

# Evaluating Journals/ Databases: Saving Money

## Old and New Tools

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# Outline

- Good News
  - University-wide faculty journal survey
  - Evaluation metrics used post-survey
- A Different View of Collections
- Bad News – Budget Crises/Forced choices

# 2006 Faculty Journal Survey - 1

- Compiled list of all subscriptions not subject to non-cancellation clauses.
- Created master alphabetical & discipline-specific lists
- Faculty could look at as many discipline lists & the master alphabetical list as desired

# 2006 Faculty Journal Survey -2

- 2 Questions
  - Check all journals important to your research & teaching.
  - List one journal you would like us to get.
- My reaction- way too simplistic to work
- 550 titles received zero votes
- 525 titles only 1 vote.

# Major Journal Eval. Criteria - Ranked

1. Use stats (cost/download)
2. Price
  - Cost/page
  - Price history ( $>10\%$ /year flagged)
  - Absolute price
3. Number of UB faculty articles in journal
4. Normalized Thomson Impact Factors®  
[Given: Low use/redundant content]

## **Minor** Journal Eval. Criteria: Ranked

1. State Univ. of NY/NYS/U.S. Holdings
2. Coverage in A&I databases
3. Full-text in aggregators (minimal weight - embargo periods/risk of content being withdrawn)

# Normalized Impact Factors (NIF)

- Raw impact factors (IF) not comparable across disciplines
- Each discipline has a top journal (100 percentile) and a bottom journal (0 percentile).
- Journal Citation Reports® IF by discipline downloaded to Microsoft Excel™ & ranked list converted into percentiles

# Normalized Chemistry IF

<b>Journal Title</b>	<b>IF</b>	<b>NIF</b>
Chem Rev	20.87	100%
Surf Sci Rep	17.86	100%
Nat Mater	15.94	100%
Prog Solid State Ch	15.17	99%
Chem Soc Rev	13.75	99%
Annu Rev Phys Chem	13.41	99%
Accounts Chem Res	13.14	99%

# NIF Master List

<b>Journal Title</b>	<b>IF</b>	<b>NIF</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Phytochem Analysis	1.398	56%	Chemistry
Phytochem Analysis	1.398	22%	Biochem
Ocean Eng	0.452	38%	EngrCiv
Ocean Eng	0.452	15%	Geosci
Ocean Eng	0.452	13%	Environ

# Univ. at Buffalo Faculty Publications

- Searched each component of the Web of Science® for UB in author address field.
- Analyzed (i.e. frequency ranked) by ‘Source Title’, i.e. journal title.

# Top Publishing Titles – UB Authors

Source Title	Count	% of 9014
Abstracts of Papers of The ACS	228	2.5%
Biophysical Journal	130	1.4%
FASEB Journal	126	1.4%
Journal of Dental Research	109	1.2%
JACS	87	1.0%
Journal of Biological Chemistry	80	0.90%
Physical Review B	76	0.80%
Alcoholism-Clinical & Experim. Res	69	0.80%

## Bottom Line Result

Cancelled about \$50,000 of unneeded journals and added an equivalent amount of new desired titles.

# Different View of Collections

- We used to manage collections by type of material: books, journals, A/V, electronic databases, etc.
- Now only two fundamental categories: **one-time purchases** and **continuing commitments**
- E-journal platforms morphing into databases
  - Finding tools, sorting, ranking, analysis.
  - RSS feeds & personalization
  - Hyperlinks: definitions, citing/related references, etc.

## Bottom Line – Unified View of Continuing Commitments

We are making few distinctions between databases & journals in terms of collection acquisition, management, and evaluation. Both are continuing commitments.

# Budget Crises – Forced Choices

- 2008-09 NYS budget mandates a 2.9% cut in operating expenses across all of SUNY.
- Classic evaluation criteria:
  - Quality, Scope, Level of uniqueness
  - Concept of “Core”, Impact factors
  - Use (one advantage of the e-age), Cost per X
  - Champions in the organization
- But what happens when everything left is high quality, core, has significant use?

# What happens?

1. Traditional metrics become nearly irrelevant.
2. The UGLY Questions get asked:
  - What can we live without?
  - What are the consequences of cancelling X?
  - i.e., What is the lesser of evils!

# What if? [Hypothetical scenarios]

(All commercial database names trademarks)

Cancel?	Rely on?
Books in Print	Amazon
NTIS (Govt. Reports)	Science.gov, etc.
INSPEC	ArXiv.org, Compendex
Academic Search Premier	Findarticles.com
PAIS International	Google Scholar

# Flat out of tricks in library land

- No second tier, low use stuff left
- No Peters (staff, facilities) left to rob to pay Paul (subscriptions)

# Coping Mechanism

- Budget cuts force us to consider “free” alternatives (even the big places.)
- Databases: Compare features of fee vs. free (Ex: WorldCat® vs. WorldCat.org®)
- Journals: Weigh open access or pay-by-the-drink document delivery
- Free alternatives become more numerous & more capable by the month.

# Driving our collection decisions

- Fundamental Budget Crisis (hasn't changed)—
  - Subscribed journals increasing 9-10% (2008 Library Journal Survey)
  - Library budgets: minus 5% to +3% at best
- Patrons increasingly use free web to find scholarly references.
- Patron's great desire is full-text.
- Possible shift of purchases from A&I databases to full-text journals/aggregators.

# Threat summary

- **Databases** threatened by library budgets, journal publishers, & OAI metadata harvesters.
- In turn, **journal publishers** threatened by library budgets and open access, especially grant funding agency mandates.
- **Libraries** threatened by budget cuts, “it’s all on the Internet” myth, out-of-control journal prices, & we used up all our tricks to save money/redirect funds.

**On that happy note**

The End! Questions?

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