

**Texas Library Coalition for United Action:**  
Update and Background: October, 2020

**Note:** The Coalition is in the midst of conducting negotiations with Elsevier, a for-profit company. As a result, we must be careful with information regarding our goals and strategies. Therefore, in lieu of a copy of the slide deck, this two-page summary has been provided. While “sanitized” we still request that this information be kept confidential and internal to campus.

- The Coalition that has been established is very strong and diverse. This infographic is a good summary of the organizational characteristics:



A complete list of members is [available](#). All members have signed a formal MOU of commitment. The Coalition was established to focus on a contract with Elsevier but may expand to other publishers or initiatives in the future. This has yet to be decided by the members.

- As the largest publisher of scholarly content in the world, Elsevier is a key target for change in scholarly communications. At 37.2%, Elsevier’s profit margin is **substantial** and higher than most for-profit companies in *any* industry! Companies that lag (far) behind Elsevier’s profit include Apple, Walmart, Amazon, and Alphabet (Google). Interestingly, Elsevier no longer describes itself as a publishing company but, rather, “a global information analytics business.”
- Essentially, negotiations are conversations with give and take on both sides so we cannot be definitive about what we will achieve but our priorities include:
  - A new contract by December 31, 2020;
  - Greater ownership by faculty of publications in Elsevier journals;
  - A more open and sustainable scholarly publishing system;
  - A mutually beneficial partnership of strength and mutual contribution;
  - Meaningful reduction in costs.

- A key goal for the Coalition is a new contract but members are not willing to sacrifice other important goals and principles. If necessary, we are willing to walk away and lose immediate access to current Elsevier content. Should that occur, we have plans in place and are committed to the practice that **while there may be a loss of convenience and immediacy to current content, there will not be loss of access.**
- Coalition Strengths/Leverage. Faculty in Coalition member libraries account for 7.2% of all research output in the U.S and about 6% of all U.S. research published by Elsevier. Also, faculty in Coalition member institutions occupy more than 1,500 advisory and editorial board positions of Elsevier journals with 1.3% of all editors and just under 4% of all U.S. editors. Finally, the economic impact of Coalition members is significant with annual expenditures exceeding \$25M. This is more than double the economic expenditure by the University of California libraries.
- While the leading publisher of scholarly content, the U.S. is lagging behind efforts for change in scholarly communications. Recent efforts include Germany's [Projekt DEAL](#), [Bibsam Sweden](#), Finland's "No deal, no review", Plan S, EU's [Horizon 2020](#).
- These are the keys ways in which access will continue in the case of a delayed contract:
  - Continued access to what we've previously purchased: "backfiles" of Elsevier content. At A&M this is a significant store of content.
  - Aggressive implementation of tools such as the [OA Button browser extension](#) that will locate legal copies of publications in open access repositories. It is estimated that as much as 50% of currently published research is available on an open basis.
  - Enhancement of Libraries' GetItForMe and document delivery services.
- In case of a lack of agreement by 12/31/20, the Coalition is committed to continuing discussions and eventual agreement.
- Faculty can help! If Elsevier contacts you directly with concerns about the negotiations, please let us know: [davidhcarlson@tamu.edu](mailto:davidhcarlson@tamu.edu). Have a following? Use your social media tools to promote support for our efforts. Please use handles: [@tamuLibraries](#) and [@TexasLibUnited](#).

