

Overview of Scholarly Communication Issues

Members of the Faculty Senate Library Committee are presenting a series of articles discussing scholarly communication. Last year the Task Force on Scholarly Communication issued a report to the Faculty Senate that documented the threats to “an open and sustainable system of scholarly communication” (http://oregonstate.edu/dept/senate/committees/other/tfosc/final_report/).

This series of articles will expand on the work of the Task Force by continuing the public dialogue about this critical issue affecting campuses worldwide. The first article, by Joe Kerkvliet, describes the extensive cost comparisons documented by leading economists and provides links to work that the Task Force and Library Committee have been doing comparing the cost of non-profit and commercial journals in which OSU researchers have been publishing. When subscription and cost per page data are compared the results are both enlightening and sometimes surprising. Building on this comparison research, Molly Engle and Alexis Walker address the uses and misuses of the journal impact factor. They provide a coherent definition of impact factors and explain the conditions that go into journal impact calculations.

Open Access journals have been widely touted as a new model for peer-reviewed scholarly publication which offers an alternative to high-priced commercial journals. Learn more about this and how it may offer new publishing opportunities in Michael Witbeck’s article, the third in our series. The final article will describe the ScholarsArchive@OSU (<http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/dspace/index.jsp>), the campus repository which provides a venue for dissemination and long term conservation of digital scholarship. Michael Boock and Melodie Putnam will provide an update on campus efforts to address scholarly communication on a local level but with national and international implications. Additional information on the cost of journals, including cost comparisons for specific scientific fields can be found at the OSU Library Web site at http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/scholarly_communication/.

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