**Usage and Perceived Importance of ECC Resources**

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**Introduction:** The $5 million budget for the Electronic Core Collection’s 25 resources[[1]](#footnote-1) has not increased in a decade. Price increases, which are substantially less with the consortium’s negotiating power, have been covered on an ad hoc basis, along with relatively minor adjustments to the resources (e.g. substituting *Westlaw* for *LexisNexis*). Because of dim prospects for increased funding, the COLD’s electronic resources committee (EAR) conducted a two-part evaluation of the resources with the goal of prioritizing them: 1) A multi-campus survey of perceived importance and 2) usage analysis. Here is a summary of the analysis and a discussion of the findings (see P2 for color legend):

**Discussion:** The 2018 survey asked campuses to rank resources two ways: 1) “essential,” “important,” or “not needed,” and 2) “most important” or “least important.” The results of #1 are reflected in the table above; the results for #2 were similar, especially at the top of the rankings. Of the 14 resources in the two highly ranked tiers above, all but two were among the top resources in the “most important/least important” rankings. (The exceptions were Communication & Mass Media Complete and Sociological Abstracts, which 15 campuses had listed as “essential.” Both are highly used.)

These two rankings plus the usage strongly suggest that the 14 resources in these two groups should be retained. They cost $4,462,186 in this fiscal year, representing 89% of the $5 million ECC budget.

Unless some cost savings could be found in the top two tiers (see Academic Search Premier discussion below), this would leave just $537,814 available for other resources, and that does not take into account 2019-20 price increases.

Last spring when EAR made recommendations, it suggested cancelling **Westlaw**, **Grove Music**, **CQ Researcher**, **Oxford English Dictionary** and **SCOAP3**. Additionally, it recommended that PsycInfo/PsycArticles be unified on one platform to save money. (MLA has already been combined on one platform.) That leaves **Dissertations & Theses Abstracts**, **Ethnic NewsWatch, GenderWatch, ACLS eBooks, Biological Abstracts,** and **MathSciNet,** which cost $471,312 in 2018-19. The usage analysis might suggest that more discussion is needed regarding **ACLS**, **Biological Abstracts** and **MathSciNet**:

* **Biological Abstracts.** Several campuses do not appear to make use of this ECC resource, opting instead to pay for BIOSIS Previews or BIOSIS Citations. Also, the cost per record is fairly high compared to other resources at $8.35.
* While every campus has some **MathSciNet** usage, it is very unevenly distributed. For example, nine campuses have fewer than 400 record views, including San Diego, one of the largest campuses. Additionally, five campuses have 4,000 or more record views, including Stanislaus one of the smaller campuses. If this resource is kept, the distribution of costs should be reconsidered. Right now all campuses have the same access but eight campuses do not pay a Data Access Fee because of a historical payment structure.
* **ACLS**: Overall usage is fairly light, although there was a sharp increase between 2016 and 2017. However, seven campuses recorded a two-year average of fewer than 200 searches, including San Diego.

The analysis of the ECC’s **Academic Search Premier/Business Source Premier** package was challenging, but the results might prompt EAR to re-think this resource a bit. This package actually comprises four databases, and several campuses have added one or more additional components. Academic Search Premier (ASP) is a combination of 2,169 unique ASP titles, plus 1,982 Academic Search Elite (ASE) unique titles. Additionally the subscription includes 821 Business Source Premier unique titles and 797 Business Source Elite unique titles, which EBSCO considers “complementary.” However, it is possible to mix and match these four databases. Further complicating this analysis is that nine campuses have upgraded one or more of the databases. It took weeks to get the detailed usage by unique titles that were needed for this analysis. Here is what that detailed analysis found:

* 59% of the total usage that the ECC pays for (ASP, ASE, BSP, BSE unique titles) comes from Academic Search Elite titles, while just 4% comes from titles unique to Business Source Premier.
* 25% of the total usage comes from titles unique to Academic Search Premier.
* 12% comes from Business Source Elite.

This might suggest that downgrading to a combo package of **Academic Search Premier / Business Source Elite**, saving about $144,000. (Downgrading Academic Search Premier and Business Source Premier to Academic Search Elite and Business Source Elite would save about $200,000.)

EAR voted to keep, 6 in favor, 1 opposed. EAR voted to downgrade to Business Source Elite, unanimous. EAR voted to not renew, all unanimous. Discussed at either March or April EAR meeting; no consensus on renewing or cutting; no formal EAR vote. Updated, 2018 FT download stats from ProQuest.

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| **Highly Ranked & Heavily Used Resources by Virtually All Campuses** |
| **Resource** | **Campuses Ranking Resource Essential** | **Usage** | **Cost** | **Cost/Use** |
| *ABIInform* (business) | 15 | 884,735 | $64,517 | $0.07 |
| *Academic Search/Bus. Source Premier* | 20 | 3,957,665 | $1,014,052 | $0.26 |
| *Academic Complete eBooks\** | 16 | 128,805 | $312,165 | $2.42/book |
| *America History & Life/Historical Abs.\** | 14 | 2,892,644 | $294,280 | $0.10/search |
| *CINAHL Complete* (health sciences)\* | 20 | 417,805 | $102,878 | $0.25 |
| *Communication & Mass Media Compl.\** | 15 | 231,627 | $111,212 | $0.48 |
| *Global Newsstream\** | 16 | 302,054 | $165,260 | $0.55 |
| *JSTOR* (13 collections) | 24 | 1,809,475 | $720,775 | $0.40 |
| *Project Muse* (humanities) | 13 | 246,942 | $370,519 | $1.50 |
| *PsycInfo / PsycArticles\**  | 17 | 723,709 | $675,6849 | $0.93 |
| *Safari* (technology eBooks)\* | 15 | 538,569 | $230,721 | $0.43/record |
| *Sociological /Social Services Abstracts\** | 15 | 542,978 | $112,017 | $0.21/search |
| **Highly Ranked but Uneven Usage** |
| *Mergent* (business) | 14 | 460,785 | $191,594 | $0.42/page view |
| *MLA* *Intl. Bibliography* (humanities)\* | 16 | 1,319,058 | $172,7629 | $0.13/search |
| **Lower Rank but Heavily Used by Virtually All Campuses** |
| *CQ Researcher* | 3 | 215,581 | $25,860 | $0.24 |
| *Dissertations & Theses Abstracts\** | 8 | 515,978 | $124,380 | $0.24/search |
| *Ethnic NewsWatch\** | 11 | 102,759 | $27,840 | $0.27 |
| *GenderWatch\** | 9 | 103,156 | $30,100 | $0.29 |
| *Oxford English Dictionary* | 2 | 76,706 | $63,900 | $0.83/search |
| **Lower Rank with Uneven Usage (or insufficient data)** |
| *ACLS* (humanities eBooks) | 3 | 19,322 | $17,191 | $0.89/page view |
| *Biological Abstracts* | 12 | 32,538 | $271,801 | $8.35/record |
| *Grove (Oxford) Music* | 5 | 43,957 | $37,750 | $0.86 |
| *MathSciNet* | 9 | 45,122 | $20,088 | $3.39/record |
| *SCOAP3\** | 1 | n/a | $9,842 | n/a |
| *Westlaw* | 12 | 374,081 | $310,716 | $0.83/search |

 PsycInfo & PsycArticles combined; resources (MLA & PsycInfo/PsycArticles) on multiple platform combined.

\*Usage for these databases came from the Chancellor’s Office website; they were not deeply analyzed as were the other databases. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)