

## **OpenCon 2014 Conference Report**

**Prepared by Chardaye Bueckert, SFSS President**

### Introduction

This report will first provide a brief introduction to OpenCon 2014. It will then summarize the various sessions and panel events. Sessions of particular relevant to the SFSS' current advocacy work are noted. Key lessons from the conference will be presented. It will conclude by listing additional resources available to interested readers.

From November 14-18, 2014, I attended OpenCon 2014 in Washington, DC on behalf of the SFSS along with SFSS Arts Representative Brady Wallace. Our interest in the conference stemmed from the advocacy work we have been coordinating to encourage SFU to get involved with the BC Open Textbook Program. This was a highly selective conference, and we were truly lucky to make it in. According to the conference organizers, there were 1750 applications made, and only 70 people were accepted, amounting to a 4% acceptance rate.

This conference was large and diverse, and covered a wide range of topics. There is plethora of resources available for anyone interested. The entire conference was video taped, and links to the videos for each session can be found at <http://opencon2014.org/resources> and can be viewed by anyone interested. This report will try to highlight the areas of particular relevant to the SFSS to avoid overwhelming the reader.

Prior to the conference, all delegates were expected to watch introductory level educational videos to ensure that the discussion was at a high level and no one had to be caught up. Anyone interested in getting introduced to open educational resources, open access, and open data can do so at <http://opencon2014.org/blog/pre-opencon-2014-webcasts-roundup>. A full conference schedule can be found at <http://opencon2014.org/program>. All presentation blocks can be clicked on for links to presentation slides, presenter contact information, as well as more details.

Please note that when the term "open" is used, it is being employed as a catch all for the movement towards open access, open data, open educational resources, and the larger context of making information freely available for public consumption. The acronym "OER" refers to open educational resources.

### Session Summaries

Day 1 -

Welcoming Session – Nick Shockey, Director of Right to Research Coalition

This session welcomed delegates, provided a basic overview of the conference itinerary and thanked the Washington School of Law for hosting us. It also highlighted delegates in attendance, including the President of the American Graduate Students Association as well as numerous medical student associations from across the world.

Opening Keynote – Patrick Brown, Co-Founder, Public Library of Science (PLOS)

Mr. Brown was one of the founders of PLOS, a leading open access journal. His speech was an excellent opening to the conference, and provided a truly rousing call to action with many advocacy tips that can be used in our efforts. I would recommend watching his session at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7CMMdQgbew&feature=youtu.be&list=PLKzRudZaXUDOS\\_A6IMycQD9UOIE-kyOPfm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F7CMMdQgbew&feature=youtu.be&list=PLKzRudZaXUDOS_A6IMycQD9UOIE-kyOPfm) as it was one of the most relevant to our cause (as well as most entertaining!).

His keynote can be summarized as follows:

- There have been many important developments in the open access movement. These include the Global Congress on Intellectual Property, 2011, an effort to combat poor intellectual property laws. This resulted in the Washington Declaration on Intellectual Property for the Public Interest. There was also the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to knowledge in the Sciences, 2003, which asserted scholarly communication and results of research and cultural heritage will be freely available for scientists and public. Principle of open access as a responsibility. This resulted in the Berlin Open Access Series, which was the precursor to OpenCon.
- You need to figure out when you support open as a movement to be an effective advocate. Is it due to the cost benefit analysis, or a deeper belief in equality of access to information? Regardless, you must truly believe that open is a good thing if you are going to expect others to get on board.
- There are many opportunities for leadership in this movement. This is because academic publishing is out of step with the possibilities of the Internet and this is felt most by young researchers. Scholarly publishing system is transitioning currently, making it challenging for upcoming scholars.
- This is evidenced by the fact that “everyone here is looking to mess with institutions and make them better”
- He got involved in 1998 when trying to synthesize existing data on genes and cells and wasn’t allowed to because publishers believed they owned this data. He then tried to get scientists to upload their data to an archive while still publishing in conventional journals and was told it was a very stupid idea. From this he learned:
  - Don’t take no for an answer. You will always have resistance from an institution you are going up against
  - Don’t just complain, if there’s a better way to do it, push it. Be subversive
  - Find kindred spirits – there is always someone out there who agrees with you and will want to help

- His next step was to address the conservatism in the scientific community. He got prominent scientists to sign what was in effect a suicide pact that said they would stop submitting to journals that stood in the way of open access in one year. Took off, and ended up getting 36 000 signatures across 174 countries
- Message to publishers –
  - Open access is coming with or without you
  - You are holding back science
  - You're not indispensable, the world would be better off without you
  - Get on board or we'll rise up
- Conduct a personal thought experiment – how long would science [or academia] be set back without publishers?
- Advocacy involves getting people to believe you are the most important thing in the word, and so by definition you have to do outlandish things. For PLOS, they made a national TV ad to promote the journal before it was even created.
- Be strategic and counterintuitive if necessary:
  - Think several moves ahead.
  - PLOS' goal was to get all valuable info into the open access space. To raise its profile, they rejected almost every paper that was sent in. This was counter to the eventual goal, but capitalized upon the existing order where people want to aim high and get published in the best journal possible i.e. one where they barely get in
  - PLOS worked with a Congressman who denied climate change and was opposed to scientific funding, generally someone who would not be an ally of open. They shows how the National Institute of Health was allowing results of publicly funded research to be given away to European companies but was making Americans pay to use. This Congressman put for a bill that all NIH funded research would have to be open access.
  - Point of these examples is that the unconventional can help make things happen
  - These strategies worked - Within months of the launch of PLOS, a major publisher lost 1 billion in stock value and 11 years later PLOS has expanded greatly and has encouraged most new research to be open access
- Key lessons –
  - It is never someone else's job to fix a broken system, if you wait for someone else to, you'll be waiting a long time
  - Be disruptive – instability is in your favour. If there's a better system that will ultimately be recognized as better, if there's just a barrier to getting there, anything you can do to shake things up is good and will help accelerate progress towards the better alternative
  - Swagger – be confident! if you don't believe you will succeed, why would anyone else?
  - Open is so important to scientific progress. The traditional peer review process slows down research, even when it is important and time sensitive, and this has important consequences. For instance, what if you make a discovery that leads to another discovery that can do something like oral hydration therapy, which has saved 100 000s of lives. If you trace the findings of that kind that led to that kind of therapy, it took years. That

means literally millions of lives were lost because of the opportunity cost of traditional peer review.

## Panel – The State of Open

### Positive developments in open in the US

- Directory of Open Access Journals, where 10 000 open access journals are being published online, 1200 of which published in the US including PLOS.
- 45 institutions in the US, including U of California, Harvard, and MIT have full required open access policies on their campus. These institutions have recognized that they don't want to just pay lip service to open access.
- NIH open access policy has been extremely successful, huge increase in use with most outside of academic institutions, giving access to a whole new set of users. This answered the question "Does anyone really need access outside of the academy?". Clearly the answer is yes.
- 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Act approved the 2013 Presidential decree for all tax payer funded research to be open
- California recently passed a state level open access bill

### Challenges

- Of 21 agencies in the US required to publish openly, only one has actually done so.
- 4,599 total post-secondary institutions in the US, so 45 having open access policies isn't that high in the overall context.
- Academic journals a \$10 billion a year industry in the US. Publishers are pushing back hard against open, and delay is on their side

### The state of open globally

- Chinese Foundation adopted open access policy
- Open access laws currently exist in Mexico, Argentina, and Peru
- India has a number of institutional open access policies in their institutions scientific departments
- European Commission for Research believes in open educational resources to improve science but also the knowledge economy
- Many resources for open science available across the world e.g. FOSTER, Open Access Button, etc.
- #isupportOA hashtag
- Students for Open Access in Poland campaign was implemented last year. Set up free site to provide reusable materials for those interested in advocating for open access in Poland.
- Almost all data is non-sensitive and is appropriate for open.
- Analysis shows that you actually obtain a citation advantage if you are publishing openly

### The State of Open Educational Resources –

*This session was highly relevant and should be reviewed as a first priority. The slides with links to all data can be found at*

[http://www.slideshare.net/txtbks/the-state-of-open-education-opencon2014?redirected\\_from=save\\_on\\_embed](http://www.slideshare.net/txtbks/the-state-of-open-education-opencon2014?redirected_from=save_on_embed)

Overview of OER -

- Basically doing the same thing in learning we were doing in the Middle Ages, with the teacher and lecture model. But with OER, we are on the cusp of doing things in a different way
- Textbook costs are rising at about 3x the rate of inflation. When you add this to the overall financial pressures on students, it is obvious something needs to be done
- To date, open educational resources have saved students over \$100 million globally
- OER improves educational outcomes because all students have the resources regardless of financial means. Research from the University of Utah shows that OER reduces the cost to students while improving their educational outcomes
- There is a great deal of developments occurring:
  - Rice University is working with Openstax College Publishing to produce open textbooks.
  - The Open Textbook Library is based out of the University of Minnesota and has 250 high quality textbooks available
  - MIT has produced open courseware (quizzes, etc.) which has been used by millions of people Project Gutenberg has made 100s of books available
  - Currently there are about 500 million open educational resources available globally
- Workforce training programs using OER exist in the US as well as Europe
- Germany recently invested \$ 2 million euro in OER
- Open educational resource policy register has 69 policies

Session – Open Access in Developing Countries

- Wikipedia zero – can send text messages to get information from Wikipedia for people without computers. More info on Wikimedia - <http://blog.wikimedia.org/2014/03/18/mtn-south-africa-responds-to-sinenjongo-high-school-open-letter-and-launches-wikipedia-zero/>
- Successful open access policies in Zimbabwe, Uganda
- In Kenya librarians trained a team of students to explain open access policy and how to post publications in open access repositories. These students then went and met with faculty members and did a demonstration which worked very well.
- Many campuses have an open access club on campus
- Developing countries well represented in the Right to Research coalition, an organization with 70 student groups that represent 7 million students.
- Open access combats notion that developed countries that they need to be exporting content to developing countries. The benefit of open access is allowing developing nations to produce and share content within.

- To move away from notion that open access journals are not as prestigious as traditional journals, a global forum of leaders is required to address this misperception

#### Panel – Open Publication Models

- Redalyc.org – Latin American specific platform
- PLOS – biggest journal in the world with 35 000 publications a year
- Institutional internal repositories – especially common for liberal arts and humanities based institutions
- E-life – user based rating system to help researchers increase their prominence without paying publication submission fees. More information at <http://www.slideshare.net/RightToResearch/e-life-opencon-2014>

#### Panel 4 – The Impact of Open

##### Case study of Tidewater College

*This section was especially relevant for the SFSS and is an inspiring example of how OER saves students massive amounts of money. It can be viewed at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GO2\\_vuGeja8&feature=youtu.be&list=PLKzRudZaXUD0SA6IMycQD9UOIE-kYOPfm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GO2_vuGeja8&feature=youtu.be&list=PLKzRudZaXUD0SA6IMycQD9UOIE-kYOPfm)*

- Tidewater Z-Degree – Eliminates all costs for textbooks using OER.
- A student taking a full Z-Degree will save 25% of their total education costs
- At Tidewater, in one year, their book store had \$11 million in textbook revenue. 60% of this money was coming through financial aid of some sort (e.g. student loans, grants, etc.). At one institution this meant that \$6.6 million of publicly provided money was going into books. By eliminating textbook costs, you are introducing a huge savings to tax payers

##### Other relevant points

- Currently only 0.008% of the world's population can have access to scientific information. This means we live in a world of knowledge aristocracy where only the richest institutions and people can have access to full scientific data
- Theft of the commons is a common historical phenomenon and this is what's happening with data and knowledge now
- No one is saying that closure is better than open. Rather politicians are saying that changes will cost jobs in publishing. Therefore need to counter this with an economic argument
- The right to reuse data is the right to create new value. It is economic, but there is more moral and social value there too that mustn't be forgotten about.

#### Day 2 –

##### Session 1 – Audrey Watters, From Open to Justice

- Notion of openwashing – creating an appearance of openness when it is not really. Same as green washing or pink washing. Blackboard learning system as an example of this.

- Open advocates need to be cautious to prevent companies and for profits interests from co-opting the notion of open as the new buzzword
- Big element of open justice is that so much of the data in question is publicly funded

## Session 2 – Being Open As An Early Career Researcher

This section was directed at graduate level students and young university faculty members, but certain points are important to note as they pertain to some the arguments against open publishing:

- Growing evidence that if you publish in open source (versus traditional journals), you will get cited more (e.g. Wagener, 2010)
- Institutions are moving towards incentivizing open publishing – e.g. San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment that says closed journal publication factors won't be considered in hiring decisions and Virginia Commonwealth University now actually put more emphasis on open publications in promotion and tenure decisions when all else equal.
- Many funders are requiring open articles and data as a stipulation – eg. Canadian institute of Health Research. More examples can be found via SERHPA/Juliet webtool
- Early career researchers can be important advocates for open data, as well as more advanced researchers can help in a variety of ways.
- Main message – don't lock your research up

## Panel Session – Successful Student Advocacy Initiatives

*This was one of the most relevant panels in the conference, and can be viewed at*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIC\\_9QSXX0&feature=youtu.be&list=PLKzRudZaXUD0SA6IMycQD9UOIE-kYOPfm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIC_9QSXX0&feature=youtu.be&list=PLKzRudZaXUD0SA6IMycQD9UOIE-kYOPfm)

Moderator – Joe Macarthur

- The panelists are all students who are exceptional, but not necessarily exceptions. There are many, many students out there doing great work in open and it was hard to narrow it down to a few panelists.

Speaker 1 - Georgina Taylor, Open Access Button

- The Open Access Button is a free app to track paywalls. It was launched last year (2013), and has already tracked almost 10 000 different paywalls. It is completely student run and totally not for profit.
- Once you report a paywall, the app will help you search for an alternative open access source, contact the author directly, and collect your story (i.e. why you need the article) if a free version of the article can't be found.
- They have encountered many challenges such as funding, meetings and team engagement online and across many time zones (needs much flexibility), technical problems

- The main lesson is that in order to be an effective advocate you need to make friends within your community. If you have a good idea there will be people to help you with the things you can't do.

Speaker 2 – Meredith Niles, National Association of Graduate Professionals (NAGP)

- NAGP provides leadership development, resources, and advocacy training for graduate student governments across America
- Through their advocacy efforts, they were able to get a bill based in the California legislature that stipulated that all taxpayers would have access to publicly funded research
- This entailed building a large coalition and addressing strong pushback from the powerful and well-funded Publishers Association
- Advocacy strategies included a coordinated letter writing campaign where students were asked to write to their representatives, attending meetings with elected officials, and testifying during the committee hearing process
- They also engaged with media, and got a major article published in the Washington Post
- Advocacy efforts took place over the course of 3 years and involved over 500 meetings
- Their effort was ultimately successful, although some compromise was involved (their initial bill covered all research and imposed only a 6 month embargo, ended up 1 year embargo and covered only health research)

Speakers 3 & 4 - Ahmed Ogunlaja, Open Access Nigeria & Roshan Kumar Karn, Open Access Nepal

- These sessions discussed open access in these 2 countries specifically
- One relevant takeaway is that Ahmed did not realize that there something wrong when he would hit paywalls until he became involved with open access. This is relevant for the SFSS as many of our members may not realize that paywalls are a problem with a solution

Speaker 5 – Ethan Semack, US Public Interest Research Group (US PIRG)

- It is easy to blame bookstores for high textbook prices, but a better approach is to discuss positive alternatives that can save students money on textbooks like open access
- US PIRG advocacy efforts have included:
  - A textbook graveyard, where students were asked to bring their depreciated textbooks. The pile was used as a media student to raise awareness.
  - Yearly surveys on textbook costs and the impacts of book prices
  - Connecting students directly on the media to discuss the cost of courseware
  - #textbookbroke had students tweet pictures of buying expensive textbooks. This approach combined old school activism with new tech. Prior to the campaign launch, they tipped off lawmakers and university presidents so they knew what was coming and could engage online with those tweeting
  - Supporting students from the University of Maryland. Two undergraduates wanted to get their institution on the Washington model of the open textbook program. They set their

eyes on state policy. They supported meetings with legislators, etc. The response was positive, and eventually it resulted in a change in policy at the university level

- It is important to keep in mind that students don't need to be policy or platform experts to be the catalyst for change on campus

Question and Answer Period:

Question – how do you craft your message so that it is well received?

- Simplicity of message is key, be sure to present in such a way that it makes sense and is concise
- Open access as a bi-partisan issue that everyone can support
- When meeting with legislators, try to find what's relevant to the person you're talking about and bring students from those districts to those meetings. They want to meet with those most impacted.
- Craft your message depending on the ideology of the party. For instance, with Republicans discuss transparency in government, efficiency, and the compelling economic argument for open. With Democrats, discuss open as a fairness and equal access issue.
- Put the blame for expensive books on the publishers, where it belongs. This will help you avoid alienating faculty and your institution
- Focus on the cost to students, as this is the perspective you can best speak to
- When meeting with government, stress the economic aspect as well as access to information for citizens
- Remember that the best thing about open is that if you make your argument well it is nearly impossible for someone to leave disagreeing with you

Question – how do you make your advocacy efforts sustainable?

- Look to include other organizations in your work where you can
- Get your juniors involved, and encourage them to appoint successors.
- Train student leaders from the get go, as this the key to continuity

Breakout Session – Right to Research Coalition Plenary

*Brady and I attended difference breakout sessions to maximize the content we could learn and report back on. Please refer to his report for more details on the Open Access Button.*

This session was a meeting of the institutions who had already signed the Right to Research Coalition pledge and involved discussion of a new proposed statement. I attended to learn more about Right to Research. The key points I took away were:

- Right to Research is an international coalition of organizations that serve students
- The goal of Right to Research is to raise awareness of open access and open data, and encourage all researchers to publish in open
- Currently only 2 Canadian organizations have signed the pledge – the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) and the Canadian Alliance of Students Association (CASA)

- The Coalition is currently revisiting its pledge to make it more inclusive, and anyone interested in endorsing should wait until the new statement has been approved and published
- The coalition is currently looking for thought leader buy from high profile people like university presidents in as a next step
- The coalition has recently hired a staff person which will greatly increase its capacity. Look for progress over the coming months
- More information can be found at : <http://righttoresearch.org/>

Day 3 –

The third day of Open Con was an advocacy day. We began our day at the Hart Senate Building and received high level training to prepare us for our meetings. There were several speakers, and then we broke out into our groups to prepare for meetings. A link to all advocacy documents is available in the “Additional Resources” section of the report. This was an extremely well-coordinated day, and the speakers were excellent. There was no recording of this session unfortunately, but I took detailed notes during training which are summarized below. Although the training was based on the US government, many lessons are relevant to the Canadian context.

Speaker1 – Amy Rosenbaum, Deputy for Legislative Affairs, Executive Officer of the President of the United States

- The 2014 midterms resulted in gridlock. Although many commentators said nothing could get done in this environment, this hasn’t been the case. Moreover, there has often been periods of partisan gridlock in Congress where great things were achieved. The lesson is to always try regardless of the environment or obstacles
- When trying to influence legislators, the best thing you can do is be real. You cannot sell your message without authenticity
- People standing in the way of progress are not sustainable. If you are on the right side of the issue, sooner or later you will break through. Building from the authentic is key to sustaining your efforts in the face of opposition
- Effective advocacy “shoots at all angles”. You need to get at every single person who is sympathetic to your cause
- Be sure to tap into vehicles that are already moving. With legislation, try to get your cause incorporated into an existing bill rather than pursue a standalone bill
- The States are your friends and can help you deal with the federal government

Panel– Advocacy Tips

Speaker 1 - Shawn Dougherty, SPARC

*Note that Shawn was the individual who organized the truly impressive advocacy day. She has a good deal of experience in advocacy and lobbying about open and is an excellent resource to ask about government relations. She provided more specific tips for our meeting.*

- You don't need to be an expert about what you are talking about. If you are asked a question that you don't know the answer to, simply say you will (and do!) follow up with specific data. Staff would prefer that to you making something up.
- Be relevant and authentic, speaking about what you know
- Use plain words and avoid acronyms
- Begin your meeting by asking "How familiar are you with this issue?". This is a good way to frame the conversation, and the person you are meeting with will generally be honest.
- Remember the big picture and look at the 10,000 feet away context to show the decision maker that this is an international issue
- There are good and not so good staffers, so this means that follow up is key. Advocacy does not end at the meeting.
- Embassies advise about building international relationships
- If you are unsure about what your ask is, do not hesitate to ask "What do you think the best way to move this forward is?"
- There is a difference between lobbying and advocacy. Lobbying involves a specific ask (i.e. please sponsor this bill) whereas advocacy is more educational
- Handwritten thank you notes are unusual and are a great way to follow up on a meeting
- 5 touch system - introduction, meet multiple times, follow up, thank you
- The best lobbyists walk out of their meetings with a good sense of how they were received

Speaker 2 – Yannick, open access advocate in former Czech Republic

- Be sure to utilize both top down and bottom up approaches i.e. pursue things like governmental policy while simultaneously seeking grass roots support for open
- Developed an "Open Government Action Plan", which included a section that involved support for OER
- Be sure to partner strategically with those working in the technology field, as there is a high level of support amongst these people

Speaker 3 – Alec Treskofsy, open access advocate from Poland

- Member of the Strategic Unit to Advise the Prime Minister on Technology
- Civil organizations tend to be standoffish with government. You will be much better received if you take a collaborative approach
- Policy is compromise – do not go in expecting to maintain every single thing you have asked for
- As an advocate, it is helpful to have a public administration background so you understand how things work on the other side
- Personal contacts are very important. Policy makers often just want someone they can call to ask questions that they know and trust
- Evidence is key when trying to change policy
- The key challenge is translating complex concepts to policy makers in a way they can understand and use. Strategies to achieve this include providing them with clear actions that you would like them to take and having a coherent, clear story. Successful advocates

always leave the decision maker with the sense that there is something they can and should do.

Speaker 4 - Ethan Semack, US PIRG

- Very few organizations are in Washington DC fighting for young people
- It is always more powerful to have those impacted by an issue speaking to it
- We stand out by being here and by being impacted
- All the power money can buy does not compare to the power of getting in a room with a decision maker to tell an authentic and powerful story

### Section 2 – Key Lessons

I took a great deal away from OpenCon 2014. This was by far the best conference I have ever attended, and I left feeling inspired. Many of the specifics of what I learned are contained in the above session summaries, but the main lessons I learned are:

- The BC Open Textbook program is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to OER, and open as a movement. There is so many more things we can be doing to increase the affordability of educational resources for SFU students.
- There is a great deal of other students and student organizations doing work around OER and open, primarily in the US. There is a great deal we can learn from their efforts.
- The SFSS is a leader in both British Columbia and Canada in our efforts around OER. We should continue to innovate and be bold in our advocacy efforts. If we look to the work happening in the US, it is plain to see that OER is the next big opportunity to make post-secondary education more affordable, and it is for us to seize it. We should be serious about getting other student unions on board if we want OER advocacy to hit a critical mass in the way it has the US
- Be ambitious! The sky is truly the limit. We met students who have changed the legislation of one of the biggest states in the US, organized national campaigns, and changes their university's tenure policies. We can do the same, and more.
- We should utilize the open community as a resource. This is where we will find our biggest allies.
- Student advocacy efforts are successful but require persistence and patience. Change does not happen overnight. The 1 year term and the SFSS elections cycle introduces a challenge to the sustainability of campaigns, but if we want any meaningful change at SFU or elsewhere we need to ensure students engaged in OER advocacy understand that they need to be in this for the long haul
- Canada seems to be lagging behind in its efforts around OER relative to countries like the US and Poland
- There is currently no large national organization like US PIRG doing OER advocacy in Canada
- Stemming largely from Patt Browns session, I learned that our goal is to convince students, faculty, and the university administration that open educational resources are the most important thing happening in academics

- Openwashing in OER may be a threat to the great progress that is happening. Publishers may try to create the appearance of openness in a resource but then figure out a way to charge or restrict access. We need to be mindful of this possibility in our advocacy work to ensure that programs like the BC Open Textbook Program are not taken over by for profit interests that will still charge students and undermine the purpose and benefits of OER
- Amy Rosenbaum's session was truly inspirational and helped me think about ways that we could improve the SFSS' advocacy with government. Our efforts should include meeting with all legislators who would take an interest in OER, including the federal government and opposition MLAs. The notion of tapping into existing vehicles of legislation is an interesting one and should be given consideration if we pursue governmental policy change. Finally, it reinforced the notion that advocacy efforts on behalf of students are important no matter the political climate.
- It is vital that we be open in our advocacy efforts, sharing our materials and ideas with other student unions in Canada and abroad.
- Libraries and librarians are a major ally in the movement towards open

### Section 3 – Next Steps & Areas for Further Exploration

Throughout the conference, Brady and I discussed next steps with one another and other conference delegates. These next steps could include –

- Meeting with the Dean of Library Studies to discuss the BC Open Textbook Program, the Right to Research Coalition, and the Open Access Button
- Consider endorsing the Right to Research Coalition pledge
- Meeting with the Provincial Government to discuss open access to provincially funded research
- Develop a workshop/presentation for the Advocacy Committee, Council, and interested students to provide an overview of what we learned at OpenCon as well as future ideas for OER advocacy
- Organize a student advocacy event, possibly during or immediately after the 2015 BC Open Textbook Summit
- Review the 69 institutional open educational resource policies discussed by Nicole Allen
- Review University of Utah research on improved educational outcomes from OER and incorporate it our messaging
- Send delegate to the 2015 Open Educational Resource Summit
- To obtain data similar to what was presented on the Z-degree, follow up with SFU Bookstore to see if they have data on how much is being spent on books, and if they know the source of that money or have estimates. Also, follow up with the BC government and federal government to see if they have data about how student loan funds are spent
- Review open access policies of Harvard, MIT, and other institutions, and try to get similar policy implemented at SFU.

- Follow up on European Commission statement of position on OER, specifically how they impact a knowledge economy. This could bolster our case for more government funding in BC and elsewhere.
- Review Students for Open Access Poland campaign. Contact [Iryna.uchma@eifl.net](mailto:Iryna.uchma@eifl.net) with questions.
- Follow up with other Canadian delegates about forming a Canadian open advocacy network

### Section 3 – Additional Resources

High Level Conference Summary -

<http://blogs.plos.org/absolutely-maybe/generation-open-sneak-peek-into-sciences-future-at-opencon-2014/>

Brady Wallace Conference Report -

[https://docs.google.com/a/sfss.ca/document/d/1S44ytNrogpsPTWSIwEU1J\\_j\\_f\\_pVFVCIRpdePeWJR0k/edit](https://docs.google.com/a/sfss.ca/document/d/1S44ytNrogpsPTWSIwEU1J_j_f_pVFVCIRpdePeWJR0k/edit)

OpenCon 2014 Official Website - <http://opencon2014.org/>

All Advocacy Day Documents -

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B68NNQau\\_ZTcLThpZ2pMZVpQa1RqcHN0TXINOGowaE0wX1FR/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B68NNQau_ZTcLThpZ2pMZVpQa1RqcHN0TXINOGowaE0wX1FR/view?usp=sharing)