FAQ about Open Access at ISU

1. ***What is open access?***
   Open access in regard to research papers can actually refer to more than one thing. In a very general sense, it refers to providing free access for anyone to scholarly articles through the Internet, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. The Illinois Act refers to open access as a means to make published research articles produced by faculty at public universities "widely available" and to allow for free public access, long-term preservation, and broad accessibility for reuse and further research. The scope of open access can also extend beyond research articles and include photographic and artistic images, theses and dissertations, scientific databases, etc.

2. ***What are public universities in Illinois being asked to do in regard to open access?***
   The Illinois Open Access to Research Articles Act (Public Act 098-0295) states that each public university in the state should develop an open access to research articles policy. The act further specifies that each public university shall establish an Open Access to Research Task Force with the charge of reviewing current practices and providing recommendations regarding a policy. A report is due to the Board of Trustees by November 15, 2014. The Illinois Act was likely passed for a number of reasons including to increase accessibility and benefits to the public of public-supported research.

3. ***Why are we investigating open access?***
   A central task of the Open Access Task Force is to respond to recent state legislation that requires an investigation about the possibilities of open access at each public university (Public Act 098-0295). The Task Force is charged with making recommendations about how it might work here. A copy of the legislative act to which we are responding is here: http://provost.illinoisstate.edu/faculty/openaccess.shtml

4. ***How is open access most commonly achieved?***
   - **Publication with open access.** Some journals will allow an article to be freely available on the internet for a higher publication charge. There are also more than 9,000 open access journals, where all articles are freely available. The publication of datasets is another form of open access that provides a citation for the author(s) while also making the data accessible for other research.
   - **Author self-archiving.** Publication copyrights still typically allow an author to place article "pre-prints" (versions of articles before peer review) or "post-prints" (the revised versions following peer review) online. Articles (or data) can also be placed in a subject-based repository such as PubMed Central for biomedical and life sciences literature, ArXiv for subjects including physics, mathematics, computer science, and quantitative finance, SSRN for the social sciences, or DataONE for environmental data, for example. Contracts may be negotiated with publishers in order to retain open access rights. Universities may provide assistance with contract negotiations, and funding of open access fees.
   - **Most disciplines support open access in some form**. For instance, see "Disciplinary Repositories" (http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Disciplinary_repositories). In addition, many universities support institutional repositories as an online location for open access

publications. You may want to view ISU's institutional repository, ISU ReD (http://library.illinoisstate.edu/library-materials/ir/).

- **Other archiving mechanisms**. An institutional repository would be a site designed to preserve and provide access to scholarly work created at an academic institution or collection of institutions. There are also archives such as ResearcherID that provide archival and citation services to authors. The use of archives like ResearcherID, PubMedCentral, ArXiv and SSRN allows the institutional repository to simply link to the various sites for different disciplines.

5. *What are other universities and other institutions doing?*
   Many universities have already adopted open access policies and other universities encourage open access or are in the process of considering policies. These include the University of California system, Harvard, MIT, Stanford, Oberlin College, University of Kansas, Trinity University, Northern Illinois University, and others.
   Universities have implemented a range of activities, for example:
   - Universities have asked faculty members to deposit their research articles in the institutional repository.
   - Universities have provided an addendum that authors can use to inform publishers of the university open access policy, at the time of signing a copyright agreement.
   - Universities have allowed faculty members to opt out on a per-article basis, in a situation where, for example, a publisher denied permission.

   The United States Executive Office of the President has issued a Policy Memorandum requiring federal agencies with major research expenditures to develop a plan to support public access to research funded by the federal government. The National Institutes of Health have had an open access policy since 2008.

6. *Does Illinois State University currently have an open access repository?*
   Recently, Illinois State University has developed an institutional repository at Milner Library, ISU ReD (Research and eData). Faculty members have also published in open access journals, and several investigators whose research is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health have their research articles placed on the NIH open access site Pub Med Central.

7. *Why might you support open access?*
   - Open access means that the results of tax-payer funded research are freely available to the citizens who supported the research.
   - Open access presumes that knowledge itself, or information, is a public good, and that access to knowledge will increase the likelihood of new innovations.
   - Open access allows scholars to share their work with peers, students and a worldwide audience of people and organizations possessing an interest in their research.
   - Open access may increase citations.
   - Scholars who place their work in the institutional repository often receive monthly reports highlighting the number of article downloads, geographic locations of those downloads, and even the search engines used to find their work.

8. *What are some potential ramifications of an open access policy?*
   Some benefits may include:
   - For the university, publishing scholarship in ISU's institutional repository enables scholars to characterize in a very public way the nature of the research conducted at this university. As a result of these collective efforts, open access serves to facilitate recruitment and fundraising. ISU's support for open access would be perceived as congruent with our public mission and would likely be viewed positively by the citizens of Illinois.
   - For authors there would be better access to current research. This will be limited by the extent to which institutions domestically and internationally choose to provide open access.
   - It would provide free access to the public.

   Other issues regarding open access may include:
   - There are likely to be increased costs associated with an open access policy. For example, increased costs may arise in:
     - Potentially higher publication fees or page charges for authors in open access journals.
     - Negotiating copyright issues with journal publishers with non-open access journals.
     - Costs associated with the creation, administration, and maintenance of an electronic repository, and the necessity of developing policies regarding how to place pre-publication versions of to-be-published research articles in the repository, and how to implement embargos on prepublication release that may be included in publication agreements.
   - Open access may necessitate the development of a new business plan for publishers since open access will reduce revenue.
   - Open access could create issues related to patents and intellectual property.
   - Some academic societies that own leading journals have business plans that depend on revenue from publishers and so those societies will require new business plans.
   - The complexity of the open access publishing environment points to the difficulties inherent in implementing standard policies and procedures.

9. *Could an open access policy have an impact on where you can publish?*
   The impact of university or state open access policy will depend on how the open access policy is eventually stated. One approach could place no restrictions on journal type, e.g., see the UC open access FAQ on this question. There may, however, be copyright questions that must be resolved in the process of publication so that a prepublication version of the research can be maintained in a repository. These and other issues will be considered by the task force, and discussed at open forums to be held on the Illinois State campus as the task force forms its recommendation to the University. The university administration will make the decision on university policy.

*10. **What will the open access task force do and how can you participate?***
The Illinois State University open access task force consists of 18 members representing many different areas of the university. The charge of the task force is only to make recommendations to the university regarding the adoption of an open access policy. You can contribute to the process in various ways, including attending the open forums which are announced on the [task force website](). Furthermore, per the Open Meetings Act, the meetings for the task force are open and can be attended by anyone. In addition, you can contact the co-chairs, Jim Jawahar ([jimoham@ilstu.edu]()) and Steven Juliano ([sajulian@ilstu.edu]()), or any [member of the task force](), if you have any questions or concerns.

*11. **Where can you learn more?***
- [Overview]() of open access by Peter Suber.
- [Fact Sheet]() on the Illinois Open Access to Research Articles Act.
- FAQ on open access for [MIT]().
- FAQ on open access for [University of California]().
- ISU's [task force website]().

*12. **How can I provide feedback to the Open Access Task Force?***
- The task force will hold several open forums on campus during spring semester 2014. During these open forums we hope to hear from a wide sample of the university community about issues related to the charge given to the university by the legislature.
    a. The first will be held Thursday March 20, 11:00AM-12:30PM, in Stevenson 401.
    b. The second will be held Wednesday March 26, 3:00-4:30PM, in Stevenson 401.
- After these open forums, feedback can be provided via the [task force web page](), or directly to members of the taskforce. All of this input will be considered as the task force prepares its first draft of a recommendation to the university.
- During fall semester 2014, the task force will hold additional open forums to discuss the first draft of the recommendation to the university, and we will again seek input from the campus community. We will also create a task force blog for commentary and discussion once the task force completes a first draft of our recommendation.