



COPE Seminar 2021

Welcome and Keynote

The evolving relationship between universities and scholarly publishers:
where do we go next?

Monday 27 September, 14:00 - 15:00 (BST)



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#COPE2021



PROMOTING INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARLY
RESEARCH AND ITS PUBLICATION

WELCOME TO THE 2021 COPE SEMINAR

Nine sessions throughout the week:

- The evolving relationship between universities and scholarly publishers
- AI
- Research data publication
- Paper mills
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Retraction taxonomy
- Ethical authorship versus fraudulent authorship
- How do publication ethics practices for journals apply to book publishing
- Introduction to publication ethics for newer or less experienced editors



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UPDATE OF COPE ACTIVITIES

Welcome to six new Council Members

- Itamar Ashkenazi, Israel Institute of Technology, Israel
- Patrick Franzen, Director, Publications and Platform, SPIE, USA
- Jason Hu, Senior Vice President, Research Services and Networks, Taylor & Francis Group, China
- Anubhav Pradhan, Deputy Editor, *South Asia Research*, India
- Jennifer Wright, Research Services Manager, Cambridge University Press, UK
- Jiayi Xu, Managing Editor, *CAAI Transactions on Intelligence Technology*, China

We also welcome back two Council Members who have been appointed for a second term

- Timothy Devinney, University Leadership Chair and former Pro-Dean of Research & Innovation, Leeds University Business School, UK
- Laura Wilson, Head of Rights, Emerald Publishing, UK



UPDATE OF COPE ACTIVITIES

Resources

- New guidelines on [Editorial board participation](#)
- New guidelines on [Editing peer reviews](#)
- New discussion document, [Artificial intelligence \(AI\) in decision making](#), which will be launched at the seminar session on AI
- New flowchart on [Handling of post-publication critiques](#), in collaboration with Wiley
- Coming next month: a new discussion document on ‘Diversity and inclusion in scholarly publishing’
- A repeat of COPE’s 2018 survey on Diversity in peer review. Results will be announced and discussed at the next COPE Forum (14 October 2021)



UPDATE OF COPE ACTIVITIES

Other COPE activity

- Work has been progressing for COPE membership for universities and research institutes, to be launch in 2022
- With DOAJ, OASPA and WAME, COPE has been updating the [Principles of transparency and best practice in scholarly publishing](#). To be published soon.
- COPE has formed a task force to support and provide guidance to our members on the issue of ‘paper mills’. A series of resources will be forthcoming in 2022.
- More resources to support diversity, equity and inclusion is planned over the coming months, with guidance on name changes and historical offensive content in the pipeline



UNIVERSITIES, RESEARCHERS, JOURNALS AND THE SCHOLARLY RECORD

In Human Resources, progressive bargaining practices recommend that bargaining among different agents look for agreed upon common interests as potential win-win solutions for addressing complex needs and vested interests.

With respect to knowledge creation, discovery and publication, there are multiple stakeholders involved but minimally we should be able to construct mechanisms around the promotion of the scholarly product of research; undertaken by researchers; promoted and facilitated by universities and disseminated and distributed through journals and books.

When things go wrong, there are structural barriers that disrupt effective cooperation and collaboration. Removing those barriers (where possible) is the purpose of this presentation.

THE EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND PUBLISHERS

Where do we go next?

In the next 30 minutes, I will try to accomplish the following:

1. Provide an environmental scan on the current state of Western universities globally;
2. Address the changing pressures on scholarly productivity that can impact the frequency of scholarly misconduct by faculty;
3. Identify the changing attitudes of faculty to peer review, copyright, open access and productivity;
4. Identify responses of universities to faculty misconduct and propose strategies for collaboration between universities and editors/publishers with respect to investigation of allegations of misconduct.



CURRENT FACTORS IMPACTING UNIVERSITIES

Universities in democratic nations states experienced unprecedented growth and development during post World War II. Universities were looked to as agents to foster modernity, science and technology, economic and social mobility and a progressive political and economic future.

All of this began to change and unravel from the 1970s forward, usually attributed to the ideology of Thatcher and Reagan and identified as an international movement of globalization and neoliberalism.

CURRENT FACTORS IMPACTING UNIVERSITIES

With globalization and neoliberalism, the attitudes of a number of governments towards universities shifted significantly.

1. University education became perceived primarily as a private benefit to the individual rather than a public benefit to the state.
2. As a private benefit, students were expected to assume more of the costs of an education.
3. This was followed by a reduction in the financial support for universities in terms of base operating funds with a concomitant rise in university tuition and fees.
4. The new political realities encouraged entrepreneurial and private industrial partnerships with industry in applied research and new technologies.
5. There was a shift in emphasis in thinking of universities primarily as existing for the teaching of future professionals and for the creation of new knowledge to characterizing universities as corporate entities existing within a highly competitive national and international environment vying to attract consumers (i.e., students) as well as competing for prestigious grants (i.e., funds for research). This propensity was strengthened through the development of comparative key indicators of performance and the emergence of national and international rankings of “excellence”.



CURRENT FACTORS IMPACTING UNIVERSITIES

More recently

In the Trump era and in right wing movements in a number of countries, there has also been growth of anti-intellectual populism/nationalism in a number of democratic countries with a corollary erosion of respect for educated professionals with specific expertise.

AS WELL

1. **There is a rise in the stature of disciplines that can attract external research funds and private sector partnerships and the diminishing of funds available to disciplines in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.**
2. **There is a recognized failure of universities to achieve many of the goals of social and economic mobility for students from lower-and-middle-class backgrounds. The increasing levels of debt load among poorer students, higher levels of attrition prior to graduation compared to upper-middle-class students, and a wage gap between graduates from higher socio-economic backgrounds compared to students from lower-or-middle-class backgrounds.**
3. **The response to budgetary constraints has resulted in the growing numbers of part-time, underpaid and limited term faculty employees in universities with both diminished status and economic differentiation from tenure track and tenured university faculty.**
4. **There is fragmentation and division within universities concerning the nature of knowledge and the consequence of that fragmentation (e.g., modernity versus post-modernity epistemologically and politically).**
5. **There is a growing division and distrust between university administrators and university faculty.**



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THESE VALUES HAVE ALSO HAD AN IMPACT ON OTHER COUNTRIES

India

Largely embraced international rankings and raised standards of performance for graduating PhDs and entry level faculty appointments, particularly in terms of publication.

China

Significantly increased STM funding for research, committed to international rankings and increased competition among universities and faculties.

CHANGING PRESSURES AND ATTITUDES OF YOUNG/NEW SCHOLARS IN UNIVERSITY CONTEXTS

Fewer permanent fulltime positions

- more competition
- more part-time teaching/less time for research
- grants dependent on publication records – so more pressure to publish

This has resulted in changing values among the faculty

- less commitment to service (“free peer reviews”)
- anger about traditional copyright transfer (career patterns have changed for many who previously saw publications as leading to career rewards)
- frustration of lack of compensation for publications
- push to support open access journals

IN THE CULTURE OF THE HAVES AND HAVE NOTS AMONG FACULTY

- **Competitive edge matters, therefore, publications matter**
- **International rankings equate to more universities focused on rewards for publication and grant success**

There is increased temptation to take an easier path to publication through:

- **FFP**
- **data manipulation / image manipulation**
- **text recycling / redundant publication**
- **submissions to predatory publishers / predatory conferences**



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FOR UNIVERSITIES

More people are paying attention

- Reputational risk – when misconduct becomes public, donors notice, journalists notice, the government notices, the funders notice, the bloggers notice
- As well, universities operate under labour law and frequently with negotiated and ratified terms of employment. Such laws and practices generally entrench principles of natural justice, confidentiality, representation by unions or associations, etc.



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FOR JOURNALS / PUBLISHERS

Reputational risk has also increased

- As with universities, more people are paying attention, including journalists, blogs, funders of research
- The reputation of journals and publishers depends on the integrity of the published scholarly record. Failures to limit or address allegations of misconduct in the published research can be harshly critiqued.



SO WHERE DO WE JOINTLY GO FROM HERE?

Here's a CLUE (Cooperation & Liaison between Universities & Editors)

- In April 2021, Liz Wager and Sabine Kleinert on behalf of the CLUE Working Group published the recommendations on a multi-year, multi-stakeholder consultation among researchers, editors/publishers and university administrators on best practices to facilitate correcting the scholarly record. See *Research Integrity and Peer Review*, 6, doi:10/1186/s41073-021-00109-3.
- Many of these recommendations which are addressed to institutions/journals and funders respectively call for clarity of policy, procedures and processes and are a useful starting point for a necessary collaborative dialogue that COPE can pursue as the implementation of university COPE membership is enabled.



THESE INCLUDE

For universities

- Established policy and procedures for university investigations and clarity of sharing key determinations of facts related to results of those investigations with editors
- Identifiable offices responsible for investigations
- Responsibility for all research undertaken at university

For journals

- Criteria for how/what/why information and evidence is passed by editors to universities

For funders

- Set policy for retention of research data in terms of duration requirements
- Ensure relations and obligations identified for institution with respect to funded research

There are many more useful recommendations in this article and it will prove to be a valuable guide to successful relations and decision-making for all of the stakeholders.

LAST CONSIDERATIONS

My personal observations of continued contentious issues that need to be mutually understood and respected

- 1. Editors/publishers statements that their interest is only in scholarly record and not in the misconduct/blame/discipline area is not helpful**
- 2. Universities relation to funders and concerns of erosion of autonomy in governance must be respected**
- 3. The fact that many violations of research integrity and misconduct which result in investigations of a research product are far more complex and embedded in issues that are more extensive than merely what has happened with respect to a particular article (and here I will give a few examples) should be understood.**



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REFERENCES

Aside from the article just referenced, much of the data for the environmental scan is taken from

Poff, D. (in press). *Corporate Social Responsibility and University Governance*. Springer Publishing.



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