

# Supporting New Models for Scholarly Publishing: A “Blueprint” for Launching an Open Access Journal

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## **Abstract**

In November 2004, Oxford College of Emory University published the first issue of the *Journal of Cognitive Affective Learning (JCAL)*, a peer-reviewed, open access journal that directly supports the Carnegie-sponsored Center for Cognitive-Affective Learning (CAL). *JCAL*, according to our official description, is dedicated to disseminating research on holistic educational practices that focus on the significance of the cognitive-affective relationship in promoting deep and enduring learning. *JCAL* publishes theoretical papers, original research reports, literature reviews, and extended reviews of selected books. As part of the editorial team of the Center’s official publication, the librarians at Oxford College are playing an integral role in supporting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) initiatives of the College. *JCAL* presents a way for the College to take a leadership position in the SoTL arena, as well as promotes cross-university collaborations and builds new and important connections between the academic program and the library. *JCAL*

will help us assess and document the College’s SoTL work, as well as make it “public.” As Pat Hutchings writes about SoTL, “One of the fundamental tenets of the scholarship of teaching and learning is “going public”—that is, documenting and representing our work as teachers, and our students’ learning, in ways that can be peer reviewed and built upon.”<sup>1</sup> Finally, *JCAL* will foster new forms of scholarly communication and publication through the use of open access publishing and open source software. In support of the goals of the CAL cluster, *JCAL*, as an open access publication, is uniquely suited to become a community-building tool for the member institutions of our cluster and other interested scholars.

In this paper, we will outline the issues and policy decisions that we faced as we established *JCAL*. We will weigh the relative merits and limitations of choosing an electronic journal publisher versus “doing it ourselves” via open access publishing. We will provide a detailed description of our process for establishing and launching an open access journal.

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Oxford College, with 600 students, is located 38 miles east of Atlanta at the site of the original Emory University campus in Oxford, Georgia. Oxford emphasizes strong grounding in foundational courses, small classes, and faculty dedicated to teaching students during the critical first two years of college. Most Oxford graduates continue on to the Atlanta campus to earn their degrees at Emory College, Goizueta Business School, or Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing. Oxford College is an undergraduate division of Emory University, uniquely positioned as a teaching campus within a major research university. Oxford is one of 12 institutions named “as a national cluster leader for the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) Campus Program, a Carnegie Foundation initiative designed to improve teaching and learning in higher education.”<sup>2</sup> Oxford’s Center for Cognitive-Affective Learning, a “center without walls,” is a collaborative endeavor to bring together faculty, students, and staff from institutions interested in holistic educational theories and practices that encourage the connection between the cognitive and affective in teaching and learning.<sup>3</sup>

### Strategic Importance of the Library’s Scholarly Publishing Role

As the Oxford College CAL Team prepared their initial proposal to Carnegie to establish the Center, they decided that a journal to support and share the scholarship and work of the cluster would be an excellent idea. Publishing a journal in the traditional method, with paper correspondence, phone calls, publishing and distribution costs, would have been prohibitive. However, with the new technology of electronic publishing, it might be made much easier. Dr. Ken Carter, Associate Professor of Psychology, approached the librarians for assistance. He thought the library seemed like a logical choice to begin this work since it is the scholarship nexus of the college. Through his work with the librarians, he knew they had experience in computer technology and research; they were scholars themselves; they understood the pitfalls of journals; and they also knew how to make our published scholarship “findable” for other scholars.

When Carter approached Kitty McNeill, Library Director, with the idea to start an electronic, peer-reviewed journal, McNeill knew that open access initiatives were strongly supported by the Emory University

libraries under the direction of Dr. Joan Gotwals, who was the Vice Provost and Director of Libraries at that time. McNeill immediately recommended talking with Martin Halbert, University Libraries Director of Systems and Executive Director of the Mellon Foundation funded MetaScholar Initiative, because of his expertise in the area of open access, digital preservation, the Open Archives Initiative (OAI), and the LOCKSS digital preservation system (<http://lockss.stanford.edu>). The university libraries were eager to support the proposed journal and played an integral role in establishing *JCAL*, from conception and testing to production. Historically, the Oxford library has worked with the other Emory libraries in collaborative technology and preservation projects and this venture promoted further cross-university connections. Because of the general libraries’ previous work in other digital library initiatives, a support structure existed that included staff, server space dedicated to open access publishing, and readily available open source software, Open Journal System (OJS), an electronic management and publishing system for refereed journals developed by the Public Knowledge Project (<http://www.pkp.ubc.ca/>).

As a partner in the launch of the electronic, peer-reviewed *JCAL* (<http://www.jcal.emory.edu/>), the library at Oxford College moved beyond its traditional role of acquiring, organizing, and providing access to information to actually producing information as a publisher and supporting different methods of scholarly communication such as open access publishing. According to the *Create Change* website, an initiative sponsored by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), “The traditional system of scholarly communications is not working. Libraries and their institutions worldwide can no longer keep up with the increasing volume and cost of scholarly resources.”<sup>4</sup> Through *JCAL*, we demonstrated our support of the SPARC initiatives to embrace different forms of scholarly communication.

Most importantly, we responded to an immediate need presented by the college to support a pedagogical and scholarly initiative, the Center for Cognitive-Affective Learning, which in turn, builds different and exciting connections between the library and the academic program that go beyond our traditional role. The college saw the library as a resource and as having

the capacity and expertise to launch and support the journal. As a result of our participation, the library is “at the table” when new initiatives and programs are being discussed, planned, and implemented. A by-product of our collaborative effort has been increased visibility for the college and our library at our university and in higher education.

### **In-house Versus Outsourcing of Publication**

When we were considering publishing a journal, our initial thought was to outsource the work. Carter explored several electronic publishing houses that manage the publishing process for journals. The ones we reviewed provided many benefits including online submission and revision, online editorial feedback, journal layout control, notification of submissions, automatic reminders to late reviewers as well as technical support. One particular publishing house that we liked offered us the option of either doing the work for us, while charging for subscriptions, or licensing their publishing software to us annually so that we could manage the journal ourselves. We determined that if we outsourced the journal to the publishing house, we would need to charge for subscriptions, a step we did not want to take for philosophical and practical reasons.

During the conversations about our options, McNeill contacted Halbert who informed her about their testing of an open source software package for journal management, the Open Journal System (OJS) developed by the Public Knowledge Project. “OJS is made freely available to journals worldwide for the express purpose of making open access publishing a viable option for more journals, as open access publishing can increase a journal’s readership as well as its contribution to the public good on a global scale.”<sup>5</sup>

Based on our evaluation of the various options, the university libraries’ commitment to the use of open source applications, open access publishing, and digital preservation, we decided to use the OJS software to manage submissions and publish our journal. This decision allows our authors to retain copyright for their works without being a charged an author’s fee. Because we have the choice of foregoing subscription fees to readers, thus making it freely accessible, we believed that our decision supported the Center’s goal of building an online community of scholars.

### **Process for Establishing and Launching an Open Access Journal**

When we began our work to launch the journal, we really had no clue where to begin. To our knowledge, an implementation checklist did not exist that we could follow as a blueprint for building an open access journal. Meeting weekly, we started by looking at other electronically published journals for clues. We talked with Halbert, with the editors of *Molecular Vision*, a highly respected open access peer-reviewed research journal published at Emory (<http://www.molvis.org/molvis/>), and with John Willinsky of the Public Knowledge Project. As a result of these conversations, we began to assemble the various pieces of the publishing “puzzle,” and a picture began to emerge. The “puzzle pieces” included four main areas: role definition, software testing and implementation, editorial policies and procedures establishment, and publicity/marketing plan development.

#### **A. Role Definition**

What was each of us going to do and how were we going to define our roles? As of this writing, we continue to re-examine our roles and to redefine them as new situations arise; however, we were able, by reviewing other journal editorial team structures and the editorial flowcharts that are included in the OJS system, to establish our core roles and responsibilities early on. As it turned out, three basic roles evolved: the Editor-in-Chief (Carter) who basically sets the editorial focus and works with authors, reviewers, and advisory board members, the Executive Editor (McNeill) who identifies resources and keeps an eye on the political and technological landscape, and the Managing Editor (Beth Haines, Special Projects Librarian) who is responsible for testing and implementing the OJS system, copyediting, proofreading, and shepherding each article from submission to final online publication.

#### **B. Software Testing and Implementation**

*Configuration of OJS software setup.* Once the system administrator, Kyle Fenton of the Emory General Libraries, finished the server setup of the software, the software configuration step was fairly simple to complete and included a series of five steps under the “Journal Management” section. The hard part, however, was “answering” the software setup questions simply because many of them required developing editorial

policies and procedures before “answering” could be completed. Thus, starting with the software setup helped us to complete another crucial piece of the process: establishing editorial policies and procedures. We also revised the standard email messages that came with the OJS system to customize them to our own needs and communication style. However, no matter how flexible and anticipatory the journal software, it does not (and cannot) replace or automate an important part of the publishing process: the relationship building that is necessary between the editorial team and the authors and the peer reviewers. Finding a system that makes the communication process easier, though, is an important factor.

*Testing the submission and publishing workflow in OJS.* Along with solitary testing of the system workflow by the managing editor, we felt it was crucial to do some group testing, so we invited all the “players”—editor-in-chief, executive editor, the system administrator, and other support personnel to a group session. In an electronic classroom, the managing editor took the group through the entire process and the roles that each person would be playing. During the demonstration, the group identified problems with the software and clarified onscreen instructions. Because the system administrator was present for the demonstration, he was able to make some of the necessary changes immediately.

*Other technical issues.* Through the course of our weekly meetings, we identified and resolved other technical issues which included registering and obtaining a journal URL, designing or choosing an article template in Microsoft WORD format in order to create and maintain a consistent “look and feel” for each article, acquiring additional publishing software (e.g., Adobe Acrobat Professional for creating PDF versions of articles), registering and obtaining a provisional International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) from the Library of Congress until the permanent ISSN was granted after providing proof of publication of the first issue.

### *C. Establishment of Editorial Policies and Procedures*

As we alluded to earlier, software testing and implementation forced us to grapple quickly with the establishment of editorial policies and procedures. This process was by far the most labor intensive and complex because it demanded that the editorial team define the

philosophy and nature of the journal. Our first task, then, was to create the *Focus and Scope* of the journal. By reviewing the original Carnegie proposal and other college grant proposals, we were able to come to a common “definition” of the journal’s focus and scope (<http://www.jcal.emory.edu/policies.php#focus>). Part of our scope included a strong, clear statement about our decision to publish an open access publication and which open source journal management software we were using, as well as our archival and preservation method (LOCKSS). To define the other policies, we looked at the policies of other SoTL and higher education journals, both print and open access. From this survey of other journal policies, we crafted our own set of policies and procedures that reflected our journal’s philosophy. Additional policies and procedures included the submission guidelines for authors, the peer review policy, the privacy statement, and the copyright statement. Eulalia Roel, who was working with the general libraries at Emory University on their open access journal, *Southern Spaces* (<http://www.southernspaces.org/>), helped us formulate our own copyright statement. With her assistance, we were able to create a copyright statement that reflected our publishing philosophy—one in which the author retains the copyright, as well as acknowledges first publication rights granted to *JCAL*. We also specified protocol for anyone who wants to reprint the author’s article when fair use guidelines are exceeded. We included a sample acknowledgement and the author’s responsibilities, as well.

### *D. Developing Publicity/Marketing Plan*

*Advisory Board Recruitment.* In our discussions with the publishers of *Molecular Vision*, one of the key steps in the process was to recruit a gold standard group of advisory board members. To identify the best possible candidates, we talked with Dr. Patti Owen-Smith, the coordinator of the Center of Cognitive-Affective Learning. As a Carnegie Scholar, Dr. Owen-Smith provided a list of Carnegie scholars and other individuals active in the field of SoTL. Six of the eight candidates we approached agreed to serve. To gain the support of respected and innovative scholars and colleagues in the SoTL and open access worlds was, and continues to be, enormously helpful in the promotion and development of *JCAL*. Also, it will continue to help us in our ongoing efforts to recruit authors and reviewers.

### *Marketing Identity and Promotional Materials.*

Recruitment of advisory board members, like the configuration of the journal software, forced the issue of developing marketing materials. To create a marketing identity, we called upon the University's publications department to develop a *JCAL* workmark, masthead, and promotional shell sheet. With these items in hand, we could then create official letterhead, envelopes, and business cards, as well as promotional items like pens and post-it notes. Once we had our masthead, we could complete "The Look" section of the software configuration setup.

*Conference and Poster Presentations.* Presenting at conferences constituted a large part of our marketing strategy. Early on, we identified pertinent conferences and submitted presentation or poster proposals. In addition to publicizing the journal to our own college's faculty, staff, and students, we presented posters and/or distributed promotional materials at eight different conferences during 2004. Two librarians and three faculty members have been involved in promoting the journal at the following conferences: Carnegie Summer Academy, AAHE Colloquium, AAHE Assessment Conference, International Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conference, Conference of the Association for Integrative Studies, Georgia Governor's Teaching Fellows Conference, Emory's University Advisory Council on Teaching, and at the Symposium on Open Access and Digital Preservation (<http://www.metacholar.org/OADP-Symposium.html>).

As a result of our presentation blitz, we have begun to generate some buzz about our journal. For example, Barbara Cambridge (AAHE Vice President for Programs) and Pat Hutchings (Vice President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) cited *JCAL* as an example in their keynote address at the *Making Teaching and Learning Visible: Integrating Scholarly Inquiry into Campus and System Culture* conference, sponsored by the University of Wisconsin System Office of Professional and Instructional Development in the spring of 2004.<sup>6</sup>

According to the *ARL Bimonthly Report*, "The open access model is attractive to many as it immediately and significantly extends dissemination of an author's paper from those at a few hundred institutions worldwide lucky enough to have a subscription to all interested readers with access to the internet."<sup>7</sup> And since the publication of our first issue in November,

our web site statistics have revealed a small, but growing readership from all over the globe (across the U.S., and including Australia, Canada, China, Egypt, Hong Kong, Greece, Hungary, India, Israel, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe, as of January 8, 2005).

### **Future Steps for Long-Term Viability**

Long-term viability for *JCAL* will be dependent upon several factors. We will continue to market the journal and recruit authors and reviewers. As we learned from the editors of *Molecular Vision*, we must receive external validation to attract high quality scholarship. As Roel writes, "Authors must be convinced of the longevity and esteem of the publications to which they submit."<sup>8</sup> Therefore, we will work to have the journal included in recognized indexing and abstracting services, once we have sufficient content. In an effort to archive and preserve the digital content, we have registered the journal with the Open Archives Initiative (OAI), which will make the journal globally accessible. We will work with the general libraries' staff to enable the LOCKSS preservation process. Early in the development of this journal, we saw the need to develop a succession plan for both the editorial staff and to provide additional support staff to manage the publication and marketing process. Most importantly, we must establish sufficient ongoing funding to ensure long-term viability. David Prosser, Director of SPARC Europe writes, "Open access journals are not free journals—only free to the reader. There are significant costs in the peer-review process and production of a journal (even if it is only online). Open access journals will survive only if they can raise sufficient funds to cover the costs of publication (plus whatever profit margin is considered reasonable by the journals' owners and is supported by the market)."<sup>9</sup> The costs that we have identified so far include: editorial and support staffing, server space and administration, technical support, marketing, including advertising, promotional materials, and postage. While we have minimal distribution costs because we publish online, our peer review and production costs remain a factor. Currently, the university libraries and the college are providing the budgetary support for this journal. When we established the journal, we made a

philosophical decision not to charge subscription or author fees. However, we may be forced to revisit this decision to ensure sustainability.

Susan K. Martin writes, "Many questions remain to be answered in the search for new economic models for scholarly communication. Open access may or may not be the answer; a convincing economic model for it has yet to be made. Issues such as the preservation of our cultural record and the nature and future of the Internet are all intertwined with the concerns of scholarly communication. But important steps have been taken by scholars and higher education administrators to become real partners with librarians in finding a better way to do business and to serve scholarship."<sup>10</sup> Through our initiative to launch the *Journal of Cognitive Affective Learning*, we have built a partnership between librarians, university scholars, and administrators. This successful partnership has developed cross-university collaborations as well as important connections between the library and the academic program, supported the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning initiatives of the college including building a community of scholars, and promoted different methods of scholarly communication.

## Notes

1. Pat Hutchings, "Introduction: Ethics and Aspiration in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning," in *Ethics of Inquiry: Issues in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, ed. Pat Hutchings (Menlo Park, Calif.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2002), 12.

2. Deb Hammacher, "Oxford Named Carnegie Cluster Leader," *Emory Report*, 23 June 2003, [http://www.emory.edu/EMORY\\_REPORT/erarchive/2003/June/June23/6\\_23\\_03oxford.html](http://www.emory.edu/EMORY_REPORT/erarchive/2003/June/June23/6_23_03oxford.html).

3. Oxford College CAL Team, "Oxford College of Emory University Proposal to Become a CASTL Cluster Leader" (Photocopy, n.d.). Thank you to the members of the Oxford College CAL Team and the cluster member institutions (Agnes Scott College, Community College of Philadelphia, Kennesaw State University, and Wright State University School of Medicine) for their support of JCAL.

4. Association of Research Libraries, Association of College and Research Libraries, and SPARC, "Create Change," <http://www.createchange.org/home.html> (accessed January 6, 2005).

5. John Willinsky, "Open Journal Systems," Public Knowledge Project, [http://pkp.ubc.ca/OJS\\_Sheet.html](http://pkp.ubc.ca/OJS_Sheet.html) (accessed January 6, 2005).

6. Patti Owen-Smith, e-mail message to Oxford College CAL Team, April 22, 2004.

7. David Prosser, "On the Transition of Journals to Open Access," *ARL Bimonthly Report* 227, April 2003, <http://www.arl.org/newsltr/227/openaccess.html>.

8. Eulalia Roel, "Electronic Journal Publication: A New Library Contribution to Scholarly Communication," *College & Research Libraries News*, January 2004: 24.

9. Prosser, para. 2.

10. Susan K. Martin, "A Wedge in the Door of Scholarly Communication," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 4, no. 2 (2004): ix-x.