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## Rubric to Evaluate Open Access Journals for Publication

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**From the Selected Works of Nataly Blas**

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Fall 2016

# Rubric to Evaluate Open Access Journals for Publication

Nataly Blas

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Marie R. Kennedy



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/nataly-blas/18/>

# Rubric to Evaluate Open Access Journals for Publication

Shilpa Rele / Nataly Blas / Marie Kennedy

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

2016 Digital Library Federation Forum

# ● Overview

- The case for library involvement
- The OA journal evaluation rubric
- Pilot tests with librarians and science faculty
- Next steps



# The Case For Library Involvement

# • Library Takes The Lead

Associate Dean reaches out to library with concerns and questions

Assistance with venue selection for publication – library mission

Exercise to build good will on campus

Opportunity to demonstrate value on campus

Convened working group





# Open Access Journal Evaluation Rubric

# Credible Journal Criteria Working Group Timeline (Spring 2015 – 2016)



## Literature Review

Sources on open access publishing



## Checklist

List of “good”/”bad” indicators



## Rubric

List of criteria to evaluate OA journals



## Scoring Sheet

List of criteria to evaluate OA journals with rationale statements



## Office of Assessment

Collaboration to validate our instrument



## Pilot

Librarians and College of Science and Engineering Faculty



# ● Literature Review

● Current knowledge/trends in OA publishing

● Model for evaluating OA journals

● List of criteria for evaluating OA journals

## CHECKLIST



### **Criterion:**

The copyright information is clearly stated

### **Evaluation:**

Licensing information is available on all published journals (Adapted from DOAJ)

### **How The Library Will Make A Determination:**

If the copyright information cannot be found then we will assign a red flag



## From Checklist To Rubric

- **Evaluation & Rationale**
- **Recommendation from Office of Assessment**

# Open Access Journal Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Good	Fair	Poor
<b>Journal Name</b>	The journal name cannot be confused with another journal	The journal has a similar name to another journal but is able to be distinguished between the two	The journal being evaluated is unable to be distinguished from another with a similar name
<b>Editorial Board</b>	The editorial board is listed with their full names and institutional affiliation	The editorial board is listed with their full names but no institutional affiliation	There is no editorial board listed
<b>Review Process</b>	The journal states whether it is peer reviewed/edited and has a review policy listed	The journal states whether it is peer reviewed/edited but has no review policy listed	The journal does not state whether it is peer reviewed/edited and has no review policy listed
<b>Journal Archive</b>	The journal website contains an archive of its past issues with links to full text articles	The journal website contains an archive but it may be incomplete or does not contain links to full text articles	The journal does not have an archive of its past issues

# Open Access Journal Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Good	Fair	Poor
<b>Copyright Information</b>	The journal clearly describes its copyright and licensing information on the journal's Web site, and licensing terms are indicated on the published articles (HTML/PDF)	-----	Copyright and licensing information is not found on the journal's Web site and on any published articles
<b>Web Search for the Publisher</b>	The publisher is within the top 5 entries on the first page of search results and there are no scam alert postings	The publisher is on the first page of search results but not within the top 5 entries and there are no scam alert postings	The publisher is not on the first page of search results or there is at least one scam alert post about the journal
<b>Publisher Information</b>	Information about the ownership/management of the journal and contact information about the publisher is clearly identified	Information about the ownership/management of the journal or contact information about the publisher is clearly identified.	Information about the ownership/management of the journal and contact information about the publisher is not available

# Open Access Journal Evaluation Scoring Sheet

Criteria	Rationale	Rating (3,2,1)	Notes (URL)
Journal Name	We want the journal name to be easily distinguishable from any other journal.		
Editorial Board	We want to be able to know the names and affiliations of the members of the editorial board.		
Review Process	We want to know if the journal is peer reviewed/edited and what the review policy is.		
<b>GUIDE TO INTERPRETATION</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	
	Within this range the journal meets many of the OA Journal Evaluation Criteria. At the higher end of the range the journal would be recommended.	48 - 39	
	Within this range the journal meets some of the Open Access Journal Evaluation criteria defined for credibility. The author would need to decide whether or not to publish in the journal.	38 - 27	
	Within this range the journal meets the fewest of the Open Access Journal Evaluation criteria defined for credibility. This journal would not be described as recommended.	26 - 16	



# Pilot Tests

## Pilot Test # 1

- 10 librarians evaluated a journal
- Sought informal feedback

## Pilot Test # 2

- 6 faculty evaluated a journal
- Sought formal feedback



- **How long did it take to conduct the evaluation?**

- **More time than estimated (30 minutes) \***
- **Faculty conducted research related to open access and scam alerts**
- **Found journal on a blacklist but could not determine its authority**

*\* indicates librarian feedback*

- Are the descriptions of the three categories of each criterion clear to you?

- Yes, for the most part \*

- **Which description was the most troublesome?**

- **Revenue Sources \***

Unable to determine business model

- **Publisher**

Top match not easy to determine

Evaluating credibility

Publisher suspect, journal suspect too?

- **Briefly explain your experience using rubric and scoring sheet.**

- **Good gate to conduct evaluation \***

- **Not sure what the final score means \***

  - To publish or not?

  - Score may say “ok” to publish, gut says no!

● **Would you have examined similar aspects of a journal if you had not been prompted to use a guiding tool such as this rubric and scoring sheet?**

- **New perspectives to conduct evaluation \***
- **Total scores were similar; decision not to publish, however:**
  - Publisher was suspect**
  - Journal was not peer reviewed**

# Scores assigned by faculty

Criteria	# 1	# 2	# 3
Web search for the journal	3	3	3
Journal name	1	3	3
Editorial Board	3	3	3
Review Process	2.5	3	1
Conflict of Interest	2	2	1
Journal Website	3	3	3
Revenue Sources	??	2	1
Journal Archive	3	3	3
Publishing Schedule	2	3	3
Author Fees	3	3	3
Copyright Information	3	3	3
Journal Index	1	3	2
Access to articles	2	3	3
# of articles published	3	3	3
Web search for publisher	2.5	2	3
Publisher information	2	1	1
TOTAL	36	39	39

Good  
48-38

Fair  
37-27

Poor  
26-16

# Is this a tool that you might recommend to a colleague in your department?

- **Yes = 3**
- **Probably = 1**
- **Not yet = 2**

Revise rubric, add specific examples \*  
and more criteria

Create list of must-have criteria \*

What does the score mean? What  
do I do with it?

- **Have you published in an OA journal before?**

- **Four faculty said yes, two said no**

- **Reviewed:**

- Affiliation with a professional society in related discipline**

- Noticed citations to given journal during research**



● **Does your rank & promotion plan give different weight to publishing in an open access journal than in a traditional journal?**

○ **No such language in promotion plan**

○ **Considerations for publication:**

Quality of journal

Looked at Impact Factor

Affiliation with professional organization/  
society

# Do you have any other feedback for us about your use of the evaluation tool?

- Change scoring ranges \*\*
- Different weights for criteria
- Include additional criteria \*
- Provide additional information/context for using rubric \*

# • Additional feedback...

- Beef up rationales, provide specific examples \*
- Gather information about citations
- Faculty raised questions such as:
  - What is the fundamental concern of this?
  - Why does the OA model exist?
- Potential additional use
  - R&T committee tool to evaluate publications



# Next Steps

## **Next Steps (Short Term)**

- **Revise rubric with feedback received**
- **Extend pilot with College of Business Administration**

## **Next Steps (Long Term)**

- **Evaluate strategic partnerships and implementation options**

# • Resources

## ○ Websites (LibGuides)

Evaluating Open Access Journals, Western Libraries, <http://guides.lib.uwo.ca/evaluatingoa/publisher>

OA Journals Quality Indicator, Boston College, <http://libguides.bc.edu/journalqual/oajournals>

Principles of Transparency and Best Practices in Scholarly Publishing, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), <https://doaj.org/bestpractice>

Scholarly Communication: Evaluating Journals, Ryerson University, <http://learn.library.ryerson.ca/scholcomm/journaleval>

Tips for Evaluating Journals, St. Francis Xavier University, [http://sites.stfx.ca/library/evaluating\\_OA\\_journals](http://sites.stfx.ca/library/evaluating_OA_journals)

## LMU Resources

Laura Massa, Director of Assessment, LMU Office of Assessment

# THANK YOU!

## QUESTIONS?

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