



The Hard Reality of Open Access in Academic Promotion and Tenure

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Abstract:

Currently there are there are over 10,000 fully open access (OA) peer-reviewed scholarly journals from 135 countries, offering 1.7 million searchable articles. Clearly, the open access-publishing model forever changed the rules of publishing. Initiatives, such as PubMed Central and the adoption of the Creative Commons License model, have brought scientific and academic research to global audiences for 'free'. However, I posit that OA complicates life for the academic researcher as individual, scientific, fiscal, and institutional perspectives collide.

The requirement that academic faculty also research and publish that research is part of the peer-review process. However, there are a number of caveats since not all journals are created equal or fit the preconceived peg of appropriate journal. Not only does the explicit and implicit language surrounding tenure and promotion in academia create confusion, academic practice is often at odds with institutional expectations.

In this paper, we examine the effects of OA in the academy, with a focus on new OA frameworks (e.g., mega-journals), stakeholder issues (peer review, impact factor), and ethical issues (scientific integrity). I end with recommendations on policies and strategies for successful inclusion of OA within academia.