



To: SUNY Library Community

From: ScienceDirect Negotiating Team

Date: March 25, 2020

SUNY Plans to Cancel ScienceDirect Big Deal

Following a year plus of negotiations SUNY and Elsevier could not reach mutually acceptable terms on renewing our license to ScienceDirect. While the firm made some accommodations in recognition of our requirements, there remained a vast difference in their proposed charges and our willingness to accede to them. The journal-based literature marketplace is dynamic and publishers no longer have the same monopolistic stranglehold they've had in the past over content. The negotiating team's perspective was that Elsevier did not go far enough in recognizing that the marketplace has changed, nor were they able to comprehend our dissatisfaction at the disparity between the calculated cost per FTE between what SUNY was being charged and what our sister system, CUNY was being charged – a difference in excess of 200%.

Rather than canceling access to all subscribed Elsevier ScienceDirect titles however, the negotiating team worked with librarian colleagues around the system to develop a core list of approximately 250 titles that we plan to subscribe to as a system. This approach will save SUNY institutions \$7 million annually. Our forecasting indicates that with using our pre-existing access to ScienceDirect content for the period 2010-2019, along with Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery and a growing body of open access content, most needs for teaching, research and scholarship should continue to be able to be met. Individual campuses will have the flexibility, local resources permitting, to supplement titles on the core title list in order to better meet local needs. The list of core titles accompanies this memo.

Access to the ScienceDirect big deal will terminate April 1, 2020 and we expect the transition to go smoothly, but if challenges arise, especially during our current period of uncertainty, please be patient as we work through them. And again, due to the good work of earlier negotiating teams, all participating campuses will continue to have access to our current ScienceDirect title list for issues covering the period 2010-2019. We recognize that this change comes at a difficult time in a uniquely challenging semester and ask your forbearance, as well as acknowledge the support the negotiating team has received from many corners of the SUNY community throughout the negotiating process. Thank you for your trust in us.