Institute, an annual one-day conference hosted by the Library Association of the City University of New York (LACUNY). Featuring Dr. Harold Varmus, co-founder of the Public Library of Science, and numerous other speakers, the conference covered open access journals, open access repositories, the citation advantage of open access publications, and more (LACUNY, 2005). From that day on, open access was a frequent topic of conversation among CUNY librarians.

After a few years of informal discussions among library faculty and self-directed learning, open access became a frequent topic at library-sponsored events and at meetings with faculty and administrators. We also created two information-sharing forums on the CUNY Academic Commons, a bustling social network for CUNY faculty, staff, and graduate students: the Open Access Publishing Network @ CUNY discussion group (<http://commons.gc.cuny.edu/groups/oapn/>) and the Open Access @ CUNY blog (<http://openaccess.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>). A high point in these early CUNY conversations about open access was the collaborative drafting and near-unanimous approval of a faculty senate resolution in support of the creation of an open access institutional repository and associated policies. The resolution passed in November 2011, and a group was promptly formed

to work toward making the resolution a reality. The resolution and task force ensure that “green” open access (that is, open access achieved through self-archiving in repositories) will be an option for all CUNY faculty, no matter their discipline.

Once the institutional repository launches, CUNY libraries will encourage its use with a major, coordinated promotional campaign. However, both because librarians understand open access better than many of their non-library colleagues and because library and information science has a robust disciplinary repository, E-LIS (<http://eprints.rclis.org/>), CUNY librarians did not need to wait for the arrival of the promised institutional repository and its attendant policies: They could create and approve open access policies for themselves.

In January 2012, at an event called “LACUNY Dialogues: Libraries, Librarians, and Advocacy,” three CUNY librarians (including co-authors Cirasella and Smale) issued a call to arms. Aware that several CUNY librarians had personally pledged to make all their publications open access and concerned that a CUNY-wide open access policy was still far in the future, we saw an opportunity: CUNY librarians could show their support for open access collectively. Specifically, they could adopt departmental open access policies, which would have a broader effect than personal pledges and could significantly increase open access to CUNY librarians’ work until a university-wide policy is approved. Also, library department policies could possibly serve as models for policies in non-library departments. We would have liked to propose a single policy for all CUNY library faculty, but each campus has its own, self-governing library department, so instead we asked every CUNY library department to consider adopting a policy. Fortunately, our colleagues were ready to accept and act on our plea: The first library department policy was adopted just a month later, as the following section details.

CREATING AND APPROVING OPEN ACCESS STATEMENTS AT CUNY

New York City College of Technology

The Library Department at New York City College of Technology (City Tech) was the first at CUNY to adopt an open access policy for publications by library faculty members. Library faculty at City Tech had been actively

involved in open access advocacy for a number of years, offering workshops and programs during Open Access Week since 2009 as well as in other venues. While only some librarians had planned these events, all members of the department had gained basic knowledge of the issues surrounding open access publishing.

The immediate catalyst for creating and adopting an open access policy for City Tech library faculty publications was the LACUNY Dialogues (mentioned above). Five of the 13 librarians at City Tech, including the Chief Librarian, attended the Dialogues, and all were active participants in the discussions about open access publishing and open access policies during the program. It is standard practice for librarians at City Tech to share with the entire department notes from events they attend, and the conversation begun at the Dialogues was brought back to the department in this manner.

To prepare for a discussion of adopting an open access policy, the Chief Librarian asked Smale to gather examples of policies enacted by other library departments. City Tech librarians considered statements from the library departments at Gustavus Adolphus College (Folke Bernadotte Memorial Library, n.d.) and Oregon State University (Oregon State University Library Faculty, 2009); these policies were selected as they seemed representative of the range of library department open access policies adopted at other institutions. The Chief Librarian sent these policies to all City Tech library faculty via email and began a discussion about adapting the policies for use at City Tech. Our consensus was that the Gustavus Adolphus pledge provided comprehensive and flexible yet concise language, and was appropriate for City Tech’s Library Department with only minimal editing.

The City Tech Library Faculty Statement on Open Access was adopted in February 2012 (see Appendix A for the text of the statement). Library faculty approved the statement via email, and the policy was presented to the department on the library website at the following department meeting. The discussion and adoption of the open access pledge moved smoothly and quickly, likely in large part due to our prior knowledge of open access publishing. The Library is pleased to be the first academic department at City Tech to have adopted an open access policy, and considers this to be an important

component of our strategy to advocate for open access publishing across the college and university.

The Graduate Center

Buoyed by City Tech's announcement of its open access policy, the Graduate Center's Mina Rees Library began its own efforts in earnest. The Chief Librarian convened a faculty meeting to discuss drafting the policy and appointed co-author Tobar, former Graduate Center Metadata Librarian, to lead the efforts. After researching available open access statements, Tobar decided to follow City Tech's lead and adapt the Gustavus Adolphus Library Faculty Open Access Pledge, along with language from MIT's Open Access Policy (MIT Libraries, 2009). A meeting was set up to revise and gain support for the pledge.

One major concern expressed by some Graduate Center library faculty and staff was that the statement needed to be non-punitive for those who chose not to support open access. They said it had to be flexible enough to allow librarians to opt out if they had works they wanted to publish in subscription-based journals. This initial resistance provided Tobar with a perfect opportunity to share additional information about open access, including self-archiving, and to dispel any misconceptions. As additional questions arose about the very nature of open access, Tobar decided that it would be best to offer faculty and staff a more detailed orientation, and shared a presentation on open access by Cirasella (2012), which provided a thorough overview of open access topics and issues in scholarly publishing.

Another concern raised by some library faculty was that their research was in academic fields whose journals had yet to embrace open access, thus they would be constrained by having to publish exclusively in open access journals or journals that allow self-archiving. It was important to reassure faculty that they could still publish with subscription-based journals if doing so was the best option for their work. However, the importance of engaging in due diligence to try to locate relevant open access journals was also emphasized.

In April 2012, a second faculty meeting was scheduled to distribute revisions and to gather feedback. After a series of emails and a final edit by the Chief Librarian, the Mina Rees Library was finally able to revise the language of the

draft into a statement. The statement (see Appendix A) reflects the conversations and compromises along the way, and motivates library faculty and staff to recognize the value of open access.

Brooklyn College

At Brooklyn College, the process was longer and more contentious than at City Tech and the Graduate Center. First, Cirasella (then at Brooklyn College) studied the language of several pledges and resolutions, looking for one with strong and unambiguous language. She respected policies that grant a university or department a non-exclusive license to faculty-written articles, but she knew that such a policy would require input from Brooklyn College legal counsel, and she suspected that several members of the department would resist such a provision. Therefore, she decided to aim for something more likely to unify the department. She made this decision knowing that a declaration of support could, when the time is right, be superseded by a stronger policy.

Like Smale and Tobar, Cirasella was drawn to the open access pledge made by Gustavus Adolphus's library faculty. After editing that pledge slightly, she brought it to the February 2012 library department meeting, expecting easy approval. However, despite the fact that most department members understood and supported open access, there was significant dissent, primarily about the appropriateness of a departmental action and the implications of a departmental action for future hires. Also, some department members bristled against the word "pledge," arguing that it was too coercive. Others felt that a pledge was not strong enough and argued for a mandate.

Realizing there was much to talk through, the department agreed to move the debate to email, where it quickly became clear that neither a pledge nor a mandate would pass unanimously. However, everyone could embrace a "statement of support." One department member objected to the phrase "The Brooklyn College library faculty believes," arguing that any action should be an intellectual statement rather than an article of faith; her objection led to the replacement of "believes" with "affirms." The group also debated whether the statement should be by and for "the Brooklyn College library faculty" or "the Brooklyn College Library Department," ultimately deciding on "the Brooklyn College Library Department," which

makes it clear that the statement applies to all current and future members of the department, not just those who voted for the statement.

Some department members were eager for an action like Virginia Commonwealth University's resolution to weigh open access publications more heavily than other publications in tenure and promotion decisions. However, it became clear that such a resolution would accomplish little, since tenure and promotion decisions are not made solely by the department. It was agreed that the role of open access in tenure and promotion evaluations was a larger issue and therefore not appropriate for the departmental statement.

Cirasella brought the edited and expanded statement to the June 2012 library department meeting, where it passed unanimously and without additional discussion. The extended email discussion had allowed everyone to voice his or her opinions and resulted in a statement that satisfied everyone (see Appendix A).

Lehman College

At Lehman College's Leonard Lief Library, the Chief Librarian laid the groundwork in educating library faculty by inviting co-authors Cirasella and Smale in late 2011 to present a workshop on the nature of open access. For junior faculty, this might have been the first exposure to concepts such as gold and green open access. Further, tenure-track faculty began to consider issues related to open access and tenure, opening up informal discussion about their own publishing choices. In spring 2012, after the adoption of open access statements by City Tech and the Graduate Center, the Chief Librarian asked co-author Cohen, herself a tenure-track faculty member, to circulate a draft open access policy to library faculty in advance of discussion at an upcoming faculty meeting. Along with the draft policy, Cohen sent out recent journal articles and key statistics from ROARMAP to highlight concepts such as self-archiving, institutional repositories, and green and gold open access (see Appendix B).

However, possibly because of time constraints, there was little, if any, discussion prior to the faculty meeting in May 2012, and Cohen and the Chief Librarian encountered resistance and questions. One faculty member remarked that the Library should not adopt its own policy on open access; rather, the college or CUNY should adopt an

institution-wide policy. Cohen and the Chief Librarian responded that the Library policy (1) would be voluntary, (2) was an expression of belief in the principles of open access, and (3) would be a model that would hopefully bring other departments on board. It was proposed that the library's open access policy would, in fact, be one step toward an eventual college policy.

Lehman's draft policy was modeled closely on the statement adopted by the Graduate Center, though questions and discussion arose over some specific wording. The word "pledge" was considered by some to be too forceful and binding, and library faculty were uncertain about where they would publish and the rights they could negotiate with publishers. Moreover, questions arose about self-archiving, particularly in light of the fact that CUNY does not yet have an institutional repository. Without an institutional repository, most faculty were uncertain how or where their publications could be made available open access on the web. Library faculty decided to postpone the vote until fall 2012 to allow time for the draft to be reworded and for informal discussion over the summer.

The rewritten draft presented at the fall 2012 faculty meeting removed the word "pledge" and included this sentence: "If feasible, we will deposit our publications in a CUNY institutional repository." As a result, the Leonard Lief Library Open Access Policy was adopted unanimously by library faculty in September 2012 (see Appendix A). Immediately following the vote, the Library hosted an educational workshop on open access and the development of a CUNY institutional repository conducted by Cirasella for the entire Lehman faculty. In discussion following the workshop, Cirasella and other librarians were able to clarify the distinctions between green and gold open access, and clear up misconceptions about authors' rights. As Lehman library faculty continue to advocate for open access publishing, we are learning to anticipate and address the concerns of colleagues in other departments. By publicly demonstrating a commitment to open access as scholars, Lehman librarians are now in a position to educate other faculty, help departments frame their own open access policies, and work toward developing a college policy.

LESSONS LEARNED, INCLUDING POTHoles, DETOURS, AND SURPRISES ALONG THE WAY

With the exception of City Tech, where the departmental

pledge was embraced quickly and without debate, each resolution encountered some resistance. As open access supporters, we all believed our draft resolutions to be important (yet relatively innocuous for anyone who might be opposed to them), and we were caught off guard by others' objections. However, the objections were usually signs of confusion rather than unwillingness to support open access. Therefore, almost every objection led to a productive conversation, and many led to clarifications and improvements in the resolutions.

A common confusion was the difference between gold open access and green open access, including the complexities of gold journals' article processing fees. In all cases, once it was made absolutely clear, in both conversation and resolution language, that the resolutions neither favored gold open access journals nor asked colleagues to spend money on gold open access, concerns melted away.

Also, even though the proposed policies were non-mandatory and non-punitive from the start, some colleagues responded with fear—about possible repercussions for not making works open access, about the potential loss of academic freedom, and about the lack of an institutional repository—as well as skepticism about negotiating with book publishers, which rarely allow open access. In response, we reiterated that the policies are simply strong encouragements, not requirements, and reexamined the policies' language to make sure they were unambiguous on this point. Our reassurances and explanations assuaged those fears.

In all four departments, the librarian who brought forward the resolution was untenured and therefore disinclined to sow disagreement. Luckily, in all cases, the resolution had the full support of the department's Chief Librarian, and the Chief Librarians were instrumental in convincing hesitant colleagues to support the resolutions. Without their support, it is quite possible that one or more of the resolutions would not have passed unanimously, or perhaps not at all.

While some colleagues were initially concerned that the resolutions were too strong and restrictive, some were concerned that they were too weak and unlikely to change publishing behaviors. A few people preferred the idea of a Harvard-style mandate, which is known to be more effective than encouragements, but the word “mandate”

was controversial; in fact, several colleagues refused to vote for any kind of mandate. These conversations made us realize how contentious the word “mandate” can be, and that we should avoid it whenever possible. In fact, it is unfortunate that “mandate” has become a popular term in open access circles, as Harvard-style policies do not actually require faculty to do anything. Rather, such so-called mandates state that faculty automatically give the university a non-exclusive license to their articles but can opt out. In other words, the word “mandate” sounds more coercive than the policies actually are.

Regardless of whether the word “mandate” is used, Harvard-style policies involve granting licenses to works. None of us is an expert on licenses or comfortable creating policies with legal implications, and seeking legal advice would have significantly delayed our resolutions. In addition, since CUNY does not yet have an institutional repository, Harvard-style policies could not have been implemented even if they had passed. Furthermore, we all believed that such policies make more sense at the college or university level, not the departmental level. Therefore, none of us chose to pursue such a policy. Rather, we advocated and passed statements of encouragement and intent, hoping that an institutional repository would arrive soon and that an institution-wide, Harvard-style policy would become both logistically and politically feasible in the future.

By pursuing something modest and achievable, we were able to succeed, and to do so quickly and with consensus. If we had been more ambitious, we almost certainly would have failed, and done so slowly and contentiously.

BEYOND THE LIBRARY: NEXT STEPS FOR CUNY

While we are pleased that the four library departments were ultimately successful in passing departmental open access policies, we do have bigger ambitions and we understand that there is still much work to be done at CUNY to promote open access at the departmental, college, and university level. We are continuing to advocate for adoption of open access policies both within and outside the libraries, including following up with our library department colleagues to stay abreast of challenges and successes in their open access publishing efforts. Undoubtedly this work will benefit from alliances between discipline faculty and library faculty. While some departments include informed insiders like co-

author Daniels, others do not; reconsidering the role of library subject liaisons, as at the University of Minnesota (Malenfant, 2010), may be one way forward.

Winning Support for Open Access from Faculty and Administrators

As we have begun the work of persuading faculty and administrators outside the library to adopt open access policies, it has become clear that, though challenging, it will be possible. Faculty in departments other than the library are often unaware of the distinction between gold and green open access, and some assume that an open access policy will require them to publish only in (gold) open access journals. This misconception can be compounded by other myths, namely that all open access publications are not peer-reviewed and that they are the equivalent of vanity publishing—and therefore do not meet the rigorous standards of high academic quality. University administrators, perhaps even more than faculty, are chiefly concerned with the quality and prestige of publishing as a key component of an institution's overall status within higher education. We anticipate that some administrators, then, may object to open access publications out of fear that they are regarded as less prestigious. For both faculty and administrators outside the library, we believe that these objections to open access policies that are rooted in concerns about the quality, prestige, and status of open access publications can be addressed by emphasizing the freedom of choice for authors that is retained through green open access. In addition to clarifying the differences between gold and green open access, at both the CUNY School of Public Health and at the CUNY Graduate Center, one faculty member, co-author Daniels, has had some success with gaining support of faculty and administrators by shifting the language she uses to discuss issues related to open access. For faculty in the interdisciplinary field of public health, who are often funded by government entities such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), arguments that were most successful hinged on the right of audiences beyond the specialist to have access to information that had the potential to improve health and even save lives. For faculty engaged in research that is fundamentally about improving the public's health, discussing open access is best framed within those concerns.

A similar ethical argument has been used in discussions with faculty in the social sciences at the Graduate Center

who often conceive of themselves as change agents who are doing research they hope will contribute to social justice. In part, this stems from the institutional history of CUNY and the kind of faculty it attracts, and from CUNY's identity as a publicly funded institution with a strong faculty union. For these faculty, framing the issue of subscription-based publishing as unethical, even "immoral" (Taylor, 2013), has proven to be a successful rhetorical strategy. Social science faculty at the Graduate Center view themselves as, and indeed are, deeply committed to ensuring that all students have equal access to the resources that will help them succeed in higher education. Within this context, focusing on "paywalls" as "immoral" has been an effective way to address the concept without ever using the language of "open access."

While philosophical arguments about the ethical imperative for open information are useful with some groups, we predict that other constituents may be more responsive to economic justifications. For example, administrators at both the CUNY School of Public Health and the Graduate Center, and across higher education, are often tasked with keeping costs down. For these stakeholders, approaching the issue of open access through the avenue of the high cost of subscription-based publishing may be more effective. When addressing administrators, it is best to speak their language, which is often written in numbers. We have found that it is relatively easy to persuade administrators to support open access policies by sharing data about the dramatic increase in the cost of journal subscriptions to libraries. While there is no straight line leading from the adoption of open access policies to institutional cost reductions, frequently cited data on price increases of academic journals should help emphasize that the spiraling costs lead to decreased access and dissemination of scholarly publications, which affects the reach and impact of an institution's scholars. It is also important to make it clear to administrators that open access policies will not necessarily lead to additional costs to the institution. While some schools may elect to establish funds to help pay authors' article processing charges for fee-based open access journals, there are many open access journals that do not charge such fees—and there are no direct costs for authors associated with green open access.

Ultimately, at CUNY we have found that arguments need to be tailored to address the unique concerns and contexts of different groups. And once faculty and administrators

are initially persuaded to adopt open access policies, there is much work that still needs to be done, as many will not understand how to find, publish, or share work within the parameters of “openness.”

Incorporating the Institutional Repository

Obviously, one of the best ways for faculty to openly share their work is through an institutional repository. Although CUNY did not have an institutional repository when the Libraries adopted their open access policies, the University has begun to plan for creating a repository, and once the repository is in place a new wave of education and promotion will be necessary and offer yet another opportunity for open access advocacy. We are optimistic that the existence of a repository will create a positive feedback loop and encourage other CUNY entities to craft similar open access policies. Also, if the University as a whole passes a stronger open access policy connected to the repository, it could replace those from departments and campuses across the University. However, if the University passes a weaker policy, our stronger individual department policies could remain in place and serve as models to other departments. The repository may also assist us in bringing the conversation about open access to undergraduate students, a population we have not yet had the opportunity to engage on the topic.

LESSONS FOR OTHER INSTITUTIONS

The challenges and successes we experienced while campaigning for departmental open access policies may help prepare open access advocates elsewhere for the concerns and confusions they will likely encounter when working toward sub-institutional policies. To those pursuing or hoping to pursue such policies, we offer the following recommendations:

- *Educate, educate, educate:* The key to effective advocacy for open access policies is education. Departmental colleagues, even in library departments, may not be as familiar with open access publishing as we assume. If they are not completely clear on the facts, they may resist or reject formal action related to open access. Further, one’s set of colleagues is not fixed over time, which means that education cannot be a one-time effort: As new colleagues arrive, they must be apprised of and incorporated into ongoing conversations about
- *Be prepared for resistance:* No matter how unobjectionable a policy may seem to someone well versed in open access issues, it will almost certainly cause some confusion, which often begets resistance, among those less familiar with open access. Therefore, when drafting the proposal and preparing to bring it to the department, imagine and prepare for all possible objections. Also, talk to as many colleagues as possible before the meeting where the policy will be first discussed; this will allow you to engage in preliminary education and get an early sense of potential concerns. In particular, be prepared to respond to questions about these areas of possible concern: mandatory vs. voluntary policies, open access and peer review, gold vs. green open access, article processing charges, and varying levels of support in different disciplines for open access.
- *Act small, think big:* Many institutions are not yet ready for an institution-wide open access policy. If this is the case at your institution, a departmental or divisional policy is a good starting point. Aim your policy at the body you think is most likely to pass it, and if there is no such body, start by talking to individuals about their personal publication choices. Whatever the size and scope of your first advocacy project, approach it with larger goals in mind. A sub-institutional policy may not have as much impact as a broader policy (though it may, since institutional policies that are not well explained or understood may be ignored), but it can lead to a significant increase in acceptance and adoption of open access among those it does affect. Also, a sub-institutional policy can serve as a model for policies in other units, and perhaps even for an eventual institutional policy.
- *Cultivate advocates across the disciplines:* Repeat and repurpose your department-specific educational efforts for other disciplines, adjusting as necessary for each discipline’s particular practices and issues. Also take your advocacy campaign to administrators, remembering to customize your pitch to them to include institutional and budgetary implications of open access. When you find or groom an ally, enlist that person’s help: Some faculty are more trusting of

encouragements from their immediate colleagues, and some administrators are more receptive to arguments made by fellow administrators. Do not try to single-handedly convert your whole institution; rather, identify and nurture a cadre of open access supporters and activists.

CONCLUSION

CUNY has long been influenced by a strong passion for equal access to higher education, from its early mission to provide higher education for immigrant communities, to the fight over open admissions in the 1960s and 1970s, the effects of the fiscal crisis of 1977, the battle over remediation in the 1990s, and current issues related to state and city fiscal support, faculty governance, and tuition hikes. This spirit is prevalent among its current faculty and student body. Building on this philosophy, CUNY librarians and discipline faculty will continue the collective effort described here to provide equal access to scholarly publication to ensure student academic success and faculty research excellence. In this way, CUNY is emblematic of the open access movement's mission to make publicly funded research freely available to interested readers everywhere.

Whether or not an institution shares CUNY's historic (and current) mission, it is our hope that the library department open access resolutions adopted at CUNY will serve as a model for leadership on scholarly communication issues for other academic institutions. We believe that our experience educating library and discipline faculty, and overcoming their resistance, should be instructive for all institutions engaged in efforts to expand open access on their campuses. Libraries are in a strong position to lead on this issue by setting an example—not only of a commitment to open access but of the open and constructive discussion the can lead to that commitment.

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CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Madeline Cohen
Assistant Professor
Head of Reference

Leonard Lief Library
Lehman College
250 Bedford Park Blvd West
Bronx, NY 10468

madeline.cohen@lehman.cuny.edu

APPENDIX A

City Tech Library Faculty: Statement on Open Access (February 2012)

The City Tech library faculty believe that open access to scholarship is critical for scholarly communication and for the future of libraries. For that reason we pledge to make our own research freely available whenever possible by seeking publishers that have either adopted open access policies, publish contents online without restriction, and/or allow authors to self-archive their publications on the web. We pledge to link to and/or self-archive our publications to make them freely accessible.

Faculty librarians may submit their work to a publication that does not follow open access principles and will not allow self-archiving only if it is clearly the best or only option for publication; however, library faculty will actively seek out publishers that allow them to make their research available freely online and, when necessary, will negotiate with publishers to improve publication agreements. Further, we pledge to devote most of our reviewing and editing efforts to manuscripts destined for open access.

This statement is adapted from the Gustavus Adolphus Library Faculty Open Access Pledge (<http://gustavus.edu/library/Pubs/OApledge.html>).

CUNY Graduate Center Mina Rees Library Statement on Open Access (April 2012)

The CUNY Graduate Center Mina Rees Library faculty and staff are committed to disseminating research and scholarship as widely as possible. We believe that open access to scholarship is critical for scholarly communication and for the future of libraries, and that it is central to CUNY's mission of public education. We recognize the added value to public knowledge that open access publishing gathers for a work. For that reason, we pledge to make our own research freely available whenever possible by seeking publishers who have either adopted open access policies, publish content online without restriction, and/or allow authors to self-archive publications on the web. When necessary and when possible, we will negotiate with publishers to improve open access terms. We pledge to link to and/or self-archive our open access publications to make them freely accessible. Further, we pledge to support open access by lending our reviewing and editing efforts to manuscripts destined for open access.

Brooklyn College Library Statement of Support for Open Access (June 2012)

The Brooklyn College Library Department affirms that open access to scholarship is critical for scholarly communication, affordable education, and the advancement of knowledge. Accordingly, the Department asks its faculty to make their research available at no cost whenever possible by seeking publishers that have adopted open access policies (i.e., publishers that publish their contents online without restriction and/or allow authors to self-archive their publications in online repositories). Whenever self-archiving is allowed, the Department expects its faculty to promptly self-archive their publications online for all to read and use. When faculty are working with publishers that do not allow self-archiving, the Department encourages them to negotiate to improve publication agreements. Furthermore, the Department encourages its faculty to devote most of their reviewing and editing efforts to manuscripts destined for open access.

For information about open access, including tools that help researchers make their works open access, see Open Access Publishing (<http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/resources/?service=openaccess>).

This statement is adapted from the Gustavus Adolphus Library Faculty Open Access Pledge (<https://gustavus.edu/library/Pubs/OApledge.html>).

Lehman College Leonard Lief Library Open Access Policy (August 2012)

Leonard Lief Library faculty is committed to disseminating research and scholarship as widely as possible. We believe that Open Access to scholarship is critical for scholarly communication and the future of libraries. Further, we assert this is central to CUNY's mission of public education.

We acknowledge that Open Access publishing accrues value for a work. Accordingly, we advocate making our own research freely available whenever possible by seeking publishers who offer Open Access publishing or self-archiving options.

When necessary and when possible, we will attempt to negotiate with publishers to improve Open Access terms. If feasible, we will deposit our publications in a CUNY institutional repository.

Moreover, we will further support Open Access by contributing our reviewing and editing efforts to manuscripts destined for this format.

APPENDIX B

The following articles and website links were sent to library faculty at Lehman College in preparation for consideration of the draft Open Access Policy:

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CUNY Graduate Center Mina Rees Library. (n.d.). Open access publishing. Retrieved from <http://libguides.gc.cuny.edu/openaccess>

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