Scholarly Publishing:  
A Need for Faculty Engagement

The Problem: Increasingly we are unable to deal with the costs associated with the library – but the library is absolutely vital to the faculty.

Responses:

The librarians are painfully aware of the dilemma.

• They have been cutting subscriptions for many years (despite an ever-increasing body they should be collecting).

• They have engaged the commercial publishers (largely unsuccessfully) in trying to find a financially sustainable approach.

• Most faculty have been engaged only peripherally – but some have been exploring alternatives – with some notable success.

If we continue along the path we’ve been following, there is little reason to believe that the faculty’s fundamental need for access to the scholarly literature will be satisfied.

The faculty must work with the librarians to bring about some fundamental changes in our approach to scholarly publishing.

I’m specifically inviting the Cornell Faculty to join a group of us in addressing what has become a serious problem for all of higher education. I think it is entirely proper and normal for Cornell to provide national leadership in addressing this serious difficulty.

A group of us has already initiated a response and we invite your participation and support. I’m the PI and Ken King is project manager for a grant that is about to be formally announced.

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I believe the remedy is for us to shift to a system of Open Access to the scholarly output of every university – that is, modify our approach of giving away an exclusive right to third parties to control access to our scholarship.
Key Concepts:

1. Universities will assume responsibility for publishing and archiving its own scholarship.

2. Speed the transition from paper to digital paradigm to improve service and to contain costs (dual systems now increase costs).

3. Current approach has become too expensive to sustain into the future ($2 Billion ANNUAL Operating Budgets for 111 Research Libraries)

4. Squeeze out unnecessary (national) duplication (now every campus aspires to acquiring and storing in perpetuity a paper copy of everything)

With a national approach we should be able to share a single copy (with some, not aspire to total redundancy).

5. Speed the transition to the digital paradigm (for those who desire it).


7. Part Two – create a university-based, federated publishing model with collaboration whenever our goals of open access can be respected.