

Lori Bronars

# Journal metrics

## A workshop and/or LibGuide for your library?

Several years ago, a faculty member in biology approached me in the library with a couple of paper journals in hand, asking if I could provide information about each. He was trying to decide where to submit his manuscript. Choosing a journal in which to publish is a big decision for scholars. Authors want to have their paper published in the highest-quality journal possible, while avoiding lengthy delays in the review process. The norm allows researchers to submit their paper to one journal at a time and wait for the review decision.

As I worked on this problem, I realized that there were quite a few resources with relevant information in the library or on free websites. Resources I identified included information on rank in field, impact factor, circulation, database or index coverage, time in review, and percent of articles uncited. I found myself thinking, if a tenured professor is asking for help on this topic, there must be other patrons who would also be interested in some guidance.

### LibGuide

Nearly five years ago, I developed a LibGuide to provide support in this area.<sup>1</sup> I incorporated links to library resources, such as Journal Citation Reports, Scopus, Ulrichsweb.com, WorldCat, and Standard Periodical Directory (information on locating the paper edition). I also included helpful, freely available resources, such as Eigenfactor.org, Google Scholar, and others (SciRev, JANE, Journal Reviewer,

and Journal Guide), which I'd learned about from listening to various vendor or publisher-sponsored webinars on journal metrics.

Journal metrics information in Google Scholar has proven to be relatively unknown among library patrons, even though the Google Scholar site is heavily used. On the homepage,<sup>2</sup> there is a link for Metrics, where the top 20 journals in each field or subcategory, and the top 100 publications in English, are listed according to h-index.

Another entry in my LibGuide is Match. The relatively recent addition of the manuscript matcher function in Thomson Reuters' EndNote online suggests journal names based on title and abstract input from the author. These suggestions are based on journals included in Journal Citation Reports. I'm told that soon there will be a video tutorial on this from Thomson Reuters.

I also included a tab (page) with an explanation or definition of a specific metric, such as Scopus' SNIP, Scopus' SJR, Google Scholar's h5-index, and Journal Citation Report's Impact Factor. A good summary of many of the relevant journal metrics is found in *Meaningful Metrics: A 21st-Century Librarian's Guide to Bibliometrics, Altmetrics, and Research Impact*.<sup>3</sup>

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Lori Bronars is science research support librarian-life sciences at the Yale University Center for Science and Social Science Information, email: lori.bronars@yale.edu

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The LibGuide continued to develop in other ways, as well. Some of my librarian colleagues, knowing of my interest in resources for journal metrics, suggested related sites such as Jeffrey Beall's List of Suspicious OA Journals and Publishers. Recently I was asked to add a tab (page) for the LibGuide created by Daniel Dollar, director of collection development for Yale University Library. This LibGuide, "Yale Libraries' OA Publishing Support,"<sup>4</sup> provides information on each journal or platform where Yale authors would receive a discount on publication fees or even free OA publication upon acceptance of a manuscript.

A colleague also suggested adding a link to Sherpa/ROMEO for searches on journal title, ISSN, or publisher name for information on journal publisher copyright and self-archiving policies and author permissions.

### **Workshop**

After my LibGuide was published, I decided to offer a library workshop on the topic. That was four-and-a-half years ago, and since then I have offered the workshop once or twice a semester and in the summer to our graduate students and faculty. Most participants are graduate students in the sciences, social sciences, or public health fields. A couple of graduate students in the humanities have also attended.

Attendance at my workshops varies from one to about eight participants. I try to demonstrate the resources using keywords or journal titles from the attendees' fields by asking for their fields when they register or when they join the workshop in person, if they haven't registered. Workshops are advertised through email via science and social science subject liaison librarians; through the Graduate School's Student Writing Center's weekly electronic newsletter on its website; and on the library instruction calendar, Facebook page, and library workshop handout.

The workshops and LibGuide efforts do not require much time to implement and maintain, and they consistently fill an information need among patrons from a variety

of fields. Patrons attending the workshop generally seem very grateful for this guidance. At the first workshop I gave, students were thanking me. In the summer of 2016, I was asked to offer the workshop to Yale librarians so they could get a sense of what it covers and for their own use in library science publication efforts. My announcement of this workshop resulted in five colleagues contacting me about attending.

### **Related LibGuides**

I began to wonder what assistance other libraries were offering their patrons in this area. I searched "journal metrics" at libguides.com and identified other LibGuides that were similar. I contacted the authors of these LibGuides to find out more about how they are used. Librarian Linda Zellmer, at Western Illinois University Libraries, also offers workshops with her "Choosing and Evaluating Journals & Conferences" LibGuide<sup>5</sup> through their Center for Innovation in Teaching & Research. She has found a varied, but "generally small" audience.<sup>6</sup>

Pat Ensor, executive director of the WI Dykes Library at the University of Houston -Downtown, hasn't taught workshops, but she offers her primarily faculty audience a related LibGuide, "Journal Quality Evaluation."<sup>7</sup>

Johns Hopkins University's Sheridan Libraries and University Museums offers scholarly metrics with a page, "Finding Journal Metrics."<sup>8</sup> This LibGuide received 1,649 uses between September 1, 2015, and January 5, 2016,<sup>9</sup> with the others mentioned falling between 106 and 174 uses during that time.

More recently, for my LibGuide, I had 171 uses from May 10, 2016, until June 10, 2016, which is more representative of its use over the past few years. Perhaps some focused attention on this area would benefit patrons at your institution, too.

Most of the LibGuide authors I contacted were interested in comparing notes. You might find your colleagues sharing information with you to be advantageous, as well, once you've started. Being able to assist patrons or even librarians and other library col-

leagues with these questions is another way that a liaison librarian can support researchers and colleagues in their scholarly endeavors.

In a recent article, Mehdi Dadkhah<sup>10</sup> writes that many scholars use general search engines, such as Google, to research journals for their articles. Dadkhah found for search phrases such as “ISI journal fast review” or “fast publication + Scopus indexed” that a number of “questionable” journals come up in the first 30 results. I encourage you to counteract this approach with your patrons to give them more choices in deciding where to send their journal manuscript.

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### Notes

1. LibGuide, <http://guides.library.yale.edu/articlepublishing>.

2. Google Scholar, <http://scholar.google.com>.

3. Robin Chin Roemer and Rachel Borchartdt, *Meaningful Metrics: A 21st-Century Librarian's Guide to Bibliometrics, Altmetrics, and Research Impact* (Chicago, IL: ACRL, 2015).

4. “Yale Libraries’ OA Publishing Support,” <http://guides.library.yale.edu/openaccess/publications>.

5. “Choosing and Evaluating Journals & Conferences” LibGuide, <http://wiu.libguides.com/gettingpublished>.

6. Linda Zellmer, email message to author, January 5, 2016.

7. “Journal Quality Evaluation,” <http://uhd.edu/journalquality>.

8. “Finding Journal Metrics,” by Mark Cyzyk, Robin Sinn, and Yuan Zeng, <http://guides.library.jhu.edu/c.php?g=202558&p=1334626>.

9. Mark Cyzyk, email message to author, January 15, 2016.

10. Mehdi Dadkhah, “Researchers must not use phrases in search engines to find journals,” *Journal of the Association for Vascular Access* 21(2016):19-20. DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.java.2015.11.001> ([www.avajournal.com/article/S1552-8855\(15\)00281-0/fulltext](http://www.avajournal.com/article/S1552-8855(15)00281-0/fulltext), accessed June 29, 2016). *ZZ*

### RBM Fall 2016 issue available

ACRL’s special collections and cultural heritage-focused journal *RBM: A Journal of Rare Books, Manuscripts, and Cultural Heritage* became an open access publication beginning with the spring 2016 issue.

This change in access policy made the complete contents of the journal from 2000 to the present, along with complete contents of its predecessor *Rare Books & Manuscripts Librarianship*, freely available through the publication website at <http://rbm.acrl.org>.

The fall 2016 issue is now freely available and features the following research articles, along with book reviews and a note from Editor Jennifer Sheehan.

Anne Garner, Johanna Goldberg, and Rebecca Pou. “Collaborative Social Media Campaigns and Special Collections: A Case Study on #ColorOurCollections.”

Jacob Gordon. “In the Flesh? Anthropodermic Bibliopegy Verification and Its Implications.”

Laila Hussein Moustafa. “From Peshawar to Kabul: Preserving Afghanistan’s Cultural Heritage during Wartime.”

Silvia Vong. “A Constructivist Approach for Introducing Undergraduate Students to Special Collections and Archival Research.”