Western Libraries Subscription Task Force
Interim Report and Plan to Evaluate Library Subscriptions
Spring 2019

Madeline Kelly, Chair, Western Libraries
Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
Tilmann Glimm, College of Science & Engineering
Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, College of Humanities & Social Sciences
Michelle Weston, Western Libraries

Introduction 2
Scope of Plan 3
Timeline & Deliverables 4
Stage 1: Develop Methods (April - June 2019) 4
Stage 2: Data Collection (July - September 2019) 5
Stage 3: Feedback | Outreach | New Content (September - March 2020) 5
Methods 6
Evaluating existing subscriptions 6
Evaluating prospective subscriptions 13
Immediate Recommendations 14
Remaining Questions for AY2019-20 14
Appendixes 15
Appendix A: Task Force Charge 15
Appendix B: Literature Review 18
Appendix C: Glossary 28
Appendix D: Spring 2019 Communication Plan 30
Appendix E: Spring 2019 Faculty Survey Results 42
Appendix F: Annotated Bibliography of Additional Resources 94
Introduction

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force was formed in Winter 2019 in response to renewed pressures on the Libraries’ Resource Access Budget (RAB). Inflation on library subscriptions—which averages almost 5 percent annually and vastly outpaces the Consumer Price Index (CPI)—means that a flat budget is effectively a declining budget, and rising subscription costs crowd out all other collections spending. Even with annual funding to offset inflation, roughly 90 percent of the RAB is committed to subscriptions or access fees, leaving just under 10 percent for new one-time purchases and no margin for added subscriptions. The result is that, at best, library subscriptions are static; at worst, they are vulnerable to the slightest change in the budget landscape.

The Task Force’s charge is to develop a sustainable, systematic, and comprehensive plan for evaluating and managing subscriptions that goes beyond mere maintenance and proactively seeks opportunities for change. In the short-term, the Task Force must lay the groundwork for up to $330K in collections reductions; in the long-term, the Task Force must develop a way to respond to changing needs and resources year over year. See Appendix A for the full charge, membership, and contextual information.

The Task Force began meeting at the end of Winter 2019, with initial discussions around broad themes of scholarly communications, Open Access, and the library acquisitions landscape. In order to prepare for the complex process ahead, the group started with a literature review, exploring sixteen other universities’ (and one consortium’s) experiences with subscription evaluations and cancellations. Common themes emerged across institutions, including:

- The need to engage transparently with the university community throughout the entire reductions process, in a way that works for users
- The importance of broadening the conversation to include the scholarly communications ecosystem, Open Access, and the library acquisitions landscape
- The challenge of rallying support around Open Access publishing, and the need to do so; with faculty support, significant change becomes more possible
- The importance of communicating via multiple channels, such as email, open forums, news stories, a web presence, etc.
- The limitations of a reduction process that excludes major journal packages; the challenges of a reduction process that includes these packages
- The power of framing the conversation in terms of ideals (e.g. openness, intellectual exchange, inclusivity) rather than merely finances

Via follow-up with individuals at New Mexico State University, the University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee), and Georgia State University, we were able to confirm anecdotally that while faculty at the

---

1 This estimate is based on the assumption that funding to offset inflationary deficits will be provided by the University through FY2019-20. If this funding is provided and the Libraries maintains book (and other one-time) expenditures at their current levels, RAB projections show a $330K shortfall by the end of FY2020-21. (If inflationary costs are not covered in FY2018-19 and FY2019-20, the shortfall could reach as high as $548K by the end of FY2020-21.) If cancellations are made for FY2020-21, the Libraries is still projecting shortfalls of between $80K-$90K in both FY2021-22 and FY2022-23.

2 See Appendix B for a full summary of the literature review findings.
institutions we researched are able to meet their information needs using ILL, the ongoing pressure to “defend” key subscriptions year after year is wearing and contributes to decreased morale and a sense of resignation.

It is also worth noting that no institution is unique in these struggles. On the contrary, national trends in research library expenditures\(^3\) underscore a stark reality: in the 30 years from 1986 to 2015, library subscription expenditures increased a whopping 521%, versus a 152% increase in salary expenditures and a mere 79% increase in one-time expenditures (including monograph purchases). Over the same span, CPI only increased 118%.

Among the many universities that have made substantial subscription reductions in the past 15 years are prominent R1 institutions Cornell University, Florida State University, George Mason University, Georgia State University, Kansas State University, North Carolina State University, University of Iowa, University of Kansas, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts (Amherst), University of Missouri, University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), University of Oregon, and University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee); a host of institutions at other Carnegie classification levels; and, quite prominently, the entire University of California system. Western is not alone; on the contrary, we have the opportunity to take part in what may ultimately be a significant shift in the scholarly communications ecosystem.

**Scope of Plan**

The charge of the Task Force is two-fold: develop and implement methods for evaluating library collections to (a) address the need for reductions due to a flat or declining budget and (b) provide a mechanism for replacing existing content with newer, more relevant subscriptions. Within that broad framework, the scope of work can be further defined as follows.

The RAB includes approximately $2.2M, with average spending over the past three years distributed across formats and purchase models as shown in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Average RAB expenditures by category, FY16-FY18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Expenditures</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal Packages</td>
<td>$936,613</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Databases</td>
<td>$531,149</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Journals</td>
<td>$306,509</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big, One-Time</td>
<td>$94,410</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small, One-Time</td>
<td>$89,854</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Fees</td>
<td>$42,865</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) [http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/cancellations/national-trends/](http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/cancellations/national-trends/)

\(^4\) See Appendix C for definitions of each category.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alliance E-Books</td>
<td>$39,040</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing Orders</td>
<td>$19,931</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because 86% of the budget is committed to journals (both packaged and individual) and databases, these formats are necessarily included in the scope of any subscription evaluation. In addition to these prominent and impactful categories, the Task Force will address access fees, since these apply to owned databases and journal packages that can easily be evaluated alongside their subscription counterparts. Lastly, the Task Force plans to review collection development policy regarding print standing orders, with the possibility of doing away with this particular purchase model and reverting to a purchase-on-request approach.

By the end of AY2019-20, the Task Force will have developed and implemented methods to evaluate these portions of the RAB. Further details on what methods will be used and how they have been developed can be found below.

In addition to developing the mechanics for subscription review, the Task Force will conduct outreach and make recommendations regarding Western’s relationship to the broader scholarly publishing ecosystem (including potential institutional approaches to Open Access) and more effectively leveraging regional and consortial relationships.

**Timeline & Deliverables**

- **Stage 1: Develop Methods (April - June 2019)**
  - In addition to surveying the literature of other institutions’ cancellation experiences (see Introduction, above), the Task Force’s immediate priority has been to develop methods, criteria, and metrics for evaluating Western’s existing subscriptions. Part of the urgency at this stage stems from a desire to use Summer 2019 for data-gathering and preliminary analysis; there is also a need to incorporate university feedback into the development of the methods and metrics before faculty leave for the summer. With these factors in mind, the deadline for this portion of the work has been June 2019. Specific tasks have included:
    - Review and revision of existing subscription review processes and frameworks, as well as a review of other universities’ strategies
    - Outreach to faculty via an all-faculty email, support documents and other informational resources, a Task Force web presence, and optional visits to each college DAC (see Appendix D for the full text of the Task Force communication plan)
    - Communication with the Libraries’ Scholarly Resources Group and the Senate Library Committee
A survey of faculty to determine priorities for subscription evaluation criteria, as well as gain preliminary insight into faculty impressions of and attitudes toward Open Access.

In June 2019, the Senate Library Committee reviewed the Task Force’s overall methodology and endorsed this approach to subscription evaluation. Now, the Task Force is sharing this preliminary report and evaluation plan with Libraries Administration for approval, as well as with the Scholarly Resources Group for informational purposes. In Fall 2019 it will be made available in full to the Senate Library Committee and the broader university community (via the Libraries’ webpage and other broad channels). See “Methods,” below, for a summary of the methods to be implemented.

**Stage 2: Data Collection (July - September 2019)**

Throughout the summer, Libraries’ personnel will work to implement the evaluation methods, criteria, and metrics that have been developed. This will include resource-specific evaluations, as well as evaluation of how library resources and expenditures are currently distributed among colleges and development of target ranges for more equitable distribution.

Stage 2 may also include development of informational resources and outreach strategies for educating the university community on Open Access (as time allows).

**Stage 3: Feedback | Outreach | New Content (September - March 2020)**

Throughout AY2019-20, the Task Force’s work will include three main components:

- **Review of existing subscriptions**
  Working from the subscription data gathered during Stage 2, the Task Force will identify low-value resources in consideration for cancellation, then work with stakeholder groups to explore these resources and reduction options more fully. This will include varied opportunities for feedback from the university community, including at least two rounds of further vetting in which qualitative criteria will be considered on top of earlier quantitative factors. These stages will be based in part on faculty feedback gathered via survey during Stage 1. The Task Force will present this process to the university community in detail early in Fall quarter, adjust as needed based on stakeholder input, and implement it over the course of several months.

- **Ongoing outreach**
  In collaboration with the Senate Library Committee, the Task Force will continue engaging with the university community on the topics of Open Access, scholarly communications, library acquisitions models, and leveraging regional and consortial relationships. This will include distribution and promotion of any informational resources developed during Stage 2.

- **Evaluating new content**
  Working from the methods and metrics developed for existing subscriptions, the Task Force will develop processes and criteria for cycling new content into the Libraries’ collections.

The Task Force will also produce a final report, including potential cancellation scenarios (to be evaluated and approved by Libraries Administration in consultation with Senate Library Committee and the Libraries’ Scholarly Resources Group) and recommendations for further initiatives (e.g. Open Access efforts, consortial negotiations, etc.).
Methods
Evaluating existing subscriptions
During Summer 2019, the Task Force will evaluate existing library subscriptions using format-specific scorecards developed over the course of AY2018-19. These scorecards, which are based on a similar model developed by the Virtual Library of Virginia consortium\(^5\), incorporate a variety of criteria and metrics for a more holistic assessment of each subscription’s value and performance. The resulting scores will provide the first step in a multi-stage evaluation process that will also include more nuanced, qualitative, user-driven feedback. The full process, including scorecards and qualitative input, is designed to be implemented on a regular basis following the initial application in AY2019-20 (frequency to be determined). Scorecards were informed in part by the results of a faculty survey; a full report of these results can be found in Appendix E: Spring 2019 Faculty Survey Results.

Criteria & scoring
In order to effectively and equitably compare e-resources across a variety of formats and purchase models, the Task Force developed customized scorecards for each major category of e-resource in the Libraries’ collection. There are nine categories of e-resource in total, based on the format of content and, in some cases, the purchase model:

- **E-Book Packages.** Subscription databases containing exclusively e-books. Content is leased year to year, so upon cancellation all titles are lost.
- **Full-Text Owned Journals.** Packages or databases containing exclusively e-journals. Content is owned, so each year’s subscription fees in effect purchase a new year of content. Upon cancellation, content up to the cancellation date is retained (except for any content from prior to the original subscription start date).
- **Full-Text Databases.** Subscription databases containing exclusively full-text content, whether journals, monographs, conference proceedings, gray literature, etc. Content is leased year to year, so upon cancellation all titles are lost.
- **Full-Text & Discovery Databases.** Subscription databases containing a mix of full-text content and abstracting/indexing, whether journals, monographs, conference proceedings, gray literature, etc. Content is leased year to year, so upon cancellation all titles, including abstracts/indexing, are lost.
- **Discovery Databases.** Subscription databases containing exclusively abstracting/indexing, i.e. that provide a means of discovering content but not the content itself. This can include abstracting/indexing for journals, monographs, conference proceedings, gray literature, etc. The database is leased year to year, so upon cancellation all discovery is lost.
- **Full-Text Reference.** Databases that provide full-text access to a single title or reference work, e.g. an online encyclopedia, dictionary, or handbook. Purchase models for full-text reference works vary: in some cases, content is leased year to year and upon cancellation all material is lost; in other cases, content is owned and each year’s payment secures perpetual access to another year of material.

\(^5\) https://vivalib.org/c.php?g=836990&p=6083936
• **Streaming Media.** Databases consisting primarily of streaming music or video. Content is leased year to year, so upon cancellation all content is lost.

• **Data, Other, Non-ILL.** Databases that contain non-textual (or other non-traditional) scholarly material, e.g. images, chemical structures, data, etc. Because it does not follow standard bibliographic patterns, the content from these e-resources is more difficult to compare (or replace) on a one-to-one basis, and may not be available through ILL. Content is typically leased year to year, so upon cancellation all titles are lost.

• **Single Subscriptions.** Single e-journal titles purchased outside of packages. Content is owned, so each year’s subscription fees in effect purchase a new year of content. Upon cancellation, content up to the cancellation date is retained (except for any content from prior to the original subscription start date).

Each category of e-resource will be evaluated using a slightly different set of criteria, depending on what is applicable and meaningful for that format or purchase model. Criteria will also be weighted differently across categories, depending on the total number of criteria for each category and the impact or importance of each criterion within that particular context. Regardless of which criteria are applied to each category, and how those criteria are weighted, all criteria on each scorecard add up to 100 points, in order to allow for direct comparisons. The complete list of criteria includes:

• **Cost per use (CPU) over three years.** CPU is a commonly used indicator of value for library subscriptions. CPU constitutes 50 out of 100 points on each e-resource scorecard.

• **Availability of content via ILL or other means.** This criterion protects material that cannot be obtained reliably via means other than a subscription. Availability via ILL is not a criterion across all categories; however, where present, it constitutes an average of 10.2 out of 100 points.

• **Usage for course reserves.** Curricular relevance is a core value of Western’s library collections; use of materials for course reserves is an indicator of curricular relevance. Use for course reserves is not a criterion across all categories; however, where present, it constitutes an average of 8.1 out of 100 points.

• **Average annual percent price increase over three years.** Annual increase is a significant factor in the sustainability of library subscriptions. Annual increase constitutes, on average, 7.6 out of 100 points on each scorecard.

• **Percent of an individual college’s support provided by each e-resource.** This criterion protects disciplines with few e-resources by privileging subscriptions that provide the bulk of the content for any given college. College support constitutes, on average, 7.8 out of 100 points on each scorecard.6

• **Accessibility of interface for users with disabilities.** Library resources should be accessible to all users, regardless of ability, with minimal mediation; this criterion operationalizes that value by holding vendors accountable for ongoing accessibility improvements. Accessibility constitutes, on average, 6.0 out of 100 points on each scorecard.

• **Limitations on seats or number of users.** Some e-resources limit access to a fixed number of concurrent users, interrupting access to our full user community and providing poor user

---

6 This criterion is balanced by “Number of users supported by each e-resource,” below, which protects e-resources supporting large departments or programs, or a large number of subject areas.
experience; this criterion holds vendors accountable for providing broader access. Limitations on seats is not a criterion across all categories; however, where present, it constitutes an average of 4.7 out of 100 points.

- **Number of users supported by each e-resource.** This criterion boosts resources that are highly interdisciplinary or support large departments or programs. Number of users supported constitutes, on average, 4.3 out of 100 points on each scorecard.  

- **Digital Rights Management (DRM) restrictions.** This criterion refers to use restrictions on e-book platforms, which include limitations on printing, sharing, and downloading, as well as proprietary software and the requirement that users create usernames and passwords to access content. For e-books, DRM constitutes 4 out of 100 points.

- **Duplication or overlap with other resources.** This criterion privileges resources with largely unique content, while flagging e-resources with a high degree of overlap. Duplication is not a criterion across all categories; however, where present, it constitutes an average of 4.2 out of 100 points.

- **Demonstrable commitment to Open Access.** As library subscriptions become increasingly unsustainable, Western wishes to acknowledge and reward publishers taking real steps toward a more open scholarly landscape. This criterion gives a small boost to e-resources from publishers who make at least some content truly open. Commitment to Open Access is not a criterion across all categories; however, where present, it constitutes an average of 4.5 out of 100 points.

- **Privacy policies.** This criterion holds vendors accountable for having transparent privacy policies. Privacy policies constitutes, on average, 3.8 out of 100 points on each scorecard.

- **Indexed in OneSearch.** The ability of users to discover content by searching in OneSearch is a key, albeit small, piece of each e-resource’s value. This criterion acknowledges the vendors who make their content easy to find. Indexing is not a criterion across all categories; however, where present, it constitutes an average of 2.3 out of 100 points.

These criteria and weightings include adjustments made following the Spring 2019 survey of Western faculty. Specific adjustments based on the input of faculty include:

- Increasing the weight of “**Percent of an individual college’s support provided by each e-resource.**” Among survey respondents, 88 percent rated “Dependence of individual college(s) on the resource” as more than “somewhat important.” The Task Force felt that this warranted an adjustment to the weightings to ensure that resources providing a substantial portion of any college’s e-resources would receive a boost.

- Increasing the weight of “**Availability of content via ILL or other means.**” Among survey respondents, 79 percent rated “Availability via ILL” as more than “somewhat important.” Additionally, the Task Force received seven open-ended responses mentioning ILL, including five describing it as an essential factor in cancellation decisions.

---

7 This criterion is balanced by “Percent of an individual college’s support provided by each e-resource,” above, which protects e-resources supporting smaller departments or programs, or subject areas with fewer e-resources. The average score for “Number of users” is lower than for “Percent of college support” because other criteria (like CPU) provide a boost for resources with a large number of users.
In contrast to the points above, there were three areas where the Task Force elected to depart from survey feedback:

- Maintaining the weighting for “Average annual percent price increase over three years.” While only 47 percent of survey respondents felt this criterion rated higher than “somewhat important,” the Task Force believes that containing annual price increases is a critical part of sustaining library subscriptions. Western must acknowledge vendors who provide sustainable pricing models while penalizing those whose prices skyrocket year over year.

- Maintaining the weighting for “Privacy policies.” Only 28 percent of survey respondents felt this criterion rated higher than “somewhat important.” However, vendors’ privacy practices—and the transparency of those practices—have a real impact on the usability and security of Western’s e-resource subscriptions.

- Not adding criteria to reflect faculty publishing, faculty citations, or grant support. Among survey respondents, 68 percent rated “Resource in which Western faculty publish” as more than “somewhat important,” 64 percent rated “Use for grant-funded projects” as very important, and 62 percent rated “Resource cited by Western faculty” as very important. Unfortunately, the Task Force was unable to locate a sustainable source of data covering the sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities. Readily available data—through sources such as Web of Science, Scopus, and 1figr—does not adequately represent the social sciences, arts, and humanities, rendering it inappropriate for meaningful cross-disciplinary analysis.

Data for each of these criteria will be gathered throughout Summer 2019 by Libraries’ personnel. A detailed table of criteria, e-resource categories, and weightings is found in Table 2.

Table 2: E-resource evaluation criteria and weightings, by category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost per use (CPU) over three years</th>
<th>E-Book Package</th>
<th>Full-Text Owned Journals</th>
<th>Full-Text Databases</th>
<th>Full-Text &amp; Discovery</th>
<th>Discovery Databases</th>
<th>Full-Text Ref</th>
<th>Streaming Media</th>
<th>Data, Non-Ill, Other</th>
<th>Single Journals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of content via ILL or other means</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage for course reserves</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average annual percent price increase over three years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of an individual college’s support provided by each e-resource</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of interface for users with disabilities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations on seats or number of users</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of users supported by each e-resource</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Rights Management (DRM) restrictions</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplication or overlap with other resources</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrable commitment to Open Access</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privacy policies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indexed in OneSearch</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overriding Criteria & Preliminary Vetting**

While the scorecards described above will provide a valuable, holistic starting point for e-resource evaluation, they will not serve as the “last word” on subscription cancellations. Instead, there will be additional vetting—both within the Task Force and across the university—prior to any final decisions.

The Task Force will conduct the first round of vetting in Fall 2019, which will incorporate qualitative criteria that emerged as priorities in the Spring 2019 faculty survey. These criteria include:

- **The dependence of individual colleges or departments on each e-resource.** While the scorecards attempt to capture this, it is a complex factor that is difficult to quantify. More nuanced evaluation may be needed, especially given the fact that 88 percent of survey respondents rated this criterion higher than “somewhat important.”

- **Relevance to marginalized groups.** While only 50 percent of survey respondents considered this criterion more than “somewhat important,” the university and library strategic plans suggest that it is worth incorporating into e-resource evaluations in some way. Too complex to be quantified, it may lend itself to a more qualitative approach.

- **Affiliation with a professional society.** Some 59 percent of survey respondents indicated that prioritizing journals published by professional societies was more than “somewhat important.” Once e-resources have been evaluated using the scorecard methodology, this criterion can provide a means of further prioritizing the lowest-scoring packages.

- **Open Access commitment.** Because Open Access and the sustainability of subscriptions are so closely related, applying this as a criterion at multiple stages of the process can help ensure final decisions are aligned with the best interest of the scholarly publishing community.
At this early vetting stage, the Task Force may also apply potentially overriding criteria to the evaluation. For example, the **percent of titles used** in a given package may override any other scores, since it could in theory make the difference between a feasible and infeasible cancellation.

Lastly, should scores be grouped too tightly to divide into high- and low-scoring e-resources, the early vetting stage is an opportunity to apply additional criteria in order to broaden the range.

The exact processes and criteria for early vetting will be developed as the Task Force’s first priority in fall 2019. These details will be determined *before* the Task Force reviews individual e-resource scores, in order to avoid any appearance of favoritism and to preserve the integrity of the process.

**Overriding Criteria & University Vetting**

In Fall 2019, the Task Force will develop a process for university-wide vetting of potential e-resource cancellations. This process will capture qualitative input from faculty, staff, and students, and will provide clarity in terms of timeline, decision-making, and communication. The exact process remains to be determined; however, in the Spring 2019 faculty survey:

- 79% of respondents were open to providing individual feedback via surveys
- 29% would like to provide departmental feedback via surveys
- 29% would like to host departmental or college visits
- 16% would like to attend open forums
- 16% would participate in focus groups

As with the first round of vetting, the exact processes and criteria for university vetting will be developed as an early priority in Fall 2019. These details will be determined before the Task Force reviews individual e-resource scores, in order to avoid any appearance of favoritism and to preserve the integrity of the process.

**Distribution of Cancellations**

In order to ensure that any cancellations impact the university equitably, there will be some element of proportionality to the decision-making process (exact details to be determined in Fall 2019). To support the equity of decision-making, Libraries’ personnel have developed a formula to calculate the ideal percentage of expenditures that should support each college on an annual basis. While the Libraries does *not* intend to use this formula to create formal college-level budget allocations, it does provide a useful guide for maintaining reasonably balanced e-resource collections.

---

8 At the end of spring 2019, the Task Force chair attended a meeting at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and participated in face-to-face Q&A with department chairs. The setting allowed college faculty to drive the agenda for the conversation, communicating their concerns and priorities. Overall, it was a successful means of gathering complex feedback and should be repeated with other colleges as possible.

9 Due to the interdisciplinary nature of most e-resource subscriptions, the increasingly cross-disciplinary nature of research, annual fluctuations in each college’s needs, the complexities of library acquisitions models, and a host of other factors, no formula can ever be the absolute bottom line—nor should yearly expenditures and cancellations be held unwaveringly to formula-derived values. Instead, a formula can be helpful for monitoring long-term trends, maintaining general equity, and guiding long-term decision-making.

[Back to top](#)
The elements of the guiding formula include:

- **Faculty demographics for the most recent year**
  - **The number of faculty FTE** in each college, including tenure-track and NTT faculty (as captured by the Western internal fact book). This constitutes **10 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **The number of new tenure-track faculty** in each college, since these faculty may require slightly more support to build collections in their subject areas (as captured by the roster for new faculty orientation). This constitutes **10 percent** of the overall formula.

- **Enrollment demographics for the most recent year**
  - **The number of undergraduate degrees awarded** by the college (as captured by the Western internal fact book). This constitutes **5 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **The number of graduate degrees awarded** by the college (as captured by the Western internal fact book). This constitutes **10 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **The number of undergraduate credit hours offered** by the college (as captured by the Western internal fact book). This constitutes **5 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **The number of graduate credit hours offered** by the college (as captured by the Western internal fact book). This constitutes **10 percent** of the overall formula.

- **Curricular demographics**
  - **The number of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs offered** by the college (as captured by the university catalog and the Council on University Programs committee minutes). This constitutes **20 percent** of the overall formula, with graduate and doctoral programs weighted more heavily due to their higher-level research needs.

- **The publishing landscape**
  - **Average book price in the discipline** (as captured by GOBI, a major supplier of books). Constitutes a variable portion of the overall formula, depending on how heavily books are used in a given field; up to **30 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **Number of books published annually in the discipline** (as captured by GOBI, a major supplier of books). Constitutes a variable portion of the overall formula, depending on how heavily books are used in a given field; up to **30 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **Average journal price in the discipline** (as captured by Library Journal’s annual periodicals price survey). Constitutes a variable portion of the overall formula, depending on how heavily journals are used in a given field; up to **30 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **Number of journals actively published in the discipline** (as captured via UlrichsWeb). Constitutes a variable portion of the overall formula, depending on how heavily journals are used in a given field; up to **30 percent** of the overall formula.
  - **Serials-monographs ratio**, or the percentage of citations in the discipline that point to journals versus monographs (as captured via literature review of discipline-specific citation analyses). Not directly part of the formula; however, this ratio affects the extent to which book price, number of books published, journal price, and number of journals published influence this 30% of the overall formula.
By populating the formula with AY2018-19 data, the Task Force will be able to determine what an ideal distribution of subscription funds could look like and compare that to current expenditures. Depending on how closely current expenditures align with the formula, the Task Force may determine that more or fewer cancellations are needed in particular disciplines in order to maintain—or move closer toward—equitable expenditure of library funds. The result may be a target dollar amount (or range) for cancellations for each college, which can then be reached using whatever processes and criteria are developed for the vetting process (above).

Whatever process is devised, and whatever targets each college does or does not receive, the Task Force anticipates identifying more candidates for cancellation than are strictly necessary in order to build in a margin for appeals.

Final Decision-Making Process
Following whatever qualitative feedback process is developed for AY2019-20, the Task Force will prepare one or more cancellation scenarios. This information will be

- Reviewed by the Libraries’ Scholarly Resources Group and revised or focused, as needed, based on the group’s expertise
- Presented to the Senate Library Committee for final input, shared governance oversight, and endorsement
- Submitted to the Dean of Libraries for final review and decision-making

Final decisions will be communicated to the entire university community via a variety of channels during Spring 2020.

Evaluating prospective subscriptions
After the processes described above have been developed, and concurrent to their implementation, the Task Force will turn to the development of guidelines and processes for adding new subscriptions. This will include processes for:

- Periodically cancelling subscriptions in order to free up funds (as needed)
- Identifying potential subscriptions
- Prioritizing potential subscriptions
- Decision-making regarding new subscriptions

It is possible that these processes will include elements of the evaluation methods outlined above, including qualitative and quantitative criteria, scorecards, and proportionality or equity.

The Task Force will consult with stakeholder groups including the Senate Library Committee and the Scholarly Resources Group and will advance a proposed process by the end of AY2019-20.

Immediate Recommendations
In addition to the resource evaluations and outreach to take place from July 2019 through March 2020, the Task Force recommends a handful of more immediate actions:
1. The Libraries should investigate integration of Unpaywall into OneSearch, to facilitate discovery and use of Open Access scholarship.

2. The Libraries should develop informational resources describing what increased support for Open Access could look like, as well as the impacts on Western and the broader scholarly community.

**Remaining Questions for AY2019-20**

- What qualitative feedback process will be implemented throughout AY2019-20 following completion of the scorecards?
- Is it feasible to discontinue standing orders? How will this be communicated?
- How frequently will the evaluation processes be applied? Will the frequency vary based on the type of subscription (e.g. single journal, database, journal package)? How frequently, and through what process, will they be updated?
- How will we make space in the budget in order to add new subscriptions? How often will this be done?
- How will prospective subscriptions be evaluated?
Appendixes

Appendix A: Task Force Charge

Western Libraries Subscription Task Force
Winter 2019

Charge
This Western Libraries Subscription Task Force, chaired by the Libraries’ Director of Collections and comprising three representatives of the campus faculty and three additional members of the Libraries’ personnel (seven members in total), is charged with developing and recommending a more nimble and flexible approach to managing the Libraries’ ongoing commitments, including serials, databases, and standing orders. This approach will help the Libraries address potential reductions to collections and be more responsive to new and growing curricular programs. The task force will report to the Dean of Libraries and will consult heavily with Senate Library Committee, college-specific faculty governance groups, the Libraries’ Scholarly Resources Group, and other stakeholders as appropriate.

In light of likely subscription funding shortfalls beginning in FY2020-21, the task force should review the FY 2015-16 subscription reductions processes and outcomes and develop improved strategies and processes by which to achieve potential reductions of up to $330K in FY2020-21 and up to $90K in FY2021-22 and $80K in FY2022-23. The task force should establish a process to review (at a minimum) all ongoing subscription commitments as well as (optionally) the unencumbered portion of the resource access budget used for one-time purchases. Even if significant reductions are not required, these strategies should be applied by the Libraries to address new and growing areas of the curriculum.

The deliverables and timeline articulated on the next page provide greater specifics on the scope and expectations for this work, including measures to ensure transparency and shared governance.

Membership
In order to ensure the group can engage nimbly and effectively with this work, the task force will be a relatively small group, rather than a representative one, and it will engage existing shared governance structures such as the Senate Library Committee, Libraries’ faculty (and relevant collections staff), and each college’s faculty governance group. Members (seven in total, including the chair) will be expected to participate actively, including meeting three or four hours per month and carrying out asynchronous tasks, for the period Winter 2019 through Spring 2020. Members with 12-month appointments may continue their work through Summer 2019, as agreed upon by the task force membership.

Chair: Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Faculty</th>
<th>Libraries Personnel[1]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tilmann Glimm (CSE)</td>
<td>Kate Cabe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Neff (Huxley)</td>
<td>Jeff Purdue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre (CHSS)</td>
<td>Michelle Weston</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Context and Problem

The Western Libraries lacks the budget necessary to maintain current subscriptions and to address the growing and changing teaching and learning needs of the university community. Inflation on library subscriptions—which averages almost 5 percent annually and vastly outpaces the Consumer Price Index—means that a flat budget is effectively a declining budget, and rising subscription costs crowd out all other collections spending. Even with annual funding to offset inflation, roughly 90 percent of the Libraries’ resource access budget is committed to subscriptions or access fees, leaving just under 10 percent for new one-time purchases and no margin for added subscriptions. The result is that, at best, library subscriptions are static; at worst, they are vulnerable to the slightest change in the budget landscape.

Moving forward, the Libraries must develop a sustainable, systematic, and comprehensive plan for evaluating and managing subscriptions that goes beyond mere maintenance and proactively seeks opportunities for change. Whether responding to budget reductions and the need for cancellations or simply making space for new subscriptions, a thoughtful, holistic approach to managing subscriptions will allow the Libraries to respond more dynamically to whatever the future brings.

Deliverables and Timeline

The task force is asked to develop an updated and improved process for evaluating the Libraries’ ongoing collections commitments, including a definition for what constitutes a “nimble and flexible” approach to subscription management, and strategies and timelines for targeted stakeholder engagement. The process and definition should be developed in consultation with stakeholders and shared governance groups (including Senate Library Committee, Libraries faculty and relevant collections staff, and each college’s faculty governance group) by the end of Spring 2019, before presentation to Libraries Administration for approval.

Throughout Fall 2019 and Winter 2020, the task force should work with Collection Services personnel complete any planned assessment activities, collecting and analyzing the necessary data and consulting with stakeholders regularly. Progress reports should be delivered to key stakeholder groups at least quarterly.

If additional, ongoing, and cumulative funding is not allocated for collections in the FY2020-21 operating budget, the task force should present one or more proposals for reaching the FY2020-21 spending reduction target by the beginning of Spring 2020. Proposals should result from the agreed-upon process established in Spring 2019 and should seek to minimize to the extent possible the negative impacts of reductions on the Western community. Following a period of open feedback and active engagement with the university community, and in consultation with stakeholder and shared governance groups, Libraries Administration will make final reduction decisions for implementation by Collections Services starting July 2020.

The task force may also present proposals for reaching reduction targets in FY2021-22 and FY2022-23, or define a process to prepare, vet, and implement those scenarios in subsequent years.
If additional, ongoing, and cumulative funding is allocated for collections, the task force should evaluate the effectiveness and balance of current practices in addressing new and growing programs and needs.

[1] The Libraries’ members will be appointed by the Dean of Libraries in consultation with the Director of Collections and the Faculty Chair.
Appendix B: Literature Review

Bibliography of Precedents: Example Cases of Subscription Reductions

Summary of Takeaways

- **Cancellations won’t solve the problem.** Without increases to base budgets and/or changes in pricing models, library purchasing power will continue to erode year after year. Cancellations are a quick fix to a long-term issue.
- **Don’t underestimate the value of continuous education and advocacy.** Faculty understanding of and engagement with the scholarly publishing and library landscapes is important. Reaching out continuously through a variety of channels (e.g. open forums, web presence, in-person outreach, etc.) can help raise important issues and answer tough questions. Use of tools like FAQ, infographics, and practical tips can help reach individuals not already familiar with major issues. Linking local challenges to broader global trends can help patrons understand the complexities currently facing academic libraries.
- **The type of institution matters.** Top-tier research universities have more clout and leverage than smaller universities, making it easier for their faculty to support radical, ideals-driven cancellation initiatives. These heavy-hitters can set the stage for smaller universities to follow.
- **Faculty support is integral.** Major cancellation decisions are most successful when they have the backing of faculty governance bodies. Resolutions from Senate or SLC-type groups give more weight to library decisions, and provide avenues for advocacy, outreach, and grassroots support.
- **In-person outreach to departments can help.** Many universities report conducting in-person outreach to colleges and departments. While the specifics of this outreach can be fuzzy, the importance of reaching out directly to faculty stakeholders is clear.
- **Timing is key.** Faculty feedback is only meaningful if faculty have time to give it.
- **Involve administration.** It’s important that faculty feedback make it to university administration; if administration is willing to communicate a message on behalf of the library, all the better.
- **Cost per use is not enough.** While CPU is a valuable starting point, most universities incorporate other criteria and metrics into their evaluations, including faculty publication data, qualitative user feedback, and enrollment and degree data.
- **Talk about ideals.** It can be helpful to frame the conversation as a battle of ideals--open versus restricted, free versus monetized--rather than merely a budget issue.
- **We are not alone.** Western has a broad pool of peer institutions we can draw on for advice. This is a shared challenge across many library worldwide.

**Cornell University**

Cornell was one of the first big colleges to pull out of subscriptions. In 2013, Cornell University issued a faculty senate resolution that describes a “crisis in the cost of journals in the sciences and social sciences” that are unsustainable, due in large part to “the growing commercialization of scholarly publishing.” The resolution calls for withdrawing from Elsevier’s bundled pricing plan, moving to a title-by-title selection model, and for “the library to take an aggressive approach in negotiating new contractual models and pricing structures with Elsevier and other commercial publishers designed to bring serials costs in line with realistic long-term library budget projections” as well as for “explor[ing] and support[ing]...
alternatives to commercial venues for scholarly communication” (Duranceau, 2004, p. 127). They started with Elsevier because it is gigantic (they own a quarter of the global market in scientific and technological journals) and it made so much money off academics. At the time of withdrawal Cornell’s deal with Elsevier was priced at $1.7 Million, and consumed a fifth of the universities total periodical budget. The resolution says “the increasing control by large commercial publishers over the publication and distribution of the faculty’s scholarship and research threatens to undermine core academic values promoting broad and rapid dissemination of new knowledge and unrestricted access to the results of scholarship and research” (Duranceau, 2004, p.128). The was strong support of the faculty to the resolution increased faculty involvement in the solutions. In addition to Elsevier Cornell library faculty are very concerned with Cinven and Candover (and they own Kluwer and Springer) because they are investment companies. The big issue is for Cornell is the commercialization over the public access to scholarly information. They are promoting several open access publishing alternatives such as EUCLID (https://projecteuclid.org/about).

Key takeaways:
- Cornell is a top research institution, so they set the stage for a lot of smaller schools to follow.
- Western’s UEP and DEP still value publications that are in package deals because open access does not yet the have universal clout. Most faculty at Cornell have status because of their institution and most do not plan to leave. This is why open access is more valuable to Cornell in a way that is not comparable to WWU.
- The resolution by the faculty Senate came up through Cornell’s Faculty Library Board (the equivalent of our Senate Library Committee). While our SLC is now under UPRC it could draft a similar statement to raise attention to the importance of library funding.
- The resolution coming from the faculty leads to large faculty support for an alternative to overpriced commercial publishing.

Florida State University
In 2018, FSU subscribed to $2m of Elsevier journals as part of a statewide license; this gave them access to all 1,800+ titles published by Elsevier. The Library held discussions with their Senate Library Committee, and this was reviewed by their Faculty Senate. The Senate voted unanimously to support the Library’s decision to cancel the package deal and subscribe to a smaller subset a la carte if a revised package deal could not be reached. Negotiations in 2018 failed to find an agreement with Elsevier. As of this year, they will now spend $1m to subscribe to 150 most needed titles. The library says that they will “continue to provide access to all previously available material through alternate sources,” i.e. interlibrary loan and a new “expedited delivery service” for certain requests. Library faculty worked with departments to identify journals to keep within budget limit.

Key takeaways:
- FSU has an almost identical faculty governance structure to Western’s. Their approach to Elsevier here is quite similar to what the Library, SLC, and Faculty Senate took on a few years ago with the Serials Reduction Task Force. It’s also an approach we might well consider with Elsevier ourselves. In that light, it would be good to get further information regarding the actual process of conferring with departments to learn about successes and setbacks with this process.
**Georgia State University**

In 2018, Georgia State U. Libraries wrote a blog post reporting that they were facing flat budgets and 5% annual increases in materials costs. In order to meet budgetary constraints and maintain a minimal budget for monographs and other resources, they generated a list of journals that they would drop and provided 1.5 months for library user feedback via a web form.

**Update 4/8/2019** Skye Hardesty, Head of Collection Department, has overseen 3 reductions over the past ten years. She recommends making sure that there are opportunities for faculty to give feedback, and that those requests are timed such that faculty can actually participate. Also, in person meetings with departments/colleges would help with politics.

Key takeaways:

- Include opportunities for faculty feedback. Make sure requests for feedback are timed to ensure faculty can actually participate.
- In-person meetings with departments/colleges can help, politically.

**Kansas State University**

Library has been making regular cuts, totaling $645,000, since FY14. They are in the process of cutting $730,000 this year in order to cover shortfall for FY19 and the anticipated shortfall for FY20. Due to extreme shortfall this year they also have instituted a moratorium on purchasing of all new content including monographs from January to July 2019. Actively engaging the university in the process— Including joint statement by Provost and Library Dean addressing the issue, Open Forums on the “serials crisis” (recorded and distributed) and Open Access. Collections website includes pages for Past Cancellations, an FAQ, infographics related to the serials crisis and how it impacts K-State specifically, and Cancellation Process that includes criteria used to identify potential cancellations. Currently they have posted titles for potential cancellation and have created a survey to gather feedback about the proposed titles with deadline set for April 11.

Key takeaways:

- Due to inflation, regular reviews and subscriptions cuts alone will not address “serials crisis”. Without increases to base budgets and/or changes in pricing models purchasing power is reduced each year leading to less and less content.
- University faculty engagement and understanding of how subscription pricing models work is important. K-State faculty raised important issues and asked good, tough questions during the Open Forum.
- Create infographics/visualizations demonstrating issue across universities and specific to WWU.
- Could document and share tips for better ensuring use is counted, i.e. sharing proxied links rather than sending articles via email.

**New Mexico State University**

Library has documented making cuts since 1997. The total reduction 1997-2016 amounted to $1,449,316.63; 2017-2019 reductions total $548,483.88. They also currently have a journal title list up for
review totaling $261,461.50 with no target dollar amount listed. NMSU created a LibGuide for their Library Cancellation Projects listing out the cancellation plan for each FY. For the current year they have added a chart that delineates the journal title review process.

Key takeaways:
- Use web presence to communicate a plan for moving forward, not just as list of past cancellations.

North Carolina State University
2017 recap article
Library had to make $750K in cuts for FY2015. Identified 628 journals and 34 databases for cancellation; communicated that additional databases and another 263 journals would need to be cancelled if there were subsequent cuts for FY2016. Like Western, NCSU created a dedicated web presence for their review process, including updates, notes, and an FAQ. They created an initial list of candidate titles for cancellation, which included cost, impact factor, use, the number of NCSU citations to each title over 5 years, and the number of NCSU publications in each title over 5 years. List was distributed to campus for review; individuals were asked to rank titles in their subject area according to three categories (Top Priority, Medium Priority, Low Priority). Following the review period, list was updated and redistributed for comment. After comment, list was finalized, shared, and implemented. Since the 2014 cancellations, they have reinstated 30 journals (<5%) and 1 database; most requests for cancelled journals were filled via RapidILL at no additional cost.

Key takeaways:
- Consider using WWU citation data as a factor for evaluating journals.
- Work with stakeholders to develop other factors for evaluating resources.
- Use web presence to communicate with stakeholders--but not just web presence. Meet with college governance groups also.
- If asking for campus feedback, use broad categories like high or low priority. Consider limiting number of titles that a respondent can consider “high priority”?
- Added record-level notes to library catalog to alert users when they were accessing a journal proposed for cancellation
- Important to find ways to channel feedback about the impact of cancellations to university administration
- Used $10 CPU as a “general guideline” for what is unsustainable; weighed this against anecdotal/qualitative feedback
- Some of the campus data they factored in included department-level information about grant dollars awarded, PhD enrollment and degrees conferred, Masters enrollment and degrees conferred, undergraduate enrollment and degrees conferred, and the number of faculty/post-docs

University of Alaska
In 2008, the University of Alaska Fairbanks library had approximately 2,500 serial subscriptions. They needed to do several major costs. A Web-based approach to faculty review and prioritization of journal titles was developed, with a goal of “prying loose from the faculty their preferences on journals” by
providing an easy-to-use resource for faculty to provide their opinions on individual serial titles. The credibility of the collection development librarians was vital and faculty needed to feel that the librarians were looking out for their interests. Faculty were asked to give their opinions by ranking titles with a priority rank of 1, 2 or 3. The library was able to assure faculty that any titles marked Priority 1 would be retained under almost any condition. Faculty were told that if the overall list achieved its cost reduction goals then new titles could be added, based on departmental priorities, not individual faculty recommendations.

Key takeaways:
- Direct faculty involvement was essential to reduction success.
- The ability to adding new materials to a departmental resource provided an incentive for departments to reduce funding.
- A web-based survey for faculty is very effective because it can be aggregated in various ways by librarians.
- Dennis Stephens and Christopher Lott wrote an article about the approach. The article includes a lot of great information about the technical aspects of creating the Web database and offers a number of recommendations for anyone attempting to build this type of system.

University of California
UC have taken an innovative approach: they are emphasizing Elsevier’s unwillingness to provide “universal open access” to articles published by UC researchers. They have clout since, as they note, the combined campuses of UC account for 10% of all US publishing. UC wanted this output to be freely available. Elsevier wanted to charge publishing fees on top of the subscription fees already being paid. UC have ended all subscriptions to Elsevier as a result. Elsevier publish 18% of all journals published by UC faculty authors. UC have laid some groundwork in moving in this direction. In April, 2018, the University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication published a list of 18 principles to be followed when negotiating licenses with publishers. These principles strongly emphasize open access and oppose constraints on access and use of scholarly content. In February, 2019, the Academic Senate endorsed the negotiating stance of the UC towards Elsevier, and in March, 2019, the Office of Scholarly Communication published an open statement on the reasons behind severing the relationship with Elsevier.

Key takeaways:
- This is a far more radical approach and one that emphasizes a related issue to journal inflation, that of open access availability to publicly-funded research (which is given to Elsevier free of charge, edited by an uncompensated peer-review process, and then sold back to the library at unsustainable prices). The Western community may or may not be willing to take this radical step, but emphasizing these open access issues as part of our own internal process and the negotiations that will follow seems important to me.

University of Iowa
U of I reports that, motivated by flat budgets and high inflation, they annually evaluate subscriptions to eliminate high cost/use items, infrequently used items, and items that provide redundant access. This has
been adequate to meet budget constraints for the past few years but the library must drop $600k from its subscriptions for 2019-20. The process included the following phases:

- Oct 2018: announce situation to the faculty (no mention of other stakeholders)
- Nov-Dec: post the decision metrics on website
- Jan-March 2019: gather feedback from campus
- April 19: library makes cuts and announces

They broke the list down by discipline and applied different metrics for different disciplines, presumably to account for differing publishing landscapes.

Key takeaways:

- The list of cuts is substantial and appears to include some that departments will see as existentially important.
- The library takes note to link their budget challenges to national trends and the experiences of other academic libraries: [http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/cancellations/national-trends/](http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/cancellations/national-trends/). Journal, database, and ebook costs have increased an average of 521% since 1986. For comparison, library salaries have only increased 152%.
- These cuts are being finalized currently (April 19). It may be worth establishing contact with key figures to glean any lessons learned.

**University of Kansas**

Like Kansas State, Kansas has been reviewing and cutting subscriptions regularly but has come to a crisis point. Over the past 10 years they have cancelled subscriptions totaling approximately $1.4 million. Their base budget of $7.9 million has not changed during that time. In 2017 Kansas broke up their Springer “big deal” package and now only subscribes to 50 of the highest-use/in-demand titles. This year they are reviewing their big deals with Wiley, Oxford, Sage, and Elsevier. In December 2018 Kansas distributed a joint statement from the Library Dean and the Interim Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor about the need for another round of drastic cancellations. The website includes pages with cancelled titles over the past 4 years, Content Budget Update with infographics, and an FAQ that is very similar to K-State’s.

Key takeaways:

- Trying to manage the issue by reviewing and cancelling low use titles each year is not sustainable. Eventually you are only left with “big deals” and high use titles to cut.
- Seems important for university-wide communication sent jointly from library and Provost; Kansas is using UC as a model for hosting Open Forums and faculty engagement particularly as they renegotiate their Elsevier package.

**University of Maryland**

In the 2016 review process the library cut 425 journal titles totaling 8% of total collection budget. The cuts were only on titles that were not in the “big deals” packages. Due to projected deficits between $500,000 and $800,000 in the 2017 fiscal year, the package of Taylor and Francis was identified for cancellation with a very small subset of current subscriptions to be maintained in order to meet programmatic and accreditation needs. [FAQ](#) states that the decisions were made with use, pricing, cost per use, and subject specialist also evaluated each journal based on other criteria, including its relative...
importance to an academic discipline, whether its content is available from another source such as one of the Libraries’ research databases, and if the Libraries can obtain the title through interlibrary loan or through consortial partnerships.

Key takeaways:
- Cuts cannot just be made on the titles outside of packages, at some point the budget deficit will necessitate cuts being made to the packages as well.

University of Massachusetts, Amherst
In 2017, UMass Amherst cancelled their Royal Society of Chemistry Package and re-subscribed to individual titles for a net savings of $50,000 (including fees to obtain articles through ILL). They first walked away from a consortially-negotiated price increase of 10%; RSC then approached them individually and offered 8%.

Key takeaways:
- Walking away from consortially-negotiated pricing doesn’t always guarantee worse terms--vendors may offer better rates, even outside a consortium

University of Missouri
In 2017 the University of Missouri decreased their collections budget by 1.2 million dollars (17% of their budget). Currently 80% of the budget is spent on journal subscriptions and 20% on one-time purchases. They worked with faculty to cut 20% of their subject budgets (including books purchasing, demand driven purchases from the Merlin Catalog, and database/journal subscriptions). The collection library faculty asked a representative from every subject to work with their assigned librarian to review a list of titles and respond with “your opinion on whether ILL could provide adequate support for your use of each title. An option to comment is available for each title as well. Deadline for input is May 30th.” Following, they put together a Collections Steering Committee based on input from faculty and subject librarians and agreed upon cuts as well major cuts as well as reducing book/one-time purchase expenditures by over $400,000.00 The committee used the following Principles for Reducing Expenditures:
  1. No disciplines or collections types can be exempt.
  2. Usage will be one factor, but not the only factor when considering cancellations [there is no mention of what those other factors are].
  3. Access will be prioritized over ownership.
  4. ILL will remain an effective, efficient means of acquiring materials not held by the Libraries.
  5. Transparency will be a priority.

They completed negotiations with Elsevier, Sage, Springer, and Wiley to reduce their expenditures on the journal packages based on faculty feedback. While they lost some important titles, they negotiated to not lose any Elsevier titles but instead move to access only rather than permanent ownership by the University. In 2018 they will review their Oxford University and University of Chicago journal packages.

Key takeaways:
- The U of Missouri is much bigger than our school and thus their budget accounts for multiple Phd and MD programs.
They also got donations from Dept’s and colleges to support campus access to high quality materials in their fields by partnering with the Libraries to share costs or by providing gift funds to support purchases. College of Veterinary Medicine, College of Engineering, Law Library, Department of Mathematics, School of Journalism, School of Medicine

- Working in concert with faculty helped them smooth the communication difficulties that often result with reductions.
- Since we no longer have subject databases this model of cutting subject accounts would not work well with for our school.
- While I do not know the details of our subscription agreements, the University of Missouri model makes a good case for negotiations that decrease ownership but maintain access.
- What were the “other factors” they used to consider cancellations (refers to number 2 above)?

**University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill**

Here is the language from SPARC: “In 2018, the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (UNC) Library undertook an evaluation of e-journal titles that originally were part of a multi-year contract with Wiley. The evaluation centered on both use and cost-per-use. In the 2018 evaluation, UNC identified 295 journals from the Wiley package for cancellation. The journal package was cancelled and individual titles were retained on an a la carte basis.”

**University of Oregon**

The UO doesn’t seem to have posted any current, public-facing subscription cutting plans (other than the notification linked above). However they have, in recent years, broken a few of their “big deals” and in 2016 tried implementing a new subscriptions management plan— that, in part, did away with monograph budgets and changed them to “discretionary” monies that could be used for monographs or to supplement their “recurring obligations”. At the time, UO’s Associate Dean for Research Services recognized that this plan would likely not be sustainable but rather a temporary fix. In a presentation he gave at Timberline he noted that they would soon need to grapple with “at what point does holding titles in these big deals, where we admittedly can lock in lower inflationary increases, become false economy?” In March, UO Libraries posted a message to the university about upcoming contract negotiations with Elsevier. They mention that they hadn’t really considered the possibility of not renewing a contract with Elsevier but UC’s decision has made them rethink that. Their contract (which includes PSU and OSU) ends December 31, 2020 so they plan to engage faculty in the process. We have also heard from colleagues at UO that they recognize they are now at a point where big deals are not sustainable.

Key takeaways:
- Attempts to co-mingle subscriptions and one-time spending monies will almost certainly eliminate any money for monographs
- Is there another opportunity to negotiate a more favorable and sustainable Elsevier contract with other Alliance libraries?

**University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee**

There is very little information available other than that on the SPARC website. SPARC describes the following:
- In 2017, UWM cancelled packages from Springer Nature and Wiley, saving ~$165k. They dropped additional individual titles for an additional saving of $187k.
• Decision factors included “cost, use, alternate availability, and feedback from faculty and students”

Collections are divided by subject area, and each appears to be subject to its own collections policy. They state that they have a policy of ongoing evaluation of their collections to match research needs and specialties on campus, but there is little information available about how these processes actually work. Each subject area is coded into one of four “collection levels,” including:

- Basic: resources needed for undergrad program
- Advanced: required for a master’s program
- Research: required for doctoral and advanced research
- Comprehensive: “collections which strive to acquire all significant and relevant resources in all formats”

Key takeaways:

- Despite the fact that this took place in 2017, the library website has no mention of these cuts.
- Their collection policies differ by content area; it is not clear the extent to which cuts affected each, nor how they dealt with decisions regarding packages that spanned subjects.

**Virtual Library of Virginia** (VIVA)

Task force for state-wide consortium developed set of format-specific scorecards to evaluate electronic resources. Immediate goal was to inform cancellation/renewal decisions; however, with slight modification the scorecards could also be applied to prospective new purchases. Regardless of format, all scorecards had the potential to add up to 100 points. Challenge was to incorporate criteria and metrics that mattered to all 72 VIVA member institutions, and quantify them in a meaningful way. Included clearly quantitative metrics (e.g. cost per use, annual price increase) as well as “values-based” metrics (e.g. vendor shows demonstrable commitment to Open Access). Criteria, metrics, and priorities varied by format.

Key takeaways:

- There are ways to account for qualitative values in our cancellation review--it’s a matter of determining what those values should be, when/where to apply them, and how to measure them
- Values can vary based on format, subject, etc.

**Western Washington University** (2015-16 Task Force)

In early 2016 the library estimated it needed to reduce FY17 expenditures by $315,000, or approximately 15 percent of the FY17 library resource access base budget. The Faculty Senate charged a Sustainable Access Task Force (SATF) to recommend a process and criteria for subscription reductions to the Senate Library Committee (SLC). Based on the task force’s recommendations, Western Libraries produced a list of 3,614 proposed cancellations, the list included a 15 percent buffer to allow faculty to advocate for the retention of some of the library resources identified for cancellation. The library received 579 titles for retention consideration from 33 departments, programs or centers. Faculty librarians individually considered each retention request on the strength of its justification based on the “defensible criteria” identified by the task force. The prioritized list of titles shared with the Vendor Negotiation Team served as the basis for negotiations with vendors.

Consistent with the expectations of the task force, the Vendor Negotiating Team employed several principles and strategies during its negotiations with vendors:
In some cases, it was appropriate to retain a journal package in its entirety because the cost of the package was less than the cost of ordering single titles that fell under the cost-per-use cut off and faculty retention request. Examples: ACM Digital Library and Duke University Press.

In other cases, it was appropriate to negotiate a smaller package with the vendor in order to gain access to additional titles for a substantial savings. Examples: SAGE and Oxford University Press.

In other cases, it was appropriate to abandon the package entirely and instead subscribe only to selected titles. Examples: American Physical Society Journals, Springer, and Taylor & Francis.

In early June, the university allocated a total of $85,000 in one-time funds to the FY17 resource access budget: $25,000 approved by the Provost and $60,000 identified by Library Administration in anticipated, one-time carry forward. With this money, the Vendor Negotiation Team used criteria put forward by Library Administration, to give high-use subscriptions an additional year.

The Provost’s Office agreed in January 2017 to provide the Libraries with funds to offset the cost of subscription inflation. With funding for inflation, the Libraries was able to restore access to the Taylor and Francis and Springer journal packages.
Appendix C: Glossary

This glossary defines the terms listed in the “Scope” section of this report, in the context of subscription evaluations. For broader definitions of these and similar library-related terms, consult the Libraries’ Subscription Management Glossary & FAQ.10

Access Fees. Electronic content (e.g. e-books, journals, digital archives) that was purchased and is owned by the university in perpetuity, but that requires payment of a small, ongoing fee to retain access. These fees are typically intended for platform maintenance, system improvements, and other vendor costs associated with managing electronic content. Failure to pay access fees typically results in a loss of access to content, in spite of the fact that it is “owned.” The Libraries tries to avoid access fees for owned content as much as possible; nevertheless, roughly 2% of our collections budget is committed to these fees.

Alliance E-Books. E-books purchased through the Orbis Cascade Alliance, a consortium of universities across Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Alliance E-Books are selected, purchased, and managed centrally by an Alliance working group made up of member volunteers. Decisions related to these e-books must balance the interests of all member libraries; therefore, we monitor the value of these packages locally but are limited in our ability to cancel subscriptions or reallocate funds. Alliance E-Books make up roughly 2% of the library collections budget.

Big One-Time. One-time purchases that go beyond normal, day-to-day requests for monographs, videos, and other routine one-time expenses. Most commonly, this includes digital archival collections (e.g. the complete scanned collection of American Antiquarian Society journals), certain types of electronic journal package (e.g. JSTOR), or upgrades of print content to digital form (e.g. ProQuest’s Historical Newspapers). These purchases are rare, usually made as strategic steps toward more sustainable and accessible library collections. On average, the Libraries spends about 5% of the collections budget on these types of purchases.

Databases. Large aggregations of content typically sold by third-party aggregators. Databases can include a wide variety of formats, including journals, audio, video, images, data, gray literature, reference material, e-books, conference proceedings, and more. In general, the cost per title is extremely low, enabling widespread access without the cost of a journal package. However, titles are subject to change over time, the most current content may not be included, and the library retains no content after cancellation. Well-known examples of database aggregators include EBSCO and ProQuest. Databases make up about 26% of the Libraries’ collections budget.

Individual Journals. A single journal subscription that is not part of a package. These subscriptions are often the “low-hanging fruit” of cancellation efforts because of their standalone nature. Except in rare instances, individual journals generally include post-cancellation retention rights for content published during the subscribed years. Individuals journals constitute about 15% of the Libraries’ collections budget.

10 https://library.wwu.edu/satf/glossary-faq
**Journal Packages.** A group of journals sold as a bundle. Journal packages are typically sold directly by the publisher (e.g. the American Chemical Society or Oxford University Press). Journals within a package may or may not be available for individual subscription. Journal packages often provide better per-title pricing than individual journals. Thus, it can be very difficult to cancel a package and retain high-performing titles. Most journal packages include at least some post-cancellation retention rights for content published during the subscribed years. Journal packages currently make up 45% of the Libraries collections budget.

**Small One-Time.** Routine one-time purchases, including monographs, DVDs, streaming media, and other small, finite purchases. These currently constitute 4% of collections expenditures.

**Standing Orders.** Essentially a subscription to a monograph series. With a standing order, the library automatically receives (and is billed for) each new volume in the series. For some series, this means one volume every few years; for others, it can mean multiple volumes within a single year. These volumes can be purchased individually on request, without a standing order in place. The Western Libraries reduced standing orders substantially a few years ago, now dedicating just 1% of our collections budget to this purchase model.
Date: Monday, May 13, 2019
Subject: Faculty Action Needed: Upcoming Libraries Survey
Attachments: Letter to Faculty

Dear Professors Jantzen, Neff, and Newcomer,

I am writing to you in your capacities as President of Faculty Senate, Chair of UPRC, and Chair of the Senate Libraries Committee, on behalf of the Western Libraries Subscription Task Force. Our group was formed this winter in response to potential upcoming budget shortfalls, and charged with developing sustainable strategies and methods for managing the Libraries’ subscriptions moving forward.

Over the next year, the task force will be engaging the university in a variety of ways, including surveys, open forums, and conversations within each individual college. We will be talking about the scholarly publishing landscape, Western’s values, and the implications for both moving forward.

Our first step is to collect faculty feedback regarding Open Access publishing, subscription evaluation criteria, and library feedback processes. To that end, we will be sharing the attached letter with all university faculty tomorrow (Tuesday, May 14), and distributing a Qualtrics survey on Thursday (May 16). Our goal is to use the survey results to inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. The more input we get from the university, the more representative our approaches can be.

In your leadership roles, we are hoping that you might help us boost the signal of this important survey, which has the potential to shape the future of library collections. Please feel free to use the attached letter as a resource, or refer to the Libraries’ subscription review webpage. We will be reaching out to department chairs as well, and appreciate anything you can do in collaboration with those individuals to encourage broad faculty participation.

If you would like more information on the Task Force’s work, we are happy to attend any upcoming Senate or committee meetings for deeper discussion and Q&A.

We appreciate your help and look forward to a robust conversation about the future of publishing, scholarly communication, and library subscriptions!

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force

- Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections, Western Libraries (Chair)
- Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
- Tilmann Glimm, College of Science and Engineering
- Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
- Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
- Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Michelle Weston, Western Libraries
Dear University Colleagues,

The vision of our university calls on each of us to advance the ideals of exploration, critical thinking, connection, and creativity. Collectively, we seek to provide a transformational educational experience for our students, grounded in innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity; as well as justice and equity in our policies, practices, and impacts. Through these efforts, we hope to address the world’s most challenging problems, questions, and needs. The heart of the Western Libraries’ mission is one and the same: to advance these goals, connecting people to the resources, expertise, and spaces necessary for impactful teaching and lifelong learning, while advancing equitable and inclusive access to information in all its forms.

In this spirit, the Western Libraries continues to move forward in new directions, favoring broad access to information over more traditional models of ownership, challenging the narrative that knowledge can be owned, and seeking ways to keep information open to the community where it can best serve the greater good. We are not alone in these efforts: libraries around the world are pushing for a more sustainable, open, and just approach to information, and the current moment represents an opportunity for all of us. Over the next year, the Libraries will be engaging the university in important conversations about our collective mission, the information landscape, and the implications for library collections.

The broader context of current events makes this conversation a timely one. On February 28, the University of California announced that they were terminating journal negotiations with the scholarly publishing giant Elsevier, walking away from more than 2,500 journal titles and $50 million in expenditures. At the heart of the decision: a growing tension between researchers’ desire for scholarship to be openly available and the starkly contrasting reality of skyrocketing journal costs and article paywalls. Add to this the fact that publishers increasingly lock their journals into massive “big deal” packages, and the result is an ideological and financial crisis. As researchers and libraries around the world strive toward the broadest possible access to information, rising publisher prices and content restrictions threaten the very integrity and inclusivity of our scholarly conversations.

UC’s decision to stand firm follows on the heels of similar negotiations in Germany and Sweden, and echoes a trend among academic institutions—including R1 universities like Cornell, Florida State, University of Iowa, and others—to break large journal packages. UC’s decision is one of boldest and most prominent in recent years, and since February other universities (including Duke University, the University of Minnesota, the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, the University of Oregon, and the University of Virginia) have weighed in, issuing statements acknowledging the magnitude of the moment. Meanwhile, the European Commission and eleven European nations recently committed to making all scientific studies funded by public resources freely available via Open Access by 2020.

Here at Western, we are part of the broader scholarly ecosystem and have an opportunity to help shape the future of publishing, libraries, and research. To that end, the Libraries will be working with the university
community, via the Senate Library Committee and the newly formed Western Libraries Subscription Task Force, to explore our own future.

Over the coming year, we will be engaging the university in a variety of ways, including surveys, open forums, and conversations within each individual college. We will be talking about the scholarly publishing landscape, Western’s values, and the implications for both moving forward.

These discussions, which will shape library collections strategies, will be entwined with a second, more urgent conversation about how to manage library subscriptions in the current financial climate. Inflationary costs continue to threaten the sustainability of Western’s library subscriptions, and though the Libraries submitted an internal budget proposal to UPRC this spring to alleviate these pressures, we must anticipate the potential for budget shortfalls as early as AY2020-21 and lay the groundwork accordingly.

As a first step, the Libraries’ Subscription Task Force is looking for university feedback around two major themes: Open Access and subscription evaluation. In a few days, you will receive a link to a Qualtrics survey asking for your opinions on Open Access, subscription evaluation criteria, and library feedback processes. We strongly encourage all faculty to participate in order to ensure that our path forward adequately reflects the needs and values of every discipline, college, and department. We will also be reaching out to each department chair and offering to attend department- or college-level meetings for more in-depth discussion or Q&A. If you would like us to visit your department or college, please work with your chair and we will coordinate a time.

Lastly, throughout the next 16 months we will strive to maintain open and transparent communication via our Task Force and subscription review web presence, the Senate Library Committee, Western Today, and our team of subject librarians. As we work, we will share updates, resources, and calls for feedback. Stay tuned, and don’t hesitate to reach out if you have questions, concerns, or would like to schedule a one-on-one or small group meeting. You can contact the Libraries’ Collection Services division or the Director of Collections.

We appreciate your feedback and look forward to a robust conversation about the future of publishing, scholarly communication, and library subscriptions!

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force

- Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections, Western Libraries (Chair)
- Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
- Tilmann Glimm, College of Science and Engineering
- Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
- Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
- Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Michelle Weston, Western Libraries

For more information on how the Libraries manages subscriptions, consult the Subscription Management Glossary and FAQ. For more information on Open Access and the scholarly publishing ecosystem, review the SPARC Open Access page, which includes a downloadable Open Access fact sheet.

Website Update

Date: Tuesday, May 14, 2019
Dear University Colleagues,

The vision of our university calls on each of us to advance the ideals of exploration, critical thinking, connection, and creativity. Collectively, we seek to provide a transformational educational experience for our students, grounded in innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity; as well as justice and equity in our policies, practices, and impacts. Through these efforts, we hope to address the world’s most challenging problems, questions, and needs. The heart of the Western Libraries’ mission is one and the same: to advance these goals, connecting people to the resources, expertise, and spaces necessary for impactful teaching and lifelong learning, while advancing equitable and inclusive access to information in all its forms.

In this spirit, the Western Libraries continues to move forward in new directions, favoring broad access to information over more traditional models of ownership, challenging the narrative that knowledge *can* be owned, and seeking ways to keep information open to the community where it can best serve the greater good. We are not alone in these efforts: libraries around the world are pushing for a more sustainable, open, and just approach to information, and the current moment represents an opportunity for all of us. Over the next year, the Libraries will be engaging the university in important conversations about our collective mission, the information landscape, and the implications for library collections.

The broader context of current events makes this conversation a timely one. On February 28, the University of California announced that they were terminating journal negotiations with the scholarly publishing giant Elsevier, walking away from more than 2,500 journal titles and $50 million in expenditures. At the heart of the decision: a growing tension between researchers’ desire for scholarship to be openly available and the starkly contrasting reality of skyrocketing journal costs and article paywalls. Add to this the fact that publishers increasingly lock their journals into massive “big deal” packages, and the result is an ideological and financial crisis. As researchers and libraries around the world strive toward the broadest possible access to information, rising publisher prices and content restrictions threaten the very integrity and inclusivity of our scholarly conversations.

UC’s decision to stand firm follows on the heels of similar negotiations in Germany and Sweden, and echoes a trend among academic institutions—including R1 universities like Cornell, Florida State, University of Iowa, and others—to break large journal packages. UC’s decision is one of boldest and most prominent in recent years, and since February other universities (including Duke University, the University of Minnesota, the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, the University of Oregon, and the University of Virginia) have weighed in, issuing statements acknowledging the magnitude of the moment. Meanwhile, the European Commission and eleven...
European nations recently committed to making all scientific studies funded by public resources freely available via Open Access by 2020.

Here at Western, we are part of the broader scholarly ecosystem and have an opportunity to help shape the future of publishing, libraries, and research. To that end, the Libraries will be working with the university community, via the Senate Library Committee and the newly formed Western Libraries Subscription Task Force, to explore our own future.

Over the coming year, we will be engaging the university in a variety of ways, including surveys, open forums, and conversations within each individual college. We will be talking about the scholarly publishing landscape, Western’s values, and the implications for both moving forward.

These discussions, which will shape library collections strategies, will be entwined with a second, more urgent conversation about how to manage library subscriptions in the current financial climate. Inflationary costs continue to threaten the sustainability of Western’s library subscriptions, and though the Libraries submitted an internal budget proposal to UPRC this spring to alleviate these pressures, we must anticipate the potential for budget shortfalls as early as AY2020-21 and lay the groundwork accordingly.

As a first step, the Libraries’ Subscription Task Force is looking for university feedback around two major themes: Open Access and subscription evaluation. In a few days, you will receive a link to a Qualtrics survey asking for your opinions on Open Access, subscription evaluation criteria, and library feedback processes. We strongly encourage all faculty to participate in order to ensure that our path forward adequately reflects the needs and values of every discipline, college, and department. We will also be reaching out to each department chair and offering to attend department- or college-level meetings for more in-depth discussion or Q&A. If you would like us to visit your department or college, please work with your chair and we will coordinate a time.

Lastly, throughout the next 16 months we will strive to maintain open and transparent communication via our Task Force and subscription review web presence, the Senate Library Committee, Western Today, and our team of subject librarians. As we work, we will share updates, resources, and calls for feedback. Stay tuned, and don’t hesitate to reach out if you have questions, concerns, or would like to schedule a one-on-one or small group meeting. You can contact the Libraries’ Collection Services division or the Director of Collections.

We appreciate your feedback and look forward to a robust conversation about the future of publishing, scholarly communication, and library subscriptions!

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force

- Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections, Western Libraries (Chair)
- Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
- Tilmann Glimm, College of Science and Engineering
- Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
- Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
- Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Michelle Weston, Western Libraries

For more information on how the Libraries manages subscriptions, consult the Subscription Management Glossary and FAQ. For more information on Open Access and the scholarly
publishing ecosystem, review the SPARC Open Access page, which includes a downloadable Open Access fact sheet.

The Qualtrics survey consists of 12 questions and should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Respondents are asked to provide a departmental affiliation, but are not required to submit their name or any other identifying information. All responses will remain confidential and any data shared will be in aggregate form only. The survey will remain open through Sunday, June 2.

Results of the survey will be used to inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. The more input the Task Force gets from the university, the more representative the resulting approaches can be--so members of the university community are strongly encouraged to participate.

In addition to this survey, the Task Force will also be reaching out to department chairs and offering to attend department- or college-level meetings for more in-depth discussion or Q&A. If you would like the Task Force to visit your department or college, please work with your chair and the Libraries’ Director of Collections to coordinate.

If you have any questions, please contact the Libraries’ Collection Services division or the Director of Collections.

Letter to Department Chairs

Date: Wednesday, May 13, 2019

Subject: Faculty Action Needed: Upcoming Libraries Survey

Dear Faculty Chairs and Program Directors,

I’m writing to you on behalf of the Western Libraries Subscription Task Force. Our group was formed this winter in response to potential upcoming budget shortfalls and charged with developing sustainable strategies and methods for managing the Libraries’ subscriptions moving forward.

Over the next year, the task force will be engaging the university in a variety of ways, including surveys, open forums, and conversations within each individual college. We will be talking about the scholarly publishing landscape, Western’s values, and the implications for both moving forward.

Our first step is to collect faculty input regarding Open Access publishing, subscription evaluation criteria, and library feedback processes. To that end, yesterday we shared a letter with all university faculty, and tomorrow we will be distributing a follow-up survey. Our goal is to use the survey results to inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. The more input we get from the university, the more representative our approaches can be.

In your leadership role, we are hoping that you might help us boost the signal of this important survey, which has the potential to shape the future of library collections. Please feel free to use the attached letter as a resource, or refer to the Libraries’ subscription review webpage. We have reached out to the President of Faculty Senate, the Chair of UPRC, and the Chair of Senate Libraries Committee, as well, and appreciate anything you can do in collaboration with those individuals or groups to encourage broad faculty participation.
If you would like more information on the Task Force’s work or want a more nuanced opportunity for your department or program to provide feedback, we are also more than happy to attend any upcoming departmental, program, or college meetings for deeper discussion and Q&A. We would like this to be as rich a dialog as possible, and will do what we can to be flexible and available.

We appreciate your help and look forward to a robust conversation about the future of publishing, scholarly communication, and library subscriptions!

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force

- Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections, Western Libraries (Chair)
- Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
- Tilmann Glimm, College of Science and Engineering
- Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
- Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
- Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Michelle Weston, Western Libraries

For more information on how the Libraries manages subscriptions, consult the Subscription Management Glossary and FAQ. For more information on Open Access and the scholarly publishing ecosystem, review the SPARC Open Access page, which includes a downloadable Open Access fact sheet.

Survey Email to Faculty

Date: Thursday, May 16, 2019

Subject: Faculty Action Needed: The Future of Access to Library Resources

Dear University Colleagues,

A few days ago, you should have received an email [1] from the Western Libraries Subscription Task Force [2] outlining emerging trends in scholarly publishing and library collections, and introducing a process by which the university community can provide feedback on Open Access and subscription evaluation criteria.

We now invite you to provide your perspective via Qualtrics survey [3]. The survey consists of 12 questions and should take about 10-15 minutes or less to complete. While we do ask that you provide your departmental affiliation, you do not have to submit your name or any other identifying information unless you would like the Task Force to follow up with you. All responses will remain confidential and any data shared will be in aggregate form only. The survey will remain open through Sunday, June 2.

We will use the survey results to inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. The more input we get from the university, the more representative our approaches can be--so we strongly encourage all faculty to participate. In addition to this survey, we will also be reaching out to each department chair and offering to attend department- or college-level meetings for more in-depth discussion and Q&A. If you would like us to visit your department or college, please work with your chair and we will coordinate a time.

We appreciate your feedback and look forward to a robust conversation about the future of publishing, scholarly communication, and library subscriptions!
If you have any questions, please contact the Libraries’ Collection Services division [4] or the Director of Collections [5].

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force

- Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections, Western Libraries (Chair)
- Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
- Tilmann Glimm, College of Science and Engineering
- Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
- Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
- Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Michelle Weston, Western Libraries

For more information on how the Libraries manages subscriptions, consult the Subscription Management Glossary and FAQ [6]. For more information on Open Access and the scholarly publishing ecosystem, review the SPARC Open Access page [7], which includes a downloadable Open Access fact sheet.

[1] https://library.wwu.edu/subscriptions-review
[3] https://wwu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1NPSv1ZhRBHl5Y1
[4] library.collections@wwu.edu
[7] https://sparcopen.org/open-access/

Qualtrics Survey Text

Dates: Thursday, May 16, 2019 through Sunday, June 2, 2019

The Future of Access to Library Resources

Dear University Colleagues,

A few days ago, the Western Libraries Subscription Task Force distributed a letter to all Western faculty outlining emerging trends in scholarly publishing and library collections, and introducing a process by which the university community can provide feedback on Open Access and subscription evaluation criteria.

We now invite you to provide your perspective via this Qualtrics survey. The survey consists of 12 questions and should take about 10-15 minutes or less to complete. While we do ask that you provide your departmental affiliation, you do not have to submit your name or any other identifying information unless you would like the Task Force to follow up with you. All responses will remain confidential and any data shared will be in aggregate form only. The survey will remain open through Sunday, June 2.

We will use the survey results to inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. The more input we get from the university, the more...
representative our approaches can be--so we strongly encourage all faculty to participate. In addition to this survey, we will also be reaching out to each department chair and offering to attend department- or college-level meetings for more in-depth discussion or Q&A. If you would like us to visit your department or college, please work with your chair and we will coordinate a time.

We appreciate your feedback and look forward to a robust conversation about the future of publishing, scholarly communication, and library subscriptions!

If you have any questions, please contact the Libraries’ Collection Services division or the Director of Collections.

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force

- Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections, Western Libraries (Chair)
- Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
- Tilmann Glimm, College of Science and Engineering
- Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
- Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
- Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Michelle Weston, Western Libraries

For more information on how the Libraries manages subscriptions, consult the Subscription Management Glossary and FAQ. For more information on Open Access and the scholarly publishing ecosystem, review the SPARC Open Access page, which includes a downloadable Open Access fact sheet.

---

1. How familiar are you with Open Access? More information is also available from SPARC. [not at all -- extremely familiar]
2. What hopes or concerns do you have about Open Access as it relates to your own research and publication? [hopes, concerns, not sure, other - all open response]
3. Should the university take steps to improve the viability of Open Access venues as publication outlets and resources for your research or teaching? If yes, how? [no, yes: open response, not sure]
4. Please rate the following journal publishers according to their importance for your subject or discipline: [Elsevier, Springer, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, Sage, Oxford, Cambridge, Emerald, American Chemical Society, don’t know] [important - irrelevant, don’t know]
5. In the past, the Libraries has used cost-per-use as a major component of decision-making. In order to conduct more well-rounded evaluations of our subscriptions, the Libraries plans to incorporate additional criteria moving forward. Please rate the following proposed criteria based on how important you think they are in terms of capturing the value of library subscriptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>5-point scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average annual cost increase</td>
<td>Not at all important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependence of individual college(s) on the resource</td>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinarity of the resource</td>
<td>Extremely important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency of vendors’ user privacy policies</td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplication or overlap with other resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of the interface to users with disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use restrictions and limitations on the number of users</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrated use for course reserves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vendor commitment to Open Access, based on SPARC “How Open Is It?” criteria
Accreditation requirements
Availability of content via interlibrary loan
Discoverability of content via OneSearch

6. During the 2015-16 subscription review process, other potential evaluation criteria emerged from faculty feedback. Please rate the following proposed criteria based on how important you think they are in terms of capturing the value of library subscriptions:

| Connection to the Pacific Northwest | 5-point scale: |
| Relevance to marginalized groups (for example, but not limited to, racial, religious, ethnic, gender groups) | Not at all important |
| Impact on grant-funded projects | Somewhat important |
| Resource cited by Western faculty | Extremely important |
| Connections to professional societies | I don’t know |
| Western faculty on editorial board | |
| Resource in which Western faculty publish | |

7. Are there other criteria the Libraries should use to evaluate subscriptions? [open response]

8. We are open to a wide range of processes and feedback mechanisms. What would be your preferred methods for contributing feedback to future subscription review processes? [individual feedback via surveys | departmental feedback via surveys | department visits | open forums | focus groups | other]

9. What else would you like the Libraries to keep in mind as we move forward with a subscription review and any ensuing publisher negotiations?

10. Your university status: [classified staff | exempt staff | NTT faculty | assistant professor | associate professor | professor | professor emeritus | administrator | undergraduate student | graduate student]

11. Your departmental affiliation:

12. Your name and email (optional - if you would like the Task Force to follow up with you about any of your responses):

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your answers will inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. If you have any questions, please contact the Libraries’ Collection Services division or the Director of Collections.

News Stories (Library News, Western Today)

Date: ASAP

The Future of Access to Library Resources

This winter, the Western Libraries convened a new Western Libraries Subscription Task Force in response to potential upcoming budget shortfalls. The group, which includes library and non-library personnel, is charged with developing sustainable strategies and methods for managing the Libraries’ subscriptions moving forward.

On May 14, as a first step toward this sustainable future, the Task Force distributed a letter to all Western faculty outlining emerging trends in scholarly publishing and library collections, and introducing a
process by which the university community can provide feedback on Open Access and subscription evaluation criteria. The letter was followed by a survey, the results of which will inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. The more input the Task Force gets from the university, the stronger and more representative the group’s subsequent work can be. Ultimately, this feedback has the potential to shape the future of library collections at Western.

The survey consists of 12 questions and is intended to take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Respondents are asked to provide a departmental affiliation, but are not required to submit their name or any other identifying information. All responses will remain confidential and any data shared will be in aggregate form only. The survey will remain open through Sunday, June 2. Faculty should check their inboxes for a link to the survey; other members of the university community may contact the Libraries’ Director of Collections for access.

In addition to this survey, the Task Force will be reaching out to department chairs and offering to attend department- or college-level meetings for more in-depth discussion or Q&A. If you would like the Task Force to visit your department or college, please work with your chair and the Libraries’ Director of Collections to coordinate.

For more information on how the Libraries manages subscriptions, consult the Subscription Management Glossary and FAQ. For more information on Open Access and the scholarly publishing ecosystem, review the SPARC Open Access page, which includes a downloadable Open Access fact sheet.

Survey Follow-Up Email to Faculty

Date: Tuesday, May 28, 2019

Subject: Follow-Up: The Future of Access to Library Resources

Dear University Colleagues,

A few weeks ago, you received an email from the Western Libraries Subscription Task Force outlining emerging trends in scholarly publishing and library collections, and introducing a process by which the university community can provide feedback on Open Access and subscription evaluation criteria. You also received an invitation to provide your perspective via Qualtrics survey.

If you have not completed the survey, you still have a few more days to do so. The survey consists of 12 questions and should take about 10-15 minutes or less to complete. While we do ask that you provide your departmental affiliation, you do not have to submit your name or any other identifying information unless you would like the Task Force to follow up with you. All responses will remain confidential and any data shared will be in aggregate form only. The survey will remain open through Sunday, June 2. To those who have already submitted a response, thank you!

We will use the survey results to inform outreach and Open Access initiatives, subscription evaluation methods, and collection development strategies. The more input we get from the university, the more representative our approaches can be--so we strongly encourage all faculty to participate. In addition to this survey, we will also be reaching out to each department chair and offering to attend department- or college-level meetings for more in-depth discussion or Q&A. If you would like us to visit your department or college, please work with your chair and we will coordinate a time.
We appreciate your feedback and look forward to a robust conversation about the future of publishing, scholarly communication, and library subscriptions!

If you have any questions, please contact the Libraries’ Collection Services division or the Director of Collections.

The Western Libraries Subscription Task Force

- Madeline Kelly, Director of Collections, Western Libraries (Chair)
- Kate Cabe, Western Libraries
- Tilmann Glimm, College of Science and Engineering
- Mark Neff, Huxley College of the Environment
- Jeff Purdue, Western Libraries
- Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Michelle Weston, Western Libraries

For more information on how the Libraries manages subscriptions, consult the Subscription Management Glossary and FAQ. For more information on Open Access and the scholarly publishing ecosystem, review the SPARC Open Access page, which includes a downloadable Open Access fact sheet.
Spring 2019 Faculty Survey: Summary of Responses

Executive Summary

In May 2019, the Western Libraries Subscription Task Force conducted a survey of the Western Washington University community to gather feedback on Open Access (OA) and subscription evaluation criteria. The survey, which consisted of 11 questions, was hosted on the Qualtrics survey platform and made available for just over two weeks. Western faculty were notified of the survey via email; the survey was also publicized via department chairs, Senate Library Committee representatives, Western Today, the Libraries news blog, and the Western Libraries’ website. Ultimately, 119 complete responses were received. The responses are moderately representative of the faculty demographics of the university, both in terms of faculty status and college affiliation. A high-level summary of the responses to each section is included here; further analysis can be found in the full report, below.

Open Access: There is a high level of awareness of OA among Western faculty. Faculty have hopes for OA’s potential to increase public access to information, facilitate research, and boost the visibility of faculty publications. At the same time, there are significant concerns around OA publishing fees and the quality of open journals. Many faculty would like to see the university play a greater role in supporting OA through funding (for author fees and in support of open platforms and initiatives), outreach and communications, and revisions to Unit Evaluation Plans and the tenure and promotion process.

Publisher Packages: Responses regarding the importance of nine major journal publishers underscore the difficulties of cancelling large journal packages. Several publishers were marked as “extremely important” by faculty in five or more colleges, including Cambridge, Elsevier, Oxford, Springer, Taylor & Francis, and Wiley.

Evaluation Criteria and Processes: By and large, faculty support the subscription evaluation criteria developed by Libraries personnel and the Western Libraries Subscription Task Force. Criteria that rated particularly well include: dependence of college(s) on a particular resource, availability of a resource via interlibrary loan (ILL), discoverability of a resource in OneSearch, accessibility of the interface, use restrictions or seat limitations, accreditation requirements, use for course reserves, duplication or overlap with other resources, vendor support for Open Access, and the average annual cost increase. Two criteria were less popular among respondents: interdisciplinarity of the resource and the transparency of the vendor’s privacy policies.

Faculty also rated criteria gleaned from a review of the 2015-16 subscription cancellation process. Some of these criteria emerged as being of continued interest, including: resources in which Western faculty publish, relevance for grant-funded projects, resources which Western faculty cite, and affiliation with a professional society. Others were no longer deemed important, such as: Western faculty on editorial board and connection to the Pacific Northwest. Faculty also suggested a few additional criteria.
In terms of feedback processes, respondents favored individual feedback surveys, followed by departmental feedback surveys and department or college visits. Respondents also contributed a variety of other comments to inform the subscription review process and outcomes.

Section 1: Open Access

Q1: How familiar are you with Open Access?

The majority of respondents (82.3%) are at least moderately familiar with Open Access. Faculty with the rank of full or associate professor report the greatest familiarity with Open Access, with over 20 percent of respondents in each group claiming to be “extremely familiar,” and approximately 30 percent of each group claiming to be “very familiar.” Faculty with the status of assistant professor follow closely, with almost 50 percent responding “extremely” or “very familiar.” By discipline, faculty in the sciences report greater familiarity, with just over 60 percent of respondents in both Huxley and CSE selecting “extremely” or “very familiar.” The social sciences and humanities report lower familiarity with Open Access: 20 to 40 percent of respondents in CBE, CFPA, and Woodring report being only “slightly familiar” with Open Access.

Table 1.1: Familiarity with Open Access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Respondents</th>
<th>% Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely familiar</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very familiar</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately familiar</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly familiar</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not familiar at all</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q2: What hopes or concerns do you have about Open Access as it relates to your own research and publication?

Of the 119 respondents, 15 reported having hopes around Open Access, 16 reported concerns, and 50 reported both hopes and concerns.

Sixty-five responded with specific hopes related to Open Access, which included the potential to increase access to information for the public (26 responses) and for researchers (8), share faculty’s own research (11), and lower subscription costs (5) or replace for-profit journals (5). There was also interest in seeing an increase in the implementation of Open Access (9). One NTT noted the importance of Open Access for “independent” scholars not consistently affiliated with a university or other institution providing paid
journal access. The hopes expressed seem to be shared independent of faculty status, with no clear disciplinary patterns (though larger colleges like CSE and CHSS do show a greater variety of hopes expressed). Respondents “extremely familiar” with Open Access do not list replacement of the for-profit model as a hope for Open Access.

Sixty-five faculty also responded with specific concerns related to Open Access, which included the prohibitive burden of Open Access author fees (28 responses), the quality of articles (16), and the lower prestige of open journals (6). Respondents also commented on the lack of viable Open Access options in particular fields and disciplines (6), as well as the potential loss of access to research during any transition toward Open Access (5). Concerns expressed seem to be shared independent of faculty status, with no clear disciplinary patterns (though larger colleges like CSE and CHSS do show a greater variety of concerns expressed). Respondents “extremely familiar” with Open Access do not demonstrate as much concern regarding the quality or prestige of Open Access journals as those less familiar with the model.

Table 2.1: Faculty hopes related to Open Access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>No. Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free access for everyone</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share my research</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase implementation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More access for research</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower cost</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replace journals for profit</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate access</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn more about open access</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for open access fees</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: Faculty concerns related to Open Access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>No. Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of open access fees</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease in quality of articles</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of open access in certain fields</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not as prestigious or useful in achieving tenure and promotion.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of access</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No compensation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercialized / advertising</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of visibility</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2.1: Faculty hopes related to Open Access, by College

Figure 2.2: Faculty hopes related to Open Access, by Faculty Status
Figure 2.3: Faculty hopes related to Open Access, by Familiarity with Open Access

Figure 2.4: Faculty concerns related to Open Access, by College
Q3: Should the university take steps to improve the viability of Open Access venues as publication outlets and resources for your research or teaching? If yes, how?

The majority of respondents (59.8%) indicated that the university should take steps to improve the viability of Open Access. Opinions were consistent independent of faculty status and there were no clear disciplinary patterns; however, as respondents’ familiarity with Open Access increased from “not familiar at all” to “extremely familiar,” the confidence of their answers increased, as well, with fewer “not sure” responses and a corresponding increase in both “yes” and “no” answers.
Of 119 total respondents, 29 provided suggestions for steps the university might take to improve the viability of Open Access. Suggestions included increased financial support for Open Access via author fees and platform support (13 responses), increased outreach and communication (7), revised Unit Evaluation Plans for tenure and promotion (5), and stronger stances in negotiation with publishers (4). There were no clear patterns in responses based on faculty status, discipline, or familiarity with Open Access.

Table 3.1: Faculty opinion regarding university support for Open Access

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3.1: Faculty opinion regarding university support for Open Access, by college

Figure 3.2: Faculty opinion regarding university support for Open Access, by faculty status
Figure 3.3: Faculty opinion regarding university support for Open Access, by familiarity with Open Access

![Bar chart showing faculty opinion regarding university support for Open Access by familiarity with Open Access.](Image)

Table 3.2: Steps the university can take to improve viability of Open Access

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Responses</th>
<th>% Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support OA financially</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach &amp; communication</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise T&amp;P standards</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stronger negotiations</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curation of OA content</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop OA policy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.4: Steps the university can take to improve viability of Open Access, by college

Figure 3.5: Steps the university can take to improve viability of Open Access, by faculty status
Figure 3.6: Steps the university can take to improve viability of Open Access, by familiarity with Open Access
Section 2: Publishers

Q4: Please rate the following journal publishers according to their importance for your subject or discipline.

Based on the number of respondents rating each publisher with a score of 4 or 5 (i.e. more than “somewhat important”), publishers are ranked as follows (most important to least important): Wiley (78 responses), Springer (71), Elsevier (66), Taylor & Francis (65), Sage (50), Oxford (49), Cambridge (38), American Chemical Society (11), and Emerald (2). Based on the number of respondents rating each publisher with a score of 1 or 2 (i.e. less than “somewhat important”), publishers ranked as follows (least important to most important): American Chemical Society (79), Emerald (60), Oxford (25), Sage (24), Cambridge (23), Elsevier (16), Springer (12), Wiley (11), and Taylor & Francis (10).

In comparing these two rankings, some packages emerge favorably, with more high-level ratings than low ratings (Elsevier, Taylor & Francis, Sage, Oxford, Cambridge); some fared unfavorably, with more lower-level ratings than high ratings (Emerald); and some performed ambiguously, with comparable high- and low-level ratings (Wiley, Springer, American Chemical Society). See Figure 4.3 for an illustration of both rankings side-by-side.

When examining the results on a college-by-college basis, it is worth noting that the American Chemical Society is rated Western’s least important journal package by all but CSE. However, almost a third of CSE respondents (and just over a tenth of Huxley respondents) rated American Chemical Society “extremely important.” Both Springer and Taylor & Francis had at least 1 respondent from each college score them as 5 (extremely important), suggesting that those packages have broad importance. On the other hand, Oxford, Emerald, Cambridge, and ACS all had at least 1 respondent from each college score them as 1 (not important at all). ACS and Emerald in particular appear to have more focused importance, rising to the level of “extremely important” primarily in CSE and CBE, respectively.

Emerald was the publisher with which the most respondents seemed unfamiliar—nearly 35% of Emerald’s scores were “not sure.”

There were no discernable patterns based on faculty status, other than a higher rate of NTT faculty responding “not sure.”
Figure 4.1: Faculty ratings of nine major journal packages, absolute values

Figure 4.2: Faculty ratings of nine major journal packages, relative values
Figure 4.3: Comparison of high and low ratings for each major journal package

![Bar chart showing comparison of high and low ratings for major journal packages.](chart)

Table 4.1: Most and least important journal packages, by college

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>No. Respondents</th>
<th>Most important (scores 4-5)</th>
<th>Least important (scores 1-2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBE</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Elsevier, Wiley</td>
<td>American Chemical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFPA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Taylor &amp; Francis</td>
<td>American Chemical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHSS</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Taylor &amp; Francis</td>
<td>American Chemical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSE</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Elsevier, Springer, Wiley</td>
<td>Emerald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairhaven</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sage, Springer</td>
<td>American Chemical Society, Cambridge, Oxford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huxley</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Wiley</td>
<td>American Chemical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodring</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sage</td>
<td>American Chemical Society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.4: Ratings of the American Chemical Society package, by college

Figure 4.5: Ratings of the American Chemical Society package, by faculty status
Figure 4.6: Ratings of the Cambridge package, by college

Figure 4.7: Ratings of the Cambridge package, by faculty status
Figure 4.8: Ratings of the Elsevier package, by college

Figure 4.9: Ratings of the Elsevier package, by faculty status
Figure 4.10: Ratings of the Emerald package, by college

Figure 4.11: Ratings of the Emerald package, by faculty status
Figure 4.12: Ratings of the Oxford package, by college

Figure 4.13: Ratings of the Oxford package, by faculty status
Figure 4.14: Ratings of the Sage package, by college

Figure 4.15: Ratings of the Sage package, by faculty status
Figure 4.16: Ratings of the Springer package, by college

Figure 4.17: Ratings of the Springer package, by faculty status
Figure 4.18: Ratings of the Taylor & Francis package, by college

Figure 4.19: Ratings of the Taylor & Francis package, by faculty status
Figure 4.20: Ratings of the Wiley package, by college

Figure 4.21: Ratings of the Wiley package, by faculty status
Section 3: Evaluation Criteria

Q5: In the past, the Libraries has used cost-per-use as a major component of decision-making. In order to conduct more well-rounded evaluations of our subscriptions, the Libraries plans to incorporate additional criteria moving forward. Please rate the following proposed criteria based on how important you think they are in terms of capturing the value of library subscriptions.

Based on the number of respondents rating each criterion with a score of 4 or 5 (i.e. more than “somewhat important”), criteria are ranked as follows (most important to least important): dependence of individual college(s) on the resource (88 responses); availability via ILL (79); discoverability via OneSearch (68); accessibility of interface (62); use restrictions or seat limitations (59); required for accreditation (58); demonstrated use on course reserves (57); duplication/overlap with other resources (53); vendor commitment to Open Access (53); annual percentage increase (47); interdisciplinarity of resource (45); and transparency of vendor privacy policies (28).

Based on the number of respondents rating each criterion with a score of 1 or 2 (i.e. less than “somewhat important”), criteria are ranked as follows (least important to most important): interdisciplinarity of resource (37 responses); transparency of vendor privacy policies (37); demonstrated use on course reserves (24); accessibility of interface (20); use restrictions or seat limitations (18); duplication/overlap with other resources (17); annual percentage increase (16); discoverability via OneSearch (16); vendor commitment to Open Access (15); required for accreditation (15); availability via ILL (9); and dependence of individual college(s) on the resource (4).

In comparing these two rankings, most criteria emerge strongly, with more high-level ratings than low ratings. There are, however, a few exceptions. The criteria “interdisciplinarity” and “vendor privacy policies” show a more even distribution between respondents in favor and respondents against. See Figure 5.1 for an illustration of both rankings side-by-side.

Comparing these criteria to those rated in Q6 (below), there are several Q6 criteria that rate competitively against the criteria listed here, in Q5. If the criteria from both questions are collated, four Q6 criteria emerge in the top ten: resource in which Western faculty publish (68 responses); use for grant-funded projects (64); resource cited by Western faculty (62); and affiliation with a professional society (59). More analysis of these criteria is included with Q6, below.
Figure 5.1: Comparison of high and low ratings for each evaluation criterion
Figure 5.2: Ratings of “annual increase”

Figure 5.3: Ratings of “annual increase,” by college

Figure 5.4: Ratings of “annual increase,” by faculty status
Figure 5.5: Ratings of “dependence of individual college(s) on resource”

Figure 5.6: Ratings of “dependence of individual college(s) on resource,” by college

Figure 5.7: Ratings of “dependence of individual college(s) on resource,” by faculty status
Figure 5.8: Ratings of “interdisciplinarity of resource”

Figure 5.9: Ratings of “interdisciplinarity of resource,” by college

Figure 5.10: Ratings of “interdisciplinarity of resource,” by faculty status
Figure 5.11: Ratings of “vendor privacy policies”

Figure 5.12: Ratings of “vendor privacy policies,” by college

Figure 5.13: Ratings of “vendor privacy policies,” by faculty status
Figure 5.14: Ratings of “duplication/overlap”

Figure 5.15: Ratings of “duplication/overlap,” by college

Figure 5.16: Ratings of “duplication/overlap,” by faculty status
Figure 5.17: Ratings of “accessibility of interface”

Figure 5.18: Ratings of “accessibility of interface,” by college

Figure 5.19: Ratings of “accessibility of interface,” by faculty status
Figure 5.20: Ratings of “use restrictions/seat limitations”

Figure 5.21: Ratings of “use restrictions/seat limitations,” by college

Figure 5.22: Ratings of “use restrictions/seat limitations,” by faculty status
Figure 5.23: Ratings of “use for course reserves”

Figure 5.24: Ratings of “use for course reserves,” by college

Figure 5.25: Ratings of “use for course reserves,” by faculty status
Figure 5.26: Ratings of “vendor commitment to Open Access”

Figure 5.27: Ratings of “vendor commitment to Open Access,” by college

Figure 5.28: Ratings of “vendor commitment to Open Access,” by faculty status
Figure 5.29: Ratings of “required for accreditation”

Figure 5.30: Ratings of “required for accreditation,” by college

Figure 5.31: Ratings of “required for accreditation,” by faculty status
Figure 5.35: Ratings of “discoverability via OneSearch”

Figure 5.36: Ratings of “discoverability via OneSearch,” by college

Figure 5.37: Ratings of “discoverability via OneSearch,” by faculty status
Q6: During the 2015-16 subscription review process, other potential evaluation criteria emerged from faculty feedback. Please rate the following proposed criteria based on how important you think they are in terms of capturing the value of library subscriptions.

Based on the number of respondents rating each criterion with a score of 4 or 5 (i.e. more than “somewhat important”), criteria are ranked as follows (most important to least important): resource in which Western faculty publish (68 responses); use for grant-funded projects (64); resource cited by Western faculty (62); affiliation with a professional society (59); relevance to marginalized groups/identities (50); Western faculty on editorial board (22); and connection to the Pacific Northwest (14).

Based on the number of respondents rating each criterion with a score of 1 or 2 (i.e. less than “somewhat important”), criteria are ranked as follows (least important to most important): connection to the Pacific Northwest (71 responses); Western faculty on editorial board (66); relevance to marginalized groups/identities (33); resource cited by Western faculty (22); resource in which Western faculty publish (22); affiliation with a professional society (20); and use for grant-funded projects (11).

In comparing these two rankings, about half of the criteria emerge strongly, with more high-level ratings than low ratings. There are, however, a few exceptions. The criteria “Western faculty on editorial board” and “connection to the Pacific Northwest” are both rated unimportant more frequently than they are rated important. See Figure 6.1 for an illustration of both rankings side-by-side.

Comparing these criteria to those rated in Q5 (above), there are several Q6 criteria that rate competitively against the criteria listed above, in Q5. If the criteria from both questions are collated, four Q6 criteria emerge in the top ten: Resource in which Western faculty publish (68 responses); use for grant-funded projects (64); resource cited by Western faculty (62); and affiliation with a professional society (59).
Figure 6.1: Comparison of high and low ratings for each evaluation criterion
Figure 6.2: Ratings of “connection to the Pacific Northwest”

Figure 6.3: Ratings of “connection to the Pacific Northwest,” by college

Figure 6.4: Ratings of “connection to the Pacific Northwest,” by faculty status
Figure 6.5: Ratings of “relevance to marginalized groups/identities”

Figure 6.6: Ratings of “relevance to marginalized groups/identities,” by college

Figure 6.7: Ratings of “relevance to marginalized groups/identities,” by faculty status
Figure 6.8: Ratings of “impact on grant-funded projects”

Figure 6.9: Ratings of “impact on grant-funded projects,” by college

Figure 6.10: Ratings of “impact on grant-funded projects,” by faculty status
Figure 6.11: Ratings of “resource cited by Western faculty”

Figure 6.12: Ratings of “resource cited by Western faculty,” by college

Figure 6.13: Ratings of “resource cited by Western faculty,” by faculty status
Figure 6.14: Ratings of “connection to professional society”

Figure 6.15: Ratings of “connection to professional society,” by college

Figure 6.16: Ratings of “connection to professional society,” by faculty status
Figure 6.17: Ratings of “Western faculty on editorial board”

Figure 6.18: Ratings of “Western faculty on editorial board,” by college

Figure 6.19: Ratings of “Western faculty on editorial board,” by faculty status
Figure 6.20: Ratings of “resource in which Western faculty publish”

Figure 6.21: Ratings of “resource in which Western faculty publish,” by college

Figure 6.22: Ratings of “resource in which Western faculty publish,” by faculty status
Q7: Are there other criteria the Libraries should use to evaluate subscriptions?

Twenty-six individual faculty responded to this question with a total of 32 suggestions. There were no discernable patterns based on college or faculty status.

Table 7.1: Criteria proposed by faculty for evaluating e-resource subscriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Criterion</th>
<th>No. Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty research</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact factor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities support</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8: We are open to a wide range of processes and feedback mechanisms. What would be your preferred methods for contributing feedback to future subscription review processes?

Respondents showed a strong preference for “individual feedback via surveys,” with 79 percent selecting that option (94 responses). Roughly 30 percent also selected “departmental feedback via surveys” and “departmental visits.” A much smaller percentage—approximately 15 percent—selected “open forums” and “focus groups.” One respondent suggested “other: individual feedback via conversation.”

All colleges demonstrate a preference for “individual feedback via surveys,” followed by “department visits.” One exception is CSE, where respondents favored “departmental feedback via surveys” over department visits. Similarly, individual feedback was the top choice across all faculty statuses; however, NTT faculty and assistant professors selected departmental surveys over visits, while associate and full professors favored departmental visits over surveys.

11 Age of journal (1); cost of copyright violations (1); curricular relevance (1); degree of bundling required by vendor (1); ILLiad requests (1); international perspectives (1); junior faculty support (1); recruitment and retention (1); unique articles accessed (1); use per faculty (1); use through SciHub (1); vendor ethics (1)
Figure 8.1: Faculty preferences with regard to feedback mechanisms

Figure 8.2: Faculty preferences with regard to feedback mechanisms, by college
Figure 8.3: Faculty preferences with regard to feedback mechanisms, by faculty status
Q9: What else would you like the Libraries to keep in mind as we move forward with a subscription review and any ensuing publisher negotiations?

Forty-five faculty responded to this query with a total of 69 suggestions. Common themes included the impact of cancellations on scholarship and grants (9 responses), support for Open Access (6), the importance of interlibrary loan as an alternative to subscriptions (5), the need to partner with other universities (4), the need for improved communications (3), and critiques of cost-per-use as an evaluation metric. Suggestions in the “other” category included concerns about the impact of cancellations on NTT faculty, comments about the library’s search engine (OneSearch), concerns about cuts to the book budget, and the need to differentiate between large corporate publishers and small professional societies, among others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>CBE</th>
<th>CFPA</th>
<th>CHSS</th>
<th>CSE</th>
<th>Huxley</th>
<th>Woodring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal subscription cuts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supportive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>against</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about impact on scholarship, grants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supportive</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>critical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlibrary loan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insufficient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for task force</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnering with other universities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication/survey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lacking</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism of cost per use metric</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journals, not publishers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 4: Respondent Demographics

Q10: University status

The survey received 119 complete responses (an approximately 10-15% response rate). Of these, 32.8 percent were assistant professors, 25.2 percent were associate professors, 11.8 percent were NTT faculty, and 30.3 percent were full professors. While not exactly proportionate to the full faculty population at Western, the responses are reasonably representative (with the exception of NTT faculty, who are significantly underrepresented among the survey responses).

Figure 10.1: Responses by faculty status

Figure 10.2: University faculty by faculty status
Q11: Departmental affiliation

Responses distributed across colleges as follows: CHSS (40.5%), CSE (25.9%), Huxley (13.8%), Woodring (8.6%), CBE (5.2%), CFPA (3.4%), Fairhaven (1.7%), and the Libraries (0.9%). Compared to the broader composition of university faculty, smaller colleges are slightly overrepresented, while CHSS and CSE are slightly underrepresented.

Figure 11.1: Responses by college affiliation

![Figure 11.1](image1)

Figure 11.2: University faculty by college affiliation

![Figure 11.2](image2)
Appendix F: Annotated Bibliography of Additional Resources

http://www.pnas.org/content/111/26/9425.abstract

Comparison of subscription prices charged by for-profit and nonprofit publishers. Illustrates the complexity of journal package pricing, including a range of price variations that “cannot be explained by university characteristics such as enrollment and PhD production.”

https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0vf2k2p0

Analysis of server log files from several major publishers, to determine to what extent COUNTER reports inflate download statistics. Findings suggest that most major publishers’ statistics are inflated, sometimes substantially, and that libraries should request server logs from publishers whenever possible in order to review and clean the data in-house.


The Big 10 Academic Alliance posted this notification describing the problem of publisher inflation and reduced purchasing power of libraries/universities. Also highlights some of the work the Big 10 is doing to offset some of the financial pressure, including a reliance on resource sharing and the negotiating power of their consortia.


Latest edition of an annual analysis of the periodicals price landscape. Includes a brief economic overview, discipline-specific data on publishing and pricing trends, and a brief section on Open Access.


Article describing the current serials crisis, including the development of today’s publisher models and the history of Elsevier.

Cornell Faculty Senate Resolution. Resolution Regarding the University Library’s Policies on Serials Acquisitions, with Special Reference to Negotiations with Elsevier.
Cornell faculty resolution from 2004 that outlines the unsustainability of large journal packages, particularly the Elsevier big deal. Worth noting that at the time, Cornell described being “perceived as assuming a leadership role in these matters,” and that “faculty at some other major universities [had] endorsed or [were] considering endorsing resolutions designed to address, in varying ways, this same set of issues.” Provides a sobering reminder that the current buzz surrounding the University of California will not itself lead to change unless libraries go beyond what was done following Cornell’s cancellation in 2004.


In 2004, Cornell University issued a faculty senate resolution that describes a “crisis in the cost of journals in the sciences and social sciences” that are unsustainable, due in large part to “the growing commercialization of scholarly publishing.” This interview captures the perspective of Ross Atkinson, associate university for collections at Cornell at the time.


Summary table of average journal pricing from 2011-2015, by type of library and US versus non-US journal titles. Demonstrates clearly that even the lowest price increases--typically received by public libraries--exceed the Consumer Price Index, while increases for academic libraries routinely exceed 5.5 percent.


Another overview/reaction to the UC System’s Elsevier decision. This one includes reactions from other libraries, including Kansas, and how they plan to model their communication strategy and university engagement on UC’s example.


Summary of the journal package ecosystem as of 2001. Useful as an indicator of how long libraries have been grappling with these issues.


Analysis of the consolidation of scientific output, showing that five publishers (including Reed-Elsevier, Wiley-Blackwell, Springer, and Taylor & Francis) account for more than 50 percent of all papers published in 2013. In 1973, the top five publishers accounted for just 20 percent of all papers.

Summary of the immediate aftermath of the University of California’s decision to end negotiations with Elsevier. Focuses in particular on other universities’ reactions and the potential impact on other journal package negotiations across the U.S.

Plan S: https://www.coalition-s.org

The website of Plan S, an “initiative for Open Access publishing…. Supported by cOAlition S, an international consortium of research funders. Plan S requires that, from 2020, scientific publications that result from research funded by public grants must be published in compliant Open Access journals or platforms.”


Short article describing a 2012 memo from Harvard Library, calling for faculty to publish open access and “resign from publications that keep articles behind paywalls.” Highlights the far-reaching implications of the serials crisis: “There’s always been a problem with this being seen as a library budget issue…. It’s bigger than that. It’s at the heart of education and research. If you can’t get access to the literature, it hurts research.”

SHERPA/Romeo: http://sherpa.mimas.ac.uk/romeo/index.php

An online tool that allows the public to quickly and easily determine what permissions are normally included in a publisher’s copyright transfer agreement. Users can search by journal title, ISSN, publisher, or keyword. Useful as a tool for choosing where to publish, as well as for determining to what extent works can be distributed once they have been published in a given journal.

SPARC Big Deal Cancellation Tracking: https://sparcopen.org/our-work/big-deal-cancellation-tracking/

Website maintained by the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) that lists universities and other organizations that have cancelled major journal packages. The list includes the date of the cancellation, the package that was cancelled, some contextual information, a brief summary of the outcome, and the estimated annual savings (if known). The list is actively maintained, with cancellations through 2019. Also includes a bibliography of relevant readings.


Article describing a database-driven website used by the University of Alaska Fairbanks to collect faculty feedback on cancellations.


Back to top

96


Declaration by a University of California Academic Senate body endorsing a set of 18 principles to guide journal negotiations. Includes a copy of the principles themselves. These documents provided the ideological underpinning for the UC system’s decision to end negotiations with publishing giant Elsevier.


Working paper that explores the nature of e-journal usage statistics, including comparisons across disciplines and publishers. Findings suggest that “the download statistics currently supplied by publishers may not be sufficiently reliable to allow libraries to make subscription decisions based on... reported downloads, without making an adjustment for these publisher effects.” One takeaway could be a need to rely on other metrics in addition to usage statistics.


Overview in The Atlantic of the UC System walking away from an Elsevier contract that includes discussion of Elsevier’s (although not unique to Elsevier) business model that is “extremely profitable.” There have been pushes toward open access for years but UC’s move as well as similar moves in Germany, Sweden, and Hungary as well as Europe’s new “Plan S” feel like changes might really be possible and gaining some traction. Issue is not framed as a library problem or a budget problem but is described by UC Berkeley’s university librarian as an issue that “affects the progress of science in society and the advancement of humanity.”