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Crediting Faculty for Open, Public Access to Research and Scholarship as Outreach Service in APPR

A White Paper from the Library & Information Technology Committee,
University of Tennessee Faculty Senate

November 2020, edited with minor changes February 2021

Introduction

This white paper discusses how colleges and departments may encourage and more expansively define particular community outreach (CO) and mission-aligned service activities undertaken by their faculty. The Faculty Handbook states that *outreach engagement* or *outreach service* “engages professional skills of faculty to benefit external communities and extends the intellectual resources of the university to seek solutions to problems” (section 3.2 “Criteria for Appointment to Faculty Rank”).

Identifying and reporting strong CO and mission-aligned service activities are important for three reasons. First, doing so can beneficially impact a faculty member’s record of achievement, especially with regard to faculty evaluation during the annual performance-and-planning review (APPR). Second, doing so may more accurately capture UT faculty members’ many contributions to creating and disseminating knowledge locally and globally, and improving the well-being of Tennesseans—both part of UT’s mission. Relatedly, it may also encourage others to make similar contributions.

At the behest of the Faculty Senate’s Faculty Affairs Committee, colleges and departments are now (in 2020-21) reviewing and updating their bylaws, including those related to APPR and criteria for appointment to faculty rank (Faculty Handbook section 3.2). Now is a good time to consider recognizing faculty for CO and mission-aligned service activities that may already be taking place and are underreported, or that could be encouraged and result in improved metrics in these areas.

Background

Tennessee is a land-grant institution. By definition, land-grant institutions prioritize equal access to education and engaging in research that benefits the public. They are also committed to community engagement (aplu.org). As such, UT’s mission is, in part, to serve the statewide community. In Knoxville, that is “to move forward the frontiers of

human knowledge and enrich and elevate the citizens of the state of Tennessee, the nation, and the world.” System-wide, that is to “serve the people of Tennessee and beyond through the discovery, communication and application of knowledge” and “contribute to the economic, social and environmental well-being of all Tennesseans.”

Typical scholarly publication practices are seemingly at odds with these missions and with our land-grant designation. Many publishers do not clearly state the rights authors retain to a work, making it difficult for authors to exercise any rights they have to share the work with a broader audience beyond academic subscribers. Publishers may also make it difficult for authors to find or obtain the version of a work they have the rights to share in an open access repository. Additionally, faculty review and evaluation criteria do not usually recognize or reward/credit the exercise of these rights in support of institutional service and outreach missions.

As a result, the vast majority of 6.8 million Tennesseans are unable to access most scholarly publications authored by UT faculty. This means that:

- Graduates of UT who enter a profession rather than the academy generally do not have access to the latest research and evidence.
- Likewise, organizations throughout the state—including non-profit organizations working on issues ranging from opioid addiction, domestic abuse, equity and social justice issues (including those affecting black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), Latino/a/x/e people, women, and other marginalized groups), public health, affordable housing, mentorship, renewable energy, stewardship of natural resources, and child well-being—do not have access to information and research that would assist them in a) creating evidence-based interventions and practices and b) applying for grants and other competitive funding opportunities.
- Local and national newspapers writing about or quoting UT faculty do not link to full-length, original research articles, deepening the public crisis in distinguishing between information, disinformation, and misinformation.
- Instructors at R2 and R3 institutions, including many historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), community colleges, and high schools, among others, do not have equitable access to peer-reviewed and scholarly literature in their own fields and, therefore, cannot assign students many relevant readings, whether in article or monograph form. This effectively privileges those who attend and/or are employed by R1 universities.

Furthermore, inequitable access to information and evidence negatively impacts Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts. From incoming and transfer student preparation to faculty hiring decisions, lack of access to current and vetted scholarship by leading

researchers is a barrier that inhibits equitable professional/scholarly practice and research/scholarly potential.

For all of these reasons, [many leaders among land-grant universities through their faculty governance structures have enacted open access policies](#), setting an institution-wide expectation for open archiving of accepted article manuscripts. With open archiving, faculty deposit their accepted manuscripts--accepted by any journal, including a) subscription access, b) subscription/open access hybrid, or c) open access--to the institutional open access repository. (These policies focus on authors' accepted manuscripts rather than the publisher's version of an article in order to comply with publishers' copyright terms.) This makes faculty research and scholarship open access, that is, available to read by the public. It also enables the institution's library, a nonprofit memory institution, to archive research and scholarship for future use.

Note that embargoed, open access archiving in open repositories, such as UT's open repository TRACE (Tennessee Research And Creative Exchange), is **already permitted by the policies of these major journal publishers**, among others:

- Elsevier
- Sage
- Springer-Nature
- Taylor & Francis
- Wiley

Open access archiving is little discussed in higher education when compared to publishing in open access journals, but both forms of open access address many of the same inequities. For departments in which faculty-authored monographs are decisive in tenure appointments, an increasing number of scholarly monographs are available open access through several means, including subventions (e.g., the [TOME](#) project) or [rights reversion](#).

Solution

The crux of the situation is that the vast majority of journal articles can be openly archived without any special permission from the publisher, but only if an author deposits their accepted final manuscript (not the publisher's version) to the library-run institutional open repository, TRACE. By taking this crucial step--sending to the library the final, accepted author's manuscript--UT research and scholarship would become overwhelmingly available to the public; however, this step is rarely taken by UT authors and is unaddressed in APPR evaluation criteria.

In order to more fully actualize UT's mission, serve the state as a land-grant institution, and engage in community outreach, the committee recommends that colleges and departments incentivize faculty to archive openly or publish openly by adding such criteria to their bylaws regarding appointment to faculty rank and credit such activities in faculty APPR evaluations. CO and mission-aligned service recognition may include **[1]**:

1. Open access archiving: Publishing in any venue, then openly archiving the author's accepted manuscript **[2]** in an open repository, including TRACE, UT's institutional, open access repository. *N.B. Open access archiving does not incur a fee. Also, with regard to journal articles, open archiving rarely involves negotiating with the publisher of a journal. Rights are typically spelled out in a journal's existing open archiving ("Green open access") policy.*
2. Open access publishing: Publishing an article under a Creative Commons license (especially the attribution-only license [\(CC BY\)](#) or the attribution and non-commercial use license [\(CC BY-NC\)](#), which both facilitate reuse most easily). *N.B. Open access publishing often incurs a fee.*

The committee wishes to emphasize route 1 above (open access archiving) because it does not limit authors to particular publication venues, incurs no financial burden, and is already permitted by major journal publishers. Additionally, open archiving is a path to open access for materials that are not journal articles, but that are recognized by colleges and departments as benefiting the public and consistent with peer-reviewed content, though they may undergo a different review or editorial process prior to publication.

Such additions to each college's or department's bylaws (in criteria for appointment to faculty rank) would recognize that the resources faculty spend to add the accepted manuscript version to an open repository, secure funding for an open access publication, or undertake related activities leading to public access to scholarship are worthwhile endeavors creditable in APPR. For some colleges or departments, these endeavors may also become general expectations for faculty performance.

Framing these activities as CO or mission-aligned service does not preclude a college or department from recognizing these activities as part of research. Such activities align with major funders' policies (e.g., NIH Public Access Policy, White House OSTP memo), with major funders' own repositories (e.g., PubMed Central), and major universities' existing policies. For many funders, publishing and archiving openly are considered not only best practice but also vital to the responsible conduct of research and the fulfillment of scholarship and creative achievements. Furthermore, open access, achieved either

through publishing or archiving, can help faculty develop, achieve, and maintain “a nationally recognized record in disciplinary research / scholarship / creative activity / engaged scholarship,” (The Faculty Handbook, section 3.2) as it improves citation rates [3].

Whether CO, service, or research, these activities demonstrate faculty members’ alignment with UT’s mission and reflect time spent in contributing to and improving our community and region. Archiving openly and publishing openly ensure public access to research and scholarship, build the foundation for a strong relationship between a land-grant institution and its wider community, and are essential for equitable access to evidence-based, vetted, peer-reviewed information. Such activities deserve encouragement as well as reward when fulfilled.

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[1] Examples of Activities to Credit/Recognize:

- Give credit if a journal article was published under a Creative Commons license, such as a CC BY or CC BY-NC license. Note that UT’s Open Publishing Support Fund can cover OA fees up to \$2,500 per article accepted by eligible journals (restrictions apply).
- If published under a traditional copyright transfer agreement, in which the author’s copyright is transferred to the journal publisher, then give credit if the

author's accepted manuscript has been openly archived in TRACE, UT's open access repository. This can be viewed as "Publish anywhere, archive openly."

- Upon acceptance, send 1) the accepted manuscript to trace@utk.edu, along with 2) the name of the journal that has accepted it and 3) the anticipated publication date. *N.B. The author's accepted manuscript becomes more difficult to identify or request after the publisher's version has been published, so depositing upon acceptance is best practice.*
- Libraries use a Jisc database (based in the U.K.) to determine the publisher's open archiving ("Green OA") policy, including any embargo period. Libraries will add the accepted manuscript to TRACE, and place it under embargo if required by the publisher's policy.
- Give credit for any monograph published under a CC license.
- Give credit for sharing or archiving datasets openly, without any licensing restrictions.

[2] What is the author's accepted manuscript?

Different from the article proof, it is the post-peer-review manuscript, prior to the publisher's formatting, pagination, and so forth. See this page for a simple chart outlining the differences: https://libguides.utk.edu/ld.php?content_id=36454878.

[3] Is there a citation advantage for publications that are open access?

"The utility and consistency of the citation advantage across different research fields has been intensively debated because its magnitude substantially varies depending on the discipline (Table 2). However, the general tendency identified by studies to date indicates that there is at least some association between OA publishing and increased citation counts across most disciplines (Hajjem *et al.*, 2006; Antelman, 2004) (Figure 2 and Table 2). [...] In sum, evidence indicates that OA is broadly related to increased academic impact in terms of citations (Figure 2; see also McKiernan *et al.* (2016)), but given the large variability in results, further research should aim to synthesize these findings in a meta-analysis and try to explain the cause of this variability."

Source:

Tennant JP, Waldner F, Jacques DC, Masuzzo P, Collister LB, Hartgerink CH. The academic, economic and societal impacts of Open Access: an evidence-based review. *F1000Res*. 2016 Apr 11; 5:632. doi: [10.12688/f1000research.8460.3](https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.8460.3). PMID: 27158456; PMCID: PMC4837983.