Overcoming Communication Breakdowns: Bridging the Divide Between the Graduate School, Faculty, Students, and Library

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The shift from learning to research:

Johns Hopkins 1876
Clark University 1889
University of Chicago 1892
Whereas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries the dissertation was viewed as the scholar’s first professional book, by the 1930’s the dissertation began to be viewed as the scholar's last work as a student.
We discovered some problems!

- Many embargo requests (misconceptions about publishing)
- No embargo policy
- Grad school unaware of library processes, and vice versa
- Library’s IR launch not communicated/publicised
In a nutshell:
Our library is working to digitize student and faculty research, while the grad school is working to disseminate dissertations and theses...

...but we’re like two ships passing in the night.
UNC Charlotte has:

- A centralized graduate school
- One library that serves the entire university
Current In-Progress Changes

- Soft launch of Institutional Repository
- Website improvements: provide better information regarding the IR, copyright, publishing options, embargoes, etc.
- Adoption of policy on dissertation and thesis embargoes (Spring 2019)
- Educating students and faculty on Open Access
- More library info provided at Fall doctoral orientation
- Moving formatting and submission support from the Graduate School to the Center for Graduate Life
Other Improvements

- Expand writing support in tandem with improvements to dissertation and thesis formatting and submission support.
- Replace ProQuest with our IR
- Understand library’s processes
- Revise the new embargo policy
- Niner Commons Committee
Niner Commons Committee Goals:

- Provide campus outreach, awareness, and advocacy
- Provide technical assistance for the IR submission process (which for the moment is separate from the Proquest submission process)
- Provide copyright assistance to authors
- Optimize access and discoverability
- Identify and implement standards and best practices for preservation
- Solidify metadata procedure
Discussion

- Are assumptions about the distribution of scholarly research changing at your university?
- ProQuest or institutional repository (or both)?
- Expanding number of possible dissertation formats to coincide with expanding access to scholarly works?
- How to educate students/faculty on embargoes/Open Access/etc?
- Can/should we make OA publishing mandatory for grad students?
- What do we even mean when we talk about the "dissemination of scholarly research"?
- How far should the graduate school's authority reach in any of these matters?