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## ***New Pricing Study Sheds Light on Journals Pricing***

A new report published today by LISU, based at Loughborough University, offers some valuable insights into scholarly journals pricing over the last decade. Amongst the findings are average price increases by publisher ranging from 27% to 94% over the period 2000-2004, and biomedical journal prices per page ranging from £0.31 (approx. \$0.55) to £0.98 (approx. \$1.75) in 2004 (average by publisher).

The report was originally commissioned by Oxford Journals, a division of Oxford University Press, as part of its desire to better understand what has commonly been described as “the serials crisis”. “There is much debate and conjecture within scholarly publishing surrounding the issue of pricing,” commented Richard Gedye, Oxford Journals Sales Director and driving force behind the report’s commissioning. “We felt that in the absence of any other such studies, it would be timely to invest in some quantitative data. LISU was appointed to carry out this work based on their reputation for excellence and objectivity. As such they have provided us with a very comprehensive report about journals pricing trends, the findings of which both LISU and Oxford Journals are happy to share with the academic community and industry at large.”

As part of the survey LISU analysed data from twelve named scholarly publishers, including OUP, taken over a 5-year period (2000 -2004), plus 1993 as a base year for comparison. General analysis was carried out on around 6000 journals spanning all subject areas, then detailed analysis focused on identifying average journal prices, per page and per impact factor point on Biomedical titles. Oxford Journals was encouraged by its place in the overall picture. For the analysis on biomedical journals from 2001-2004 Oxford Journals displayed both the lowest median price per page<sup>1</sup> and also the second highest rate of growth in impact factor values<sup>2</sup> (47%). These statistics suggest that Oxford Journals is achieving its objective to provide access to top quality research at a fair price.

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<sup>1</sup> OUP displayed the lowest median price per page of biomedical titles from 2001 to 2004. In 2004 the median price per page for OUP was 31 pence; in the same year the highest median price per page was 98 pence (*Scholarly Journals Prices, p. iii*).

<sup>2</sup> With one exception, there has been an overall increase of between 22% and 77% (per publisher) in mean impact factor values of biomedical journals over the period 1992 to 2002. At 47%, OUP displayed the second highest rate of growth in impact factor values over this period (*Scholarly Journals Prices, p.iv*).

Eric Davies, Director of LISU, remarked “Serials continue to be a key component of scholarly communication and their pricing and affordability is a major preoccupation for those who create and use them. The Report represents a great deal of hard work in collating and analysing data to establish some objective information to inform the current debate on serials. Although it represents a snapshot of only part of the entire serials landscape, it does provide the basis for further investigation and discussion on this important topic. We were delighted to be given the opportunity by Oxford Journals to explore trends in this detail and on this scale.”

*Scholarly Journal Prices: Selected Trends and Comparisons* (Sonya White & Claire Creaser, LISU, 2004) is freely available from the LISU website as a downloadable pdf.

<http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dis/lisu/pages/publications/oup.html>

Print copies can be purchased for £50 [post paid in the UK] from:

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About LISU

LISU is a national research, consultancy and information centre based at the Department of Information Science at Loughborough University. LISU focuses on the analysis, development, interpretation and dissemination of statistics, performance assessment measures and related management data. It seeks to contribute, in appropriate ways, to good management practice in the various public and private sector agencies that make up the strands of the information economy and cultural services. It has an established reputation as an independent authority in its field.

About Oxford Journals

Oxford Journals, a Division of OUP, publishes over 180 journals covering a broad range of subject areas, two-thirds of which are published in collaboration with learned societies and other international organisations. The collection contains some of the world's most prestigious titles, including *Nucleic Acids Research*, *JNCI* (Journal of the National Cancer Institute), *Brain*, *Human Reproduction*, *English Historical Review*, and the *Review of Financial Studies*.

