

# An Open Access Policy at Texas A&M University



Authors: Faculty Senate Research Committee and TAMU University Libraries, 3/19/2018

## What is an Open Access Policy?

Open access scholarly literature is “digital, online, free-of-charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions”<sup>1</sup>. An *Open Access Policy* is a mechanism Universities have created to distribute creative works free of charge to the author and reader. An open access policy at TAMU would be managed by the TAMU Libraries to allow authors to archive an open access copy of their publication in an institutional repository. The library would be responsible for collecting and distributing the works so that the burden on the authors would be minimal. Open access publishing empowers TAMU authors by supporting the retention of copyrights by TAMU authors for noncommercial use of their work. Open access policies directly support the mission of land grant universities by making publically supported research openly available.

Universities around the world have created Open access policies to share their research so that society has equitable access to published scholarship. These policies generally allow authors to archive a copy of their publication in an institutional repository or published in an open access journal, in ways that help address both the *price barriers* and the *permission barriers* that undermine global access to the products of a university’s scholarly and creative work. Over six hundred universities and research institutions worldwide, including more than half of our peer institutions (as defined by Vision 2020), have an open access policy<sup>2</sup>.

The Faculty Senate Research sub-committee recommends that TAMU adopt an Open Access Policy. We are proposing the Faculty Senate as a whole vote on a resolution to recommend that the President’s office implement such a policy.

## What are some Benefits of Open Access Policies?

- Increased citation rates for researchers who publish openly<sup>3</sup>.
- Meets the emerging public access mandates of federal funding agencies and many nonprofit organizations<sup>4</sup>.
- Improves access to new knowledge that directly supports economic innovation, a range of governmental and non-governmental services, and levels the playing field for researchers in developing countries.
- Help address long term and key issues with the costs associated with scholarly publishing.

## Common Questions Raised About Open Access Policies

*Will an Open Access policy control where I publish?* No. Policies don’t determine where authors publish and always include an option to request a waiver or embargo, if required by a publisher.

*Won’t publishers push back against these policies?* Most do not. The University of California system has tracked which publishers requested waivers. Since 2013, UC authors requested waivers for only four publishers consistently, including *Nature*, *Science*, *PNAS*, and the *American Roentgen Ray Society*<sup>5</sup>.

*How does this relate to the ‘open access’ publishing fee journals charge?* Unless this fee is paid the paper will not be ‘open access’ on the journal website. However, without paying any open access fees to the journal an identical content article will be ‘open access’ on a University website maintained by TAMU Libraries.

<sup>1</sup> Suber, P. *Open Access*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2012. Epub.

<sup>2</sup> Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies (ROARMAP): <https://roarmap.eprints.org/>

<sup>3</sup> Tennant JP, Waldner F, Jacques DC *et al*. The academic, economic and societal impacts of Open Access: an evidence-based review [version 3; referees: 3 approved, 2 approved with reservations] *F1000Research* 2016, 5:632 (doi:10.12688/f1000research.8460.3)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/02/22/expanding-public-access-results-federally-funded-research>

<sup>5</sup> <https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/open-access-policy/publisher-communications/>

*How does this affect my interaction with the journal?* Nothing changes from the author’s perspective. You can even still sign the copyright statement, since that does not affect the University’s claim of retention of the noncommercial copyright use.

*Is this Allowed / Legal?* Yes. The University has always had the right to retain non-commercial use copyrights but has never exercised this right for this purpose.

*How will ‘open access’ function?* The University Libraries will be responsible for identifying and incorporating papers into our institutional repository. Web search engines will find the University version and make it accessible to all. The Library will do all the additional work, and notify faculty they are posting new publications.

*Do I have to participate?* No. At any point individual faculty have the option to ‘opt –out’ or delay the Library’s open access publishing. For example, certain high impact journals with release restrictions (e.g. Science and Nature) can be special cases where open access isn’t desired.

*Do I lose ownership of works I create?* No. This policy does not transfer copyright ownership, which remains with Faculty authors under existing University policy. Authors may still transfer copyright to publishers.

*Does this apply to all creative works?* Not at this time. The recommended implementation is to apply this policy only to future journal publications where one of the coauthors is a TAMU employee.

*How will this be implemented?* The faculty senate will recommend to the President’s office the creation of an open access policy committee including all relevant stakeholders, including faculty, library, and administration. The goal of this committee will be to create a policy similar to those of our peer institutions.

## Open Access Policies at TAMU Peer Institutions

(<http://vision2020.tamu.edu/peer-institutions>)

Peer University	Open Access Policy Status
University of Texas	None
University of California System	<a href="http://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/open-access-policy/">http://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/open-access-policy/</a>
University of Michigan	None
University of North Carolina	None
University of Wisconsin	None
University of Florida	<a href="http://fora.aa.ufl.edu/docs/75//2012-2013//OAUF-policy%20and%20info.pdf">http://fora.aa.ufl.edu/docs/75//2012-2013//OAUF-policy%20and%20info.pdf</a>
Georgia Institute of Technology	<a href="http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/faculty-handbook/5.5-policy-open-access-faculty-publications">http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/faculty-handbook/5.5-policy-open-access-faculty-publications</a>
University of Illinois	<a href="http://www.senate.illinois.edu/sc1512.pdf">http://www.senate.illinois.edu/sc1512.pdf</a>
University of Minnesota	None
Ohio State University	None
Pennsylvania State University	<a href="https://libraries.psu.edu/services/scholarly-publishing-services/open-access-publishing">https://libraries.psu.edu/services/scholarly-publishing-services/open-access-publishing</a>
Purdue University	None