

02.6.2026

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Title

Peer review in academic promotion and publishing : its meaning, locus, and future / Diane Harley ; Sophia Krzys Acord ; Sarah Earl-Novell

Publisher

Berkeley, 2010

Collation

45 Bl.

Publication year

2010

Series

(CSHE Research and Occasional Paper Series ; 9.10)

Source/Footnote

Internet: <http://cshe.berkeley.edu/publications/docs/PeerReviewWorkingPapers.04.22.10.pdf>

Inventory number

44204

Keywords

Urheberrecht ; Multimedia / Internet ; Wissenschaft : Ethik in der Wissenschaft ; Wissenschaftlerin ; Wissenschaftler

Abstract

As part of its Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-funded Future of Scholarly Communication Project, the Center for Studies in Higher Education (CSHE) has hosted two meetings to explore how peer review relates to scholarly communication and academic values. In preparation for an April 2010 workshop, four working papers were developed and circulated. They are presented as drafts here. (The proceedings from the April 2010 meeting will be published at a future date.) The topics covered

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include assessing the myriad forms peer review takes in the academy, which forms of peer review are used for which specific academic purposes (e.g., tenure and promotion, publishing, extramural funding, national and international stature), the considerable costs to universities in subsidizing the entire peer review process through faculty salaries, and the perception that, although peer review represents the best available system, there are nonetheless a multitude of problems with it, including its inherent conservatism. The topics of the working papers are: (1) Peer Review in Academic Promotion and Publishing: Norms, Complaints, and Costs, (2) New Models of Peer Review: Repositories, Open Peer Review, and Post Publication Metrics, (3) Open Access: Green OA, Gold OA, and University Resolutions, and (4) Creating New Publishing and Peer Review Models: Scholarly Societies, Presses, Libraries, Commercial Publishers, and Other Stakeholders. Mirroring our work published in *Assessing the Future Landscape of Scholarly Communication: An Exploration of Faculty Values and Needs in Seven Disciplines* (Harley et al. 2010), we conclude that there is a need for a more nuanced academic reward system that is less dependent on citation metrics, slavish adherence to marquee journals and university presses, and the growing tendency of institutions to outsource assessment of scholarship to such proxies. Such a need is made more urgent given the challenges to institutional review of assessing interdisciplinary scholarship, new hybrid disciplines, the rise of heavily computational sub-branches of disciplines, the development of new online forms of edition-making and collaborative curation for community resource use, large-scale collaborations, and multiple authorship. Compounding the problem further is the insidious and destructive "trickle down" of tenure and promotion requirements from elite research universities to less competitive institutions and the mounting pressure from governments, often unrealistic, on scholars in developed and emerging economies alike to publish their research in the most select outlets. The overall global effect is a growing glut of low-quality publications that strains the efficient and effective practice of peer review, legitimate academic publishing endeavors, and library acquisition budgets. More nuanced and capacious tenure and promotion criteria at research universities might lead to a neutralization of the currently unsustainable publishing "arms race." (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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