

OpenSky: Extending the Reach of UCAR's Research

The NCAR Library created OpenSky to capture and preserve UCAR's scholarship for use by a broad community of researchers, educators, and students, and to trace the record of UCAR's scholarship and collaborations over time for sponsors, UCAR management, and collaborators. One of OpenSky's core mandates is to support the research needs of UCAR institutions. For decades, members of UCAR's community have sought access to UCAR's scholarship and the larger body of atmospheric and related science literature in journals not subscribed to by their college and university libraries. Launched in the fall of 2010, OpenSky now contains over 15,000 references to UCAR scholarship and historical materials, with full access to over 7500 articles, grey literature, and other scientific and institutional resources, including images, animations, and audio.

NCAR Technical Notes are a core collection in OpenSky. They serve to communicate atmospheric and Earth system science research, including emerging research, scientific methods or models, reports from NCAR conferences and workshops, data, and visualizations that might not otherwise be ready or appropriate for publication in traditional venues.

Prior to creating the OpenSky repository, the NCAR Library engaged a number of UCAR groups to develop the policy that would establish the authority of OpenSky as the premier resource for open access to UCAR's scholarly record. UCAR's Open Access Policy (3-5 Publication & Information Dissemination) affirms that:

"UCAR supports an open exchange of data and scholarly information derived from our research. It is UCAR's policy to share this scientific and technical information with the community as quickly as possible and at minimum cost to the user, while at the same time preserving the proprietary interests of UCAR and other entities and individuals, consistent with Federal regulations, sponsor requirements."

In September of 2009, UCAR amended this policy by adding the requirement that employees provide an electronic copy of the final version of his/her scholarly work to the library to support building the OpenSky corpus. After approval by NSF, this policy became the first to be implemented in a federally funded research and development center in the US.

Collaboration with publishers was key to the success of this effort. The Library worked closely with AMS and AGU (combined, publishers of 50% of UCAR's annual scholarly output) to reduce the embargo for their publications to within six months of publication for items in institutional repositories. Negotiations with Springer were even more successful as UCAR authors gained a full waiver to open access fees (normally \$3,000 per article). The Library continues to work with other publishers to achieve similar allowances. The benefit to our community is clear; faculty at our member institutions now cite OpenSky as a key resource in their teaching and research.

OpenSky is used by UCAR staff, UCAR members, including academic and international affiliates, as well as the broader educational and public community worldwide. Since its launch in 2010, use of OpenSky has grown steadily. Since 2011, visits have increased 357% and come from 162 countries. Internally, OpenSky is used to generate the annual bibliography of peer-reviewed publications for the NCAR Annual Reporting (NAR) process. It is also used to automatically populate lab webpages listing recent publications for ACD, COSMIC, and NESL; HAO provides full text access to its publications via OpenSky.