

Faculty talking: Thoughts on open access publishing and the library's role

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How, in a time of disruption, can communities reassert control over the knowledge they produce?

Who has access to education and research?

How is knowledge is created and shared?

Whose voices are recognized and valued?

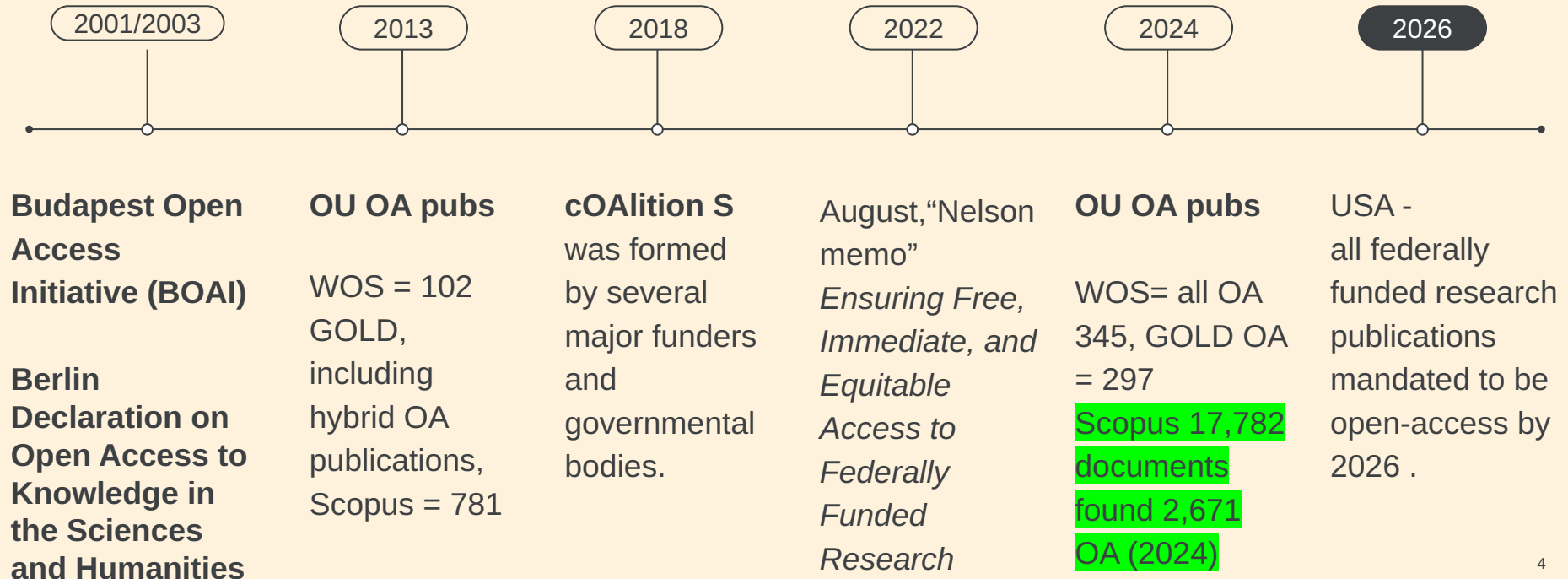
Read more about the theme at [Open Access week 2025](#)

Preview - impact of OA on faculty authors

"It is great to have access to open access articles, however their APCs are prohibitive for me as an author at an R2 institution."

"...My department doesn't cover these fees. The university appears not to cover these fees. Why would I be the one to pay them? It's stupid to pay to do your job." - CAS

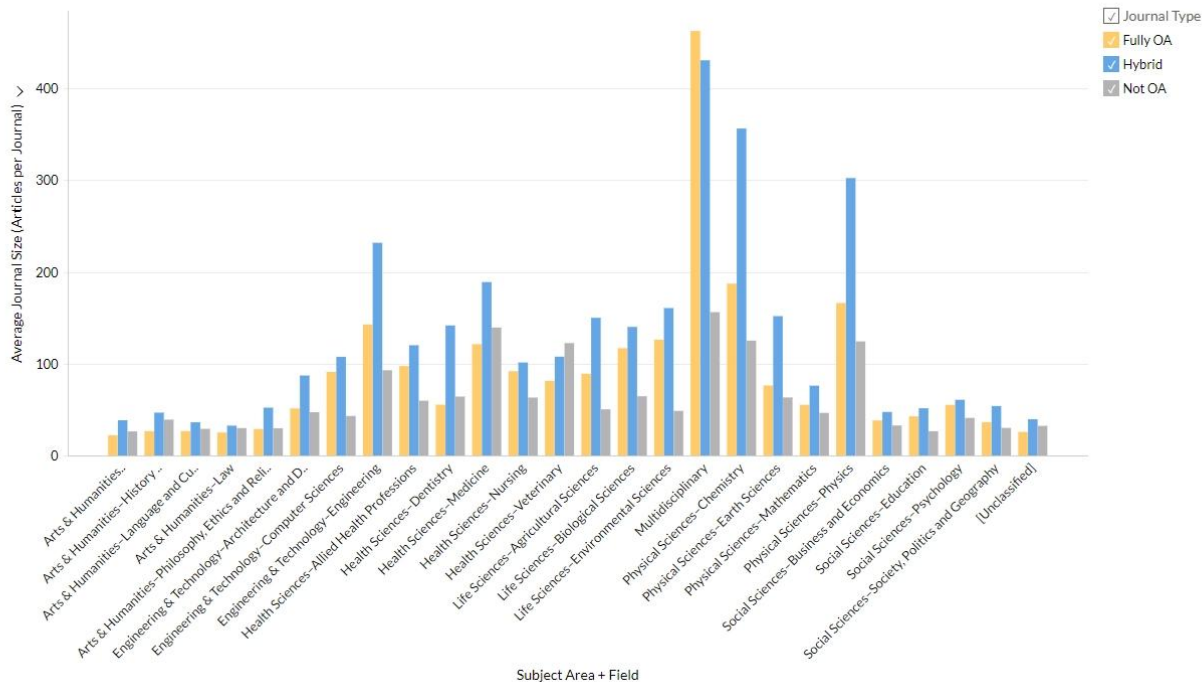
OA publishing grew 21% from 2020 to 2021, with 43% of articles published in the last 5 years being OA (Olejniczak & Wilson, 2020).



OA across disciplines

Average Article Output per Journal by Subject Area + Field

Year: 2020 Subject Area + Field: All Subject: All



OA publishing increasing in all disciplines significantly from 2000 to 2019 in all the disciplines.

(Demeter, Jele, & Major, 2021)

Survey questions

Please list the ways
that you

as an author
as a researcher
as an instructor

have been impacted by the shift
to open access publishing.

1. In what ways has the growing availability of open access literature and data impacted your use of and your relationship with the library?
2. Looking to a future where the majority of journals will be open access, how important is the role of the library in supporting your publishing, research, or instruction?

(OU) Faculty talking

500 surveys distributed to all tenure-track faculty; 209 responses submitted; overall response rate of 42% including partial responses.



College of A & S
85 responses
(37%)



School of
Business
Administration
12 responses
(20%)



School of
Education and
Human Studies
12 responses
(28%)



School of
Engineering and
Computer
Science
22 responses
(34%)

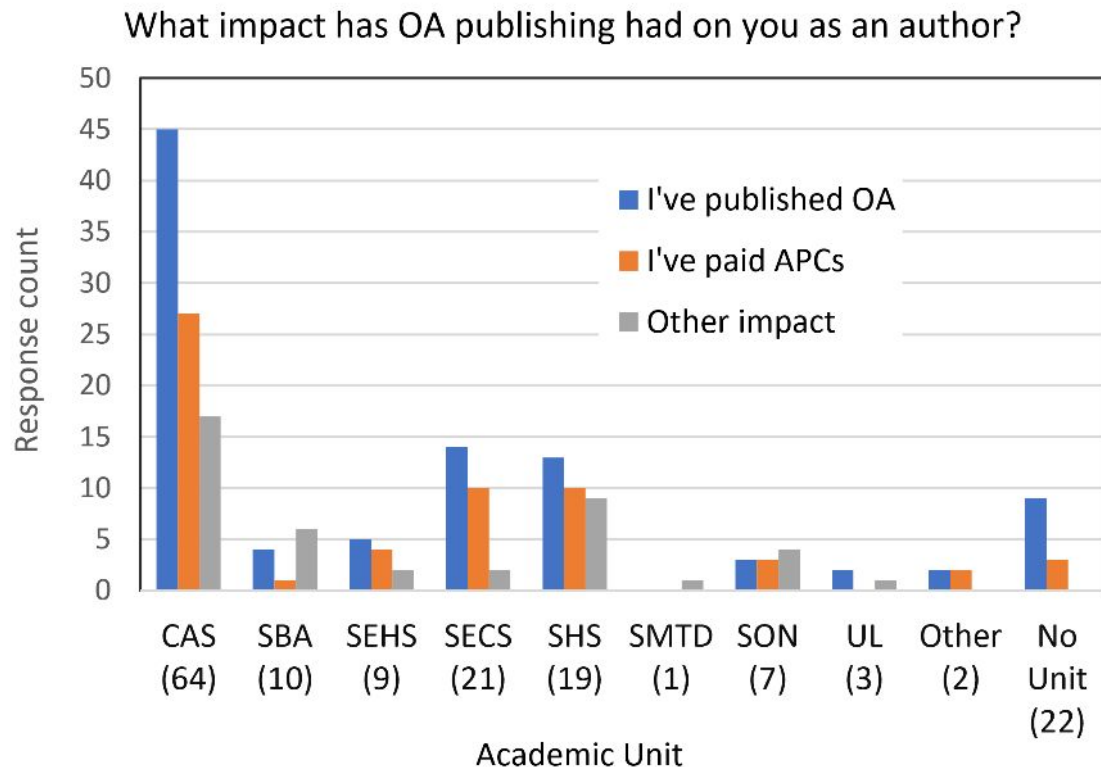


School of Health
Sciences
21 responses
(58%)



School of Nursing
9 responses
(45%)

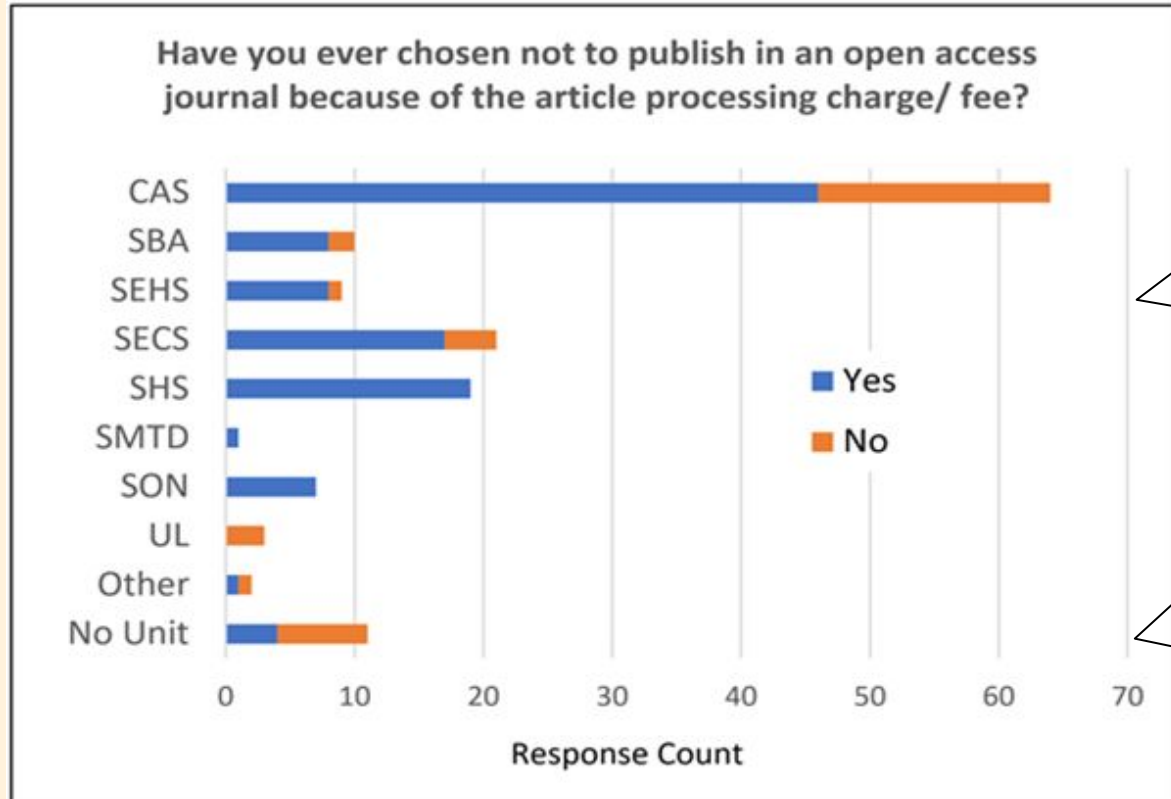
Impact of OA on OU authors (1)



"I have one open access publication, and the number of citations are exponential for that article..." - SEHS

"I've seen broader readership of my publications that are open-access than those that are not." - CAS

Impact of OA on OU authors (2)



"I have declined publishing open access because of lack of funding for fees."- SHS

"In my social science discipline, I have found that APCs for open access publishing is cost prohibitive as an author/researcher."- CAS

Summary: impact of OA on OU faculty authors



- Increased reach and impact of research
- ...but lack of funding options limits ability to publish OA
- 72% of OU faculty across all units rated the impact as “substantial” (i.e., at least medium impact):
 - SECS (90%)
 - SHS (84%)
 - CAS (69%)
 - SBA (30%)
- Faculty express a desire for institutional support for publishing fees

OA cost/funding concerns - author role

“There is no way to pay for open access other than through grant funds, but often the manuscripts are published after the grant is completed.” - CAS

“Faculty must publish in order to be competitive for external funding, so not having funds for publishing creates a barrier to the kind of success needed to get funded.” - CAS

“Many journals have optional open access publication choices where I can have wider audiences but with no funding provided by OU, it considerably limits the dissemination of my research.” - CAS

Open Access Models - shifts cost from pay to access to pay to publish - paid either by author, funder, association, institution, membership....



Author Pays

Fee charged at time of article accepted (APC)

Paid by: grant agency, institution, author

Dominate funding mechanism particularly among the major publishers and born OA publishers. (Butler et al. , 2024).



Agreement or membership

- Transformative Agreements (TAs)
 - pay for reading & publishing at institution
- Community models
 - PLOS, Subscribe to Open - S2O
- Membership models
 - Open Library of Humanities' Library Partnership Subsidy

Article Processing Charges (APCs) - OU

1

OA Fund

2015-2022
57 applications
funded = \$78,695

2024-2025
12 applications - 5
funded = \$7,767

2

Read & Publish

For 2024-2025
OU authors funded

11 Cambridge
8 ACS (2025)

Listed at \$4,000 each

3

OU APC Trends

Paid by a collaborator (13)
Paid by the library (9)
Paid by my previous
institution (2)
APCs waived by the
journal (2)
Other sources of APC
funding (5)

4

Author Self -pay

"I have withdrawn papers from consideration because of article processing fees. I will also never pay out of my own pocket to publish, so the increase in open access journals has paradoxically decreased my options for where I can publish my work."

OU Faculty Paying for OA

"I used to rely on the library's open access funding to be able to publish open access. I now avoid publishing in open access because we lack the funding." - SHS

"Since Kresge dropped the grant, I've only published in open-access journals that are free to publish." - SEHS



"I have decided not to try to publish in a journal because of the open access fees." - SHS

"I have chosen not to submit to a journal on multiple occasions due to lack of funding for APCs. If a study is otherwise low budget/does not require grant funding to conduct, it is difficult to locate funding to support APCs only." - SHS

OA ethical or quality concerns (1)

“...this seems like a terrible model for the future of academia, absolutely dreadful and potentially fraught with tons of unethical consequences.” - CAS

Themes - OA impact on faculty authors

Theme 2: OA ethical or quality concerns

- Avoid OA publication on principle (7)
- Skeptical of OA journal quality (5)
- Skeptical of OA business model (4)
- Other ethical or quality concerns (7)

OA ethical or quality concerns (2)

“...for my future publications I don't anticipate sending to open access journals given their extremely unfair price practices...” - CAS

“One thing that has been challenging is the proliferation of open-access journals that are of low quality that simply charge authors to publish anything with limited quality or peer review...” - SHS

Impact of OA on OU faculty as...



Researchers

*"I **don't usually make the distinction** between open access and publications that we have a subscription for." - CAS*

*"I **don't generally notice if articles are open access or not**, since I usually go through the Kresge Library website to search for articles." - SBA*

"...my experience is that much of the current research I want to access remains frustratingly behind a paywall, and that the availability of those resources is harder and harder to come by at our own institution." - CAS



Instructors

"I feel like I need to use the library and librarians more to find appropriate and HIGH QUALITY resources for my classes. It's been really difficult and time consuming to try and find stuff on my own. Sometimes it simply doesn't exist, or the quality is very poor." - SHS

*"**Students are more likely to read open-access publications** that don't require an additional GrizzARD login to access via the library." - CAS*

"I'm working on turning my classes into no textbook required courses, so I'm always looking for open access content. I've used an open access textbook, but honestly the quality was terrible." - SHS

In what ways has the growing availability of open access literature and data impacted your use of and your relationship with the library?

“I do not believe that it has impacted me, mainly because the library has subscriptions to many non-open access journals that I use in my research and teaching.” - SHS

“The availability of OA literature has led to a decentering of the research process in which academic libraries are no longer the central stations they used to be...” - CAS



*Today, the availability of digital archives has had a transformative impact on the way we *do* humanities, but it calls into question what the role of libraries is in catalyzing those projects.” - CAS*

Library relationships

Faculty look to the library for both expertise in the discovery of OA research materials, and for guidance in navigating the OA publishing process.



Author

“Please help people to publish papers in open access. It helps researchers to gain visibility.” - CAS

“I wish library would support more open access journals where we could publish without paying any APC.” - SECS



Researcher

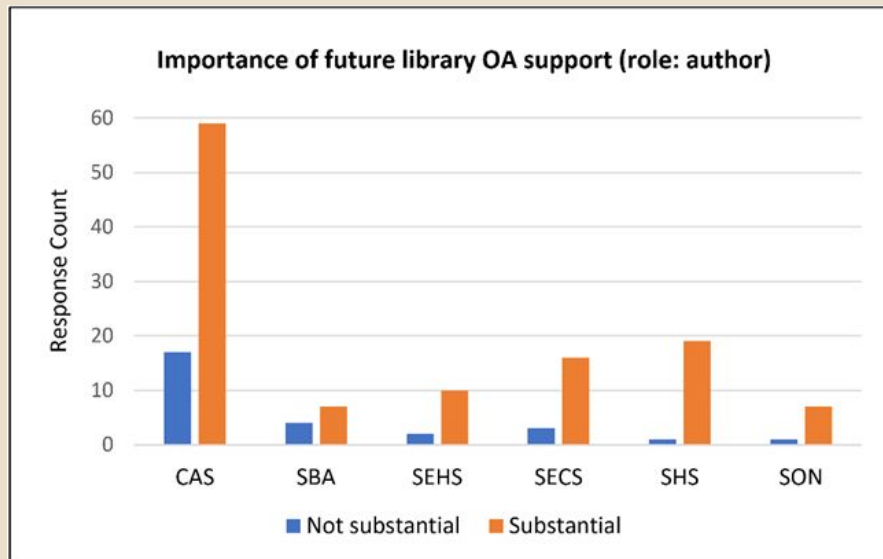
“Continue working to index open access publications and help us search them. Give us more info/training about how to publish open access.” - CAS



Instructor

“...my students would still need instruction on how to research and consume information.” - CAS

Future importance - library OA support



Themes - OA impact on faculty/library relationship

Theme 1: Decreased need for traditional library services

- Research process no longer centered on the library (8)
- Decreased reliance on library for access (6)
- Decreased reliance on library for discovery (1)
- Decreased physical visits to library (1)

Theme 2: Increased need for services supporting OA

- Reliance on librarians for OA publishing guidance (8)
- Reliance on library for OA teaching materials (3)
- Desire more OA publishing agreements (2)

Theme 3: Little or no impact on relationship

- Little or no impact (34)

Implications for library

- Librarians provide training for faculty to better understand OA publishing - eliminate bias that may impact T & P
- Librarians provide support for finding and evaluating venues for publication
- Library to continue to find ways to support OA publishing through funding, agreements and advocacy.



"Since the SBA and my department don't count such publications, I didn't use it." - SBA

"It depends on the discipline. In my area, open access journals with APC usually are not reputable." - CAS

"Open-access research is often not accepted as credible in our field." - SHS

"I would like if the library can create options for the researchers to publish open access." - SECS

"I really wish these APCs can be handled by the university. It would help a great deal having another set of eyes vetting these OA publishers. It just seems too easy to be defrauded by predatory publishers." - CAS



Looking to a future where the majority of journals will be open access...

What is the role of the library?

How do you see OA affecting your work?

Thank you.

SLIDES <https://tinyurl.com/yvpw28u3>



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Demeter, M., Jele, A., & Major, Z. B. (2021). The international development of open access publishing: A comparative empirical analysis over seven world regions and nine academic disciplines. *Publishing Research Quarterly*, 37(3), 364-383.

Olejniczak, A. J., & Wilson, M. J. (2020). Who's writing open access (OA) articles? Characteristics of OA authors at Ph.D.-granting institutions in the United States. *Quantitative Science Studies*, 1(4), 1429–1450.
https://doi.org/10.1162/qss_a_00091

Forthcoming...

Van Loon, J., & Rodriguez, J. (2025). Faculty perspectives on open access: A multi-dimensional analysis of open access usage and library relationships at an R2 institution [Manuscript submitted for publication]. Kresge Library, Oakland University.

(Faculty quote “trading cards” follow)



“Oakland should provide funding for open access publication for faculty who do not have external funding at the time. Faculty must publish in order to be competitive for external funding, so not having funds for publishing creates a barrier to the kind of success needed to get funded.”



“...In my area, open access journals with APC usually are not reputable.”



“...This seems like a terrible model for the future of academia, absolutely dreadful and potentially fraught with tons of unethical consequences. I avoid publishing in pay-to-publish journals, whether predatory or under the guise of open access fees.”



“One thing that has been challenging is the proliferation of open-access journals that are of low quality that simply charge authors to publish anything with limited quality or peer review (predatory publishers).”



“ Open-access research is often not accepted as credible in our field.”



“There is lots of junk published in open access because bad researchers from rich countries you can pay a hefty publication fee to predatory journals. They are minimally refereed. Thus such publications cannot be taken on their face values for the correctness and accuracy.”



“Many journals have optional open access publication choices where I can have wider audiences but with no funding provided by OU, it considerably limits the dissemination of my research.”



"I've been able to collaborate with other researchers because our previous work was open-access, so we could find the ways our research overlapped/could combine for future research."



*“Many of the journals I publish with have or are working toward an open-access model, but the monograph publishers do not. Having a fund to off-set even just the cost of publishing *one* chapter of a monograph open-access increases the impact of the entire monograph.”*



"I am hesitant about open access. I had feared that journals would become much more lenient in their review process because they want money from authors...I understand the spirit of open access, but I suspect that over time it will become more and more a pay-to-publish system."



“The open access trend has imported negative influence on the traditional peer review model. There is an obvious bottleneck of availability of qualified peer reviewers at traditional journals.”



"I get a (very small) percentage of the indirect costs that go to the university. So, I used this money to pay for open access publishing in a journal..this was one of the best in the field, has a quick turnaround time, and included an untenured faculty member as a coauthor, so it was really important to me that it was published quickly and open access for their final tenure review."



“ It is getting complicated. It is hard to publish in open access journals unless one has funding set aside from grants. Many of the traditional journals now have very long time to acceptance, which makes open access attractive.”



“While I would like to use open access content in order to both reduce the cost of course materials for nursing students and to decrease time-to-dissemination of new nursing knowledge for practice, there are not enough high-quality open access resources to do this.”



“I think if anything it reduces interactions with the library. When you go to obtain a source and it's freely available online, i.e. directly from the journal for example, then you don't need the library at all. Unless I am missing something...?”



“OA material does not require the library to subscribe to a journal for me to have access for teaching and research purposes. Thus OA makes me less dependent on the library.”



"I do believe that helping investigators to obtain or apply for funding for open access fees and avoiding predatory "open access" journals should be a priority with regard to this area."



"I use exclusively open source materials when teaching and work with OU library to source materials."



"I rely heavily on open access data in my work, the library stopped using the best source - ICPSR. I now no longer access data sets through the library."



“After reviewing available options, I have not assigned any open-access publications as textbook replacements. In my field the quality of such publications is lacking.”



“Open access literature and data are essential for doing research.”



"I don't generally notice if articles are open access or not, since I usually go through the Kresge Library website to search for articles."



“We probably get 50% our articles accessed through open access and the other 50% I have to place article PDF requests through the library. That later is a fast system too.”



“I'm not interested in the issue of open access publications.”



"I do not believe that it has impacted me, mainly because the library has subscriptions to many non-open access journals that I use in my research and teaching."



"It hasn't really [impacted my library use]. I still rely on the library to provide access to important sources in my discipline."



“ Library still helps facilitate me in finding these articles and in navigating my understanding of the process of publishing open access.”



“My physical visits to the library has decreased because of the open access journals and electronic journals from the library. Thanks also to the faculty resources that Kresge Library provides - I can request electronically scanned copies of journal articles or book chapters. This really helps me work more effectively when doing research! Thank you!”



"I frequently use Library's open access literature for research, but I wish library would support more open access journals where we could publish without paying any APC."



"I really wish these APCs can be handled by the university. It would help a great deal having another set of eyes vetting these OA publishers. It just seems too easy to be defrauded by predatory publishers."



“As an author, I have avoided publishing in open access journals because of the high fees associated with them.”



"I used to rely on the library's open access funding to be able to publish open access. I now avoid publishing in open access because we lack the funding."