

LAUC Journal Task Force Report

TO: Diane Mizrachi

FR: LAUC Journal Task Force

RE: 2015-2016 Preliminary Report, March 2015

LAUC Journal Task Force Background and Significance

To propose recommendations to create a LAUC Journal or other Open Access options for LAUC members to disseminate their scholarly and creative work. Statewide LAUC's theme for 2015-2016 is the celebration of our achievements and milestones. One avenue for recording our work is ensuring that our members utilize Open Access tools, including e-Scholarship, that enable easy dissemination and contain intuitive search and finding tools.

LAUC Journal Task Force Charges

1. Review 2005 "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Feasibility of Founding a LAUC-Sponsored, Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Journal" (<https://lauc.ucop.edu/sites/default/files/attached-files/report-spring-2005.pdf>) and determine how circumstances have changed, specifically publication processes, new technologies, changes in costs
2. Create a survey and administer to LAUC members to discover current Open Access practices and perceived barriers to using Open Access
3. Investigate three scenarios
 - a. A formal scholarly journal covering issues/research in academic libraries through e-scholarship
 - i. Needs: Editor & editorial board; Reviewers; Budget; Others...
 - b. An informal publication where LAUC members can submit pre-prints, interesting reports, talks and presentations; conference reports, original datasets, etc.
 - c. No publication, but recommendations to actively encourage LAUC members to deposit their appropriate work in e-scholarship or other OA venues
 - i. Needs: Guidelines for submitting work
4. Surface additional ideas and proposals

Summary of Action Items

- A review of the existing Open Access LIS journal options led the task force to conclude a new LAUC Open Access journal is not recommended.
- Analysis of data from LAUC member survey led the task force to conclude that a new LAUC Open Access journal is not recommended.
- The group proposes instead assembling a hub of scholarly output by LAUC membership, rooted in openly available materials in eScholarship and other open repositories.

Body of Report with Discussion and Recommendations

1. Review 2005 “Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Feasibility of Founding a LAUC-Sponsored, Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Journal”

The task force reviewed the 2005 “Report of the Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Feasibility of Founding a LAUC-Sponsored, Open Access, Peer-Reviewed Journal” as charged. We believe the journal mission statement and plan of organization recommended in that document remains sound for such a venture, and see no need to update it. Costs remain mostly the same as well.

In order to determine how circumstances have changed, specifically publication processes, new technologies, and changes in costs, the task force conducted reviews of the current state of Open Access journals in library and information science and discovered the following:

- There are 150 library science Open Access journals (over 80 in English), indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- There are 360 English language journals indexed in LISA.
- Prominent Gold OA examples are the *Journal of Information Literacy* and *Weave*.
- Some of the prominent journals in the field, such as *CR&L (College & Research Libraries)*, have become completely OA.
- The majority of journals in the field, such as *Reference & User Services Quarterly* or *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, have still not transitioned to the Open Access model. However, many have embraced a more open stance towards Open Access and retained author rights than in the past; for instance, content from *JMLA (Journal of the Medical Library Association)* is available after a month’s embargo.

It is clear that in the decade since the 2005 LAUC report, a trend towards increasing openness has occurred, both in Gold OA journal models, and through Green OA journal models enabled by loosened publisher attitudes towards openness and through OA policies like those employed at the UC.

2. *Create a survey and administer to LAUC members to discover current Open Access practices and perceived barriers to using Open Access*

The survey was open for two weeks from January 12, 2016 through January 25, 2016, and aimed at all LAUC members. The notifications of the survey went out through statewide LAUC to the division chairs, with the intent to pass on the information to all LAUC members at each campus. As of September 2015, there were 442 LAUC members. The survey received 126 responses, for a response rate of 28.5%. The survey shows that all who began the survey completed it. Respondents were not asked for any identifying information.

Publishing Habits: Survey response showed that 91.3% of respondents are actively publishing research or other creative work (examples include: articles, conference presentations or posters, book reviews, editorials, book chapters, translations, etc.). The three most common forms of publication are conference presentations, followed by non-peer reviewed articles and poster presentations.

Publication Venue Selection: Approximately 65% of respondents that have published in a journal are primarily concerned with publishing in a journal which has an appropriate subject focus for their work, which reaches the largest audience possible, and is as prestigious as possible. Overall, 86.2% of LAUC librarians are favorable to the idea of publishing in an Open Access journal. Those who chose “Maybe” or “No” as responses stated in comments that other factors were more important than Open Access, including the prestige and subject focus of the journal, if it is peer reviewed, the cost to publish and where it is indexed.

Opinions about a LAUC Sponsored Journal: Over half of respondents—58.7%—were in favor of starting a new LAUC-run Open Access journal in the library science field, and 42.1% of those who favored a new journal preferred an informal publication for librarians to submit work (e.g. pre-prints, reports, talks, presentations, etc.) that was open to librarians both inside and outside of LAUC. However, 49.2% answered “Maybe” when asked if they would consider publishing in a LAUC journal. It should be noted as well that the question is phrased “would you consider” so those answering “Yes” are only indicating that they would consider the idea. When asked what factors they would consider in a LAUC sponsored journal, the reasons mirror the same considerations that authors look for when publishing in any journal, and include “audience and reach” followed by “appropriate subject.” Forty five respondents answered that they would be willing to volunteer to help run a LAUC journal.

Creating a Space to Deposit Work: The final section included questions relating to the idea of having a dedicated space in which to deposit LAUC-generated creative works. eScholarship was the venue proposed in the survey. Only 6% of respondents have submitted all of their work to eScholarship, 31.7% have submitted “only some of it,” and the remaining 63.5% have either “had nothing to submit” or “have chosen not to.” This means that over 95% of respondents have some amount of content that has not been submitted. It is of note that there are 29 respondents who claim they have had nothing to submit, although only 11 claimed that they do not publish research. The reason for this discrepancy could be due to the perception that eScholarship is meant only for a certain type of publication—scholarly journal articles. For many, when say they have nothing to submit, they may mean that they have no journal articles to submit. Another reason may be that they have had nothing to submit under the UC OA mandate, not thinking work could be submitted voluntarily. The

question regarding whether respondents would submit work to a LAUC-dedicated space within eScholarship had a highly favorable response, with 85.7% of respondents indicating they would.

Survey Conclusions: The data supplied by LAUC members shows that most published work is not peer-reviewed research or scholarly articles. Because of this, any LAUC created publication would have to accept either informal or non-article creative works if it wanted to attract LAUC authors. On the other hand, peer-review was an important consideration for many respondents, so if a journal is to be started, the best type of journal would be one which could include all types of publications, both peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed. In addition, a journal aimed only at LAUC authors does not appear feasible.

The most highly listed criteria for choosing a journal was subject focus, which would also add to the difficulty of publishing a general journal for library science and information with quality content. Comments on the topic state:

*"I tend to publish in fairly niche subject librarian specific journals."
"I tend to publish in journals that are specific to a discipline"*

It is notable that the size of the audience was a more critical concern about publishing in a new journal than the subject appropriateness. This shows that respondents are concerned that a new, start-up journal would not reach a wide enough audience to be a worthwhile venue to publish in. Solving this problem will undoubtedly be a major factor in the success of any new venture. Also of note are the number of respondents who commented that there are already too many journals in the field and a new one is not needed.

With the Open Access initiative voted on by the senate faculty taking effect in the recent past, there has been much discussion in the UC system about how to get faculty to use eScholarship. While librarians were not covered by the first initiative, the expanded UC policy does cover librarian research. Also, at any time, even before the Open Access initiative, librarians could voluntarily submit their work to eScholarship. It is interesting, then, with a service that is being promoted heavily through the libraries, how few librarians are using the service themselves, and the reasons given as to why they are not.

Respondents are generally in favor of a venue to promote LAUC members' work and like the idea of setting up a dedicated space in eScholarship. However, there are significant barriers to getting librarians to submit work—the main one being the amount of time and difficulty to actually submit work. Attempting to overcome the time/difficulty barrier will be difficult for LAUC to influence, but something the library ought to be doing as we are trying to sell faculty on submitting materials. Another major barrier was the perceived appropriateness of various types of work to submit to a repository. To help reduce this barrier, LAUC will need to expand members' ideas about what is eligible for submission. The high number of works which are posters and conference presentations will mean that there is always going to be this difficulty if LAUC wants to attract a large percentage of the work that librarians are creating. Ideally, eScholarship would be a place from which we could publicize the research being created by LAUC.

Finally, while some respondents gave very positive feedback to the idea of a journal, many expressed reservations. The primary concerns are the difficulty of running a journal well,

the time it would take, the sustainability of the venture and the lack of a clear need for a new journal.

3. *Investigate three scenarios*

a. *A formal scholarly journal covering issues/research in academic libraries through e-scholarship*

The Task Force conducted background research to determine the feasibility of a formal scholarly journal by considering, among other things, cost and staffing. The creation of a LAUC Open Access journal can be relatively low cost—under \$5000 per year (see Attachment #1) with the following factors:

- To keep editorial and administrative overhead low, the journal would depend upon volunteer librarian labor for an Editor in Chief and any Guest Editors. While the volunteer model lowers cost of publication and assists with promotion and peer review needs for academic librarians, Editor in Chief and Guest Editor roles both require substantial time commitment. The Task Force estimates a 20-30% time commitment for editor in chief, which could be over 50% in the early years of establishing the journal.
- LAUC would need to hire a one-time graphic designer, copy editor, and perhaps a technical assistant for software help.
- Other budgetary costs would be travel for volunteer staff to editorial board meetings several times a year.

Furthermore, the task force found, through personal communication, the poor cost/benefit ratio of launching a new OA journal. In 2015, the Academic Business Library Directors group launched the Open Access, editor reviewed (not peer) journal *Ticker: Academic Business Librarianship Review*, with a narrower scope than the generalist *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*. While there exist many library journals for articles of general interest, there are fewer options for specialists and this opportunity existed to attract the business librarian niche. Even with financial support and a readily available university repository, it took three years to get off the ground, with in house design, an open journal platform for publishing, and a volunteer research assistant and technical staff. To date, there has been one issue published with four articles. Unfortunately, there hasn't been much interest from business librarians so far.

b. *An informal publication where LAUC members can submit pre-prints, interesting reports, talks and presentations; conference reports, original datasets, etc.*

The changing landscape of scholarly communication includes non-traditional means of disseminating research such as web sites and social media. LAUC members would have the opportunity to demonstrate best practices in emerging forms of scholarship while adhering to the Presidential Open Access policy. Practicing what we preach would increase our legitimacy as we do outreach to the University community.

- c. *No publication, but recommendations to actively encourage LAUC members to deposit their appropriate work in e-scholarship or other OA venues*

The Task Force conducted a review of the current LAUC scholarly output on eScholarship which is represented in the chart below. Data shows that few librarians deposit their work in eScholarship. This data is likely not comprehensive, and these numbers would likely grow if an effort is made to spur LAUC members to deposit and identify their works for this effort. In addition, if metadata in eScholarship is better employed to identify this work systematically, deposit numbers would likely rise.

Current review of LAUC Scholarly Output on eScholarship	
<i>Campus</i>	<i># of LAUC members' items in e-scholarship</i>
UCB	21 items, 21 LAUC-B current and former librarians
UCD	69 items - mostly a hosted e-journal not LIS related. 3 Lib staff represented
UCSF	Library not represented as dept.
UCM	1325 items - 2 hosted journals + 1 additional work. None of this is LIS related or seems to involve Librarians producing the works
UCSC	11 items, 6 librarians/staff
UCSB	7 publications, 14 librarians/staff named
UCLA	10 publications
UCR	Library not represented as dept.
UCI	44 items in LAUC-I collection representing 31 librarians, 1 staff 1 item in "Other Archival Items" collection, representing 1 librarian Affiliated unit in Library - 121 publications, 131 .aiml files (source text files for chatbot application, representing 1 librarian
UCSD	4 separate sub-sections: 3 of these sections have a combined 10 publications, but most are not traditional articles or published research, except for 1 post print. The other sub-section has 49 publications ranging from 1997 to 2013, written by about 25 different LAUC members. Fourteen of those members have submitted more than one, with the most being five from any one librarian.

4. *Surface additional ideas and proposals*

The Task Force has yet to investigate this scenario.

Recommendations

The task force does not recommend launching a LAUC Open Access journal at this time. Though we can envision such a journal being useful and successful, it is far from clear that the venture is necessary in the rapidly changing landscape of LIS academic journals. Even if the actual costs of a LAUC Open Access journal are manageable, the effort would require a massive time commitment from many members of LAUC. There is no clear argument for launching a generalist library and information science Open Access journal based on the current publishing scene.

However, the general goal of increasing exposure and access to the scholarly output of LAUC members remains. A simple and plausible way to accomplish this is to assemble a web presence to showcase this material, presented as a collection of all LAUC members' publications, preprints, conference presentation slides. The content can be linked from any open repository, but it is assumed that most LAUC scholarship will end up in eScholarship. Many examples already exist as a model for this effort, like the Migration Studies Working papers site: <http://www.international.ucla.edu/migration/workingpapers/>

Accordingly, the Task Force puts forth the following motion to the LAUC Executive Board:

The task force moves that the LAUC executive board appoint a task force to design, assemble and deploy a web presence that collects the research output of LAUC membership into one collection. Collecting citations from LAUC members, and linking to full text deposits of this work in eScholarship and elsewhere, this site will serve as a place to highlight the significant ongoing scholarly contributions of LAUC members. While we generally recommend maintenance of this site should be an ongoing task of the LAUC Executive Board (or delegated at their discretion), the task force should strive to make maintenance and updating of such a site as automated as possible.

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Attachment #1

Year One Budget for creation of LAUC scholarly, Open Access journal	
Graphic designer (one time cost): rates from American Institute of Graphic Arts (http://www.aiga.org/calculating-a-freelance-rate/), \$40-\$80/hr for 20 hours	\$800-\$1600
Copyeditor: rates from Editorial Freelancers Association (http://www.the-efa.org/res/rates.php), \$40-50/hr for 16 hours	\$640-\$800
Technical Assistant: \$30/hr for 10 hours	\$300
Office supplies and misc. expenses	\$500
Meetings: Two in-person editorial board meetings for first two years, one in person meeting annually thereafter	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lodging: \$200/night for 2 people (2 nights) 	\$800
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Per Diem: (meals, etc.) \$75/person for 2 people (2 days) 	\$150
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airfare: \$400/person for 2 people 	\$800
TOTAL COST	\$3990-\$4950

Attachment #2

Survey Analysis and Questions

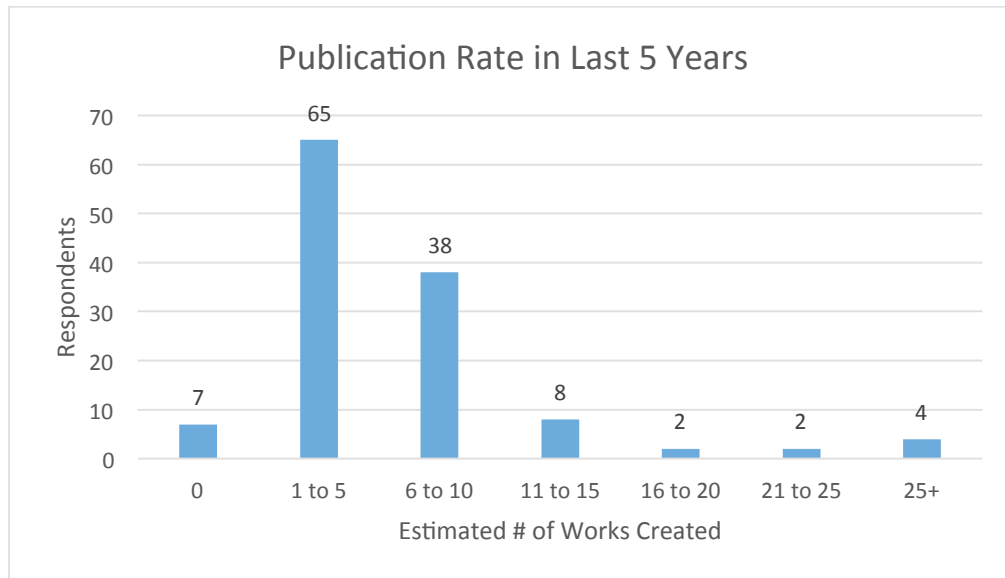
Part 1 - The Publishing Habits of LAUC Members (three questions)

- Do you publish research or other creative works?
- In the last 5 years, about how many works have you produced?
- Which of the following types of creative works have you produced?

The results showed that the large majority of respondents do produce some type of research or creative work.

Do you publish research or other creative works? (For example: articles, conference presentations or posters, book reviews, editorials, book chapters, translations, etc.)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	91.3%	115
No	8.7%	11

When asked to estimate how many works they had produced in the last 5 years, the average number was 6.5 works, or more than 1 per year. The overall average number is slightly misleading, as a few respondents estimated a very large number of publications, which raised the average. The majority of respondents reported 1-5 works in the last 5 years.



For types of works produced, respondents were asked to select all options which applied. The most common form of creative work is a conference presentation, followed by non-peer reviewed articles and poster presentation.

Types of Works Produced	Response Percent	Response Count
Conference presentation	66.7%	84
Non peer-reviewed article	51.6%	65
Poster presentation	50.8%	64
Peer-reviewed journal article	46.8%	59
Book chapter	35.7%	45
Review (book, film, etc.)	28.6%	36
Editorial	7.9%	10
None	4.0%	5
Monograph	4.0%	5
Translation	3.2%	4
Other (please specify)	27.0%	34

Breaking out the “Other” responses:

“Other” Types of Works Produced	Response Count
Blog posts	4
Exhibition Curation	4
Encyclopedia Entry	3
Conference session report	3
Edited book	3
Peer review	3
Newsletter articles	3
White paper	2
Grant	2
Video	1
Lightning talk	1
Bibliography	1
Interview	1
Instructional programming	1
Database	1
Webinar presentation	1

Part 2 – Publication Venue Selection (two questions)

- What factors do you consider when deciding to which journal(s) you will submit your article?
- Would you publish in an Open Access journal?

The first question was meant to be answered only by those who have published a journal article, and was answered by 82 respondents. The second question was answered by all respondents.

The factors which respondents consider when choosing what journal to submit an article to are shown below. Many respondents listed more than one factor. They were not asked to rank factors in order of importance. The subject matter of the journal was the most important factor that respondents ranked.

What to consider when submitting an article to a journal	Response Count
Subject matter of the journal	46
Prestige of journal	27
Is the journal Open Access	16
Size of readership of journal	15
Peer reviewed	8
Responded to invitation/opportunity	8
Length of publication cycle	5
Publisher/editorial board	4
Author's rights policy	4
Likelihood of acceptance	3
Ease of submission	3
Quality of journal	2
Cost to publish	2
Usage stats availability	1
Cross-ref DOI availability	1

The question regarding publishing in an Open Access journal received a highly favorable response.

Would you publish in an Open Access journal?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	86.2%	106
No	1.6%	2
Maybe	12.2%	15

Part 3 – Opinions about a LAUC-Sponsored Journal (five questions)

- In general, would you be in favor of LAUC starting a new, LAUC-run Open Access journal in the Library and Information Science field?
- If LAUC started a new journal, would you prefer to see a formal, peer-reviewed journal or an informal publication?
- If LAUC started a new journal, would you prefer to see a publication which would attract original work from outside of LAUC, or a publication for only LAUC members?
- If LAUC sponsored a new journal in the Library and Information Science field, would you consider publishing in it?
- Would you be willing to volunteer to help run a LAUC journal?

For the first question, there was a somewhat favorable response to the idea:

In general, would you be in favor of LAUC starting a new, LAUC-run Open Access journal in the Library and Information Science field?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	58.7%	74
No	41.3%	52

As for what type of journal respondents would like to see, among those who did not choose “LAUC should not start a journal” the answers tended toward an informal publication, and one which would be open to all librarians, and not only for LAUC members.

If LAUC started a new journal, which would you prefer to see?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A formal, peer-reviewed journal	29.4%	37
An informal publication for librarians to submit work (e.g. pre-prints, reports, talks and presentations, original datasets, etc.)	42.1%	53
Neither. LAUC should not start a new journal.	28.6%	36

If LAUC started a new journal, which would you prefer to see?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A publication which would attract original work from librarians both inside and outside of LAUC	57.1%	72
A publication for only LAUC members to submit work	15.1%	19
Neither. LAUC should not start a new journal.	27.8%	35

When respondents were asked if they would consider publishing in a LAUC journal, the most answered option was Maybe.

If LAUC sponsored a new journal in the Library and Information Science field, would you consider publishing in it?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	39.7%	50
No	11.1%	14
Maybe	49.2%	62

The factors the respondents would consider are shown below:

What to consider in a LAUC sponsored journal.	Response Count
If the audience/reach was there	17
If the subject was appropriate	15
If the quality was high enough	8
If it is peer reviewed	4
If it is Open Access	4
If it is sustainable	3
If it is discoverable	3
If it is well edited	2
If it has a short publication cycle	2
If it carries enough weight for review	1
There are too many journals already	15

These reasons mirror the same considerations that authors look for when publishing in any journal.

The final question, regarding the respondents' willingness to volunteer to help run a journal, showed that there might actually be enough volunteers to staff an endeavor.

Would you be willing to volunteer to help run a LAUC journal?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	35.7%	45
No	64.3%	81

Part 4 – Creating a Space to Deposit Work (two questions)

- *Have you submitted your research or other creative work to eScholarship?*
- *If LAUC did not start a new journal, but created a dedicated space within eScholarship to collect and showcase LAUC publications and creative work, would you submit your work to this space?*

Have you submitted your research or other creative work to eScholarship?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, all of it.	4.8%	6
Yes, but only some of it.	31.7%	40
No. I have had nothing to submit.	23.0%	29
No, I have chosen not to.	40.5%	51

The following table shows the responses given as to why work was not submitted to eScholarship:

Reasons to not Submit Work to eScholarship	Response Count
Not enough time	20
My work isn't the appropriate type	18
Didn't know I should/could	12
Too new to UC	10
Copyright limitations	8
Too difficult	7
Already in an OA venue	7
Nothing under UC OA policy	2
No longer have manuscript/preprint	2
Not interested	1
Not satisfied with work	1
Not seen as necessary	1

The question regarding whether respondents would submit work to a LAUC-dedicated space had a highly favorable response:

If LAUC did not start a new journal, but created a dedicated space within eScholarship to collect and showcase LAUC publications and creative work, would you submit your work to this space?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	85.7%	108
No	14.3%	18

Those who answered No gave a variety of answers as to why.

Reasons to not Submit Work to LAUC-dedicated eScholarship Space	Response Count
Content isn't appropriate	4
Difficult to use	3
Time	2
Might preclude journal acceptance	2
Not enough exposure	1
I'm not eligible	1
Work already archived in OA venue	1

Open Ended Comments

The survey gave respondents an opportunity to give open-ended final comments. A number of themes arose in this section which mirror the comments throughout the survey. Included below are sample comments which express these themes.

There were a number of respondents in favor of the idea of a LAUC journal:

- *"An OA peer-reviewed journal by LAUC is a great venture!"*
- *"Great idea. Start it!"*
- *"I love the idea – a big thanks to the task force for taking on these preliminary steps."*

Others felt the idea of using eScholarship to promote LAUC work was preferable:

- *"I do like the idea of highlighting librarian-created work in a LAUC eScholarship place"*
- *"I am much more in favor of a dedicated space within eScholarship."*
- *"I like the idea of having a place to showcase our work, especially the content that falls outside peer-reviewed journal articles."*
- *"I really like the idea of a dedicated space within eScholarship to showcase LAUC publications and creative work."*

There were greater number of comments which showed reservations and skepticism about the venture. These centered on a few main concerns, including the following:

The difficulty and time required to run a journal:

- *"I would seriously question how LAUC members will have the time and expertise to run a journal. It's not something to take on lightly."*
- *"I think establishing a quality journal is a lot of work."*
- *"It's a tremendous amount of work to publish a peer-reviewed journal."*

- *"It takes a full-time staff to create, promote, and keep running any publication. It's not something that can be done well on a voluntary basis by people who have other full-time responsibilities."*

The sustainability of a LAUC journal venture:

- *"While there may be initial enthusiasm, in a few years, it is likely to be hard to find editors, etc. to continue the work."*
- *"Sounds like a lot of work. Could be great or could be hard to sustain."*
- *"This would be a significant, long-term commitment so I hope we are careful to avoid creating something that would become just another chore for an over-stretched workforce."*

The abundance of journals already available to publish in:

- *"It seems there is already an "information overload" for general library output."*
- *"There are more library journals than I can keep up with now, so I don't really want another that I would be expected to read."*
- *"Honestly? I think there are already too many journals, including OA, in our field. I don't think we need to contribute to the publishing glut."*
- *"The last thing we need is a new journal."*

The lack of a clear reason for the existence of a LAUC journal:

- *"What need would it meet that isn't already met by other publications?"*
- *"Not sure there is the content and that the UC deserves its own publication."*
- *"I voted yes but I'm doing so under the assumption that there are good reasons for doing so."*
- *"Did this proposal originate because people are unhappy with the available publishing venues?"*
- *"It's unclear what the scope of a LAUC journal would be. Is there an audience for another general "Library and Information Science" journal?"*