Atkins Library Open Access Publishing Whitepaper

What is Open Access Publishing

Academic publishing as we know it began in the seventeenth century. It is now a multi-billion dollar industry. The traditional method of academic publishing remains the standard for most authors: an author writes an article, the author publishes the article in a traditional academic journal, and academic libraries pay journal publishers for access to the journal containing said article. The article is then only available to members of institutions that subscribe to the journal containing the article, with many publisher license agreements limiting article sharing (Interlibrary Loan) within an institution's home country or around the world.

Academic journals began moving from print to electronic format in the late twentieth century, and many believed this shift would render traditional academic publishing obsolete. Scholarly research could be published and disseminated using the Internet, and the costs for typesetting and printing would be unnecessary. Academic publishers took advantage of the new publishing landscape and started making their journals available electronically on their proprietary platforms and bundling them with existing print subscriptions. Even after publishers and libraries dropped subscriptions to the print version of journals, costs continued to increase. Publishers packaged large amounts of online content, making it available to libraries that were previously unable to provide the same content in print. They added special features, including powerful search systems and detailed MARC records making their content more easily discoverable in library catalogs. These publishers continuously increased the cost of these packages, which came to be known as "big deals".

Much has been written about the high cost of academic journals and the impact this has had on the scholarly communications landscape[1]. Academic journals have become increasingly expensive in recent decades, while library budgets have faced steep cuts, resulting in what

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[1] "Crisis in Scholarly Publishing: Executive Summary," Stephen Boyd and Andrew Herkovic: https://web.archive.org/web/19991001233828/http://www.stanford.edu/~boyd/schol_pub_crisis.html; "The Serials Crisis Revisited," Dana L. Roth, The Serials Librarian: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J123v18n01_09; "Open Access and the Serials Crisis: The Role of Academic Libraries," Sarah Jurchen, Technical Services Quarterly: https://doi.org/10.1080/07317131.2020.1728136

became known as the "serials crisis". This crisis impacts the scholarly communications landscape in that it forces libraries to make hard decisions about their journal subscriptions, often resulting in lack of access to journals that are much needed for academic research. As sole source providers, academic publishers can charge whatever price they deem appropriate for journals they publish.

The traditional model for scholarly publishing is no longer sustainable for several reasons, including the cost for libraries to license materials, paywalls limiting access to materials only to subscribing institutions, and increasingly restrictive interlibrary loan policies making it harder to share materials. Universities and research institutions that can afford the most expensive journals employ the faculty who publish in these journals, thus limiting what research is disseminated. As stated in Judith Panitch and Sarah Michalak's seminal white paper on the serials crisis, "The system as we know it is broken to the point that we can no longer carry out the daily business of the university. But there is also an ethical dimension to the discussion, for what we are talking about most fundamentally is access to information."[2] Open Access emerged out of this crisis as a potential solution to this financial and ethical problem. Open Access is defined by SPARC as, "the free, immediate, online availability of research articles coupled with the rights to use these articles fully in the digital environment."[3]

There are two main types of open access publishing: Gold Open Access and Green Open Access. Gold Open Access is the model whereby an article is published in an Open Access journal. There are two different types of Gold Open Access Journals: a) Fully Open Access journals where all articles are freely available to read and download and b) Hybrid Open Access Journals, where some articles are open access while others still require a paid subscription to access. Hybrid Open Access Journals are usually journals that used to be subscription based but many traditional publishers decided to provide an option to publish open access due to mandates that were created through funding organizations. To publish open access in a journal, authors often have to pay an Article Process Charge (APC) ranging from $400 - $5,000, depending on the journal. This can set up an additional barrier for open access, but many libraries have tried to offset these costs by creating funds from collection budgets, paying membership fees to publishers that include author APC discounts, or negotiating the cost of APCs into journal packages. The ultimate goal is for all articles to be open with each research institution paying for the cost of publishing articles written by researchers on their campus.

Green Open Access allows a researcher to place the preprint of their published article in an institutional repository (IR) housed either in the university library or through a research organization. At UNC Charlotte we recently established our own institutional repository called Niner Commons[4]. In order to publish the preprint in the institutional repository, it is necessary for the author to get permission to do so from the journal publisher. This is usually negotiated in the author agreement but as IRs have become more prevalent and universities have become more

[2] https://ils.unc.edu/courses/2019_fall/inls700_001/Readings/Panitch2005-SerialsCrisis.htm
[3] https://sparcopen.org/open-access/
[4] https://ninercommons.uncc.edu/

insistent on deposit, many publishers have included language allowing this in their standard author contracts.

Whether an article is published as Gold or Green, the research is made openly available to a wide variety of readers who can use this research as part of their work. This can lead to more researchers being able to make scholarly contributions to different areas of study, increase the researchers' audience, and lift the burden paywalls have placed on scholarly communication.

Supporting Open Access Publishing

Atkins Library approved an Open Access Publishing Statement in April 2019.[5] The Statement affirms the Library's commitment to educating the campus community on Open Access (OA) publishing and states the importance of OA publishing for the overall scholarly communications ecosystem. In addition, the Library engages in campus outreach and education through events such as Open Access Week and the creation of infographics.[6]

APC Funding

The burden of paying APCs need not fall entirely on the researcher intending to publish in an OA journal. In 2014, Atkins Library started an [Open Access Publishing Fund](https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing/grants-funding)[7] to help faculty and graduate students pay the APCs often associated with open access publishing. If unable to secure funds elsewhere, a faculty member can apply for one award annually of up to $1,000 for a single article that has been submitted to an Open Access journal that meets certain criteria. Since the inception of the fund, the library has provided over 65 grants, spending over $70,000, for article processing charges in support of open access publishing.

A researcher's department might fund APCs and some funding agencies allow researchers to include APCs in grant proposals. Information on funding agencies can be found on Atkin's [Grants & Funding](https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing/grants-funding) page.[8]

Niner Commons & Institutional Repositories

In 2019 Atkins Library launched Niner Commons, the campus's institutional repository. Niner Commons provides a venue for students, faculty, and staff at UNC Charlotte to share their academic output. The materials deposited in Niner Commons include preprint, postprint, and publisher versions of journal articles. The author must determine what, if any, version of their article can be placed in Niner Commons and the Library can assist with this determination by helping authors review the copyright for materials and author agreements prior to or after publication. Prior to publishing, the Atkins Library's Copyright and Licensing Librarian answers questions related to the copyright policies of journals and provides example language for use in author agreements to enable the author to deposit a version of their article into Niner Commons.

[5] https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing/open-access-publishing-statement
[6] https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing
[7] https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing/grants-funding
[8] https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing/grants-funding

Even if a published version of an article cannot be deposited in Niner Commons, placing a preprint version in the repository benefits the author by making their research more widely available, even if the final version of the article is published in a journal with a paywall.

Journal Editors Support OA

In contrast to the "author pays" APC model, still other journals have moved to (or have always relied on) a fully free, open access model, with few or none of the publication costs shifted to the individual author. This model has the greatest potential to create meaningful impacts on both library subscription budgets and open access to scholarship. A number of highly regarded journals currently employ this fully free and open model.

[Glossa](#)[9] is an example of a journal that switched from a subscription based journal to a fully free and open model. They are able to provide this with financial support from research institutions and universities. [SCOAP3](#)[10] is a consortium effort to make more research open. They negotiate agreements with publishers wherein after a number of libraries pay for the subscription, the content of those subscriptions becomes open access. In these examples, funding is provided by the research institutions to facilitate open scholarship rather than supporting publisher profits. If more institutions can partner to make the most out of their budgets and purchasing power, more content can be made open for the benefit of their researchers and the world.

Atkins Library also offers support for OA journal and monograph publishing to faculty interested in starting a journal or unable to find an open access publishing option for a book. The Library provides guidance for launching an OA journal and software to support submission, double blind peer review, and hosting of published articles. The Library also offers a platform to publish ebooks that can be accessed and downloaded by any user.

Faculty Support for OA publishing

Faculty can play an equally important role in supporting OA publishing by being thoughtful about where and how they publish and ensuring their work is open access whenever possible. The simplest way to support OA is to select a fully open access journal to publish in and deposit a copy of the published work in Niner Commons. In doing so, the article is immediately and widely available to the world. Before submitting an article to a journal, faculty should review the publisher's policies on the journal's website or use [Sherpa Romeo](#)[11] to determine if the journal is fully open access. Faculty can also use the [Pathways to Open Access Article Publishing](#)[12] flowchart to identify points at which OA should be considered in the article creation and publication process.

We recognize that selecting a fully OA journal is not always possible. However, faculty can still take steps to ensure the articles they publish have some level of open accessibility for readers.

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[9] https://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=22162
[10] https://scoap3.org/what-is-scoap3/
[11] https://v2.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/
[12] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PXEexrdHmjH9oKTs75BwQPMK0RhYh5_V/view?usp=sharing

The first step is to review the author agreement of any journals you publish in and ensure it allows self archiving in an institutional repository. Ideally, the agreement should allow the final, published version to be deposited into an IR like Niner Commons. If depositing the published version is not allowed, authors can ensure a pre or postprint version can be deposited or inquire if an embargo can be used, which would allow the published version to be placed in the IR but not visible to the public until a certain amount of time has passed. To aid faculty in understanding copyright and author agreements, the Library has a Copyright and Licensing Librarian available to offer consultations and guidance.

Framework for Future Progress

After years of intermittent advocacy of open access publishing, UNC Charlotte falls behind in our efforts compared to other universities, who have embraced a more open publishing model that goes beyond encouragement and advocacy. There are a few initiatives in particular that universities have taken in order to increase adoption of and participation in open access publishing including mandating faculty publish either in a gold open access journal or depositing a preprint in the university's institutional repository, negotiating transformative deals with large publishers to include the cost of article processing charges for the universities authors who publish the articles open access as part of the contract, and providing significant funding to cover the cost of APCs or support to open collections. Below are some examples of programs that have engaged in these initiatives to help accelerate the move to open access and what they have done to be successful.

Successful Open Access Mandates

OA mandates have been in place at a variety of institutions for over a decade (see Appendix for examples). Successful mandates primarily focus on supporting researchers by requiring deposit of works in an institutional repository as well as supporting tenure and promotion committees to incorporate OA in the review and promotion process. To ensure academic freedom, many institutions follow the example set by Harvard and used in their [model policy](#)[13] language to allow researchers to opt-out of the mandate requirements when necessary.

Successful Transformative Agreements

Transformative agreements with journal publishers come in many different shapes and sizes and there is some debate on whether they are the right way to accelerate the journal publishing market's move from subscription based to APC based. In reality the only libraries or groups of libraries that can really participate in these types of agreements are those that have the money to support both traditional subscriptions and article processing fees at the same time. An example of a transformative agreement in North Carolina is the one negotiated by UNC-Chapel Hill with SAGE Publishing. According to their website, "Under the agreement, part of the subscription fees that the Library will pay for SAGE content in 2020 will cover the costs of open access publishing for a number of UNC-Chapel Hill authors in SAGE publications. This comes

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[13] https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/modelpolicy/

at no additional cost to the Library and will preserve access to all content that the Library currently licenses from SAGE."[14]

These types of agreements are popping up all over the country with large consortia such as University of California Systems agreement with Springer Nature[15] or individual institutions like Carnegie Mellon's agreement with Elsevier.[16] Here at UNC Charlotte we have recently entered into a Read and Publish Agreement with Cambridge University Press for 2021. This agreement keeps the cost of our journal package the same, but allows UNC Charlotte authors to publish their articles open access, APC free. We continue to review these deals and determine if it is possible to participate. Faculty can review deals the library participates in our Grants and Funding page.[17]

Article Processing Charge (APC) Funding

To help offset the cost of APCs for faculty who seek to publish their article open access, many libraries, departments, or funding agencies will provide funding to cover some or all of the cost of APCs, outside of any larger negotiated agreements. As mentioned above, Atkins Library has a very active fund to cover the cost of APC's up to $1000. This is a common practice among research universities. Libraries also can receive discounts through subscriptions on APCs. Atkins Library posts our discounts on our website.[18]

Recommendations for increasing Open Access Publishing at UNC Charlotte

There are several actions that both the library and the faculty can take to make the work created on our campus openly available to the world to increase visibility and support an open system of scholarly communication.

1) Continue advocacy for open access publishing on campus to lead to changes in the Promotion and Tenure process that supports publishing open access.
2) Mandate faculty to deposit articles in Niner Commons, with the ability to opt-out. This action will need to be taken up and voted on by the Faculty Council.
   a) Present the ideas outlined in this paper in various venues, including Faculty Council. Collect feedback from departments and update as necessary.
   b) Continue to hold information sessions and provide support to faculty depositing articles in Niner Commons.
3) Encourage faculty to publish in open access journals by:
   a) Securing funding for APC's from sources outside of the library.

[14] https://library.unc.edu/services/faculty/sage-faq/
[15] https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-reaches-groundbreaking-open-access-deal-leading-global-publisher#:~:text=The%20California%20Digital%20Library%2C%20within,of%20the%20University%20of%20California
[16] https://www.library.cmu.edu/about/publications/news/cmu-elsevier-reach-transformative-deal
[17] https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing/grants-funding
[18] https://library.uncc.edu/research-write/publishing/grants-funding

      b) Providing information on how to include the money to publish in open access journals through grant funding.

4) Participate in transformative deals that make sense for our campus and can be adequately funded.

Appendix

[Pathways to Open Access Article Publishing Flowchart](#)[19]
[Open Access Publishing Infographic](#)[20]
Example Open Accesses Mandates

[Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)](#)[21]

A commitment to the dissemination of faculty research led to the adoption of an open access policy to grant the university "nonexclusive permission to make available his or her scholarly articles and to exercise the copyright in those articles for the purpose of open dissemination."[22] This license pertains to scholarly articles in any medium, produced after policy adoption, while the faculty member is employed by MIT. Articles are not to be sold for profit. Works that are exempted from the policy are those covered by incompatible licensing, assignment agreements prior to policy implementation, or those granted a policy waiver by the Provost or Provost's designate upon application of the author with written justification. The university's open-access repository is the platform for distributing electronic scholarly article copies, made available at the date of publication. The faculty Committee on the Library Systems consults with the Office of the Provost to interpret the open access policy, settling challenges to its interpretation and application, and advocating for changes. The policy is reviewed by the Faculty Policy Committee every five years with a report sent to the faculty. The purpose, compliance, and scope of the policy are discussed in MIT's FAQ on the open access policy.[23] Information regarding the deposition of final peer-reviewed manuscripts in the DSpace@MIT repository and "opt-in" open access license is summarized on one of the library's scholarly publishing webpages.[24]

[Duke University](#)[25]

The Duke University Academic Council adopted an open access policy[26] to "serve faculty interests by promoting greater reach and impact for articles, simplifying authors' retention of distribution rights, and aiding preservation." The policy states that each faculty member grants the university a license to reproduce, distribute, and make available the faculty member's scholarly articles through the DukeSpace repository and

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[19] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PXEexrdHmjH9oKTs75BwQPMK0RhYh5_V/view?usp=sharing
[20] https://drive.google.com/file/d/18bXVfR2c9WeuDG4ZJLsEB2mNgddMe0lP/view
[21] https://libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/mit-open-access/open-access-policy/
[22] https://libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/mit-open-access/open-access-policy/
[23] https://libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/mit-open-access/faq-on-the-oa-policy/
[24] https://libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/mit-open-access/opt-in-oa-license/
[25] https://scholarworks.duke.edu/open-access/
[26] https://provost.duke.edu/sites/default/files/FHB_App_P.pdf

all rights under copyright to authorize others to do so, as long as the articles are not sold. Waivers to this license for delayed access or a certain article are made by the faculty member to the Provost or Provost's designate. The Office of the Provost interprets this policy with the Executive Committee of the Academic Council for the purposes of dispute resolution and changes. The Library Council and Duke University Libraries are given the authority by the faculty to create and monitor policy compliance. Every three years the policy and service model are reviewed for a report to the faculty.

[UNC-Chapel Hill](url)[27]

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's open access policy includes essentially the same criteria as Duke University, although it is the Scholarly Communications Office of the University Library, or other office designated by the Provost, which is responsible for policy interpretation. Additionally, the Provost or designee will "waive application of this policy for a particular article or delay public access to an article for a reasonable period of time upon express direction by a Faculty member." Finally, there are no exceptions to the policy. The UNC Health Sciences Libraries website includes a page listing a number of advocacy organizations.[28]

[The University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Open Access Declaration](url)[29]

An open access declaration at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, signed by the McIntyre Library faculty, describes a commitment to open access publishing. In addition to striving to seek out OA content, some of the librarians published a study[30] of their university's promotion and tenure (P&T) evaluation plans. The OA-related issues reviewed from 34 departments included whether those plans directly addressed OA and its support, flexibility in the evaluation of faculty scholarship, scholarship dissemination, scholarship equality, and diminished support for OA due to contradictory language. Study findings included that P&T reviewers are not reviewing the candidate's articles for merit, just what they think they know about the journal's reputation and impact. If departments will only accept certain journals for P&T, then this should be explicitly stated, though the authors neglected to mention that this will limit academic freedom. The author recommendations for encouraging positive attitudes about OA publishing in P&T evaluations included how librarians can assist with helping faculty determine journal quality and avoid predatory publishers, submit works to institutional or discipline-specific repository, partner with an office of research that supports OA, and allow untenured faculty to drive the conversation about to change the P&T review process with untenured faculty to sending tenured faculty articles as proof of quality or legitimate scholarship.

[Harvard University](url)[31]

[27] https://unc.policystat.com/policy/8013586/latest/
[28] https://guides.lib.unc.edu/open-access-and-scholarly-communications/advocating
[29] https://library.uwec.edu/using-the-library/services/services-students/open-access-declaration/
[30]
https://uncc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UNCC_INST/1rqb8fi/cdi_crossref_primary_10_1080_00987913_2017_1313024
[31] https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/policies/

As the faculty of the nine schools, divisions, and research centers of Harvard University voted to give their employer the rights to distribute their scholarly articles for non-commercial purposes through open-access policies, other universities have adopted Harvard's model policy[32] language. This model policy is presented with explanatory notes to clarify word choice within the documents. Examples include details about waiving the worldwide license to mean that "the policy is not a mandate for rights retention, but merely a change in the default rights retention from opt-in to opt-out" and to preempt any potential conflicts from those individuals who may have "concerns about academic freedom, unintended effects on junior faculty, principled libertarian objections, freedom to accommodate publisher policies, and the like." As part of the Harvard Open Access Project,[33] a guide entitled "Good Practices for University Open-Access Policies"[34] lists recommendations for institutions implementing similar policies. The Harvard Library Office for Scholarly Communication[35] manages the university's open access repository, the HOPE fund[36] to reimburse processing fees, and the COPE compact[37] to underwrite reasonable publishing charges. A sample waiver[38] to the open access license is available to be used as a template, along with a sample addendum[39] to a publication agreement may be downloaded and integrated into an overarching open access program.

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[32] https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/modelpolicy/
[33] https://cyber.harvard.edu/hoap/Main_Page
[34] https://cyber.harvard.edu/hoap/Good_practices_for_university_open-access_policies
[35] https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/
[36] https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/programs/hope/
[37] http://www.oacompact.org/
[38] https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/sample_waiver/
[39] https://osc.hul.harvard.edu/authors/amend/