



THE GEORGE  
WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY  
MEDICAL CENTER

December 20, 2005

To: All GWUMC Faculty & Staff,

From: John F. 'Skip' Williams, MD., Ed.D  
Provost & Vice President for Health Affairs

*Skip*

Re: Change in Policy Regarding Subscription Purchases

The purpose of this memorandum is to announce changes in the policy regarding subscription purchases. Good management of resources requires constant review and analysis of business processes. One area that has been identified where redundancy exists is in subscription purchases/renewals. Considering the high cost of journals, we cannot afford unnecessary duplication. Some members of the GWUMC community are ordering journals when the Himmelfarb Library already subscribes to the title or provides access through its partnership with the University's Gelman Library. In some cases this duplication may be the result of not knowing that Himmelfarb is already an institutional subscriber; in other cases busy faculty and researchers may prefer having print copies in their own lab or departmental 'library.'

With the recommendation of the Deans in both Schools and Shelley Bader, I have agreed that we institute a review of journal purchases before departments or individual faculty or researchers place subscription orders. In fact, the policy of a central review for journal ordering is becoming more commonplace, especially in light of institutional licenses for electronic access to journal titles. This is not just a preemptive move to reduce purchasing. We hope through this assessment process to identify funds which can be applied to the acquisition of new information sources and databases [like Scopus] to help support our growing research program. We may also be able to help identify journals with a broad, interdisciplinary focus which should be added to the Himmelfarb collection.

Like the computer assessment form, the Library has created a GWUMC Subscription Assessment Form available from the list of Finance Forms at <http://inside.gwumc.edu/vpha> **This process is not intended to prevent or curtail approved Scientific Society memberships** which provide an individual subscription to the Society's journal. The assessment form will identify these situations and approval will be authorized. Individuals and departments must submit planned journal purchases to the Library for its review before the department orders the subscriptions regardless of payment type (i.e. P-Card, Procurement request or personal reimbursement.) This is a prospective review not retrospective.

I appreciate everyone's cooperation as we move forward with this initiative. Shortly after implementation, you will be asked for feedback and if appropriate we will make modifications to the process as long as we are able to get a handle on the redundancy found in the system

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