



11-9-2017

Stuck in the Middle: Re-defining What Successful Scholarly Communications Programs Look Like

Janelle Wertzberger
Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/librarypubs>



Part of the [Scholarly Communication Commons](#)

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

Recommended Citation

Wertzberger, Janelle, "Stuck in the Middle: Re-defining What Successful Scholarly Communications Programs Look Like" (2017). *Musselman Library Staff Publications*. 72.
<https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/librarypubs/72>

This open access conference material is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.

Stuck in the Middle: Re-defining What Successful Scholarly Communications Programs Look Like

Abstract

What are the goals of your scholarly communications programs and services, and how do you define success? Critics and proponents alike often attempt to paint the scholarly communications movement with a broad brush. Both groups seem to push for a common definition of what the movement should look like and how success should be defined. In the world we live in today, these loudest voices are often amplified through their use of social media, listservs and prominent roles on the conference circuit, leaving some in the middle to question their own success and whether they have a place in this movement. And because scholarly communications programs do often grow out of the open access movement, some institutions may define their local success in terms of the movement as a whole.

We argue that effective scholarly communications programs are ones that are aligned with their institutions' mission and goals, and use planning and evaluation methods that reflect their unique community and needs. This panel will explore the challenges posed by those who seek a singular definition of success and share brief examples of how scholarly communications programs are developed, sustained, and evaluated at three different institutions. Panelists from a liberal arts college, a comprehensive university and a research university will discuss the ways they define and measure success at their institutions, and how this may have evolved over time.

Keywords

scholarly communications, assessment, success

Disciplines

Scholarly Communication

Comments

Panel presentation at the 2017 Charleston Library Conference with co-presenters Sarah Beaubien (Grand Valley State University) and Doug Way (University of Wisconsin-Madison)

Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

Stuck in the Middle: Re-defining What Successful Scholarly Communications Programs Look Like



Doug Way
**University of Wisconsin –
Madison**



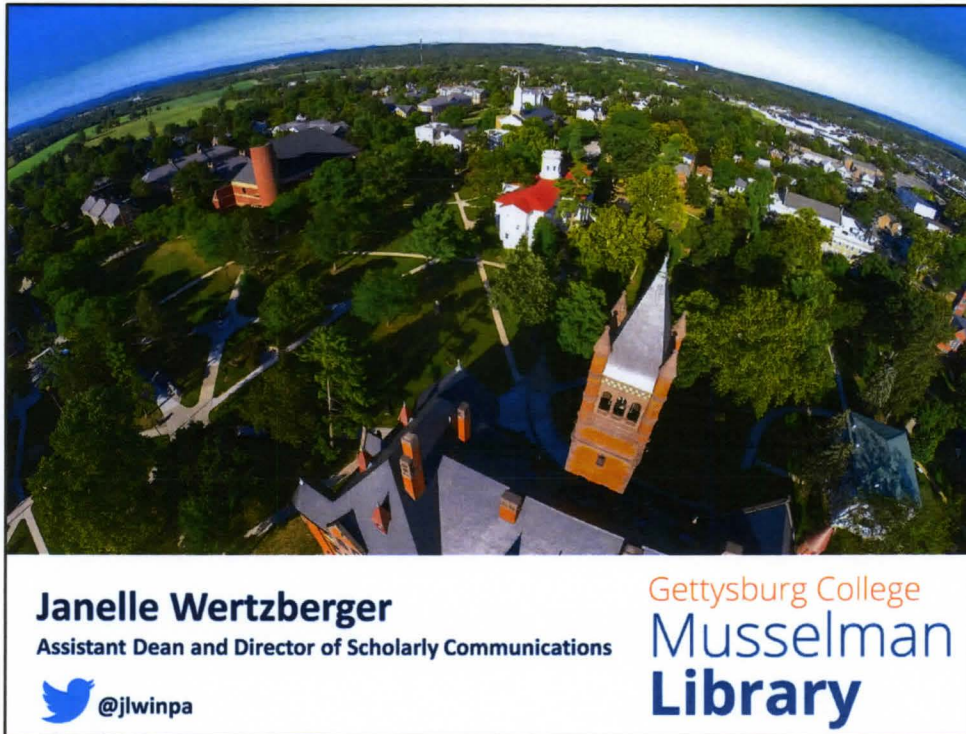
Janelle Wertzberger
Gettysburg College



Sarah Beaubien
**Grand Valley State
University**



Charleston Conference™
ISSUES IN BOOK AND SERIAL ACQUISITION
November 6 - 10, 2017
"WHAT'S PAST IS PROLOGUE"



I work at Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, PA. We are a small, private, residential liberal arts college with about 2,600 undergraduate students. Liberal arts colleges are a rare breed in the American education system. By “liberal arts college,” I don’t mean a large university that has a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences – I mean a small school that focuses on undergraduates and provides a broad foundation in liberal arts and sciences as well as a specialized major. Only about 2% of U.S. college graduates receive this type of education. Studying for a bachelor’s degree at my institution is different in many ways from studying for one at an ARL school. We have small classes, no graduate student instructors, many opportunities for those high impact educational experiences, and an emphasis on teaching. (We also have a high list price, but 75% of our students receive financial aid.) Often visitors are amazed at the kind of research our students do, and I like to quip that we don’t have any pesky graduate students to get in the way of undergraduate excellence. We are all about undergraduate excellence.

In fact, undergraduates are the reason we started an open access institutional repository in 2012. We wanted to capture and archive the best of our undergraduate research and creative activity that was being presented on campus at our annual research colloquium, and an IR seemed like a good solution. We chose Digital Commons because we needed a hosted solution – we simply don’t have access to programmers who could make an open source IR work for us. Our choice was between no IR and a hosted IR, and we chose a hosted IR because it allowed us to support a strategic goal of “advancing scholarship across campus in its established and emerging forms.”



Our IR is called The Cupola. It is the foundation of our commitment to open access, open publishing, and scholarly communications. In addition to collecting exemplary student course work, conference presentations, and the like, we use it as a publishing platform for four journals that are edited and peer-reviewed by undergraduates. Today we have about 1,800 student works in The Cupola, with over 315,000 downloads. This increases visibility for our educational program and enhances the reputation of the institution.



**The Unfinished Work:
A Strategic Direction for Gettysburg College**

2016-2021

Impact

**Inclusion &
International-
ization**

Innovation

This panel is about how aligning scholarly communications initiatives with institutional missions and goals produces varied results. I want to highlight one student-centered project in our IR that supports those priorities. But first, what are those priorities? Our current strategic plan, “The Unfinished Work,” lifts up three themes: impact, inclusion & internationalization, and innovation.



The Mainstream Misrepresentation of Muslim Women in the Media

Ms. Marvel: Changing Muslim Representation in the Comic World

To Veil or Not to Veil: A Loaded Question

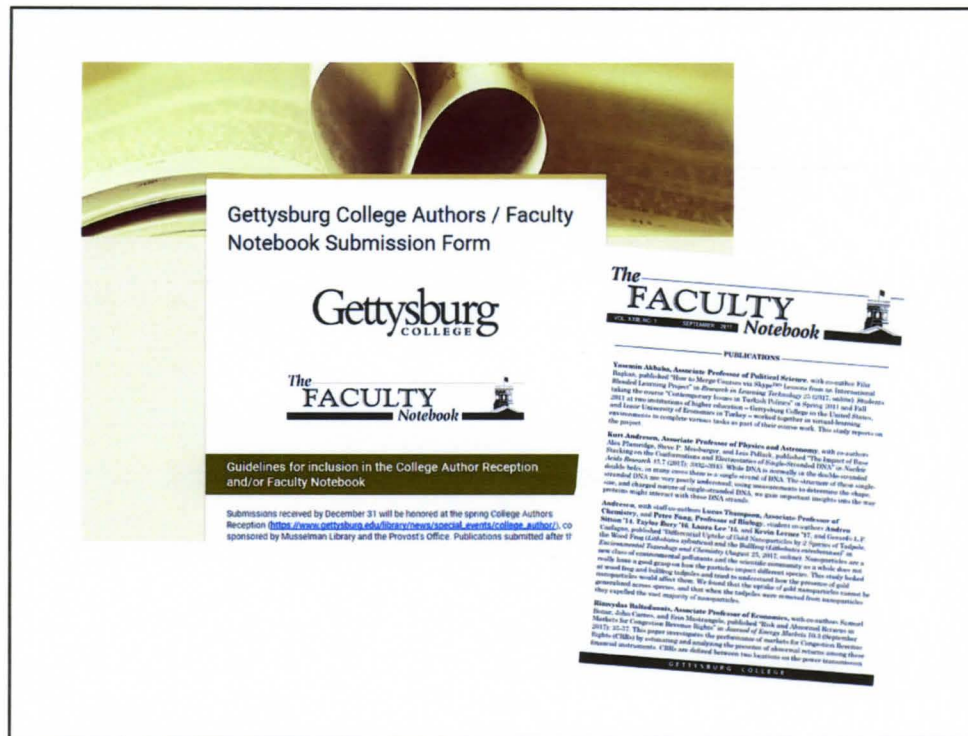
Kittens and Nutella: Why Women Join ISIS



“What All Americans Should Know About Women in the Muslim World” emerged from a 200-level anthropology course on Islam and women. The professor had long wanted to write a book addressing that topic, and one afternoon as we were talking, she said she realized that her students were writing the book as part of her class. She wrote an introduction to the project and then selected the strongest class papers to be included in the series – some of the titles are included on the slide. Currently there are two semesters worth of student papers in The Cupola, and the course is being taught again right now, so we expect to add to it again later this fall. The series of 13 papers has been online for about 18 months and currently has over 5,000 downloads from 121 countries. Student scholarship that shows how institutional priorities connect with the classroom is exactly what we want to share publicly with the world. Having this kind of work in our IR is one kind of success in my institutional context.



So far I've been talking about student work, but of course we try to open access to faculty publications in our IR, as well. We collect ALL faculty publications in The Cupola. We track them carefully so that we can honor them in an annual College Authors Reception that we co-host with our Provost's Office each year. These pictures show the event, and you can tell it's well-attended— that's our president in the top right corner.



I know some of you are wondering how we track those publications – do we search big databases like Web of Knowledge or Scopus, do we use a script...? We don't do any of that. We just ask the faculty what they publish, and they tell us using a simple Google form. They self-report because they don't want to be left out of this fancy reception attended by the Provost and the President or this semi-annual publication called The Faculty Notebook that comes out of the Provost's Office. It is part of our campus culture to celebrate each other's work.



This is how the faculty publications are represented in The Cupola (this is part of the 2016 author page). Someone on my team proofs and enters the metadata and works diligently to post full content for every single item that we can share legally. Another advantage of working at a small institution is that we are able to research the copyright permission for every faculty publication (because we only have 125-150 per year). When we cannot find a publisher policy regarding self-archiving (which is common for books and book chapters), we contact the copyright holder requesting permission to share.

The Cupola
Scholarship at Gettysburg College

Home About FAQ My Account

Enter search terms
in this series Search
Advanced Search

Home > College Authors > 2016 College Authors

2016 COLLEGE AUTHORS

Mexican Immigrants' Perceptions and Attitudes:
Evidence from Popular Songs of the Bracero
Program Era

This item is not available in The
Cupola.

Contact Author

Find in your library

SHARE

Verónica Calvillo, Gettysburg College

Follow

Document Type
Article

4th Univ. Producing an Imperial Budget: The Making of Budgets in Ivory Coast, 1908-1955. Abou B. Benba

JA 2016 Cupola Online Journals of Science Ryan P. Bevier and Darren B. Glass

JA 2016 Individual, Reaction, and Resistance to Stressors in Response Personality Disorder Kathy R. Benenson, Wesley, Ellen Gregory, Erin Glasser, Aliza Rosenzweig, Esther Rafael, Xiao Yang, and Genevieve Downey

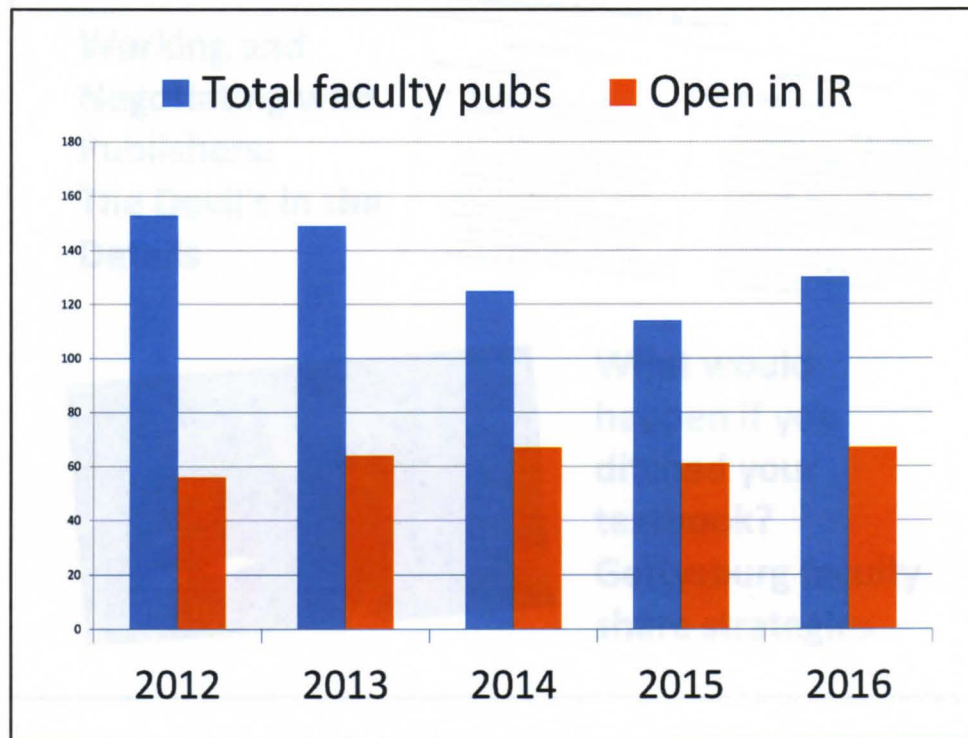
Reading Amazon's Fragments: Queering Shitay Temma F. Berg

JA 2016 Mesmeric Visions: Dysregulation and Unreliable Information Accompanying Buprenorphine Social Media Emily Schwartz-Bessecker, Gina M. Deiter, Nicole Pironi, Timothy K. Cooper, and Gregory Michael Holmes

JA 2016 The Politics of Civil War History James J. Broome, Peter S. Carmichael, and Jill Ogline Titus

Of course, we don't always have copyright permissions for posting full content. We have opted to include metadata-only entries in the IR for those publications, because sharing that descriptive information in our search engine-optimized IR still increases visibility for our campus authors. We really try to help future readers out, though. Even if a reader encounters one of these metadata-only entries, they still might be able to access full content by using the "Find in your library" link. That only works for readers with access to institutional subscriptions, but it will help some of them. For the rest, we have been careful to include a "contact author" button so that readers can email the author directly to ask for a copy.

9



All this background is to say that another way that I measure success at Gettysburg is to look at the percentage of faculty publications each year for which there is an open version shared in The Cupola. This is kind of a dashboard metric for me, because it's a single number that represents various kinds of work. It includes things like journal articles published in OA journals, works that are only open because a copy is in The Cupola, and works that might not have been open if the library had not been doing education and outreach to faculty about the benefits of open access in recent years. It's a messy, multi-faceted number, but it's a number I keep my eye on. You can see that for the past five years, 37-54% of all faculty publications are fully open in The Cupola, and it's been over 50% for the past three years. This is without an OA mandate. I hope that with continued outreach and education to faculty, we can push the number even higher.



Earlier I mentioned Gettysburg College's strategic plan, "The Unfinished Work," which cleverly borrows some words from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address to frame what's coming next. I found myself thinking about that phrase as I prepared for this panel. It occurred to me that the pundits who declare the open access movement a failure or who criticize librarians for not all working from the same definition are guilty of calling the game before it is over. The work that academic librarians now call "scholarly communications" is really new within our profession, and it's very "unfinished." Let's give it some time to mature, while working with urgency to ensure that it does, each within our own institutional context.

Photo by Miranda Harple, © Gettysburg College 2016

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gettysburgcollege/28171066421/in/album-72157682610566141/>