Goodness vs. Greatness: An Analysis of Motivation in Open Access Policies at US Land-Grant Institutions

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abstract: Higher education, when understood as a public or common good, aligns with the values of an open access movement that promotes public access to information and published research. In the United States, land-grant institutions rhetorically appeal to their shared missions of public benefit and societal advancement. Do land-grant institutions with open access policies make rhetorical claims that these policies align with their specific institutional missions as land-grants? This study examines land-grant universities in the United States that have adopted institutional open access (OA) policies, testing the hypothesis that they will reference their public mission in these policies. A content analysis of institutional open access policies was performed to determine the motivating factors as expressed, explicitly or implicitly, and assess commitments to the public good or to status-linked priorities such as reputation. While these policies maintained continuity with the broader OA movement through appeals to "dissemination" and invoked land-grant values in the language of public benefit, they overwhelmingly referenced reputational benefit as a priority. This study finds that land-grant institutions rely on the language of their open access policies to express complex motivations for pursuing public access to research.

Introduction

Asked and expected to serve the public good, higher education is directly engaged in the advancement of knowledge and innovation through a research context and the mission of teaching and learning. Academic institutions impact individual students, faculty, teachers and researchers, practitioners, and professionals as well as local communities with their businesses, K-12 schools, nonprofits and governments, and society at large. In the United States, colleges and universities are typically—if sometimes controversially—designated as charitable nonprofits, 501(C)(3)

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s, in recognition of their service to the larger community.[1] Moreover, public universities, supported by state funds, have a direct responsibility to serve the citizens of their states. Land-grant universities (referred to in this paper as land-grants) have also cultivated an image of federally funded education, research, and extension as publicly beneficial. Nathan M. Sorber and Roger L. Geiger describe the perception of land-grants as conveying "the idea of federal dollars devoted to extending access to underrepresented groups (as with the land-grant HBCUs) or subsidizing programs that connect academic research with social or scientific programs."[2]

In 2013, the American Association of Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the Association of Research Libraries crafted a joint document asserting universities' research responsibilities: "Research universities are long-lived and are mission-driven to generate, make accessible, and preserve over time new knowledge and understanding. Research universities collectively have the assets needed for a national solution for enhanced public access to federally funded research output."[3] These claims align with the federal mandates for open access (OA) and shape the open access mission in higher education, to broadly disseminate knowledge and remove economic (and other) barriers to accessing scholarly publishing, for the benefit of society.

On the surface, there would seem to be an alignment between the values of land-grant universities and those of open access efforts. Both emphasize public benefit and public access, asserting that the knowledge generated in these institutions of higher education be shared broadly and with specific communities and goals. By addressing societal issues and tackling big questions, the institutions' efforts benefit citizens, educators, policymakers in their states, scholars and researchers across disciplines, and the world at large. Further, the rhetoric around land-grant institutions has long held that they are a public good with a primary responsibility to serve the public and the citizens of their state, and potentially beyond. However, open access and land-grants may also align in their commitments to a deeper neoliberalism strain in research; rather than emphasizing a broader or cooperative public benefit, this strain attends to the logic of rankings and seeks to secure competitive advantage.

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Land-grant institutions have a shared mandate, at both the federal and state levels, to give back to the public through teaching, research, and extension. This mandate is locally interpreted through the institutional missions of individual universities. While acknowledging the limitation of relying on institutional rhetoric as a signifier of true intent, this study asserts a utility in examining the language chosen by the nineteen US land-grants that have adopted institutional open access policies (IOAPs) or resolutions. This study analyzes the articulated institutional motivations and values regarding the creation and dissemination of research as well as how their missions and their goals, both explicitly and implicitly, contribute to this effort. It seeks to answer the questions:

1. **Are** land-grants, both as a particular type of institution and as research-intensive universities, claiming to adopt OA policies and resolutions in service to their public mission? Or do their policies express a motivation to align with their competitors and peer institutions?

2. **More** generally, what articulated priorities, including both motivation and commitment to stakeholders, are given the weight of policy?

Literature Review

A number of studies and surveys look at researcher motivation for choosing open access venues or strategies or researcher support for open access policies.[4] In a study examining individual faculty members' motivations for pursuing the "green model" of open access—OA deposit of research output published elsewhere into disciplinary or institutional repositories—Jihyun Kim defines six benefit factors: "five external—(1) accessibility; (2) publicity; (3) trustworthiness; (4) academic reward; (5) professional recognition—and one internal—(6) altruism." Kim also identifies two costs faculty members incur in pursuing green OA: "(1) copyright concerns and (2) additional time and effort."[5]

Open access policies cluster some of these individual motivations, adapted to the institutional level. Chun-Kai Karl Huang et al. point out a major factor in the adoption of open access policies:

> "**…the** key to understanding and guiding the cultural changes that underpin a transition to openness is at the level of research institutions. While funders, national governments, and research communities create the environments in which researchers operate, it is within their professional spaces that choices around communication and their links to career progression and job security are strongest. Analysis of how external policy leads to change at the level of universities is critical."[6]

Attentive to the motivations of both altruistic public benefit and self-serving reputational benefit, Lucy Montgomery et al. see the university operating in, and responding to, external pressures and obligations. The tensions around open access are brought into sharp focus across the institutional context, wherein "… universities themselves continue to be assessed, ranked and evaluated according to narrow measures of performance that depend on limited datasets and ignore the value of open knowledge."[7]

Institutional concerns inform, and are informed by, the priorities and values of individual researchers. A prime example is the promotion and tenure process, the ultimate arbiter of a scholar's success in an institution. Promotion and tenure processes are primarily based on traditional impact metrics and vague criteria that are slow to change in response to a shifting scholarly landscape. While not explicitly a financial construct, prestige and reputation are linked to a neoliberalism that has long dominated academia. Jingfeng Xia et al. also point out that the adoption of OA mandates, as for NIH funding and by the Harvard Faculty of Arts and Sciences, are notable "because they represent the first major adoptions of a mandate policy using a democratic process"

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rather than administrative edict.[8] While their focus is on repositories and self-archiving, they make a point about the utility of open access policies that rely on faculty members' depositing their work into institutional repositories:

> "**Without** examining the needs of scholarly researchers and connecting current academic priorities to new principles regarding open access self-archiving, a mandate policy will not succeed. Faculty members do not see the benefit of open access reflected in the tenure process, so they fail to deposit items into the repository."[9]

To encourage scholar adoption of open access, institutions need to implement systems that reward, or at the very least do not punish, this behavior. If a tenure system recognizes the benefits of open access, so will scholars; conversely, if an institution punishes or marginalizes the use of open access venues, scholars will avoid them.

Studies on institutional open access policies tend to focus on the operational and procedural aspects of the policies rather than motivation.[10] However, Simon Wakeling et al. attend to questions of motivation in their documentary analysis of open access policies in Australian universities. Wakeling et al. examined policy libraries and institutional websites of the 41 universities in Australia, identifying 20 OA policies. Of the universities without OA policies, several reference OA in related policy documents (such as "Research publication policy") or disseminate other forms of principles, procedures, or guidelines related to OA.[11] Their content analysis focuses on information such as relevant dates, responsible offices, definitions, to whom a policy applies, and the outputs covered, exceptions and intent. The study explicitly invokes motivation, relying on the language of OA documents to identify "rationale used in policies in support of OA as a principle." Three main categories of rationale are identified: "to increase the profile of the research of the university, to ensure the university research has a wide audience, or because open research benefits society."[12] Wakeling et al. observe: "Despite the general philosophy that publicly funded research should be publicly available, only [two policies] specifically refer to 'publicly-funded research.'"[13]

Several case studies describe local efforts at OA policy implementation.[14] Leo Sai-Ho Lo's dissertation offered a case study analysis of two institutions' open access policies, relying on interviews and document analysis. Lo identifies two major reasons for adopting OA policies: "One is 'the dissemination of knowledge' and the other is 'reducing cost.'"[15] While cost reduction – specifically a goal of using OA to mitigate the soaring costs of journal subscriptions for university libraries - was a clear motivating factor in the universities' pursuit of open access, neither institution references cost reduction in its policy, instead emphasizing knowledge dissemination. Lo posits that the decision not to invoke cost issues in the language of the policy may be guided by a recognition that faculty would understand the alignment between institutional mission and knowledge dissemination, perceiving both an ethical imperative and potential benefits to research impact.[16] Lo further observes the impact of reputational motivation on policy adoption, as gleaned through interviews: "Being an early adopter of Open Access also put the two institutions in good company. Participants at both institutions mentioned that being the first (or the second) public institution to adopt Open Access policies created a positive image and brand for their institution. It raised their reputations and prestige, as they were mentioned with elite institutions such as Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology."[17]

Finally, as will be considered at greater length in the Discussion section, a robust body of literature on open access, open science, and open data attends to the philosophical and rhetorical claims of these movements and their motivations.[18] Benedikt Fecher and Sascha Friesike identify distinctive concerns that define five separate but overlapping schools of thought in Open Science. Most relevant to this study are their formulations of public and democratic schools, concerned as they are with accessibility and access.[19] Outlining alternatives to the corporate market dominance and "capitalization of knowledge" in the UK, Sarah Kember observes the rhetorical influence of the "Information wants to be free" mantra and "… its quest for a counterculture in which knowledge and information are equally accessible to all."[20] Broadening out to consider rhetorical functions across research communication, Samuel Moore, Cameron Neylon, Martin Paul Eve, Daniel Paul O'Donnell, and Damian Pattinson interrogate "excellence" as a ubiquitous, flexible, and harmful rhetorical concept in universities. Moore et al. argue: "Used in its current unqualified form ["excellence"] is a pernicious and dangerous rhetoric that undermines the very foundations of good research and scholarship."[21]

Lo and Wakeling et al. have advanced a method of examining the articulated motivation of formal open access policy adoption at the institutional level.[22] This study builds on their work, addressing the gap in the literature that examines institutional motivation or justification for an open access policy. Additionally, this study builds on previous work about the signaling value of university documents, specifically looking at mission statements for common elements, and considers the gap between rhetoric and motivation.[23] In this study, the area of focus is confined to US research institutions with a land-grant mission, and the question of motivation is examined in greater depth.

Methodology

This study deploys context analysis and grounded theory to examine institutional governing documents, attending to rhetorical claims of purpose, priority, and values. In a previous publication, the authors reported on findings that, despite hypothesizing an alignment between a commitment to open access and land-grant mission, only 19 of 112 land-grant institutions have adopted open access policies or resolutions at the institutional level.[24] Further, every land-grant that had passed an open access policy or resolution was an 1862 land-grant; none of the historically black land-grants (1890) or tribal colleges (1994) in the land-grant dataset had adopted policies. This study builds on those findings to consider intent and motivation for institutions with IOAPs.

The authors generated a list of land-grant institutions with IOAPs by first identifying land-grant institutions in the United States from the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture and then cross-referencing this list with institutional policy listings from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition), the Registry of Open Access Repositories Mandatory Archiving Policies (ROARMAP), and the Coalition of Open Access Policy Institutions (COAPI).[25] Additionally, each land-grant institutional website was searched to collect the institutional policy and identify any others not included on these lists. For purposes of this analysis, the University of California (UC) system is treated as one entity (the system as a whole is recognized as a land-grant by

Table 1.
US land-grant institutions with OA policies or resolutions

Institution	Date Adopted
Cornell University (resolution)	May 2005
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	March 2009
University of New Hampshire (resolution)	March 2010
University of Hawaii at Manoa	Fall 2012
University of Rhode Island	May 2013
Oregon State University	June 2013
University of California System (10 schools)	July 2013; October 2015
University of Minnesota	January 2015
University of Delaware	April 2015
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey	September 2015; passed October 2012
University of Arizona	April 2016
University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign	May 2016
University of Massachusetts at Amherst	July 2016
University of Arkansas (resolution)	June 2016
Utah State University	August 2016
Iowa State University (resolution)	2017
Pennsylvania State University	January 2020
Virginia Polytechnical and State University	July 2021
University of Maryland, College Park	April 2022

the federal government, and the 10 UC schools are all governed by the same policy at the UC system level as well as being subject to other regulations and financial support at the state level). Table 1 identifies land-grant universities that have adopted open access resolutions or policies.

The authors relied on Peter Suber's framework to initially classify the 15 "policies" and 4 "resolutions" in the study corpus.[26] There is also a noted distinction between the rhetoric and the reality of open access policies, one that goes beyond the nomenclature of mandate, policy, and resolution. Rick Anderson presents some of the distinctions among types of policies or resolutions:

> "**Institutional** mandates are a much more mixed bag. Some are powerful, many are not, and a great many of them are not even real. But it's interesting to note that patterns of "mandatoriness" can be discerned across countries. A spot-check of the ROARMAP database is instructive: Australian and British institutional mandates tend to be real… Institutional mandates in the United States, however, are very rarely real, and while they may be called "mandates" colloquially, they often turn out to be little more than statements of institutional preference."[27]

Lo articulates of OA policies that "although they are typically mandates, they are not designed to be enforced. In fact, it might be counter-productive to strictly enforce the policy, as faculty value their academic freedom, which could be defined very broadly."[28] In recognition of OA resolutions' different function, as tools to encourage open access deposit, sometimes passed when OA advocates have not secured political support for a full policy, this study examined the four adopted resolutions separately.

For this study, the authors located institutional policies posted to official university websites, minted permalinks to these posted policies to ensure continued accessibility, and created a corpus of texts as the basis for analysis (see Appendix). Overall, the documentary analysis was limited to the text of the formal policies themselves, as approved and adopted by institutional actors, rather than relying on changeable accompanying web matter or documentation, such as posted Q&As. However, given the brevity of many of the statements, external documentation was consulted to identify additional procedural or operational details.

Using this sample of 19 land-grants with IOAPs (15 policies and 4 resolutions), the authors performed a content analysis of the open access policy documents collected. Examining those few policies that have been enacted, the scope and purposes of these policies as cited by the institutions, and conducting further analysis of how they have been implemented, may provide some insight into policy motivation and adoption as they relate to the land-grant mission. Given the small sample size, the analysis of the policies is not necessarily generalizable or predictive but provides some indicators of trends and influences and may help guide future adoption by land-grant universities.

In order to consistently analyze the formal policy documents, the authors used a grounded theory approach, developing and refining themes in the process of data collection. Articulations of purpose in open access policies were examined closely. As the analysis will describe, multiple factors led to classification of each policy in this analysis based on particular language, including use of boilerplate language and the relative brevity of many statements of purpose.

Limitations

One challenge to coding was the comparative brevity of policies. Table 2 indicates the range in length, from just over 200, to more than 1,300 words. The length, while seemingly an arbitrary metric, translates to the ability to articulate more motivational factors or elaborate on those that are present.

For example, MIT, the University of Massachusetts, and the University of Rhode Island limited their stated purpose to a one-sentence commitment by their faculty to "disseminating the fruits of its research and scholarship as widely as possible," expressing an action rather than a specific benefit or beneficiary.

Table 2.
Word count and frequency of concepts

	Total word count in policy	# of key concepts referenced	Words per concept (calculated)
Min	214	7	14.04
Max	1378	30	91.87
Mean	626	18	37.66

Another challenge when coding was discerning standard institutional descriptions from more specific or meaningful claims. Rutgers University opens their policy statement by describing an institutional commitment "to conducting research that breaks new ground, and to turning knowledge into solutions for local, national, and global communities." A quick search of the Rutgers website turned up this phrasing as an articulation of local university priorities, or what amounts to institutional boilerplate. One might read this claim as evidence of a consistent university commitment to its mission, with the open access policy well-aligned with these pursuits, or as a simple repetition of a certain type of branding. While this study identifies boilerplate phrases among stated motivation, it does not make a determination as to the sincerity of these claims or the effect of their repetition.

Jack Meacham describes university mission statements, which are often referenced or alluded to in other institutional policies, as "declarations of a campus's rationale and purpose; its responsibilities towards students and the community; and its vision of student, faculty, and institutional excellence."[29] Institutional boilerplate, in turn, is informed by the development of land-grant universities' unique and shared visions and missions. As Gladys Melika Walker explains, land-grants have been described as experiencing an "identity crisis" as they pursue potentially conflicting goals – staying true to their land-grant roots and tripartite mission of teaching, extension, and publicly impactful research, historically grounded in agriculture and engineering, while competitively pursuing pre-eminence.[30]

Findings and Discussion

The results of the analysis examine the priorities as articulated in the language of the policies and resolutions, associating them with motivational themes. Discussion will focus on the factors that signal value in terms of whether goodness (understood as a public good or benefit) or greatness (conceptualized as an emphasis on prestige, competitiveness, and reputation) held a more prominent place in the document, and how these themes interact.

Table 3.

Motivational themes in IOAPs

Theme	Frequency of appearance
Dissemination of knowledge	16 (84.2%)
Prestige/reputation (author or institution)	15 (79.0%)
Public good/benefit	12 (63.2%)
Advancement of knowledge (broadly, in discipline or profession)	8 (42.1%)
Collectivity proposition ("trend", peers")	8 (42.1%)
Compliance proposition (funding mandate, accountability to taxpayers)	8 (42.1%)
Economic motivation	8 (42.1%)
Preservation of knowledge	5 (26.3%)
Promotion of collaboration	2 (10.5%)

Motivational Themes

The research corpus related to land-grant open access policies and resolutions revealed distinctive stated arguments for institutional policy, which in some cases align with the ideologies identified in the broader literature on open access, open science, and open data. This study's emphasis on motivation compelled the use of grounded theory to identify categories emerging from the corpus. Nine clusters of motivational themes emerged from the authors' analysis, with varying distributions across the study set, as shown in Table 3.

As this study is concerned with both the prevalence of thematic motivational clusters and the particular language used within policies and resolutions, the following sections will quote from policies to examine each motivational theme more closely.

Dissemination of Knowledge

Nearly every institution in this study asserted a motivation of broader "dissemination." This wording explicitly echoes the phrasing originally used in Harvard's groundbreaking institutional policy, with its implicit promise of public and scholarly access. In a document that annotates "a model open-access policy" adapted from the policies adopted by faculties and schools at Harvard, Duke, Stanford, and MIT, Stuart Shreiber explains the motivation behind the phrasing of "dissemination": "The intention of the policy is to promote the broadest possible access to the university's research."[31] This relatively

agnostic dedication to "dissemination of information," with emphasis on the proliferation of the information for its own sake (or with various motivations inferred by the reader), appeared in 84.2 percent of the land-grant IOAPs. Indeed, language from Harvard's policy regarding dissemination could be considered boilerplate itself: Harvard's formulation of "disseminating the fruits of its research and scholarship as widely as possible" showed up in eight of the institutions' policies in similar, if not identical, form.[32]

The authors observed some variation within this motivation, including instances in which different articulated priorities and motivations intersected in one phrase, demonstrating mixed motivation, an understanding of dissemination as instrumental to other goals (such as author benefit), and corroborative factors:

- "**Authors** do not benefit from the full dissemination of their work when access is limited."
- "**Open** access publishing and archiving is central to the long-term viability of the dissemination of scholarship."
- "**In** support of greater openness … scholars seek to collaborate and share their work as widely as possible."

Dissemination, as the most commonly articulated motivation, was thus often joined with other claims.

Advancement of Knowledge

Advancement of knowledge was often, understandably, coupled with dissemination of knowledge. The direction of the advancement was varied in focus, pointing to "the field," "the scholarly community," and "the public."

Several statements referred to the correlation between openness and innovation:

- "**Open** Access and Open Source promote timely and innovative research."
- "**A** general increase in the exchange and creation of knowledge."
- "**Accelerate** the research and discovery process."

The last example makes the connection between innovation in research and solutions for "local, national, and global communities," recalling a core land-grant mission.

Preservation of Knowledge

Following the focus on the generation of knowledge, preservation of knowledge emerged as a priority. The archiving of research and discovery for future generations or researchers, students, and the public acknowledges that knowledge builds on previous research. Five institutions articulated preservation of knowledge and open access as a priority, ranging from such brevity as "aid preservation" to a more detailed statement like "provide persistent storage of and access to a digital copy of your work, ensuring that it will continue to be available to readers." The latter statement was explicit about operational details.

While related to preservation of knowledge, this study additionally considers the number of policies or resolutions that identify an institutional repository as part of

their open access commitment. The recommended (or required) use of an institutional repository was articulated in all 19 policies and resolutions studied, a major indicator of commitment to green open access and institutional infrastructure.

The Compliance Proposition

A motivation of compliance (to funders) or accountability was identified in only eight institutional policies, evidenced by:

- "**Open** access enhances the broad dissemination of scholarly work, consistent with federal agency requirements for public access findings."
- "**Comply** with all relevant external requirements (granting agency requirements, federal requirements, contractual obligations) with respect to Open Access"
- "**Funding** agencies worldwide have mandated; realizes that a majority of scholarly activities and outcomes are directly supported by the taxpayers of the United States."

The motivating language used in the policies to describe compliance ranges from open access as a mandate to an effort to be accountable to taxpayers (the public), acknowledging that there is an external authority in the form of a granting agency, governing body or taxpayer.

Economic Motivation

The economic proposition included several relevant subtopics, employing rhetoric that recognized equity in terms of specific populations, considerations of economic disparity, and acknowledgement of authors' rights and intellectual property. Each of these perspectives is predicated on the premise of knowledge as a commodity.

Seven policies included equity-related text, acknowledging institutions' lack of access and resources, and highlighting specific communities, countries, and regions:

- "**The** public includes scholars in low- and middle-income countries."
- "**Open** access contributes to global information sharing, including developing countries that do not have access to expensive databases or journal subscriptions."
- "**Open** and transparent systems of scholarship can help remove barriers that have marginalized the voices of women, communities of color, scholars from the Global South, and other underrepresented identities in the scholarly record."

The discussion of equity was unavoidably entangled with the economic motivation. Generally, policies that referenced an economic motivation addressed the affordability of resources (or lack thereof) and, specifically, the excessive costs of journal access. These concerns were explicitly addressed by six institutions, with varying degrees of specificity and scope from a vague "free access" to more detailed, direct and, at times, activist language:

The discussion of equity was unavoidably entangled with the economic motivation. Generally, policies that referenced an economic motivation addressed the affordability of resources (or lack thereof) and, specifically, the excessive costs of journal access.

- "**Unreasonable** subscription costs of many journals"
- "**Making** it more accessible and affordable"
- "**Institutions** that cannot afford subscriptions to all of the relevant professional journals."

This acknowledgment of the tension between information as a commodity and information as a public good also surfaced concerns about the sustainability of the current scholarly communication channels and access:

- "**Open** access works to offset the sharply rising costs for online journals and databases (even if in some cases independent publication costs may exist)"; Open access contributes to global information sharing, including developing countries that do not have access to expensive databases or journal subscriptions"; A campus-wide open access initiative would provide … scholars with leverage to negotiate more favorable copyright terms with publishers."
- "**Urge** tenured faculty to cease supporting publishers who engage in exorbitant pricing, by not submitting papers to, or refereeing for, the journals sold by those publishers, and by resigning from their editorial boards if more reasonable pricing policies are not forthcoming."
- "**Open** Access … may help address affordability of education; … can help address the academic journal subscription cost inflation crisis; better utilize its resources by eliminating the need to pay subscription fees..."

Related to consideration of knowledge as an economic commodity, 15 institutions acknowledged intellectual property with statements affirming that the researcher, author, or creator (who may be faculty, staff, or a student) retains copyright. Employing the policies and resolutions as way to grant themselves permission, 17 institutions wrote into the policy, "the author grants limited license to the university."

The Collectivity Proposition and Promotion of Collaboration

As previously discussed, the first institutional open access policy in the country was passed by Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 2008. Harvard's policy has served as a highly influential model for others, down to the detail of imitating its distinctive "disseminating the fruits" language.[33] In a parallel of best practice similar to that inspired by Harvard's policy, claims and wording from the University of California's policy recurred across subsequent policies, most tangibly IOAPs from Illinois, Penn State, and Arizona. The collectivity proposition, referring to peers adopting open access or the trend toward OA in higher education, was frequently articulated. Several institutions referenced Harvard, including MIT, which has the earliest OA policy included in this study of land-grants. Illinois' policy includes the claim that the UC policy serves as "an acceptable basis" for their own policy. Collectivity as an institutional motivation signifies more than a cultural norm or the desire or be part of a community: underlying the attention to "peers" is the concern about reputation, and thus it may be driven more by competition than collaboration.

Somewhat related to this concept of collectivity, only two institutions specifically addressed the value of collaboration:

- "**Open** access increases networking among scholars with the likelihood that … scholarship is more easily discoverable and cited by others."
- "**In** support of greater openness, … scholars seek to collaborate and share their work as widely as possible."

These results are representative of the tensions between collaboration and competition in higher education research. They also signal the larger conflict between public good and prestige, or goodness and greatness, with both motivations co-existing in most policies. While the most agnostic of motivations—dissemination of knowledge—was present in the greatest number of policies, it was closely followed by prestige or reputation and then by public good or benefit (see Figure 1).

Prestige and Reputation

The next most common theme was prestige or reputation, with 80 percent of the institutions referenced prestige or reputation as a motivation. This frequency indicates the prominence of this priority in land-grant policies. Several policies addressed the topic of prestige at length, delineating two core beneficiaries: the institution and the researcher. Statements about building institutional reputation approached it from several strategies, allying prestige with public benefit, a commitment to more robust scholarship, and persistence:

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- "**Benefits** that accrue to individual scholars and to the scholarly enterprise from such wide dissemination, including greater recognition, more thorough review, consideration and critique, and a general increase in scientific, scholarly and critical knowledge."

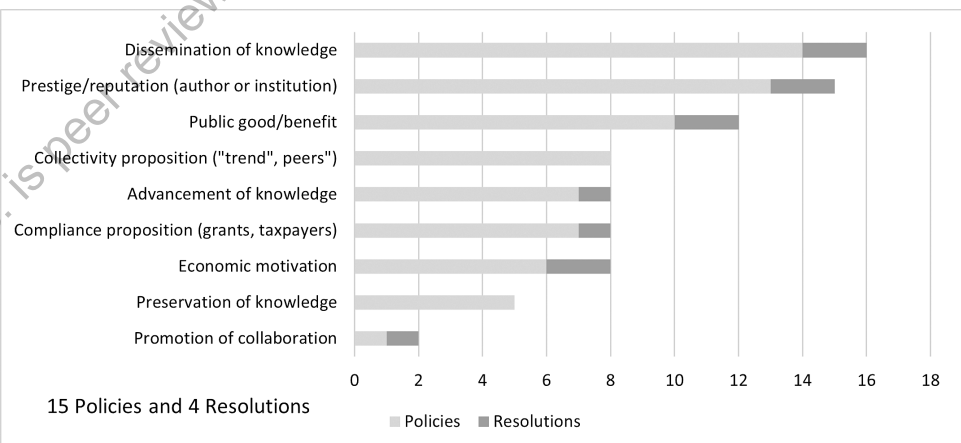

Figure 1. Articulated motivations behind OA policies and resolutions.

- "**An** open access policy will increase the visibility, readership and impact of [university] scholarship and ensure that it is widely and permanently available in the University's digital repository to readers and researchers worldwide."
- "**Increase** the visibility of university research by participating in Open initiatives"
- "**Maximize** impact and availability of research and establish [the university] as a leader in the international Open Access Movement."

Interestingly, the last example indicates the value of open access in building reputation, not by virtue of the discovery of its research, but as a leader in the open access movement.

The statements about prestige benefits specifically directed at faculty addressed topics relevant to the building of their national reputation and impact, with some mentioning promotion and tenure:

- "**Serve** faculty interests by promoting greater reach and impact for articles"
- "**Meet** the requirements of promotion and tenure, "
- "**Authors** do not benefit from the full dissemination of their work when access is limited, as many citation studies have shown"
- "**Intended** to serve faculty interests by promoting greater reach and impact for articles"

Policies also referenced the potential citational advantages accrued by open access dissemination, with citations framed as a meaningful metric and proxy for impact. Research citation translates to impact of the institution as noted in the following statements. The perceived prestige of the institution is dependent on the reputation of their researchers:

- "**Open** access increases the visibility of … scholars' research and thus enhances the university's reputation"
- "**Open** access increases citations to and impact of publications; visibility of the authors and of the campus"
- "**Faculty** recognizes the benefits that accrue to themselves as individual scholars and to the scholarly enterprise from such wide dissemination…"

Overall, these statements surface longstanding systems in higher education that perpetuate prestige and reputation as a priority. That this sentiment was more frequent than the explicit public good motivation at land-grant universities, raises the question of how one motive may undermine the efforts of the other.

Public Good and Public Benefit

The public good ideal, mentioned in only 63 percent of IOAPs, is markedly lower in occurrence than the prestige ideal. The fact that the motivation of goodness—or work for the benefit of the public—is overtaken by emphasis on prestige raises a number of questions. Institutions referenced public benefit in distinctive formulations and combinations:

- "**Making** the knowledge and resources created and preserved at the University accessible to the citizens of the state, the nation, and the world."
- "**A** key element of the land-grant mission is public access."

- "**Serving** the public through learning, discovery, and engagement."
- "**Freely** accessible scholarship benefits the academy and society at large."
- "**Open** access contributes to global information sharing, including developing countries."
- "**The** … University library upholds the values rooted in academic freedom and the land-grant mission of researching and sharing knowledge beyond the campus borders for the common good."
- "**Publicly** funded research should be made available to the public."
- "**In** addition to securing the public benefit of such access, this policy …"
- "**serving** the public through learning, discovery, and engagement."
- "**Open** sharing of information for the common good, known as the Open Access movement."

The emphasis on public good or benefit to the public was also present in text related to other thematic categories. For example, language that situated an IOAP as advancing the land-grant mission or as a public research university might be considered to promote benefits to the public, the institution, and sponsors.

The representation of "public" is indicated in a few different ways within these documents (see Figure 2). The acknowledgement of different stakeholders, group engagement and governance processes send a strong signal about the populations that are priorities for the institution and the role these individuals play in the university's mission. The open access policies in this study offer a range of approaches with regard to policy scope, buy-in and participants or beneficiaries.

The acknowledgement of different stakeholders, group engagement and governance processes send a strong signal about the populations that are priorities for the institution and the role these individuals play in the university's mission.

Acknowledging the Land-grant Mission

The authors reviewed the text of IOAPs for documentary evidence of the land-grant mission as a specific motivation for policy adoption. Out of nineteen resolutions and policies, only five policies and one resolution explicitly mentioned land-grant status or mission; three of these five policies also referenced their mission as public universities. An additional two policies referenced their public university status without including any reference to land-grant status. These mentions are made in specific contexts and appear to be given different weight but cluster around claims that land-grant status informs a commitment to broad dissemination of research. Oregon State opens its policy with: "In recognition of Oregon State University's land-grant mission, the Faculty is committed to disseminating its research and scholarship as widely as possible." So, too, does Minnesota: "As a publicly funded land-grant institution, the University of Minnesota is committed to ensuring the greatest possible scholarly and public access to the research

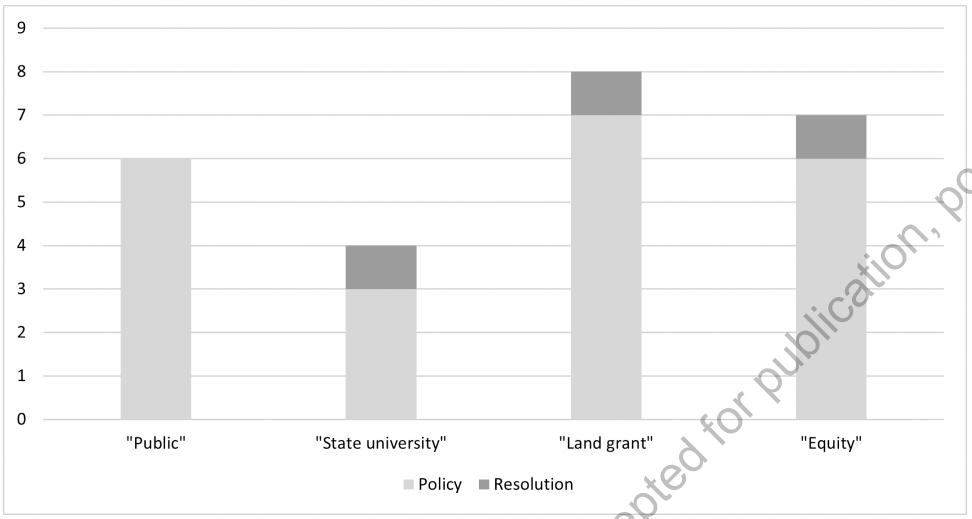

Figure 2. Policy language that acknowledged social responsibility commitment.

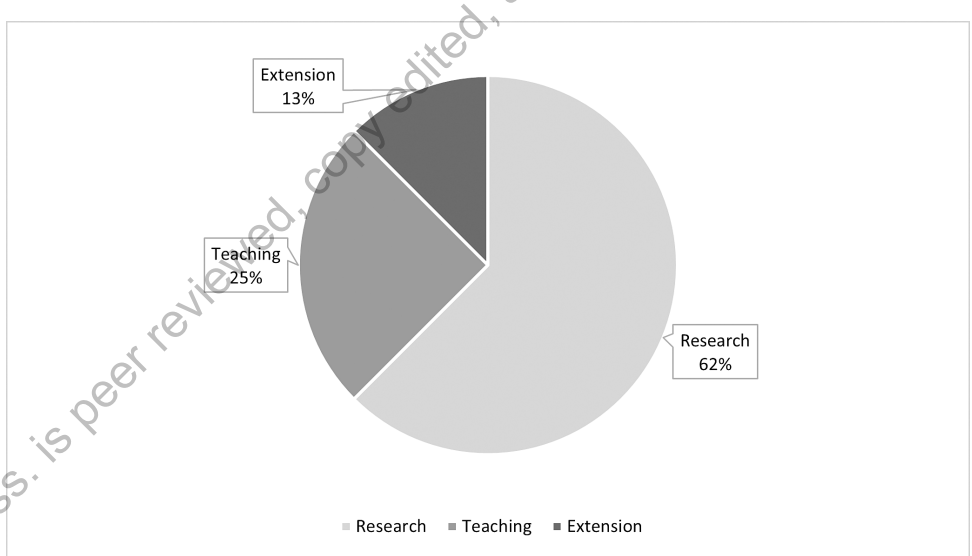

Figure 3. Facets of the land-grant mission explicitly mentioned in OA policies and resolutions.

and scholarship produced by the University community." Their policy rationale further describes a "threefold mission of research and discovery, teaching and learning, and outreach and public service."

Other signifiers of land-grant mission were directly invoked in IOAPs themselves. Looking at the specific aspects of the land-grant mission—teaching, research, and extension—13 institutions named at least one of those aspects and several named more than one (see Figure 3).

Research was by far the most recognized component, referenced in 13 IOAPs, followed by teaching, which was named in four policies. However, the usage of the terms "research" and "teaching" is so ubiquitous and fundamental to the broader university mission that correlating it specifically to the land-grant is specious. Conversely, the extension mission is unique to land-grants and can be considered core to the mission. While no IOAP in this study mentioned extension, Oregon State acknowledged it in its Q&A portion of the policy:

"Open Access allows the fruits of that research to be read and used by taxpayers, decision-makers, teachers and students. OSU's Extension and Experiment Station recognizes the importance of making OSU research available to the public by making every one of their publications available Open Access."

Public Writ Broadly: Other Beneficiaries and Stakeholders

Related to a commitment to the public, there are varying participants, stakeholders and beneficiaries that are attendant to these motivations and their perspectives are sometimes acknowledged in the policies:

- **Benefit** to public (including either scholarly or community usage).
- **Benefit** to institution and researcher (including visibility, impact, assertion of rights, preservation, alignment with institutional missions or goals).
- **Benefit** to scholarly enterprise (including furtherance of scientific, scholarly, and critical knowledge).
- **Benefit** to sponsors (including compliance, alignment with funders, service to taxpayers).
- **Repudiation** of for-profit or restricted models of scholarly communication.

Some beneficiaries of open access may not have a direct relationship but, nonetheless, they are identified as potential users (see Figure 4).

The intended audience for an institutional OA policy is manifold: it is a statement both for and by the faculty and researchers at an institution; it is a signal to the larger academic and disciplinary communities and peers; and it is an informative declaration to the leadership (system-level or governmental) and the larger public. As such, the language employed in a policy is intentional and indicative of institutional priorities; policies speak to each of these audiences in different ways.

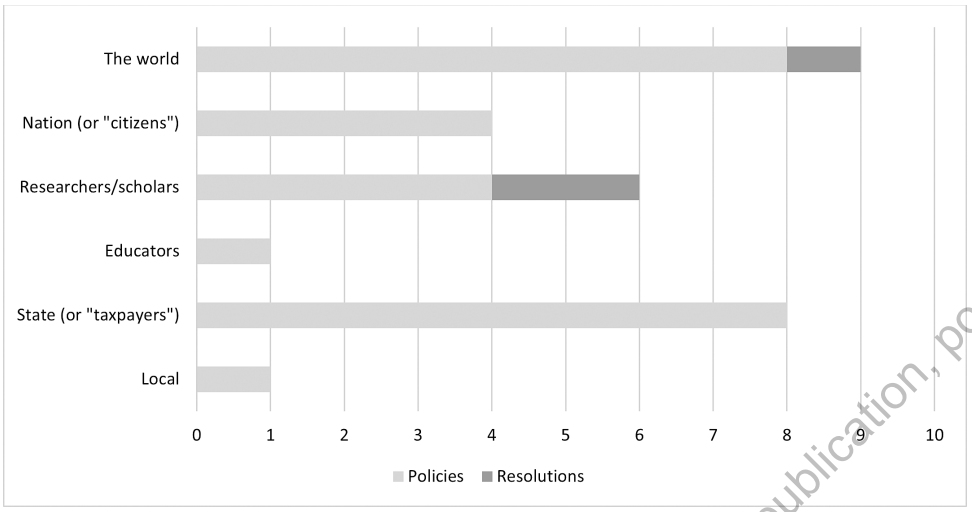

Figure 4. Defined beneficiaries of OA, as stated in the policies and resolutions.

Discussion

Land-grant institutions have historically deployed nostalgic and idealistic rhetoric, tying their existence as "democracy's colleges" to tangible community benefit. These claims are buttressed by a dominant "romantic school" of land-grant historiography that uncritically celebrates land-grants as agents of democracy and egalitarianism, advancing the needs of both farmers and the middle class through accessible, practical instruction and through the sharing of their research, knowledge, and expertise.[34] Such descriptions of land-grants focus idealistically on the values meant to further public education and the outreach mission, attentive to both national and local goals and communities. As the authors' previous study reports in detail, this "romantic school" strain of land-grant rhetoric diverges sharply from a critical perspective of these institutions as "Land-Grab Universities" that dispossessed Native peoples and continue to occupy "a central element of settler colonialism."[35]

A tension between academic research and innovation as a public right and a public good or as a vehicle for influence and prestige is rampant through the information policy literature (see Figure 5). These competing philosophies of thought represent distinctive priorities and approaches that manifest in formal ways, such as institutional mission statements, as well as in more operational decisions, as when faculty and researchers weigh whether to make their research open access or not. The rise and evolution of open access has sharpened these divisions.

Rhetorically, the land-grant open access policies examined in this study sought to, effectively, split the difference. Appeals to the public benefit of open dissemination of land-grant research are situated alongside less altruistic advocacy for gains in prestige and impact to researchers and institutions. Or, reliant on boilerplate and other language gleaned from Harvard's original policy, land-grant open access policies rhetorically align themselves with the open access movement itself and the network of institutions that have adopted policies, rather than any distinctive institutional mission or mandate.

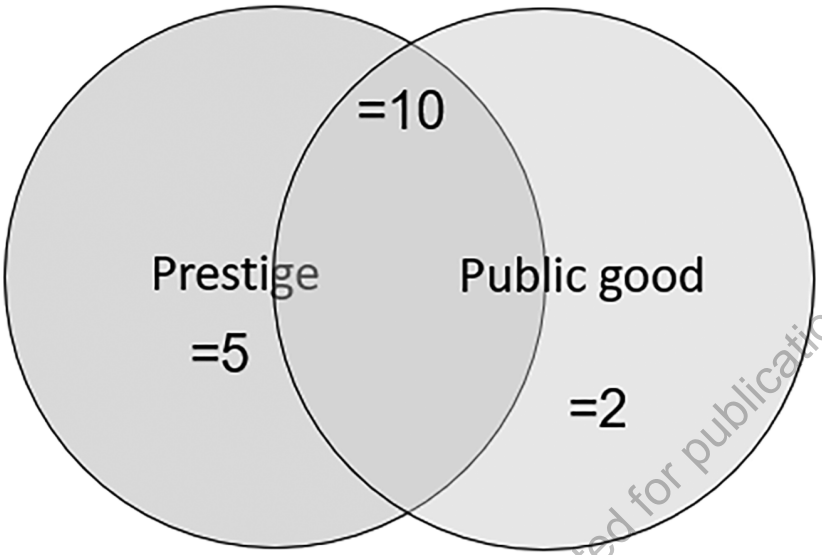

Figure 5. Overlap of greatness and goodness motivations, as stated in IOAPs.

In their framework delineating five schools of thought in Open Science, Benedikt Fecher and Sascha Friesike describe a "democratic school of thought." Unlike the "infrastructure school (concerned with the technological architecture)" or the "measurement school (concerned with alternative impact measurement)" or the "pragmatic school (concerned with collaborative research)"or even the "public school (concerned with the accessibility of knowledge creation)," the democratic school, "which is concerned with access to knowledge," views Open Access as a tool or a means to achieve this access.[36] Fecher and Friesike write of the scientists, politicians, and citizens identified with the democratic school:

> "**Put** simply, they argue that any research product should be freely available. The reason we refer to the discourse about free access to research products as the democratic school issues from its inherent rationale that everyone should have the equal right to access knowledge, especially when it is state-funded."[37]

But this seemingly public-oriented goal, immediately identified with the "good" or publicly oriented category within this study, also bundles together distinctive goals that push beyond public benefit. Fecher and Friesike discern a number of themes specifically within the democratic school, including OA's potential to serve as a tool for economic development; to increase dissemination, usage, and impact of publications; and to drive down inflated journal pricing.

Competing interests around scholarly communication are also addressed in a recent study by Melissa Hubbard. Hubbard focuses on the role of higher education more

broadly as a public good, taking the term from an economic perspective as opposed to a more colloquial one: "as institutions are increasingly driven by market imperatives, they may exacerbate existing social inequities by emphasizing profit motive over education outcomes."[38] This perspective is evident, she argues, in the increased importance of technology commercialization initiatives on campuses across the US: "Public research universities responded to these changes by placing new emphasis on departments that produced research that could be monetized, particularly applied science fields, in order to generate new revenue streams…."[39] She summarizes the forces at play in scholarly communication, drawing from Hahn: "1) a prestige economy, which drives faculty behavior; 2) a market economy, which drives for-profit publisher behavior; and 3) a subsidy economy, in which libraries are subsidized by universities to act as customers in the market, supporting the behavior of both faculty and publishers."[40]

Ellen Detlefsen categorizes the different priorities in scholarly communication under social, economic, technological, and political priorities, identifying tensions or dichotomies. Among them are several that juxtapose public good versus economic (or bureaucratic) priorities:

- "**Information** as a social good versus information as an economic commodity"
- "**Information-rich** vs information poor"
- "**Equal** access versus equitable access"
- "**Collections** versus connections"
- "**Economic** fee versus free"
- "**Public** sector/private sector interaction in providing information services"
- "**Socialism** versus capitalism"
- "**Restraints** versus constraints."[41]

These philosophies about open access articulate reasons that may, or may not, overlap with the actual motivation of researchers and knowledge creators or with the university culture. They also demonstrate significant overlap among the priorities for open access.

Conclusion

This analysis of open access policies and resolutions at land-grant universities revealed multiple motivational factors, including the potentially competing priorities of prestige or reputation and benefit to the public. Undoubtedly, multiple motives or justifications contribute to the consideration and adoption of the open access policies, given that they address different purposes and meet the varying needs of different stakeholders. While the incidence of prestige and reputation occurred in 16 percent more institutions, the emphasis on public good was present in multiple ways: the acknowledgement of who was served by the policy; the reference to the land-grant mission and responsibility to the populations served (state, citizens, public); and the accountability to different stakeholders, some of whom also value the public ideal.

While a growing body of literature examines the inadequacy of open access to serve the public good, as well as the potential for open access to deepen cumulative advantages and entrench inequality, the motivations referenced in open access policies are lofty and aspirational, emphasizing the possibility rather than the limitations of these mechanisms.[42] Institutional open access policies and resolutions have varied motivations or justifications, with different values or priorities either explicitly or implicitly articulated. They may act exclusively as signaling devices, functioning merely as aspirational statements, and aligning universities with peers or the broader OA movement without making any clear commitment to achieving public access.

Undoubtedly, multiple motives or justifications contribute to the consideration and adoption of the open access policies, given that they address different purposes and meet the varying needs of different stakeholders.

This study argues that open access policies are akin to mission statements in higher education in the way they signal value. Like mission statements, open access policies resist analysis. Christopher C. Morphew and Matthew Hartley ask whether mission statements are "a) strategic expressions of institutional distinctiveness; or b) organizational window dressings that are normative necessities." [43] One of their findings is that elements cluster according to institutions' status as public or private universities rather than according to their Carnegie classification; they observe: "… public colleges include mention of public service because, to ignore this element, might call into question their very 'publicness." [44] Similar to the role that open access policies and resolutions play, Morphew and Hartley surmise that "mission statements may reflect, rather than drive, the realities of these institutions' environments," including complex, politically charged signaling to specific audiences and constituents.[45] Jelle Mampaey asserts that studies such as Morphew and Hartley's, which focus on institutional rhetoric, relate to the challenge of assessing and differentiating among institutions of higher education.[46] Referencing the work of Dennis A. Gioia and Kevin G. Corley, Mampaey observes that "the preoccupation with symbolism" in higher education relates to its intangible nature; in this context, "… 'looking good' is more important than 'being good,' hence symbolic activities are crucial for the survival of [higher education institutions]." [47]

As with any policy, the signaling power does not always translate to robust implementation. Lo states that "the biggest criticism of US university policies is that they are not real, enforced policies; many allow faculty to opt-out of the policy."[48] In other words, open access policies are largely rhetorical and may function as a call to action. The tension between altruism and reputation, or rather between goodness and greatness, in the adoption of open access policies is representative of larger struggles in higher education with the particular implications for public good, public audiences, or public commitments by public universities. These policies, then, reinforce claims made in the open access movement about the importance of dissemination. Additionally, land-grants are both unique institutions with dedicated public missions (reflected in these policies) and research universities concerned with standard markers of prestige and reputation. IOAP statements at land-grant universities demonstrate how the rhetoric of open access ulti-

mately invokes *both* goodness and greatness, both public benefit and institutional reward.

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Appendix

Land-grants with IOAPs (and Resolutions) Identified and Used for Analysis

Cornell University	http://wayback.archive-it.org/2566/20130608143253/http://www.library.cornell.edu/scholarlycomm/resolution.html
Iowa State University	http://www.facsen.iastate.edu/sites/default/files/uploads/16-17 Docket Calendar/S16-24 - Open Access at ISU - Senate resolution.pdf https://perma.cc/J9VN-DDM5
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	https://libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/mit-open-access/open-access-policy/ https://perma.cc/DK6Q-LRX5
Oregon State University	https://library.oregonstate.edu/open-access https://perma.cc/NF24-TNYG
Rutgers, State University of New Jersey	https://new.library.arizona.edu/research/open-access/policy https://perma.cc/JX48-Y9N2
University of Arizona	https://guides.library.illinois.edu/oapolicy/policy https://perma.cc/WB3W-LWUZ https://www.senate.illinois.edu/sc1512.pdf https://perma.cc/R354-U2RZ
University of Arkansas	https://provost.uark.edu/policies/122000.php https://perma.cc/4H53-B3S4
University of California System	https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/scholarly-publishing/uc-open-access-policies-background/systemwide-senate/ https://perma.cc/S69X-PTX6 https://osc.universityofcalifornia.edu/scholarly-publishing/uc-open-access-policies-background/presidential/ https://perma.cc/UE67-MRVX

University of Delaware	https://guides.lib.udel.edu/scholcom/openaccess https://perma.cc/VQP2-K48N
University of Hawaii	https://manoa.hawaii.edu/ovcaa/admin_memos/pdf/memo_04042012_openaccess.pdf https://perma.cc/4BLH-NVAC
University of Illinois	https://www.library.umass.edu/open-access-policy/ https://perma.cc/RK7V-W2CC
University of Massachusetts	https://www.usu.edu/policies/586/ https://perma.cc/G5DS-CGUQ
University of Minnesota	https://policy.umn.edu/research/scholarlyarticles https://perma.cc/T7NX-WQFB
University of New Hampshire	https://www.unh.edu/sites/www.unh.edu/files/departments/faculty_senate/documents/motions/2009-10/openaccess_signed-xiv-m14-3-22-2010.pdf https://perma.cc/9NS3-KSRE
University of Rhode Island	https://uri.libguides.com/c.php?g=42596&p=269438 https://perma.cc/HA8W-MLXA
Utah State University	https://openaccess.psu.edu/ https://perma.cc/NK7A-8J4E
Virginia Tech	https://sites.google.com/a/vt.edu/cor-oa-policy-working-group/ https://perma.cc/7BTX-BRZV
University of Maryland	https://pact.umd.edu/sites/default/files/2022-04/Equitable_Access_Policy_Senate_Version_2022_0406.pdf https://perma.cc/LU4E-S8Y8

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