



## THE HARVARD LIBRARY

### News

#### News Archive

» Draft Harvard Library Mission Statement

» Happy Holidays from the Harvard Library

» Photos: Pop-Up Innovation Space Showcases Projects Exploring and Celebrating Libraries

» Photos: Microsoft Surface Tables Installed, Tested in Three Harvard Libraries

» Photos: Students, Faculty Design Space Envisioning the Library of the Future

» Photos: Graduate School of Design Exhibit Features Maps from Library Collections

» Happy Thanksgiving from the Harvard Library

» Photos: Gutman Library Renovation Includes Green 'Living Walls'

» Photos: Planning for Emergencies; Saving Wet Books

» Photos: Tozzer Book by Book: Library Staff Move 155,000 Volumes

» Project Update: New Library Portal Preview

» Save the Date: Library All-Staff Gathering

» Project Update: Innovation Initiative

» Project Update: Tell Us

# Faculty Advisory Council Memorandum on Journal Pricing

## Major Periodical Subscriptions Cannot Be Sustained



To: Faculty Members in all Schools, Faculties, and Units

From: [The Faculty Advisory Council](#)

Date: April 17, 2012

RE: Periodical Subscriptions

We write to communicate an untenable situation facing the Harvard Library. Many large journal publishers have made the scholarly communication environment fiscally unsustainable and academically restrictive. This situation is exacerbated by efforts of certain publishers (called "providers") to acquire, bundle, and increase the pricing on journals.

Harvard's annual cost for journals from these providers now approaches \$3.75M. In 2010, the comparable amount accounted for more than 20% of *all* periodical subscription costs and just under 10% of *all* collection costs for everything the Library acquires. Some journals cost as much as \$40,000 per year, others in the tens of thousands. Prices for online content from two providers have increased by about 145% over the past six years, which far exceeds not only the consumer price index, but also the higher education and the library price indices. These journals therefore claim an ever-increasing share of our overall collection budget. Even though scholarly output continues to grow and publishing can be expensive, profit margins of 35% and more suggest that the prices we must pay do not solely result from an increasing supply of new articles.

The Library has never received anything close to full reimbursement for these expenditures from overhead collected by the University on grant and research funds.

The Faculty Advisory Council to the Library, representing university faculty in all schools and in consultation with the Harvard Library leadership, reached this conclusion: major periodical subscriptions, especially to electronic journals published by historically key providers, cannot be sustained: continuing these subscriptions on their current footing is financially untenable. Doing so would seriously erode collection efforts in many other areas, already compromised.

It is untenable for contracts with at least two major providers to continue on the basis identical with past agreements. Costs are now prohibitive. Moreover, some providers bundle many journals as one subscription, with major, high-use journals bundled in with journals consulted far less frequently. Since the Library now must change its subscriptions and since faculty and graduate students are chief users, please consider the following options open to faculty and students (F) and the Library (L), state other options you think viable, and [communicate your views](#):

1. Make sure that all of your own papers are accessible by submitting them to DASH in accordance with the faculty-initiated open-access policies (F).
2. Consider submitting articles to open-access journals, or to ones that have reasonable, sustainable subscription costs; move prestige to open access (F).
3. If on the editorial board of a journal involved, determine if it can be published as open access material, or independently from publishers that practice pricing described above. If not, consider resigning (F).
4. Contact professional organizations to raise these issues (F).
5. Encourage professional associations to take control of scholarly literature in their field or shift the management of their e-journals to library-friendly organizations (F).

» Library to Form Information Technology Steering Committee

» Project Update: Dataverse

» Library Welcomes Head of Electronic Resources and Serials

» Open Library Positions Posted

» Student-Focused Council to Form

» New E-Resources Available in July

» Library Welcomes Two New Colleagues

» A Note from Provost Alan Garber: Launch of New Library Organization

» The Harvard Library Welcomes New Director of Human Resources

» New Library Procedures

» Save the Date: Collection Development Open Meeting

» A Note from Helen Shenton and Mary Lee Kennedy, July 17, 2012

» A Note from Helen Shenton and Mary Lee Kennedy, July 13, 2012

» A Note from Helen Shenton and Mary Lee Kennedy, July 12, 2012

» New E-Resources Available in June

» Project Update: New Library Portal

» ITS Recruitment Schedule

» A Note from Helen Shenton and Mary Lee Kennedy

» Thank You to Retirees

» Call for Participation: ITS Staff Recruitment

» A Note from Mary Lee Kennedy and Helen Shenton

6. Encourage colleagues to consider and to discuss these or other options (F).

7. Sign contracts that unbundle subscriptions and concentrate on higher-use journals (L).

8. Move journals to a sustainable pay per use system, (L).

9. Insist on subscription contracts in which the terms can be made public (L).

See coverage:

[Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

[Inside Higher Education](#)

[The Atlantic](#)

» Library Staff Members  
Join Harvard IT Summit

» Library Welcomes HR  
Colleague

» Call for Participation:  
Resource Sharing  
Workflow Analysis

» Board Approves  
Charge to Develop  
Collection and Content  
Development Strategic  
Plan

» Sniffin-Marinoff  
Named Overseer of USS  
Constitution Museum

» A Note from Helen  
Shenton and Mary Lee  
Kennedy

» Library Overview Page  
Updated

» Project Update: Tell  
Us

» The Transit of Venus:  
Harvard 18th and 19th  
Century Student  
Predictions

» New E-Resources  
Available in May

» Project Update:  
Developing a Shared  
Services Operating  
Model

» Library Convenes  
University Conservation  
Community

» Library Project  
Update: Digital  
Scholarship Site

» Library Project  
Update: Dataverse Pilot

» Library Project  
Update: New Library  
Portal

» Harvard Library  
Recruitment Update

» Call for Participation--  
Access Services Process  
Mapping

» Speaker Series  
Continues with "Digital  
Transformations of  
Research"

» Library Early

## Retirement Program Concludes

» Harvard Library Board Resolution

» Library Announces Several New Staff Appointments

» New E-Resources Available in April

» Harvard Library Names Two to New Positions

» Library Launches Student Engagement Pilot Project

» Millions of Harvard Library Catalog Records Publicly Available

» New Andover-Harvard Theological Librarian Announced

» "The Armenians and the Book" Exhibit at Lamont Library

» Library Tech Joins HUIT on April 20

» **Faculty Advisory Council Memorandum on Journal Pricing**

» Harvard Library Explorer Debuts at Cabot

» Library Staff Invited to Innovation Unconference

» Lamont Open 24/7 for Reading Period and Exams

» Thomson Reuters InCites Available May 1

» Save the Date: Innovation Initiative Unconference

» New E-Resources Available in March

» Project Update: New Library Portal

» Library Recruitment Update

» The Library Welcomes New Team Members

» Library Staff Invited to Join Interview Panels

» Zittrain and Wones to Lead Harvard Law School Library

» Speaker Series Continues with Session on Open Access

» Harvard Library to Deposit Additional Volumes in HathiTrust

» Sessions with Heads of Shared Services

» New E-Resources Available in February

» Dean's Distinction Awards Honor HCL's Hussein, Kornilowicz, and Sheridan

» Harvard Library Affinity Group Heads Selected

» New Collection Development Listserv

» Robert Darnton Receives National Humanities Medal

» Letter from Provost Garber on the Harvard Libraries, February 10, 2012

» President Faust's Reflections on the Future of the Harvard Library, February 8, 2012

» New E-Resources Available in January

» Geospatial Library Offers Seamless Access to GIS Repositories

» Transition Update from the Senior Associate Provost and the Executive Director

» Harvard Judaica Division Publications Now Online

» Transition Update from the Senior Associate Provost and the Executive Director

» Harvard Library eReader Pilot Program Launched

» Library Town Hall  
Presentation, January  
19, 2012

» Transition Update  
from the Senior  
Associate Provost and  
the Executive Director

» Spring Semester  
Community  
Conversations  
Scheduled

» Foundation for the  
History of Women in  
Medicine Offers  
Fellowship

» Update from the  
Senior Associate Provost  
and the Executive  
Director

» New E-Resources  
Now Available

» Harvard Library Town  
Hall Meetings  
Scheduled

» New Managing  
Director of Academic  
Technology Services  
Announced

» Preservation in the  
Harvard Library Session  
Scheduled

» Chair Yoga for  
Librarians Spring  
Schedule Announced

» Harvard Film Archive  
Receives Seven Boston  
Society of Film Critics  
Awards

» Holiday Greeting from  
the Harvard Library

» Update from the  
Senior Associate Provost

» Harvard Library  
Launches Universal  
Circulation

» Preservation and  
Digital Imaging Services  
Open House Scheduled

» Tudesco and Miller  
Receive HCL 2011  
Ishimoto Award

» Judaica Division  
Receives \$1M Gift

» Update from the  
Executive Director

» Library Lab Supports  
13 New Projects

» Strategy Development  
Program "History in  
Objects" Tours  
Announced

» New eResources  
Available

» Update from the  
Senior Associate Provost

» Meet Cooper, the  
Countway Library  
Therapy Dog

» Cataloging Listserv  
Created

» Chair Yoga for  
Librarians Scheduled

» Update from the  
Executive Director

» Update on Widener  
Library Fire

» From Fireproof  
Storage to Information  
Commons Session  
Scheduled

» Presentation and  
Discussion on Design of  
Libraries Announced

» Law Library  
Announces Discussion  
on Intellectual Property  
Strategy

» Hauser Fund Grants  
Announced

» Excellence in Service  
Award Winners Named  
by HCL

» Update from the  
Senior Associate Provost

» Update from the  
Executive Director

» HathiTrust Brown Bag  
Lunch Scheduled

» Technical Services  
Open Session Scheduled

» Update from the  
Executive Director

» Access Services Focus  
Groups Announced

» Update from the  
Executive Director

- » Senior Program Manager Named
- » Library Director of Communications Announced
- » Series of Open Forums for Library Staff Announced
- » Library Director of Human Resources Named
- » Mary Lee Kennedy Speaks at 'Strategic Conversations' Kickoff
- » Letter from Provost Alan Garber
- » Answering Questions about the Library Transition
- » Library Transition Slides: Sept. 28, 2011
- » Q&A with Scott Wicks
- » Video Update about Strategic Conversations
- » Letter from Mary Lee Kennedy
- » Library Transition: Design Phase Team
- » Shared Services Staff Update
- » Chief Financial Officer of the Harvard Library Named
- » Harvard Library Names Head of Preservation and Digital Imaging Services
- » Head of Information and Technical Services Announced
- » Q&A with Matthew Sheehy
- » Matthew Sheehy Named Head of Access Services
- » Early Progress in Planning the "Year of Public Conversations"
- » Recruitment Update from the Executive Director



- » A Note from the Executive Director
- » Kennedy Named Senior Associate Provost
- » Director of Human Resources Position Posted
- » Provost Convenes Faculty Advisory Council on the Library
- » New Chief Financial Officer Position Posted
- » Letter from the Executive Director
- » The Harvard Library Launches "A Year of Public Conversations"
- » Crowdsourcing Effort Will Cultivate Reading List for Board
- » Three New Library Leadership Positions Posted
- » Letter from the Executive Director
- » Letter from Provost Steven Hyman to Harvard Community
- » Search Begun for Associate Director of Library Services
- » Update from the Executive Director
- » Innovation, Collaboration Key to Inaugural Library Lab Projects
- » Harvard and MIT Libraries Explore Far-Reaching Alliance
- » Harvard Library Joins HathiTrust
- » Harvard Library Joins Borrow Direct
- » Letter from the Executive Director
- » Library Module Added to Harvard Mobile App
- » Harvard Library Board Names Helen Shenton Executive Director
- » University Libraries

Report Issued

» Q&A regarding review of libraries

From the Harvard Gazette

Harvard Library Projects

Change Management and Career Development

Overview: The Harvard Library

Harvard Library Leadership

Harvard Library Team

FAQ

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