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UPCC Book Collections on Project MUSE

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ADVISOR REVIEWS—STANDARD REVIEW

UPCC Book Collections on Project MUSE

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Composite Score:

★★★★

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Abstract

The University Press Content Consortium (UPCC) has collaborated with Project MUSE to host over 15,000 e-books on the MUSE platform. This database was launched on January 1, 2012, and is fully integrated with MUSE's content from 500 journals in the humanities and social sciences to form a seamlessly searchable database of books and articles that provides scholarly content from 192 university presses and learned societies at a very affordable price. Carnegie Tier 4 & 5 universities may receive an additional 20% and 40% discount respectively if a purchase contract is signed by Aug. 31, 2012. As has always been the case with journal content on MUSE, *UPCC Books on Project MUSE* will offer unlimited usage, downloading, and printing for purchasing libraries. Book content is offered in DRM-free, chapter-level PDFs. SUSHI and COUNTER-compliant usage statistics and free MARC records are available.

Product Description

In 2009, the University Press e-book Consortium (UPeC) was created to investigate the possibility of launching an e-book database with titles published by university presses.¹ This effort was led by individuals from the university presses of the University of Nebraska, New York University, Temple University, Rutgers University, and the University of Pennsylvania. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation provided funding, while Informed Strategies surveyed libraries to determine need and Chain Bridge Group developed the business model. In 2011, after an RFP process, UPeC asked Johns Hopkins University Press (JHUP) to collaborate on the project. JHUP was chosen, in part, because of its experience balancing the interests of publishers and librarians and because it is a university press, as are most of the UPeC members, which provided a strong mission alliance for this collaboration. Cutting out third party vendors to secure cost savings, UPeC and JHUP formed the University Press Content Consortium (UPCC) and launched *UPCC Books on Project MUSE* in January, 2012, with content provided by scholarly publishers and sixty-six university presses, including Brookings, Duke, Georgetown, Michigan State, UMICH, NYU, Northwestern, Ohio State, Penn State, Purdue, Rutgers, et al.²

UPCC's collections are aimed at college and university libraries. They are available for purchase, either paid in full, or by three annual installment payments. A small access fee is assessed on libraries that do not subscribe to the Project MUSE journal collection. Otherwise, access to the UPCC book collections is free of charge. Backlist archival collections are also available by subscription.

According to Melanie Schaffner, Director, Sales and Marketing at JHUP, titles are placed in the various UPCC book collections upon

close consultation with MUSE acquisition librarians. UPCC publishers submit books to MUSE that fit the collection criteria, which stipulates that book content must complement and enhance the journal collections in MUSE. The titles cover disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. There are forty-seven collection options to choose from, including eleven specially-priced three-year frontlist bundles that cover 2010-2012, twelve current subject collections, current complete collections, archival subject collections, and the complete archive foundation collection consisting of eleven-thousand titles prior to 2010. As more books are added to the archival collection, these will become available for purchase as supplements.

UPCC displays the complete, published version of its books in DRM-free PDFs, which means all content may be accessed by any computer or mobile device with an Internet connection, most of which are able to display PDFs. The Bluefire Reader app is available for mobile devices that are not natively enabled to read PDFs, such as Amazon's Kindle. In order to accommodate various copyright agreements with a wide variety of publishers, individual books are not provided as a single PDF. Each book is broken up into separate PDF files for the cover, title page, table of contents, acknowledgments, introduction, individual chapters, conclusion, notes, bibliography and index. A positive consequence of the multiple PDF format is the entire book does not need to be downloaded whenever a single chapter is being accessed, which is a boon for mobile devices with limited bandwidth and for researchers who are only interested in using content from a single chapter. Unfortunately, individuals who wish to read an entire book will find it cumbersome to download each chapter separately.

Books provide broad subject scope, so there is an enormous amount of value added by combining UPCC content with the journal collection in MUSE. Researchers are likely to search for, access and use book chapters and scholarly journal articles simultaneously. The complete MUSE collection includes a close balance of 243,824 journal articles and 279,019 book chapters that cover subjects in the social sciences and humanities. There are seventeen research areas available: Area and Ethnic Studies; Art and Architecture; Creative Writing; Education; Film, Theater, and Performing Arts; History; Language and Linguistics; Library Science and Publishing; Literature; Medicine and Health; Music; Philosophy; Religion; Science, Technology, and Mathematics; Social Sciences; Studies by Time Period; Women's Studies, Gender, and Sexuality. These are broken down into 178 sub-topics. For example, Area and Ethnic Studies has the following subheadings: African American and African Diaspora Studies; African Studies; American Studies; Asian American Studies; Hispanic American Studies; Asian and Pacific Studies; Canadian Studies; French Studies; German Studies; Iberian Studies/Irish Studies; Jewish Studies; Latin American and Caribbean Studies; Middle Eastern

Studies; Native American and Indigenous Studies; Russian and East European Studies.³

Discovery and linking partners include ABC-CLIO (America: History and Life; Historical Abstracts), ACLS Humanities E-Book, Celdes, CrossRef, CSA (all databases), EBSCOhost (EDS), Gale, Google, Google Scholar, ISI Web of Science (all databases), JSTOR, Lalisio (literature metasearch), MathSciNet, Minerva M/e/o/s, NISC (all databases), OCLC FirstSearch Electronic Collections Online, OCLC WorldCat, OVID, Philosophy Documentation Center POIESIS, Primo Central, ProQuest, SCOPUS, Serials Solutions (Summon), Swets-Wise, TDNet, and WebFeat.

The Project MUSE search interface runs and has been tested on all major browsers, including Internet Explorer 6.0; Mozilla Firefox 7.0; Chrome 15; Opera 10 and Safari. JavaScript is required in order to use the Project MUSE search interface.

Searching

Anyone may search the entire collection although full text access to all but a small amount of Open Access material would be denied without a subscription. The Research Areas and sub-topics provide useful menu-driven browsing. After arriving at a particular research topic, results may be narrowed using facets in the left margin which limit by research area, access (*everything or only content I have full access to*), author, language, and content type (*journals or books*). Results are ranked according to relevancy, but this may be changed to *oldest first or newest first*.

The search engine default is set to keyword search both the book and the journal collections that a user has access to, and it recognizes Boolean operators, phrases and truncation, but not wildcards. As a search is being inputted, a drop-down menu offers predictive search terms and phrases. This feature is particularly useful to students who are unfamiliar with their research topic. It provides guidance and saves time and frustration, especially for undergraduates. After executing a search, results may be modified by selecting one of four fields, or entering additional search terms on multiple search bars, or selecting one of the facets on the left side of the search results page. The look and feel of the “modify search” page is similar to EBSCOhost’s “advanced search” page.

Search results include a partial abstract for each title that can be easily expanded by pressing the “show more” option. They may be further refined on the book level by clicking the “Search Inside This Book” tab. A binocular icon appears on the toolbar of every search page. This is particularly useful for individuals who are unaccustomed to searching PDF files using the “CTRL F” keystroke. Citations are provided in MLA, APA, and Chicago styles, and they may be exported to Endnote to save citations or to automatically create a reference page. Each search result includes an icon that shows whether or not the person has access to the content, is a free sample, Open Access, or restricted access.

The Library of Congress Subject Headings search function has been temporarily disabled in MUSE journals and is not yet operating in the UPCC e-book collections because the subject headings that were being supplied by the book publishers were inadequate. When the UPCC book collections are LCSH enabled, this feature will be brought back to the journal collection. In the meantime, some experienced users of

Project MUSE are quite disappointed to be unable to search the subject field or click on subject links.

Faculty may take advantage of unlimited simultaneous access to book content, the right to make unlimited copies and to email and electronically distribute content to students. Permanent links may be provided to UPCC content for students on a course management system such as Blackboard.

Pricing Options

There are five pricing tiers available for every collection offered by UPCC, which are determined by a school’s ranking in “The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.”⁴ A Tier 1 school may purchase the Archival Complete Foundation Collection (11,000 titles) for \$39,859.20, which comes to about \$4 per book. This is remarkably inexpensive for permanent and unlimited multiple use, and a great way for small colleges to add a significant amount of backlist titles from prestigious academic publishers for a relatively small amount of money. A large Tier 5 research institution would pay \$169,401.60 for the same collection, which is \$15.40 per book.

The current three-year bundle (2010-2012) may be purchased at a savings of 20% over making a separate purchase for each individual year. The complete package of frontlist titles is guaranteed to contain a minimum of 1,820 books for 2012, and an estimated total for 2010-2012 of at least 5,200 books. The purchase price is \$30,384.00 for a tier 1 library (less than \$6.00 per book) and \$129,132 for tier 5 research library (under \$25 per book). The cost to purchase the entire collection of about 16,000 titles available through UPCC would be close to \$70,000 for Tier 1 colleges (about \$5.00 per book) and close to \$300,000 for Tier 5 universities (about \$20.00 per book).

Even though these are bargain prices, they exceed the annual book budgets of some libraries. MUSE provides the option to purchase the collection in three annual installments. Libraries might also opt to purchase one of the subject collections. For example, the frontlist (2010-2012) collection of Film, Theater and Performing Arts is only \$2,203.20 for about 470 titles. The History frontlist has at least 940 titles for \$5,478.91.

Through a competitive RFP process, LYRASIS was awarded a contract by ARL to negotiate a set of special consortium rates and options that include a limited time special offer available to Tier 4 and 5 libraries through Project MUSE.⁵ This is an opportunity to purchase all 16,000 books for a price of \$174,870. This is an additional 20% discount for a Tier 4 and 40% for a Tier 5 library. It works out to just under \$11 per book, which is an excellent value for a large research university or master’s university (which is what Tiers 4 and 5 include). That price is good only through August 31, 2012, as a sort of early adopter special for a library that wishes to make a large amount of high quality university press content accessible to its users via the Project MUSE platform.

The Archival Complete Foundation Collection is the only UPCC collection that is available by subscription for libraries that do not wish to purchase it. A one-year subscription fee is \$13,400 for Tier 1 libraries and \$67,000 for Tier 5. This is a bit pricey as three subscription years would equal the purchase price. Ebrary has a better subscription model, but it is doubtful that anyone will beat UPCC’s purchase price for such a high level of scholarly material in the content areas that MUSE provides. Complete details on collections and pricing are available at http://muse.jhu.edu/about/order/book_title_lists.html#>.



UPCC Book Collections on Project MUSE

Review Scores Composite: ★★★★★

The maximum number of stars in each category is 5.

Content: ★★★★★

There is currently no alternative to Project MUSE that can deliver such extensive high end scholarly university press e-book content in the social sciences and humanities. JSTOR and UPSO by Oxford University Press may become close competitors at some point. Regardless, there would be very little overlap in titles between them and MUSE since they are covering different presses.

User Interface/Searchability: ★★★

When LCSH subject searching is enabled, this score will increase to 4.5. Indexing content by LCSH has been one of MUSE's most outstanding features. MUSE also needs to rethink some of its default search settings, which can be cumbersome to advanced searchers.

Pricing: ★★★★★

I am not aware of any other e-book provider that sells humanities and social sciences e-books for less than \$5 per title to small libraries and less than \$20 per title to ARL Tier 5 libraries. Through the end of August 2012, a discount of 20% for Tier 4 and 40% for Tier 5 libraries is available. The subscription fee to access backlist books is too high, single titles cannot be purchased (except directly from the publishers, and often only in print) and no provision is made for individuals to subscribe to MUSE. (UPCC rates a 5.0 for libraries that wish to purchase, not rent, e-books in the social sciences and humanities.)

Contract Options: ★★★★★

Content may be purchased with or without a subscription to Project MUSE. Consortiums may negotiate lower rates. Unlimited simultaneous usage by authorized users is allowed. There is no subscription available for frontlist books. Bundles may be purchased, not individual titles. These limitations lower the contract options score, but they have enabled UPCC to lower the per book cost substantially. (UPCC rates a 5.0 for academic libraries that wish only to purchase a collection of e-books in the social sciences and humanities.)

Critical Evaluation

The collection development librarians at Project MUSE have worked closely with UPCC publishers to acquire books that nicely complement the journal collection, which has 500 titles. The result is that the collection upon which MUSE has gained its reputation has become far stronger. There is an almost one-to-one correspondence between the journal and book collections. They are remarkably well balanced. For an excellent, though dated review of the original Project MUSE journal database, please see "Project Muse," a review article authored by Chuck Hamaker that appeared in *The Charleston Advisor* in April, 2000.⁶

The search engine is highly functional and the results page is attractive and easy to read. After an initial search, the results may be refined using the *advanced search* feature. It is unfortunate that the *advanced search* option is no longer available at the start of a search as it was prior to the integration of the book and journal collections. MUSE should bring it back. It is time consuming and perhaps a bit irritating to be unable to use multiple search windows and fields at the start of every search since it adds an extra step.

The default setting is to search both journals and books simultaneously. While searching for only books or only journals, whenever a new

search begins, the default is automatically restored. It is cumbersome to continuously reset the format type.

The current lack of an option to search the subject field or to click on a subject in order to obtain highly precise results is a huge loss. This is only temporary, but Project MUSE is unable to say when this function will be restored.

Project MUSE may be the only journal provider that assigns Library of Congress Subject Headings to articles. This has always been one of MUSE's strongest selling points. During information literacy classes,

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it is very convenient to cover LCSH searching using the library catalog to find the best print materials on a subject, then to segue to Project MUSE and apply the same subject heading to an article search. Students normally *get it*. How much better it will be when MUSE will enable students to see LCSH subject headings for books and journal articles in a single search. For a video tutorial on one of three ways to use the Project MUSE Library of Congress Subject Heading search function, go to <<http://www.screencast.com/users/ants/folders/Database%20Tutorials/media/dee1c63c-06b5-4440-99ca-6447aad-b4f84>>, or to dspace at the University of Calgary for the official published version: <<http://hdl.handle.net/1880/48498>>.⁷

In addition to restoring LCSH subject field searching, the citation function needs extensive updating. APA and MLA citations need to be double-spaced and use a hanging indent. In APA, journal volume numbers need to be italicized. In MLA, the journal titles should be italicized rather than underlined, and book publishers need to be italicized. In APA, book authors' first names should not be listed, but only the initial of the first name.

MUSE should consider enabling RSS alerts for saved searches whenever new material is published that fits a search query. Such a feature is provided by EBSCOhost and ScienceDirect, and it is very useful to researchers who must be alerted to the very latest advances in their field.

Although MUSE has little competition currently, JSTOR and UPSO (University Press Scholarship Online, a collaboration of university presses headed by Oxford University Press) could provide serious competition at some point.⁸

Contract Provisions

When a UPCC collection is purchased, it belongs to the purchaser who has perpetual access and archiving rights. Free online access is offered when an institution subscribes to any of the six journal packages offered by Project MUSE. If not, a modest fee is collected annually to maintain online access. Or, an institution may opt to participate in the LOCKSS system for archiving digitized publications. The purchaser would be required to install a LOCKSS cache at their institution, which would allow perpetual use of the LOCKSS system to archive and restore e-book content.

Johns Hopkins University Press provides monthly SUSHI and COUNTER-compliant usage data on purchased e-books.

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for their intended purpose. Inter-library loan of single copies of individual chapters is allowed as long as copyright is adhered to. This may be the most significant feature of the license that libraries would wish to change, as chapter by chapter ILL rights create so much "friction" in the process that whole-book ILL is almost unfeasible. In the humanities and social sciences, this restriction is a key negative.

Authentication

Anyone may conduct free searches on the MUSE platform; however, to view full-text articles and book chapters, users must be from an institution that subscribes to MUSE. Authentication methods include authorized IP, referring URL, Athens and Shibboleth.

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About the Author

Larry Sheret is the Instruction and Emerging Technologies Librarian/Associate Professor at Marshall University's Drinko Library in Huntington, West Virginia. His job is currently focused on providing library liaison services to the Department of Modern Languages, working with faculty to post their scholarly publications on Marshall's institutional repository, and working on information literacy and assessment. He has also been the Public Services/Instruction Librarian at the Savage Library at Western State College of Colorado in Gunnison, and the Program Coordinator of the Library and Learning Center of Central Arizona College, Aravaipa Campus. He received his M.A. from the School of Information Resources and Library Science at the University of Arizona in 1996. ■