WIU Open Access to Research Task Force
Report of subcommittee to review item 9

Subcommittee Members:
Dale Adkins, Associate Dean, COEHS
Lisa Miczo, Professor, Dept. of Communications
Jim Schmidt, Associate Dean, CAS

The subcommittee was asked to address the mandated item concerning what version of a research publication should be placed in the public access repository:

... consider academic, legal, ethical, and fiscal ramifications of and questions regarding an open access, including but not limited to the following...

(9) the determination of which version of a research article should be made publicly accessible;

The subcommittee met to discuss various factors influencing the decision, including:
- whether more than one version of a published piece be in the repository at any one time (e.g., should pre-publication drafts of journal articles be included or only final versions?)
- what should be considered "published" for these purposes (e.g., books/articles published by a publisher vs. self-published documents, blog posts, or personally created web pages)
- what should be considered "research" for these purposes (e.g., printed, textual material? Visual arts? Representations of three-dimensional arts? New media?)
- what components of the research process should fall under this purview (i.e., what components of the research should be included for public access? Raw data? Results of analyses? The finished, published work?)

After much discussion, the subcommittee suggests recommending the following:

1) Recommendation: Only the final version of a research article (or other text-based publication) should be added to the WIU repository.

Rationale: This recommendation is based on the idea that multiple versions of the same work in the repository may make it confusing for readers to know which is the most recent version. It may also make it confusing, when searching the repository, to know which version has received vetting via a review/refereed process. By limiting additions to the repository to ‘final products’ we would make clear that these objects are the culminating products of the research/scholarly process. To determine if this approach was favored by the various disciplines in the university, a request was made of department chairs to review this recommendation and our rationale. (See appendix for a sample of the request sent to department chairs by their respective dean’s offices.) Support for limiting the repository to final versions was nearly unanimous among those who responded.

2) Recommendation: "Published" research would cover research that is disseminated through a publishing company or organization. This would include those pieces that have been published at a cost to the researcher, but would not include research posted on individual web pages.
**Rationale:** The subcommittee agreed it was important to distinguish between self-published works and other-published works, if for no other reason than to place some limits on what might be included in the repository.

3) **Recommendation:** "Research" would include any printed article or text-based publication.

**Rationale:** The Act states in Section 5, Purpose: “to maximize the social and economic benefits of research to the public, the published research articles of produced by faculty at public universities should be made as widely as possible...” (emphasis added). This seems to indicate the intent of the Act is for the repository to make available text-based publications. The subcommittee found no reason to expand the scope of the repository beyond that stipulated in the Act.

4) **Recommendation:** Only those components of the publication made "public" to those receiving the publication would fall under this purview. Data not included in the final piece, full book access, scales developed or utilized, proprietary material associated with patents, and other components that were a part of the research process but not a part of the final printed publication would not be subject to "public" access.

**Rationale:** The subcommittee again interpreted the scope of the Act to be limited to the actual end product (i.e., the “publication”) and we found no reason to expand the scope of the repository.

5) **Recommendation:** In circumstances where publisher-established embargoes, restrictions, and/or proprietary constraints do not allow the published work to be made available through the repository, the subcommittee recommends that an abstract be submitted with an electronic pointer or link to the source of the published research, where they may purchase materials covered by these restrictions.

**Rationale:** In instances where it is not possible for the published work to be made available via the repository, due either to copyright restrictions or fiscal constraints of making available published material, a summary/abstract (with linking information to the publication itself) would suffice to alert the public to the work’s existence and availability. (It should be added that a frequent comment in our polling of department chairs involved concerns that requiring full text versions of all publications to be available in the repository would, in essence, impose unfair restrictions on faculty in choosing outlets for publication. The subcommittee shares this concern and we believe placing an abstract or summary in the repository in those cases would meet the spirit of the Act.)
Appendix: Sample Request for Feedback from Department Chairs

Dear CAS Department Chairs:

Dale Adkins (COEHS), Lisa Miczo (COFAC) and I form a subcommittee of a university task force charged with making recommendations about the development of an Open Access Repository of research articles generated at WIU. (This task force was mandated by an Act passed by the Illinois legislature, and our charge comes directly from provisions in the Act. Information on the task force can be found at http://wiu.libguides.com/OAWIU).

In order to best represent the many perspectives of all the disciplines at WIU, I’m writing to solicit your feedback.

A bit of background:
Our subcommittee is looking at one narrow section of the Act, which directs us to consider the ramifications of and questions regarding “the determination of which version of a research article should be made publicly accessible.”

The repository will be a place where the research articles produced by our faculty would be freely available via the Web. Generally, a repository is a long-term storage facility, so once an object goes into the repository, it remains available for a long time (indefinitely, perhaps). Other sub-groups of the task force will address the question of which objects (e.g., journal articles, books, book chapters, theses) should be included in our repository as well as many other legal and practical issues, but our subcommittee is making recommendations only about which version (or versions) of a single work should be included.

Some repositories may contain multiple versions of a single work: unpublished early versions of a manuscript, preprints, reprints, etc. This allows access to all parts of the research, and perhaps makes the work available before it appears in print (some journals, for example, have a wait time of a year or more between acceptance and publication). Other repositories may only include the final, published version of an article.

Here is where we need your feedback:
After much discussion, our subcommittee is leaning toward recommending that only the final version of a research article (or other text-based publication) be added to the WIU repository. This recommendation is based on the idea that multiple versions of the same work in the repository may make it difficult for readers to know which is the most recent version. It may also make it confusing, when searching the repository, to know which version has received vetting via a review/referee process. By limiting additions to the repository to ‘final products’ we would make clear that these objects are the culminating products of the research/scholarly process.

My question:
Do you agree with our recommendation that only the final version of a research article should be placed in the repository? Why or why not? We want to represent the view of many disciplines, so if there are reasons, from the perspective of your area, that this approach would not be preferable, please let me know.

If you have any thoughts or preferences regarding this recommendation, please drop me a note by Wednesday, April 9 will make sure your comments are included in our deliberation.

Final notes: I know someone will ask this, so let me address it up front: adding an object to a repository does not, in our opinion, constitute “publication” of that work for promotion and tenure procedures, any more than posting a work on an individual’s web site would constitute publication. The decisions affecting inclusion of material into the repository is entirely independent from decisions regarding the merit of research that are part of the personnel process. In addition, we realize there are many associated issues involved with placing publications into such a repository (e.g., copyright matters); these are things the Task Force will address. For now, we are interested primarily in your thought regarding which version of a publication is made accessible via the repository.

Thanks, and if you have any feedback that you would like to share, please send it to me at ja-schmidt@wiu.edu.