



UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

2025-26 ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

According to Senate Bylaw 185, the University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (UCOLASC) shall:

1. Advise the President concerning the administration of the libraries of the University in accordance with the Standing Orders of The Regents and issues related to innovations in forms of scholarly communication.
2. Perform such other appropriate duties as may be committed to the Academic Senate by proper authority.

UCOLASC met three times in 2025-26 via videoconference.

Consultation with the California Digital Library

UCOLASC met with representatives from the California Digital Library (CDL) at each meeting. Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director Günter Waibel provided regular updates on CDL budget issues as well as emerging federal policy changes and requirements. UCOLASC and the CDL have had a cooperative relationship, and the committee has supported many CDL priorities.

- The CDL budget faced challenges this academic year, receiving budget cuts and having to eliminate staff positions.
- The Online Archive of California (OAC), in existence since 1995, was relaunched on a new platform this year. This service aggregates collection descriptions of California libraries, archives, historical societies, and museums.
- The OA Forward coalition brings worldwide chief negotiators together to discuss how to advance publisher based open access. All UC campuses and UCOP have signed an Expression of Interest (Eol) in advancing OA through publisher negotiations. UC values and strategies (represented by UCOLASC statements) are strongly represented in the statements shared at the recent conference.
- CDL is partnering with the Big Ten Academic Alliance and Lyrasis on a research project funded by a grant from the Gates foundation to do a landscape analysis of Diamond OA publishing in the United States.

Council of University Libraries Updates

Budget cuts at all campuses are impacting libraries, and cuts to the shared collections budget are felt throughout the system. Libraries have banded together to roll out varying mitigation strategies, but core library holdings and services capacity is being cut.

Updates from Office of Scholarly Communication Working Groups:

Project Transform (PTWG)

Project Transform continued to update UCOLASC about their work to secure author rights through negotiating transformative publishing contracts and noted that publishers representing approximately 55 percent of all UC articles have signed transformative agreements. Noncommercial topics including retention of Artificial Intelligence/Text and Data Mining rights are also in negotiation. Securing UC researcher's rights to use computational methods on licensed content has been a key feature of this year's negotiations. Negotiations with the American Chemical Society have taken up much of the team's attention this year.

Conflict between Federal Funders and Publisher Policies

UCOLASC was asked to provide a letter of support to the negotiating team and the UC Libraries, not only specifically rejecting the recent response of publishers to federal mandates but also emphasizing how the position of the negotiation team aligns directly with the principles outlined in the 2018 Declaration of Rights and Principles to Transform Scholarly Communication.

Advancing OA Monographs for UC Authors

Miranda Bennett, Director of Shared Collections, CDL, reported on the effort to support UC authors in making their monographs open access. The project will provide steady funding for publishers and steady expense levels for libraries. The third pilot program with Oxford University Press is fully focused on backlist titles, aiming for a total of 100 new open books this year.

The team is also involved with Big Ten Books, part of the Big Ten Academic Alliance, and UC libraries provided funding for 34 UC-authored books to be opened. In addition, new workflows that can be replicated and make these works available with eScholarship. The program enhances the UC reputation as a force within open access publishing. The steering committee charged with advancing this work will compare recommended strategies versus current investments and determine which strategies to pursue further.

eScholarship

eScholarship has a repository function and is a publisher of diamond open access journals. All materials collected under the auspices of the UC Open Access policies are deposited in and available via eScholarship. Similarly, all theses and dissertations written by UC graduate students are submitted to ProQuest and displayed in eScholarship. A new function of the repository is to provide access to the UC-authored OA Monographs pilot.

eScholarship publishes more than 90 UC-affiliated journals. eScholarship journals represent a wide range of disciplines, especially humanities and social sciences which make up 50-70 percent of the output and includes undergraduate and graduate student-published journals.

Because the prestige of these journals rests with the editorial board, Promotion and Tenure committees need support in navigating a different kind of valuing for all these Diamond OA journals. The program is exploring various funding models including the newly launched Open Journals Collective, providing a potential path toward sustainable Diamond open access publishing.

Federal Data Management Planning

Federal policy requires that funded authors deposit their data in data management systems. Recent changes from both NSF and NIH to data management and sharing plans appear to be minor but have large implications. NSF Data management Plans will now be moving into a closed federal portal – currently with no API, though the community is advocating for open APIs and interoperability. The UC has a web application helping researchers create best practice data management plans called the DMP tool that serves as a communication tool between libraries and researchers, so that information and guidance could be delivered to researchers. The CDL and UCOLASC will continue to monitor changes to federal policy about data submission and work to preserve open APIs

UC Arts and Humanities OA Fund

The small-scale (300 articles) pilot of the UC Libraries Arts and Humanities Open Access Fund was launched in November 2026. This fund is managed by the library system and will fully cover fees for open access publishing by an eligible UC corresponding author (a UC-affiliated early career researcher, including students, postdocs, research staff, and pre-tenure faculty) in an eligible journal. Because transformative agreements are not possible with every single journal, this fund allows authors to choose open access by subsidizing the costs for eligible journals not covered by an existing transformative agreement.

Systemwide Library Facilities

The UC approach to shared library facilities is innovative as the approach prioritizes efficiency, sustainability, and effectiveness in managing these collections without ceding access, preservation, or stewardship. The governance structure is carefully constructed so that it continues as a shared resource, prioritizing active accessibility to the materials while the system moves from a regional structure to a system-wide one. A new full-time director of the Systemwide Library Facility, and Associate University Librarian, Shari Laster, will coordinate the transformation.

Other UCOLASC Issues:

Data Evaluation

The committee discussed how tenure and promotion evaluation of data and software contributions should be considered for advancement. A member provided a rubric, created by the Implementing

Data Evaluation in Academia Working Group (IDEA WG), which grew from a collaboration between Helios Open and Making Data Count. IDEA WG aims to provide resources for universities to standardize analysis of data and other open science contributions as scholarly work products for hiring and promotion. For example, one project goal is to modernize fields in standard CV-creating software to provide a reporting area for data and other open science work products. Another is to offer guidance for review committees on how to consider these products, thereby fostering more accurate evaluation of diverse faculty work in the promotion process.

Artificial Intelligence

UCOLASC spent much time in vigorous discussion of artificial intelligence (AI) and publishing. Members learned neither a closed publication nor a CC-BY-NC(-ND) license protect against commercial AI training on UC-authored work. Open access presents the most straightforward path to federal compliance but will generally not facilitate authors who seek revenue streams from their publishing activities. Members responded to the UC Academic Senate Workgroup on Artificial Intelligence final report and wrote letters supporting the Project Transform Negotiating Team's continued commitment to open access as they discuss contracts including AI provisions.

Consultation with Senate Leadership

Each meeting, UCOLASC received updates from Senate leadership on current concerns of the wider Senate as well as matters related specifically to the committee. Topics covered included:

- Topics from Assembly and Council meetings, including meeting with President Milliken.
- Federal government actions against the UC and ever-changing funding landscapes, including grant cancellations and restorations.
- The work of the University Committee on Adaptation to Disruptions (UCAD) and the following joint Senate-Administration UCAD-Plus Workgroup effort.
- The Performance of Undergraduate Degree. Programs Task Force (PUDP), the successor to the 2023 -2024 Presidential Task Force on Instructional Modalities and UC Quality Education, which is of interest specifically to libraries.

Changes to Universal Guidance by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

In June, the OMB released proposed changes to universal guidance. UCOLASC responded, noting that the new policy prohibits use of federal research grant funds to pay for subscriptions, which would devastate the UC Library's journal subscription budget. Library costs are used to set indirect cost rates, and this might disallow payments to publishers. In addition, the policy disallows using federal grant funds for publishing fees, including open access fees. The UC has worked diligently to establish transformative agreements with publishers; this policy would disrupt this substantially.

Endorsements, Systemwide Reviews, and Letters of Support

UCOLASC wrote several letters and memos, and responded to systemwide review items:

- In November, a review of the Senate Adaptation to Disruptions Working Group Interim Report

- In November, a statement on 100% Open Access and Funder Compliance
- In February, a response to request for systemwide review of APM 015-016 and an update on faculty discipline revisions
- In February, a memo to the Project Transform Working Group amplifying a previous statement in support of open access publishing agreements, noting a federal mandate that all federally funded research articles be deposited in a public repository without any embargo period and calling on publishers to cooperate with this requirement.
- In March, a Statement on the UC Libraries Negotiations with Publishers Regarding Fair Use, Text and Data Mining, and Artificial Intelligence Usage Rights, sent to the Project Transform Negotiating Team and the Council of University Librarians
- In June, a review and response to the Academic Senate Workgroup on Artificial Intelligence Workgroup final report.
- In June, a letter to the Project Transform Negotiating Team, Project Transform Working Group, and the Council of University Librarians about 100% Open Access and Artificial Intelligence.
- In June, a letter to the Executive Director, Research Policy Analysis and Coordination, expressing concern over proposed changes to universal guidance by the OMB.

UCOLASC expresses gratitude to its regular consultants, student representative, and guests: Associate Vice President and Provost Günter Wqibel, CoUL Chair William Garrity, LAUC President Heather Briston, Director of Publishing, Archives, and Digitization Catherine Mitchell, Director of Shared Collections Miranda Bennett, Director of Systemwide Library Planning Danielle Watters-Westbrook, Assistant Director for Open Access Agreement Matthew Willmott,, Senior Project Manager Adrian Turner, University Librarian, San Diego Erik Mitchell, Associate University Librarian and Director of Systemwide Library Facilities, Shari Laster, James Steintrager, UC San Francisco, Rich Schneider, Undergraduate Representative Alice Parra Rios..

Respectfully submitted:

Abraham Stone, Chair
 Déborah Blocker, Vice Chair
 Jennifer LaFleur, Berkeley
 John Roberts, Berkeley
 Michael Foster, Irvine
 Alan Fiske, Los Angeles
 Christopher Ojeda, Merced
 Sholeh Quinn, Merced
 Joseph Genereux, Riverside
 Sebastian Salegh, San Diego
 Michael Oldham, San Francisco
 Teresa Shewry, Santa Barbara
 Michael Hance, Santa Cruz
 Stefani Leto, Analyst