Resolution on Chemical Abstracts in the Small Colleges

We, the members of NACTLAC, are and have been for many years concerned about the increasing price of Chemical Abstracts. This price has now reached a level at which, from the results of a recent survey, over 50% of our colleges can no longer afford to subscribe. We fear that very soon this number will approach 75%. We believe that ready access to Chemical Abstracts is necessary for the proper operation of an undergraduate department offering a major in chemistry. We assert that the small colleges are still an important "cradles of budding chemists "[Hung, Narl C., J Chem. Education 53,53#9, 565-570(1976)].

We believe that Chemical Abstracts is a service, not a product. Those who use the service the most should pay the most. However, present pricing policies, which load virtually all data-base-development costs onto the descrimination in favor of the large users (university and particulary corporate) at the expense of the small colleges, which, as best we can ascertain, still account for nearly 1/3 of all CA subscriptions, although we are not represented on any of the boards which influence CAS policy.

Therefore we advocate that the following alternative be given careful scrutiny: printed copy

(1) Allow undergraduate colleges to subscribe to printed CA at a rate representing only the actual printing costs plus a reasonable markup.
(2) Exempt undergraduate colleges from having to purchase a printed CA in order to receive the micro-form CA.
(3) Work toward a "per-use" and "per-hit" price schedule as CA moves into computerized data retrieval.
(4) Provide, at reasonable cost, annual indices to Section Groupings subscribers.
(5) MOST IMPORTANTLY, provide for representation from the undergraduate colleges on the Board Committee and the Council Committee on Chemical Abstracts as well as on the CAS Advisory Board.