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Open educational resources (OER) remain at the forefront of the debate about open access to information and how to address the challenge of providing affordable textbooks for students. University of Massachusetts Amherst developed the Open Education Initiative, creating a grant program that supports faculty in discovering or developing replacement resources for teaching materials that are of little or no cost to students. In their article, “Open Educational Resources as Learning Materials: Prospects and Strategies for University Libraries,” Jay Schafer, library director, and Charlie Schweik, faculty member in environmental conservation and public policy and administration, join librarians Marilyn Billings, Sarah Hutton, and Matt Sheridan in telling the story of this initiative. They also provide an excellent primer on the opportunities and challenges of open educational resources for higher education, libraries, faculty, students, and publishers.

In the fall of 2010, ARL began working with member libraries on a project to license e-books from university presses. This first step in shaping the licensing terms, business models, and technical platforms that are mutually beneficial to libraries and presses is one in what ARL hopes will be many ways to positively influence the scholarly communication marketplace. Charles Lowry, ARL executive director, and Julia Blixrud, ARL assistant executive director for scholarly communication, describe the license provisions that are key in the current negotiations in “E-Book Licensing and Research Libraries—Negotiating Principles and Price in an Emerging Market.” These efforts have defined critical factors that libraries can use in their own licensing discussions. Lowry and Blixrud also identify next steps in the negotiations that ARL will undertake.

The last article in this issue of *RLI* takes a look at long-term trends. For decades ARL members have used the annual ARL Statistics to compare one library to another for planning and budgeting purposes. ARL libraries benchmark themselves against their “peer institutions” to develop strategies for change. Over time as the data change, whether for individual libraries or for the ARL community as a whole, information about collections, staffing, expenditures, and service activities can serve multiple purposes. In this article, Martha Kyrillidou, senior director of ARL statistics and service quality programs, reviews data trends for ARL libraries over the past 20 to 25 years. Of note are the changes about which data are most useful to libraries, including the most recent decision to no longer collect separate statistics on expenditures for serials, monographs, or electronic resources, starting with the 2011–2012 ARL Statistics. The trends highlighted in this article represent the ongoing evolution taking place in research libraries.

— Sue Baughman, editor

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