<h1 style="text-align:center">Scholarly Communications: Planning and Action for Sustainability</h1>
<p style="text-align:center">DRAFT 11/14/03</p>

Introduction

There is widespread agreement[1] and a wealth of supporting data[2] for the proposition that the current model for scholarly communication is not sustainable. Three factors combine to create and fuel the model's dysfunction:

1. The cost of scholarly publications is – and has been - rising at rates that are several times higher than inflation.
2. The number of scholarly publications of all forms is – and has been – increasing exponentially.
3. University budgets, and library budgets in particular, are remaining relatively flat when adjusted for inflation, even as collection and service expectations rise.

While the unsustainable factors have been operating for some time, they have been brought into sharp focus at the University of California due to several recent events and trends:

- the current California state budget crisis and the direct diminution of UC library purchasing power and resources available for service development;
- the emergence of computer and network-based alternative publications that have the potential for experimental reconfiguration of one or more elements of the traditional model;
- increased communication with and understanding by UC's faculty of the traditional model, its unsustainable elements, and their role and power as the primary stakeholders in scholarly communication.

Refreshing Strategic Planning and Action

As reported elsewhere, concerted action by the UC libraries individually and collectively has been able to mitigate or disguise the impact of the trends.[3] Specifically, methods for licensing or purchasing material as a 10-campus system have led to volume discounts, especially on electronic resources; leveraging facilities and technology to increase extensive sharing of materials has provided access to resources held at a distance from a researcher's home campus; and disciplined negotiations have yielded concessions in pricing and licensing terms. However, significant yield from these actions is unlikely to continue. It certainly cannot continue to compensate for the combined effects of the unsustainable trends mentioned above.

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[1] Within UC agreement has existed at high levels since at least 1997. See, for example, the *Library Planning and Action Initiative ADVISORY Task Force Final Report* at http://www.slp.ucop.edu/initiatives/lpai.htm.

[2] Data is cited or referenced at the UC libraries' web site *Reshaping Scholarly Communication* (http://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/scholarly).

[3] See *Advances In Resource Sharing And Systemwide Library Service At The University Of California* at http://www.slp.ucop.edu/documents/Expanded_Progress_Report.pdf

With the characteristics of the crisis well known and documented, with declining return on current compensatory tactics, and with the UC community as a whole engaged, now is the time to review the extant strategies for creating change and to consider new ones. It is time to refresh planning and action that will create sustainable acquisition and management of scholarly materials in support of UC's research, teaching, and public service missions.

Existing Strategies
1. **Information and communication** - Strategic planning and action depends upon deep and shared understanding of the environment and its stakeholders. The UC community has established several rich methods and streams of communication about the scholarly communication crisis in general and at UC. Most recently, web sites at several campuses, the new UC Libraries site, meetings and communiqués with faculty regarding negotiations with commercial journal publishers, and faculty seminars co-developed with faculty senate leadership have successfully engaged the UC community.

2. **Deep resource sharing -** The successes of the 25 year old strategy of sharing resources has been well-documented.[4] The potential for leveraging and extending that strategy is under active discussion within UC, with a focus on shared [print] collections and deeper collaboration on shared services. Disciplined and collective negotiation for commercial digital content – and the infrastructure to support collective negotiation - is a prominent component of deep resource sharing, but the resulting volume discounts and price caps can be characterized as buying time rather than ultimate solutions to the unsustainable economics of scholarly communication.

3. **Supplementary and alternative forms of scholarly communication -** Several new models for disseminating scholarship have emerged and are being deployed. The UC libraries and the UC Press have provided organizational and technical support for scholar-led explorations of these models at UC, particularly with the eScholarship program. Institutional and disciplinary repositories of scholarly material, open-access journals, and other reconfigurations of the traditional system have an immediate, but localized impact. They net affect is likely to accrue to significant levels only over the long term.

Potential strategies and tactics
A list of starting points for revised and additional planning and action, informed by the results of all of the above, could include:

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[4] *New models of library service: deep resource sharing and collaboration at the University of California* at
http://www.slp.ucop.edu/documents/newmodelsoflibraryservice4-17-03.pdf

1. **Assess the impact and sustainability of existing strategies** – analyze what has been done, refresh and refine existing tactics.

2. **Create decision-support data and mechanisms** – assemble and filter data for informed stakeholder action (e.g. price-value metrics for faculty decisions on where to publish; templates for action).

3. **Create/facilitate new stakeholder partnerships** – reduce relative isolation of stakeholder groups; create stakeholder working groups organized by substantive issue (e.g. intellectual property; quality and impact assessments; promotion/tenure; new business models) or by action perspective (informing; building new organizational/administrative infrastructure; building new academic conventions; researching/analyzing new modes).

4. **Create an applied research agenda** –
   a. Survey faculty and other stakeholders about attitudes and readiness to change
   b. Deepen understanding of the costs associated with writing, editing, reviewing scholarship
   c. Experiment with redistributing the costs and subsidies of scholarly publication (subsidize first monographs, subsidize open access publication, etc.)
   d. Create new, better metrics for determining the value of scholarly resources to UC

5. **Identify institutional viewpoints and support** -
   a. Assert institutional principles with regard to the production and dissemination of knowledge
   b. Decrease (share) the (financial; "front line") burden faced by the libraries
   c. Create platforms (organizational, technical, etc.) to support journal start ups or migrations
   d. Identify, promulgate "templates" for action (resigning from editorial boards, refusing to author, etc.)
   e. Reposition UC Press to compete and house refugee journals
   f. Identify a "utility infrastructure" to support lower costs and publishing alternatives