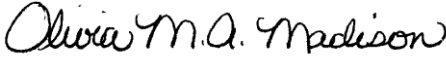


*Interoffice Communication*

**Date** August 17, 2009  
**To** Iowa State University Faculty, Staff and Students  
**From** Olivia M. A. Madison  
Dean of the Library   
**Re** Library Journal Cancellation Review

It is with regret, but nevertheless with some optimism, that I am initiating a journal cancellation project.

The University and Library face many financial unknowns at this time, including a strong likelihood that the FY11 budget will be reduced further from FY10 levels. We could certainly face mid-year reductions in the upcoming year as well, and library materials inflation will probably continue in the 7-8% range. For the University Library, both the Library Administration and the Library Advisory Committee (LAC) have recommended that we initiate a cancellation review by the university community early in the fall semester, to proactively address these financial uncertainties.

The three-fold purpose of this cancellation project is straightforward and pragmatic:

1. Fund the purchase of new journals that will support new interdisciplinary initiatives or major research/teaching programs that have been re-focused
2. Offset the cost of “unfunded” inflation
3. Identify resources for potential mid-year or FY11 budget reductions

As a backdrop to our local financial constraints, the global economic crisis has placed unusual budgetary pressure on research libraries, including spiraling annual inflation rates. Unfortunately, the research library community has seen few financial “reality checks” by publishers, or any acknowledgement on their part of the current economic downturn and its devastating impact on the academy. We struggle to meet the needs of expanding transdisciplinary research and the growth of new scholarly publishing outlets; and watch with concern the continuing movement of professional society journals from self-publishing to commercial publishers—enhancing their revenues, but frequently increasing our costs.

Through much of last year, the Library Advisory Committee discussed these numerous financial constraints – local and national – and recommended that we respond as a community. The Library’s financial constraints were also discussed in other venues, including the Faculty Senate, the University Budget Advisory Committee, and the P&S Council. Essential to the planning process are the policies and criteria that LAC recommended to govern any journal cancellation project. The policies document was shared with all the Library departmental liaisons last spring at the annual liaison meetings sponsored by LAC and the Library. LAC also recommended that if the Library were to initiate a cancellation project, it should address the need to contain costs, purchase new

interdisciplinary journals, and anticipate future budget reductions and/or unmet inflation costs. At LAC's strong urging, the Library began planning a serials cancellation project. I would like to note that, given the Library's careful management of the acquisitions budget, we have avoided such a project for well over ten years, despite many years of unmet inflation costs and budget reductions.

### ***Summary Review of FY10 Budget***

For FY10, the Library received financial protection to support materials inflation (5%), which provided vital relief for the overall 7.5% reduction against the entire Library budget. The Library also received base budget funding for what had been a previously soft-funded increase to pay for new publisher/vendor charges for their digital infrastructure costs. In addition, the Library received well-needed stimulus funds to offset for one year the FY10 reductions in the serials budget. As a result of unmet inflation costs (approximately 3%) and the FY10 budget reduction, the Library began this summer to cancel duplicate print or microform journal subscriptions when they were available through electronic licensing agreements; to cancel indexing and reference tools that have been determined duplicative in coverage or little used; and to reduce the budget for purchasing books.

### ***FY10 Journal Cancellation Project***

Having eliminated almost all format duplication from our journal collections, we are now faced with reviewing journal subscriptions that represent unique access. It is for this project that we ask for your help, to ensure that the decisions we make are the right ones when considering the impact on our collective research, teaching, learning, and outreach missions. Key to the ultimate cancellation decisions is the expectation that for any unique title we cancel, you can rely on effective interlibrary loan and/or document delivery services for continuing access.

To gather your input, the Library has prepared a list of unique journals and mounted it on a public website for your review and comment. The Journal Cancellation Review website provides you with:

- A list of journals that the Library is recommending for cancellation, and a means for you to communicate any comments you might have regarding specific titles
- The journal cancellation policies approved by the Library Advisory Committee
- The selection criteria used to create the cancellation list

I also ask for your suggestions for new journal titles that could make strategic differences in the Library's support for key research, teaching, learning and outreach programs.

The Journal Cancellation Review website is found at: <http://www.lib.iastate.edu/jourcanc-summ/2026/3047>

As libraries continue to struggle with inflation in the cost of scholarly journals, it would be helpful if our faculty would investigate the pricing practices of the journals they support as authors, reviewers, editors, and members of professional associations, and to advocate for pricing restraint. Faculty support for Open Access initiatives and for low-cost publishing alternatives will also help to maintain the widest possible distribution of the products of scholarship. The Library Advisory Committee and I hope to work with you on some initiative along these lines in the upcoming academic year.

C: Library Advisory Committee  
Gregory Geoffroy, President  
Elizabeth Hoffman, Executive Vice President and Provost