

TO: UC Merced Faculty

FROM: Kurt Schnier, Chair, UCM Academic Senate
Teenie Matlock, Interim Vice Provost for the Faculty
Maria DePrano, Chair, LASC
Haipeng Li, University Librarian

RE: Outcome of UC Negotiations with Elsevier

Thursday, February 28, 2019

We are writing to share the outcome of the University of California's negotiations to renew its systemwide license with scholarly journal publisher Elsevier, which have been underway for many months.

What's happening

While we did make progress, particularly in the past few weeks, toward defining a model for open access publishing of UC research, **Elsevier was ultimately unwilling to meet UC's key goal**: securing universal open access to UC research, as stated in UC's faculty-driven [principles on scholarly communication](#), while integrating open access publishing fees and subscription fees into a single cost-controlled contract.

As you have seen earlier, the Academic Senate today also expressed its [support for UC's position](#) with regard to the Elsevier negotiations.

In the end, cost, in particular, proved to be an insurmountable challenge. For example, Elsevier's most recent proposal did not include any cap on the total amount UC faculty could end up paying in article publishing fees. Their model also would not have allowed us to fully subsidize article fees for authors who lack the funds themselves. To meet UC's goal of open access publication for all UC authors, Elsevier would have charged authors over \$10 million per year *in addition to* the libraries' current multi-million dollar subscription. The university is not willing to accept a deal that increases Elsevier's profits at the expense of our faculty. **As a result, UC has [announced](#) that it will not be signing a new contract with Elsevier at this time.**

While we do not know exactly when, Elsevier is expected to begin limiting UC's access to new articles through its online platform, ScienceDirect, possibly very soon. This will mean some changes to how UC scholars access certain Elsevier journal articles.

What content will — and won't — be affected

If you use Elsevier articles in your research, here are the most important things to know:

- **Most Elsevier articles published in 2018 or earlier** will still be accessible via ScienceDirect. Because UC's prior contracts included permanent access to previously

published content, you will still be able to get immediate access to the full text of most articles via Elsevier's ScienceDirect backfiles, just as you have in the past.

- **Open access articles** in Elsevier journals are also unaffected. Many authors choose to pay an open access fee (called an article processing charge, or APC) when they publish, so it's always worth checking to see if the article you're seeking is available open access from the journal's website or elsewhere online ([click here](#) for tips on how to search for open access versions).
- **Elsevier e-books and other products** licensed by UC (e.g., Compendex, Reaxys) are covered under separate contracts and remain available as before.
- **What is affected:** At some point, Elsevier may begin to turn off UC's direct access to **articles with a 2019 publish date and the backfiles of certain journals ([download list](#))**. However, open access versions of many of these articles are available; [visit the UC Office of Scholarly Communication website](#) for advice on where to look. You can also [submit a request](#) and the UC Merced Library will help you get a copy of the final, published version of an article. If your new request requires rush processing, a request you've submitted has not been delivered within 24-48 hours (1-2 business days, excluding weekends) or if you have questions regarding article availability, contact UC Merced Library Interlibrary Loan by calling 209-500-8216 or emailing ucmill@ucmerced.edu.

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Interested in updates?

Find the latest information on the [Office of Scholarly Communication's website](#).

If you have any questions or need help accessing an article, please don't hesitate to email the library at ucmill@ucmerced.edu at any time.