

## Draft

### Scholarly Communication Support from UC

A draft letter from SLASIAC to the Provost

June 28, 2013, Rev. Oct. 8, 2013, Rev. Oct. 17, 2013

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Like many sectors of higher education, the area of scholarly publishing is undergoing dramatic changes. Libraries, in particular, must continue to support existing modes of academic communication as well as explore new models. The **open access** model has begun to earn wide-spread acceptance in many fields, but it's not yet clear how the UC Libraries can best support their constituents, explore the options, and continue to be leaders in this area.

At its June 10, 2013, meeting the Systemwide Library and Scholarly Information Advisory Committee agreed that funding to support scholarly communication at the University of California is of the utmost importance. As the advisory committee to the Provost on scholarly communication, SLASIAC applauds the support that has been approved for the California Digital Library to implement the UC Open Access Policy, and recommends that the Provost provide continued investment in new modes of scholarly communication.

In their responses to the proposed UC Open Access Policy, the faculty requested increased "institutional support" from UC to help them effect positive change within the scholarly communication system. The Libraries and CDL are already supporting the faculty in various ways as they try out new models of scholarly communication. In 2012, campus libraries set up pilot programs that were seed-funded by the CDL, with matching funds added by the campuses to help pay open access costs. The funds were made available to defray the charges faced by UC authors who wished to make their research findings freely available via open access publications, including article processing charges (APCs), open access monograph and electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) payments, open data archiving fees and other open access fees.

Other ways that the UC Libraries assist faculty in their efforts to support alternative publishing options is through participation in open access memberships from publishers such as BioMedCentral, PLoS, and Nucleic Acids Research. At Berkeley, the library has entered into a partnership with PeerJ, a new peer-reviewed, open access journal in the biological, medical and health sciences. Under the terms of this partnership, when a paper by a Berkeley author is accepted for publication in PeerJ, the Berkeley library will automatically pay the cost of a Basic Membership for each Berkeley author. That membership will allow authors to publish one PeerJ article every year, for life, for free.

Of course, UC already supports **eScholarship**, UC's open access publisher and institutional repository. eScholarship serves as the default repository for UC scholars for complying with UC's open access policy requirements, and is a vital part of UC's open access strategy.

The above examples represent some of the work being done by the UC libraries in support of open access, but there is more to be explored. Some possible investment opportunities include a study of what a scholarly communications system would look like if authors and/or institutions routinely paid for

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immediate open access. Other options might be to subsidize faculty publication charges in open access journals to a greater degree, or provide open access to data that are part of research publications. Disciplinary differences will mean differing types of support across academic fields. Work has already started on exploring new metrics to evaluate quality and reach of scholarly publications, but the area is still new. Expansion of eScholarship's open access publishing capabilities is another potential option for future investment. As you noted in your letter to the Academic Senate on May 6, work has begun on several of these fronts. UC Davis and the CDL have applied for grant funding to continue research into open access fees, and the OA matching fund pilot program will be evaluated this year.

As the Libraries and CDL work with the faculty to explore and better define the needs of working in an open access publishing environment, we encourage you to engage in the issues and advocate for appropriate funding to ensure UC's leadership. SLASIAC member and UC Davis Professor of Law and Science and Technology Studies Mario Biagioli noted: "the introduction of the OA policy is a game changer that will trigger more changes.... UC needs to stay on top of this, not just go with the flow." SLASIAC members bring a range of academic and scholarly perspectives and are prepared to provide you with informed opinions and advice on these issues.