

**University Faculty Senate
Operations Committee
170th Plenary
SUNY Plattsburgh
April 25, 2015**

Resolution on Open Access Publication

Whereas, SUNY faculty members create scholarly research and publish it with commercial publishers to sell to libraries at increasingly unaffordable prices; and

Whereas, the SUNY Libraries recognize the need for faculty and students to have access to, read, publish in, and to cite high quality, high-impact journals in their fields of study; and

Whereas, SUNY needs to develop a multi-faceted long-term strategy for scholarly communications and library funding across our campuses; and

Whereas, such a strategy will require strong statements of direction from the SUNY System Office, significant cultural change on our campuses, and alignment with faculty governance;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the University Faculty Senate encourages SUNY, its Libraries, and the Faculty to explore and support alternatives to publishing scholarship with commercial publishers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Committee of the University Faculty Senate work with the SUNY Provost office, the SUNY Librarians Association, the SUNY Council of Library Directors, and other stakeholders to create a task force to explore alternative models of scholarly publishing and communications, and their impact on promotions and continuing appointment, and to report back to the University Faculty Senate with an interim report at the Winter 2016 UFS Plenary meeting, and with a final report at the Spring 2016 UFS Plenary meeting, regarding the feasibility, desirability and logistics of adopting such alternative models.

A Rationale for a SUNY Strategy for the Future of Academic Publishing
By Steve Weiter, in his role as member of the UFS Operations Committee
April 2015

We need to change the model for academic publishing in order to maintain our ability to afford to fulfill SUNY's mission "to provide to the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access."

SUNY-wide, library acquisitions costs have grown from \$27 million to \$63 million from 2002-2012. , Yet we are not increasing our access to information relative to the increase in expenditures. We are paying roughly \$40 million more now than we were ten years ago for far less access to scholarly information. The number of volumes added system wide in 2002 was 165,000. In 2012 it was 91,000 volumes. The most recent SUNY negotiated contract with Elsevier is just one example in which the system-wide costs for access to holdings increased to over \$8 million per year

Across SUNY, we are paying more and have access to far less.¹

There is little negotiating power with publishers unless SUNY institutions are willing to cancel subscriptions and walk away from the table. Since the faculty require access to specific titles, we can't do that very often, so we are forced to take what the publishers give us. These increases are annual, built into multi-year contracts, and have been consistent for more than two decades. They are "inevitable" as we currently do business. With decreased state support, limited revenue from rational tuition increases, more chargebacks from SUNY System, we cannot keep pace with annual price increases and maintain our collections.

Cost Impacts:

Every cost increase now means SUNY loses access to journal subscriptions, and monographs.

- **Monographic Purchases** by libraries have been slashed as those funds have been redirected to maintain serial subscriptions
- **Learning Outcomes for Students:** As libraries cut subscriptions or access to journals, students' participation in research declines.
- **External Funding** Grant applications depend upon timely access to current research.
- **Promotion and Tenure:** The rise of pay-walled access to scholarly publications, reduces the ability of scholars to engage in effective research and limits the impact of published works.
- **Support of Remote/Distance Education:** We can't support online learning if we can't afford online information.

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- **Interlibrary loan:** If no one can afford the subscription there is **no** source from which to borrow.
- **Library Staff and Services:** See chart below. As funds are diverted to pay for online subscriptions, SUNY is losing library professional and staff positions and therefore have a decreased capacity to provide support for teaching and research. This is happening at all levels, across the academic community.

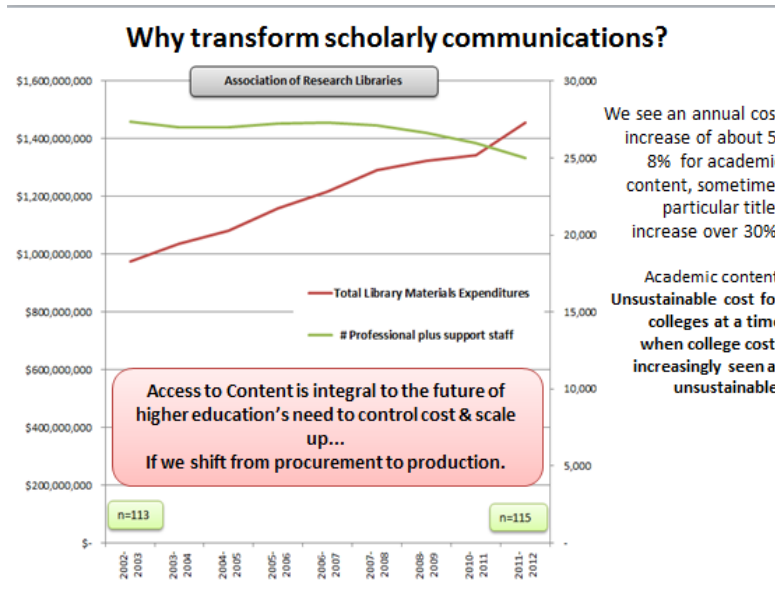


Chart Developed by Cyril Oberlander, former Library Director at SUNY Geneseo. Used with permission

Current Federal Open Access Policy is Insufficient to Address this Challenge

Legislation has been passed <http://creativecommons.org/weblog/entry/41802> as part of last year's omnibus appropriations act, signed into law 1/17/14, that gets closer to the goal of open access to all federally funded research output. That legislation covered about half of all federal research investment. But it still includes a 1-year embargo (commercial publishers can control access for the first year of publication). So the requirement to purchase subscriptions from commercial publishers to access this material in a timely fashion is still there To add to the embargo quandary, according the article "[Team Science](#)" published in the [Chronicle of Higher Education, March 9, 2015](#) (paywalled for some readers) federal investment in research is shrinking, and corporate research funding is increasing (national average) by 61% since 2004. Articles resulting from corporate sponsored research are not covered by federal mandates for open access to funded research.

A concerted lobbying effort in favor of open access for ALL Federally funded research, and to shrink/remove the embargo period from the existing federal law would be a huge help towards driving a new model. But there is also less research funded by federal dollars, and the

corporate funded research represents a huge, growing “donut hole” that needs to be addressed.

Quality, Prestige, Impact, and Reputation

Faculty and students need to have access to, read, publish in, and cite high quality, high-impact journals with prestige in their fields of study.

Most of us are aware of highly publicized scams, such as the “Get Me off your F#\$%ing email list” [paper](#). And yes that does happen. Biomed Central has publicly addressed evidence of fake-peer review and actively investigates such claims openly. However, if you pay much

attention to [Retraction Watch](#) it becomes clear that an incredible amount of bogus science gets published in traditional journals in which we nevertheless have a great deal of confidence (and for which we pay enormous sums of money). The article linking Vaccines and Autism entitled “Ileal-lymphoid-nodular hyperplasia, non-specific colitis, and pervasive

developmental disorder in children” by Wakefield, et.al. was published in the [Lancet](#) in 1998. It took twelve years to fully retract this article. Which instance did more harm?

While traditional scholarly publications are read by the expert community, that community is small and highly specialized. Replicating research is expensive, and verifying someone else’s research doesn’t result in funding or publication credit towards tenure. Access is restricted to those who can afford the subscriptions and memberships. . Therefore, disseminating and verifying research results, which is central to scholarly research, is hampered.

The more open and freely available an article is, the more people will have an opportunity to read it. It will reach specialists in a broad range of disciplines as well as non-experts. That not only indicates a greater likelihood of scholarly impact through citation propagation, but it also means that bogus science and false claims will be more quickly identified and retracted, and those retractions will get more notice in the press. The “open” marketplace is potentially much more reliable than the closed peer review system we currently rely on.

Cognitive authority and prestige are granted to online resources in other formats http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/27/business/media/wikipedia-is-emerging-as-trusted-internet-source-for-information-on-ebola-.html?_r=0 . No one reads or pays for the OED or Britannica anymore.

Faculty must lead reform efforts in academic publishing. They could do this by publishing high quality work in open journals rather than expensive ones. What “prestige” – after all - does Science have if the content stops flowing to it and readers stop insisting we pay (thousands per year) for it? The professional societies, and the Faculty (Faculty across SUNY, and more broadly) could make this happen by granting/assigning value to open access publications in the P&T process, and by advocacy within and across the disciplines for this activity. SUNY System cannot dictate this, nor can the libraries.. It needs to come up from the department/discipline/society level, and from faculty activity. But it needs to happen, and it needs to happen soon.

Open Access Mandates

It is time for SUNY, the largest comprehensive university system in the United States, to join the ranks of Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology in adopting Open Access mandates. OA Mandates are requirements that faculty seek to have pre- and post-print versions of their works openly available in institutional repositories, or through some other method of self-archiving. Our faculty are already producing research funded by organizations that have adopted Open Access mandates for grant recipients -- organizations such as the National Institutes of Health, Research Councils UK, National Fund for Scientific Research, Wellcome Trust and the European Research Council. Such a mandate would position us on the right side of history.

The University of California, The University of North Carolina Greensboro, the University of Kentucky, are all publicly funded institutions that have adopted Open Access Policies. Penn State and George Washington University are the latest major research institutions to embrace open access policies for scholarly work. There are now well over 650 research institutions, agencies, and funders with policies on Open Access. (see <http://roarmap.eprints.org/>) We hope that the SUNY faculty senate will embrace a similar policy (or set of goals, at least) at this plenary meeting.

Such a strategy will require strong statements of direction from the SUNY System Office, significant cultural change in the promotion and tenure processes on our campuses, and alignment with faculty governance.

Conclusion:

We need to effect change in this traditional model of academic publishing in order to maintain our ability to afford to be a research-based institution that includes:

- **Pushback on the profit-driven publishing model.** Faculty are aware of the inequities inherent in our scholarly communication processes. More than 14,000 scholars (including two dozen from SUNY) have signed the boycott of Elsevier housed at The Cost of Knowledge (<http://thecostofknowledge.com/>). If SUNY believes that commercial publishers are not strong partners, then SUNY should say so, not just with words and dollars, but with influence, calling on faculty to cease the unpaid editorial, publishing, and refereeing work expected by commercial publishers.
- **Adoption of an Open Access mandate.** SUNY faculty already produce research funded by organizations that have adopted Open Access mandates for grant recipients -- organizations such as the National Institutes of Health, Research Councils UK, National Fund for Scientific Research, Wellcome Trust and the European Research Council. Such a mandate would position SUNY on the right side of history, and rectify the current lag of ten years or more behind many peer institutions in this area of policy.

The \$63 million spent SUNY-wide on journals in 2012 was money not spent on infrastructure, capital improvements, staff positions, faculty lines, support services, or decreases in the rate of tuition. It may have contributed significantly to the generation of research funding, but that doesn't always produce a positive balance on the indirect recovery side. As these costs grow, how many faculty will we not hire? How many faculty will we lose because we can't afford start-up packages? How many grad students will we not be able to fund? How many disciplines can

we not afford to support? How sustainable do we think this situation really is? If the system doesn't fundamentally change, how are we going to continue to afford to do this?

All of us broadly, but particularly System needs to explicitly support these efforts. If you look at the wording of the I2NY E-Resources Licensing Manifesto, we take a hard negotiating line on specific contract language that many publishers loathe. We need backing from OLIS/Provost/Chancellor's Office to be able to stick to those principals or say "no deal" when the publishers balk at them.

The transition from a journal subscription model to a more sustainable economic solution that integrates Open Access will take time, and as we work towards that goal, our student and faculty researchers will continue to require access to ScienceDirect and other similar resources." Therefore We recommend that the University Faculty Senate encourages SUNY, its Libraries, and the Faculty to explore and support alternatives to publishing scholarship with commercial publishers.

We further recommend that the Executive Committee of the University Faculty Senate work with Provost Cartwright, Associate Provost Hatch, the SUNY Librarians Association, the SUNY Council of Library Directors, and other stakeholders to create a task force to holistically explore alternative models of scholarly publishing and communications, and to report back to the University Faculty Senate at least twice during the next academic year regarding the feasibility, desirability and logistics of adopting such alternative models.

Resolution on Open Access Publication
Passed without Dissent