What do we know about faculty?

Prepared by: G. Castro Gessner
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Purpose: Synthesize findings of local and national studies on faculty attitudes and practices
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Description:
The purpose of this project was to synthesize a wide range of articles on faculty attitudes and practices regarding scholarly production.

This report is based on a small collection of recent local and national studies and essays (2006 to present) that explored the scholarly production/consumption cycle from access to creation and dissemination of scholarly material for research and teaching purposes. It is supplemented in part by locally available information and data regarding faculty demographics, research behavior or library use.

Two underlying themes emerging from these studies are the role and integration of technology in the scholarly production cycle and the constraints perpetuated by the academic structures of promotion and tenure.

Research and Assessment Unit (RAU) projects are undertaken to assess existing library programs and services, to investigate user needs and future directions, and to assist Library decision-makers in developing superior information services for the Cornell community. RAU strives for neutrality in the collection and analysis of data and in reporting its findings. Inherent in all research projects are contingencies and circumstances that call for caution when interpreting the data. Specific information about the known limitations of the study is included in the project report. RAU staff are happy to discuss interpretation of data in the reports they produce.
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Two underlying themes emerging from these studies are the role and integration of technology in the scholarly production cycle and the constraints perpetuated by the academic structures of promotion and tenure. Some of these studies aimed to understand faculty or advanced scholars within a single institution (i.e., Rieger 2010; University of Minnesota (UM) 2006;), while others attempted to cull out trends from faculty in various institutions (research universities and teaching colleges), disciplines and varying status (i.e., Harley et al., 2010; Jaschik 2006; Schonfeld and Housewright 2010).

The role of allied organizations, such as libraries, publishing houses, granting agencies and institutional support in the scholarly production cycle is in many cases inferred if not specifically addressed; however, the impact of user behavior and preferences regarding discovery, use, creation and dissemination of materials is evident for all of them. In this report, library-related implications as well as perceived value are highlighted where possible.

I. SCHOLARLY PRODUCTION

Shared Practices

The scholarly production cycle is at the core of the academic endeavor for both research and teaching purposes and is standard academic practice for faculty in all disciplines. Despite numerous known disciplinary differences in scholarly production between scientists, humanists and social scientists, there are a few shared perspectives. Among those shared practices, tenure and promotion are hugely influential forces for status quo in scholarly practices (expanded below).

Most, if not all researchers, are delighted with and make use of the increasing volume of online research materials and tools available (Harley et al., 2010:18). Ithaka’s recent report (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:7), indicates that over 70% of faculty search online databases with full-text content and about 65% follow citations found in online articles.

In the discovery process (finding sources), the library is largely invisible since scholars do not start with a visit to the library, library catalog, or consult with a librarian, and instead turn to search engines or specific and preferred databases, often remaining largely unaware of who provides access to these materials.

Appendix A contains a brief summary of methods and research objectives undertaken by each study used in this report.
electronic resources (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:5). Preferences for particular databases or access points was evident during the eXtensible Catalog (XC Study) research interviews that CUL took part in, where faculty and graduate students demonstrated habituated access paths, adhering to resources they knew or which were discipline specific. Social scientists are more likely to rely on multidisciplinary or varied databases when compared to scientists and humanists (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:5-6).

Once data or research materials are collected, many faculty and graduate students exhibit varied, idiosyncratic, inconsistent and ever evolving ways of straddling analog and digital components to integrate their notes and research materials to fit a project or a new collaboration (Bussert, Chiang and Tancheva, ND; UM 2006:29; XC Study). Related to this, but problematic in other ways, is the preservation of scholars’ data and primary materials. While use of tools may vary by scholar and/or discipline, numerous online archives with primary or raw data collected by scholars have appeared (e.g., Genbank). In some cases, these online archives have been built with institutional support or assistance by curators or librarians, but support structures for their preservation are inconsistent or not in place (Harley et al., 2010:17-18).

In the context of final publications and as a result of current constraints of the print medium (word and page limits) and as variable formats of multimodal scholarship increase in use (audio, video, sound, etc., sensu Rieger 2010), scholars increasingly desire that final publications include direct links to data sets, primary source materials and images (Harley et al., 2010).

Disciplinary Differences

Recognizing that there are personal practices as well as field-specific differences within a discipline that are hidden in the aggregate, there are general shared preferences among humanists that differ from those of scientists and social scientists. At the forefront of technology use and behavioral changes in the modes of conducting research, as well as reliance on the library as a starting point for research, scientists and humanists are at opposite ends of the spectrum. Scientists tend to be less reliant on library resources as a starting point for research than humanists, while social scientists’ reliance falls somewhere between both. The trend of lower reliance on library sources as starting points for research exhibited by scientists, seems to be on the rise for humanists and social scientists as well.

Search strategies and discovery. Discovery of resources in the library or through the library catalog has decreased for all scholars, with humanities scholars showing the highest percentage of library-specific starting points (ca. 30%) and scientists the lowest percentage (ca. 10%). Starting points for research that include a search engine or a specific electronic research source, as reported by Schonfeld and Housewright (2010:5), indicate that 65% of humanists prefer this mode of access, compared with about 80% and 88% of social scientists and scientists, respectively. It is suggested that humanists rely more on libraries because fewer books and monographs are currently digitized and available electronically.
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(Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:5), but Rieger’s research (2010:190) indicates that humanists rely on direct physical contact with books, photos, journals and other artifacts of research because they are perceived as instrumental in the learning process. In addition, ease of discovery does not preclude the necessary time and cognitive effort required to process and understand the information found (Rieger 2010: 162, 166, 192). Despite the value given to electronic access because of efficiency and ease of use, scholars at the University of Minnesota also report appreciation for access to physical materials (UM 2006:19).

**Collections use - digital and analog.** According to Ross and Sennyey (2008:146), “in today's environment simplicity, efficiency and transparency” among other factors are decisive reasons influencing patrons’ choice of information sources. Part of this sentiment may underscore changing scholarly perspectives on the increasing importance of availability of electronic formats, in particular journals, for research and teaching.

Electronic journals seem to be the medium of choice for most faculty, including most humanists (except Art Historians and Asian Studies scholars) whose acceptance to e-only subscriptions for current issues is about 60%, compared to about 78% and 82% for social scientists and scientists, respectively. Nonetheless, very few scholars would agree on letting go of print backfiles and keeping only electronic access as a substitute (under 38% for all disciplines; just above 20% for humanists, and about 43% for both scientists and social scientists). By the same token, scholars are generally reluctant to have their core discipline journals available only electronically (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010: 16-19, 24). To a degree, preservation and electronic reliability influence this reluctance, but more important issues seem to be related to credibility, prestige and the reliable authorship that is upheld by print materials (Harley et al., 2010; Rieger 2010). Another reason suggested by Rieger (2010: 193, 202), is that while electronic journals may be the medium of choice for discovery, they are not perceived by humanists as the best resources for serious research. She noted that ease of online availability has modified reading habits, where humanists may more easily perform a perfunctory read on an online article than in print, spend more time searching at the expense of reading/writing, and read less broadly by performing key phrase searches in texts to focus on certain passages.

Despite a preference for online electronic journals, at least as far as searching is concerned, the majority of scholars interviewed at the University of Minnesota print and store print copies of their journal articles, while only a very select group makes digital copies (UM 2006:32). In over 60% of those interviewed, born digital resources (jpg, pdf, etc.,) get duplicated and printed, and graduate students as well as humanist faculty, are more likely to make print copies of born digital materials.

Unlike electronic journals, electronic books are not seen as important in research or teaching, perhaps because those systems have not reached optimal functionality even with the appearance of market devices such as the *Kindle*. Cornell Engineering graduate students in a recent RAU-conducted focus group expressed similar frustration with the printing restrictions and technical difficulties in e-books.
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The preservation of electronic books is likewise not seen as crucial in that context and also because most faculty “dismiss the notion that e-books will displace print originals in a relatively short time frame” (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:23). The underlying issue is that scholars tend to value preserving resources that form the core of their research, such as primary sources for humanists or data sets for social scientists, and are less concerned about other resources (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:22).

At Cornell University, use of traditional print books is evident, but usage also differs by college affiliation. A snapshot of a single day in April 2010, reveals a striking difference in book usage between faculty in the Colleges of Arts & Sciences (AS), Art, Architecture and Planning (AR) and Law (LA), and faculty in other colleges on campus (Fig. 1). This astounding difference needs to be explored further, but for the College of Arts & Sciences, may be attributed to the fact that the number of humanist disciplines is about equal to the number of social science and science disciplines combined (CA&S website).

Unfortunately, user demographics data is not available for e-resources. If they were, they might very well show similarly lopsided use between the humanists, sciences and social sciences, although the peaks and valleys would probably line up differently.

![Cornell University Faculty Book Usage by College](image)

Figure 1. Book usage by faculty by college. (source: IRP and ASR statistics)

Key: AS= Arts & Sciences; AG=Agriculture & Life Sciences; EN= Engineering; VM= Veterinary Medicine; HE= Human Ecology; GM=Graduate School of Management; AR=Architecture, Art & Planning; IL=Industrial & Labor Relations; LA=Law School; HA=Hotel Administration.

2 The choice of an earlier date in the semester, did not show considerable differences in book usage percentages.
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Collections purchase and archive. The library’s essential and primary role as partner in research and teaching, according to faculty perceptions reported by Schonfeld and Housewright (2010), is that of buyer of materials. This role has increased in importance in the last six years and supersedes all others, including that of gatekeeper to materials (access) and archival resource.

Humanists tend to see the library as an important partner in teaching (far more than other disciplines), and in research, but these roles are less important than its function as an archive. About two thirds of social scientists and scientists and four fifths of humanists, attribute the library’s second most important role as that of an archive (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:11). This is surprising in the context of preservation of electronic materials more generally. The majority of scholars agree that electronic journal preservation is paramount, if not so for other kinds of electronic resources (e-books, digitized primary source collections, data sets, etc.), but there is less support for a scholar’s own institution to preserve materials, even if they support the idea that an institution ‘out there’ should preserve them (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010:20-21). Rieger notes that scholars tend to take preservation of materials and their archiving for granted, with little awareness of the risks and challenges involved (2010:214).

Scholarly Output For Tenure/Promotion Requirements

In the context of a declining trend in tenured or tenure-track scholars in the US (Wilson 2010), the parameters and restrictions of traditional academic structures that limit, guide and influence scholarly production are at the core of perceptions of utility, value and use of research materials. Harley et al. (2010:7) refer to three core areas in which promotion and tenure are achieved: publications, service, and teaching; where the latter two carry weight only with an outstanding publication record. As a result, publication in selective and highly visible, peer-reviewed outlets or presses, reigns and sways scholarly choices in searching, reading and output. Differences in status – senior vs. untenured researchers – affect these choices also. In the sciences, unlike other disciplines, obtaining external funds (grants) is a requirement for advancement as well.

Making a name in their respective fields is of supreme importance in the academic promotion and review process. External reviewers may only be aware of a candidate’s promise through her/his publication record. Thus visibility, prestige and credibility are some of the guiding principles of where to publish both for journals and for monographs. Peer-reviewed prestige trumps all other choices, thus scholars are less likely to invest time and effort in blogs, websites, edited volumes or other similar venues (Harley et al., 2010: 7 – 9,11). The wide dissemination possibilities (and visibility) that Open Access may afford is eschewed in favor of prestigious publishers even if the latter only reaches a small and select audience. Open access venues are not rewarded in the promotion process and are perceived as erasing the boundaries between amateurs and professionals, and casting doubts on authority and credibility (Rieger 2010: 164).
Jaschik reports that young scholars (“the Gen X faculty”) differ from senior scholars in their attitudes towards the tenure review process. They tend to value a more open review process (less confidential), acknowledge the worth of teaching as an important part of their academic work, and recognize collaborative research as a positive endeavor. Nonetheless, in fulfilling tenure publishing requirements, young scholars tend to be more conservative in their choice of publishers and publishing outlets than senior scholars, adhering more closely to the standards of tenure and promotion. They are also encouraged and directed to publish in selective outlets and not spend time in blogs, websites or alternate and innovative forms of scholarship for which there is no precedent in the advancement requirements. The mechanisms for evaluating alternate genres or scholarship in non-text formats are not clear and usually not encouraged, but may vary by discipline (e.g., performance art) and by institution (Harley et al., 2010:10).

At Cornell University, younger faculty (born between 1965-1981) represent less than 30% of the total faculty population, and almost represent the same percent of faculty between the ages of 60 and 69 (Fig. 2; IRP Faculty by Age, 2009-2010). Given that attitudes towards publishing for tenure are held almost constant between generations, the influx of a younger faculty in the next 10-15 years may not bring significant changes in our campus for scholarly output.

![Age of Faculty at CU 2009-2010](image)

Figure 2. Age distribution of CU faculty for academic year 2009-2010 (source: Cornell’s IRP).

The legacy of the tenure system and its traditional text-based scholarship helps explain the importance of print materials despite digital publishing availability (UM 2006:19). Its implications reach beyond the selection of publishers, because it affects the collections that scholars find necessary to read, or need to
keep up to date, or which they choose to conduct scholarly work. The reputation or prestige of a source helps scholars discern and filter relevant material in their searches (Harley et al., 2010: 10).

For most fields, peer-reviewed publications in journals, plus a book or monograph are a requirement. Working papers that may eventually be published are accepted in some fields, but not encouraged in the sciences because of concerns with commercial potential or the loss of ownership of an idea (Harley et al., 2010). Humanists have concerns regarding the two book requirement for tenure and decry the excess of low quality publications which this has engendered. For the most part, scholars are according to Harley et al. (2010:12), unaware of a crisis in scholarly communication, except when their manuscripts are rejected by a publisher that no longer publishes in their area of scholarship. Only biologists in Harley et al.’s study were aware of a ‘serials crisis’ and were open to publish in open access journals rather than commercial vendors.

There is enthusiasm for alternate and new modes of publishing, especially given technological advances and the increasing ease with which audio, video, GIS, and other such materials are integrated into essential research. Scholars would also like the ability to link final publications to data sets and other primary resources, but in some cases technological advances are not available yet for these kinds of endeavors, and more importantly, alternate scholarly output is constrained and limited by the promotion and review process (Harley et al. 2010: 12-13). As long as these legacy traditions and structures remain unchanged, adoption of alternate modes of output will not likely occur (Rieger 2010:212).

Interdisciplinary Focus And Collaborative Work

Interdisciplinary research is not well-defined and is understood differently by scholars. It seems to be an important attitude towards research as well as an associated benefit that increases the potential for broad dissemination and scholarly impact (UM 2006:20). For some scholars, interdisciplinary means reading broadly outside one’s discipline, disseminating widely, learning a foreign language (Rieger 2010:195), using combined research methods or collaboration with specialists outside their own field (UM 2006:30). More than 90% of scholars interviewed and surveyed at the University of Minnesota, considered their work interdisciplinary (UM 2006:39).

In terms of access and search strategies, an interdisciplinary scholar needs access to a wider set of resources and archival materials, requiring a broad range of skills to find materials in other fields, as well as familiarity with different terminologies, methods and possibly technologies. In addition, opportunities to meet with scholars in other fields is important (UM 2006:30).

The perks of interdisciplinary research include the possibility of disseminating research to a broad audience, collaborating with colleagues across the hall or the globe, and thinking differently about a project. By the same token, perceived drawbacks include finding an adequate venue to publish, funding agencies that span several disciplines (Harley et al. 2010:16), and whether publishing in journals outside
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of a scholar’s field constitutes advancement in the tenure requirements (UM 2006:20-23). Lack of guidelines for tenure on individual contributions or lack of incentives for collaborative authorships, may work against collaborations (UM 2006: 23), except in the hard sciences (biology and astrophysics), where multiple authorship is expected (Harley et al. 2010:17).

Collaboration. Collaborative work may be interdisciplinary, even within the same department if scholars work on different topics within a discipline. But collaboration, just as interdisciplinary research, is also varied. Collaboration may consist of a joint project, circulating pre-publication papers or joint authorship, the latter which, as Harley et al. (2010:16) indicate, is the most likely scenario in the US academy.

The preferred collaborative mode is face-to-face, and according to some “has no substitute” even with communication advances. Proximity affords discussion of research as it is happening, not only when it is completed, and allows for the building of relationships with graduate students. Some consider impromptu hallway conversations invaluable, thus distance to colleagues is seen as an obstacle in this kind of joint venture (UM 2006:23). Conferences or presentations are also useful venues for collaborations.

Despite the preference for in-person collaboration, email plays an important role in the exchange of ideas or essays as they are developed and shared with colleagues (UM 2006:29; Harley et al., 2010:13). Usually, informal exchanges via email occur first before sharing with a wider audience in presentations or conferences (Harley et al., 2010:13). Collaborative methods vary by discipline and in Harley et al’s (2010:16) study, astrophysicists and musicians/composers displayed the most sophisticated methods, such as, software germane to their disciplines, while other fields (social sciences and humanities), used email, ftp servers and tracked changes in documents.

II. Library Perceptions & Value

It is a challenge to separate perceptions about the library from user research practices, but this section attempts to highlight self-reported values and use of library buildings, collections and services.

As noted by the Ithaka report (2010), increasingly fewer scholars use the physical library or even the library catalog as a starting place for research. Nonetheless, scholars perceive the importance of the library in securing resources, preserving them for the future, and in providing the platforms to access them. These functions are essential in the scholarly production cycle and suggest that scholars perceive the library as a fundamental partner even in the context of declining visits (UM 2006:34).

Scholars in the University of Minnesota study were asked to rate the importance of the library in different aspects. The list below provides a summary of their responses and is organized from most important to least important (UM 2006:30-31):
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- Collector and purchaser, 93%
  - compared to 2006 Ithaka results: Buyer ca. 83%.
- Resource finding and retrieval, 80%
  - Compared to 2006 Ithaka results: Gateway ca. 62%
- Repository/preservation, 65%
  - compared to 2006 Ithaka results: Archive ca. 72%
- Developer of technology, 39%
- Library as very or somewhat important as a place for research and study, graduate students 64%; faculty 39%

Both studies seem to indicate greater awareness of the library’s role as purchaser of materials, perhaps as a result of the current economic downturn and the Open Access movement (Schonfeld and Housewright 2010). The importance of the library as a resource for finding items and repository remain in the top three categories, even if the numbers in both reports numbers differ. The perception that the library plays an important role as ‘developer of technology or tools for information access or management’ may deserve additional exploration as a point of ongoing emphasis for libraries.

Technological tools and organization of information. Rieger’s research explored the role of information and communication technologies among humanists. Her research revealed acceptance to the idea that technologies enhance scholarship, and that their use is essential and well-integrated into the daily work patterns of scholars. More importantly, she found no divergent models of technology use or attitude among scholars of different generations, genders, academic status (tenured vs. untenured), or discipline (2010:189).

In the XC Study, and explored more fully by Bussert et al. (ND), Cornell University researchers engaged at different levels with a variety of information management tools. The ways people collect and organize research materials into workable retrieval and storage systems, varies considerably. The choice of system or technology tools hinges on the anticipated benefits and the associated learning and processing time required. At the University of Minnesota, as well as observed in the XC Study, scholars described and pointed to piles, cabinets and electronic files of materials that over time or in the course of a project can become unwieldy and a challenge to manage. Some scholars at UM worked with experts to make those materials accessible online and to ensure their preservation (UM 2006:24), but overall, UM reports that little thought is given to accessibility and preservation of accumulated materials (UM 2006:19). Over 50% of the faculty at UM archive their personally acquired materials, and 37% assemble original collections (UM 2006:32). Over fifty percent of scholars with personally owned collections indicate that their collections are inaccessible to others, and most (82%), express the lack of time as the primary reason, followed by inadequate funding (55%), and lack of expertise (48%). Whether they are keen on library assistance in these endeavors was not developed.

Library visits – physical and virtual. The library’s role as a place for research and study is important for graduate students and less so for faculty, but in that context, they still make heavy use of library services
such as ILL/BD, book delivery and digital services (UM 2006:18). At Cornell, faculty represents approximately 6% of the borrowing population (students, faculty, and staff) and they make about 16% of all borrowing requests (ILL/BD). This ratio is almost at a par with that of graduate students, who at 17% of the population make nearly 53% of all borrowing requests (ASR 2009: Graph 12; IRP: Distribution of Faculty by College, 2010).

Faculty in the course of the eXtensible Catalog study, expressed joy at not having to set foot in the library thanks to online and delivery services available (XC Study). By the same regard, Schonfeld and Housewright (2010:13) note that despite ease of access to online materials, less than 20% of faculty would agree that the role of librarians at their institution is obsolete. University of Minnesota scholars recognized that they needed librarian help in various realms, but were “slow to seek assistance” (UM 2006:18). This was also evident in our XC Study, where both graduate students and faculty reported rarely finding time to seek assistance and rather than asking for help, developed their own workarounds to problems or ignored them (Castro Gessner and Wilcox ND, XC Study). Areas for librarian assistance in research practices identified by faculty and graduate students in the University of Minnesota included (UM 2006:29):

- Acquiring sources (93%)
- Preparing bibliographies (73%)
- Saving and storing resources (73%)
- General organization (72%)

As the authors of the UM report stated, “there is a need for services and tools that find the researcher” (UM 2006:18).

At the University of Minnesota, daily or weekly visits by both faculty and graduate students to the library are primarily for the purposes of checking out/renewing books (43%) (UM 2006:31). The use of the physical library may be diminished for faculty, but it serves as a focal place for graduate students. At the University of Minnesota, graduate students do research, browse, read, study, seek help and use library computers on a daily or weekly basis. Since graduate students lack “stable physical space” in their home departments (and in the library) to work privately or collaboratively (UM 2006:19) they make extensive use of available library spaces to conduct their work. Focus groups conducted at Cornell with faculty and graduate students of the College of Arts and Sciences for the Olin Renovation project, reiterated a need for quiet and independent study space in close proximity to collections (Tancheva 2007).

Online connectivity provides location options from which to carry out research. Most faculty and graduate students conduct research primarily from home (76-78%), and fewer from departmental offices (44%). Broken down by discipline, the library as a place to conduct research is slightly more popular for humanists (52%) than for social scientists (50%), but these percentages suggest it is still used more than departmental offices (UM 2006:28). Again, at Cornell, faculty with library carrels appreciated
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a location to work outside of their departmental office since it offered easy access to collections as well as a haven to write or execute research with little or no interruption (Tancheva 2007). In 2007, Roughly about a ¼ of the faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences, held library carrels in Olin Library prior to the beginning of the Fire Safety Renovation Project.

At the University of Minnesota, a comparison between library building use and library website use (see figure 3), found that web use of the library exceeds daily and weekly physical visits for accessing online journals (ca. 72%), browsing online catalogs and indexes (ca. 78%), and making ILL requests (ca. 27%). Checking out/renewing books in person at the library occurs more frequently than online, and seeking research assistance is about even between physical (in-person) visits and virtual visits. Online use of all services/resources identified in figure 3 on a daily or weekly basis by social scientists exceeds similar use by humanists (ca. 79% vs. 62%), but on a monthly/occasional basis, humanists outpace social scientists (ca. 33% vs. 19%) (UM 2006:31).

![Figure 3. Comparison of daily/weekly visits to library buildings and library website for the University of Minnesota (Source: UM 2006:31).](image)

III. Some Key Observations

This report is a review of a small and select set of articles and studies that focus on scholarly production and consumption of faculty, future faculty, and/or advanced scholars. Within the academic context, the implications of these scholarly practices for research libraries may not be immediately apparent, but
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provide a backdrop on how scholars interact, use and perceive the services and collections that libraries supply.

At the core, and despite national decreases in the proportions of tenure/tenure-track faculty (Wilson 2010), are the constraints inherent in advancement and promotion, as well as their influence in scholarly utilization, creation and output. At a fundamental level, research practices have remained the same, and will not likely change until approaches to promotion and tenure are modified (Rieger 2010:162). Evolving support systems will be necessary within the framework of the academic traditions of peer review and tenure (Harley et al., 2010), and given the diversity of approaches based on discipline and the rapid changes in technology, a single approach to support user needs will not be effective. Rieger suggests that systems that bridge our current hybrid environment and make it easier to navigate between both analog and digital would benefit researchers, especially humanists, rather than keeping those systems altogether separate (2010:218). Another area that needs to be linked and developed more forcefully is that between alternative and economically sustainable publishing models and promotion requirements buttressing scholarly communications.

Although the role played by the library in support of scholars’ academic endeavors has been a constant, the means of support might need to be modified. A couple of emerging themes deserving of focus are: customizable and flexible services and collections, and improved marketing of library services.

Services that are flexible and customizable. The University of Minnesota findings indicate that overall “faculty and graduate students look for research tools and services that are centered on their needs, are flexible and customizable” (UM 2006:18). This is the greatest challenge of all given the breadth of disciplinary needs and requirements at Cornell University, but may be achieved in small ways.

Regardless of how scholars define interdisciplinary work, the fact that many perceive their own work to fall into that realm, means there is a shared attitude regarding the necessity of access to a wide set of resources. Purchasing materials is essential, but there are a myriad of collections housed in our libraries that may benefit from increased visibility and ease of discovery for inquisitive scholars. Similarly, access to a widespread set of disciplinary materials means in some cases and for some scholars, the need to develop broader skill sets to deal and integrate resources into their research materials. Librarian research assistance – as in focused and/or targeted at the start of particular research projects, might develop into a welcome partnership of collaborators and/or trainers. Flexibility and service at the time, place and point of need, may pave the way for deeper partnerships and understandings between faculty and librarians.

Jaschik (2006) notes that Gen X faculty also value teaching and collaboration more than their senior counterparts, and thus may be more willing to forge partnerships with librarians in ways that increase their works’ visibility. One possible avenue is in the area of information management and preservation of original collections. Both of these are traditional librarian practices that can be adapted and flexed to
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support scholars’ increasing needs in these areas. If almost 40% of scholars at a single research institution (University of Minnesota) amass personal collections, and most of them report that they do not make them accessible because of lack of time, the library may increase inroads in this direction.

Marketing and outreach. In addition to efficiency, transparency and simplicity, Ross and Sennyey include “savvy marketing” as affecting patrons’ decisions regarding choice of information sources. Although the library does not deliberately market its contributions towards scholarly support, making its presence more evident may forge a stronger partnership with the constituencies it serves. It’s possible, as Ross and Sennyey (2008: 146) suggest, that the library may become a node or hub among many others (teaching and learning services), that support scholarly needs. It is a matter of making that hub a crucial one for research and/or, where faculty finds assistance or support of those needs. The embedded librarians’ model in practice at Cornell may be the vehicle to enhance and strengthen the partnerships and collaborations necessary in these important ventures.

References

http://ecommons.library.cornell.edu/bitstream/1813/14665/2/2008_2009_ASR_3_1_10.pdf


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APPENDIX A

Harley et al. 2010

*Purpose:* Understand the needs of faculty for “in-progress scholarly communication” before final publication, and assessing attitudes and needs of scholars as both producers and consumers of research results.

*Methods:* 160 interviews with faculty, advanced scholars, administrative faculty, librarians, postdocs and publishers in 45 research universities in the United States (n=132 individual interviews; n=28 focus group participants). Seven disciplines were targeted: biology, astrophysics, archaeology, economics, history, music and political science.

Rieger, Oya 2010

*Purpose:* To investigate how information and communication technologies (ICTs) support research and scholarly discourse by humanities scholars.

*Methods:* Participant observation (22 month long) in the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Forty five interviews with humanities fellows which included faculty (assistant to full rank), post-docs and graduate students from anthropology, comparative literature, history and languages. Qualitative methods of analysis were employed.

Schonfeld and Housewright 2010 (Ithaka S+R)

*Purpose:* Survey conducted every three years to examine broad issues affecting academic libraries, publishers, and scholarly societies. The 2009 survey, on which this report is based, examined faculty attitudes and reported practices in the areas of scholarly information practices, use of digital materials, and attitudes regarding scholarly communications.

*Methods:* Surveys sent to faculty in colleges and universities of the United States that grant bachelor’s degrees or higher. Paper surveys were mailed to 35,184 faculty in September 2009, and they received 3025 responses (response rate of approximately 8.6%).

University of Minnesota 2006.

*Purpose:* To assess support for scholarship in the context of a large research campus, exploring discipline-specific needs for facilities, information content, services, tools, and expertise in the humanities and social sciences. Framework focused on three components: information sources, infrastructure services, and research behaviors.
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Methods: 16 College of Liberal Arts departments were targeted – Humanities, Area Studies and Social Sciences. Interviews were conducted with faculty from these departments (n=50), focus groups with graduate students (n=23 participants); and, web and mail surveys sent to both faculty and graduate students (n=568; 413 graduate students; 155 faculty), with a response rate of about 50%.

XC Study – eXtensible Catalog Study at Cornell University

Purpose: Part of the eXtensible Catalog project of the University of Rochester (http://www.extensiblecatalog.org/) centered on developing open source, user-centered, next generation software for libraries. Cornell University participated in the user research component of the eXtensible Catalog project among other institutions (Yale, Ohio State and University of Rochester.) The purpose of our participation was to obtain information regarding user behavior practices of faculty and advanced graduate students in the course of doing research.

Methods: Video-taped 19 interviews with faculty and graduate students (n=13 faculty; n=6 graduate students) in Near Eastern Studies, History, Government, Communication, Comparative Literature, English, Classics, Romance Studies, Engineering, Information Science, Business, Art and Policy Analysis Management. Audio/video was transcribed and qualitative analysis undertaken.