



UNIVERSITY OF IOWA LIBRARIES

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October 24, 2018

To our campus community:

Beginning next fiscal year (July 2019), the University of Iowa Libraries must trim the amount it spends on annual subscriptions to journals, databases, and e-books. This reduction is necessary because subscription price increases far outpace budget increases. Subscriptions managed by the UI Law Library are not included in this reduction strategy.

We are writing today to ask for assistance in reviewing current subscriptions, with a goal of identifying those that can be eliminated due to:

- low use;
- high cost per use;
- lack of strategic importance to research areas.

In recent years and continuing today, scholarly publishing companies have levied annual price increases of 5 percent to 7 percent, while for the last three fiscal years, UI's annual budget for these materials has remained mostly unchanged. Such an environment diminishes our purchasing power, and these cost increases are simply not sustainable.

To address this, the Libraries already has reduced spending on printed books, eliminated duplication, and canceled underutilized subscriptions. In addition, we purchase many materials jointly with our peers in the Big Ten Academic Alliance to ensure we are receiving the best possible pricing. We also closely align ourselves national efforts to encourage publication in and support for open access journals.

These cost-saving efforts have not been enough to offset subscription cost increases set by scholarly publishing companies. We must cut about \$600,000 in annual subscriptions if we are to maintain access to the information resources that are vital to research and scholarship. Our strategy will be to reduce spending proportionately by discipline as follows:

- 10 percent: basic sciences, engineering, and health sciences
- 7 percent: social sciences
- 5 percent: humanities (including area studies and performing arts)

This review process will occur in three stages:

Stage 1 (October-November 2018)

Share lists of proposed subscription cancellations. Via our liaison librarians, the Libraries will share lists of proposed cancellations with colleges and departments. The lists, based on subscription usage and cost data, will be organized by discipline.

Stage 2 (November-December 2018)

Gather initial input from UI campus. Faculty and researchers provide feedback to liaison librarians that will inform the final selection process. The UI Libraries will host an open forum at a date to be announced later and reach out to campus governance groups regarding the reduction strategy.

Stage 3 (March-April 2018)

Share initial cut projections and final list of journal cancellations. UI Libraries will share updated information with campus showing the list of proposed subscriptions to cut. These will be subscriptions generally agreed to be most expendable. During this stage, the Libraries also will recommend alternative ways to access the content in subscribed resources slated for cancellation. The final list of canceled subscriptions must be compiled by April 2019.

As the process unfolds, we'll post information and updates at <http://lib.uiowa.edu/cancellations>.

Our liaison librarians will work closely with faculty and researchers to make informed decisions, provide alternatives where possible, monitor subscriptions going forward, and continue our missional work of supporting research at Iowa with access to scholarly resources. Please contact your [liaison librarian](#) with questions about specific subscriptions or with questions regarding the subscription cancellation review process.

John Culshaw
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Sue Curry
Interim Executive Vice President and Provost