

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OPEN ACCESS POLICY FOR UCSF

- **Why are we doing this?** *A UCSF Open Access Policy would be a powerful, collective statement about the Faculty commitment to promote the access to and use of our scholarship by the wider public. The primary aim is to make our scholarship more widely available and accessible. We would assert Faculty control over the publication of scholarly research, and recognize our responsibility for making that process sustainable and true to the intentions of scholars. We would also be sending a strong collective message to commercial publishers about our values and the system we would like to see put in place.*
- **Why does the policy use an automatic license? Why not just let individuals do it themselves?** *Experience has shown that mere exhortations have little effect on authors' behavior. Before Congress made it a requirement, participation in the NIH Public Access Policy was optional. During that period, there was only a 4% level of compliance. Opt-out systems achieve much higher degrees of participation than opt-in systems, even while remaining non-coercive. By making a blanket policy, individual Faculty benefit from their membership in the policy-making group. The University can work with publishers on behalf of the Faculty to simplify procedures and broaden access. Without a blanket policy, the unified action benefit of the policy would be vitiated.*
- **What must Faculty do to comply with this policy?** *The policy operates automatically to give UC a license to make available all scholarly articles. This policy can be communicated to your publisher when signing the copyright license or assignment agreement in the form of a boilerplate addendum, and simply notifies the publisher that any agreement is subject to this prior license. Part of the implementation plan will be to provide a standard addendum for this purpose. Whether you use the addendum or not, the license to UC still will have force.*
- **Does this policy require that I do anything differently or pay for anything?** *No. You can continue to publish as you always have, in the very same journals, and you do not have to pay to publish your articles or pay to deposit them in an open-access repository. But the intent of the policy is to also to raise awareness that there are other options for your publications, particularly open access journals, which will make your work more widely available. Such options do employ a different financial model for support as described below.*
- **What effect will this have on the ability of Faculty to publish in top-ranked journals?** *None. The policy is completely agnostic with respect to where a Faculty member chooses to publish: it only requires that Faculty retain the right to make the work available in a repository. If a publisher refuses to publish a work due to the policy, the Faculty member has several options: he or she can choose to publish elsewhere, ask your UL or CDL to negotiate with the publisher, or in the last instance, simply opt out of the application of the license.*
- **Can I opt out of this policy?** *Yes. The policy allows Faculty members to opt out of making a work open access. If for any reason, the scholar does not want the work to be made publicly available, he or she simply needs to inform UC. The policy does not, however, allow Faculty to opt out of the deposit requirement. We are in essence, agreeing to make a copy of our articles either actually or potentially available freely in a repository.*

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- ***Doesn't this opt-out approach mean that the policy has no teeth? Won't publishers just demand that all authors opt out?*** *Many publishers already allow deposit of articles in their standard agreements, and will have no issue with this policy. A goal of this policy is not to make large publishers capitulate to Faculty demands for open access, but to find ways to make our work have greater impact and accessibility. If there is any message to publishers, it is that we hope they will continue to explore options for more sustainable open access publishing solutions in the future, so that policies such as this one become unnecessary.*
- ***Why require Faculty to deposit an article even if they opt out of the Open Access requirement?*** *There are at least three possible advantages: 1) it allows the Faculty member to change their mind later; 2) it allows an independent entity (UC/CDL) to preserve a copy of any publication in the case that a publisher goes out of business or decides to sell or close a particular journal or venue; and 3) it retains for the Faculty member the right to republish an article in another venue in the case that a publisher refuses permission. An unintended effect might be the creation of a robust archive of UC Faculty publications for the purposes of review for promotion and tenure.*
- ***Would a UC Open Access policy increase Faculty vulnerability to piracy of our intellectual property? Will it enable plagiarism?*** *The policy creates an open access version of a scholarly article covered by copyright. All of the rights and duties that exist in the case of traditional publication remain in the case of the Open Access version, including the ability to prosecute in cases of piracy or plagiarism. If anything, it will deter piracy by allowing access to a freely available version of an article that might otherwise be distributed unlawfully. Plagiarism is something that cannot be addressed by an open access policy.*
- ***What version will I submit to the repository?*** *The policy requires that the author submit the "final version"—which usually means the manuscript copy post-peer review but before a publisher typesets and finalizes it. In the case that the author is publishing in an open access journal, the version submitted might be the final published version.*
- ***Publishers usually require Faculty to check a box indicating transfer of copyright before a paper is published. Would Faculty be in compliance with the policy if they checked the box?*** *Faculty will be free to transfer their copyright to whomever they wish, but articles would henceforth be subject to a pre-existing license. In practice, Faculty may opt out of the Open Access requirement, meaning that the policy requires only that a copy of the pre-publication version of an article be deposited with UC, though not made available. Publishers should be alerted to the policy using a standard addendum. Faculty might also want to think carefully about transferring copyright to any publisher, and instead offer a license. Many Faculty routinely modify their agreements to do just that, and many publishers comply.*
- ***What do Faculty need to do to comply with the policy?*** *Not much. Simply notify the publisher of the policy when signing the final publishing agreement and deposit a copy of the article, upon publication, within UC's eScholarship open access repository. UC's eScholarship repository already houses over 7,000 postprints within its more than 45,000 UC-affiliated publications. If your articles are already deposited in PubMed Central per NIH policy, then*

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*you will continue to deposit there with the understanding that a copy will also be harvested and deposited in eScholarship, unless you opt out of this policy altogether. The eScholarship submission process will be quite minimal and involve a simple web form. The UL's and CDL's technical teams intend to refine this process further by developing a system that, upon receipt of a document, will harvest all of that publication's available, pertinent metadata and return the information to the author for approval prior to final submission.*

- **Is OA a scheme to move the burden of subscription costs on to Faculty?** *No. Open Access is an effort to make research publications as widely available as possible. To do so, we must shift from the standard subscription-based model (i.e., payment for access) to a model that supports the publication of freely accessible research through contributions from funders, institutions, and/or authors. Currently, University libraries pay for ever-increasing subscriptions to journals, and so the burden of costs already fall on Faculty in the form of reduced library services, access, and staff.*
- **I've never paid to publish before, why should I do so now?** *Authors have historically paid for reprints, page charges, color plates, etc. In some cases these would have been more expensive than current OA publication fees. For conferences, authors routinely pay submission fees for abstracts or to print posters. Authors also pay for reagents, materials, and other parts of a publication (e.g., statistics, sequencing, or illustrations). Paying for someone to publish your paper can be seen as just another contracted service in support of your research.*
- **Will NIH pay for publication costs?** *Yes. According to published NIH policy, "The NIH will reimburse publication costs, including author fees, for grants and contracts on three conditions: (1) such costs incurred are actual, allowable, and reasonable to advance the objectives of the award; (2) costs are charged consistently regardless of the source of support; (3) all other applicable rules on allowability of costs are met."*
- **Will my Institution help pay for publication costs?** *Yes. In lieu of subscription costs, the library will have resources available to support Faculty publications in Open Access journals.*
- **Are OA journals peer-reviewed to the same degree as more traditional publications?** *Yes. A journal's economic or access policy does not determine its peer review policy. Most scholarly journals, whether open access or controlled-access journals, are rigorously peer-reviewed, and usually by Faculty just like us. There are both open and controlled journals that are not peer-reviewed. Many publishers now have an open access option for individual articles. This open access option does not change the quality of the peer review or editorial process for those journals or articles.*
- **There are a lot of bad open access journals out there, how do we distinguish the good journals from the bad ones?** *Open access is not a designation of quality. OA journals should be judged by exactly the same criteria as any traditional publication: the caliber of the research published, the peer review process, the composition of the editorial board and staff, impact factors or any other trusted metrics of quality.*

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- **Do articles published in OA journals get as much credit during T&P reviews as articles published in commercial journals? Would there be a disproportionate impact on junior Faculty who have not yet been tenured?** *The proposed policy should have no effect on tenure and promotion. The policy does not prescribe or proscribe the venues in which an author may publish. It could have a positive effect on some scholarship insofar as leading to more visibility and higher rates of citation.*