

## DRAFT

### Systemwide Library and Scholarly Information Advisory Committee

#### Resolution G: Digital Library Journal Collecting Principles

**Resolved:** *The Committee advises that the CDL and UC libraries, in close consultation with the faculty, pursue an aggressive approach in negotiating with publishers whose titles and packages are excessively priced. To align costs with value, UC libraries should initiate a Systemwide review of these publishers' contracts even if it leads to canceling access to some journals in some formats in order to assure funding is available to support other higher quality and cost effective scholarly materials. It is in the long-term interest of the University and the scholarly community to selectively support high quality publications.*

**Background:** The University libraries face financial constraints due to a dismal State budget situation and the ever-escalating prices of journals. Systemwide licensing of electronic journals is the current primary strategy for sharing the journal literature among campuses. This strategy has been successful; among the benefits are cumulative "savings" through multi-year inflation caps that approach \$1 million over 3-4 years for all publishers. In other words, without these agreements the University would have spent an additional \$1 million for journals or would have further reduced titles available to each campus. There are currently nearly 9,000 electronic journals in the shared UC collection. With a total investment of about \$20 million, ongoing subscriptions and their escalating costs have now become a serious threat to the libraries' ability to flexibly manage their acquisitions and adjust their expenditures. Many large publishers want UC to license packages of electronic journals. These packages include high quality titles of relevance to UC academic programs as well as some mediocre titles. Due to historical investments in print journals that have in many cases determined the cost of our digital licenses, the cost of some of the UC packages is considerably higher than what is charged to other institutions. To manage our expenditures and focus on acquiring relevant, high-quality publications, particularly from professional societies, UC will need to convince publishers to lower their prices or to unbundle their offerings to allow us to select among their titles, or be prepared to cancel the package subscriptions entirely.

Faculty members and researchers have become increasingly dependent on around-the-clock, remote electronic access to journals. Having greater freedom to drop titles that are not well used by scholars, or to acquire in only the lowest-cost format, and using the money to purchase other high quality publications will serve the University well, but the stakes are high, as faculty have become used to immediate access to large numbers of digital journals. However, flexibility is essential in assuring that UC money is used to purchase the highest quality of journals first and other journals only as funds permit.