Public Access to Research and Scientific Data

Functional Lead: Provost
Division: IRAP & MCUP
Responsible Offices: IRAP & MCUP

Reference: (a) Office of Science and Technology Policy Memorandum for the Heads of
Executive Departments and Agencies: Ensuring Free, Immediate, and Equitable
Access to Federally Funded Research. 25 August 2022
(b) DoDI 3200.12 DoD Scientific and Technical Information Program (STIP)
2013 (17 Dec 2018)
(c) 17 U.S. Code § 105 - Subject matter of copyright: United States Government
works
(d) Marine Corps University Press Public Access Plan
(e) Academic Regulations: Research

1. Purpose: To provide Marine Corps University (MCU) policy and procedures related to
ensuring equitable and immediate public access to federally funded research outcomes.

2. Background: The terms open access and public access refer to the practice of making research
reports, publications, and data available to the public without cost or requirement for the user to
be a member of an institution holding a subscription to a journal, database, or repository. Within
the Department of Defense (DoD), these terms also refer to the practice of ensuring that federally
supported or conducted research is available to the public without government log-in credentials.

Reference (a) requires that organizations spending federal funds on research make research
outcomes, such as publications and datasets available to the public without embargo periods,
subject to certain limitations described below. It also directs DoD organizations to take actions to
maximize equitable access, such as ensuring that materials are available in machine readable
format. These requirements are not limited to research outcomes from expenditures of formal
Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation funds. They include outcomes from other federal
funds that support research or salaries of federal employees conducting research. Reference (b)
includes similar requirements to post research reports, publications, and datasets from scientific
and technology research on the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) portal.

Scholarly publication encompasses a large number of activities with options and constraints that
vary based on publication type and venue. Additionally, expectations and standards vary across
scholarly disciplines. MCU's faculty, staff, and students are expected to exercise judgment in
balancing the requirement to facilitate immediate, equitable public access to federally funded
research with the research and publication requirements associated with their positions and
MCU's missions.

3. Policy

   a. General

      (1) To the maximum extent possible, MCU's faculty, staff, and students (collectively
referred to below as MCU researchers) will ensure that the public has access to research

outcomes produced using federal funds and that access is provided without embargo periods. This requirement includes reports, publications, and scientific data (collectively referred to below as research outcomes), subject to the limitations described below.

(2) MCU researchers will follow applicable laws and policies that require the protection of certain types of data, including the protection of data from human subjects' research.

(3) This policy applies to:

- research outcomes by a single or multiple MCU researchers,
- research outcomes in which an MCU researcher is a co-investigator or co-author with a researcher or author from outside MCU,
- contributions by MCU researchers to works authored or edited by others, such as edited volumes, chapters in edited volumes, and conference proceedings,
- research outcomes produced by researchers from outside MCU if the research was funded by MCU, including research conducted by contractors.

(4) This policy does not apply to internal reports and datasets developed through research conducted solely for the purposes of MCU's internal institutional effectiveness activities or program assessment.

b. Digital Persistent Identifiers (DPI) for MCU Researchers

(1) MCU faculty and staff intending to publish research outcomes will obtain a DPI. MCU will not dictate which DPI service to use. However, one commonly accepted DPI option is Open Researcher and Contributor Identifiers (ORCID).

(2) MCU students are not required to obtain DPIs.

c. Equitable Access and Transparency

(1) To facilitate equitable access, including accessibility through assistive devices, research outcomes made available to the public will be in machine readable formats, such as word documents and pdfs.

- Documents that have been scanned must be accompanied by a version converted to machine readable format using optical character recognition software, which is included in commonly available pdf software.
- As needed, data may be made available in formats appropriate for use, such as xml, xlsx, or JSON.
- When a dataset includes files that cannot be made machine readable, such as images, audio recordings, or video recordings, the researcher will include a data description in machine readable format.

(2) To facilitate transparency, to the maximum extent allowed by the publisher or repository, publications and datasets will include information in the text or metadata regarding:

- Funding source(s).

- Author name(s), affiliation(s), and digital persistent identifier(s).
- Whether or not the publication was peer reviewed.

(3) For research that was reviewed by an Institutional Review Board (IRB), the publication or dataset will include information on the IRB's determination and, if applicable, the protocol number and name of the principal investigator. This information may be included in the text or metadata.

d. Uncopyrighted Publications by MCU Researchers

(1) Uncopyrighted publications will be made available to the public without embargo periods through one or more of the following means:

- The publisher's website, if the full publication will be immediately available to the public without cost.
- One of more of MCU public websites (such as the main university public site or public sites of History Division, museum, or Library of the Marine Corps).
- The publicly accessible DTIC portal.
- Other publicly accessible repositories.

(2) When research outcomes are released through a publisher, MCU researchers will request that a digital persistent identifier such as a DOI be assigned to their publication.

e. Copyrighted Books by Civilian Faculty

Per reference (c), MCU's civilian faculty may hold copyright to certain scholarly works developed using government funding, including books. Reference (a) defines scholarly publication as follows: "scholarly publications always include peer-reviewed research articles or final manuscripts published in scholarly journals, and may include peer-reviewed book chapters, editorials, and peer-reviewed conference proceedings published in other scholarly outlets that result from federally funded research." In accordance with this definition, there is no requirement for copyrighted books by civilian faculty to be made publicly accessible.

f. Other Copyrighted Publications by Civilian Faculty

Per reference (c), MCU's civilian faculty may hold copyright to certain scholarly works developed using government funding. When these works are published by a civilian journal or press, copyright may be transferred to the publisher and/or there may be other restrictions on when and how the author can distribute the publication.

(1) When entering into a publication agreement for a work other than a book, civilian faculty will ask about the publisher's policies regarding open access or public access. To the extent possible, the author will tailor the agreement to allow immediate public access to some version of the publication, such as pre-publication proofs, and public access to the published version of the work after a reasonable embargo period.

(2) MCU researchers will request that the publisher assign a digital persistent identifier, such as a DOI, to the publication.

(3) Within 30 days of the date on which the publication agreement allows public dissemination, civilian faculty will ensure that publications are made available on one or more of the venues specified in 3(d).

g. Publications by MCU Press

MCU Press is a platinum open-access press, which means that the press provides immediate, permanent, and free access to all publications to the public in both print and digital formats without an open access fee paid by the author, funder, or author's institution. To ensure global access, all digital publications are made available in a variety of machine-readable formats and as audiobooks. MCU Press further facilitates public access to its publications through posting works in other publicly accessible repositories such as DTIC, Directory of Open Access Books, and Government Printing Office Document Discovery Program. Reference (d) contains additional details regarding the MCU Press policy and plan for open access.

h. Scientific Data

Reference (a) defines scientific data as "the recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific community as of sufficient quality to validate and replicate research findings." This definition is focused on scientific research conducted using a narrow range of experimental research methods. Criteria for assessing quality differ between exploratory and experimental research and across disciplines. For the purposes of this policy, MCU defines scientific data as systematically gathered information intended for analysis and use in one or more research projects.

(1) Scientific data that are subject to restrictions under existing law or policy, including, but not limited to data from human subjects' research per Reference (e), will not be made publicly available.

(2) Scientific data gathered from an existing public repository or public source do not need to be re-posted if the research outcomes clearly indicate how the data may be accessed.

(3) At the time a report or publication is made publicly available, associated scientific data that are not restricted also will be made publicly available in one or more appropriate venues such as:

- Defense Technical Information Center
- MCU-funded data repositories
- Scholarly data repositories that allow public access without paid membership
- Publishers' websites, provided that the data is available to the public without cost.

(4) When feasible within a particular venue, MCU researchers will request that one or more digital persistent identifiers, such as a DOI, be assigned to the dataset.

(5) Data from human subjects' research may be deposited in the Qualitative Data Repository (QDR) in which MCU has a membership. The QDR will not release such data without a protocol approved by an Institutional Review Board. However, once an approved

protocol is received, data is available without cost to the user. Other repositories may be used with the approval of the Marine Corps Human Research Protection Program if data are available to users without cost.

    i. Publications and Scientific Data Produced by Researchers Outside MCU.

If funded by MCU, external researchers, including contractors, must follow the same guidelines for public access to research outcomes as MCU researchers.

    j. Open Access Fees

Many publishers offer tiers of access to allow authors to ensure open access. Allowing immediate public access may require the funder, author, or author's institution to pay a fee.

Open access publishing models vary based on cost and accessibility.
- Platinum is the highest level (MCUP), where zero fiscal requirements are placed on the authors or readers and the content is permanently and freely available;
- Gold requires the author to pay fees for accessibility; and
- Green allows the author to self-archive an OA copy of their work but there is no guarantee of public availability otherwise.

    (1) MCU is not resourced to pay open access fees and will not require authors to pay them.

    (2) When proposing a sponsored project, if possible, within funder guidelines and expected publication timelines, civilian faculty may include appropriate funds to cover publisher open access fees.

4. Procedures

    a. MCU's faculty staff and students will follow the above policies. Questions may be directed to MCU's Director of Research or, if applicable, the Director of MCU Press.

Related Policies and Forms:
Research

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