

HOW TO PUBLISH JOURNAL ARTICLES: A GUIDE FOR NOVICE SCHOLARS

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Scholars emphasize the importance of publishing their research (1) to establish their credentials as a researcher, (2) to establish a track record of research, and (3) to increase chances of funding. Publishing can be difficult given the competing obligations of students and faculty members.¹

DETERMINING THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH/FUTURE PUBLICATION

- ❖ Increase chances of job acquisition or graduate school admission
- ❖ Facilitate promotion and/or tenure
- ❖ Enhance professional development
- ❖ Contribute to scholarship
 - Test, develop, or apply theory
 - Increase understanding of topic
 - Enhance research methodology
 - Help practitioners, program developers, counselors, etc.
 - Inform lay audiences

SCHOLARSHIP

- ❖ Scholarship often means publishing peer-reviewed journal articles, such as:
 - Empirical research – original, unpublished research
 - Review articles – summary of research on a specific topic with implications for theory, future research, practitioners, educators, and/or policy makers
 - Brief reports – a shorter article reporting on original, unpublished research. A brief report is often used for preliminary results of a longitudinal study, validity study of a scale, etc.
- ❖ Scholarly journals differ from magazines (see next table), there are journals that are hybrids (i.e., publish both peer reviewed and non peer reviewed articles, e.g., *Journal of Family & Consumer Sciences*).
- ❖ Scholarship can also include other peer-reviewed, public works (e.g., juried recitals, juried art).
- ❖ Most prestigious to least prestigious in psychology (order varies based on discipline)
 - Peer-reviewed, journal articles
 - Edited book chapters
 - Research monographs by government or foundation
 - Books – books are okay to cite as long as the authors are reputable or experts in the field.
 - Conference proceedings
 - Magazines/Wikipedia
 - Other internet sources

These first four are usually okay to cite in manuscripts or papers

Scholarly Journals Versus Magazines/Books

	Scholarly Journals	Magazines
Mission	Disseminate scholarly findings	Entertainment or personal learning
Submissions	Open to anyone with expertise relate to the journal's aims and scopes	Limited to magazine writers and some external contributors
Review	Blind peer review and editorial review	Editorial review
Target Audiences	Researchers, practitioners, educators, policy makers	Lay audience

RANKINGS OF SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

- ❖ **Impact factor** indicates the frequency of citations of an *average* article in a particular journal in a certain time period.² Generally, a journal's impact factor is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total \# of citations in a year (e.g., 2013) in the journal}}{\text{\# of citable items published in the journal in the prior 2 years (e.g., 2011 \& 2012)}}$$

¹ Abbott, D., & Sanders, G. F. (1991). On the road to tenure. *Family Relations*, 40, 106-109. doi:10.2307/585667

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. California/Princeton Fulfillment Services: Princeton, N.J.

Seldin, P. (1984). Faculty evaluation: Surveying policy and practices. *Change*, 16(3), 28-33. doi:10.1080/00091383.1984.10570071

² http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/free/essays/impact_factor/

- Impact factor is often considered a more “objective” method of evaluating a journal’s value/prestige.
 - However, journals can increase impact factor in many ways, such as:
 - Publishing less original research and more review articles.
 - Publishing more citable articles earlier in the calendar year to give more time for citations.
 - Not publishing topics that have less likelihood of being cited.
 - There are critiques to using impact factor as measure of a journal’s value.
 - Impact factor is highly dependent upon the topic of the publications.
 - For example, publishing ‘hot’ or timely topics can result in the increase of impact factor (yet, the journal structure itself does not change).
 - Also, impact factor varies based on the field/discipline.³
 - For example, some fields (e.g., mathematics, philosophy, history) rely less upon recent citations than other fields (e.g., biology and medical sciences).
- ❖ **Journal tier** is a subjective indicator of journal ranking (see next table).

Journal Tier		% Ranking in Field	Editorial Board	Acceptance Rate	Other Criteria
Top	A*	Top 5%	Mostly leading scholars in the field; many from top institutions	Low	Almost all papers are very high quality and help define the field. Authors brag when publishing in this tier journal.
High	A	Top 6-20%	A number of well known scholars in the field from top institutions	Low	Many very high quality papers. Publishing in this tier journal would enhance an author's standing.
Medium	B	Top 21-50%	A few well known scholars in the field from top institutions	High	A solid, but not outstanding, reputation. Only a few very high quality papers.
Low	C	Top 51-100%	Scholars in the field	High	Quality, peer reviewed, journal, but does not meet the criteria of the higher tier journals.

Adapted from <http://www.research.qut.edu.au/data/quality/qutonly/rankings.jsp>

- ❖ Studies show that subjective ratings (e.g., tier) of journals are not correlated⁴ or are moderately correlated⁵ with impact factor.

DETERMINING THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH/FUTURE PUBLICATION

- ❖ Contribute to knowledge and scholarship
 - Test, develop, or apply theory
 - Increase understanding of topic
 - Enhance research methodology
 - Help practitioners, program developers, counselors, etc.
 - Inform lay audiences
- ❖ Increase chances of job acquisition or graduate school admission
 - Publishing scholarly work can lead to an increased acceptance rate in doctoral programs and increased likelihood of acquiring fellowships.⁶
- ❖ Facilitate promotion and/or tenure
- ❖ Enhance professional development

Undergraduate Journals
<http://www.cur.org/ugjournal.html>
<http://psychologyjournal.binghamtonsa.org>
http://www.kon.org/CFP/cfp_urjhs.html

KNOWING THE PURPOSE WILL DETERMINE THE OUTLET FOR PUBLICATION

- ❖ Refereed vs. non-refereed journal?
- ❖ What target audience (e.g., practitioners, researchers, educators) does the author want to write it for?
- ❖ What level of journal does the author want to publish in (e.g., tier, impact factor)?
- ❖ What tradeoffs is an author willing to make when publishing?
 - Example: Is it more important to get the information to more people (e.g., students, researchers, practitioners) but have less prestige, or is it more important to get the information to a select few (e.g., researchers in the field) and have higher prestige?

³ van Nierop, W. (2009). Why do statistics journals have low impact factors? *Statistica Neerlandica*, 63(1), 52–62. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9574.2008.00408.x

⁴ Maier, G. (2006). Impact factors and peer judgment: The case of regional science journals. *Scientometrics*, 69(3), 651-667.

⁵ Serenko, A., & Dohan, M. (2011). Comparing the expert survey and citation impact journal ranking methods: Example from the field of artificial intelligence. *Journal of Informetrics*, 5(4), 629-648. doi:10.1016/j.joi.2011.06.002

⁶ Keith-Spiegel, P. (1991). *The complete guide to graduate school admission: Psychology and related fields*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Powell, J. L. (2000, Winter). Creative outlets for student research, or what do I do now that my study is completed. *Eye on Psi Chi*, 4, 28-29. Retrieved from www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_92.aspx

IDENTIFYING THE JOURNAL

❖ Examine the mission statement (also called ‘aims and scopes’) and author submission guidelines

- Purpose of journal
- Acceptable topics (Hint: Look at recent articles published in the journal)
- Target audience
- Type of manuscripts acceptable (e.g., research, review article, best practices, research notes, book reviews)
- Review process
- Fee for review/submission
- Style guidelines
- Page, table, figure, and/or word number limitations

❖ Journal analysis involves looking at current versions of the journal to identify the following:

- What components appear in the currently published articles?
 - **Introduction**
 - Review of literature, but it is more than a review of literature; it should justify and set up the study.
 - It should answer the questions of “so what?” and “why is this study important?”
 - Purpose of the study
 - Research question(s) and/or hypotheses
 - **Methods/Methodology**
 - *Procedures* – How were the data collected?
 - *Sample characteristics* – Who were the data collected from? Describe the sample.
 - *Measures/Instrumentation* – How were the variables measured?
 - **Results/Findings**
 - What analyses were conducted and what were the results?
 - **Discussion**
 - Restate the purpose of the study
 - Discuss the findings: Why did the study find these results? Similar to past research? Does theory support the results? If different than previous studies, why?
 - **Limitations**
 - What are the problems with the current study?
 - **Implications**
 - *Research implications* – How can results of this study be used by other researchers? Sometimes the limitations and research implications will be integrated together.
 - *Implications for practice* – How can results be used by practitioners, educators, and/or therapists?
 - **Conclusion**
 - What point(s) does the author want to leave with the reader?
 - How long are the various components? What percentage of each article is comprised by each section?
 - What types of analyses/methods are used and how are the analyses reported?
 - Any qualitative articles?
 - Is there a preference for mixed methods?
 - Is multiple regression analysis used or does the journal prefer SEM?
 - Are the articles written in 1st person/2nd person, 3rd person?
 - Do most articles have a theory base? Or a particular theory base?
 - Does the journal have a particular bias on your topic?
 - Example 1: If you are writing a manuscript on self-esteem, does the journal publish articles that use a global measure of self-esteem, or does the journal only publish articles that examine self-esteem from a multi-dimensional aspect?
 - Example 2: If you are conducting a program evaluation, does the journal only publish articles that use control groups?
- Some authors have an overview of the statistical analyses in the methods section, while others include it in the results section.
- ### ❖ Other issues to find out about the journal include:
- Editor and editorial review board
 - Fees for printing, reprints, etc.
 - Acceptance and rejection rate (**APA journals rate**)
 - Length of review process
 - Number of reviewers

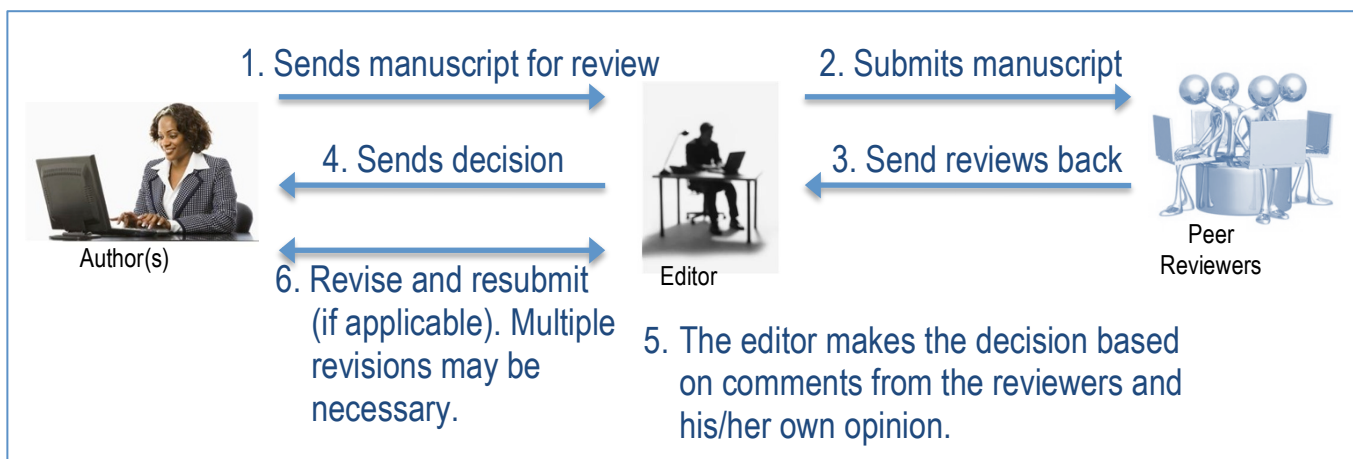
PEER REVIEW

❖ Peer review/refereeing refers to the process of having one’s scholarship evaluated by qualified (i.e., experts in the field) and impartial peers to determine if the work merits publication.

- **Blind peer review** means the reviewers do not know whose works they are reviewing.
- Peer review is often required for:
 - Manuscripts submitted for publication to scholarly journals, and
 - Grant proposals submitted to get funding for research or programs.

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATION PROCESS

- ❖ Write manuscript.
- ❖ Submit manuscript, submission letter, and review fee (if applicable).
- ❖ The editor conducts an initial review for appropriate content and to determine if it fits the journal.
- ❖ The editor sends the manuscript to the reviewers (usually 2-3 reviewers).
 - The reviewers are usually people on the editorial review board.
 - **Ad hoc reviewers** are not on the editorial review board, but are occasionally asked to review a manuscript because of their expertise.
 - Manuscripts are sent without author identification (i.e., blind peer review)
- ❖ The reviewers typically have about 4-8 weeks to do the review and send it back to the editor.
 - Reviewers provide the following:
 - Constructive critique for the authors to improve the manuscript.
 - Ideally, reviewers should providing positive comments as well, but this does not always occur.
 - Recommendations about whether the manuscript should be accepted or rejected.
- ❖ The editor looks at the reviewers' comments, reviews the manuscript based on the reviews, and then makes a decision about the manuscript regarding acceptance/rejection.
 - **Acceptance**-outright with minor or no revisions
 - **Acceptance-conditional** with revisions
 - **Rejection-conditional** – in this case the author(s) is encouraged to revise and resubmit the manuscript
 - **Rejection-outright**
 - High rejection rates of many journals can discourage young scholars.⁷
- ❖ The editor notifies the author(s) on the status of the manuscript.
 - Waiting to hear back from the editor can be stressful.⁸
- ❖ There may be multiple revisions before final acceptance.
- ❖ Proofing and editing the article proofs.



ESTABLISHING AUTHORSHIP

- ❖ Generally, the 1st author makes the most contribution, followed by the 2nd author, and so on.
 - There are some exceptions, such as “anchor authorship” – where a principal investigator takes last authorship while more junior authors (e.g., students, more junior faculty) take a higher position in authorship.
- ❖ Decide on order of authorship ahead of time.
- ❖ Being a research assistant does not guarantee authorship on an article.
- ❖ Designate tasks for each author (with time lines for completion of each part).
- ❖ For additional information, see the following guidelines:
 - **American Psychological Association**
 - **The Office of Research Integrity**
 - **International Committee of Medical Journal Editors**

⁷ Meyers, S. A., Reid, P. T., & Quina, K. (1998). Ready or not, here we come: Preparing psychology graduate students for academic careers. *Teaching of Psychology, 25*, 124–126.

⁸ Calfee, R. C., & Valencia, R. R. (2001). *APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication*. Retrieved on February 14, 2005 from <http://www.apa.org/journals/authors/guide.html>

BEING ETHICAL

- ❖ Ensure the accuracy of all information in the manuscript.
- ❖ Do not send a manuscript to more than one journal at a time.
- ❖ Do not publish the same study in more than one outlet.
 - Note: One research project can produce multiple publications because there may be numerous variables, several possible research questions, and different ways of examining the data.

SUGGESTED READINGS

- ❖ **APA Journals Manuscript Submission Instructions For All Authors** – provides a quick overview for publishing and gives a good bibliography of more thorough sources
- ❖ Clark, D. (1997). From documentary to sitcom: Turning your honors thesis/senior project into a journal article. *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research*, 2, 3-4.
- ❖ Fiske, D. W., & Fogg, L. (1990). But the reviewers are making different criticisms of my paper! Diversity and uniqueness in reviewer comments. *American Psychologist*, 45, 591-598.
- ❖ Miller, A. C., & Servan, S. L. (1984). Criteria for identifying a refereed journal. *Journal of Higher Education*, 55, 673-697.
- ❖ Nation, J. R. (1997). The publication process. In J. R. Nation (Ed.), *Research methods* (pp. 365-380). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- ❖ Sternberg, R. J. (1992). How to win acceptances by psychology journals: 21 tips for better writing. *American Psychological Society Observer*, 5(5), 12.