

Open Access at UBC Library

By Glenn Drexhage



Caption: Open Access Week puts the focus on how we can all access and share knowledge openly

Should UBC and other academic institutions have to *pay* to access publicly funded research that benefits society and leads to a greater understanding of today's pressing issues?

This topic and many others will be discussed at UBC during the first international **Open Access Week**, which takes place from October 20 to October 22 in the *Dodson Room*, on the third floor of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre.

How Open is Open?

In a nutshell, open access (OA) is about access to information and knowledge for all. It is a growing international movement that encourages the unrestricted sharing of research that is typically taxpayer-funded. The development of this movement comes at an opportune time, given the surging costs of scholarly journals and the budgetary pressures facing academic libraries.

Technology – and specifically, the advent of the Internet – has been a huge factor behind the growth of open access. “I think we’re aware that there’s a sea change happening that’s driven both by technology and the desire to create something different from traditional models of scholarship,” says **Joy Kirchner**, Librarian for Collections, Licenses & Digital Scholarship at UBC. “We’re seeing new kinds of business models and new ways of interacting with information.”

The OA movement is gaining momentum thanks in part to research funders and policy makers. For example, there are new requirements from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the U.S. to deposit grant-recipient research into an openly available repository.

UBC's Open cIRcle

UBC Library launched its own open access, online repository – called [cIRcle](#) more than two years ago. It serves as a digital archive of UBC's scholarly and research output, and is led by Co-ordinator **Hilde Colenbrander**. cIRcle now features more than 13,000 UBC items – the biggest proportion of these being theses and dissertations.

The Library also hosts e-journals for UBC faculty members who use [Open Journal Systems](#) software. Titles include *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly* and the *Canadian Journal of Midwifery Research and Practice*. Also hosted is the *UBC Medical Journal*, a new student peer-reviewed publication.



Caption: Librarian Joy Kirchner (Martin Dee photo)

In addition, UBC Library pays institutional memberships for various open access publications, entitling UBC authors to discounts on article submission fees. Examples include Biomed Central and Hindawi, which are science, technology and medicine publishers, and the Public Library of Science Journals. The Library supports Canada's [Open Medicine](#) and the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#), a repository of more than 4,300 open access journals.

Worth Attending, with an Open Mind

cIRcle's Colenbrander will be one of the special guests speaking at UBC's Open Access Week. Others include keynote speaker **Dr. Frits Pannekoek**, President of Athabasca University; **Ingrid Parent**, UBC's University Librarian; **Dr. Henry Yu**, Associate Professor in UBC's Department of History; and many more.

Topics include a national Canadian study examining open access, a copyright workshop, a panel discussion, a review of undergraduate, graduate and faculty research, and a focus on academic journal publishing.

For more information and to register, please visit http://www.library.ubc.ca/schol_comm/oa/start.html or contact **Joy Kirchner** at joy.kirchner@ubc.ca.

Also, as you prepare for Open Access Week, check out the Workshop notes from [Town Hall 2009](#). **Peter Dauvergne**, a Senior Advisor to UBC's President, hosted an informal discussion with **Sally Taylor** from UBC Library last June at the Forest Sciences Centre.

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