Open Access and Collection Development Policies: Two Solitudes?

Sharon Dyas-Correia

Collection Development Department, University of Toronto Libraries, Toronto, Canada.
s.dyas.correia@utoronto.ca

Rea Devakos

Information Technology Services, University of Toronto Libraries, Toronto, Canada.
rea.devakos@utoronto.ca

Abstract:

Although open access (OA) services and policies have been implemented by many institutions, there has been little discussion, and integration of OA into collection policy development. This paper reports on an environmental scan and strategic planning exercise that will inform institutional collection policy development activities at the University of Toronto, a premiere academic institution in North America. The paper outlines multi-method original research with varied stakeholder groups. The state of collection development policies related to many types of OA materials, issues and activities including but not limited to digitization projects, journal publishing, institutional repositories, metadata, consortia projects, memberships and author funds is examined. A variety of approaches and concerns are identified that cross research methodologies and stakeholder groups. The analysis scrutinizes what types of materials and activities are addressed by existing policies in North America. The paper's overall purpose is to assist both management and collection development practitioners in better understanding trends and possible strategies for integrating OA materials into collections. Results represent a rich resource for academic libraries looking to mainstream open access into collection development, and beyond.

Keywords: open access, collection development policies, survey research, content analysis, North America, academic libraries

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Introduction

Although open access (OA) services and policies have been implemented by many institutions, there has been little discussion, and integration of OA into collection policy development. This paper reports on an environmental scan and strategic planning exercise that will inform institutional collection policy development activities at the University of Toronto, a premiere academic institution in North America. The paper outlines multi-method original research with varied stakeholder groups. The state of collection development policies related to many types of OA materials, issues and activities including but not limited to, digitization projects, journal publishing, institutional repositories, metadata, consortia projects, memberships and author funds is examined. The analysis scrutinizes what types of materials and activities are addressed by existing policies in North America. The paper's overall purpose is to assist both management and collection development practitioners in better understanding trends and possible strategies for integrating OA materials into collections.

Literature Review

Several themes emerge from a review of current collection development and scholarly communication literature:

1. Redefining collections and their management in light of OA: A more complex environment is recognized, one that is not only user centered but also includes resources outside of those owned and/or created by the institution. (Mullen, 2010; Horava 2010; Morrison, 2007)

2. Barriers and/or the need to integrate OA into mainstream library tools, workflows and roles: OA materials still fall outside the norms of libraries and librarianship including inclusion in catalogs, and abstracting and indexing services. The reporting structure of scholarly communication roles is seen as a barrier, with few reporting to collection development, and often being a single person department. Other authors however call on the library profession to mainstream OA into all library functions and roles (Burpee, 2014; Harris 2012; Potvin, 2013);

3. Role and utility of collection development policies: Collection development policies are recognized as difficult to develop and maintain (Pickett, 2011; Mangrum, 2012).

Methodology and Results

The approach to our research was three pronged: a survey of chief collection development officers of larger academic libraries, an examination of collection development policy statements and a survey of libraries within a large academic library.

Survey of Chief Collection Development Officers

An email invitation to complete an online survey was sent to chief collection development officers of 78 North American academic libraries (see Appendix A: Survey Invitation). Forty-four of the recipients were members of the American Library Association (ALA), Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS) Chief Collection Development

Officers of Large Research Libraries Discussion Group, 13 represented larger university libraries in Canadian provinces other than Ontario, and 21 represented university libraries in Ontario. Three of the Canadian collection development offices surveyed were also members of the ALA ALCTS Chief Collection Development Officers Discussion Group (see Appendix B: Surveyed Library List). No human subjects approval was sought as the information gathering was in preparation of our own institutional strategy setting, and hence considered part of normal administrative duties.

Survey Monkey was utilized. Thirty-three responses were collected plus 5 emails were received from institutions unable to complete the survey at the present time because the issue was currently under discussion. Excluding the five institutions that abstained, the response rate was 45.2%. The survey included 8 questions including 2 open ended questions and opportunity for comments throughout (see Appendix C: Survey Questions).

The first question addressed the library's plan for including OA in their collection development policies or strategy statements. Respondents were asked: "What plans does your library have for including Open Access in your collection development policies or strategy statements?" A total of 31 responses were received, 51.6% indicating that OA was already included; a further 32.3% planned inclusion while 16.1% had no plans for inclusion.

	Percentage	Response No.
Our Library already includes Open Access in our collection development policies or strategy statements.	51.6	16
Our Library plans to address Open Access in our collection development policies or strategy statements in the future.	32.3	10
Are there other Scholarly Communication areas that a Collection Development policy or strategy statement should address?	16.1	5
Total		31

Thirty institutions responded to the question as to whether or not collection development policies should address OA. An overwhelming, 83.3% responded yes, while another 16.7 chose no.

Thirty collection development officers answered the question "How detailed should the collection development policy or strategy statement be regarding Open Access?" Fully two thirds of respondents desired a general statement, while another 23.3% preferred a detailed approach. A further 10% thought that OA should not be included in collection development policy instruments

	Percentage	Response No.
It should include just an overall general statement	66.7	20
It should be very detailed and address many areas of scholarly communication	23.3	7
It should not address Open Access	10	3
Total		30

Respondents were also asked to identify and rate the importance of including various elements of OA in the collection development documentation: "We would also like to learn what Open Access issues and areas your institution believes a collection development policy or strategy statement should address. Please rate the following:"

Percentage and (Ranking)	Important	Less Important	Not Important	Don't know	Response No.
Digitization projects	72.4 (3)	17.2	6.9	3.5	29
Journal publishing	65.5	26.7	10.3	3.5	29
Institutional repositories	82.8 (1)	6.9	6.9	3.5	29
Data	75.9 (2)	13.8	6.9	3.5	29
Databases listing Open Access items (DOAJ, etc.)	51.7	37.9	6.9	3.5	29
Open access projects (SCOAP3)	62.1	27.6	6.9	3.5	29
Metadata issues	41.1	41.4(1)	16.3(3)	6.9	28
Individual serial titles	32.1	35.7(2)	28.6(2)	3.6	28
Individual e-book titles	32.1	28.6(3)	35.7(1)	3.6	28
Consortia projects	69.0	20.7	6.9	3.5	29

Of the 28 respondents, almost half (46.4%) thought that there were other issues that should also be addressed in policy documents, while just over half (53.6%) thought not. Most respondents, 74.1% or 20 were willing to be contacted for follow up, an action we indeed to do at a later date.

A total of 108 comments were received ranging from 16 for the first question: "What plans does your library have for including Open Access in your collection development policies or strategy statements?" to 11 observations for question 7: "Please share any specific strategies you can for including Open Access in Collection Development policies. The average number of comments was 13.5; the mode and midpoints were fourteen. Many comments reflected recurrent themes, despite the associated question, so they will be dealt with as one set. Selected quotations follow.

Some respondents felt OA should be addressed in other documents:

"We might include promoting open access in our strategic plan, but probably won't single out open access as a separate category or format of materials in collection development policies."

"Not in our collection policies, but part of library value and mission statements."

Others noted the prematurity of including OA:

> "There are way too many OA sects, and the business models fall all over the map; the conversation isn't yet mature enough to allow more than a general endorsement."

> "Strategies yes, policies are shakier ground."

Another reason for exclusion is the multiple players in scholarly communication, both within and outside the library:

> "It isn't clear to me that scholarly communication falls entirely under the umbrella of collections. However a plan for how we incorporate open access resources into our collection is important."

> "We have actually had several conversations about this over the years. But the previous dean's position was that the Library should not fund OA for one area and not others. The funding of OA subventions etc. was really something that needed to be taken on by the campus research leadership. That doesn't mean that we didn't participate in discussions, work to move things forward, object to the concept – only that it is part of a broader system of challenges that we face in higher ed."

Some collection development heads felt that the policies should be agnostic, and silent, in terms of business models:

> "The policy should state the purpose the collections are to serve and neither promote or eliminate any particular forms of material."

> "I would argue that our library includes OA in its collection development statements by not specifying that the resources that we acquire, deliver, etc…be commercially procured."

The use of policies also varied since many libraries are now using objective and strategy statements to describe their collection development activities:

> "We tend not to use collection development policy statements."

Dated policies, and keeping policies up to date, were also identified as issues:

> "Our current strategy document is somewhat dated but will be updated over the next few months."

> "I worry if we have to spell them all out, we'll never keep up."

A number of respondents noted plans to revisit polices shortly while others noted that procedures and practices are already in place, despite a lack of documented policy:

> "We have developed procedures for OA materials to be catalogued into our collections, and for these materials to be downloaded onto our local server if that's the best way to provide stable access. "

"We do not use our collection development policy statements, but may return to this. If so we would need to address our expectations regarding open access materials. This might reflect staff time taken to identify valuable open resources, and to make them discoverable through local tools. We have done this in practice for many years, both as one-offs and groups of titles."

Some tied policy development to funding:

"No great urgency to turn this into a policy or strategic statements since there is no extra money to invest in OA."

"If it's part of your overall CD plan to use Open Access resources then you really need to include some mechanisms for providing support to OA publishers. "

The role and purpose of policy documents was also raised:

"The question is of balancing strategy statements and policies to the extent that the latter are practical actionable road-maps."

"The real point here is whether putting [OA] in our policies will help drive towards the outcomes we desire."

Other respondents felt that the emphasis on OA was wrongly placed:

"The funding model that supports production and dissemination of a particular resource may matter less than promoting convenient and timely discovery and use. So I would expect OA to be part of an overall content strategy."

We have to be in alignment with our institution on scholarly sharing issues, particularly when it comes to open access. Really, the broader issue is the economics of scholarly communication, and lack of market forces in content pricing, specifically journal pricing. This is not a strategy but seeing this larger reality might prevent an excessive focus on open access at the expense of other issues, including author rights.

"[I am] not sure how to answer this. Policies and statements should probably focus on general outcomes in the ecosystem of the future. Specific details might be left to the departmental and individual goals/objectives."

Comments also highlighted the importance of institutional context, at several levels:

"This will depend in part on the mission of the library and university. How significant is the commitment to the public good? Is there sensitivity to the tragedy of the commons?"

"Much of this really dependent upon local context: a. depends on how you fund or promote access to the content; b. depends on the library's role in publishing (etc.)."

When questioned about the required level of detail, comments varied:

> "This would depend on the nature of your policy statement. I would expect some general commitments that describe what's in scope, or how decisions are made among many options. And yet the flavor of OA which best supports the needs of particular disciplinary communities may vary, so might better addressed in more granular and detailed policy statements—particularly for ones aimed at an internal library audience."

> "A general statement is necessary but there needs to be more information about helping cover author fees and which memberships fit and do not fit."

> "Important to include details on what is included and what is not included and why. For example, we do not support hybrid journals."

> "In addition to overall statement, add details that are unique to the institution's environment and economic factors. "

> "I'm not sure if "very detailed" is the right description, but it should be specific as to the objectives and criteria for which type of open access will be supported… and other criteria that the institution may consider importing in achieving its strategic objectives."

When asked about other scholarly communication areas that a collection development policy should address, comments were far ranging. Support for authors in the form of authors' funds and copyright assistance was noted several times. Redirecting funding and look for opportunities to support OA initiatives were also mentioned. Another common theme was addressing specific formats such as monographs or business models such as hybrid journals and university presses. The role of liaisons was stressed by many respondents, particularly in terms of outreach to the scholarly community and correcting misconceptions.

Collection Development Policies and Strategy Statements

A Google keyword search was performed, and supplemented by targeted searches for documents on the websites of key North American universities. Documents from 27 institutions were examined. Six or 22.2 % of the documents contained very detailed collection development policy information, 12 or 44.4 % contained a general statement on OA collection development policy and there was no mention of OA collection development policy in 9 or 33.3% of the documents.

Of the 6 documents that contained very detailed collection development policy information the University of North Texas Libraries (2013) document titled "Collection Development Policy for OA and Born-Digital Resources" was by far the most detailed and comprehensive discovered. The document contains sections outlining, goals and definitions, selection responsibility, selection guidelines, access, copyright compliance, collection maintenance, and collaborative efforts with the digital libraries division.

The Collection Development Policy of the University of Ottawa ("Collection Development Policy," n.d.) has statements related to OA interspersed throughout the document:

> "The Library has made a strong commitment to Open Access. Our institutional repository UO Research houses theses, articles, working papers, technical reports, conference papers, data sets in various digital formats, etc. Faculty, students, and other researchers are encouraged to submit their works for secure storage and greater visibility and impact of their works" (p.1).

> "We pursue opportunities to digitize library print collections as appropriate, in order to broaden access to the richness of research material and advance the potential of open access for scholarship and learning" (p.2).

> "University of Ottawa theses are made available online through our institutional repository" (p.6).

Simon Fraser University (2005) includes the following statement of "Support for Scholarly Publishing" in its "SFU Library Collections Policy Statement": "In its collection development and other activities, the SFU Library works to promote effective, sustainable, and economically viable models of scholarly communication that provide barrier-free access to quality information" (Section 5).

The Simon Fraser University statement outlines that support will be manifested by:

> "By actively supporting independent and alternative publishers, and making efforts to ensure that collections are built with acquisitions from university presses and other not-for-profit presses such as association and society publishers, in addition to commercial publishers" (Section 5);

> "By seeking out and adding Open Access and alternative publications to the Library collection when they meet current collection guidelines" (Section 5);

> "By actively investigating and supporting emerging Open Access publishing ventures, and investing in these financially when they are able to present a viable business case for support, and can demonstrate a sustainable financial alternative to existing commercial publishing models" (Section 5);

> "By working within the SFU community to promote discussion of scholarly communication among faculty members, authors, editors and students and administrators" (Section 5);

> "By providing software that supports scholarly publishing and communication, and making this available to authors, editors and administrators" (Section 5)."

The Simon Fraser University (2005) collection development policy is supplement by a very detailed document "Removing Barriers: Open Access strategy at the SFU Library" (2010) that is also posted on the Web and discusses collection development among other OA issues.

Within the 13 documents that had a general statement, 7 or 53.85% documents referred to repositories, publishing activities, digitization projects, author funds, DOAJ, OAister, separate OA policies and other documents related to OA.

The collection development policy document of Columbia College Chicago ("Collection Development Policy," n.d.) states: "With our open access policy and participation in various library consortia and networks, the user population actually served goes well beyond our institutional community" (p, 1).

The University of Alberta (2012) collection development policy includes the following statement:

> "We are committed to the principles of open access, as outlined in the IFLA Statement on Open Access to Scholarly Literature and Research Documentation. In addition to providing open access materials in our collection and supporting OA publishing efforts of faculty members, we also offer digital repository and publishing services via the Libraries (Education and Research Archive, Journal Hosting)" (p.2).

The Indiana University Bloomington ("IUB Libraries: Mission," n.d.) has a collection development document with objective and strategy statements:

> "Objective…Create local and distributed digital collections that enable traditional and new opportunities for knowledge transmission and the creation of new knowledge. Strategy A: Negotiate for and implement capabilities embedded in licensed and locally-created digital content, such as mobile access, bibliographic management and sharing tools, current awareness services and data mining rights. Strategy B: Seek out and pilot new forms of scholarly communication strategies that enable the transmission and advancement of knowledge, such as digital scholarly editions, open access initiatives, and scholarly publishing innovations. Strategy C: Create new digital collections reformatted from existing physical collections, locally and in partnership with others" (p.3).

Open Access in Practice at a Large ARL Library

An email request was sent to 48 University of Toronto libraries on April 3, 2014 and a reminder message was sent on May 21, 2014 (see Appendix D: Invitation to Libraries). Of the 48 libraries contacted 23 responded. The University of Toronto Libraries are a federated system, with "central" libraries reporting directly to the Chief Librarians while "campus" libraries, largely institute, college, campus and departmental libraries report to their respective Deans, Provosts or Directors. The campus libraries provided 11 of the responses, while the central system provided 6. Smaller libraries, with less than 15 full time equivalent staff, provided 13 responses; 4 of the larger libraries also responded.

The responses were wide ranging, including differing notions of what OA includes. Three libraries specifically noted that they did nothing or very little in the OA realm though 3 indicated greater future involvement, including specific projects. Two libraries specifically noted that their collection development policies do not include any mention of OA. The University of Toronto at Scarborough quoted their collection development policy:

> "[The] Library supports open access to scholarly communication by contribution to the University of Toronto institutional research repository, T-Space and by promoting its open journal and open conference systems."

Two libraries noted that they contribute funds towards "opening access" to licensed materials for the broader University of Toronto community. One respondent mentioned the inclusion of scholarly communication knowledge in the joint departmental annual goals.

The most common response was digitization of text or images, with 9 libraries noting their past, present or future projects. Library support for a variety of platforms and services, for both digitized and born digital works including repositories, journal and conference hosting were mentioned by name by 10 respondents. Another 2 libraries described providing OA to some scholarly materials from their local site. Four libraries mentioned their involvement in external consortia and collaborative OA projects. Three of these were discipline specific. Only one library mentioned open educational materials.

We also asked about general OA activities. Three mentioned promotion through library displays and events; the same number noted their participation in OA Week. Three libraries mentioned assisting faculty and students with deposit or publishing materials in OA platforms or publications; two specifically noted using student assistants. One respondent mentioned forwarding information to faculty. A total of 5 noted responding to patron queries, with 3 of these being for OA Author Funds.

Comparison of Results

All three research methods highlight the incredibly challenging environment collection development policies, OA and their intersection operate in. The survey comments are a particularly useful starting point for exploring this landscape. Both the survey and the policy review yielded similar numbers for the inclusion or exclusion of OA in collection policies. The majority of libraries included or planned to include OA explicitly in collection development policy or strategy documents. Three approaches were found: inclusion using a shorter general approach, inclusion using a detailed approach or exclusion. Reponses received from University of Toronto Librarians agreed with the survey ranking of digitization as the key initiative supported by libraries. Survey comments on activities supporting OA mirrored those received from University of Toronto Libraries. Some results appear paradoxical; notably the collection development officers' preference for shorter policy statements, coupled with rankings of importance for inclusion of specifics such as institutional repositories, digitization, journal production etc.

Discussion/Implication

While we found some consensus on the import of inclusion of OA in collection policies, approaches varied widely. This was somewhat surprising given the similarities in OA activities and ranking of what is, and is not, important to be included. This may be due to the number of concerns and variables identified, most eloquently in the survey comments. Both institutional positions and approaches on OA and policy development may be key determinants of policy orientation. Therefore it is not unexpected that we did not identify a single definition of "best practices." A detailed, general or exclusionary approach may or may not be appropriate. Similarly, an institution may have already integrated OA into policy, may be currently reviewing or planning to do so, or may have chosen an agnostic approach.

More importantly, further research is needed to tie specific policy actions with the successful promotion of OA at the institutional level.

Conclusion

A multi-method original research strategy was used to further inform institutional policy development. While a single solution, or set of solutions was not found, a variety of approaches and concerns were identified that crossed research methodologies and stakeholders. Results represent a rich, if not cohesive, resource for academic libraries looking to mainstream open access into collection development, and beyond. Our best advice to libraries' is to begin by examining what, when and how policy initiatives drive the regularization of new scholarly norms and services, locally in a single institution and within professional and disciplinary communities. Critical to this analysis is considering both the impact internally on library operations and roles, externally, on both our local patrons and global community.

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Appendix A: Survey Invitation

Dear:

A colleague and myself at the University of Toronto Libraries are conducting research to understand and discover information related to how or if libraries in North America are incorporating Open Access into their collection development policies or strategy statements. The results of this research will be shared at the August 2014 International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) World Congress in Lyon, France. Individual libraries or respondents will not be identified in the data presented.

We have selected you as a collection development representative of a respected peer institution and hope you will participate. We believe our short survey will only take a few moments of your time and would appreciate your participation. Please take the survey here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/S5ZQS9F

Appendix B: Surveyed Library List

University of Arizona Library
Arizona State University Library
California Digital Library
The UC Berkeley Library
University of California
The University of Chicago Library
Columbia University Libraries
Cornell University Library
Duke University
University of Florida
University of Georgia
Harvard College Library
University of Illinois Libraries
Indiana University Libraries
University of Iowa Library
Johns Hopkins University
Library of Congress
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
National Agricultural Library (United States)
U.S. National Library of Medicine
New York Public Library
New York University
The University of North Carolina
North Carolina State University
Northwestern University Library
Ohio State University
University of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania State University
University of Pittsburgh
Princeton University Library
Rutgers University Libraries

Smithsonian Libraries
University of Southern California Libraries
Stanford University Libraries
The University of Texas Libraries
Texas A & M University
UCLA Library
University of Utah
University of Virginia
University of Washington Libraries
Washington University in St. Louis
University of Wisconsin
Yale University Library
University of Alberta*
University of Calgary
Simon Fraser University
University of British Columbia*
University of Victoria
University of Manitoba
University of New Brunswick
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Dalhousie University
Algoma University
Brock University
Carleton University
Lakehead University
Laurentian University
McMaster University
Nipissing University
OCAD University
Queen's University
Royal Military College of Canada
Ryerson University
Trent University
University of Guelph
University of Ontario Institute of Technology
University of Ottawa
University of Toronto*
University of Waterloo
University of Windsor
Western University
Wilfrid Laurier University
York University
Concordia University
McGill University
University of Regina
University of Saskatchewan
***Canadian Libraries in ALA ALCTS Chief Collection Development Officers of Large
Research Libraries Discussion Group**

Appendix C: Survey Questions

1. What plans does your library have for including Open Access in your collection development policies or strategy statements?
   a. Our Library already includes Open Access in our collection development policies or strategy statements.
   b. Our Library plans to address Open Access in our collection development policies or strategy statements in the future.
   c. Our Library does not plan to include Open Access in our collection development policies or strategy statements.
   Comments

2. Does your institution believe that collection development policies or strategy statements should address Open Access?
   Yes
   No
   Comments

3. How detailed should the collection development policy or strategy statement be regarding Open Access?
   It should include just an overall general statement.
   It should be very detailed and address many areas of scholarly communication.
   It should not address Open Access.
   Other (please specify)

4. We would also like to learn what Open Access issues and areas your institution believes a collection development policy or strategy statement should address. Please rate the following:

	Important	Less Important	Not Important	Don't know
a) Digitization projects				
b) Journal publishing				
c) Institutional repositories				
d) Data				
e) Databases listing Open Access items (DOAJ, etc.)				
f) Open access projects (SCOAP3)				
g) Metadata issues				
h) Individual serial titles				
i) Individual e-book titles				
j) Open access memberships (BMC)				
k) Consortia projects				

   Comments

5. Are there other Scholarly Communication areas that a Collection Development policy or strategy statement should address?
   Yes
   No
   If you answered yes, please specify other areas that should be addressed.

6. Please share any specific strategies you can for including Open Access in Collection Development Policies or Strategy statements.

7. Please share any specific strategies you can for including Open Access in Collection Development.

8. Would you be available for a follow up email or phone call if we require clarification or have further related questions?
    Yes
    No
    If yes, please include contact information.

Appendix D: Invitation to Libraries

Dear

As part of my role as Collections Librarian for Open Access Initiatives I am collecting information on Open Access activities and projects in libraries across the University. I would appreciate you taking a few minutes to provide me with information about any activities or projects related to Open Access in your library.

I am especially interested in projects and activities directly or broadly related to collections including library publishing activities, digitization projects, institutional or other repositories work, acquiring and maintaining access to Open Access publications, inclusion of Open Access in collection development policies or strategy statements, educational and Open Access Week events, etc. I would also like to know if there are specific people assigned responsibility for Open Access activities in your library and whether or not I could telephone you or someone else for further information.

The data collected will be used to inform the work of the Collection Development Department but also for a research project and paper that Rea Devakos (Coordinator, Scholarly Communication University of Toronto Libraries) and I are preparing for presentation at IFLA in Lyon, France this summer. We will of course also share the information with libraries across Campus and the Tri-Campus Scholarly Communication Committee.

Thank you,
Sharon Dyas-Correia