**EAR Committee Report**

**Presented to Members of COLD**

**November 30, 2017**

**Mark Stover, Chair**

The second meeting of the EAR Committee for the 2017-2018 academic year took place via Zoom on November 2, 2017. Mary Wegmann joined the committee for this meeting, her first since joining the library faculty at Sonoma recently. EAR plans to meet quarterly via Zoom throughout the year, along with one face-to-face meeting in March at the SCELC conference in Los Angeles.

Topics discussed at the November EAR Committee meeting (or via email after the meeting) included:

* Terri Joiner reported that SDLC is working on getting memos, licenses, and title lists into Alma for all campuses to see. Users will need to be logged in to Alma to view them.
* EAR members discussed the Gale Access Program. Gale reps went to SDLC with pricing, and then they (the Gale reps) started talking to individual campuses. Concerns were expressed that the Gale Access program did not appear to be coming from SDLC, but rather some other entity at the Chancellor’s Office. Also, it is expensive; and there is a lot of overlap between Gale and other resources. One member expressed concerns that this will turn into another “NBC Learn” debacle.
* The committee discussed the Oxford Research Encyclopedia. Apparently an Oxford University press rep has been reaching out to gauge interest and pitch this new resource, although it is unknown how many campuses already have this content. OUP has not talked to SDLC about a package or opt-in for these resources yet. EAR decided that the eBook subcommittee should look at offers like this and other core reference titles. Some caveats: OUP is costly, and there are alternative reference products (Credo, Cambridge, etc.). In addition, the cost of packages vs. title-by-title should be considered.
* Readex has an offer and trial for new digital/historical collections. Concerns were expressed about the quality of the content, along with the lack of pricing provided by Readex.
* The committee discussed the new Proquest Textbook Initiative. Proquest has already met with some members, but there are concerns about making sure Affordable Learning Solutions (AL$) staff at the Chancellor's Office are involved, especially with regards to budget. Other concerns expressed relate to a possible strain on library resources (infrastructure) and library budgets, as well as the issue of faculty choice. In Australia, where Proquest has piloted this initiative, the library has a lot of control over affordable textbook solutions.
  + One scalable method that the committee discussed is working with the vendor for supplemental or required readings rather than traditional textbooks. We might see more success approaching acquisition of the required readings than the traditional, expensive textbooks. Different campus approaches to textbook acquisition were discussed. Recurring readings are covered in this approach, but changes in textbooks or readings will always be an issue.
  + There was a brief discussion of the role of the bookstore on campus. One member strongly disagrees with EAR involvement in textbook purchases because of cost and academic freedom. Other members talked about how they fund different resources and the sustainability of purchasing textbooks for the library.
  + There was a discussion on what is happening on the different campuses in regard to textbook initiatives. Some campuses are writing textbooks; others are moving toward course readers or aggregated resources. David Hellman will draft a poll to survey how and whether textbooks are funded in the library and how they are funded, and will send it out to the Collection Development list.
* The committee discussed Cabell's "Blacklist" database, which has (in effect) taken over Beall’s List in terms of naming predatory journals. The State-wide Academic Senate and others are interested in this at the SDLC level for RTP and other faculty research-related reasons. But what does this do to scholarly communication librarians and other library faculty members who assist classroom faculty (and occasionally students) with determining the best journals to publish in and the ones to stay away from? San Francisco added Cabell’s Blacklist last year, but the use does not appear to be that high. Bakersfield has the Whitelist (Cabell’s legacy database), and it is required for faculty in one school on campus to use. The EAR member from Bakersfield believes that Cabell’s **does** get used there. Stanislaus and Northridge have the same situation as Bakersfield. It appears that the business schools are heavy users of Cabell’s, and sometimes they subsidize the cost. The committee determined that, based on the information we have now, Cabell’s Blacklist might be useful for instruction to graduate students. Not all agreed that it falls within the scope of EAR, but it could be useful for new faculty. It might be a useful tool for teaching students how to evaluate fake news and to see whether indexers are indexing predatory journals. It does have some value if it is in the right price range. SDLC has contacted Cabell's for more information, and EAR is hoping for a trial.
* The committee discussed Elsevier’s latest “evidence based acquisition” (EBA) ebooks initiative. Email consensus initially was that there is not a lot of interest in it, and the offer did not make it to SDLC because of this disinterest. EAR members did not like the offer because it was too geared toward science research where those students mostly utilize journal content, and the package was too expensive even at the per book cost. ($200-300 per book for a system-wide cost would have been a good deal, but per campus was too expensive).
  + EBA models are becoming more popular. We may see other vendors offering packages along these lines with more diversity of publishers and content. EBA is not a bad model, but the cost of the books in the end that is the issue. If you have a subscription with Alexander Street Press, you also have access to EBA to select titles for perpetual access even if they are pulled by the vendor. Docuseek offers a similar model.
  + The EAR ebook subcommittee will have more information in a few months on ebook recommendations (possibly also including the EBA model).
  + **Late-breaking news:** Elsevier came back to EAR (in mid-November) with a new offer that effectively **cut its original offer in half.** Nevertheless, while some EAR members wanted to move forward and send it to the Collection Development librarians with a formal offer, a majority of EAR members remained unconvinced. Prices, while cut in half, still seem too high, and the content seems too focused on research monographs at the graduate student or faculty level rather than on undergraduate students. EAR is still not ready to recommend that SDLC turn this into a formal offer to the campuses.