

Webology, Volume 4, Number 4, December, 2007

Home	Table of Contents	Titles & Subject Index	Authors Index
----------------------	-----------------------------------	--	-------------------------------

Editorial

Educational Impact and Open Access Journals

[Alireza Noruzi](#), PhD, Editor-in-Chief

Introduction

Scholars may find out that they (i.e., their papers, ideas, findings, methods, models or theories) have been invoked (i.e., cited, mentioned, or linked to) by others. Citations (links) are no longer found only in classical scholarly texts, nor are they directed only to scholarly texts: Scholars may be cited formally, or merely mentioned en passant in *listservs* and others *electronic discussion fora*, or they may find out that they have been included in *reading lists or electronic syllabi* ([Cronin et al.](#), 1998). The Web is both a publishing and a conversational medium. It engenders new modes of scholarly communication, interaction and signaling ([Cronin et al.](#), 1998).

Google and especially *Google Scholar* offer potentials for tracking scientific and technological progress traditionally excluded from bibliometric or scientometric studies, such as the use of scientific journals in teaching/presentations and by the general public ([Björneborn](#), 2004). *Google Scholar*, as a citation tracking service and a bibliometric tool, can be used to locate citations from a variety of file types (e.g., PPT, DOC, PHP, HTML, PDF) that are not covered by the ISI Web of Science and traditional citation indexes ([Noruzi](#), 2005).

Online course syllabi provide a convenient source of information about a journal use ([Williams, Cody & Parnell](#), 2004). The number of faculty members who use the Web to post syllabi and other course materials is increasing. Therefore, editors and publishers of journals should use this golden opportunity to maximize journals *visibility* and *educational impact*. The *educational impact* of a journal depends not only on *online accessibility* (open access), but also on how widely it is used by *educators*.

The inclusion of an open access (OA) journal in recommended/required reading lists in the course syllabi is important for its *visibility* and of course for its *impact factor*. Moreover, the creation of hyperlinks to OA journals in web-based syllabi increases their *link popularity*. The syllabi can be used to determine how a journal is used and how much it is used.

While a few of the references to a journal are from papers, books, theses, web resources, etc., references from course syllabi might be considered differently. It is essential for an educator to cite a reference in a paper. But a listing on a course syllabus seems to indicate that the educator thinks the resource is worth being consulted by students. If a book or a journal is frequently cited or mentioned as reading text in the course syllabi, it serves the information needs of educators and students. Therefore, it seems interesting to know to what extent a journal has been included in *reading lists or electronic syllabi* and cited in PowerPoint presentations. For example, some of the papers published in *Webology* are included in the course syllabi for library and information science (LIS) schools. Some of

these occurrences are on syllabi for LIS schools in the U.S. and Canada. We also found that *Webology* journal was cited 50 times in the [PowerPoint presentations](#).

Conclusion

The online syllabi can reveal a better picture of how a journal is used and can present the *educational impact* of the journal. It is obvious that open access will improve the *educational impact* of journals. For example, *Webology* journal is very often mentioned in lists of journals and e-journals or in lists of links on topics covered by *Webology*, especially in the fields of *library and information science* and *computer science*. We found several online syllabi that listed the journal.

References

- Björneborn, Lennart (2004). *Small-world link structures across an academic web space: A library and information science approach*. PhD Thesis. Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen, Denmark.
- Cronin, B., Snyder, H.W., Rosenbaum, H., Martinson, A., & Callahan, E. (1998). Invoked on the Web. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 49(14), 1319-1328.
- Noruzi, A. (2005) Google Scholar: The new generation of citation indexes. *LIBRI*, 55(4), 170-180.
- Williams, L.M., Cody, S.A., & Parnell, J. (2004). Prospecting for new collaborations: mining syllabi for library service opportunities. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 30 (4), 270-275.

Bibliographic information of this paper for citing:

Noruzi, A. (2007). "Editorial: Educational Impact and Open Access Journals." *Webology*, 4(4), editorial 14. Available at:
<http://www.webology.org/2007/v4n4/editorial14.html>

Copyright © 2007, Alireza Noruzi.