



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
College of Arts and Sciences

June 22, 2009

Dear Jim, Russ, Rich, and Scott:

During the past few years, University Library Committee (ULC) has made a top priority of address the problem of rising journal costs, and the erosion of authors' rights in scholarly publishing.

As one effort this year, the ULC has been involved in designing and implementing, as a pilot project at the UO libraries, the Open Access Publishing Support Fund. See the description of this program at:

<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/scis/sc/oaps.html>

The fund encourages UO faculty to publish their research in open access journals by providing funds to pay the "page fees" for such journals, which in most cases are higher than the fees charged by subscription-based journals, but which represent a greater value to the faculty author and to the scholarly community, because of the ease of access and larger audience available through open access journals.

However, this fund stands to benefit faculty in the sciences and social sciences to a greater degree than those in the humanities. Humanities journals rarely charge page fees, and humanities faculty often place a higher priority on publishing monographs compared to journal articles. Given this situation, the ULC has turned its attention to the problems humanities faculty face in publishing books. For the publication of monographs, university presses increasingly are demanding their own "page fees" in the form of subventions that underwrite the costs and risks of publication. These subventions frequently run between \$4000 and \$5000. It is difficult for UO humanities faculty to raise that much money in their research accounts.

The ULC agreed to inquire into whether UO faculty are being asked to pay such subventions, how they are raising funds to do so, and whether a fund to support monograph publication might be created.

Our first step is to gather information. We would appreciate your response:

Has the Provost's office, the Dean of CAS, individual departments, or the Office of Research distributed money to pay subvention fees for UO faculty members' books?

Are you aware of any recently hired Assistant Professors who have negotiated for money to pay subventions on their first books? If yes, in which departments?

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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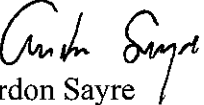
If you have not made these funds available, would you consider this level of support?

In the event a program is begun to provide subvention funds, the ULC wishes to be involved in setting principles by which a support fund might be administered, such as whether it should support first books only, or also those by tenured faculty. Another issue is whether, consistent with the Open Access Support Fund, the money should be available only to publishers who agree to sell the book for a reasonable price.

In the fast-changing market of scholarly communications, faculty authors need sound advice and solid support in order to ensure that their work receives the distribution and recognition it deserves. The ULC is eager to help provide this advice, and wants to work with UO faculty and administrators.

Please direct your replies to Deb Carver, Dean of Libraries, or to Gordon Sayre, Professor of English and 2008-09 chair of the University Library Committee.

Sincerely,


Gordon Sayre
Professor of English