

OCLC Distinguished Seminar Series

Thursday, 8 July 2010

9:30-10:00 a.m.
Coffee & Pastry Reception

10:00-11:30 a.m.
Presentation and Discussion

OCLC Online Computer
Library Center, Inc.
Kilgour Building—Auditorium
6565 Kilgour Place
Dublin, OH 43017-3395

This presentation is free and open to the public.

Advanced registration is encouraged, but not required. Registering in advance allows us to plan sufficient refreshments and to alert you if for any reason the lecture needs to be rescheduled.

Please RSVP by calling OCLC Research at (614) 764-6073 or by e-mailing disbrowk@oclc.org and indicating your name, affiliation and phone number.

Maps to OCLC are available online at: <http://www.oclc.org/about/maps/>

Remote Access

The audio and slides of this meeting will be broadcast live online. If you are unable to attend the event in person, you may attend online via WebEx.

WebEx details are available at: <http://www.oclc.org/research/dss/courant.htm#webex>

Economic Perspectives on Academic Libraries

Paul Courant

University Librarian and Dean of Libraries, Harold T. Shapiro Collegiate Professor of Public Policy, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Professor of Economics and Professor of Information, University of Michigan

Paul Courant has spent most of the last thirteen years attending to the interests of a major research university and its library, both as a practitioner (provost, librarian) and as a policy economist. The library is an exquisitely complicated institution. It is a big nonprofit business that supports the mission of an even bigger nonprofit business. It plays essential roles in a number of industries, notably those related to the production and distribution of scholarship. For over a century, its focus has been almost entirely on the interests of the local institution. Changes in information technology are radically altering the sustainability (to use the buzzword of the day) of that focus. The library, its associated industries, and its relationship to other libraries and to institutions that serve libraries are all profoundly affected by the fact that copying and distribution, which used to be expensive, are now very cheap. In this presentation, Courant will develop this theme and some associated variations, concluding with some thoughts on the properties of collective institutions requisite to the effective and efficient functioning of academic libraries.

Background Information

Paul N. Courant is University Librarian and Dean of Libraries, Harold T. Shapiro Collegiate Professor of Public Policy, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor, Professor of Economics and Professor of Information at the University of Michigan. From 2002-2005 he served as Provost and Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the chief academic officer and the chief budget officer of the University. He has also served as the Associate Provost for Academic and Budgetary Affairs, Chair of the Department of Economics and Director of the Institute of Public Policy Studies (which is now the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy). In 1979 and 1980 he was a Senior Staff Economist at the Council of Economic Advisers.

Courant has authored half a dozen books, and over seventy papers covering a broad range of topics in economics and public policy, including tax policy, state and local economic development, gender differences in pay, housing, radon and public health, relationships between economic growth and environmental policy, and university budgeting systems. More recently, his academic work has considered the economics of universities, the economics of libraries and archives, and the effects of new information technologies and other disruptions on scholarship, scholarly publication, and academic libraries.

Related Information

Paul Courant's Blog
<http://paulcourant.net/>

Paul Courant's Publications
<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~pnc/workingpapers.html>

A recording of this presentation will be made available online at <http://www.oclc.org/research/dss/>.

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