Scholarly Communications: Open Education, Open Access, Open Data

Statement of Purpose
The University of Arkansas Libraries embrace the principle of openness for educational materials, scholarly publications, and research data. Openness refers to the public availability of information without financial or legal barriers to access and use. This principle aligns with the University of Arkansas' Guiding Priorities focused on students, primarily Advancing Student Success and Promoting Innovation in Teaching and Learning. Openness also advances all three Signature Research Areas and enhances the impact of this work throughout Arkansas and beyond, thus supporting two additional Guiding Priorities: Enhancing Our Research and Discovery Mission and Reaffirming Our Land-Grant and Flagship Responsibilities. More broadly, the Libraries support the transition to a more equitable, transparent, and sustainable global system of discovery and learning.

Current Services and Programs
The Libraries focus on three areas: 1) open education (instructional materials); 2) open access (scholarly publications); 3) open data (research data). To date, the most notable services and programs in each of these areas include:

Campus-wide leadership in Open Education Resources (OER) advocacy, research, and support
Partnering with the Global Campus, the Libraries provide campus education about OER, advocate for OER to campus teaching faculty, administer and fund campus OER projects, and engage on a national level in OER conversations and issues. Implementation of OER in academic courses reduces costs for students, which can contribute to improved retention and graduation rates.

Memberships and financial support
The Libraries hold memberships in SPARC and the Open Textbooks Network, two leading national OER advocacy alliances. Additionally, the Libraries have contributed financially to open access initiatives like Knowledge Unlatched (KU), SCOAP3, and the publishing of important historical primary documents.

Open Education Southern Symposium
Established by the Libraries, the OESS is a low-cost regional conference helping to promote best practices in Open Education and provide equitable access to professional development opportunities for others in the state and region as part of the university's land-grant mission.
Institutional repository
The Libraries and the Office of Research and Innovation jointly sponsor ScholarWorks@UARK, which offers research, scholarship, creative work, and teaching materials produced by U of A students, faculty, and staff without charge.

Open access and public domain materials
Digital Services, Special Collections, Technical Services, User Services, Web Services and other departments throughout the Libraries work to make our own collections available digitally without charge and to assist patrons with discovering other open and public domain content around the world.

Outreach and education
The Libraries offer online guides, presentations, special events, instruction, and individual consultations to educate the University of Arkansas community and advocate for open access, open education, and open data.

Future Services and Programs
In addition to continuing our current services and programs, over the next six months, the Libraries commit to further advancing these three areas in the following ways.

Open access policy
In consultation with Library personnel and stakeholders across campus, Scholarly Communications Task Force will draft a revised University of Arkansas open access policy which encompasses open education and open data.

Open education
The Libraries will host an Open Textbook Network (OTN) campus visit to expand OER efforts and advocacy and will continue providing conversion grants for faculty to create free, openly licensed class materials for University of Arkansas students. The Libraries will also create promotional materials for new faculty orientation.

Research sponsors’ public access mandates
The Libraries will assist with the action plan developed by the Federal Public Access Compliance Task Force (composed of Library and sponsored by the Libraries and the Office for Research and Innovation personnel) to educate faculty, staff, and students about public access mandates for publications and data resulting from federally-funded research and to track and facilitate compliance with these mandates.

Support open data
The Libraries will support open data on campus through promotional events and displays, software leadership training, and providing data management guidance.
Scholarly Communications Task Force

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