To Catch a Predatory Publisher: A Study of STEM Faculty at the University of Central Florida

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ABSTRACT: In today’s academic publishing environment, open access journals have become an increasingly common and used venue for publication by STEM faculty and researchers. Subject librarians at one of the largest public research institutions in the United States are tailoring workshops geared towards faculty to create awareness of predatory publishing. Our research question involved identifying STEM faculty at our institution who have published in questionable journals and bringing this to their attention through a series of faculty workshops.

METHODOLOGY: To identify a list of predatory journals, surveying faculty CV’s from three large STEM colleges at our institution, and running cross-searches through library databases and other online tools to locate faculty publications from questionable sources. Our findings will show the percentage of faculty who publish in predatory journals and how the numbers correlate with Open Access journals. This poster will share information about how to discuss predatory publishing with your faculty by emphasizing the role of open access publishers, how to differentiate between credible and predatory journals within the STEM fields, and by providing best practices for how to go about running this type of study at your institution.


Where We Are Headed...
• Targeted Scholarly Communication/STEM Librarian collaborations
• Personalized presentations to STEM faculty during departmental meetings
• Specific workshops about STEM & Open Access (invite your vendors to participate)
• Discuss Citation Metrics and Article Processing Charges with the University community

Initial Results
• 0 Findings - Faculty CV & Predatory Journals list
• 4089 CECS Faculty Published Open Access Articles (Web of Science)
• 2849 COS Faculty Published Open Access Articles (Web of Science)
• 673 Open Access Journal Articles (Web of Science) published by CREOL Faculty

Findings
• 0 Findings - Top 3 CECS Faculty publishing Open Access
• 0 Findings - Top 3 COS Faculty publishing Open Access
• 0 Findings - Top 3 CREOL Faculty publishing Open Access

Characteristics of Predatory Behavior
- Journal content extremely broad/unfocused
- Inconsistent/contradictory information presented
- Promise of fast peer review & quick publication
- Solicitations from editors - request for articles
- Journal not included in indexes or databases
- Poorly constructed website or web presence

Assessing Journal Quality

The Detectives
Sandy Avila- Science Librarian
Ven Basco- Engineering Librarian

The Usual Suspects
College of Engineering & Computer Science (CECS)
- 5 Departments
- 9 Research Centers
- Total enrollment: 11,047
College of Sciences (COS)
- 5 Physical Science Departments
- 5 Research Centers
- Total enrollment: 2,493
CREOL, The College of Optics & Photonics
- 5 Research Areas
- 4 Research Centers
- Total enrollment: 235