

Resolution from the
University Faculty Library Board
Concerning Scholarly Publishing

WHEREAS Cornell's longstanding commitment to the free and open publication, presentation and discussion of research advances the interests of the scholarly community, the faculty individually, and the public, and

WHEREAS certain publishers of scholarly journals continually raise their prices far above the level that could be reasonably justified by their costs, and

WHEREAS the activities of these publishers directly depend upon the continued participation of faculty at Cornell and similar institutions acting as editors, reviewers, and authors, and

WHEREAS a lasting solution to this problem requires not only interim measures but also a long-range plan, and

WHEREAS publication in open access journals and repositories is an increasingly effective option for scholarly communication,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT

The Senate calls upon all faculty to become familiar with the pricing policies of journals in their specialty.¹

The Senate strongly urges tenured faculty to cease supporting publishers who engage in exorbitant pricing, by not submitting papers to, or refereeing for, the journals sold by those publishers, and by resigning from their editorial boards if more reasonable pricing policies are not forthcoming.²

Reaffirming and broadening the proposals discussed during its meeting of December 17, 2003, the Senate strongly urges the University Library to negotiate vigorously with publishers who engage in exorbitant pricing and to reduce serial acquisitions from these publishers based on a reasonable measure of those subscriptions' relative importance to the collection, taking into account any particular needs of scholars in certain disciplinary areas.

The Senate strongly encourages all faculty, and especially tenured faculty, to consider publishing in open access, rather than restricted access, journals or in reasonably priced journals that make their contents openly accessible shortly after publication.³

¹ See, e.g., <http://oap.comm.nsd.org/10most.html> (listing 2005 prices of journals in various disciplines); <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/scholarlycomm/scholarlycommunicationtoolkit/faculty/facultyeconomics.htm> (providing general journal price info).

² See, e.g., <http://www.arl.org/sparc/author/addendum.html> (discussing what faculty referees and editors can do to change journal policies).

³ See, e.g., <http://www.doaj.org/> (listing peer-reviewed open access journals); <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/do.htm#faculty> (providing advice and sources for open access publishing); <http://www.library.cornell.edu/scholarlycomm/> (same); <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/scholarlycomm/scholarlycommunicationtoolkit/toolkit.htm> (same);

The Senate strongly urges all faculty to negotiate with the journals in which they publish either to retain copyright rights and transfer only the right of first print and electronic publication, or to retain at a minimum the right of postprint archiving.⁴

The Senate strongly urges all faculty to deposit preprint or postprint copies of articles in an open access repository such as the Cornell University DSpace Repository or discipline-specific repositories such as arXiv.org.⁵

DISCUSSION

This matter has been before the Senate previously. On December 17, 2003, the Senators present unanimously supported the Cornell University Library's efforts to control spiraling acquisition costs by tough negotiations with certain journal publishers who were exploiting their market power.

Since that date the underlying problem of certain publishers charging excessive prices for subscriptions has continued, driven by stock market forces that demand ever-higher profits. At the same time, these journals could not even exist without the faculty who submit papers and act as editors and reviewers.

The resolution has been helpful to the Library in resisting the price increases and in protecting its acquisition budgets, so that funds are not transferred from other disciplines to pay the excessive prices from certain publishers. However, this is still a severe problem.

As regards copyright, faculty should realize that documents sent to authors by publishers to transfer copyright are often negotiable. Many publishers have alternative copyright arrangements for those who do not want to transfer copyright. See also Footnote 4.

Also over the past few years, open access journals and repositories have emerged as an important extension of or alternative to conventional journal publication in many disciplines, though far from all.

Definition of open access from Peter Suber's web page - "Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions."

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⁴ See, e.g., <http://www.arl.org/sparc/author/addendum.html> (providing a form to use to retain necessary rights); <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/scholarlycomm/scholarlycommunicationtoolkit/faculty/facultyauthorcontrol.htm> (providing model agreements and negotiation advice). See also <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php?stats=yes> by Project SHERPA (<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/>)([listing](#) journals that permit such archiving without special arrangement).

⁵ See, e.g., <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/do.htm#faculty> (describing methods and results of open-access archiving);