What Journal Editors Wish Authors Knew About Academic Publishing

Richard Hartshorne
Richard E. Ferdig
Glen Bull

Published by AACE
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AACE-Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due,
when it is in your power to act.

Proverbs 3:27 (NIV)

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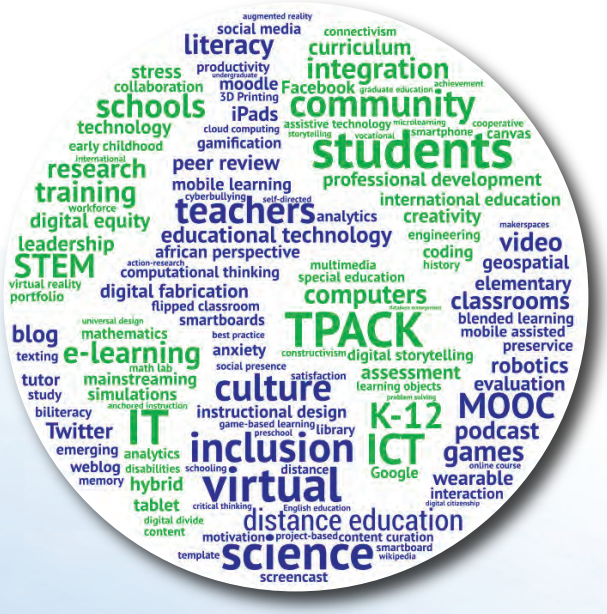

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Book

Academics need to conduct and then publish their research. While service and teaching also play an important role in their professional lives, academic publishing is a mainstay for tenure, promotion, and the ability to positively impact the empirical and practical directions of the field. Unfortunately, journal publishing is not an easy task for novice or even experienced researchers. Consider a journal's acceptance rate as one proxy for rigor. Publication in a journal with a five-percent acceptance rate would be viewed as a positive factor by most tenure and promotion committees. Yet this rejection rate represents an enormous loss of productive time and effort for the 95 percent of authors whose submissions are not accepted.

A prospective author typically spends months or years working on a submission to a journal. When this work does not reach its intended audience, the efforts of the author represent lost time that might have been more productively directed elsewhere. It also represents spent future time as they revise or resubmit their manuscript. Reviewers also become frustrated by having to spend time reading, evaluating, and providing recommendations for articles that may never go to print due to issues with quality or rigor. When salary and resources for conducted research are collectively considered, this theoretically represents millions of dollars of lost effort for the field.

Therein lies the main goal of this book: supporting authors. This edited book is a collection of chapters written by journal editors who share the same goal of helping authors write better papers. Collectively, the editors who contributed to this book represent more than a century of experience and practice in publishing. Each chapter is penned by editors (sometimes with contributions from past editors and/or other editorial board members) of a specific journal. They provide an overview of the journal's mission and purpose, an explanation of the submission and review process, and then, perhaps most importantly for readers, advice for authors. The primary focus of each chapter is a *best practices* section where the editors describe what they wish authors knew and considered prior to submission of a manuscript to the journal. As you read each of the chapters, we hope that you will be able to see both the overlap as well as specific nuanced differences between individual journals.

History of the Book

The book came about as an amalgam of three simultaneous efforts in the field. Each of the efforts are described briefly below and represent our own unique perspective on this book (e.g., Richard Hartshorne with conference presentations, Rick Ferdig with *JTATE*, and Glen Bull with *NTLS*).

Conference Presentations

Efforts to support authors in academic publishing can take many forms. For example, doctoral programs often offer seminar courses that specifically address the academic publishing process. Additionally, many conferences for professional organizations provide attendees with opportunities to interact with journal editors via individual presentations, roundtable sessions, panel presentations, or other venues. Thus, journal editors and/or editorial review board members presenting on various aspects of the academic publishing process for prospective authors at professional conferences (which served as one of the impetuses for this book) is not a new or particularly innovative concept. It has arguably been commonplace in an array of fields for many years. However, journal editors and editorial board members often having a myriad of responsibilities and commitments at professional conferences as they typically serve in leadership roles in professional organizations. As such, these opportunities can be difficult to organize in a manner that maximizes editor and/or editorial board participation.

Participants at such presentations may also have very specific questions regarding a particular manuscript they would like addressed, which can either monopolize the conversation or not be addressed in a sufficient manner within the constraints of a conference presentation format, frustrating the attendee. In an effort to limit scheduling issues and provide a more focused effort support authors, the *Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education* (SITE) leadership

invited the editor of the *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education-General* (CITE-General) to conduct an individual presentation focused on specific tips and resources for authors in navigating the academic publishing process (Hartshorne, 2019).

Rather than develop a siloed presentation, the voices of other journal editors in the field were added to provide a more global collection of recommendations to potential authors and to provide a mechanism for supporting authors beyond the conference. In the presentation, editors from other academic journals in associated fields (many of which contributed chapters to this book) were polled for a list of key reasons that submissions are rejected, as well as tips and resources for prospective authors to reduce the likelihood of rejection. The presentation included a synthesis of contributions that highlighted the unique input from each journal editor, while also providing a more comprehensive and nuanced collection of recommendations and resources for authors. These presentations have become a mainstay at the SITE conference in recent years (Hartshorne et al., 2019, Hartshorne 2020). This book serves as a continuation of these efforts, alongside *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education* (JTATE) editorials and the *National Technology Leadership Summit* (NTLS) meetings highlighted below.

JTATE Editorials

Some academics might suggest that a low acceptance rate is one sign of a journal's quality. There may be some truth to the fact that a highly qualified and experienced editorial review board is going to be more stringent and rigorous. However, no editor enjoys rejecting articles, for both professional and personal concerns. Personally, manuscripts have names, faces, and jobs attached to them. They represent research that someone spent time and effort to conduct. A rejection negatively affects another person's life and livelihood.

Professionally, editor and editorial review boards are volunteer positions. Spending time having to desk reject 100 of the 200 articles received during a year takes away from time that editors could use to support authors. And, while most reviewers we have worked with enjoy being able to support the development of a manuscript, most also get frustrated having to spend time reviewing articles that do not meet the quality, scope, or focus of a journal. Finally, professionally, a rigorous reputation can be a bad or good thing. JTATE, as well as many other journals represented in this book, has a notoriously low acceptance rate. For instance, between 2015 and 2020, JTATE had an acceptance rate at around 9% (Ferdig, 2020). This means that future authors may choose to submit their professional work elsewhere, simply because of the reputation.

Given these challenges, the last four editors of JTATE have worked hard to create editorials to support authors. For instance, in 2007, there was a high submission of articles that glossed over data usage and analyses. Editors responded with writing to support authors in their work (Ferdig et al., 2007). Another example came from the social media boom. The editor and associate editor both saw the opportunity and were getting high email traffic asking about the novelty and suitability of the trend for JTATE. Again, the editor responded with a call for research in this area (Ferdig, 2007).

Finally, and most recently, JTATE has started a process of attempting to demystify the publication process. This has taken the form of two, yearly editorials. One comes out in the final quarter of the year (e.g., Baumgartner & Ferdig, 2019). It provides a year-end review of all the articles that were published in the previous year. The goal is to be able to provide potential authors information about the kinds of topics that were published that year. The second comes out in the second quarter of the following year once all submissions for the previous year have been reviewed (Ferdig, 2020). Where the year-end editorial discusses published works, the second editorial describes all publication data, focusing on acceptance rate, submission processing times, topics of articles not published, and recommendations for authors based on repeated mistakes noticed in the previous year's submissions.

The good news is that these efforts have significantly decreased the number of submissions to JTATE while significantly increasing the quality of the articles that are submitted. However, such efforts only support those who take the time to read the editorials. The hope of this book was to be able to take these lessons and reach a wider audience, including those that are not familiar with JTATE or any of the other titles in this book.

National Technology Leadership Summit Meetings

The NTLS was established in the year 2000 with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education and their *Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology* (PT3) initiative. The funding provided support to bring together the leaders of

technology and teacher education associations. The goal of this effort was to enable the presidents and leaders of these associations to collaborate on effective methods of integrating technology into teacher preparation programs.

The PT3 grant provided support to convene the first three summits. However, the participating associations elected to continue to collaborate through an annual summit after the grant funding ended. Each participating association assumed responsibility for the travel and lodging expenses for its president or other designated leader. The initial associations participating in the summit included the following:

- American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE)
- Association of Science Teacher Educators (ASTE)
- Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE)
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
    - Conference on English Education (CEE)
- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
    - College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA)
- Organization of Teacher Educators in Reading (OTER)
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
- Association for Educational Communications & Technology (AECT)
- Association for Advancement of Computers in Education (AACE)
- Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE)

For many of the presidents of associations participating in NTLS, the annual summit is the only time in which they have opportunities to meet with their peers of other associations for in-depth conversations. Each individual teacher education association necessarily develops technology guidelines and standards that are aligned with the specific content taught. To take an obvious example, graphing calculators play a central role in teaching mathematics with technology while primary online source documents are an important resource in the field of social studies. The technology standards established by the respective associations for these disciplines reflect this. Against this backdrop, NTLS provides an opportunity for perspectives that transcend any single association or discipline. Some of the goals of the collaborating associations include the following:

1. Collaborate on development of programs that will spur individual teacher educators as well as institutions with colleges of teacher education to consider how technology is best implemented.
2. Prepare teacher educators to model effective use of technology in teacher education content methods courses, with the goal of preparing pre-service and in-service teachers effectively using technology with PK-12 students to increase student learning.
3. Contribute to development of a pipeline of PK-12 graduates who are prepared to use and apply technology to solve problems as they pursue careers and higher education.
4. Increase innovation and entrepreneurship in PK-12 and higher education graduates.

These deliberations have already led to development of several initiatives. For instance, the AACTE Committee on Innovation and Technology collaborated with leaders of associations participating in NTLS to develop the *Handbook of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) for Educators* (Stoilescu et al., 2010). This work represented a collaboration across teacher educator content associations and helped guide practice in adoption and use of rapidly emerging technologies. Such collaboration at NTLS summits also led to the development of the *Teacher Educator Technology Competencies* (TETCs; https://site.aace.org/tetc/) (Foulger et al., 2017). These competencies were developed to support the redesign of teaching in teacher education programs; they reflect perspectives from a diverse array of teacher educators and teacher educator associations.

From the beginning, the editors of journals published by associations participating in NTLS were important contributors to these efforts. The editors of these journals collectively have a broad perspective of emerging trends or directions in the field. It has been traditional at NTLS to hold an *Editors' Panel* each year to provide a forum for participating editors to discuss these trends and compare notes on desired directions to advance the field. One benefit of these joint editors' meetings has been the opportunity to broadly disseminate information across associations through publication in multiple journals simultaneously. This has provided a mechanism to reach teacher educators across disciplines and associations in a way that would not be possible through publication in any single journal.

For instance, in 2020, editors discussed how to quickly disseminate critical information to educators in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the *Rapid Response Publishing* discussion was to identify methods for responding to time-sensitive events in a rigorous but efficient manner (Ferdig et al., 2021). In the year prior (2019), the topic of discussion at the *NTLS Editors Panel* focused on provision of guidance and support to prospective authors. It was at this discussion that the trifecta of conference presentations, journal editorials, and editor discussions merged into the idea of publishing this book.

The General Outline of Chapters

We asked chapter authors to follow a template. While templates can initially seem restricting, they can serve as a map to help readers explore within chapters and compare between chapters. They also helped with production time. Each of the editors bring a tremendous passion and history of their work; they each could have easily written their own book about their experiences. The template gave the editors a framework for discussing such work, and in doing so, limiting (positively) the scope of these chapters (see Ferdig et al., 2020; Ferdig et al., 2021).

1. **Introduction** – explain the purpose and mission of the journal. This should include organizational details, historical information, statistical publication data, types of articles solicited/published, and anything else that would help differentiate the journal from others in the field.

2. **Submission and Review Process –** describe the submission and review process. We expect that most journals are similar (e.g., submit, review, respond); as such, focus on nuances to the process that might support new scholars.

3. **Best Practices/Advice to Authors** – This is obviously the main component of the chapter. Describe what editors wish authors knew prior to submitting to the journal. We are expecting overlap here between chapters. That overlap—and the nuanced differences—will help readers see both the consistency in the field and the requirements for specific journals. It will help scholars begin to further conceptualize consistent, emerging, and desired aspects of future publishing practices.

4. **Exemplary Readings –** Provide 5–10 readings from your journal that exemplify what you would have a future author read from your journal before they submit an article. This could include editorials or exemplar articles.

5. **References** – as necessary to support the chapter.

Conclusion and Getting Involved

We believe that the information in this book will make your future scholarship efforts more productive. There is no warranty that leads to a guaranteed publication, but the information in this book can reduce the amount of non-productive effort. Such a result is a positive outcome for the editor, author, reviewer, and reader.

It is worth concluding by noting that we view this book as a living document—something more easily conceptualized due to its eBook format. In other words, we look forward to new directions and recommendations in future years—i.e., updates—from journal editors as they continue to learn ways to help authors. We also encourage other journals to get involved. As evidenced by this book, while there are similarities between each of these journals, there are unique differences that warrant inclusion of other journals in our field. We hope to include other journals at the intersection of technology and education in future editions.

Respectfully,

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Richard E. Ferdig, *Summit Professor of Learning Technologies, Research Center for Educational Technology, Kent State University, USA*

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We would also like to thank the entire team at the *Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education* (AACE). Gary Marks, Chris Marks, Kathryn Mosby, and Sarah Benson all supported this idea from the beginning. AACE also provided the means necessary to release this book as open access, greatly impacting distribution and uptake in our respective fields.

There were countless authors and reviewers who indirectly contributed to this book long before the idea for a book was conceived. Authors would ask questions and seek advice in routine ways that made all of us realize the need for such a book. This would occasionally happen via email; however, it most often occurred in conference presentations as grad students, new assistant professors, and even senior academics would engage in conversations about being successful in publishing. Reviewers, many of whom used the '*comments to the editor*' section of the review form, shared things they wished all authors did or knew prior to submitting. We thank authors and reviewers for their insights.

In closing, we want to thank our families for their encouragement of our professional efforts and the time they gave up so that we could finish this book.

From Submission to Publication: Guidance from CITE Journal Editors

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education (*CITE Journal*; https://citejournal.org/) is an open-access, peer-reviewed publication established in 2000. It is sponsored by the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education (SITE) and co-sponsored by four other teacher education associations. *CITE Journal* articles need to address any area of technology and teacher education (pre-service, in-service, etc.). The journal invites a wide range of formats and approaches to scholarship including qualitative, quantitative, conceptual and theoretical pieces, case studies, and professional practice papers. The journal is organized in disciplinary oriented sections each associated with a sponsoring professional organization. The editorial team includes the Editor-in-Chief who is responsible for the general oversight of the journal, the journal coordinator who is responsible for preparing accepted manuscripts for publication, and the section editors. Specifically, each section is led by one or two editors all of whom are selected through a competitive process by the sponsoring organization. All editors are appointed for a 3-year term which can be renewed. In addition, each section includes a robust editorial board.

CITE Journal is unique in three ways. First, the journal represents the collaborative efforts of several organizations, each of which has its own publication outlets. Second, it represents the best thinking of these organizations about how to meet the needs of scholars in a field—information, technology and teacher education—that cuts across many different disciplines. Third, the journal is intended to be interactive, capable of incorporating video, sound, animated images, and simulations, as well as ongoing dialog about critical and timely issues that advance the educational technology field.

The respective professional organizations for each of following disciplines have sole responsibility for editorial review of *CITE Journal* articles in their discipline.

- ***CITE-Current Practice:*** **Sponsored by SITE** (https://citejournal.org/category/current-practice/). Papers published in this section focus on innovative and new approaches to integrating technology into teacher education or innovative approaches supported by professional development for teachers. The goal is to advance discussion and make available ideas and findings accessible to a wide audience. The Current Practice section values descriptions of promising ideas with empirical data describing their implementation, as well as formal research studies.

- ***CITE-General:*** **Sponsored by SITE** (https://citejournal.org/category/general/). More general theoretical and research articles that do not address specific content areas are published in the General Section of the *CITE Journal*. The *CITE-General* section encourages submission of research reports and theoretical articles on the use of innovative technologies in teacher education on a broad interdisciplinary basis.

- ***CITE-Science*****: Sponsored by the Association for Science Teacher Education (ASTE;** https://citejournal.org/category/science/**)** The unique purpose of *CITE-Science* is to publish peer-reviewed research reports and theoretical articles on the use of innovative technologies in science teacher education. Editors encourage manuscripts that deal with the education of preservice or in-service science teachers as well as college level science faculty.

- ***CITE-Mathematics*****: Sponsored by the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE;** https://citejournal.org/category/mathematics/**).** The purpose of *CITE-Math* is to provide a forum for reporting on research and engaging in a dialog about best practices related to any area of technology and mathematics teacher preparation.

- ***CITE-English:*** **Sponsored by English Language Arts Teacher Educators (ELATE**; https://citejournal.org/category/english-language-arts/**)**. Manuscripts for *CITE – English* should focus on the interconnectedness of the English language arts content area, technology, and English teacher education.

- ***CITE-Social Studies:*** **Sponsored by the National Council for the Social Studies College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA;** https://citejournal.org/category/social-studies/**).** The purpose of *CITE-Social Studies* is to provide a forum for reporting on research related to social studies content, teacher education, and technology.

In addition to formal manuscripts submitted to any of the above sections, *CITE Journal* publishes **Editorials and Commentaries** (https://citejournal.org/category/editorial/). Readers may submit critiques/commentaries on papers in the Current Practice section. The response papers are peer reviewed and, if accepted, published as a new paper in the journal. These submissions are treated as articles and are refereed in the same way as all other articles. Commentaries need to provide substantiated perspectives in response to a paper and should advance the discussion and make a substantial contribution to the conversation.

Further, *CITE Journal* publishes **Seminal** Articles (https://citejournal.org/category/seminal-articles/). Those include reprint classic articles that have advanced the discussion of technology and teacher education. The editor for this section and CITE founding editor, Glen Bull, welcomes nominations.

Special Issues

CITE Journal publishes special issues on timely and critical topics at the intersection of technology, specific disciplinary content, and teacher education. Special Issue proposals can be submitted to any of the *CITE Journal* disciplines. These proposals are reviewed by the editor as well as the appropriate section editors. Special issue proposals have also been initiated by section editors themselves to advance topics important to the field of technology and teacher education. In the last 5 years, *CITE Journal* published two types of special issues; the first type has a unifying theme that cuts across

an entire journal issue. In this case, each discipline specific article must address the special issue's unifying theme. The following two examples represent Special Issues that ran across the entire journal:

- Research in Video-Enhanced Teacher Learning (*CITE Journal* Volume 18, Issue 1: https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-1-18/editorial/experience-advance-research-in-video-enhanced-teacher-learning/), and
- Geospatial Technologies in Teacher Education (*CITE Journal* Volume 16, Issue 3: https://citejournal.org/publication/volume-16/issue-3-16/).

The second type of Special Issue is situated within the disciplines. This type of special issue can be advanced by *CITE Journal* editors themselves or by guest-editors. Below are examples of Special Issues organized by the editors of *CITE-English* to address critical, thought-provoking, and timely topics in technology and English teacher education.

- Innovations in Hybrid/Virtual ELA Teacher Education (https://citejournal.org/volume-20/issue-3-20/english-language-arts/call-for-proposals-innovations-in-hybrid-virtual-english-language-arts-teacher-education/),
- Connected Learning and 21st Century English Teacher Education (https://citejournal.org/volume-17/issue-3-17/english-language-arts/call-for-proposals-special-issue-on-connected-learning-and-21st-century-english-teacher-education/), and
- Technology and English Language Arts Teacher Education in Troubled Times (https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-4-18/english-language-arts/call-for-proposals-special-issue-on-technology-and-ela-teacher-education-in-troubled-times/).

Publication Frequency and Acceptance Rates

The number of articles published in each section of *CITE Journal* is limited to one or two per quarter. Although all issues of the journal are available free of charge on the internet, it is indexed by H.W. Wilson Education Full Text (since 2005, volume 5), EBSCO (since 2006, volume 6), ERIC, and the LearnTechLib: The Learning and Technology Library (all volumes; http://learntechlib.org/). Readers may sign up to receive quarterly alerts to new issues of *CITE Journal* by clicking on the Subscribe button at the top of the main journal page (https://citejournal.org/).

CITE Journal receives over 100 submissions per year. The average number of submissions per year during the last five years was 140. *CITE-Current Practice* and *CITE-General* received the largest number of submissions every year. During the last five years, the acceptance rate ranged from 13 – 29%. However, acceptance rates for the journal vary from section to section; some sections had an acceptance rate of as low as 5%. Table 1 provides a summary of submission and decision data during the five-year period of 2016-2020. The open-access nature of the journal makes it highly accessible, encouraging a wide readability. Authors can track the number of times their work was viewed.

Table 1
Submission and Decision Data from 2016-2020

	Total Number of Submissions	Accepted	Rejected	Revised	Acceptance Rate
2020	123	22	86	15	17.9%
2019	146	28	111	7	19.2%
2018	122	36	83	3	29.5%
2017	159	44	113	2	27.7%
2016	151	20	127	4	13.2%

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

There is a consistent submission process for all strands of the *CITE Journal* (i.e., Mathematics Education, English/Language Arts Education, Science Education, Social Studies Education, General Practice, and Current Practice) which is managed by the publication platform of the Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). At the top right-hand side of the main journal page (see https://citejournal.org), there is a "Submissions" tab, which is linked to the *CITE Journal* Submission Guidelines (http://publish.aace.org/begin/cite). At the bottom of the guidelines, there is a large blue box stating "Begin Submission Process" (http://publish.aace.org/index.cfm). When an author selects the link, they are taken to the SITE website to sign in and continue the submission process by selecting "Go." The next page allows the author to choose the *CITE Journal* for the submission. There is the ability to select "More Info" at the end of each *CITE Journal* section to solicit more information on the specific foci. Once a section is chosen, the author selects "Continue" and adds/updates/confirms the author information shown (see Figure 1). The next page allows authors to enter the article title, abstract, upload files, and add co-authors. When all steps are complete, the article is submitted to the *CITE Journal*. One unique feature of *CITE Journal* is that although it is open-access, there are no fees associated with publication. Moreover, because it is published online, the editors seek articles that incorporate multimedia, graphics, videos, and links.

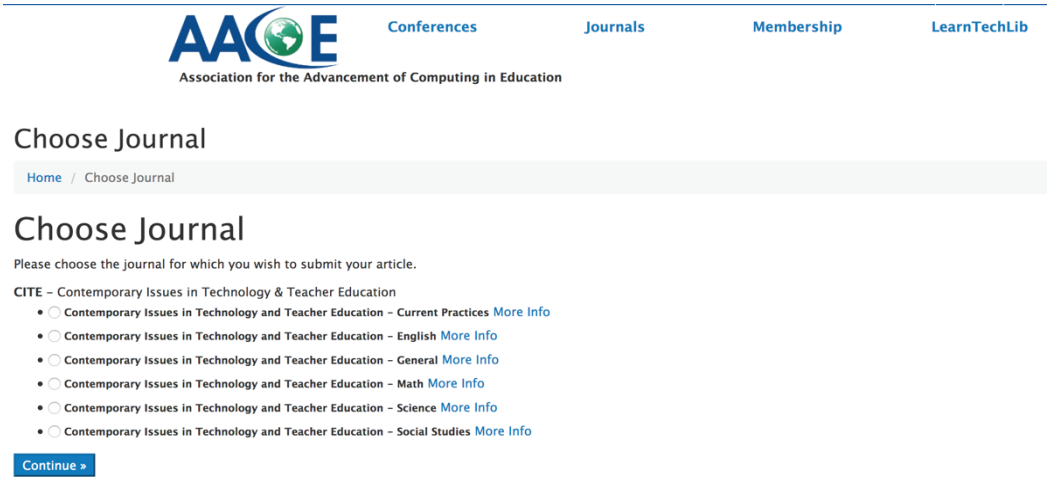

Figure 1. CITE Journal Submission Process.

Editorial Board and Reviewers

Each *CITE Journal* section has an editorial review board (ERB), as well as additional reviewers. Across all sections, a minimum of two reviews are provided for each article. At least one review is completed by an ERB member. Each professional organization selects and appoints the ERB members. For instance, ERB members for *CITE-Science* are selected yearly from individual applications submitted by ASTE members. ASTE leadership reviews, selects, and approves ERB members for *CITE-Science*. When selected, ERB members are appointed for three-year terms. A current list for both editor(s) and ERB members is on the website: https://citejournal.org/review-boards/science-section-reviewers/. ERB members and reviewers must be ASTE members (https://theaste.org/), and the journal encourages anyone interested in science, technology, and teacher education to become an ASTE member and review for *CITE-Science*. Both ERB members and reviewers are asked to review two to four article submissions a year.

The *CITE-Math* ERB is a committee of the AMTE Publications Division (https://amte.net/division/publications-division). All AMTE members may volunteer to serve on the ERB by selecting this choice when completing the AMTE volunteer form which lists all volunteer opportunities. The Vice President for Publications shares with the *CITE-Math* co-editors information about each member who volunteered to serve on the *CITE-Math* ERB. The co-editors review the list and provide their top five recommendations to the Vice President for Publications who then takes the list to the AMTE Board for final approval (https://citejournal.org/review-boards/math-section-reviewers/). Attention to diversity, gender,

type of institution and location, type of role within the institution, experience, and previous service roles is considered. The *CITE-Math* reviewers volunteer through the SITE system, and a notification is sent to the editors who then review the information submitted by the volunteer to make sure that they have a mathematics education background.

Similar to *CITE-Science* and *CITE-Math*, other sections have processes in place for selecting ERB members and reviewers. In all instances, ERB members need to have demonstrated expertise in the field of teacher education (e.g., ELA, Social studies) and digital literacy pedagogies. Interested individuals can contact the current editor(s) for more information about reviewing and becoming an ERB member.

Review Process

The *CITE Journal* review process, outside of the traditional submit/review/response, varies by each section, and is directed by the corresponding section editor(s). However, there are a number of similarities across sections including an initial review by a section editor, blind peer review of each submission by at least two different reviewers (one must be an ERB member), support for new scholars, an emphasis on studies involving technology and teacher education, and a means of highlighting interactive article content (e.g., multimedia, links, clickable data plots, videos, etc.).

Key to the review process is an understanding of what reviewers are looking for in *CITE Journal* submissions. First and foremost, submitted articles must incorporate technology and teacher education. Second, if submitting to one of the disciplinary sections (i.e., English/Language Arts, Math, Science, or Social Studies Education), it is essential that studies incorporate the disciplinary aspect of the work. For example, if submitting to the *CITE Journal*'s Mathematics Education section, reviewers should be able to discern the technology utilized, the teacher education focus, and the mathematics content applied. Another aspect of the review process is that reviewers routinely search for interactive material, such as clickable links or videos, since this is a benefit of an online, open-access article. In addition, reviewers look for quality ingredients of a research study, including clear research questions, literature reviews, theoretical frameworks, methods, analyses, and conclusions. Quality theoretical articles are also accepted if there are clear connections to the literature.

CITE New Scholar Information

The support of new scholars is important to each editor of the *CITE Journal*. As such, the editors welcome potential authors to contact them prior to submission with article ideas or abstracts, as well as after receiving a decision for article improvements. When communicating with an editor or responding to reviewers, authors should point out if they are new scholars. Doing so provides editors and reviewers the opportunity to more deeply explain comments and offer suggestions for improvement. The next section outlines best practices and advice to authors.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE TO AUTHORS

CITE Journal editors have developed several recommendations for new authors, as described below.

Identifying and Choosing a Target Journal Before Preparing a Manuscript

Choosing a target journal allows authors to develop their manuscript following the editorial guidelines, recommended manuscript structure and length, and other pertinent journal submission requirements. There are different ways in which authors can identify journals relevant to their work. We list some below.

- Visit websites of associations that support your work. Along with *CITE Journal*, the AACE has six other journals (i.e., *International Journal on E-Learning*, *Journal of Computers in Mathematics and Science Teaching*, *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, *Journal of Interactive Learning Research*, *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, Journal of Online Learning Research*). The AMTE supports *CITE-Math* along with *Mathematics Teacher Educator*, *Connections*, and monographs. Similarly, SITE, which sponsors *CITE-General* and *CITE-Current Practice*, sponsors the *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*. Identifying the best publication outlet is, therefore, critical.

- Ask colleagues, Ph.D. advisors, mentors, more advanced graduate students, or their assigned librarians at their institutions for journal recommendations.
- Research fellow colleagues' CVs to get ideas about potential journals that might fit well with their own publication needs.
- Review the references in articles cited in their own manuscript, and pay attention to the journals that appear more frequently in the citations.
- Consider the reputation, acceptance rate, and other publication metrics, especially in relation to what is valued most at their institution for promotion and tenure purposes. This information can be found on the journal's website or by contacting the editor(s).
- Use a journal suggester tool, such as the one available at: https://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/publishing-your-research/choosing-a-journal/journal-suggester/
- Contact the journal editor to discuss a manuscript, particularly if unsure about publication fit. Editors are invested in identifying the best articles that advance the mission of their journal and frequently work closely with authors from submission to publication. *CITE Journal* editors welcome author inquiries. Further *CITE Journal* editors hold regular roundtables at major education conferences, including the *SITE Conference* and the *American Educational Research Association* conference.

Identifying your Target Audience

Deciding which journal will reach the target audience is essential for disseminating scholarly work and having the greatest impact. Publishing in a general-interest educational technology or teacher education journal allows authors to reach a wider audience, while publishing in a more specialized journal, like *CITE Journal*, allows authors to reach a specific audience who shares the same interests. Making a decision about which audience to target will also help make a decision related to publication outlets. For instance, *CITE Journal* targets both researchers and teacher educators doing important work at the intersection of technology and teacher education. Having a clear idea of the target audience helps authors tailor their manuscript to meet needs and expectations. This might also influence decisions related to language usage, level of methodological detail, and nature of implications described in the work.

Identifying calls for Special Issues is another way of targeting a specific audience. A number of journals have special issues focusing on emerging areas of scholarship or areas consistent with the mission and priorities of the editorial board. These special issues are more targeted and provide a way to engage in a scholarly conversation with researchers in a niche area of expertise. Recently, *CITE-English* issued a call for a Special Issue that explores innovative uses of technology in English Language Arts teacher education in remote and/or virtual contexts, in response to the rise of hybrid/virtual learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Familiarize Yourself with the Review Process

Prior to submission, it is important for authors to familiarize themselves with the review process. For instance, knowing whether a journal is peer-reviewed, non-peer reviewed, or blind-reviewed is important for one's scholarship goals. Furthermore, blind peer-reviewed journals may be a requirement for scholarship goals or for meeting promotion and tenure expectations. Double-blind peer reviews are highly regarded as they provide independent assessment of the quality of submitted manuscripts. The purpose of the peer reviews is to provide constructive feedback and suggestions for improving the manuscript prior to publication, thus, advancing and strengthening the work.

CITE Journal provides clear and explicit guidance on the submission process. For an example, readers are encouraged to review the criteria *CITE-Math* reviewers use to judge the merit of submitted manuscripts, which focus on: (a) grammatical construction, writing style, and use of non-sexist language; (b) overall clarity of ideas and expression; (c) value or usefulness to field or profession; (d) consistency with existing literature; (e) important and timely; (f) adequacy of design/accuracy of analysis; (g) presentation and interpretation of findings, discussion, and conclusions; and (h) inclusion of appropriate implications for practice and/or policy. For more information please review the criteria at: https://citejournal.org/category/mathematics/.

In addition to learning more about the review process, it is important for authors to gather information related to number of issues published per year, acceptance rate, turn-around time for reviews, as well as decision categories (e.g.,

accept, accept with minor revisions, etc.). Not all journals utilize the same decision tags; therefore, understanding what to expect is important. It is not unusual for editors to reject a manuscript based on reviews but encourage authors to revise and resubmit for further consideration if they detect promise in the work. When authors are unsure about a decision, they should always reach out to the editor to discuss next steps.

Consistency with Literature and Value of the Work

Consistency with existing literature is an essential component of high-quality manuscripts. The authors need to present a strong rationale for both research and practitioner-based manuscripts, justified and supported by existing and up-to-date literature. Towards this end, it is imperative that authors include current literature—often defined within the past 5-8 years—that describes developments and gaps and delineates the contributions of the work. Simply stating that there is no existing literature on a topic does not necessarily make the study worthwhile. The study should fit into existing literature and move the field forward in either research, practice, or policy.

In addition, authors are encouraged to review recent publications in each journal of interest (even in press), to identify scholarly areas of interest and types of articles accepted. This will help authors tailor their work to build on research that has already been published in the target journal. In turn, this will help editors identify the ways in which a specific manuscript adds to the 'conversation' in the target journal—conceptually, methodologically, or theoretically.

Clear Description of Methods

The adequacy of the research design and clear description of methods are two of the most important elements of a manuscript. For practitioner-oriented manuscripts, authors should provide a clear description of the design of the innovation. For research manuscripts, authors must provide a clear description of the methods section, including participants, data collection, instruments, and data analysis. Further, authors need to provide a clear description of the results grounded in a systematic data analysis, along with evidence of claims. For research articles, it is essential that authors include a theoretical framework that is not conflated with a conceptual framework. A theoretical framework is a lens that is used to analyze data, and it pulls together the research questions, methods, analysis, and conclusions (e.g., constructivism). A conceptual framework is a structure that an author uses to explain the research study (e.g., integrated STEM framework, or Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge framework). Finally, clear implications for research, practice, and/or policy must be provided. For *CITE Journal* in particular, editors would like to see specific implications for teacher educators related to in-service professional development or pre-service education.

One way to strengthen a manuscript is by reading a selection of articles published by the target journal, particularly those that use similar methodologies. For example, if an author utilizes qualitative methodologies, it is important to read other manuscripts reporting on qualitative studies to become more familiar with the format and journal expectations. A common issue with the methodology is the use of data collection instruments that lack any type of reliability or validity measures, thereby making it difficult to establish confidence that the manuscript provides meaningful information that can guide decision making.

Writing Style and Formatting Guidelines (American Psychological Association, 7th edition)

Clarity and precision are essential in scholarly work. As authors prepare their manuscript, it is important that they define terms that are unique to the work. Using specific and well-defined terms helps improve the readers' ability to make connections among other research, interpret the findings, and include the findings in a future meta-analysis or replication. Also, using clear language makes manuscripts more accessible to varied audiences. Authors are therefore encouraged to ensure that their manuscripts are well-organized, clear, reasoned, and follow a logical flow so that the audience can understand the main points of the article easily.

Importantly, authors are expected to familiarize themselves with the publication manuals accepted by the target journal. The *CITE Journal* has recently transitioned to the American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition of the APA Publication Manual (2019) which replaces the 6th edition published in 2009. Since 2009, citing online material has become more common and using inclusive and bias-free language has received more extensive guidelines. In addition,

technologies have changed both among researchers and students. APA 7th edition includes guidelines for citing those sources as well as other electronic sources such as ebooks, podcasts, TV series, etc. Further, APA includes guidelines for choosing words that are inclusive and free from bias to help authors reduce gender, age, disability, racial and ethnic identity, and sexual orientation bias.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

CITE Journal editors identified a collection of articles that exemplify what they expect from future authors. Those articles are listed below.

Exemplary Empirical Articles

CITE Journal editors selected a collection of exemplary empirical articles across the different *CITE Journal* sections. The following articles are considered exemplary for these primary reasons: (a) they are driven by a coherent theoretical framework; (b) they are well situated in the literature; (c) they provide adequate information on the technology utilized when applicable; (d) they provide adequate information on the methods, including links to research instruments as well as clear description of participants and data collection procedures (i.e., procedures for collecting and analyzing new forms of data such as social media records); and (e) they provide implications and recommendations for researchers and teacher educators that are grounded in the data. Further, the articles were selected to illustrate different methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, content analysis, etc. Finally, the selected articles exemplify how authors can discuss their positionality and role in the execution of the research. Emphasis was placed on selecting more contemporary articles, but authors are encouraged to explore *CITE Journal* archives.

1. Casey, S., Hudson, R., Harrison, T., Barker, H., & Draper, J. (2020). Preservice teachers' design of technology-enhanced statistical tasks. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 20*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-20/issue-2-20/mathematics/preservice-teachers-design-of-technology-enhanced-statistical-tasks
2. Rodriguez, N., Brown, M., & Vickery, A. (2020). Pinning for profit? Examining elementary preservice teachers' critical analysis of online social studies resources about Black history. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 20*(3). https://citejournal.org/volume-20/issue-3-20/social-studies/pinning-for-profit-examining-elementary-preservice-teachers-critical-analysis-of-online-social-studies-resources-about-black-history
3. DeCoito, I., & Richardson, T. (2018). Teachers and technology: Present practice and future directions. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 18*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-2-18/science/teachers-and-technology-present-practice-and-future-directions
4. Trainin, G., Friedrich, L., & Deng, Q. (2018). The impact of a teacher education program redesign on technology integration in elementary preservice teachers. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 18*(4). https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-4-18/general/the-impact-of-a-teacher-education-program-redesign-on-technology-integration-in-elementary-preservice-teachers
5. Hughes, J. E., Liu, S., & Lim, M. (2016). Technological modeling: Faculty use of technologies in preservice teacher education from 2004 to 2012. *Contemporary Issues in Technology & Teacher Education, 16*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-16/issue-2-16/current-practice/technological-modeling-faculty-use-of-technologies-in-preservice-teacher-education-from-2004-to-2012
6. Carpenter, J. (2015). Preservice teachers' microblogging: Professional development via Twitter. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *15*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-15/issue-2-15/general/preservice-teachers-microblogging-professional-development-via-twitter
7. Archambault, L., & Crippen, K. (2009). Examining TPACK among K-12 online distance educators in the United States *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *9*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-9/issue-1-09/general/examining-tpack-among-k-12-online-distance-educators-in-the-united-states

Exemplary Theoretical and Conceptual Articles

CITE Journal editors selected a collection of theoretical and conceptual articles across disciplines, as well as literature reviews, that illustrate exemplary work. These articles were selected because of their innovation and rigor, the opportunity to examine a construct from a unique perspective, and their role in helping readers gain a better understanding and common language around new ideas in relation to technology and teacher education. For instance, the article by Koehler and Mishra (2009) introduces a condensed and updated depiction of the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework for readers who may not be familiar with it. Literature review articles illustrate ways in which authors can examine how a topic (e.g., STEM) is treated in the literature over a period of time.

1. Ellis, J., Wieselmann, J., Sivaraj, R., Roehrig, G., Dare, E., & Ring-Whalen, E. (2020). Toward a productive definition of technology in science and STEM education. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 20*(3). https://citejournal.org/volume-20/issue-3-20/science/toward-a-productive-definition-of-technology-in-science-and-stem-education
2. Mason, S. L., & Rich, P. J. (2019). Preparing elementary school teachers to teach computing, coding, and computational thinking. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 19*(4). https://citejournal.org/volume-19/issue-4-19/general/preparing-elementary-school-teachers-to-teach-computing-coding-and-computational-thinking
3. Koehler, M. J., & Mishra, P. (2009). What is technological pedagogical content knowledge? *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *9*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-9/issue-1-09/general/what-is-technological-pedagogicalcontent-knowledge
4. Niess, M. L., Ronau, R. N., Shafer, K. G., Driskell, S. O., Harper S. R., Johnston, C., Browning, C., Özgün-Koca, S. A., & Kersaint, G. (2009). Mathematics teacher TPACK standards and development model. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education* [Online serial], *9*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-9/issue-1-09/mathematics/mathematics-teacher-tpack-standards-and-development-model

Exemplary Editorials

CITE Journal is unique in that it publishes Editorials and invites commentaries in response. Below are two exemplary editorials. The editorial prepared by Bull et al. (2017) includes the responses it elicited from representatives of different organizations.

1. Harris, J. (2005). Our agenda for technology integration: It's time to choose. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *5*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-5/issue-2-05/editorial/our-agenda-for-technology-integration-its-time-to-choose
2. Bull, G., Spector, J. M., Persichitte, K., & Meier, E. (2017). Reflections on preparing educators to evaluate the efficacy of educational technology: An interview with Joseph South. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 17*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-17/issue-1-17/editorial/reflections-on-preparing-educators-to-evaluate-the-efficacy-of-educational-technology-an-interview-with-joseph-south

    - Response 1: Hodges, C. B., Carpenter, J. P., & Borthwick A. C., (2017). Commentary: Response of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education to an interview with Joseph South regarding the preparation of educators to evaluate the efficacy of educational technology. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 17*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-17/issue-1-17/editorial/commentary-response-of-the-american-association-of-colleges-of-teacher-education-to-an-interview-with-joseph-south-regarding-the-preparation-of-educators-to-evaluate-the-efficacy-of-educational-tech
    - Response 2: Slykhuis, D. (2017). Commentary: Response of SITE to an interview with Joseph South regarding the preparation of educators to evaluate the efficacy of educational technology. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 17*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-17/issue-1-17/editorial/commentary-response-of-site-to-an-interview-with-joseph-south-regarding-the-preparation-of-educators-to-evaluate-the-efficacy-of-educational-technology

- Response 3: Roehrig, G., & Ellis, J. (2017). Commentary: Response of the Association of Science Teacher Educators to "An Interview with Joseph South." *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 17*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-17/issue-2-17/editorial/commentary-response-of-the-association-of-science-teacher-educators-to-an-interview-with-joseph-south
- Response 4: Manfra, M. (2017). Commentary: Social studies education response to "An Interview with Joseph South." *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 17*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-17/issue-2-17/editorial/commentary-social-studies-education-response-to-an-interview-with-joseph-south

Exemplary Special Issue Articles

In this section we present exemplars from some of the latest special issues. We selected two exemplars from journal wide special issues, focusing on the role of video and geospatial technologies in teacher education. We also selected two exemplars from the latest ELA special issues focusing on connected learning and the role of technology in ELA teacher education in troubled times. All exemplars illustrate how the authors weave technology that served as the focus of the special issue (e.g., geospatial technologies), teacher education, and disciplinary content while adhering to the publication standards expected by *CITE Journal*.

1. O'Byrne, W. I. (2019). Educate, empower, advocate: Amplifying marginalized voices in a digital society. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 19*(4). https://citejournal.org/volume-19/issue-4-19/english-language-arts/educate-empower-advocate-amplifying-marginalized-voices-in-a-digital-society (Special Issue: Technology and ELA Teacher Education in Troubled Times)
2. West-Puckett, S., Smith, A., Cantrill, C., & Zamora, M. (2018). The fallacies of open: Participatory design, infrastructuring, and the pursuit of radical possibility. *Contemporary Issues in Technology & Teacher Education, 18*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-2-18/english-language-arts/the-fallacies-of-open-participatory-design-infrastructuring-and-the-pursuit-of-radical-possibility (Special Issue: Connected Learning and 21st Century English Teacher Education)
3. Barnhart, T., & van Es, E. (2018). Leveraging analysis of students' disciplinary thinking in a video club to promote student-centered science instruction. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 18*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-1-18/science/leveraging-analysis-of-students-disciplinary-thinking-in-a-video-club-to-promote-student-centered-science-instruction (Special Issue: Research in Video-Enhanced Teacher Learning)
4. Bodzin, A., Anastasio, D., Sahagian, D., & Henry, J. B. (2016). A curriculum-linked professional development approach to support teachers' adoption of Web GIS tectonics investigations. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 16*(3). https://citejournal.org/volume-16/issue-3-16/current-practice/a-curriculum-linked-professional-development-approach-to-support-teachers-adoption-of-web-gis-tectonics-investigations (Special Issue: Geospatial Technologies in Teacher Education)

Seminal Articles

A unique feature of *CITE Journal* is the section on Seminal Articles, which captures some original pieces on the role of technology in teaching and learning broadly. Three examples are listed below:

1. Roblyer, M. D. (2005). Educational technology research that makes a difference: Series introduction. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *5*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-5/issue-2-05/seminal-articles/educational-technology-research-that-makes-a-difference-series-introduction
2. Kleiman, G. M. (2004). Myths and realities about technology in k-12 schools: Five years later. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *4*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-4/issue-2-04/seminal-articles/myths-and-realities-about-technology-in-k-12-schools-five-years-later
3. Taylor, R. P. (1980). Introduction. In R. P. Taylor (Ed.), *The computer in school: Tutor, tool, tutee* (pp. 1-10). Teachers College Press. Reprinted by permission of the publisher from Taylor, R., Ed., *The Computer in School: Tutor, Tool, Tutee,* (Teachers College Press, © 1980 by Teachers College, Columbia University. All rights reserved.), pp. 1-10. All rights reserved. https://citejournal.org/volume-3/issue-2-03/seminal-articles/the-computer-in-school-tutor-tool-tutee

We hope the readers found the advice from *CITE Journal* editors useful. We welcome comments and encourage readers to reach out to editors for questions and to sign up as *CITE Journal* reviewers.

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Barnhart, T., & van Es, E. (2018). Leveraging analysis of students' disciplinary thinking in a video club to promote student-centered science instruction. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 18*(1). https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-1-18/science/leveraging-analysis-of-students-disciplinary-thinking-in-a-video-club-to-promote-student-centered-science-instruction

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Carpenter, J. (2015). Preservice teachers' microblogging: Professional development via Twitter. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education*, *15*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-15/issue-2-15/general/preservice-teachers-microblogging-professional-development-via-twitter

Casey, S., Hudson, R., Harrison, T., Barker, H., & Draper, J. (2020). Preservice teachers' design of technology-enhanced statistical tasks. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 20*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-20/issue-2-20/mathematics/preservice-teachers-design-of-technology-enhanced-statistical-tasks

DeCoito, I., & Richardson, T. (2018). Teachers and technology: Present practice and future directions. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 18*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-18/issue-2-18/science/teachers-and-technology-present-practice-and-future-directions

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Manfra, M. (2017). Commentary: Social studies education response to "An Interview with Joseph South." *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 17*(2). https://citejournal.org/volume-17/issue-2-17/editorial/commentary-social-studies-education-response-to-an-interview-with-joseph-south

Mason, S. L., & Rich, P. J. (2019). Preparing elementary school teachers to teach computing, coding, and computational thinking. *Contemporary Issues in Technology and Teacher Education, 19*(4). https://citejournal.org/volume-19/issue-4-19/general/preparing-elementary-school-teachers-to-teach-computing-coding-and-computational-thinking

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The Fate of a Submission Is Sealed Long Before Its Consideration for Publication!

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INTRODUCTION

The *Distance Education* journal is a peer-reviewed publication of the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA). The journal offers an outlet for research and scholarly work in the field of open, flexible and distance education. It is one of the first journals published to focus exclusively on this area of educational practice and remains a primary source of scholarly work in these fields.

As one of the first among a growing list of such publications in the field, its genesis goes back to the early days of the Australian and South Pacific External Studies Association (ASPESA), the forerunner of ODLAA (see Bewley, 2008; Inglis, 1999). Records show that the idea of a scholarly publication in the field of open, flexible and distance education may have been first mooted around the time of the 1977 forum of ASPESA. In the following year, members of the ASPESA Executive took the idea to the conference of the International Council of Correspondence (now Distance) Education held in Delhi, India, where it received further support and endorsement (see Mitchell, 2009).

Several factors at the time seemed to suggest this to be a good idea. Open Universities to focus attention specifically on open, flexible and distance learning were beginning to emerge around this time of the 20th Century. The most notable among these, although not the first, was the United Kingdom Open University which was established in 1969. Staff joining these institutions were starting to theorize about it and investigate its efficacies. While enthusiastic about its potentials, practitioners in the field needed professional development in its non-traditional strategies (Mitchell, 1982). This also highlighted the need for formal programs of study in the field (see Mitchell, 2009).

A consequence of these developments was growing interest in research and scholarship in the field. A peer-reviewed publication (such as a journal) seemed like a good idea to further this cause. It would provide a forum for the dissemination of discourse as well as research and scholarship in the field that was properly scrutinized by its peers (Smith, 1984). And so the *Distance Education* journal was born.

The inaugural issue of the *Distance Education* journal was published in 1980 under the stewardship of two Executive Editors, and an international editorial board. The Editorial Board was to have an ASPESA-member majoritypresumably to ensure that Australian content and influence featured prominently in the journal. And to avoid being labeled as an Australian journal, it carried the subtitle "An International Journal" till around the 1990s when it was obvious that the journal had achieved a global footprint and did not need to remind its readership that it was truly an international journal.

The journal has always been owned and managed by ODLAA although its production has shifted over the years. In the early days of its publication, the journal was published by University presses. However, over time, this model of in-house publishing became unsustainable, and around the turn of the 21st Century the journal began publishing with the Taylor and Francis Group. The business of the journal is managed by a committee of the ODLAA Executive, chaired by its President. Currently, the journal is edited by one Executive Editor, a cadre of Associate Editors and an international Editorial Board.

The journal provides an outlet for rigorous research and scholarship in the broad field of open, flexible and distance education. In the early years the journal sought to provide a forum for a wide range of publications on the subject. This included, research articles, short reports, book reviews, and notes on the contributors. This was meant to offer a forum for the wide variety of material from a new and emerging area of educational practice. Currently, the journal publishes a narrower range of publications including outputs of data-driven research, book reviews, reflections and commentary. The inclusion of reflections and commentary is a more recent feature of the journal. This is designed to offer scholars the opportunity to comment on phenomena, to help promote discussion and debate, without the need for extensive data to support their assertions. The journal has recorded a consistent Impact Factor and ranking in the Education & Educational Research JCR category (see Table 1).

Table 1

Impact Factor and Ranking of Distance Education

Impact Factor and Ranking

Impact Factor	Score	Rank
2013	0.725	109 / 219 Education & Educational Research
2014	0.918	83 / 224 Education & Educational Research
2015	2.021	20 / 230 Education & Educational Research
2016	1.592	56 / 235 Education & Educational Research
2017	1.314	127 / 239 Education & Educational Research
2018	1.729	97 / 243 Education & Educational Research - SSCI
2019	1.702	122 / 263 Education & Educational Research - SSCI

Although the bulk of its readership is from the English-speaking block, namely USA/Canada, Australasia, Asia and Europe, the journal has a global reach (see Figure 1).

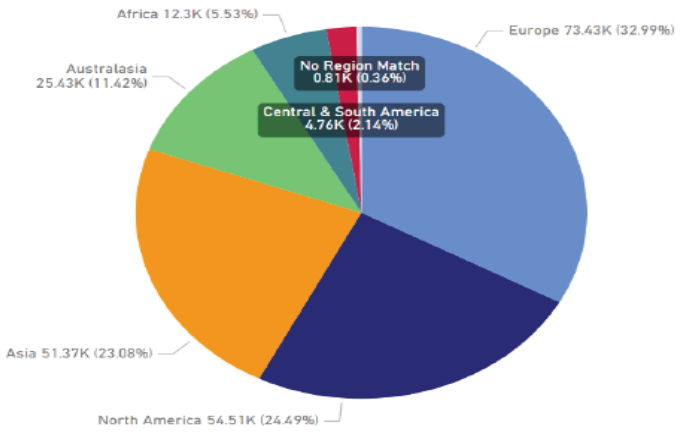

Figure 1. Article Downloads by Region.

In 2020, the journal received 149,660, downloads which is 105% higher than that in 2019. A recent report of publication trends in the journal shows that one of the most downloaded article has been "Evaluating videoconferencing systems for the quality of the educational experience," by Ana-Paula Correia, Chenxi Liu and Fan Xu (2020, pp. 429-452) with 2,987 downloads. The top cited article for the same period was "Refining success and dropout in massive open online courses based on the intention-behavior gap," by Maartje Henderikx, Karel Kreijns and Marco Kalz (2017, pp. 353-368), and the top Altmetric scoring article for this period is "Four narratives about online international students: A critical literature review," by Kyungmee Lee and Brett Bligh (2019, pp. 153-169).

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The journal started off with publishing two issues per volume/per year for the first couple of decades. Around the turn of the century its publication frequency increased to three issues per volume, with the help of one of these issues being devoted to a special theme. The idea behind a regular special themed issue was to enable the exploration of a topic of current interest in detail under the guidance of a guest editor(s). Currently it publishes four issues per volume with one of these allocated to a special theme.

The journal has always been a subscription-based publication and members of ODLAA receive a print copy of each issue of the journal as part of their membership. Like other such publications, the journal follows the usual conventions of peer review. The journal publishes only in the English language. There are no submission fees, publication fees or page charges for this journal. However, contributors have the option to publish open access in this journal via the Open Select publishing program. Publishing open access means that the article is free to access online immediately on publication, increasing its visibility, readership and impact (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2010). The journal is committed to peer-review and upholding the highest standards. All submissions to the journal undergo double-blind peer review, and are reviewed by members of the Editorial Board with expertise in the areas(s) represented by an article, and/or invited reviewers with special competence in the area(s) covered. The Editors reserve the right to make minor alterations to all papers that are accepted for publication. A typical paper for this journal is around 7,000 words, inclusive of tables, figures and references. A book review and reflective commentary is around 2-3,000 words. The journal follows APA style guidelines, US spelling, and Merriam-Webster as the preferred dictionary.

The Distance Education journal uses ScholarOne Manuscripts to manage its peer-review process. Submissions to the journal takes anything between 1-3 months to reach publication (see Figure 2). Authors are encouraged to share and open up access to data supporting the results or analyses presented in their submissions where this does not violate the protection of human subjects or other valid privacy or security concerns. Authors are encouraged to deposit the dataset(s) in a recognized data repository, preferably with a digital object identifier (DOI) which recognizes a long-term preservation plan. Authors are encouraged to cite any data sets referenced in the article and provide a Data Availability Statement.

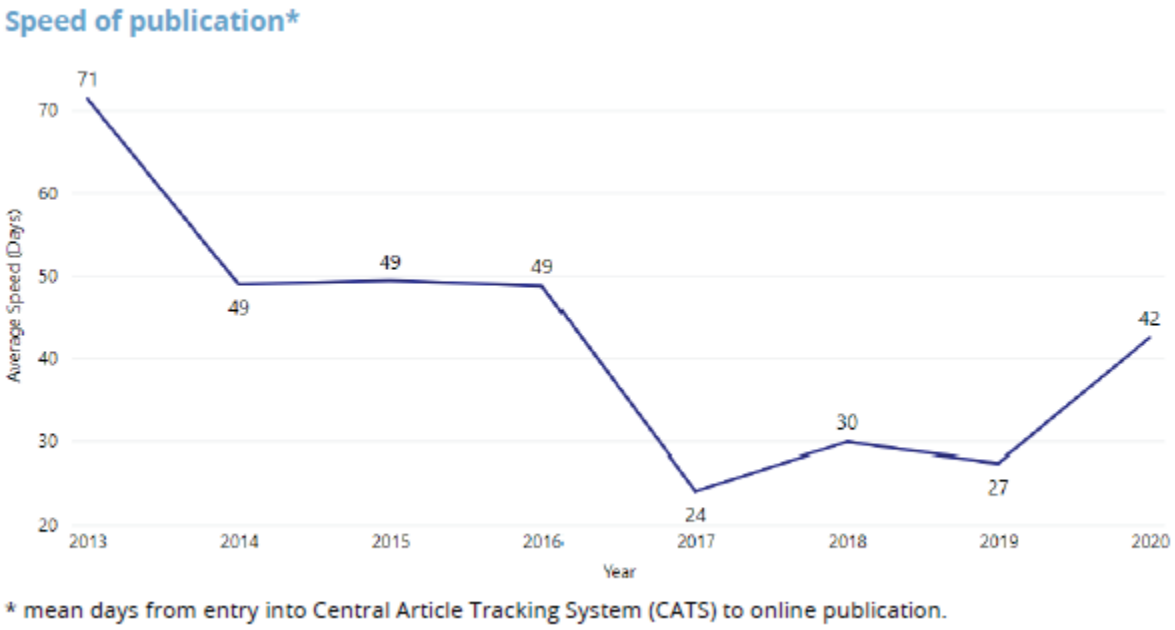

Figure 2. Speed of Publication.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE FOR AUTHORS

Distance Education, like most other journals, examines submissions to it for their contribution to the field, quality of ideas, their relevance to the readers, research rigor, composition and writing style, as well as their technical merit including adherence to publication guidelines of the journal. Common reasons for elimination from the review process are failure to meet the criteria and standards for research articles, lack of attention to the journal's style and conventions, or for scholarly writing generally. Hence, before beginning your research, it is crucial to identify its audience and the target of the publication for it.

- It will help immensely to have a look at already published papers in the target journal to get an idea of what it might take to get published. Study the aims and scope of the journal very carefully. Ensure that you follow the journal's style guide for the preparation of article. Furthermore, it will not hurt to alert the Editors of your intentions and ask if their journal might be interested in your work.

- Paying attention to detail may take you past the first post and enhance your chances of acceptance. Do not overlook obvious things like the title, the abstract, keywords and the reference list. The title, along with the abstract and keywords will be used to correctly index the publication. Your title and abstract are your article's 'shop window'. They will help its discovery by researchers and students. Think about how someone will search for your research–what search terms will they use? Use these in your title and abstract to make your article more discoverable.

- Use clear, concise language that can be understood by someone outside of, or new to the field. Draw out the main issues you are looking to address in both the title and abstract, but within the word limits. Put what's new/what makes it different at the start.

- Be wary of self-plagiarism. This means that your own work needs to be appropriately and correctly acknowledged. Be careful not to cite yourself too much to avoid being accused of unfairly influencing citations to your own work.

- Do not submit a paper to more than one journal at a time. And do not send an incomplete paper just to get feedback from reviewers. Your peers are not obliged to give you feedback, and they are certainly not there to correct your errors.

- If and when you do receive review reports, be appreciative and accept the feedback with gratitude. Thank the editors and your reviewers for their time and feedback and revise your article as requested.

- When responding to the reviewers' comments be specific and, if necessary, defend your position, and when doing so, be assertive and persuasive, not defensive or aggressive.

- Don't be afraid to ask the editor for guidance. A good editor will want to help. If your article is being reviewed then, there is a good chance it will get published. Few editors will commit a submission to the often lengthy and time-consuming review process, if they themselves did not think that the submission had a chance to reach publication.

Open, flexible and distance education--the field covered by the *Distance Education* journal--draws its foundations from an eclectic knowledge base. Primarily these comprise learning and cognitive sciences, information and communications technology, human factors engineering, and educational cybernetics. As such contributions to the journal are diverse with unclear boundaries. Researchers in this field come from a variety of backgrounds and areas of practice, many without a grounding in the broad field of education (see Gomes & Barbosa, 2018). While this provides scope for multiple perspectives, it also poses some serious challenges to the editors (see Zawacki-Richter & Anderson, 2011). Key among these challenges are: 1) a lack of awareness of the basic principles of learning and teaching; 2) lack of awareness of lessons already learned; and 3) lack of methodological rigor.

1. *Awareness of basic principles.* Regardless of the background and perspective, submissions to this journal need to reflect an awareness of the fundamental principles and best practices of learning and teaching. These don't vary significantly across various modes of education, whether they are offline, online, group-based, synchronous or asynchronous. This kind of grounding requires a deep level of understanding of learning and cognition and when this is the case, submissions have much greater chances to reach the publication stage (see Baggaley, 2008; Naidu, 2015a).

2. *Awareness of lessons already learned.* A key role of journals such as this one is to provide a forum for an informed conversation to take place among practitioners, theoreticians and students (see Naidu, 2016). Before joining or starting any such conversation, it is critical to develop a substantial understanding of the conversation, and make sure, that you have something unique to say. The literature review is critical to the development of this understanding. It will enable the identification of gaps and weaknesses in our understanding. Focusing attention on these gaps and weakness will significantly enhance the chances of publication, because the goal of a journal is adding to this knowledge base and further developing our collective memories on the topic and subject.

A good literature review is a synthesis, and not a mere summary of what is known on the topic. It helps to identify what is known and not known, and what is worth further investigation. Most submissions are rejected because they make little to no meaningful contribution to the conversation on issues that confront the field, and/or the submission is not properly contextualized and as such, not aligned with the aims and aspirations of the journal. Contributions need to be aware of what is known, as well as not known about a topic and what is worth investigating and why we need to bother with it? This is far from an easy task. A lot of researchers, and especially those without a solid grounding in educational research, are unable to carry out a thorough review of the literature. There is plenty of advice available on how to approach a literature review. A first principle or a simple rule of thumb is to lead your narrative of the literature with an idea, and not the author. Start with w*hat was said and by who*, instead of *who said or did what*. It is only after a study of what is known on a topic that one is able to identify what is not known and therefore worth an investigation. A thorough literature review will naturally then, lead to possible research questions.

3. *Insistence on methodological rigor.* Framing a research question to ensure that it is "researchable" is an important and yet difficult task. This is a crucial consideration because it has implications for the selection of the research method. The choice of the research method will depend on the nature of the research question. The research method will, moreover, suggest the kind of data that is required in order to be able to answer that question, where one might be able to find that data, approaches to the collection of data (both quantitative and qualitative), approaches and tools for the analysis of that data, and their analysis and interpretation.

Defining and framing a broad query into a researchable question is a very important task in the process, as not all research questions can be easily answered. The fate of a submission is often sealed long before it is submitted for publication consideration to a journal, because this depends so much on its building blocks (see Naidu, 2015b). If the design of a research is flawed, the data will not be able to support its findings, just as bricks and mortar will not be able to hold a structure, if the design architecture of a construction is weak. When this is the case, it will result in a weak publication which will eventually fail to get published no matter what kind of gloss you put on it thereafter. Insisting on methodological rigor in the design and the conduct of the research is therefore key.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

Exemplary Articles

The following is a small selection of articles with a focus on the field of open, flexible and distance education and key issues confronting the field. These issues include research trends over much of the life of the journal, including its role in shaping this research, and what lies ahead for the journal after forty years of supporting and nurturing research and scholarship in the field.

1. Baggaley, J. (2019). The Distance Education journal at 40: Crossroads and horizons. *Distance Education, 40*(4), 430–437. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1681891
2. Bernard, R. M., Abrami, P. C., Lou, Y., Borokhovski, E., Wade, A., Wozney, L., Wallet, P. A., Fiset, M., & Huang, B. (2004). How does distance education compare with classroom instruction? A meta-analysis of the empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research, 74*(3), 379–439. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543074003379
3. Bernard, R. M., Abrami, P. C., Lou, Y., & Borokhovski, E. (2004). A methodological morass? How we can improve the quality of quantitative research in distance education. *Distance Education, 25*(2), 176–198. https://doi.org/10.1080/0158791042000262094
4. Bozkurt, A. (2019). Intellectual roots of distance education: a progressive knowledge domain analysis. *Distance Education, 40*(4), 497–514. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1681894
5. Veletsianos, G., & Houlden, S. (2019). An analysis of flexible learning and flexibility over the last 40 years of Distance Education. *Distance Education, 40*(4), 454–468. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1681893
6. Zawacki-Richter, O., & Buntins, K. (2019). The position of Distance Education in a journal network. *Distance Education, 40*(4), 438–453. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1692766
7. Zawacki-Richter, O., & Naidu, S. (2016). Mapping research trends from 35 years of publications in Distance Education. *Distance Education, 37*(3), 245–269. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2016.1185079

Exemplary Editorials

Exemplary editorials are those that reflect on the content of the articles in light of key issues and challenges confronting the field at the time, as opposed to merely presenting a summary of the content of the articles published in an issue. The following are some notable examples of editorials that do that.

1. Naidu, S. (2020). It is the worst—and the best—of times! *Distance Education, 41*(4), 425–428. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2020.1825929
2. Naidu, S. (2020). The MOOC is dead—long live MOOC 2.0! *Distance Education, 41*(1), 1–5. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2020.1727289
3. Naidu, S. (2019). Forty years of pushing the boundaries of education. *Distance Education, 40*(4), 425–429. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1693952
4. Naidu, S. (2019). The changing narratives of open, flexible and online learning. *Distance Education, 40*(2), 149–152. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1612981
5. Naidu, S. (2019). The idea of open education. *Distance Education, 40*(1), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2018.1564622
6. Naidu, S. (2018). Recalibrating existing choreographies for open and flexible learning. *Distance Education, 39*(4), 437–440. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2018.1525279
7. Naidu, S. (2018). To interact or not to interact is NOT the question! *Distance Education, 39*(3), 277–280. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2018.1483715
8. Naidu, S. (2017). How flexible is flexible learning, who is to decide and what are its implications? *Distance Education, 38*(3), 269–272. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2017.137183
9. Naidu, S. (2017). Openness and flexibility are the norm, but what are the challenges? *Distance Education, 38*(1), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2017.1297185
10. Naidu, S. (2016). Joining or starting a new conversation? *Distance Education, 37*(3), 241–244. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2016.1226190
11. Naidu, S. (2016). The case for open educational practice. *Distance Education, 37*(1), 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2016.1157010
12. Naidu, S. (2015). Lessons we are not learning or choosing to ignore! *Distance Education, 36*(3), 291–294. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2015.1083645
13. Naidu, S. (2015). Methodological issues in educational research. *Distance Education, 36*(1), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2015.1030097
14. Naidu, S. (2014). Looking back, looking forward: The invention and reinvention of distance education. *Distance Education, 35*(3), 263–270. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2014.961671

Exemplary Special Issue Articles

Special themed issues of the journal serve to provide space for a deep dive into issues that are topical and/or controversial at the time. The Distance Education Journal devotes at least one Issue each year to this cause. Editorials of these special themed issues play a critical role in articulating the issues and controversies that lie at the heart of the special theme. The following are a selection of editorials from special themed issues of the journal.

1. Koseoglu, S., Bozkurt, A., & Havemann, L. (2020). Critical questions for open educational practices. *Distance Education, 41*(2), 153–155. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2020.1775341
2. Lowenthal, P. R., & Dennen, V. P. (2017). Social presence, identity, and online learning: Research development and needs. *Distance Education, 38*(2), 137–140. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2017.1335172
3. Mays, T. J., Combrinck, M. H. A., & Aluko, F. R. (2018). Deconstructing dual-mode provision in a digital era. *Distance Education, 39*(2), 135–139. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2018.1457943
4. Naidu, S. (2019). Forty years of pushing the boundaries of education. *Distance Education, 40*(4), 425–429. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2019.1693952
5. Rice, M. F., Lowenthal, P. R., & Woodley, X. (2020). Distance education across critical theoretical landscapes: touchstones for quality research and teaching. *Distance Education, 41*(3), 319–325. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2020.1790091

Exemplary Commentary/Reflections

Commentaries and reflections are shorter pieces of writing in the Distance Education journal. Their goal is to give their authors enough rope so that they can explore issues and topics in the field without having to conform to the requirements and expectations of the data driven research article. However, like all other items published in the journal, they are subjected to rigorous peer-review. The following are a small selection of these reflections with a specific focus on the field of open, flexible and distance learning.

1. Baggaley, J. (2011). A giant structure. *Distance Education, 32*(1), 135–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2011.565505
2. Baggaley, J. (2008). Where did distance education go wrong? *Distance Education, 29*(1), 39–51. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587910802004837
3. Baggaley, J. (2013). MOOC rampant. *Distance Education, 34*(3), 368–378. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2013.835768

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Inglis, A. (1999). Looking back, looking forward: Celebrating a quarter century of serving distance education 'down under.' *Distance Education, 20*(1), 7–30.

Mitchell, I. McD. (1982). Learning to be a distance educator – by distance education. *Distance Education, 3*(2), 298–308.

Mitchell, I. McD. (2009). Distance Education: An international journal: Reflections on how it all began. *Distance Education, 30*(1), 143–156. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587910902845998

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Thinking from Different Perspectives: Academic Publishing Strategies and Management in the Field of Educational Technology

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INTRODUCTION

Educational Technology Research and Development (ETR&D) journal is a publication of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology and currently published by Springer Nature. The journal emerged in 1989 by joining two separate journals, the Journal of Educational Technology Research and Journal of Instructional Development. The main focus of ETR&D is interdisciplinary studies looking at learning, instruction and performance across all disciplines and contexts, as well as all phases of planning, designing, implementing and evaluating various kinds of support for learning, instruction and performance.

ETR&D is refereed and follows a double-blind peer review process. Further, the journal is indexed with the Institute of Scientific Information (ISI) Web of Science, Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), and Education Resources

Information Center (ERIC) with a significant and steadily increasing impact factor. The typical acceptance rate has been between 8-14%. We receive submissions from across the globe with more than 75% of manuscripts being submitted from outside the United States.

Each major section (e.g. Research and Development sections) is assigned a separate Editor-in-Chief and dedicated Assistant Editor. Each major section has two international and multidisciplinary editorial boards comprised of 6 voted members serving 3-year terms. The editorial boards elect the editors who each serve 3-year terms. The journal has two perspective sections, the Cultural and Regional Perspectives and a newly formed Featured Papers section.

For specific journal information, please see the journal website: https://www.springer.com/journal/11423. Sample papers from the journal are available at no cost on the Springer website. The Association for Educational Communications & Technology (AECT) provides members with a free subscription via the website: https://www.aect.org/.

Research Section

The Research Section assigns highest priority in reviewing manuscripts to rigorous original quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods studies on topics relating to applications of technology or instructional design in educational settings. Such contexts include K–12, higher education, and adult learning (e.g., in corporate training settings). Analytical papers that evaluate important research issues related to educational technology research and reviews of the literature on similar topics are also published. This section features well-documented articles on the practical aspects of research as well as applied theory in educational practice and provides a comprehensive source of current research information in instructional technology. Table 1 provides an at-a-glance review of the Research Section focus.

Table 1
Research Section At-a-Glance

Focus Area	Description
Priority	Assigns highest priority ratings to rigorous original manuscripts
Methods	Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods studies
Topics	Applications of technology or instructional design in educational or performance settings
Contexts	K-12, higher education, and adult learning (workplace training)
Types of Papers	Analytical papers focused on evaluating important research issues related to educational technology research, including Literature Reviews, Replication Studies, Feature Pieces (well documented articles on practical aspects of research & applied theory in practice)

Development Section

The Development Section publishes research on planning, implementation, evaluation, and management of a variety of instructional technologies and learning environments. Empirically based formative evaluations and theoretically based instructional design research papers are welcome, as are papers that report outcomes of innovative approaches in applying technology to instructional development. Papers for the Development section may involve a variety of research methods and should focus on one aspect of the instructional development process or more; when relevant and possible, papers should discuss the implications of instructional design decisions and provide evidence linking outcomes to those decisions. Table 2 provides an at-a-glance review of the Development Section focus.

Table 2
Development Section At-a-Glance

Focus Area	Description
Priority	Focus on one or more aspects of the instructional development process
Methods	Planning, implementation, evaluation, and management of a variety of instructional technologies and learning environments
Types of Papers	Empirically-based formative evaluations. Theoretically-based instructional design research papers, and outcomes reports on innovative approaches in applying technology to instructional development
Relevancy	Implications of instructional design decisions and evidence linking outcomes to those decisions

Cultural and Regional Perspectives Section

The Cultural and Regional Perspectives Section (formerly International Review) welcomes innovative research about how technologies are being used to enhance learning, instruction, and performance specific to a culture or region. Educational technology studies submitted to this section should be situated in cultural contexts that critically examine issues and ideologies prevalent in the culture or region or by individuals or groups in the culture or region. Theoretical perspectives can be broadly based and inclusive of research, such as critical race theory, cultural-historical activity theory, and cultural models. Papers published in this section include quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods and reviews drawing on relevant theories, empirical evidence, and critical analyses of the findings, implications, and conclusions within a cultural context. Table 3 provides an at-a-glance review of the Cultural & Regional Perspectives Section focus.

Table 3
Cultural & Regional Perspectives Section At-a-Glance

Focus Area	Description
Priority	Manuscripts focused on the use of technologies to enhance learning, instruction, and performance specific to a culture or region
Topics	Cultural contexts that critically examine issues and ideologies prevalent in a culture or region or by individuals or groups in the culture or region Theoretical perspectives broadly based and inclusive of research such as critical race theory, cultural-historical activity theory and cultural models
Types of Papers	Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods; reviews drawing on relevant theories, empirical evidence, critical analyses of the findings, implications and conclusions within a cultural context

Featured Papers Section

The Featured Paper Section highlights work by researchers and scholars, who contribute papers to ETR&D that provide lessons learned and insights across multiple studies that move the discipline forward. This Section also highlights Early Career Award papers as well as other AECT award papers and papers invited by highly distinguished authors. Featured papers are those which are likely to be of keen interest to all ETR&D readers.

Special Issues

The journal invites proposals for Special Issues regularly. Proposals are reviewed to determine alignment and impact on the proposed special issue. A Special Issue typically has 8 to 12 papers (between 5000 and 7000 words each -- including references). The Guest Editor(s) contribute an introductory piece to the Special-Issue.

Special Issue papers span the full range of research, development, and cultural/regional issues addressed in the journal. It is desirable to have papers that represent multiple perspectives from a variety of research groups. Each paper should not have been submitted elsewhere or previously published, and must represent an original contribution.

Recent and past special issues have included:

- Shifting to Digital - Informing the Rapid Development, Deployment, and Future of Teaching and Learning
- Embodied Cognition and Technology for Learning
- Learners and Learning Contexts: International Perspectives on New Alignments for the Digital Age
- Systematic Reviews of Research on Emerging Learning Environments and Technologies
- Cognition and Exploratory Learning in the Digital Age
- Theory in Learning Design and Technology Research and Practice

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The process for getting published in ETR&D is somewhat similar to other journals. To help prospective authors better understand the details, the following section covers some of the key factors to guide and keep in mind the process as one progresses along the various stages of manuscript submission, reviewers' feedback, editing and resubmission.

Overview of Manuscript Submission and Review Process

All manuscripts are submitted using the online editorial management system, Editorial Manager at https://www.editorialmanager.com/etrd/Default.aspx. Submitted manuscripts need to follow the latest version of APA guidelines. Authors select a section that is most appropriate for their manuscript, then upload the manuscripts with any author identifying information removed. After the assigned editor reviews the paper checking for general quality, three reviewers are selected if the paper appears a good fit and of reasonable or promising quality. It usually takes 60-90 days to receive feedback from the reviewers. If the paper is specifically focused on a narrow topic or specific unique methodology is used, it may take longer to get feedback due to the challenges in finding reviewers who are willing to take on the article review task.

For ETR&D, a typical initial outcome is Major Revisions/Resubmission. In this case reviewers may provide detailed recommendations for improvements. Another typical outcome could be Rejection. Often ETR&D reviewers provide detailed recommendations for improvements, but the journal editors have deemed that based on the peer reviews, the manuscript is not a good fit (for a variety of reasons) for the journal.

As manuscripts improve the other two typical outcomes are Minor revisions required indicating that the manuscript is on a path to publication and the sought-after outcome of Acceptance. For all outcomes other than Acceptance and Rejection, authors are encouraged to revise the manuscript and then resubmit it to the journal. Editors consider the edits that were made and when possible, they send the revised manuscript back to the same reviewers to re-review. This is not always possible in which case a new reviewer is invited to review the revised manuscript. Additional information about submission guidelines and style requirements can be found on the journal website: https://www.springer.com/journal/11423/submission-guidelines.

How ETR&D Editors Work

Each editor oversees the publication process for their section. The journal's culture is set up to rely on the reviewers to determine if the current submitted manuscript could plausibly reach a level of quality for publication and also to determine if that level of quality has been achieved in order to be considered ready for publication. The editors do monitor the quality and reliability of the reviews and take this into account when they render a decision on a submitted manuscript. When assigning reviewers to a manuscript, the editors seek to achieve a balanced review panel – e.g., one for the methodology, one for the content focus, and so forth.

The editors rarely overturn a review panel's recommendation. The editors respect the views of the reviewers; while at times when we are not fully agreeing with them, we take their reviews seriously. This principle has its challenges. For instance, it may lengthen the time to get published in ETR&D as it is difficult to get three reviewers to sign off on a manuscript. On the other hand, the level of reviewers' direct involvement in the decision to accept a manuscript truly makes ETR&D a double-blind peer reviewed journal. Editors find that we have to help authors interpret and prioritize reviewer recommendations especially in cases where a review agreement is lacking. In such cases, we adjudicate differences between reviewers.

How ETR&D Reviewers Work

ETR&D reviewers are typically experienced in the field and therefore somewhat busy. When invited to review a manuscript, they can be selective on what papers they choose to review. To make this decision, they typically read the abstract first to answer the question, "Do I want to spend time reviewing this paper?" Not often, but we have had a few papers where all invitees decline our invitation to review a specific manuscript.

If the reviewer is interested, then they likely read the introduction, conclusion and review the references. During this initial screening, they ask questions such as: 1) What is the focus and general quality of this paper? 2) Am I qualified to review it? 3) Is it a well-written piece?

If reviewers believe that the paper is of a good quality and interesting and they are qualified to review it, then reviewers start the formal review process. This process includes a first reading during which they take notes. They most likely formulate a preliminary decision about the manuscript. Then they could completely read the full paper and determine if the author achieves their intended purpose. At this point, reviewers could "make a decision" and provide feedback to the editor indicating if this paper could reach publication standards. They also write up their review to the author(s) to help them improve their paper.

What Do ETR&D Editors & Reviewers Expect?

It is helpful to know what is expected from authors from those reviewing their work. If you use these expectations to influence your writing, you will more easily meet the reviewers' expectations and increase your chance for getting good feedback and ultimately influencing them to accept your manuscript for publication. We have provided more details on challenges in the following section on Best Practices.

Given their role, editors are looking to meet some general expectations that help with the review process but also some specific expectations to ensure value to the journal's readership. Specific expectations include familiarity with the journal and journal guidelines as well as a paper likely to generate interest among readers and lead to follow-on submissions on related topics. General expectations include creating a coherent and focused paper, adherence to research standards and standards of the profession, and a genuine contribution to the knowledge base. Reviewers have a similar range of expectations like that of the editor's and fall into two areas - general and specific.

General Reviewer Criteria

- What contributions is the paper to the field?
- How relevant is this paper?
- How significant is this paper?
- How original is this paper?
- How is the quality of this paper?
- How is the clarity of this paper?
- How is the appropriateness of the title, abstract, and conclusion?

Specific Reviewer Criteria

1. Originality
    - Are the problems and approaches new?
    - Is this a novel combination of existing techniques?
    - Does the paper point out differences from related research?
    - Does it address a new problem or one that has not been studied in depth?
    - Does it introduce an idea that appears promising or might stimulate others to develop promising alternatives?

2. Technical Quality
    - Is this paper technically sound?
    - Does it carefully evaluate the strength and limitations of its contributions?
    - Are its claims backed up?
    - Does the paper offer a new form of evidence in support of or against a well-known technique?
    - Does it offer a theoretical analysis of prior experimental results?
    - Related work?
3. Presentation Quality
    - Is the paper well written?
    - Does it motivate the research?
    - Are the results described and evaluated?
    - Is the paper organized in a logical fashion?
    - Is the paper written in a manner that makes it accessible to most educators and/or educational technologists?
    - Is the paper written in clear English?
    - Is the readability good?
    - Are there any presentation problems?

These criteria can be very detailed and not easy for some authors to self-critique. We find that authors with little academic publishing experience find the process much easier if they team up with a mentor to help not only with their research but also the academic publishing process.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE FOR AUTHORS

One of the challenges authors have is determining the likelihood that their manuscripts will be published in a given journal. Two key phases of academic publishing are manuscript preparation and then manuscript revisions. This section provides guidelines to help authors prepare for the best chance of being reviewed and accepted for publication.

In general, new authors may believe that having good research and sound studies are the key to getting published, but additional considerations will help authors deal with the challenges of having their work vetted and refined prior to publication. Best practices help to give perspective to the academic publishing process. Areas of advice include: find the best outlets for your research, verify alignment of research with journals, manage the review process, deal effectively with reviewer feedback, manage manuscript revisions, and persist.

Best Practices for Success in Academic Manuscript Preparation

The following best practices are provided to assist authors in preparing their manuscripts for success.

Select a Journal that Aligns with Your Manuscript

Different journals have different purposes and audiences. One of the first steps when preparing a manuscript is to find a journal that is a good fit for your work. Finding the most appropriate journal for your manuscript can be challenging. Focus on the alignment of your manuscript with the goals and purposes of various journals. In addition, consider journal quality, acceptance rates, reputation, review process as well as possible opportunities for follow-on or response articles.

One resource that has been around for years is the work of Drs. Perkins and Lowenthal with their list of Ed Tech Journals https://sites.google.com/site/edtechpubs/home. They have done a good job at creating and maintaining a decent list of publishing opportunities in our field. Google Scholar also updates a list of top-rated journals in educational technology https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=top_venues&hl=en&vq=soc_educationaltechnology .

As you are working to familiarize yourself with various journals, we welcome emails to help guild authors to know if their work would be aligned with ETR&D. A brief email to one of the editors with an abstract is welcome. You may certainly ask if the topic and scope are relevant to the journal.

Pay Specific Attention to the Journal's Guidelines for Authors

Journal editors are interested in attracting quality manuscripts. To help authors, journals provide detailed guidelines for authors to follow. Be familiar with and follow the journal guidelines. If you have questions, please ask a member from the editor's team.

In addition to considering the appropriateness of your manuscript for the journal, some basic guidelines include: write clearly, coherently, and concisely without exaggeration and without self-praise/evaluation; tell a compelling story and include pertinent research and development details; make the abstract, introduction and reference section free of errors; carefully proofread your manuscript prior to submission; and respond to all reviewer recommendations when resubmitting a manuscript (more on this later).

Ensure Manuscript Value is Explicit to the Editors and Reviewers (and Readers)

Various factors motivate us to do research and when it comes to academic publications, the value of your work needs to be visible to the reader. There are specific factors within a paper that can add or show the explicit value of your manuscript. As you are writing your paper, consider making the following factors clear to the reader so they may see why your work might be important to them or the field at large.

- Contribution to the field
- Research logic—alignment between questions, methods, and results
- Research purpose and rationale
- Research questions
- Presentation of relevant literature
- Description of the problem
- Suitability of methods
- Presentation of results
- Appropriateness of conclusions
- Implications of the study

Above are the common factors that academic editors use to determine if a submitted manuscript is generally viable to be sent out for review. The more you provide clarity on these factors, the easier it is for editors and reviewers to see the value of your work thereby making it easier to "make a decision" as to the suitability of your manuscript for publication.

Build the Overall Logic of Your Manuscript

In order to write and publish to affect the reader, have a clear purpose for why you are writing. Are you writing to share new knowledge or convince readers that a specific technique has value? Understand what you are trying to accomplish with your publication.

Considering the value factors above, combine them to create the manuscript logic. This is the backbone of the manuscript and if well formed, the manuscript will be logical and easy to understand. If not well formed, the manuscript may be confusing. A general overall logic could include the following questions:

- What is the problem you are trying to solve or understand?
- What is the rationale for the research?
- What are the research questions?
- How are these questions relevant?

With this logic, you could easily craft a manuscript that answers these questions and provides supporting information and study details. Building the logic is easier to create on the front end rather than the back end of writing.

Common Manuscript Problems

Understanding common problems can help you avoid them and work to better prepare your manuscript for the review process. Having a strong manuscript logic can help avoid many of these common problems.

Problem 1: Lack of focus. This is where it takes the author over five pages to state the research question, and even then, it is not clear as to why the research question is relevant. What are the problems or opportunities the author wishes to investigate and why? Of what value will the inquiry be to readers? What is the story behind the research question?

This type of focus needs to be established in the first paragraph, followed by content in support of the stated focus and goal.

Problem 2: Dated and incomplete Literature Review. A significant issue with manuscripts is that the citations are quite dated. Also, given the topic, the author can miss significant research that has occurred over the last five years. In addition, the literature review may be incomplete. For example, there might have been a lot written about the focus of the research/study in the last five years.

Problem 3: Vague Methods, Design, Instruments, or Analysis. Readers want to know why certain decisions were made. The details need to be provided. Do not assume readers will understand the reasoning behind your decisions.

In addition, readers want to have a very clear understanding of the context of the study. They want to know what specifically happened with students in the control group and what specifically happened with students in the experimental group. A thick, in-depth description of the instructional activities of both groups is warranted. Readers want and need to see the instruments or at least excerpts from the instruments.

For research studies, there is often a treatment or a design element that is being studied. The details need to be clear and concise so that the reader can determine relevance of the focus of your study.

Problem 4: Weak Discussion and Findings. There are many possible reasons for results. It is important for the author to clearly state reasons explaining any effects found in their research. Also, it is important to discuss their opinion while ensuring they state them as opinion and not as fact.

Problem 5: Lack of Recommendations and Implications. The author should include specific recommendations for how to apply the new knowledge or what plausible implications are given the results of their work. The recommendations should give readers ideas for how they can use the new knowledge in practical ways.

It is important to remember that your manuscript should have an overall purpose. Helping the reader see the implications of your work can quickly add value to the ideas and show areas of relevance for application and practice.

Managing the Review Process in Academic Writing

After an author prepares and submits their manuscript, the paper begins the formal review process. The process for vetting a manuscript is to first, have a general review by the editorial team. Once deemed aligned with the journal and not containing any obvious issues, the manuscript is then sent out for review to a journal reviewer. The manuscript reviewer makes a recommendation for a decision and also provides details about the strengths and weaknesses. At that time, the editor "makes a decision" based on the outcome of the combined reviews and the recommended decisions from the reviewers. The general review by the editorial team and by the journal reviewers is described below.

Review by Editorial Team

When a manuscript is received, the editorial team carries out an internal review to determine if the manuscript is appropriate for the journal and to determine that manuscript quality appears to be sufficient to not waste reviewers' time.

There may be a need to communicate with the editor about general or specific questions. This can be done easily outside the manuscript review system. However, when emailing about a resubmission, do not express anything especially negative about the reviewers or the process – this will only serve to further reduce the chances for publication and may have additional undesirable, counter-productive consequences.

To help with this initial review, the following list (see Table 4) outlines the various key issues that we typically look for in an internal preliminary review.

Table 4

Internal Preliminary Review — Key Issues

Key Issues	Examples
Alignment	• Manuscript does not align with major sections of the journal. • Manuscript is not aligned with ETR&D or it is a better fit for another journal. • The manuscript does not address learning, performance or educational issues directly.
Impact	• Topic is not novel. • It is not clear how the study adds to what is already known. • Relevance for the field is not clear.
Implications for Research	• Implications of research are not clear. • Conclusions are not well established.
Research Purpose	• Rationale for research purpose is not clear.
Research Logic	• Research questions/hypotheses are absent. • Research questions are not clear. • Research questions were proposed but a clear answer to these questions is not obvious.
Grammar	• The manuscript suffers from grammatical deficiencies: problems with wording, awkward construction, improper grammar and so forth. • The manuscript was not proof-read for accuracies in the English language.
Data Strength	• Study used data that was not well suited for empirical research (Note: self-report data can be suspect). Consider how learning is measured. • Data was not substantiated by a written analysis as in qualitative research.
Self-Identification	• Self-identifying citations are not blinded.
Manuscript Length	• The manuscript exceeds maximum length (8,000) without rationale.
APA Style	• There were issues with citation and styles.

Depending on the type of issues, editors may request that the authors fix and resubmit before the manuscript is sent out for external review.

Review by Journal Reviewers

As described above, one of the key stages is peer review of manuscripts. The output of this process is a formal analysis of authors manuscripts. Like previously mentioned, assuming that the manuscript is not rejected, the author(s) will have the chance to resubmit their manuscript for further review. Not only is making edits to improve one's paper a most challenging step in academic publishing but managing the reviews is also key for efficiency and will give the author(s) a greater chance to find favor from their manuscript's reviewers.

To streamline and make it easier to re-review your resubmitted manuscript, we ask that authors create a "response to the reviewer" letter. Techniques for responding to reviewers include reviewing all of the comments and feedback, looking for commonalities and differences; developing a plan to improve the manuscript; as you work on responding to feedback and improving the manuscript, build a separate response to each comment/suggestion for each reviewer in a table – arrange the table by reviewer; and submit the response to reviewers as recommended by the journal. We have found that if you take each review and address each part of the review line by line, reviewers find this approach easier to process and it also helps them see the edits you made more quickly.

Some authors find that they do not agree with the reviewers. In this instance, it is important to determine if the feedback is a philosophical difference or a perspective. You do not have to make every change that is recommended or suggested but we find that authors who address each part of the review and are responsive to the reviewer's comments tend to have more favorable outcomes. If you do not agree, then state your rationale. Sometimes when a reviewer thinks something is not clear, this is good evidence that others in the field may have the same perception. This is where you may choose to take the advice of the reviewer and work to clarify your points.

Mike Spector has used the following Tips on Responding to Reviewers (strongly based on Annesley, 2011) to help authors deal with the challenge of receiving feedback from blind reviewers: 1) Get mad. 2) Get over it. 3) Consider what editor says. 4) Gather your thoughts. 5) If the reviewer is wrong, this does not mean you are right. 6) Be grateful for the reviewers' and editor's time. 7) To clarify your understanding, restate what reviewers say. 8) Cut text if needed. 9) Do not submit the same paper to another journal without changes based on feedback from any prior journal. We think this is useful to manage this extremely challenging state in academic publishing.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

Exemplary Articles

The following four readings are samples of key papers that have been key to the journal. In these examples you will see the clarity of writing and also, they each have strong impact on our field. Please consider these as exemplary papers from ETR&D.

1. Gagné, R. M., & Merrill, M. D. (1990). Integrative goals for instructional design. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 38*(1), 23–30. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02298245
2. Jonassen, D. (2000). Transforming learning with technology: Beyond modernism and post-modernism or whoever controls the technology creates the reality. *Educational Technology, 40*(2), 21–25.
3. Lohr, L., & Falvo, D. A. (2005). Online learning: Personal reflections on the transformation of education. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 53*(2), 113–116. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02504869
4. Merrill, M. D. (2002). First principles of instruction. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *50*, 43–59. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02505024

Exemplary Special Issue

Although not a typical special issue at ETR&D, the journal editors took the responsibility and opportunity to provide research-based and evidence-based resources for educational professionals to integrate digital technologies into their teaching practices in 2020. In order to make a broader impact on the practice of rapid development, deployment, and future of teaching and learning, Lin and Johnson (2021) called for a special issue with more than eight special issue guest editors managing more than 80 response articles from the field on the application of research-based and evidence-based manuscripts.

1. Lin, L., & Johnson, T. (2021). Shifting to digital: informing the rapid development, deployment, and future of teaching and learning. *Educational Technology Research and Development*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-021-09960-z

The core guest editors of the special issue included Drs. Dickson-Deane, Ilgaz, Ioannou, Istenič, Kimmons, Morel, Natividad, Wijekumar, and Young (in the alphabetical order of guest editors' last names). The idea for the special issue was to present response-style papers that would provide multiple points of view on selected ETR&D recently published research studies drawing insights from the publications, to also provide recommendations for teaching and learning practice specifically related to the rapid development, deployment, and future of teaching and learning in a digital space. The original manuscripts are listed below:

1. Bennett, S., Agostinho, S., & Lockyer, L. (2017). The process of designing for learning: Understanding university teachers' design work. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 65,* 125–145. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9469-y.
2. Borup, J., West, R. E., & Thomas, R. (2015). The impact of text versus video communication on instructor feedback in blended courses. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 63,* 161–184. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-015-9367-8

3. Giannakas, F., Kambourakis, G., Papasalouros, A., & Gritzalis, S. (2018). A critical review of 13 years of mobile game-based learning. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 66,* 341–384. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-017-9552-z
4. Hilton, J. (2016). Open educational resources and college textbook choices: A review of research on efficacy and perceptions. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 573–590. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9434-9
5. Ifenthaler, D., & Schumacher, C. (2016). Student perceptions of privacy principles for learning analytics. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 923–938. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9477-y
6. Jarrell, A., Harley, J. M., Lajoie, S., & Naismith, L. (2017). Success, failure and emotions: Examining the relationship between performance feedback and emotions in diagnostic reasoning. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 65,* 1263–1284. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-017-9521-6
7. Joo, Y. J., Kim, N., & Kim, N. H. (2016). Factors predicting online university students' use of a mobile learning management system (m-LMS). *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 611–630. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9436
8. Ke, F. (2016). Designing and integrating purposeful learning in game play: A systematic review. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 219–244. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-015-9418-1
9. Kuo, Y., & Belland, B. R. (2016). An exploratory study of adult learners' perceptions of online learning: Minority students in continuing education. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 661–680. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9442-9
10. Lee, E., & Hannafin, M. J. (2016). A design framework for enhancing engagement in student-centered learning: Own it, learn it, and share it. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 707–734. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-015-9422-5
11. Liu, J., Shindo, H., & Matsumoto, Y. (2019). Development of a computer-assisted Japanese functional expression learning system for Chinese-speaking learners. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 67,* 1307–1331. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-019-09669-0
12. Loizzo, J., & Ertmer, P. A. (2016). MOOCocracy: The learning culture of massive open online courses. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 1013–1032. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9444-7
13. Nacu, D., Martin, C. K., & Pinkard, N. (2018). Designing for 21st century learning online: A heuristic method to enable educator learning support roles. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 66,* 1029–1049. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-018-9603-0
14. Philipsen, B., Tondeur, J., Roblin, N. P., Philipsen, B., Tondeur, J., Roblin, N. P., Vanslambrouck, S., & Zhu, C. (2019). Improving teacher professional development for online and blended learning: A systematic meta-aggregative review. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 67,* 1145–1174. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-019-09645-8
15. Tracey, M. W., & Hutchinson, A. (2019). Empathic design: Imagining the cognitive and emotional learner experience. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 67,* 1259–1272. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-019-09683-2
16. Willis, J. E., Slade, S., & Prinsloo, P. (2016). Ethical oversight of student data in learning analytics: A typology derived from a cross-continental, cross-institutional perspective. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 64,* 881–901. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9463-4
17. Zacharia, Z. C., Manoli, C., Xenofontos, N., De Jong, T., Pedaste, M., van Riesen, S. A., ... & Tsourlidaki, E. (2015). Identifying potential types of guidance for supporting student inquiry when using virtual and remote labs in science: A literature review. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 63,* 257–302. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-015-9370-0

In addition, Spector, Johnson, and Young (2015) published an editorial encouraging replication studies as a means to make a bigger impact on the practice in our field stating that ETR&D call on papers "reporting replication studies and studies reporting large-scale, sustainable, systemic impact on educational practice. Such papers can be submitted to any ETR&D section following journal guidelines, and every effort will be made to bring these papers up to the publication standards of ETR&D" (p. 1).

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Publishing as a Collaborative Endeavour: Insights from the Editors of *The Internet and Higher Education*

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INTRODUCTION

The Internet and Higher Education (IHE) is a journal that, as its name suggests, focuses on research at the intersection of internet use and higher education teaching and learning. The journal is published by Elsevier, and there are four issues published each year. The 2019 impact factor is 6.566, which yielded a journal impact factor ranking of 3 out of 263 journals in the Education and Educational Research category (Clarivate Analytics, 2020).

The journal was founded in 1998, a time when online learning was a relatively new concept and internet use in higher education settings was just becoming mainstream. The founding editors stated in their initial editorial that they planned to focus on how the information technology and the Internet was changing higher education (Harris et al., 1998). Volume 2 brought a new slate of editors, one of whom was Laurie Dringus. She remained at the helm of the journal through 2014, carrying it through its adolescence and developing the research focus that remains today. Following her, two associate editors became editors-in-chief, Vanessa Dennen and Cher Ping Lim.

Throughout the early volumes, one can find articles that discuss pedagogical practices, approaches to course design and facilitation, different uses of technologies, and administrative, technology support, and policy issues, along with product and book reviews. These articles, many of which were theoretical or reported personal experience "from the trenches", depict a field that was developing rapidly and needed a journal to share perspectives and practices in a timely manner. Although some of the early articles represent technology and thought that have been superseded by new developments, others remain timeless. These articles lay the foundation upon which future research and practice was built or share practitioner wisdom that remains valuable to online learning newcomers.

At the center of the journal's scope today is research on Internet-enabled higher education teaching and learning. Most articles published in the journal are empirical studies of some aspect of internet use to support pedagogical endeavors in higher education contexts. The journal has moved away from publishing articles that share personal design, teaching, and learning cases or that review products. This shift reflects the maturation of the field. Topics frequently covered in the journal include research on instructional strategies for online and blended learning, online learning communities, emerging online learning technologies, learner interactions, and learning analytics. Theoretical manuscripts are welcomed if they have a solid foundation in existing research and provide transformative insights into online pedagogy. At this time, we find that such manuscripts are quite rare, again reflecting the maturation of the field.

IHE has an international editorial board and seeks manuscripts from around the world. Manuscripts should have a word count between 4500-8000 words, not inclusive of references and tables. Special issues may be proposed to the editors. Special issues must represent topics and themes not yet frequently addressed in the general submissions published by the journal, must have an open call for contributions, and follow the same peer review process as regular issues.

Reviewers are identified through a variety of approaches, including authors who have previously published in the journal, who are listed in the SCOPUS database, and who are members of the higher education, instructional design, and educational technology communities. We seek reviewers with relevant content and methodological expertise and experience for each manuscript. Editorial board members are invited by the editors and are usually selected from among the journal's active authors and reviewers. IHE strives to maintain a diverse editorial board.

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their research in several ways, including personal web sites and institutional repositories. Details are provided on the Elsevier web site (https://www.elsevier.com/about/policies/sharing). Authors are prompted to make the decision after a manuscript has been accepted for publication.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The manuscript submission pathway at The Internet and Higher Education is similar to the one used by many journals. When an author uploads a manuscript into our system, it undergoes some initial checks before it is placed in a queue awaiting assignment to an editor. Because we have two editors-in-chief, we alternate paper handling, although we consult each other on a regular basis to ensure that our decisions are in sync or to get a second opinion. The advantage of two editors with different academic networks is that we are able to easily hand off manuscripts where we might have a conflict of interest.

Initial Review

Each manuscript that reaches the editor's dashboard undergoes an initial review that consists of a series of checks. The order of these checks may vary, but across all of the checks the following questions are being addressed:

1. Does this manuscript fit within the journal's scope?
2. Does the manuscript represent original research?
3. Does the study appear to make a new contribution to knowledge within the area of our scope?
4. Does the study appear to meet our quality standards?

The initial review helps the editor decide whether to send the manuscript out to reviewers or to reject it without review, which is called a reject without review, or in commonly used term, a desk reject. A reject without review can be frustrating for authors who are hoping to get a manuscript published and, if not, at least receive feedback that will help strengthen that manuscript. However, it is necessary to reject some of these manuscripts prior to review because reviewer labor is a precious commodity, and reviewers get annoyed when asked to provide reviews for manuscripts that are far from meeting a journal's expectations. It does not make sense to use up that labor when it is clear that the manuscript is lacking in fit, originality, contribution, and/or quality. If we can answer yes to the above questions, we send a manuscript out for peer review. If the answer to one or more of the questions is a "no," then the decision is reject without review. If we are uncertain of the decision, we ask the co-editor or an editorial board member to provide a second opinion.

Various data points are used in pre-review checks. The title and abstract may indicate if a manuscript is out of scope or represents non-empirical work. IHE also asks authors to provide highlights, which are a few bullet points summarizing the main findings of a manuscript. These are often poorly written, as if they are an afterthought, but they also can help determine if the manuscript is within scope and offers a substantive contribution to the field.

All manuscripts submitted to the journal are automatically run through a software program that conducts an originality check. This check is of critical importance. After all, a manuscript that is plagiarized, whether copying the text of other authors or representing an act of self-plagiarism, will not be publishable. The editor's dashboard shows two scores, one that indicates similarity to other published manuscripts and another that indicates similarity to other submitted manuscripts. There is no magical cut score when it comes to similarity, and an editor needs to manually examine the reports. A manuscript with a low similarity score to other published manuscripts may contain an egregious instance of plagiarism, whereas one with a higher score may be just fine. The score could represent use of a well-established and properly cited instrument, a commonly cited lists of terms (e.g., the three components of a community of practice per Wenger, 1998) or even a frequently used string of words (e.g. computer supported collaborative learning). If a manuscript has a low similarly score when compared to other published manuscripts but a high similarity score with a previous submission to the journal, that usually indicates that an author whose manuscript was previously rejected has tried to submit it again. We consider this a classic "if mom says no, ask dad" approach and investigate further. If we see that we have previously rejected a manuscript and no significant revision has been made, we will not send the uninvited resubmission out for review.

If a manuscript appears within scope and represents original research based on these first criteria, it is time to delve deeper. Some of the things to consider are the research questions and alignment of research questions with study design. With those in mind, the method section can be scanned to assess the appropriateness of the sample size, participation rates, data collection methods and data sources. A quick scan of the reference list helps determine if topically relevant and recent literature has been cited. A manuscript that cites scant literature is likely to be of low quality. One that primarily cites literature from other fields, is likely to not be a good fit.

The result of these checks is a decision: reject without review or send for review. If the manuscript is rejected at this point, we provide a brief reason or refer the author to a different journal that may be a better fit. If the manuscript will go into peer review, potential reviewers are identified and either invited to review or queued up as alternate reviewers. The peer review process at IHE is double anonymized, which means that reviewers and authors are not privy to each other's information. For this reason, it is important for authors to remove their names and all identifying details from the manuscript. This includes in-text citations, references, and other identifiers such as institution names that might otherwise appear in a published article.

Reviews and Dispositions

In an ideal situation, reviewers swiftly agree to review and submit reviews on time. At IHE, reviewers are given two weeks to respond to the request for review before alternates are contacted. Upon accepting the invitation, they are asked to complete reviews within 21 days, but extensions can be granted upon request. Ideally, the reviewers are established scholars working in the same or similar area who use similar research methods. The further a manuscript edges away from the journal's central scope or commonly used methods in the field, the more difficult it can be to secure reviewers.

When the reviews have been returned to the journal, the editor looks at the reviewers' recommendations and feedback. Reviewers provide feedback to authors and to the editor. Feedback to the editor is private and may provide a direct or blunt assessment that the reviewer did not want to communicate directly to an author, indicate a concern for the editor to follow up on, or suggest the reviewer's confidence in their assessment.

The editor needs to consider the reviewer feedback alongside the manuscript and decide whether the manuscript should be accepted, revised for further consideration, or rejected. When the reviewers are in agreement, rendering a decision is usually a simple process. When they are in disagreement, it is more challenging. At times the editor may seek an additional review, especially if parts of the method have been called into question or if one reviewer provided virtually no qualitative feedback.

An editor's independent judgment is important in this process, and the editor has an opportunity to add their own feedback or to provide the author with direction about how to approach the reviews. For example, contradictory feedback from two reviewers can be challenging to incorporate and an editor can recommend which advice to follow. When a recommendation represents self-citation by reviewers – that is, reviewers request that an author cite their work or perhaps even the work of a colleague or friend (Thombs et al., 2015) – the editor can tell the author that it is not necessary unless the work is truly germane to the manuscript.

Authors who are invited to revise and resubmit a manuscript are given a resubmission deadline automatically assigned by the review system, but just like review deadlines this one can be adjusted upon request. Resubmitted manuscripts are reviewed to ensure the author responded to the feedback and then sent out for peer review. Manuscripts typically go to the same reviewers, although exceptions may be made, and new reviewers invited if a prior reviewer declines the invitation or is deemed unlikely to provide useful review. If the revisions were minor, the editor may review the revision and determine independently if the revision was sufficient.

Accepted Manuscripts

Upon acceptance, a manuscript leaves the editor's dashboard queue and moves into production. At this phase, copyediting and typesetting will occur, and the author will be given proofs to approve. The author will be asked to transfer copyright or complete the forms and payment for open access. Finally, the manuscript will be published online, awaiting assignment to a volume and issue.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE TO AUTHORS

The opportunity to share an editor's perspective with authors is a gift. We have some concrete and pragmatic advice, much of which will overlap with the advice of other editors in this volume. We also have some philosophical advice about how to conceptualize the publication process. While the pragmatic comments will help an author be successful with journal submissions in a mechanical sense, the perspectives on the publication process will help authors better understand the overall system of journal labor and peer review. Combined, these pieces of advice guide authors to produce manuscripts that are well-received by editors, peer reviewers and, upon publication, fellow researchers.

Pragmatic Advice

Our pragmatic advice relates to three points in the submission process: journal selection, manuscript preparation and formatting, and effective revision.

Journal Selection

The external pressures to publish may lead authors to submit to the top-ranked journal in a field, but that journal may not be a good fit for the author's work. Alternately, the study in question may be suitable for publication in a journal if the manuscript frames it appropriately. Submitting a manuscript to a journal that is not a good match is a waste of both the author and editor's time.

Journals publish information about their scope online, although a journal's scope may evolve over time. It is a good idea to review the official scope, but that is not enough. To truly determine whether a journal is a good fit for a manuscript, an author should read the journal. Skimming through multiple issues from the last three to five years is a good practice. Look at the types of articles that are regularly published, considering topic, research questions, method, and writing style and organization. As a good rule of thumb, if you find yourself thinking that you want to read the articles from these recent volumes and find some that you are likely to cite in your manuscript, that is a good sign that the journal is an appropriate venue for publication.

When we desk reject manuscripts that are a poor topical fit for publication in IHE, we can sometimes identify a few journals that would be a better publication venue by looking at the manuscript's reference list. Authors are expected to cite other work that is part of the same larger research conversation, and reference lists provide insights about where that research conversation is occurring. When we sense that a manuscript is a poor fit for IHE based on the title and abstract, a cursory scan of the reference list typically confirms as much. This observation is not meant to suggest that by citing articles already published in a specific journal that one increases his/her chances of being published in that journal. Anyone who abides by that suggestion is participating in an abhorrent practice that is called coercive induced self-citations (Ioannidis, 2015).

For IHE, sometimes it is quite simple to determine if a manuscript is within scope. As the title of the journal suggests, the focus lies at the intersection of the internet and higher education, and more specifically examines Internet-enabled higher education teaching and learning innovations. Mindbogglingly, we receive a handful of manuscripts that focus on neither topic. Getting closer but still not a fit are manuscripts that examine higher education generally, internet use at other levels of education, or internet use more generally. Manuscripts about internet addiction or internet marketing, for example, are not within scope even if the study population was college students. Most often this population was used out of convenience and the study does not purport to look at the issue in the context of higher education.

Other times the determination of fit falls into a greyer zone. For example, imagine a study that examines whether students learn about history better when the content is presented in outline form versus prose. In the study, university students are exposed to course material via a learning management system (LMS). The LMS requires the Internet to function. Technically, the study incorporates both higher education and the Internet, but the Internet is merely a means to an end and not an integral part of what is being studied. The research questions might just as well be addressed via a paper and pencil intervention. If the Internet is merely a delivery mechanism that is not robustly examined or meaningfully used within the study, then the manuscript would be a better fit in a journal with a broader educational technology scope.

Just because a manuscript's topic fits within the scope of the journal does not mean that it is a good fit. It is also necessary to consider who reads the journal and whether the manuscript makes a sufficient contribution to knowledge.

When submitting to IHE, one should anticipate a reader audience that is familiar with online learning and the diffusion of internet-based technologies in higher education settings. We desk reject manuscripts that appear on the surface to be of reasonable quality (e.g., contain research questions, follow the expected structure, are well written) if they offer little new insight into the field. For example, in the early days of the journal, many people shared cases about teaching online. These cases were novel; relatively few higher education faculty taught online. However, now online teaching and learning are fairly common activities. There have been more than two decades of studies reporting on student perceptions of online learning, student and faculty behavioral intentions toward online learning and various aspects of technology adoption, and comparison of outcomes between online and face-to-face classes. These topics are no longer new to the field of online learning, although they are understandably new to some individuals. When faculty have their first online teaching experience, they may be tempted to engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning and find a way to research their experience. While we applaud people who use data to critically examine the outcomes of their courses, and they may write up a compelling case of a class with a large sample size, unless the study addresses an established gap in the literature, it is unlikely to be published in IHE. We often suggest that these authors turn to journals focused on education within their discipline, where online teaching may be a newer practice and their manuscript may be a valuable contribution to knowledge.

Manuscript Preparation and Formatting

Manuscript preparation and formatting is boring and sometimes laborious work, but it serves a purpose. A clearly formatted manuscript that is free of errors makes it easy for readers to focus on the content. APA style is a good choice given the journal's discipline, and it is the style guide for citations that is requested in the journal's author guide (https://www.elsevier.com/journals/the-internet-and-higher-education/1096-7516/guide-for-authors). Although a manuscript that does not adhere to APA 7th edition will not be rejected, peer reviewers will be familiar with this style, and will not be distracted by the formatting. Although it is always helpful when a reviewer points out a minor formatting item or typographical error that an author overlooked, reviewers should not be spending their time copy-editing a manuscript.

In particular, authors should strive to use heading levels that are logical and consistent throughout. In-text citations and references should follow the style and be complete. Tables and figures should have appropriate captions. APA style recommends a running head, but that is not critical for submission. It is, however, helpful to reviewers if the author includes page number. Page numbers allow the reviewers to easily make reference to specific locations in a manuscript. Reviewers will point out formatting errors, and often view shoddy formatting as a warning sign about the overall quality of the author's work. When a manuscript is disorganized or poorly formatted to the extent that it becomes a distraction, reviewers get frustrated and sometimes even ask the editor why low-quality manuscripts are being sent out for review.

It should be enough to request that authors use APA style for submission, as specified in the journal's author guide. However, occasionally IHE receives submissions that stray far from this style or add their own formatting. Two-column formats and text smaller than 12-point should be avoided. These manuscripts can be more difficult for reviewers to read due to the column layout and font size. Finally, it is ill-advised for an author to spend time searching for or creating a template that emulates the journal's masthead and publication style. This type of formatting can be confusing to reviewers who at first glance see a manuscript that looks like an already published article. It does not result in the article being viewed more favorably in the review process.

Effective Revision

Editors recommend revision when they see promise in a manuscript. Often this means the manuscript is on the path to publication. Sometimes it means that the editor and reviewers have questions that need to be addressed before it is possible to determine if the manuscript is suitable. Authors should view a revise and resubmit disposition as a positive sign and should be thorough in their revision process. They should also recognize that publication after revision is not a guarantee.

It can be difficult to read a critique of one's own scholarly work, particularly when substantial effort has been put into that work. Those critiques can be even more frustrating to read when it appears that a reviewer did not understand the manuscript. However, authors who disregard some or all of a reviewer's feedback, unless explicitly instructed to do so by the editor, are less likely to have their manuscript reviewed favorably after revision. We encourage authors to not

be dismissive of a review they disagree with but instead to embrace it as a chance to strengthen a manuscript. To that end, we share one of the first author's recent experiences:

> *I had a manuscript in submission at another journal and received a disposition of revise and resubmit. Two of the reviews were quite complimentary and offered relatively minor recommendations for improving the manuscript. I appreciated and incorporated that feedback into the revision. The other review recommended that the manuscript be rejected, and as I worked through the review I wondered if the reviewer had even read my manuscript. The reviewer raised two big issues, one about method and the other about a key element, but in both instances incorrectly identified the method and element. Needless to say, the rest of the feedback given about those items did not make much sense. Additionally, the reviewer did not comment on findings or conclusion because they claimed the method and topic were so problematic that it was not worth further engaging with the manuscript. It might have been easy to say to myself, "This reviewer clearly did not read the manuscript. The other two reviewers did and liked it. I will ignore this reviewer." Instead, I looked at the manuscript through fresh eyes, pretending to be this reviewer who was skimming rather than closely reading. Although I thought my first iteration of the manuscript was clear about the method and topic, this feedback led me to find additional places where I could highlight and signpost the method and topic throughout the manuscript. I also edited a sentence that may have led the reviewer to misconstrue the method. The feedback may have seemed irrelevant initially, but I was able to use it to improve the manuscript.*

As this example shows, every piece of reviewer feedback provides an opportunity to consider the focus and clarity of a manuscript.

Every revision has two components: the actual revisions, and a detailed response to the reviewers' feedback. Revisions should strengthen the manuscript, and the author's response to the reviewers is a place to document the changes that were made and engage in dialogue with the reviewers. Changes that were not made should be addressed directly; although authors do not have to make every change that a reviewer requests, they do need to respond to every question or recommendation in a review.

Reviews are more than just a checklist of changes to make to a manuscript, but instead represent points at which a reviewer engaged with a manuscript, paused, and noted that something was not quite right. If a reviewer misunderstood something in a manuscript, make sure that it would be stated clearly in the revision. If a reviewer tries to take the manuscript in a different direction, be sure the intended focus is stated in a sufficiently clear manner. If a reviewer highlights something that cannot be fixed at this phase (e.g., sample size), be sure that thing is clearly discussed as a limitation. In sum, authors should take care to read between the lines of a review and make sure that the manuscript they mean to write is the one that others are reading.

Philosophical Advice: Perspectives on the Publication Process

Sometimes authors have tunnel vision when it comes to the publication process. They naturally focus on getting their manuscript accepted by a journal, and may feel impatient waiting for the review process to complete or angered by feedback from reviewers and editors that pushes back on some of their ideas. However, from our vantage point as editors we have come to see how journal publishing functions as a system, requiring authors, reviewers, and editors to each play a prescribed role and commit time and effort in the process. For this reason, we encourage authors to consider three perspectives on publication: a labor view, a dialogic view, and a collaborative view.

A Labor View of Publication

The peer review process relies on the labor of both reviewers and editors. Each manuscript an author submits to the journal takes at least 20 minutes of an editor's time to handle prior to the decision to reject prior to review or put into review. Then each manuscript that enters peer review will receive two or three reviews. These reviews may take a few hours each, and then the editor has to read the reviews along with the manuscript before rendering a decision. A safe estimate would be that a published manuscript requires eight reviewer and editor labor throughout the process, and more for each revision.

All too often, authors who submit manuscripts for review and then are subsequently asked to provide a peer review of another manuscript decline. They say they are busy, or they are on leave or vacation. Interestingly, periods when scholars are likely to be on vacation or very busy are when we observe increased patterns of submission and decreased willingness to review. In order for the system to work smoothly, however, everyone must be willing to work as both author and reviewer on a regular basis. However, if we invoke a rule of reciprocity, each manuscript (and each revision) that an author submits to a journal should obligate that author to conduct two or three peer reviews, preferably for that same journal.

Direct reciprocity is not always possible. Many submissions come from graduate students or new faculty, who are not yet asked to serve as peer reviewers. Although we recommend that these junior scholars volunteer to peer review, some may not yet be ready to do it on their own. With this in mind, senior scholars who supervise and mentor these graduate students and new faculty should consider three things: First, they might do an initial review of work before the junior scholar submits to a journal. These reviews might eliminate some of the manuscripts that are rejected prior to review. Second, they might reflect on the unreciprocated labor generated by the need to peer review the work of junior scholars and willingly review a few extra manuscripts each year to help make up the difference. Third, they might offer to do a shadow review or two with the junior scholar, preparing them to engage in this reciprocal labor and modeling the importance of being a peer reviewer.

A Dialogic View of Research

Although a manuscript can be read like a monologue, research ideally is a dialogue. In other words, each published manuscript represents a contribution to the larger conversation on a topic, and maintaining the overall conversation is an interdependent rather than an individual endeavor. As conversations go, it is an unconventional genre, because it is spread out over time and across multiple venues and conversation partners (e.g., books, journals, conferences). It is strengthened by less visible side conversations often conducted among nameless, faceless people (i.e., the peer review process).

Table 1 presents the two different publication mindsets. The individualistic-oriented monologue view of publishing research makes sense when considering the increased use of publication metrics by universities to assess researchers (Steele et al., 2006). Authors frequently have external pressure to publish a certain number of manuscripts annually in journals ranked at a particular level, and to demonstrate that their work has been well-cited. The monologue view represents a focus on meeting or exceeding these metrics and promoting one's own work. In contrast, the dialogic view of publishing research takes a more collaborative perspective and considers the meaning an individual's work derives by being shaped and responded to by other researchers

Table 1
Publication Mindsets

Part of the Publication Process	Monologue View	Dialogic View
Introduction and Literature Review Sections	I want my work to be considered novel and groundbreaking.	I want my work to provide a meaningful and important extension to what others in my field have discovered.
Discussion and Conclusion Sections	I want my findings to be considered important.	I want to show how my findings fit into the larger conversation and call others
Peer Review Process	I want my work published.	I want outside perspectives on my work to double-check and strengthen it before publication.
Post-Publication	I want others to cite my work.	I want others to extend my work, conducting studies that build on, refine, or even refute my findings.

In practical terms, authors who embrace the monologue view tend to use the introduction and literature review to be dismissive of earlier work or as a cursory formality in which a suitable number of vaguely related articles are cited.

Alternately, they might focus on citing their own work as a precursor to the present study, which can raise red flags when overdone. It makes sense that authors would include their own prior contributions to the overall research conversation and show how the present study fits into their larger body of work (Hyland, 2003). Still, there are times when such citations become gratuitous or even inappropriate, such as when they represent an effort to raise one's citation counts (Aksnes, 2003; Fowler & Aksnes, 2007), particularly given research that suggests self-citations expand exposure to an author's work and lead to more citations in general (Fowler & Aksnes, 2007).

In contrast, the dialogic perspective encourages authors to use the introduction and literature review to build a strong foundation for their study and think about their work as an extension of what is already known. The new study and resulting manuscript are a response to a collection of earlier works. The dialogue view similarly encourages authors extend beyond a summary of their research at the end of a manuscript, and to directly call others into the conversation and make space for the research that should follow this study.

During the peer review process, the monologue approach sets up peer reviewers and editors as gatekeepers to publication, whereas the dialogue approach acknowledges them as collaborators in revising and refining a manuscript in preparation for publication. Post-publication, the difference between these views represents a desire to acquire citations across a body of publications and increase one's h-index, a metric that is increasingly used but of questionable value for assessing research performance (Ding et al., 2020), versus a hope that one's research findings will be used in a meaningful way by other researchers and, as appropriate, practitioners.

Note that the two views, monologue and dialogue, need not be in conflict with each other. One can get their work published and raise their publication metrics while taking a dialogue approach to research. Ideally, the dialogue approach improves the monologue by highlighting the interdependence of researchers. Each published manuscript represents a step along the path to better understanding a phenomenon, and no person or research team can answer all of the questions alone. Researchers rely on each other to further knowledge in a given field. Conducting a novel study is not enough; it is necessary to demonstrate how a study is situated in the larger body of research. Authors accomplish this in a manuscript by showing building their study's foundations and problem statement through a meaningful literature review and demonstrating their study's contribution through making new connections in the discussion and conclusion of their work and highlighting future research opportunities. Researchers who enter the dialogue with a strong contribution and invite others to respond will find that their work is successfully published and cited because it is part of the conversation, and not because it stands alone.

A Collaborative View of Publication

No one publishes alone. As an author, one can readily sink into a mindset that getting one's manuscript published is a matter of getting past the gatekeepers, namely the editor and reviewers, but an alternate perspective is to consider them collaborators in the publication process. The manuscript is at the center of the process, and the author, reviewers, and editor all play important roles as summarized in Table 2. Most scholars regularly engage in two of these roles, author and reviewer, and at some point during their career many will get to experience an editorial or similar role in which both formative and summative decisions must be made on the basis of review (e.g., conference planning).

Table 2
Roles in the Publication Process

Role	Task(s)	Goal(s)	Challenge(s)
Author	Submit manuscript Respond to feedback Revise feedback	Get manuscript published	Accepting peer feedback
Reviewer	Read manuscript Provide feedback and assessment	Complete a quality review in a timely manner	Write feedback in a constructive manner
Editor	Triage manuscript Select reviewers Render decisions based on reviewer feedback and personal review	Uphold the integrity of the review process Ensure the journal has a steady stream of high-quality manuscripts to publish	Secure reviewers Triangulate reviews and make decisions Deliver bad news to authors

The Author Perspective. As an author, the main focus is on getting one's work accepted. Authors submit work that they believe is deserving of publication, and naturally feel some disappointment when their work is not accepted. Authors get frustrated when reviews take a long time to come in, and when reviewers request changes that require rethinking or reworking part of a manuscript. However, we encourage authors to return to the initial submission of a later published manuscript and to revisit it occasionally. It can be humbling and informative to see how much the review process improved the manuscript.

The Reviewer Perspective. Whereas having a manuscript quickly reviewed and published is an author's goal, reviewers do not necessarily have the same priorities. Most scholars prioritize the work they do as authors over the work they do as reviewers, which is logical given that authorship is valued and rewarded more heavily than review work. Not only can reviewers be slow, but they can also be terse or direct. Few are truly unkind, but even a matter-of-fact list of items that need to be addressed prior to publication can deflate an author's mood. Still, that list of items is offered to the author to help improve their work, not to keep it from being published.

It can be fun to joke about the Reviewer 2 meme, in which a mean reviewer requests tedious and perhaps impossible or ridiculous revisions (Cranford, 2020). Reviewer 2, in this sense, embodies all of the anxiety that authors experience during the publication process. People have asked me if editors choose a specific person to be Reviewer 2, anticipating the negative response. It is time to lay that rumor to rest. Reviewer numbers are assigned by the editorial management system when reviewers agree to review and complete those reviews. It is that simple. In a system where a manuscript receives two or three reviews, Reviewer 2 is likely to write the more critical review 33-50% of the time. Anyone who would like empirical data to confirm that Reviewer 2 is no more challenging than any other reviewer should consult Peterson's (2020) study. However, this meme reminds scholars to be the kind of reviewer they hope to encounter as authors.

The Editor Perspective. Editors are every bit as much solicitors of manuscripts as they are gatekeepers of journals. An editor wants to fill their journal with strong manuscripts that scholars will want to read and build upon. When they see a promising manuscript, their goal is to use the review and revision process to make it as strong as possible. They are working with authors, not against them.

Editors may recommend against publishing a manuscript, and in those instances, authors may struggle to perceive them as collaborators. However, it is possible to view the situation from a different angle. When manuscripts are rejected from a journal because of topic or scope, authors are encouraged to find and enter the research conversation where their work is a better fit. When manuscripts are rejected due to quality, authors have an opportunity to reconsider whether the work in question represents them well. Most senior scholars, if they are honest with themselves, can think back to some manuscripts that have been rejected and recognize that the editor saved them from publishing poorly done work.

Rejection is difficult for everyone. Editors take no pleasure in rejecting articles and prefer to see authors succeed. Each manuscript represents hope and hard work. In many instances it represents not only the labor of the researchers, but also the labor of participants who offered up their time for interviews and surveys. Telling someone that their work does not fit a journals scope or is not of sufficient quality is not an easy task and requires direct language. Most authors simply move on after rejection, and a few will respond kindly, but others are argumentative. Treating an editor poorly does not change the final disposition of a manuscript. We have had disgruntled authors question our integrity, tell us that we crush dreams and enjoy cruelty, call our intelligence into question, and inform us of all the ways in which our assessment was wrong. These messages make the job more difficult, but also remind us of how important it is as an editor to uphold the standards of the journal and make these difficult decisions. The authors whose manuscripts are published in the journal and the journal's readers expect and benefit from it.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

As mentioned earlier, one of the best ways to understand a journal's scope and quality expectations is to read that journal. This section presents three older articles and three recent articles published in *The Internet and Higher Education* to help prospective authors become familiar with the research conversations that have been firmly established in the journal, as well as the contemporary research that is being published.

Exemplary Articles: Foundational Work

These three articles present concepts and framework (personal learning environments, community of inquiry and sense of community) that have been thoroughly explored in IHE. Authors who are building on or exploring these concepts and frameworks are advised to read carefully through the rich body of theoretical and empirical pieces that have shaped our contemporary understanding and use of them.

1. Dabbagh, N., & Kitsantas, A. (2012). Personal Learning Environments, social media, and self-regulated learning: A natural formula for connecting formal and informal learning. *The Internet and Higher Education, 15*(1), 3–8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2011.06.002
2. Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2010). The first decade of the community of inquiry framework: A retrospective. *The Internet and Higher Education, 13*(1–2), 5–9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2009.10.003
3. Rovai, A. P. (2002). Sense of community, perceived cognitive learning, and persistence in asynchronous learning networks. *The Internet and Higher Education, 5*, 319–332. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1096-7516(02)00130-6

Exemplary Articles: Contemporary Work

These four articles from the last few years represent the types of empirical work that are now being published in the journal. Each has a strong foundation in the research literature, articulates clear research questions, includes an appropriate sample size for the method, and provides meaningful implications for both practice and future research. Although the journal primarily publishes reports of empirical research at this time, a strong connection to practice is still valued. Across these articles are themes that are prevalent in many of the manuscripts currently published in the journal, such as teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and learning analytics.

1. Brinkley-Etzkorn, K. E. (2018). Learning to teach online: Measuring the influence of faculty development training on teaching effectiveness through a TPACK lens. *The Internet and Higher Education, 38*, 28–35. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2018.04.004
2. Chen, B., Chang, Y.-H., Ouyang, F., & Zhou, W. (2018). Fostering student engagement in online discussion through social learning analytics. *The Internet and Higher Education, 37*, 21–30. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2017.12.002
3. Han, F., & Ellis, R. A. (2019). Identifying consistent patterns of quality learning discussions in blended learning. *The Internet and Higher Education, 40*, 12–19. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2018.09.002
4. Howard, E., Meehan, M., & Parnell, A. (2018). Contrasting prediction methods for early warning systems at undergraduate level. *The Internet and Higher Education, 37*, 66–75. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2018.02.001

To further explore the types of manuscripts currently being published in *The Internet and Higher Education* we encourage prospective authors to visit the journal's homepage (https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/the-internet-and-higher-education), from which one can navigate to recent issues or view a selection latest published, top cited, and most downloaded articles from the last few years.

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Peterson, D. A. M. (2020). Dear Reviewer 2: Go f' yourself. *Social Science Quarterly, 101*(4), 1648–1652. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12824

Steele, C., Butler, L., & Kingsley, D. (2006). The publishing imperative: The pervasive influence of publication metrics [https://doi.org/10.1087/095315106778690751]. *Learned Publishing, 19*(4), 277–290. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1087/095315106778690751

Thombs, B. D., Levis, A. W., Razykov, I., Syamchandra, A., Leentjens, A. F., Levenson, J. L., & Lumley, M. A. (2015). Potentially coercive self-citation by peer reviewers: A cross-sectional study. *J Psychosom Res, 78*(1), 1–6. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2014.09.015

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Behind the Curtain: Understanding the Review and Publishing Process for a Peer-Reviewed Research Journal in Higher Education

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INTRODUCTION

Our own understanding of the publishing process and our own approaches to publishing as authors changed after we became editors for the *Journal of Computing in Higher Education* (JCHE). The window into what transpires behind the scenes in the reviewing and publication processes is one we wish we could easily provide to colleagues, not only as potential authors but as a scholarship community. It's one thing to show others technically how it's done. It's quite another to understand it operationally, and by "operationally" we mean the functioning of an organization that is not an organization in a traditional sense. As the saying goes, it is really more a process of herding cats who all have different thoughts about how their days and time should be spent and help complete the work on a mostly volunteer basis.

What might seem like a rather technical topic of "how the sausage gets made" is truly more a study in human beings, of motivation and performance support and drivers of behavior. It is easier for us to focus on the processes – how you submit, what happens after submission, managing reviewer feedback, etc. But what we are continually struck by in our daily editorial work is how much better it all works when we approach it through empathy and care – empathy with our colleagues, for one day we might be the ones running behind on reviewing a manuscript, and care for the quality of our scholarship and for our scholarly community. If we have done our job well here, then you will leave this chapter with a much more humanized sense of publishing in journals – not just for the sake of empathy but as an opportunity to reflect and consider how you engage this very-human process and how you participate in the research community both as an author/reviewer/researcher and as a colleague in our scholarship community.

As you read through this and other chapters in this collection, we encourage you to picture yourself in different roles. Consider what kind of scholarship community we want to have in our field and what that means in terms of what kind of community member you want to be and how you feel you could contribute in various roles. We often think of the final products (the articles) *as* the discipline's discourse, but really they are one dimension of our discourse on research and arguably are both products of process and outcome itself. Along with publications, our research classes and professional conferences are the more visible dimensions of our professional discourse and community, but the review and publication processes are more internal and function as a central discursive space where we actively shape our external research artifacts. In fact, it is probably better characterized as a deliberation process rather than simply as a submission-and-review feedback loop. The following is our conversation with you, as a potential author/reviewer. The informal language presented in this chapter, should not be taken as a position of editorial superiority, but rather it should be received with the air of subjective reflectivity to each participating individual - editor, reviewer and author alike.

About JCHE

The *Journal of Computing in Higher Education* launched in 1989 when "computing" was a more common way to refer to the integration of new technologies into higher education, especially with the excitement around computers and what they can do. Early topics in the journal included subjects such as computer-assisted instruction, authoring systems,

hypermedia, and literary and philosophical explorations of the hypermedia space, with pieces like Landow's "The rhetoric of hypermedia" (1989) and DeRose et al. on "What is text, really?" (1990). The field just realized a hyperlinked world in which readers could follow multiple paths, akin to Borges' "The Garden of Forking Paths," and the role of the author (and therefore the instructor) was becoming a more fluid construct as readers and learners could engage more in knowledge construction by following these forking paths. This nonlinear world afforded many new possibilities, and it was in that time of major change that JCHE was launched. Where literary authors saw the interplay of meaning, educational researchers saw questions around cognitive load and opportunities for interactive knowledge construction through simulations, games, and microworlds. Volume 4, Issue 2 in March of 1993 was especially representative of the field at this time, with pieces like Jonassen & Grabinger's "Applications of hypertext," Kearsley's "Hypertext as a tool for the metatheoretical analysis of learning theories," Shneiderman's "Engagement and construction: Educational strategies for the post-TV era," and Kahn & Landow's "The pleasure of possibility: What is disorientation in hypertext?"

In 2009, Gary Morrison took over as editor-in-chief (EiC), rebuilding the editorial team and establishing a brand new board. They added a subtitle to the journal: *Research & Integration of Instructional Technology*, to reflect a broader scope for the journal beyond computers to include various technologies in higher education (Morrison, Anglin, & Watson, 2009). JCHE today represents the continued exploration of the implications of technologies for learning in higher education. Current topics range greatly from learning analytics to MOOCs to online learning to gaming and more. The journal's primary focus remains on research with emphasis on studies that investigate learning and teaching in higher education, although some conceptual pieces are accepted. We may publish some pieces from time to time that focus more on issues of enrollment and retention in higher education if those pieces reflect a particular emphasis on learning or instructional theories and frameworks. Papers can range greatly in their focus from instructional products to large units of instruction to entire programs or institutions, but all papers must have a focus on learning in a higher education context for consideration. Sometimes we receive papers that are more technical in nature, such as testing algorithms for learning analytics, and we refer those to other journals. We have also featured special issues on topics like instructional design in higher education as we endeavor to support both research in the higher education context and our instructional design and educational technology practices in higher education.

There have been four editors of JCHE since its inception: Carol MacKnight (1989-2009), Gary Morrison (2009-2015), MJ Bishop (2015-2018), and Stephanie Moore (2018-present). As noted earlier, Morrison added Associate Editors to the editorial team and established a Board for the journal. Bishop continued with two Associate Editors and one Assistant Editor, retaining the same Board composition. Moore expanded the number of Assistant Editors to manage the increasing load of the journal. Moore also recently overhauled the Board composition, as many from the original Board under Morrison and had retired (the JCHE Board does not have fixed terms). Both Board members and members of the editorial team are recruited and selected directly by the EiC. Board members are expected to provide a great deal of support to the journal through reviews, inviting authors for submissions, and leading special issues as well as deliberation on strategic considerations for the journal. Associate Editors help to provide initial reviews of submissions and collaborate with the editor on desk decisions and journal management issues. Assistant Editors largely oversee the peer review process but are also involved in addressing management needs. All editors and board members are expected to help recruit reviewers as well.

JCHE has been growing, quickly, in recent years. Some of the historical data we have only goes back to 2008, at which time the journal received around 20 submissions per year. In 2009, that tripled to 63. By 2016, that had nearly tripled again to 179 submissions. In 2020, we received 386 submissions, more than double that of 2016, and in early 2021 we are already well past the number of submissions for this same time last year, looking to triple our number of submissions yet again. We presently publish three issues per year with an average of 11-12 articles per issue, although we are considering moving to quarterly issues in the next few years. At present, our one-year impact factor is 2.271 (2.673 for 5 years). Historically, the rate of acceptance has been around 16-18%, but that is changing in more recent years as we receive more submissions. Our average acceptance rate for the last 5 years is 12.7%, and acceptance rates in 2020 were 7%, although this may be an artificially low year because of some impacts we experienced from COVID (delays on the part of reviewers and editors combined with a large number of submissions about COVID that were not research and therefore were rejected). On average, the time between submission and an initial decision is 65 days, and the time between submission and acceptance is 386 days. We are working on ways to shorten each of these. We also enjoy a high volume of downloads from the article, which are steadily increasing from year to year, and we are distributed internationally with a large percentage of our downloads occurring all around the globe.

As we look ahead for the journal, we are thinking through how we respond to the charge from Reeves & Lin (2020) to generate more research that focuses on how we are helping to solve pressing problems, including broader social prob-

lems, rather than things (for which we'll be publishing a call soon). We are also questioning how we can publish research that better supports practice or promote more translational research in the field, as well as how we can continue to foster deliberation through intellectual and philosophical examinations that animated our early years, as well as pieces that engage in theory building, yielding rich playgrounds for thinking and research. We are mapping out collaborations with professions in positions in higher education leading the development of online programs and integration of learning technologies into universities and community colleges to better represent the work taking place in institutions. Our journal has a strong international publication record with authors representing countries all over the world, and we want to continue that direction. We would like to see more articles in the community college setting. As the journal grows, we are also carefully considering how our selection criteria may adapt. Since the number of submissions to the journal has tripled in the past three years, and we are increasingly inclined towards submissions that go beyond standard indicators of quality to clearly focus on complex needs or problems in higher education. We may consider moving to quarterly issues in the next few years, but for now we are focused on quality and on how we can play a role in prompting new research directions.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

First, it may be helpful to understand that different journals are published by different companies, so we have different online submission systems and processes as a result. A good number of journals in our field are published by Springer Nature, although not all of them. JCHE is a Springer journal, so the submission system we use will be similar to other Springer journals, and some of our processes may be similar as well. The EiC also has the ability to change settings and determine the process flow, so you will find that, even though several journals use the same system, each journal has a fair number of subjective and maybe idiosyncratic processes.

Initial Review

In terms of a generic process, once you submit a manuscript for the first time, it is now under initial review. At this time, the editor or the editorial team will make a decision whether to "desk reject" your paper or move it on to review, although there can be exceptions to this. For JCHE, all original submissions come to the EiC, and a decision on roughly 60% of initial submissions is made without input from the editorial team. We receive a lot of submissions that aren't a good fit for the journal, so we try to save others' time in reviewing anything that simply isn't a fit. However, sometimes the EiC is on the fence or has questions or wants to deliberate a manuscript, or sometimes we receive too many at one time for the EiC to process in a timely manner. In any one of these cases, the EiC will assign the manuscript to an Associate Editor for them to review and send their thoughts on the submission. Sometimes the EiC will ask an Assistant Editor to do a desk review as well if that person has a particular area of expertise to bring to bear on the manuscript. Once the EiC receives initial reviews from the editorial team, she then makes a final desk decision or sends it along for review.

We have a range of desk decisions we can make. The most common are to reject a manuscript or to send it along for review, but we can also ask an author to Revise before Review. We use that decision for a number of reasons. For example, if an author submits a paper that looks like a solid manuscript and is a good fit but it isn't formatted properly or if the manuscript hasn't been "blinded," meaning you haven't removed all references to yourself in the manuscript, including in the in-text citations and references list. This clearly adds additional time to the process and to everyone's task load, so we strongly encourage authors to make sure you follow journal guidelines for formatting and preparing your manuscript for submission. It's wise to add a day just for formatting and preparation of a manuscript, so be sure you build this into your planning process.

There are also different types of rejections we can select. Our options for JCHE are set as "Reject," "Reject Editor Review," and "Reject Do Not Transfer." We use these very differently. For initial submissions that are rejected, we use "Reject Editor Review" for the vast majority of those. This option allows the manuscript to stay in the Springer system but be transferred to other journals that may be a better fit. For instance, we receive a lot of submissions that really should go into a computer science journal (because people just see "computing" in the title). So we use this decision option to reject manuscripts that were submitted to JCHE but give authors the option to transfer it to another Springer journal. We use "Reject Do Not Transfer" in very rare instances, namely for cases where the manuscript is similar in content

somewhere else or papers where the readers of the journal may view discriminatory language, concerning framing, or problematic theories or data as a flaw with the article's contribution to the field. Our goal is for most rejections to happen at this stage of the process, as rejections that come later can be understandably frustrating for everyone -- we the editors know very well what these feel like too. In cases where we move an article along for review but reviewers recommend "Reject" or catch something we missed, then I will use the "Reject" option, indicating that it is not simply a desk reject but has been reviewed by peers and rejected.

Exceptions happen, though, and this can create a situation where initial review takes longer, thus contributing to the frustration that authors may feel. For example, new developments may lead to new types of research and new topics, and we want to carefully deliberate as an editorial team whether a manuscript makes sense for the journal, given its expressed purpose. An example of such a development is a decision on submissions that are design cases. As the value of design cases for the field have increased, we calibrate and recalibrate our thinking, thus prolonging the decision-making process. We have also been discussing whether and how the journal might promote more publications of research that better support practice, and sometimes we receive submissions that require discussion around whether it represents the sort of publication we would want to see in that space. Also, new research topics develop, and we may be on the fence about whether this is a topic that makes sense for the journal or is a better fit elsewhere. For example, topics like learning analytics, artificial intelligence, and machine learning for education can sometimes wax too technical for our scope and audience, and the lines aren't always clear or require deliberation. As an international journal with a large number of submissions from around the world, we also see a different sort of trend in submissions where researchers in other countries may be working on something that seems "old" to a US audience, but we want to support colleagues around the world in the work that's important to them contextually. While the time delays for authors can be frustrating, we feel the deliberation process is more reflective of what we as a scholarly community would envision for the publication process.

Review Process

Once we decide we want to consider a manuscript for publication, we then send it out for review. Finding reviewers and getting reviews turned around in a timely manner is the hardest part of the publication process. Not all reviewers respond to invitations quickly or submit their reviews in a timely manner, some reviewers are more detailed while others provide very little feedback, and reviewers often look for different things, as they should. Most journals do have some sort of rubric or items that reviewers use for scoring manuscripts, but that doesn't mean the reviewers will notice the same things, and it certainly doesn't mean they will agree. Let's talk first about who reviewers are and how the process works.

Who Are Our Reviewers

As a "peer-reviewed" journal, our reviewers are those who would be considered "peer" researchers. What this translates into practically is that reviewers are people who hold a doctorate or terminal degree in the relevant domain(s). This does not necessarily mean all reviewers have degrees from the same field, although most will. In some cases, our reviewers have degrees in other fields such as data sciences or literature with expertise in textual analysis or sociology and expertise in related methods. Reviewers are also volunteers. For JCHE, reviewers are not compensated financially for their time, although many consider it an honor to be asked to serve as a reviewer for research journals. (Some journals may give awards or recognitions for reviews, but JCHE does not at this time.) The vast majority of our reviewers are full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, or professionals in leadership or administrative positions. For some reviewers, that might mean that reviewing is counted as part of their Service load for their faculty positions; for others it counts towards their research activity. Reviewers may work in other sectors where making time to provide reviews is an additional load -- on top of their full load of work. Looking at a journal and the publishing process organizationally, reviewer time is both the most precious commodity and one of the most limited resources.

As we have seen behind the scenes more, one worry we have is whether we are spreading our valuable resource of peer reviewers ever-more thinly, especially as we create new journals for the field. These new areas are important, but we also should be thinking carefully about collective capacity and the expectations around volunteer effort. You may find that journals are starting to explore a range of different approaches to the review process, so what works as the traditional

review process now may change over your career. For example, JCHE is piloting an experimental effort with a doctoral program in our field where a faculty member who mentors doctoral students and teaches research methods takes on a small bundle of submissions and reviews them with doctoral students, providing both a cognitive apprenticeship sort of opportunity for developing future peer reviewers while also ensuring a peer oversees the reviews and is ultimately the one providing their expert review.

Understanding who the reviewers are can help humanize our understanding of the process and hopefully inform author expectations. When you submit a manuscript, try to picture your manuscript going to one of your colleagues in the field who may be going through different things in their careers or personal lives. While we aim for tight turn-around times as part of our goal to support you in your career and help authors keep their publications moving along, we also try to keep in mind that everyone is doing the best that they can, especially when individual or social circumstances warrant compassion and patience.

Review Process

We recently changed our review process, and this helps highlight how journals can take very different approaches. As of a year ago, when a paper was moved forward for review, we would search our reviewer database to find people who were a good fit for the topic then send them an invitation to review through this system. However, this resulted in a lot of wasted time and frustration both for our editorial team and our authors. One issue we had was that the database was outdated, so some invitations never made it to the person, but we weren't receiving a notice of an email bouncing -- we just never heard a response. Another issue that really dogged our process was that a number of people would decline but colleagues are given 30 days to respond, so sometimes it would take us months just to find reviewers because of a protracted cycle of invitations and declinations. Meanwhile, the handling editors grew weary of seeing "declines invitation" emails in their inbox, and authors were wondering what took so long. So we overhauled our database and process. To enhance the process, we changed to where each handling editor works with a cadre of colleagues as reviewers and periodically sends out a list of articles needing review, asking folks to volunteer. This has changed the affect of the review process, as we are receiving a lot more acceptance emails and reviewers are able to directly select articles they're interested in reviewing.

As reviewers volunteer, we send them the manuscript through the system. For initial manuscripts, they have 60 days to complete their review as a default. If they do not return their reviews by then, the system automatically reminds them to submit. After 90 days, they will be unassigned if they have not submitted anything, and we then identify someone else. (This happens far less now that we've adopted this new process.) Once enough reviews are returned for us to make an informed decision, the handling editor reviews the reviews and then sends along their recommendation to me along with the reviews. The EiC then reviews everything and issues a decision. It is exceedingly rare for the EiC to disagree with the other editors' recommendations. Authors then have 90 days to resubmit revisions. One important thing you should know from a reviewer perspective: *You can ask for more time if you need it.* From time to time, an author will email to ask for more time, and we are always happy to work with them. Again, life happens.

When you submit a revised manuscript, the EiC will either review it or assign it to the handling editor to review it, at which point we make a decision if it should go out for review again. If so, we send it out for review. The default timeline for revised manuscripts is 30 days, although sometimes we will adjust that, and reviewers do often take a bit longer. We then go through a second round of review like the first and issue a second decision. Assuming the manuscript progresses accordingly, at some point when the EiC receives a sufficiently-revised manuscript, she then selects to either Accept As Is, which means it then is sent along to the publisher and added to the queue, or Accept Pending Revisions by EiC, which means it's close but the EiC has caught a few minor things for the author to edit before the manuscript is sent it along for publication. But we do not review and revise ad infinitum. This leads us to the question of why not. To elaborate let's talk about review policies.

Review Policies

Journals may vary to some degree on their review policies. For example, some journals invite two peer reviewers as a minimum, some three. A few years ago, the standard policy for JCHE was three reviewers for initial submissions. However, this can add to the length of time for reviews, and sometimes it can be challenging to find three available re-

viewers for a manuscript. We met as an editorial team to discuss this policy and decided to change our policy to two as a minimum and then seek a third if we received divergent feedback and recommendations *and* the handling editor felt a third review might help provide additional clarity. There are times when one review recommends Accept with Revisions and the other recommends Reject. This could be a time when we send it out for a third review, which extends the review cycle for the paper.

Of course there are also exceptions to this. Sometimes a reviewer will find "fatal flaws" in a paper, such as methodological issues, possible plagiarism or self-plagiarism that a checker did not catch, or some other issue that cannot be addressed through revisions or has some sort of fundamental impact on consideration of the article. In these rare instances, we may make a decision based on a single review if that review is received first and examined before another review is submitted. Sometimes we receive two very divergent reviews, but the editorial team reviews the feedback and makes a decision one way or another (e.g., a reviewer recommended a rejection for issues we think can be addressed through revisions or a reviewer found a problem we missed and it should be rejected).

We also have a policy as a journal for the maximum number of review cycles we allow for a manuscript. JCHE allows the original submission and three revision cycles. If a manuscript is not ready for publication by the time the third revision has been submitted, then we cease the review process at that point and will reject the article. It is extremely rare that this occurs, but it does happen, and as you might imagine it can be frustrating if not angering for authors after so much time invested. However, as noted earlier, the people reviewing are very busy people volunteering their time and are spread thinly already. If a paper is not progressing sufficiently through three rounds of review and revision, then we will likely terminate the process and hope that the feedback received from JCHE reviewers proves useful to the author in moving it forward through an alternative venue.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE FOR AUTHORS

The description of the process above includes a lot of advice and insight for authors that should help you in the preparation, submission, and revision of your manuscripts, but there are a few other things on which some more transparency or clarity is helpful. And there are also consistent problem areas where we do wish authors knew more or understood better what they can do to facilitate the process.

Tend to the Fundamentals

A rather large number of manuscripts that we receive are rejected because they don't really tend to the fundamentals of research articles. Once the manuscript is reviewed for journal fit, the fundamentals easily guide the decision to desk reject or not. When we present in roundtables for "advice from editors" or other talks, we as editors are often asked about what we are looking for in papers to be considered. This advice boils down to essentials that make for good research and preparation of a sound research manuscript. Much of what makes for a good research paper starts with the study planning and design process itself. It's difficult-to-impossible to fix fundamental flaws at the point of editing a manuscript. Think of the paper you submit as a later-stage product of your work, although it may be helpful to map out what should go into a paper to help you think through important questions and decisions as you plan and design your research study. The following are specific areas we look for as we review submissions:

- Generally speaking, what is your **"so what"**? Why should the readers of your paper care about your study, and what should they gain from reading it? We are starting to encourage authors to explicitly articulate what problem or need they are endeavoring to address through their research and thread this sense of meaning or impact throughout the paper.
- Is there a clear **Introduction**, and does it focus on the paper topic and what problem or need you are aiming to address rather than starting with broad or sweeping statements like how technology is rapidly evolving and changing all of humanity and revolutionizing higher education? We strongly encourage you to avoid rhetorical framing such as "transforming," "revolutionizing," or "disrupting."
- Does the **Literature Review** make the case for a clear **Rationale or Justification** for the study, and does it clarify how this paper or study *contributes* to the existing body of knowledge? A few references does not a literature review make. Your literature review should be relevant, comprehensive, up-to-date, and accurate. Demonstrate you know the body of existing research and that you are addressing an important gap.

- Is there a clear **Theoretical Framework** for the study that is well-established through the literature review (not just a scant reference to Bandura or Dewey), and is that theoretical framework *aligned* throughout the study so it informs construct definition, the research questions, methodology, analysis, and interpretation? Alternatively, do you have a **Hypothesis** that informs your premise? Supporting your argument with a theoretical foundation is key.
- Are the **constructs** you're studying clearly defined? We want to see that you understand what you're studying and that it's precise. This is essential for reliability and validity. We are also looking to see if the paper is focused or if it's trying to study everything all at once.
- Are your **Research Questions** clearly stated, and can we clearly see how they are derived from your theoretical framework and the lit review? Is it also clear how your research questions inform your methodology?
- Is your **Methodology** clear, do you provide enough detail where it could be replicated, and is it rigorously applied and appropriate to the questions you're asking?
- Are your **Findings or Data** presented clearly both for comprehension and for replicability?
- Is your **Discussion** of the findings grounded in the actual data and theoretical framework for your study, and does it elaborate sufficiently on an actual discussion?
- Do you map out the **Implications** for future research or investigation?
- Are your **Discussion, Implications, or Conclusions** appropriate to the data and scope of your study, or do you make assertions that aren't supported by your data or within the scope of your paper?
- Do you *anticipate questions* a reader might ask and address those questions proactively, such as any limitations, assumptions you are making, why you chose a particular statistical procedure (e.g., for a small sample size), etc.?
- How strong is the writing quality? Is the paper easy to follow and understand, explaining everything clearly and in a well-organized manner, or is it confusing, jargony, poorly edited, or otherwise difficult for readers to really understand all of it or major/important parts of it?

While some of this can be addressed through editing, other issues -- like methodological issues or a theoretical framework that's weak or absent entirely -- cannot be addressed through a revision process alone. So, make sure you are carefully tending to these fundamentals well in advance of preparing and submitting your paper for review. These criteria may vary some depending on the nature of the submission and the research, but in general these are quality indicators that we're looking at. John Turner, the editor of *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, has published a running series on these different fundamentals (2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2019a, 2019b). Those articles are excellent references that address different "fundamentals" for research manuscripts in detail that may be worth saving and referring to from time to time as you plan your studies and prepare your papers.

Published Papers Are Version 52

One thing to keep in mind is that the papers that you see at the point of publication are heavily revised and edited, and much of that revision and editing process should take place before your paper is submitted to the journal. One bit of advice many doctoral faculty advisors find themselves giving repeatedly is that authors should expect feedback and should expect to do revisions throughout the writing and publication process. Before you submit any paper, anticipate that it will go through multiple versions and edits before it even hits the desk of an editor, and at that point it will go through anywhere from 1 to 3 rounds of edits (maybe more if you're working with a journal that allows more rounds of revisions). When we write papers for publication, we often rename each draft with version numbering on papers as we develop ours (in case we edit something out we later want to pull back in or re-use elsewhere). On a recent article one of us submitted, the version finally submitted for review was v.11. Granted, many of those are very drafty, but that included some major revisions and one cycle of asking for an external check on grammar and APA. Crafting a successful article for publication is not akin to pulling an all-nighter to crank out a paper due the next day for a class. Some colleagues plan their writing schedules to work on one paper per quarter or every four months and break the writing and revision cycle down into multiple versions and editing cycles over months. Give yourself time to develop your paper, and plan for multiple rounds of editing and revision. The more of a tumbler you send it through pre-submission, the faster your article will usually go through the review process, assuming all the fundamentals are in place as well.

As a corollary to this, one thing you should anticipate is feedback, and a lot of it. Unless you have been fortunate enough to have writing groups during your graduate studies or instructors who use instructor or peer feedback loops as part of their paper development process, you may not yet be used to your written work receiving a lot of external scrutiny. However, the whole point of peer review is for articles to go through a round or two or three of external scrutiny, which is part of that deliberation process we mentioned at the beginning. We will talk more about handling feedback below, but you should anticipate receiving feedback and making revisions as part of the publication process. If you do not already have a support network, you might consider creating your own feedback loop by starting a writing group that meets regularly to support each other and provide some dedicated quiet time for writing. At one institution, the library hosts virtual writing cafes where people join a virtual meeting and work as light jazz plays. Other groups may meet quarterly or monthly and include check-ins on progress and some round-robin editing cycles. Establishing a community of practice can be very effective in helping you create a writing rhythm, receive constructive feedback, and revise prior to submission.

One important additional thing we wish authors knew prior to publishing is that not all editors edit your work for all the grammatical errors, APA citations, etc. Many of us consider this your job in preparing the manuscript. If there are small errors, we will note those and ask you to fix them. Everyone misses details in every paper - including us. But when there are a lot of grammatical or writing issues or no APA formatting (or a lot of APA errors), we usually will bounce that back to you for editing before we'll send it out for review. Reviewer time is precious, so we want to make sure we're preserving their effort for the things where peer review is truly most helpful. That does not include grammatical and APA editing of your manuscript. If you are submitting to a journal that is in a language other than your primary or native language, then we strongly recommend that you ask a colleague or a professional editor to review your manuscript for grammar, writing, clarity, and readability before submitting it to a journal. By no means are editing issues limited to instances where you may be submitting an article in a language that is not your primary language, though. You may find that working with a group of colleagues on publishing for feedback and revision prior to submission is helpful, or you may consider hiring professional editing services.

Turn-around Times

Several factors can impact turn-around times, and these factors can fluctuate year-to-year and month-to-month. Some papers are on topics for which we have a large number of reviewers able to review, so it's easier to move those on out for review quickly. There are other topics that are much more niche so there are simply fewer scholars who can review, but we want to support publication in these areas. Some areas are relatively new or not pervasive through the literature, such as ethics, accessibility and inclusive design, and social justice. In some cases, we may need to reach out and identify new reviewers, email them, talk with them, get them into the system, and then get a submission assigned to them and out for review. This is especially true for new or niche topics and some methodologies that are less common. If you are submitting a paper that you believe might reflect a new or nice topic or uncommon methodology, you might want to consider including some recommendations for reviewers with your submission. Be sure there are no conflicts of interest, but in theory as the author of a paper on the topic or using the methodology, you know the literature well and know who might make a good reviewer for your paper.

While journals publish averages for time for initial review or time to publication, keep in mind these are just means, not even modes, so the statistics don't account for outliers or even communicate the variance very well. In reality, there can be a high degree of variation depending on both human and non-human factors, and it's hard to predict. For example, submission levels may impact turn-around times on manuscripts based on the number of submissions. We are taking longer to process submissions because we are receiving more submissions, and there are certain times of year when we typically receive more or there are holidays that lead to a slight delay in processing original submissions or receiving reviews. We must remember of course that academic / yearly cycle calendars for authors, reviewers, and the editorial team might all differ based on location, time zones, countries and other characteristics that produce variability.

The year 2020 was also a challenging year for turn-around times as members of the editorial team and reviewers managed health needs and increased job pressures. One colleague, for example, shared that she had been told by her department chair to cut out all external service for the year to focus on an increased teaching load as an institutional measure to weather impacts of the coronavirus. Other colleagues who are usually very reliable reviewers informed me they were taking a leave of absence. Others were happy to take on reviews but then became sick and were delayed in process-

ing manuscripts. While this happens some every year, there was definitely a marked increase in 2020. Most authors were very understanding when their manuscripts didn't progress as quickly as possible, but a few were not.

Handling Reviewer Feedback

As noted earlier, you will receive feedback, and likely a lot of it. You should anticipate this for every submission to every journal, and it's good to start thinking about what your process is for anticipating feedback and revisions and how you'll keep track of this portion of the publishing process. Generally, most feedback will be supportive and constructive, despite the reputation peer review receives, and the vast majority of author response to peer review is to thank the reviewers for their time and feedback and then carefully show how you've responded to each piece of feedback. Figure 1 is a good example of an author's response to peer feedback on a revised resubmission.

Comment	**Incorporation**
The first sentence of the abstract is a little confusing. What is a scoping review? This is not a typical term used in research or the field of instructional design and educational technology. I would recommend revising this sentence. Are you reviewing to a literature review? A systematic review? How does a scoping review differ from a systematic review? That would be helpful for the readers to understand? You referred to PRISMA for helping your selection of papers; this is prevalent in systematic reviews.	Thank you for the feedback. We have addressed this several ways: 1. We updated the abstract to better address the study's use of a scoping review. 2. We've revised the Methods section to be clearer as to what a scoping review is and how it differentiates from a systematic review as well as a meta-analysis. 3. Additionally, towards the end of the methods section we've provided several examples of scoping reviews within the current instructional design literature that hopefully address the comment.
Nowhere in your introduction do you explain what is game-based learning. I would recommend providing a 1-2 sentence explanation to ensure that all readers are on the same page as they read through the rest of your paper.	We've revised the introduction section to reflect the reviewed comment including a new Table 1 which includes the definitions of all three classifications. We also chose to frame the three classifications into the macro view of Game-Based Instructional Intervention. An explanation for the use of this catch all term is now made in the introduction section.

Figure 1. Responding to Reviewer Feedback (Used with permission).

There is often a tendency to treat reviewer feedback as required edits for publication, but as the author, you are the final arbiter of your paper. Assuming you are responsive to helpful feedback, you should also stay true to your vision and focus. Navigating reviewer feedback may sometimes mean choosing to ignore some of it. Part of your job as an author is learning how to sort the feedback into major and minor revisions that must be addressed and feedback that we'll call "collegial suggestions." It is fine, and not uncommon, to disagree with a reviewer's suggestions. In these instances, make sure you provide a clear rationale for why you are ignoring the advice in your response. Figure 2 is an example of an author responding to feedback in a way that is both responsive and helps to clarify their authorial intent.

Comment	Response
I recommend to incorporate literature about race and gender. If you are going to study race and gender as a "predictor", then you need to explain more about why these variables are valuable. It seems to be atheortical on page 3 line 33 when without prior discussion of why demographics might matter, they are added to the question. Perhaps a little background on why you thought demographics like race and gender would make a difference?	The intent of the study was not to predict based on any of the independent variables and the reviewer comments were invaluable in illustrating that the study as originally explained did not provide a basis for prediction. Rather, the original aim was to determine whether there were any significant relationships, which is also a common use of logistic regression. The purpose of including gender, age, and race/ethnicity was to see if there was any difference in their success rates when everyone met the same academic readiness criteria. It was not to determine if those factors predicted success. The discussion was revised to explain this. The specific demographics have been made explicit up front.
On page 3 around line 40 you say a little more about why demographics are useful to examine from an outreach standpoint, so out of the hundreds of factors possible, justify why you select the ones you select. This seems to happen on page four – maybe it's minor re-ordering of info in order here.	The study did not intend to use demographics in relation to outreach or predicting success. The purpose of the demographics was only to see if there was a difference in the success rates for these groups when everyone met the same academic readiness criteria. The study has been reframed to remove any implication that the demographics were being used in a predictive capacity.

Figure 2. Responding When Feedback Requires Explanation or Clarification (Used with permission).

Be aware that this does not mean an editor will agree and might still reject your paper. We have received some revised submissions where an author disagreed with a reviewer's recommendations and laid out an argument for why they were not making the requested changes, including citations to support their position, and we have fully supported the author's right and expertise in deciding what direction they want for their own manuscripts. In a few other cases, authors have chosen to ignore the feedback on significant issues with their papers that aren't a matter of style or purpose but are a matter of quality, such as a lacking literature review or a weak or unclear methodology. This is your right as an author. If an editor decides that means it's not a fit for the journal, then perhaps another journal will have a differing perspective on it.

Responding to "Reviewer #2"

There are plenty of social media memes going around about reviewers and reviews. "Reviewer #2" is short-hand for reviewers who suggest you read the work by an author who is you, or suggest you read and incorporate their work, or suggest your study would be significantly better if it were a different study entirely, and on and on. Indeed, there may be times that you receive feedback from a reviewer that falls somewhere between questionable to absurd. We try to include some editorial guidance when we notice this happening, but we may not always catch it. In addition to providing a rationale for how you choose to respond, you should also feel free to reach out to the EiC or the handling editor if you have concerns about whether some unreasonable or silly requests will be treated as requirements for publication. This is not common, but in a few circumstances, we have gladly emailed or met with an author to discuss their questions or concerns and help navigate their manuscript through a more helpful process.

Handling Conflicting Reviews

Normally, we try to help authors deconflict reviews that provide contradictory feedback. We have implemented an expanded editorial team in part to implement a layer of quality control and communications around the review process. So, at times, we may add an "Editor's Note" or some such commentary to reviews before we send it along to reviewers, especially if the reviews are divergent. But sometimes we may not catch some details or important nuance, or you may be working with a different journal that does not actively try to resolve these contradictions. Rather than treating these as competing requirements you have to somehow satisfy simultaneously, this is an important space for author agency. You can exercise your authority in how you want to manage conflicting recommendations similar to recommendations with

which you may not agree. This may also be something where you want to consult with a colleague or mentor or reach out to the EiC or the handling editor for their guidance.

Handling Rejection

One thing we don't talk about often enough is how many of us have pieces rejected. Those of us publishing advice in this collection have had many articles rejected, and the reasons range a great deal. You may hear stories from your advisors or from others how a piece of their work that is now considered seminal or defining was rejected by multiple journals and went through many rounds or revisions before finally being published. Rejection can be hard, but whatever you do don't interpret it as a statement about your worth or whether you'll succeed or whether your paper is a good idea. Most rejections are because of fit with the journal, and some pieces can be very hard to find a home for. Actual published pieces are a small portion for all of us of the actual work we produce. You'll find you have more pieces that are rejected, in process, or even left unfinished or abandoned than the number that are published. Keep in mind that this is very common, even for those you may think are "superstars." You have to figure out what you want to keep pushing forward and what may not be worth more time then work to find the place that will give you an outlet. If you're having trouble with a piece, you may even want to email editors and ask them if they think a piece or idea could be a good fit.

Special Issues

Journals will often have special issues that are focused on a particular topic of investigation. For example, recent special issues in JCHE have included blended learning, instructional design in higher education settings, online assessment, data sciences in higher education, and virtual and remote labs. Sometimes scholars will submit an unsolicited proposal for a special issue to the editor of the journal, sometimes the editor will invite colleagues to lead a special issue on a topic they would like to see, and other times a journal may work closely with an event like a conference or research symposium to invite authors to participate in a special issue. If you are interested in proposing a special issue, we encourage you to reach out to the editor first to discuss your idea. For JCHE, we receive quite a few unsolicited proposals, and most of these are rejected because they do not align with the focus of the journal. As with submitting a paper, submitting a special issue proposal requires that you carefully research the journals and what they are publishing to see if your idea is a good fit for that journal.

Once you find a fit, a good special issue call will include a clear description of the focus, perhaps even some references or examples, and a list of topics that would fit in the issue. Clearly state what type of articles you would like to receive, such as research papers (perhaps even specific methodologies), conceptual papers, or theory-building pieces. If you plan to invite comment from other authors for discussion, make that clear as well. You also should provide a clear timeline for submissions, reviews, and final decisions; to establish these, you'll have to work closely with the editor of the journal. Special issues usually take one to two years from initiation to completion, and in some cases, you may want to provide two years if you're encouraging research that authors may not have started yet. In some cases, a special issue call may include an initial deadline for proposals to provide authors time to plan, develop, and write their studies. Once a journal has accepted your special issue proposal, the editor can guide you from there as to how submissions will be received and processed and can show you how to use their particular system.

For authors, especially for younger scholars, special issues can be great opportunities to have a higher degree of interaction with a guest editor, as sometimes they involve a proposal stage as well. Submissions for special issues should fit the general focus of the journal (e.g., for JCHE it should be situated in higher education), but the call for submissions or proposals will provide you further guidance. Make sure you read the call carefully. You should also feel free to email the lead guest editor for any questions or clarification, and you may also find you converse more with a guest editor of a special issue than happens during the regular process. If you're just starting your publication efforts, you may want to consider publishing in a special issue because of the additional interaction and scaffolding that is usually a part of special issues.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

The following represent a range of exemplary readings from JCHE. We selected these as examples of quality but also as examples of different types of submissions we receive and publish.

Exemplary Research Articles

The articles below provide an array of characteristics of exemplary research articles, including: 1) an example of strong qualitative research and methodological variety, 2) exemplary study design, 3) exploring instructional features, 4) superb theoretical framing (or grounding), and 5) high quality research on topics in emerging areas.

1. Muljana, P. S., & Luo, T. (2020). Utilizing learning analytics in course design: Voices from instructional designers in higher education. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education,* https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-020-09262-y

An example of strong qualitative research and methodological variety, this article also focuses on a topic that I think is an important discussion and reflects how JCHE publishes not just research on, say, classes or implementations in higher education, but includes work on instructional design and development in the higher ed context.

2. Oh, E. G., Huang, W. H. D., Mehdiabadi, A. H., & Boreum, J. (2018). Facilitating critical thinking in asynchronous online discussion: Comparison between peer- and instructor-redirection. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education,* 30, 489–509. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-018-9180-6

This is a very well-designed study moving beyond a focus on "things" to what works and how in an online learning environment.

3. Oyarzun, B., Stefaniak, J., Bol, L., & Morrison, G. (2018). Effects of learner-to-learner interactions on social presence, achievement and satisfaction. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 30*(1), 154–175. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-017-9157-x

Types of interaction and social presence are some of the most robust areas of research in online education, and this paper is a good example exploring the effects of these instructional features. It also is a nice way for me to pay some historical homage to Gary Morrison, who shepherded JCHE as the editor-in-chief for many years and on whose giant shoulders I stand, and to Jill Stefaniak, who served as Associate Editor for many years with Gary, MJ Bishop, and me and was instrumental in the journal achieving the success it has today.

4. Schumacher, C., & Ifenthaler, D. (2018). The importance of students' motivational dispositions for designing learning analytics. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 30*(3), 599–619. https://doi.org /10.1007/s12528-018-9188-y

Superb theoretical framing (or grounding) with clear focus, well-defined constructs, strong literature review, clear research questions and rationale for these, a well-aligned methodology, and clear presentation and discussion of the data and findings.

5. Tawfik, A. A., Schmidt, M., & Hooper, C. P. (2020). Role of conjecture mapping in applying a game-based strategy towards a case library: A view from educational design research. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 32*(3), 655–681. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-020-09251-1

Another high-quality example of research on a topic that is an emerging area.

Exemplary Conceptual or Theoretical Papers

These articles in this section are both excellent examples of conceptual papers, a form of research-grounded intellectual exploration we see too little of today and even fewer reflecting as much rigor.

1. Hannafin, M. J., & Land, S. M. (2000). Technology and student-centered learning in higher education: Issues and practices. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 12*(1), 3–30. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03032712
2. Jonassen, D. H. (1995). Computers as cognitive tools: Learning *with* technology, not *from* technology. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 6*(2), 40. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02941038

Exemplary Editorials

1. Reeves, T. C., Herrington, J., & Oliver, R. (2005). Design research: A socially responsible approach to instructional technology research in higher education. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 16*(2), 96. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02961476

Some papers are more about setting the future direction or re-direction of the field. We selected this one because it is an influential piece that serves as an example of the purpose editorials can serve and because we would like to see JCHE reflect this direction more.

2. Ross, S. M., & Morrison, G. R. (2012). Constructing a deconstructed campus: Instructional design as vital bricks and mortar. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 24*(2), 119–131. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-012-9056-0

We are at our finest when we are publishing not just quality research but also actively engaged in transparent deliberation, and this article as well as this entire issue is a good example of research-grounded deliberation.

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Reeves, T. C., & Lin, L. (2020). The research we have is not the research we need. *Education Technology Research and Development,* 68, 1991–2001. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-020-09811-3

Turner, J. (2018a). Introduction, theoretical framework, and the problem statement. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, *31*(1), 103–106. https://doi.org/10.1002/piq.21271

Turner, J. R. (2018b). Literature review. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, *31*(2), 113–117. https://doi.org/10.1002/piq.21275

Turner, J. R. (2018c). Tell me how you got those numbers: A review of the methodology section. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, *31*(3), 219–223. https://doi.org/10.1002/piq.21286

Turner, J. R. (2019a). Tell me what you found, not what it means: A review of the results section. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, *31*(4), 323–326. https://doi.org/10.1002/piq.21291

Turner, J. R. (2019b). The essential components for an article, with examples. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, *32*(2), 105–110. https://doi.org/10.1002/piq.21315

Creating and Sharing Knowledge in Digital Learning in Teacher Education

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INTRODUCTION

The *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education* (JDLTE) has been supported by the *International Society for Technology in Education* (ISTE) for more than 36 years. JDLTE is a refereed journal published in partnership with the ISTE Teacher Education Network (TEN). The journal began in 1984 as a newsletter for the ISTE teacher education SIG (SIGTE) and moved to journal status in 1988 under the name *Journal of Computing in Teacher Education* (JCTE). In the following years, the JCTE grew steadily in both submissions and subscribers and the scope of the journal moved from computers in teacher education toward learning and pedagogy enhanced by technology in teacher education. Thus, in 2014 the editorial board voted to change the name of the journal from the *Journal of Computing in Teacher Education* to the *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*. For all 36 years, this journal has focused upon research and practice on technology in teacher education and the "new" name for the journal reflects the constant growth and change in technology use in teacher education. Although the content of research and practice has changed significantly over the life of the JDLTE, the focus on both inservice and preservice teacher education has remained constant.

The JDLTE (https://www.iste.org/learn/edtech-research) is a research/practice journal published by Taylor & Francis that focuses on work in the areas of both inservice and preservice teacher education related to digital learning. Readers include higher education faculty and graduate students and practicing teachers and technology leaders at the PK-12 level. The number of readers and author submissions has grown steadily as the integration of digital learning has expanded at both the PK-12 and higher education levels. The journal is published quarterly and each issue includes an editors' column and a president's column written by the president of the ISTE Teacher Education Network (TEN). The JDTLE is currently considered a Quartile 3 journal with an H-Index of 17. The yearly acceptance rate for the journal has typically been around 20% but this rate dropped to 13% in 2020.

The JDLTE welcomes manuscripts that make significant contributions to advancing knowledge and understanding in using digital technologies in teacher preparation and the professional development of inservice and preservice teachers. Articles published in JDLTE are primarily reports of original, rigorously conducted research employing diverse epistemologies, methodologies, and disciplinary perspectives. However, articles that detail scholarly practice with an appropriate blend of practical classroom application and a solid theoretical research framework are also of interest, especially those that detail innovative approaches to teaching with technology in PK-12 schools that can result in new practices for teacher education programs. The JDLTE readership also welcomes manuscripts that introduce teacher educators to new theoretical or methodological perspectives that lead to a better understanding of trends and issues around technology and

teacher education. In addition, the JDLTE welcomes literature reviews and meta-analysis papers that synthesize results of multiple studies within the context of a systematic review.

Notably, the ISTE TEN sponsors the JDLTE Outstanding Research Paper Award that is presented annually at the ISTE conference to recognize the author(s) of one article from the prior volume year that has a high probability to advance the field of technology and teacher education. This award was established starting with volume 29 and has since been awarded annually. Each year in early January the editors review all articles published during the prior volume year and nominate 3-4 articles based on selection criteria that includes: 1) potential impact and contribution, 2) innovativeness and forward thinking, and 3) ability to generalize or be used and applied by teacher educators. The nominated articles are forwarded to the ISTE TEN Research Paper Award Selection Committee who rate the articles using the defined selection criteria. By the end of January, the chair of the selection committee contacts the JDLTE editors and the TEN president with the name of the recommended award-winning article. The process is finalized by early February when the ISTE TEN president and the JDLTE editors notify the winning author(s) and arrangements are made for the award to be presented at the annual ISTE conference typically held in June. The winners of the JDLTE Outstanding Research Paper Award also present their work and any updates to that work during a one-hour research session at the conference.

The first JDLTE Outstanding Research Paper Award titled, *What knowledge is of most worth: Teacher knowledge for 21st century learning* written by Kristen Kereluik, Punya Mishra, Chris Fahnoe and Laura Terry was awarded in 2013 and provides a good example of expectations for an award paper. The paper offers a review and synthesis of 15 reports, books, and articles on 21st Century knowledge frameworks and identifies common themes and knowledge domains that describe the kinds of knowledge important in the 21st Century and the authors make detailed conclusions and recommendations at the end of the article specific to teacher education. A sampling of articles that have won the JDLTE Outstanding Research Paper Award can be found in the exemplary readings section at the end of this chapter.

Special issues are also planned in the JDLTE around current topics of interest and a special issue is published about every two years. Topics for special issues are typically generated and discussed by members of the ISTE TEN leadership and the JDTLE editorial review board. Then, the editors use this generated list to choose a topic for the special issue based on current trends and gaps identified in the relevant literature base. Depending on the topic selected, a guest editor(s) is invited to review and select articles for the special issue. Recent special issues have focused on mobile technology, makerspaces, and computational thinking and coding for learning. A few exemplary articles published in JDLTE special issues are listed in the exemplary readings section at the end of this chapter.

The JDLTE editorial review board consists of prominent teacher educators from around the world who are experts in the field of instructional or educational technology. Members of the review board must have a strong publication record in order to be selected to serve as reviewers for the journal. Individuals interested in becoming part of the editorial review board are asked to submit a vita to the editors and then the editors select new members based on a thorough examination of the individual's accomplishments and publication record in technology and teacher education. The JDLTE does not impose term limits for the members on the editorial review board, instead the editors review the membership each year and there is a natural transition that occurs with members joining, stepping down, or continuing. In sum, the JDLTE has a group of committed and experienced reviewers who provide detailed and valuable feedback to authors.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The submission process for the Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education (JDLTE) begins with signing in or setting up an account with ScholarOne Manuscripts (https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jdlte). There are no submission fees, publication fees, or page charges for this journal. It is important that authors understand that Taylor & Francis uses specialized software to screen papers for unoriginal material and that by submitting your paper to JDLTE you are agreeing to originality checks during the peer-review and production processes. Articles should be approximately 4,000-6,000 words, which includes the 120-word abstract but not references and figures. It is also important to use American spelling style consistently throughout the manuscript. Authors should not submit material that is currently being considered by another journal. Research articles will be assessed on these criteria;

- Importance of the topic
- Definition of the research problem
- Appropriateness of the design and approach
- Clarity of hypotheses or research questions

- Appropriateness and definition of the population
- Reliability of critical measures
- Appropriateness of descriptive statistics and data analyses
- Clarity and accurateness of data tables and figures
- Relationship of data presented to conclusions drawn
- Acknowledgment of alternative interpretations of the data
- Support of recommendations by the research findings
- Clarity of applications of findings to practice

Manuscript Submission

Most manuscripts submitted to the JDLTE are organized and formatted using the following structure: title page, abstract (120 words or less); keywords; main text introduction, literature review, methodology (that may include: research context, participants, instruments, data analysis, etc.), results/findings, discussion, conclusion, acknowledgments, grant funded (details required by funder), biographical information on contributors (200 words or less), references, appendices (as appropriate), table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages), and figures, figure captions (as a list). With each submission, one author will be identified as the corresponding author. Authors' affiliations are the affiliations where the research was conducted. If any of the named co-authors moves affiliation during the peer-review process, the new affiliation can be given as a footnote.

Preliminary Editorial Review

One JDLTE editor is assigned the manuscript when it is submitted to determine if the manuscript topic fits with the journal's mission and that the research and writing is of high quality. The manuscript is also checked for blind review. If any of these areas are deemed inadequate the manuscript may be returned to the author without further review. The author is then free to revise and resubmit to the JDLTE or submit the manuscript to another journal. If it is determined that the manuscript is worthy of peer review, the manuscript is prepared for blind peer review and is intentionally assigned to three reviewers who have expertise in the area(s) addressed by the research and/or practice detailed in the manuscript. At this point, the manuscript is ready for peer review.

Peer Review Process

To begin the peer review process, each reviewer receives the manuscript and an evaluation form from the editors indicating the date when the review must be returned. Typically, a reviewer is given 3 to 4 weeks to complete a review. If the review cannot be completed in the given time frame, it is reassigned to another reviewer and an additional 3-4 weeks may be needed to complete the blind peer review process. Along with the manuscript, reviewers receive an evaluation form to focus their comments and provide ratings on a four-point scale that include the qualifiers poor, fair, good and excellent. Review evaluation criteria include significance, quality of writing, technical correctness, and overall quality. Reviewers must also select one of the following to guide the editors' publication decisions: Publish as Is, Publish with Minor Revisions, Reconsider after Major Revisions, or Decline to Publish. In addition to completing the evaluation form, reviewers provide detailed comments and suggestions for the author(s). Manuscript reviews containing up to 1000 words in the comment section are common. This means that authors who submit to the JDLTE can be assured that whether or not their manuscripts are accepted for publication they will receive timely and thoughtful feedback that can be used to strengthen their manuscripts for revision and publication in the JDLTE or for revision and submission to another journal. Once all the reviews are submitted the manuscript moves to the editors who make the final decision on publication.

Editorial Decision

Once the blind peer review process is concluded the editors meet to read the reviews during monthly editor meetings. After reading and discussing each of the reviews editors collectively make one of three decisions: Accept, Conditional Accept, or Reject. In the case of an "Accept" decision the editors may still request some minor revisions for the manuscript. Manuscripts that receive a "Conditional Accept" decision will typically need to make major revisions that may include extending and updating the literature review, strengthening the theoretical/conceptual framework description, clarifying the research methodology, reworking the data analysis, following APA formatting requirements, and/or making stronger connections between literature and the findings in the discussion section. All revisions made to a revised manuscript should be described in a detailed separate letter back to the editors. After the revised manuscript is resubmitted, one editor reads the manuscript to ensure that the reviewers' concerns and suggestions were adequately addressed in the revised document. Authors of manuscripts that receive a "Reject" are given thoughtful and detailed feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their manuscript which might prove useful for revising the piece for submission to another journal.

Once a manuscript is accepted it will be sent to the production team at Taylor & Francis through the ScholarOne system for copy editing and formatting according to the journal's specifications and then published (both online and print format). Authors also receive a standard contract from Taylor & Francis in which copyright is transferred to the journal. This is a necessary step that allows publishing companies to publish an article and make it available to the intended and potential readership.

The average time from manuscript submission to editorial decision is three to six months. In 2020, the average time from submission to the final editors' decision on a manuscript was 55 days. The actual publication of the article in a journal issue is typically six to 12 months from start to finish. Once articles are published with Taylor & Francis the authors can view, download, and check the article's metrics on the website. Authors receive three print copies of the journal issue that contains their article. Authors are also sent an access free e-prints link to share the publication with friends and colleagues.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE TO AUTHORS

There are several things to keep in mind when sending a manuscript to the JDLTE. Always select the journal for your manuscript carefully and prepare it to follow the guidelines specific to the journal. The following sections highlight a few best practices that authors might consider before submitting their manuscripts to the JDLTE. This advice is shared in order to simplify the process and to make it as transparent as possible.

Journal Fit

Each academic journal has a specific mission and audience. Authors need to select the journal that best provides the opportunity to share their work with a knowledgeable and interested readership. In order to find a good match, authors must read and understand recent work published in the journal and determine how their work fits its scope (Niederhauser et al., 2004). Although this may seem obvious, many beginning researchers neglect this important part of the process. The JDLTE, for example, serves a readership of scholars/practitioners in the field of technology in teacher education. The readership is very focused. Authors whose work is in the area of technology in education will find that unless their work addresses issues around teacher education, the JDLTE is probably not a good fit for their manuscript. One good test of fit is to look at your manuscript's reference list. If your manuscript has cited articles published in the JDLTE, it is quite possible that this journal is a natural fit for your work.

Be sure to visit the JDLTE website (https://www.iste.org/learn/edtech-research) and read the "instructions for authors'' section carefully. Never hesitate to contact the editors with questions about the submission process or the journal fit. It is helpful if authors review articles related to their research study that are already published in the journal and use those examples as models for formatting and style. More importantly, being familiar with what has already been published in the journal ensures that your work is grounded in literature familiar to reviewers, builds on the findings of prior research, and adds to what is already known about the identified line of research.

Common Mistakes

Common mistakes authors make when submitting to the JDLTE typically align with their lack of attention to the development and details of what the editors consider critical sections of the manuscript. It is critical that authors begin by locating the important and most recent literature to provide the necessary background needed for readers to establish familiarity with the context of the study. Connections to this literature base should be revisited in the discussion and/or conclusion sections of the manuscript. Make sure the research design and methodology approaches are adequately described for the reader. One common response from our reviewers is that more detailed description is needed in the methodology section of the manuscripts they review. When reporting results from your data analysis be sure to organize the results section around the research questions posed. Sometimes researchers also have a tendency to overstate the findings beyond the scope of the individual study. Making exaggerated conclusions or claims will ensure that reviewers will make requests for significant revisions.

To provide a little more context around one of the common mistakes mentioned above, a clear explicit, and detailed methodology section is essential for a positive review. Authors need to be sure to use standard headings for quantitative and qualitative research projects and relevant information under each. According to Niederhauser, Wetzel & Lindstrom (2004) it is highly recommended to use example headings from your target journal, so reviewers do not have to look for specific information because headings are not used appropriately. This mistake can lead to confusion and subsequently result in lower evaluations from the reviewers reading your manuscript.

Although manuscripts are not rejected based on English language usage alone, it is beneficial for authors to have their manuscripts professionally edited if needed. Taylor & Francis does offer additional editing support (https://www.tandfeditingservices.com/) for pre-submission manuscript preparation that will help improve the quality of any manuscript submitted. Some of these services include English language editing, translation with editing, manuscript formatting, plagiarism check, and technical review.

Final Steps in Article Preparation

Some of the final steps to complete before submitting the manuscript, like refining your title, selecting keywords, and writing your abstract, are key to a successful submission. Paying close attention to features like these are important as it will make a difference when readers try to search for an article about a certain topic and to then anticipate what they might learn from the article once located. According to Taylor & Francis (2021) a good title should be concise, accurate, and informative. It should tell the reader exactly what the article is about by incorporating keywords so that the article is more likely to be included in the results for relevant online searches. The keywords should be within the first 65 characters of your title so that they are visible in the search engine results. Authors should use the following strategies to select keywords for your manuscript:

- Read through your paper and highlight any key terms or phrases that are most relevant to the focus of your work
- Draw up a shortlist
- Try searching with your keywords to ensure the results fit with your article and so you can see how useful they would be to others
- Narrow down your keywords to ensure they are as accurate as possible
- Review your final list and ask yourself, will these keywords be most effective at indexing my article online?

Use of APA Guidelines

Finally, it is critical that authors write and format the manuscript according to APA Publication Manual (currently 7th edition) guidelines. For example, changes in APA 7th edition aim to support inclusive and bias free language and endorse gender neutral pronouns. Manuscripts will automatically be returned if not formatted using the APA 7th edition guidelines and inevitably delay the reviewing process. As we enter our 36th year of publication, we are proud of the contributions to the advancement of knowledge in the field of technology in teacher education for the past 35 years and look forward to the continuing contributions of JDLTE authors, reviewers, and readers in the years to come.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

This section highlights some of the exemplary articles that are published in the JDLTE. The following three sections highlight outstanding research papers, articles published in special issues, and examples of editors' columns published in each issue.

Exemplary Articles

JDLTE research provides an important function to the members and leaders of ISTE TEN and others who subscribe to the journal. The JDLTE Outstanding Research Paper Award recognizes outstanding research published during the prior volume year with the intent that the selected article will advance the field of technology and teacher education. The articles that follow represent a few of the exemplary articles that have received the JDLTE Outstanding Research Paper Award.

1. Buss, R. B., Foulger, T. S., Wetzel, K., & Lindsey, L. (2018). Preparing teachers to integrate technology into K–12 instruction II: Examining the effects of technology-infused methods courses and student teaching. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *34*(3), 134–150. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2018.1437852
2. Clausen, J. M., Finsness, E. S., Borthwick, A. C., Graziano, K. J., Carpenter, J. P., & Herring, M. (2019). TPACK leadership diagnostic tool: Adoption and implementation by teacher education leaders. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *35*(1), 54–72. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2018.1537818special issue
3. Kereluik, K., Mishra, P., Fahnoe, C., & Terry, L. (2013). What knowledge is of most worth? *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *29*(4), 127–140. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2013.10784716

Exemplary Special Issue Articles

A JDLTE special issue is published every two years and focuses on emerging topics of interest in technology and teacher education. Special issue topics are selected by ISTE TEN members and the editorial review board. A sampling of exemplary articles published in JDLTE special issues follows.

1. Bull, G., Garofalo, J., & Hguyen, N. R. (2020). Thinking about computational thinking: Origins of computational thinking in educational computing. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *36*(1), 6–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2019.1694381
2. Husbye, N. E., & Elsener, A. A. (2013). To move forward, we must be mobile. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *30*(2), 46–51. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2013.10784726
3. Kjällander, S., Åkerfeldt, A., Mannila, L., & Parnes, P. (2018). Makerspaces across settings: Didactic design for programming in formal and informal teacher education in the Nordic countries. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *34*(1), 18–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2017.1387831

Exemplary Editorials

An editors' column is included in every issue of the JDLTE. These columns provide thought-provoking commentary about current events and emerging topics around technology and teacher education. At times, guest editors are invited to write the column either with the editors or by themselves for a special issue. Several exemplary editorials are provided below.

1. Lindstrom, D., Thompson, A. D., & Schmidt-Crawford, D. A. (2017). The maker movement: Democratizing STEM education and empowering learners to shape their world. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *33*(3), 89–90. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2017.1316153
2. Schmidt-Crawford, D. A., Lindstrom, D., & Thompson, A. D. (2018). Coding for teacher education: A recurring theme that requires our attention. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *34*(4), 198–200. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2018.1499992

3. Schmidt-Crawford, D. A., Lindstrom, D., & Thompson, A. D. (2019). Celebrating 35 years of JDLTE. *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *35*(1), 4–5. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2019.1577071
4. Thompson, A. D., & Mishra, P. (2007). Breaking news: TPCK becomes TPACK! *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *24*(2), 38–64. https://doi.org/10.1080/10402454.2007.10784583
5. Thompson, A. D., Schmidt-Crawford, D. A., & Lindstrom, D. (2015). Are we finished yet? *Journal of Digital Learning in Teacher Education*, *31*(4), 133. https://doi.org/10.1080/21532974.2015.1090286

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Advice for Publishing in the field of K-12 Online and Blended Learning: *Journal of Online Learning Research* and Beyond

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INTRODUCTION

Started as an idea in 2010, the *Journal of Online Learning Research* was launched in 2015 with the support of the Association for the Advancement of Computers in Education (AACE) as a venue for those in the field of educational technology and learning design who focus their research on K-12 online and blended learning. In 2010, senior scholars and thought leaders in the area sought to start an open access journal focused on K-12 online learning. Instrumental in this start-up were Drs. Rick Ferdig, Cathy Cavanaugh, Niki Davis, Susan Lowes, and Joe Freidhoff, among others. Their mission was to create a peer-reviewed, international journal that would be centered on K-12 pedagogy and policy in online and blended environments. They looked to create a new venue that would include traditional research articles but also highlight case studies and more practitioner-based articles that would share progress within the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of approaches related to online learning at elementary and secondary education levels.

However, given existing constraints at the time, it was difficult to get this project off the ground. After a few years, in 2013, at the Society for Information Technology in Teacher Education (SITE) annual conference, Dr. Kathryn Kennedy took the lead in approaching AACE for their help and support with getting the fledgling journal off the ground. Without Kathryn's tenacity and vision, along with the generous commitment and support of AACE, our community would lack an open access, freely accessible outlet for peer-reviewed research specific to K-12 online and blended teaching and learning. JOLR is beyond grateful for the organization's ongoing assistance and for providing the necessary infrastructure required to make the journal a reality.

The mission of JOLR is to provide an avenue for peer-reviewed research devoted to the theoretical, empirical, and pragmatic understanding of technologies and their impact on K-12 online and blended learning environments. The journal centers on all facets of online teaching and learning at the elementary and secondary education levels. Topics range from focusing on student outcomes in online settings, teacher development and preparation for online/blended learning environments, the implications of instructional design, the function of personalized learning approaches, meeting the needs for student support in K-12 online learning, among many others.

JOLR seeks to serve not only researchers but also educators who research, practice, design, and/or administer in K-12 schooling in online settings. The journal also seeks to serve those educators who have chosen to blend online learning tools and strategies in their in-person classrooms. As a result, JOLR is intended to be both theoretical and practical. While each research article is critically-reviewed to ensure publication of rigorous and thoughtful research, contributors should include pragmatic implications for research, policy, and practice. Since its inception, JOLR aims to be both international and interdisciplinary, publishing research from multiple fields and disciplines that have a shared goal of improving K-12 education worldwide. In fact, approximately two years ago, an international section was added at the suggestion of Dr. Michael Barbour. Although it has had somewhat limited success, the goal is to work with international authors and highlight articles that focus on online and blended learning with primary and secondary students in international contexts. Thus far, JOLR has featured research from such countries as South Korea, India, and Brazil.

Special Issues in JOLR

JOLR typically publishes one special issue per year. Prior special issues have included the following topics:

- Inclusion in Online Learning Environments (2020)
- Blended and Online Practices for Personalized Learning (2019)
- Instructional Design in K-12 Online and Blended Learning Environments (2018)
- Describing Online Learning Programs and Practices that Serve Diverse Learners (2018)
- Connecting Research and Practice to Understand Efficacy in K-12 Blended Learning (2017)
- Supporting Students in K-12 Online and Blended Learning Environments (2016)
- Research on Professional Development for Teachers in K-12 Online and Blended Learning (2016)

Special issue topics offer the chance to bring together work dedicated to addressing a particular area within the broader field of K-12 online and blended learning. JOLR often solicits scholars to guest edit special issues given a particular focus of study that is relevant to the field. The journal also accepts proposals for special issues that are of interest to potential guest editors.

Journal Metrics and Editorial Roles

JOLR currently has an acceptance rate of 25.4%. It is indexed in Google Scholar, ERIC, LearnTechLib, and is working on adding additional indexes. Since its inception, JOLR has had two co-editors to help distribute the workload of getting a new journal off the ground. Recently, a search for new editors concluded, and JOLR looks forward to having them join in the coming year. Editors typically serve renewable three year terms upon the approval of the SITE executive committee. The Editorial Review Board consists of senior scholars in the field that were identified when JOLR began. Reviewers also play a vital role in the success of JOLR. The journal is fortunate to have a dedicated group who serve as ongoing reviewers. Those who are interested in becoming reviewers for JOLR should contact the Editors.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

JOLR welcomes research articles for double-blind peer review and follows a similar process to other journals in the field. To fit the JOLR's scope and aims, articles must relate to online and/or blended learning in the elementary or secondary school setting. There are a wide array of topics this can include, but there needs to be a connection to teaching or learning at the pre-kindergarten through high school level. This can include teacher education for online settings. However, articles that only connect to online teaching or learning within the higher education context are better suited for other outlets and are not sent out for peer-review by JOLR. This is the largest reason for desk-rejection of submissions.

Related research articles can be theoretical in nature; however, theoretical arguments or literature reviews should move beyond simple summary. Such articles should promote new understandings from concise arguments and reviews. They can also be empirical, focusing on qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methodologies. Any empirical article, but particularly those from a qualitative framework, should make strong attempts at highlighting data and data analyses, rather than simply discussing outcomes or providing one exemplary quote as evidence of outcomes. Each article, whether theoretical or empirical, should contain pragmatic implications for policy, research, and/or practice. Finally, as mentioned, the intent is for JOLR to be international in scope and include global representation as much as possible. To aid in this goal, authors should refrain from using locale-centric abbreviations or acronyms or make sure that they clearly define such terms.

Due to JOLR's availability in electronic format, there are no strict requirements for manuscript length. However, authors should plan on approximately 5,000-9,000 words per manuscript (not including references). Much shorter or longer manuscripts will be addressed individually. Through the generosity of AACE, JOLR provides open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge.

After an initial editor review to determine fit for the journal and that the manuscript meets the journal guidelines (academic writing, APA formatting, etc.), electronic submissions are sent out for peer review. To ensure double-blind review, the authors should avoid any reference to their names or affiliations in the main body of the manuscript. The assignment of three reviewers is based on the current reviewer content expertise, their current assignment load, and also the number of manuscripts received throughout the year by each selected reviewer.

Once assigned, reviewers evaluate the manuscript based on the following criteria:

- *Importance of Topic*. The topic addressed should be relevant to current issues, problems, or opportunities in the field.
- *Clarity of Presentation*. The manuscript should be well written and present clear, easy to follow arguments.
- *Quality of Literature Review*. There should be a direct connection from the work described to the broader research and practice community.
- *Quality of Research Methodology/Analysis*. While not every research article will have a methodology or data analysis section, those that do should outline the appropriate methodology, provide data and data results, and then follow with a discussion of results.
- *Implications for Research, Policy, and/or Practice.* As mentioned, JOLR is committed to helping bridge the gap between research and practice. Articles are evaluated on their ability to tie research to existing practice, policy, or future research.
- *Comments to the Author*. Reviewers are asked to provide comments that are critical yet encouraging directly to the author(s).
- *Comments to the Editor*. Reviewers are not required to make comments directly to the editor, but they have the opportunity to do so. These comments are not made available to the author(s).

Based on their assessment of these criteria, each reviewer assigns one of four recommendations:

1. Accept
2. Accept with Minor Revisions
3. Accept with Major Revisions
4. Reject

All reviews are then evaluated by the editors, and a final decision is made. It should be noted that very rarely is an article accepted without the need for revision. Authors should expect to complete at least one round of revisions, and at times, it may be necessary to complete multiple rounds.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE TO AUTHORS

Conducting scholarly research can take several months if not years. Unfortunately, these efforts may not result in publication in peer-reviewed journals. It is even harder to publish research that actually has an impact because too often published research is largely ignored by others in the field (Arnesen et al., 2020). While publication is never a guarantee, there are certain steps researchers can take to increase both the likelihood of publication and that once published, the article will gain the attention of others in the field. Assisting potential authors is the focus of the discussion that follows.

Ask Interesting Questions

Researchers' personal interests, experiences, and background often influence the research questions they choose to address. However, personal interest is insufficient, and researchers need to ask questions that can actually move the field forward. For instance, many scholars have begun to teach online due to social distancing measures to slow the spread of COVID-19. These scholars may want to compare learning outcomes in their online courses to those in their previous in-person courses. It is only natural to want to compare a new phenomenon with that which is more familiar. Surrey and Ensminger (2001) added that these types of comparison studies are popular because they are relatively easy to conceptualize and conduct. The need for this type of comparative research was especially high when K-12 online learning was still new and there was "an early policy need to show that learning online was just as good as, or better than, learning in classrooms in brick-and-mortar schools" (Lowes & Lin, 2018, p. 92). More recently, research has found that online students are less likely to pass an online course compared to an in-person course (Freidhoff, 2020). Additionally, research has also indicated that full-time online students tend to have smaller learner gains than their in-person peers (Woodworth et al., 2015).

This type of comparison research is not meritless and can even be very important when done well. However, in the field of K-12 online learning, this line of inquiry has already been done or is being done by organizations that are able to conduct nuanced analyses using large data sets. If interested, see quality examples such as the annual effectiveness reports conducted by Michigan Virtual (Freidhoff, 2020). However, comparisons that are too simplistic are unlikely to make an important contribution to the field. Often this research ends up focusing on the delivery medium while ignoring the differences in the actual methods that were used to teach and learn. Even when these types of studies provide some insight into the instructional methods used in the online environment, they tend to provide little insight into the methods used in the "traditional" in-person learning environment. While there are some exceptions, such studies also tend to ignore differences in student populations. As a result, the findings from these types of simple head-to-head horse race research studies tend to simply identify the winner and the loser between the two without addressing any of the underlying causes (spurious or actual).

Researchers should follow Ferdig, Cavanaugh, and Freidhoff's (2015) recommendation, "[W]e shouldn't spend time focusing our research energy on comparison studies. Rather, we need to understand when and where and why certain initiatives worked or failed to work" (p. 52). Rather than asking "Does K-12 online learning work?" it is better to ask "Does this specific online learning strategy appear to work for this specific student population?" Similarly, since research has repeatedly found that online learning tends to have high attrition rates (Freidhoff, 2020), it is important to ask which types of support do specific student populations require to be successful (Rose et al., 2015). Additionally, being an online teacher or administrator requires different skills, and additional research is needed that provides insights into how best to prepare and develop online teacher and administrator skills.

Identify Relevant Frameworks

Theoretical frameworks and models can provide important insights into which questions are important to answer. Graham, Henrie, and Gibbons (2013) make the distinction between frameworks that explore and those that explain. Explore frameworks attempt to define and categorize the meaningful variables that make up a phenomenon (see Figure 1). This is the most common type of framework in a relatively new field, as researchers begin to define and make sense of the field. When successful, explore frameworks can provide the field with the common vocabulary that is a prerequisite to coordinate research efforts.

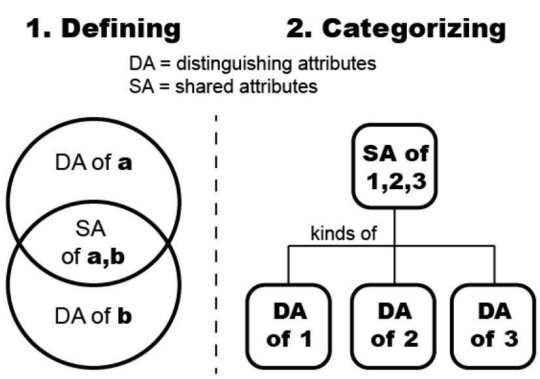

Figure 1. Visual representation created by Graham et al. (2013) to show the two types of explore frameworks.

The goal of explore frameworks is not to create a comprehensive list of everything that exists but rather to draw researcher's attention to those variables that appear to be the most important. Whetten (1989) explained, "Two criteria exist for judging the extent to which we have included the 'right' factors: *comprehensiveness* (i.e., are all relevant factors included?) and *parsimony* (i.e., should some factors be deleted because they add little additional value to our understanding?)" (p. 490). Once an explore framework has been published, it is important that additional research is conducted to address issues related to the framework's comprehensiveness and parsimony. It is also important to note that these elements can change depending on the context. For instance, a framework may be found to be comprehensive and parsimonious in a cyber charter school but not in an online credit-recovery program or blended environment. As a result, in-depth case studies in a variety of contexts can help in identifying the factors that may be important for future researchers to examine.

Explain frameworks go beyond defining and categorizing variables to creating hypotheses for how variables impact each other and other desirable outcomes. Graham et al. (2013) explained that while explore frameworks attempt to answer "What exists?" explain frameworks attempt to answer "Why does this happen?" Once an explore framework has been published, it is important that researchers carefully examine and test the hypotheses. When hypotheses are found to be incomplete or incorrect, researchers can make the necessary corrections. At times, this requires the development of validated instruments that allow researchers to quantitatively measure, compare, and correlate variables. While some validated instruments exist (Archibald et al., 2020; Graham et al., 2019; Liu et al., 2010), in general they are lacking in the field of K-12 online and blended learning. Although developing and validating instruments can be difficult and time consuming, they can be critical in the advancement of our field and unlock new lines of research.

Researchers examining K-12 online and blended learning research commonly use frameworks that were created in higher education or in-person settings. Whitten (1989) warned that each framework is developed within contextual factors that "set the boundaries of generalizability, and as such constitute the range of the theory" (p. 492). K-12 online and blended learning researchers should take caution when applying outside frameworks. When applied carefully these frameworks can provide important insights and add some legitimacy to the research. However, frameworks created for in-person learning are unlikely to explain aspects of teaching and learning that are unique to the online environment. Likewise, frameworks that were created for online learning in higher education largely ignore some aspects such as parental involvement that are highly impactful on student learning at the K-12 level. Additionally, editors of seven journals including JOLR warned against *conceptual dilution* that can occur when a framework is stretched well beyond what it was originally created for (Bull et al., 2019). As a result, there are times when it is best to create new frameworks specifically for K-12 online and blended learning. However, too many frameworks describing similar phenomena can actually divide researchers' attention and efforts. As a result, before creating a new framework, it is important that researchers first have a solid understanding of existing research and frameworks as explained in the next section.

Understand and Contribute to the Academic Conversation Before Trying to Contribute

Too often, authors submit manuscripts to JOLR without making sufficient effort to situate their work in the larger body of research. Members of the K-12 online and blended learning community have been publishing research for decades, and too often researchers fail to acknowledge previous, relevant research. Sigismund Huff (2016) explained that publishing scholarly research is analogous to joining a conversation:

> Fortunately everyone already knows how to be part of a conversation, even those of us who wish we had more social skills. At a party, we gravitate toward talk that interests us, and we can see that conversationalists first listen to understand what has been said before trying to make a contribution of their own. In other words, most of us already understand the importance of coordinating out interests with the interests of others. (p. 241)

Whetten (1989) pointed out that when conducting research to join the scholarly conversation, the goal should be to make a contribution that is both incremental and interesting. He added that when a researcher attempts to add too much too quickly, he/she may inadvertently be attempting to start a new conversation, one that only makes sense to the author. Within the larger conversation of K-12 online and blended learning, there are many sub-conversations. JOLR special issues can be a helpful introduction to some of these sub-conversations. In addition, the 50 chapters within the second edition of the *Handbook of Research on K-12 Online and Blended Learning*'s (Kennedy & Ferdig, 2018) provide a helpful review of the existing research. Arnesen, Hveem, Short, West, and Barbour (2019) also offer a useful analysis of K-12 online learning articles published across two decades. For JOLR specifically, Hu, Arnesen, Barbour, and Leary (2019) provided an analysis of articles published in the journal between 2015 and 2018.

Provide a Rationale for Your and Future Research

When George Mallory, the famous British mountaineer, was asked "Why did you want to climb Mount Everest?" he famously quipped "Because it's there." When providing a rationale for conducting a research study, researchers often simply say, "Because it's not there." While it is important to identify and address a gap in the literature, simply conducting research because it has not yet been conducted is not a sufficient rationale. Instead researchers should explain how addressing that gap in the research could benefit students, teachers, researchers, or other stakeholders. That said, when

discussing possible implications of a research study it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the research in addressing the identified gap and avoid overstating the importance and potential impact of the research. In fact, researchers should think beyond their current research project by developing planning for a research agenda. While many can tell you about the project that they are currently working on, scholarly researchers can tell you about their current project as well the research they want to conduct for the next few years and how it all fits together. Any published research in the field of K-12 online and blended learning is important, research is more consequential when it is part of a larger research agenda, and we need more scholars with a sustained interest in the field.

Find the Right Fit and Follow the Guidelines

Even a quality manuscript will be rejected if it is submitted to the wrong journal. Authors should carefully consider the aims and scope of the journal before submitting their work. For instance, the following statement is on JOLR's homepage: "The *Journal of Online Learning Research* (JOLR) is a peer-reviewed journal devoted to the theoretical, empirical, and pragmatic understanding of technologies and their impact on pedagogy and policy in primary and secondary (K-12) online and blended environments." As noted, the most common reason an article out is not sent out for peer review is that researchers have failed to read the journal's aim, and submit research that does not examine issues related to online and blended learning at the K-12 level.

In addition to reading the journal's aims and scope, reviewing the journal's previously published articles, paying particular attention to their topics and methods, can give you a better sense if your research would be a good fit. Richard West and his graduate students also published a helpful series of articles in *Educational Technology*. Each of the 23 articles analyzed 10 years of publications in a single journal. West (2016) explained, "We've been told, and experienced ourselves, that these articles have helped to decipher the differences in the ongoing conversations in various journals, the methods preferred, and the scholars who are most respected" (p. 41). Each of the articles in the series can be obtained on West's Academia page (https://byu.academia.edu/RichardWest/Journal-Analysis-Series).

Lastly, it can be helpful to serve as a peer-reviewer for a journal. Doing so will help authors to familiarize themselves with the review criteria and help them to better prepare their manuscript for review.

Evaluate the Journal

When there are multiple journals that could be a good fit for a research manuscript, authors need to evaluate the quality of the potential journals. West and Rich (2012) proposed evaluating journals based on the following framework:

- **Rigor**: Rigor includes the standards and safeguards that result in critical reviews and decisions based on the merits of the research. The journal's acceptance rate is an indicator of rigor, but does not tell the whole story. Authors should also consider the rigor of the peer-review process and the expertise of the reviewers and editors. For instance, JOLR's reviewer panel is made up of leading K-12 online and blended learning researchers whose reviews result in a 25% acceptance rate.
- **Impact**: The impact of a publication is made up of how the extent publications contribute to the development of research, theory, and practice. A journal's ISI Impact Factor (IF) can be a helpful evaluation tool, but many quality journals in my field do not have IFs (see West & Borup, 2014). While there are many factors that help to determine how frequently an article is cited in other research, open access journals tend to be cited more frequently than paywalled articles (Li et al., 2018; Piwowar et al., 2018). JOLR does not have an ISI Impact Factor, but it is open access, allowing its research to be accessed and used by both researchers and practitioners. More articles on K-12 online and blended learning have also been published in JOLR than in any other journal (Arnesen et al., 2019).
- **Prestige**: Prestige is the esteem a researcher receives by publishing in a given journal. Prestige indicators include the quality of scholars who serve as editors or editorial board members, size of journal readerships, and affiliated professional organizations. JOLR is an official journal of the Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE), and it is the only journal focused entirely on issues surrounding K-12 online and blended learning.

Clearly Respond to Reviewers and Editors

If JOLR seems like a strong fit for your research based on the described criteria, the journal welcomes submissions from researchers and practitioners alike. Upon editorial review, editors send out appropriate manuscripts for review which generally can take between 6-8 weeks. It is important to note that as with many other journals, even if reviewers are favorable toward a particular piece, it may need to go through multiple rounds of peer-review prior to publication as part of the process. While this can be frustrating as an author, it serves to make each contribution as strong as possible. Each time reviewer comments and feedback are provided, authors should plan to address each particular issue raised by each reviewer. Authors should create a two-column table with the reviewer's comment on the left, and then an explanation of how the authors addressed each specific issue raised. It may be in some instances that there is sufficient rationale for pushing back against what a reviewer suggests. Offering an explanation and noting this in a professional manner is important. Although creating this table takes additional time, it assists both the author as well as the editors in reviewing each round of revisions and determining the extent to which the manuscript may be ready for publication having gone through the revision process. Clearly responding to reviewers' feedback as well as that from editors is a necessary skill that authors should cultivate as they engage with the process of having their work published.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

It is important to gain a strong foundation in issues related to K-12 online and blended teaching and learning prior to submitting scholarly work. One of the biggest challenges is that scholars new to K-12 online and blended learning may not realize the wealth of literature in this small, but growing field. Often authors may include literature reviews that are lacking sufficient depth or that indicate that no research has been done on a particular topic. Authors should make sure that they have done their due diligence in researching relevant scholarship and using it as a foundation to build their own work prior to submitting to either JOLR or another academic outlet.

Exemplary Articles

Examining the body of work that JOLR has published thus far, there are articles that stand out, not only as a result of their relevant topic and focus, but also for their level of writing, thoughtful application of appropriate methodologies, and growing number of citations according to Google Scholar. The following articles represent pieces that have made an important contribution to the field of K-12 online and blended learning:

1. Evmenova, A. (2018). Preparing teachers to use universal design for learning to support diverse learners. *Journal of Online Learning Research, 4*(2), 147–171. https://www.learntechlib.org/p/181969/
2. Lawrence, A. (2020). Teaching as dialogue: Toward culturally responsive online pedagogy. *Journal of Online Learning Research, 6*(1), 5–33. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/210657/
3. Lowes, S., & Lin, P. (2015). Learning to learn online: Using locus of control to help students become successful online learners. *Journal of Online Learning Research, 1*(1), 17–48. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/149845/
4. Pulham, E., Graham, C., & Short, C. (2018). Generic vs. modality-specific competencies for K-12 online and blended teaching. *Journal of Online Learning Research, 4*(1), 33–52. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/182168/
5. Rice, M., Oritz, K., Curry, T., & Petropoulos, R. (2019). A case study of a foster parent working to support a child with multiple disabilities in a full-time virtual school. *Journal of Online Learning Research, 5*(2), 145–168. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/184933/

In addition, one article published by Hu et al. (2019) examined 51 articles published between 2015 and 2018 in JOLR. The authors identified trends with regard to article topics, geography, research methods and article types, authorship, and citation frequency. This analysis may be of interest to prospective authors.

6. Hu, M., Arnesen, K., Barbour, M. K., & Leary, H. (2019). A newcomer's lens: A look at K-12 online and blended learning in the Journal of Online Learning Research. *Journal of Online Learning Research*, *5*(2), 123–144. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/195231/

Finally, using citation data obtained from Google Scholar in January 2021, the following table lists the most highly cited JOLR articles each year from 2015-2019. These articles provide a good representation of the type of research published in JOLR and potential contributors would benefit from a careful review in preparation for submitting related work.

Year	Title	Authors	Citations
2015	Learning to learn online: Using locus of control to help students become successful online learners	Lowes & Lin	49
2016	Incremental progress: Re-examining field experiences in K-12 online learning contexts	Archambault et al.	42
2017	Using blended teaching to teach blended learning: Lessons learned from pre-service teachers in an instructional methods course	Shand & Glassett Farrelly	23
2018	Preparing teachers to use Universal Design for Learning to support diverse learners	Evmenova	27
2019	Blended learning in middle school math: The question of effectiveness	Fazal & Bryant	26

Exemplary Special Issue

JOLR's most recent special issue on *Inclusion in Online Learning Environments*, led by guest editors, Kelsey Ortiz, Mary Rice, Tammy McKeown, and Delaina Tonks, was especially timely and relevant to the field. Not only has the pandemic thrust remote learning into the forefront, but meeting students' needs, particularly those with disabilities, is of critical importance. As the guest editors note, "the emerging research base about students with disabilities who are learning online suggests that many students and families struggle mightily to manage the shift in roles, responsibilities, routines, and relationships in these new settings" (p. 173). Within their special issue, they highlight the need to focus on inclusion, particularly when it comes to diverse learners in online learning environments.

1. Ortiz, K., Rice, M., McKeown, T., & Tonks, D. (2020). Inclusion in online learning environments. *Journal of Online Learning Research*, *6*(3), 171–176. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/218374/

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Publishing in the *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*: An Overview of the Aims, Processes, and Editorial Suggestions

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INTRODUCTION

The *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* (JRTE) (Print ISSN: 1539-1523; Online ISSN: 1945-0818; https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ujrt20/current) is the flagship research journal for the *International Society for Technology in Education* (ISTE). ISTE is a long-standing professional association on the forefront of educational reform and technology by providing research-based standards, certifications, online communities of practice, conferences, and rich technology-enhanced resources for the educational community. JRTE has been in publication for more than 50 years as a leader in the peer-reviewed research on technology in education and is presently published by Taylor and Francis. JRTE is currently published quarterly (four times a year); however, JRTE will be moving into bi-monthly publication (six issues a year) within the next couple of years due to the increased volume of quality manuscripts submitted to the journal. JRTE is currently led by two editors. An editorial board of carefully selected scholars serve as reviewers and offers guidance to editors through annual Editorial Board meetings. In addition, numerous carefully selected reviewers participate in the peer review process. Those interested in serving as reviewers should contact the JRTE editors.

JRTE is indexed in many of the major academic databases, including the premiere *Social Science Citation Index* (SSCI), the *Education Resources Information Center* (ERIC), and *Scopus*. JRTE's acceptance rate has fluctuated over the past several years and falls within the range of 10% to 15% since 2018. In the close of 2020, JRTE received more than 500 manuscript submissions throughout the calendar year. The aims and scope statement for JRTE was updated by the editorial board in 2018:

> *"The Journal of Research on Technology in Education (JRTE) is a premier source for high-quality, peer-reviewed research that defines the state of the art, and future horizons, of teaching and learning with technology. The terms "education" and "technology" are broadly defined. Education is inclusive of formal educational environments ranging from PK-12 to higher education, and informal learning environments, such as museums, community centers, and after-school programs. Technology refers to both software and hardware innovations, and more broadly, the application of technological processes to education.*
>
> *JRTE publishes original empirical research (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method designs), project descriptions/evaluations, systematic literature reviews (including meta-analyses), methodological reviews, policy analyses, and theoretical or conceptual positions that relate to the uses and innovative applications of technology in education. JRTE publishes the latest in research and critical analyses on technology in education for educational theorists, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers. International in scope, the journal is published quarterly by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)."*

JRTE does not favor a particular research methodology so long as the method employs the appropriate measures of rigor and addresses the assumptions of the underlying approach. JRTE has a long history of publishing social science-inspired research approaches, but with the advent of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and learning analytics, JRTE

is also welcoming computational approaches to inquiry so long as the implications for teaching and learning are clearly outlined and discussed by the authors. JRTE typically solicits leading guest editors for one special issue a year in which leaders on select topics on technology in education are recruited to host a special issue for the journal. Our past special issues have included the personalization of technology-enhanced learning environments in 2020, the application of virtual humans in education in 2021, and an upcoming issue on the COVID-19 pandemic and student engagement slated for the 2022 publication cycle. Guest editors create the call for proposals, the schedule, and make the editorial decisions in consultation with the JRTE editors. Those interested in proposing a special issue should reach out the editors.

During the past several years, JRTE has received manuscripts on a wide-range of cutting-edge technology in education topics that use rigorous research methods to answer socially-responsible and relevant research questions (Reeves, 2000). Some recent topics include computer science education and computational thinking, maker-spaces and the maker movement, technology integration and leadership, technology-related professional development, educational robotics, social media and online communities, educational games, and scholarship focusing on students, in-service teachers, preservice teachers, and other educational stakeholders in the context of K-12 education, higher education, and informal learning environments. The research methods employed within these published papers range from quantitative to qualitative to mixed methods and beyond (e.g., meta-analysis, learning analytics). JRTE is circulated online to more than 3,000 academic libraries and institutions across the globe. JRTE's 2019 Scopus CiteScore was 4.50 and the 2019 SSCI Impact Factor was 1.585 (132/263 in *Education & Educational Research*).

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

JRTE typically accepts manuscripts that focus on using cutting-edge technology to address educational problems. These manuscripts employ rigorous research methods and include strong implications for both teaching and learning. JRTE presently uses the American Psychological Association (APA) version seven for formatting the manuscript and references (APA, 2020). JRTE uses the ScholarOne system, an online peer-review system produced by Clarivate, to facilitate the review and communication process. All manuscript submissions are preliminarily reviewed by the editors of the journal to determine their suitability for JRTE and the peer-review process. If the manuscript is deemed inappropriate for JRTE, the manuscript is sent back to the authors with a rationale as to why it is inappropriate for JRTE in its present form. JRTE does not entertain resubmissions unless explicitly stated by the editors in the decision email. Once a manuscript is deemed appropriate for JRTE, the editors assign the manuscript to editorial board members and reviewers for the journal based on a match between the content and method of the manuscript and the research expertise of the reviewers. The editors strive to secure three blind reviews for a manuscript; however, we will sometimes make decisions based on a minimum of two reviews.

JRTE editors try to make preliminary decisions about possible desk rejection within a week of receiving the manuscript. Once an article is sent out for review, the process can last for about two months for an initial decision, and generally, within three months for a final decision if the manuscript is sent back out for review after a revision cycle or two. JRTE has four categories for outcomes of a manuscript: 1) Accept as is (very rare), 2) Accept pending revision, 3) Revise and resubmit, and 4) Reject after review. In our several years serving as editors for the journal, we have never had a manuscript with the "Accept as is" classification on the first round. The Accept pending revision classification typically means that there are minor revisions to be made to the manuscript, and the revised manuscript may or may not be sent out for another round of peer-review depending on the nature of the comments. The "Revise and resubmit" classification is tentative about acceptance of the manuscript and usually means the manuscript needs major revisions and will likely be sent out for an additional round of review. Notably, the "Revise and resubmit" classification does not guarantee acceptance into JRTE. Finally, the last classification is "Reject after review," in which the reviewers suggested the manuscript is not suitable for publication.

JRTE reviewers are carefully selected based on their expertise in and experience with research related to technology, teaching and learning. Reviewers identify their areas of expertise in an online profile and editors strive to match reviewer expertise with manuscript content. JRTE also coordinates a program that allows doctoral students to apply to be student reviewers (please see Ritzhaupt & Dawson, 2019). JRTE reviewers are provided a template to answer and rate specific questions/dimensions about each manuscript under consideration. We provide these questions below to assist authors in understanding the way in which their work will be assessed by reviewers in light of JRTE's quality considerations. The questions are rated using a five-point scale (1 = poor, 3 = good, and 5 = excellent):

- Does the manuscript report on original research, project descriptions/evaluations, syntheses of literature, assessments of the state of the art, and theoretical or conceptual positions that relate to the field of educational technology in teaching and learning? Is the topic timely? Will publication of this research serve to advance the field?
- How would you rate the quality of the writing? Any concerns about APA format?
- Has the author provided an appropriate introduction to the problem? Is there evidence that the research has been conducted in the context of a theoretical framework? Do the research questions emerge logically from the extant knowledge base to address a gap in literature?
- Does the author cite appropriate literature in framing the introduction to the problem? Is the literature review current? Knowing that space is limited, can you identify any significant topics or authors that were omitted from the literature review?
- Did the researcher use appropriate research methods for answering the research questions? Were appropriate procedures used to analyze the data? Are the tables and figures appropriate? Are the data less than two years old? If the study is quantitative, has an effect size been calculated and reported?
- Are the conclusions firmly grounded in the data? Does the author identify limitations of the current study? Does the author address the implications of the research for practice and future research?
- Have the references been prepared correctly in APA style? Did you identify any citations in the text that were not included in the reference list?

When authors receive a decision from JRTE editors, they also receive a compilation of the feedback provided by the reviewers. The authors are expected to carefully read and respond to the reviewer feedback in a revision of the original manuscript. JRTE asks the authors to use tracked changes in the document or to highlight or bold the revisions in the revised document to assist the reviewers in observing the changes made. We also ask authors to provide a detailed account of how they used this feedback to revise and improve their manuscript. Many authors will provide a table format with the reviewer comments and the author actions to those comments. We have found this approach to be helpful to both editors and reviewers. A notable aspect is that an author does not have to agree to every suggested revision presented by the reviewers. In most cases, the feedback is helpful and allows the authors to improve the substance and flow of their manuscript. In other cases, the authors will craft a reasoned response to a reviewer suggestion with which they disagree. So long as there is a clear rationale for these decisions and the nature of the revisions are clearly explained, there may be no issues about a choice to not use a reviewer suggestion.

After a manuscript is accepted for publication, it moves into a production process in which staff members from Taylor and Francis work with the authors to format the final draft of the manuscript. This is a swift process which typically takes less than a week to prepare the final document. Authors have the ability to review the camera-ready proof prior to the online publication of the final and approved document. Taylor and Francis provides an online ready version of the manuscript with a Document Object Identifier (DOI) number assigned prior to the manuscript being assigned to a volume and issue with page numbers. Since JRTE is also a print publication, it may take a couple of months to assign an official volume, issue, and page numbers for the print version. However, this does not delay the online access to the published article or the ability of interested readers to cite the works in the online format. While the COVID-19 pandemic has certainly delayed the speed and throughput of the peer-review process, as noted, JRTE still maintains relatively quick turnaround for authors.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE FOR AUTHORS

Instructions for authors wishing to submit to JRTE are available here: https://www.tandfonline.com/action/authorSubmission?show=instructions&journalCode=ujrt20. In this section, we offer some guidance for JRTE authors based on our experiences. While there are many obvious details for a successful submission to any academic outlet including JRTE, such as providing a clean, well-formatted document within the 8,000-word limit and without spelling or grammar errors, there are also more subtle details that we believe authors should keep in mind prior to submitting a manuscript for consideration in JRTE. We outline several of the nuances below in order to help authors publish their scholarly works in JRTE. These suggestions are not mutually exclusive ideas, but rather overlapping suggestions to help authors produce the best possible submission to JRTE. You may note that several of these suggestions clearly link to the template used by reviewers to assess articles.

Suitability and Innovativeness for JRTE

One major consideration is the suitability and the innovativeness of the manuscript for JRTE. Authors should remember that although a topic or research method might be innovative to them or their research team, it may not be innovative to the field at large. Authors should always conduct a thorough literature review to determine gaps in the literature and show the unique contribution of their work. For instance, with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, many scholars are conducting survey studies on various aspects of online learning and technology use. However, many of these papers do not extend on the existing knowledge base. It is imperative that authors show the unique innovations of their works grounded in strong theoretical and conceptual underpinnings.

Authors are also strongly encouraged to review current published articles in JRTE to get an understanding of the types of works published by the journal. Authors of JRTE must build on the theoretical and conceptual groundings in the research literature, thus manuscripts that do not show the appropriate grounding in literature are often declined.

Other aspects that are equally important to consider are the innovativeness, relevance and significance of the manuscript. JRTE attempts to publish cutting-edge research on technology in education with strong implications for both teaching and learning. Providing strong implications for teaching and learning is a particularly important feature that sets the journal apart from other well-respected, peer-reviewed outlets in the field.

Clear Problem Statement

Concisely establishing the problem or issue leading to the study is essential. A few sentences early in the article that conveys the problem or issue in a way that stimulates interest for a broad audience can serve as narrative hook for JRTE editors, reviewers and, eventually, readers. This aspect of conveying a clear problem statement also encourages the authors to demonstrate how their research addresses socially-responsible and relevant issues to the field. JRTE's readership is interested in a broad array of educational problems that may stem from a combination of factors such as a void in the literature, conflict in previous research results, topics neglected in the literature, a need to draw attention to marginalized voices, contextual problems, etc. An author's job is to make it clear from where the problem arises and why it is important. Once the problem is established, the rest of the article should follow in a logical progression and with explicit alignment between the identified problem and the other structural elements of the article (i.e., Purpose Statement, Research Questions, Methods, etc.)

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The most important sentence in an article may be the purpose statement. This purpose statement establishes the central intent of the study (i.e., why you want to do the study and what you intend to accomplish.) This statement should be distinct from but align with the problem addressed and research question(s). The research question(s) should then follow logically and be in alignment with the stated problem and purpose. Depending on the research method employed, sometimes authors will also supply research hypotheses such as in the case for a structural equation model using path analysis. We often observe authors changing the purpose of the research within different sections of the manuscript. We encourage authors to carefully align the purpose statement with the entire manuscript to ensure clarity among the problem statement, purpose statement, research questions, theoretical or conceptual framework, relevant supporting literature, method, results, and discussion. We also encourage our authors to write their research questions using simple language that clearly connects to the purpose statement. Of course, later in the manuscript, there should be clear connections and answers to the research questions supplied early in the manuscript.

Theoretical or Conceptual Framework

There are numerous ways to think about theoretical or conceptual frameworks, but these frameworks serve to convey the beliefs, assumptions, theories and concepts that characterize the study. The frameworks may come from existing work (i.e., Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, TPACK, Community of Inquiry, etc.) or may involve the integra-

tion of theories and concepts (i.e., nursing education pedagogy and digital storytelling). The most common oversight we see in JRTE submissions occurs when the framework described is not integrated into the rest of the article. Equally important is the situation when authors confound the theoretical frames they are using to justify the direction of the article. For example, if two theoretical approaches conflict, it can confuse the readers of the manuscript. It is incumbent upon the authors to provide a clear connection between theoretical or conceptual constructs and build the connections for readers. There should also be a very explicit and intentional connection between the theoretical or conceptual framework and the choice of research methods. Again, the alignment among these sections is critical for the readers of JRTE - there should be no confusion between each critical section of the manuscript. We encourage our authors to read Antonenko (2014) and Kumar and Antonenko (2014) for addition insights related to theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

Recent and Relevant Literature Review

JRTE authors are expected to demonstrate their authority on a topic and the gaps in the existing research literature by including both recent and relevant literature in the manuscript. Of course, since JRTE publishes innovative applications of technology in education, authors are expected to cite the most recent literature advancing knowledge of the topic. Thus, manuscripts with only citations to work that is more than three years old, is often a red flag to both the editors and the reviewers of the journal. However, authors are also expected to cite the relevant seminal works on the topic. For instance, it is also a red flag to both the editors and the reviewers if the authors are writing about a topic like the Technological-Pedagogical-Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework and fail to cite the original work describing the framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). A literature review in a JRTE manuscript can be a stand-alone section or integrated carefully into a theoretical or conceptual framework section. For example, some works that are hypothesis-driven might use each hypothesis to frame the way the literature review is organized. Likewise, the conceptual or theoretical frame might also serve to organize the literature review. Literature reviews need not be long-winded accounts, but rather focused and concise portrayals of the supporting research literature on a topic of interest.

Appropriate and Rigorous Methods

Choosing a research design and research methods that align with the theoretical/conceptual frameworks, purpose and research question(s) is of paramount concern as mistakes with the research design and methods cannot be fixed without collecting new data or re-analyzing existing data. For example, a phenomenological study is designed to explore the essence of participants' lived experiences related to some phenomenon so the methods must uncover such experiences.

The editors of JRTE are open to a wide-range of research methods so long as the appropriate groundwork and rigor is applied to the use of the method. A common problem is that authors do not always address the underlying assumptions of a chosen research method. For instance, assume that the research study employs a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare three or more groups on a dependent measure of interest. Firstly, the authors need to supply evidence of both reliability and validity for the target dependent measures used in the study. Additionally, ANOVA has statistical assumptions that are often ignored in empirical research studies, including normality, homogeneity of the variance, and independence of observation (Field, 2018). Authors must supply evidence in their manuscript that the data does not violate these assumptions or make appropriate adjustments. Similarly, authors of qualitative studies are expected to discuss how their subjectivity or positionality may influence the research and to clearly explain their methods so readers understand how results were derived from raw data. There are many common methods of rigor to establish trustworthiness via credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This site also provides a nice overview of these concepts: https://conjointly.com/kb/qualitative-validity/. Previous editors of the *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education* wrote a nice editorial about expectations for using evidence to support qualitative claims (Ferdig et al., 2007).

Two other issues we see that hinder manuscript quality relate to survey studies and design/intervention studies. Survey design studies that do not explain how the survey was designed, pilot tested and analyzed for reliability and validity can leave readers questioning the quality of the data presented. Similarly, studies that fail to adequately describe the design of the intervention under study leave readers wondering about the usefulness of the results. For example, the results of a study related to a flipped classroom or new curriculum are not very meaningful if the readers do not understand how these innovations were designed.

Clearly Outline Limitations and Delimitations

No research study is without limitations and delimitations. It is incumbent upon the authors to clearly outline these items somewhere within the manuscript. Typically, authors will supply their limitations and delimitations in the discussion as a separate section or integrated within future research. Regardless, it is a clear red flag to both reviewers and editors to ignore this important aspect of the work. Equally important, authors need to really think about the research method, the questions posed, and the answers to those questions provided to ensure due diligence. For instance, authors who commonly use a qualitative research approach will state "A limitation to this research is the small sample size." However, generalizability is not the intention of most qualitative research studies, so the real concern becomes transferability.

Significance and Implications for Teaching and Learning

Significance can relate to, but is not limited to, contributions to scholarly literature, improving practice and improving policy and decision making. JRTE is especially concerned with the implications for teaching and learning. Authors should clearly explain how their work contributes to and provides implications or suggestions teaching and learning. Importantly, it should be clear how these implications are derived from the findings of the study.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

We provide a list of articles that were published within the last three years and during our tenure as the editors of the journal. We provide two categories: 1) the most downloaded articles according to the Taylor and Francis website, and 2) the most cited articles according to Google Scholar. We want to make it clear that these selections are not the "top" choices of the current editors of JRTE, but rather, articles that appear to be read and cited widely from the past three years and during our tenure as editors of JRTE.

Exemplary Articles: Most Cited

Below is a list of the five most frequently cited articles in JRTE published since 2018:

1. Qian, Y., Hambrusch, S., Yadav, A., & Gretter, S. (2018). Who needs what: Recommendations for designing effective online professional development for computer science teachers. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *50*(2), 164–181.
2. Ottenbreit-Leftwich, A., Liao, J. Y. C., Sadik, O., & Ertmer, P. (2018). Evolution of teachers' technology integration knowledge, beliefs, and practices: How can we support beginning teachers use of technology? *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *50*(4), 282–304.
3. Harper, B. (2018). Technology and teacher–student interactions: A review of empirical research. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *50*(3), 214–225.
4. Staudt Willet, K. B. (2019). Revisiting how and why educators use Twitter: Tweet types and purposes in# Edchat. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *51*(3), 273–289.
5. Cacciamani, S., Villani, D., Bonanomi, A., Carissoli, C., Olivari, M. G., Morganti, L., Riva, G. & Confalonieri, E. (2018). Factors affecting students' acceptance of tablet PCs: A study in Italian high schools. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *50*(2), 120–133.

Exemplary Articles: Most Downloaded

Below is a list of the three most downloaded articles published in JRTE since 2018:

1. Harper, B. (2018). Technology and teacher–student interactions: A review of empirical research. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *50*(3), 214–225.

2. Walkington, C., & Bernacki, M. L. (2020). Appraising research on personalized learning: Definitions, theoretical alignment, advancements, and future directions. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 52(3), 235–252.
3. Daoud, R., Starkey, L., Eppel, E., Vo, T. D., & Sylvester, A. (2020). The educational value of internet use in the home for school children: A systematic review of literature. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, 1–22.

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Antonenko, P. D. (2014). The instrumental value of conceptual frameworks in educational technology research. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, *63*(1), 53–71.

Ferdig, R. E., Sprague, D., Maddux, C., & Albion, P. (2007). Publishing data evidence to support educational technology claims. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, *15*(4), 429–437.

Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics: North American edition*. Sage.

Kumar, S., & Antonenko, P. (2014). Connecting practice, theory and method: Supporting professional doctoral students in developing conceptual frameworks. *TechTrends*, *58*(4), 54–61.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.

Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record*, *108*(6), 1017–1054.

Reeves, T. C. (2000). Socially responsible educational technology research. *Educational Technology*, *40*(6), 19–28.

Ritzhaupt, A. D., & Dawson, K. (2019). Setting a course for the future of JRTE: New editorial team, revision to the Aims and Scope, and Goals for the journal. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *51*(1), 1–6.

The Journal of Technology and Teacher Education: An Overview with Publication Tips and Resources for Prospective Authors

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INTRODUCTION

Established in 1993, the *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education* (JTATE) (ISSN: ISSN 1059-7069; https://www.aace.org/pubs/JTATE/) is a research journal of the *Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (*AACE). It is also the official journal of the *Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education* (SITE). SITE is an international, academic association of teacher educators, researchers, and practitioners across multiple disciplines; it disseminates knowledge enhancing teacher education through the use of technology across a global context. JTATE is indexed in several academic databases, including *LearnTechLib* (https://www.learntechlib.org/), ERIC, Google Scholar, GetCited, Bacon's Media Directory, Cabell's, and several others. SITE members are provided free, online access to all back issues via LearnTechLib.

JTATE editors are selected through an application and review process managed by SITE leadership, and more specifically by the SITE Consultative Council, on which the JTATE journal editor serves. Editors are selected for three-year terms and may choose or be asked to re-apply at the end of their term. There is no current term limit, though most editors have stepped down after one or two terms to ensure JTATE continually has a fresh perspective.

JTATE has an *international advisory board* (IAB) that is asked to complete two tasks. First, they are asked to promote the journal internationally, so that articles submitted and published do not have a focus solely in a United States context. This can include requests for special issues that might respond to cultural or national contexts outside the U.S. Second, they are asked to continue to recruit international ERB members to, once again, maintain a legitimate international scope. IAB members are called upon occasionally by the editor; they are also welcomed and encouraged to discuss new ideas with the editor. The IAB and its membership are discussed each year at SITE Consultative Council meetings; members are replaced by mutual agreement as their availability changes, or the needs of the journal evolve.

In addition to the IAB, JTATE maintains a large and very active *editorial review board* (ERB). Where the IAB helps supports the direction and the international focus of the journal, ERB members are the driving force behind journal article quality and rigor. There are no term limits for editorial review board members. When a new editor is installed, they typically take the opportunity to recruit new reviewers based on need, expertise, and locale (e.g., ensuring a global response). Each year in January, all ERB members are also contacted and asked if they want to (and have the time to) continue to serve.

JTATE editors have always considered a quality review process to be one that is timely and supportive of authors, regardless of the final paper decision. As such, ERB members may be removed by the editor if they continually fail to miss deadlines or if they frequently submit subpar quality reviews (e.g., one that merely states a decision without support for the author or the editor). It is worth noting that given these high expectations, reviewers are provided multiple supports. First, they are contacted by the editor with instructions on improving reviews. Second, they receive blinded reviews when paper decisions are made, so that they can compare their comments and the work done by others reviewing the same paper. Many JTATE ERB members have served for five or more years, which has helped editor transition as well as journal rigor and quality. Longstanding reviewers are also able to help authors understand past and present work in JTATE that may inform the author's research.

There was a period of time in the history of JTATE where the editor-in-chief (EIC) was accompanied by *associate editors*. This was instituted, in part, to reduce review processing times. However, in recent years, the role was removed and the EIC has instead been supported by a managing editor. The managing editor role was created to support the EIC, but also to enculturate the managing editor—often a doctoral student in the field—to the community of practice. In other words, the managing editor helps the EIC manage the process; they often graduate and then become a scholar in technology and teacher education. It was an intentional decision to help mentor future leaders in the field. The managing editor also supports communication between authors, reviewers, and the EIC—something that is important given the voluntary role of the EIC position (and other work duties that may interfere with the EIC's time commitments).

JTATE invites submissions of a variety of types of scholarly works, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods empirical studies; case studies; theoretical and conceptual pieces; and others. While a variety of types of manuscripts are published, all manuscripts submitted to JTATE are expected to be written at the intersection of technology and teacher education, which can either address preservice teacher education and/or in-service teacher professional development. Some recent areas of focus have included computational thinking in preservice and inservice teacher education, digital simulations, preparing teachers for virtual teaching, teacher educator competencies, staff development with instructional technology, and educational computing and coding.

JTATE is published quarterly (four issues per year), with each issue typically consisting of between four and seven articles. While the number of submissions vary from year-to-year, JTATE normally receives over 150 manuscripts annually, with an acceptance rate recently ranging between 8 to 15%. For example, in 2020, JTATE received approximately 230 submissions, with an overall acceptance rate of around 10% (Hartshorne & Kibbey, 2021). JTATE will also periodically publish special issues specifically designed to address a salient topic of interest in the field. For example, JTATE 28(2) (Hartshorne et al., 2020) contained a collection of articles that addressed transitioning from emergency remote teaching and learning to more of a thriving phase of remote teaching, learning, and teacher education during the COVID pandemic.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESSES

In this section, we provide an overview of manuscript submission, the review process, as well as paper revisions. Specifically, we will introduce the basics of submitting to JTATE, how reviewers are asked to engage with manuscripts, and how decision types impact the revision process.

Submitting to JTATE and Editorial Review

JTATE uses the AACE paper processing system (http://publish.aace.org/) for all submissions. The system organizes all submissions, manuscripts under review, reviewed manuscripts, and manuscripts published or to-be-published in a series of *buckets*. Once a new manuscript is submitted, the processing system places it in the *received bucket* and notifies the EIC and the managing editor of the submission. All manuscripts submitted to JTATE are initially reviewed by the EIC and managing editor to determine whether the manuscript is appropriate for full review. Several core items are considered for appropriateness, including:

1) fit with the aims and scope of JTATE (i.e., addressing the intersection of technology and teacher education)
2) length and formatting (see http://publish.aace.org/begin/)
3) methodological concerns
4) novelty
5) implications for research, practice, and policy

These core components can be positive characteristics that ensure papers get sent for full review; they are also the most commonly cited reasons for editorial desk rejections. If a manuscript is not ready for full review, the author is provided notification, reasons for the decision, and ways in which the manuscript can be modified that would enable it to be sent for full review.

There are many occasions where manuscript submissions meet the quality and rigor required, but they do not match the scope of the journal. For instance, a paper may be about technology and have no implications for teacher education. It may also be written very carefully and supported by the teacher education literature but have no discussion regarding the role of technology. The JTATE EIC works closely with other editors within AACE. In such scope issues, the EIC may contact another AACE editor to determine interest in the paper. The desk rejection would then include an offer to transfer the paper to another AACE journal (https://www.aace.org/pubs/) upon agreement by the other journal editor and the author.

In Review

If the manuscript passes the initial editorial review by both the EIC and the managing editor, they are then sent out for double-blind peer-review by a minimum of three reviewers of the journal's ERB (see http://publish.aace.org/?fuseaction=Editors.Board&journal_code= JTATE). The AACE system moves the paper from received to the *in-review bucket*. The reviewers, a collection of international experts in fields related to the intersection of technology and teacher education, are asked to provide their recommended publication decision as well as numerical ratings and commentary regarding the quality of the manuscript. Numerical ratings and comments focus on:

1) usefulness to the field
2) adequacy of research design, methods, and analysis
3) interpretation of findings
4) discussion of implications for practice, policy, and future research
5) novelty and innovativeness
6) situation within existing literature
7) clarity and expression of ideas
8) references to relevant existing work, both in the literature review and discussion of findings
9) grammar, flow, and writing style
10) adherence to submission guidelines.

Reviewers are assigned based on their areas of expertise and alignment with the manuscript topic area(s). They are given one-week to accept or decline a requested review and one month to conduct a review. If a reviewer is unable to complete a review in the allotted time, an alternate individual from the ERB is assigned. Reviewers then provide both the editor (confidential) and the author (anonymous) with comments intended to improve the quality of the article, regardless of the decision. This allows for elaboration of the numerical ratings and the suggested publication decision provided, as well as any additional areas of concern that are not adequately represented in the numerical ratings.

Decisions, Revisions, and Publication

Once all reviews are received by the editor, one of three decisions is made: 1) *Accept*, 2) *Accept with Revisions*, or 3) *Reject*. JTATE experimented with a fourth category called *Revise and Resubmit* (R&R). The idea with R&R was that a paper was not ready for publication, but the EIC felt like the paper had tremendous potential to be published with extensive work. Unfortunately, the R&R experiment failed. Papers with R&R designations were put into their own bucket. A significantly high percentage of authors left their papers in the *R&R bucket*, deciding not to resubmit but not telling the EIC or managing editor. Others took years to resubmit their papers. And still others would inappropriately send their papers elsewhere, technically having one paper under review at two places, playing their chances in two or more journals.

The EIC attempted to rectify this by giving deadlines, but the experiment still failed, causing tremendous extra work on the EIC and managing editor. Today, papers that have significant publication potential but need extensive work are slated as rejections. However, the EIC will reach out to the author and personally invite them to resubmit, starting a conversation and relationship between EIC and author(s). This process has worked at JTATE to produce higher quality papers and less communication concerns with authors and editors.

The overall publication decision is derived from an examination of the collection of reviews. If a manuscript is rejected (e.g., the paper is moved into the *rejected bucket*), an editorial commentary is included to provide context for the decision, the reviewer comments, and recommendations for next steps. Suggested next steps might include resubmission to JTATE after revisions addressing reviewer/editor comments, submission to alternative publication venues, or others.

If a manuscript is accepted with revisions (e.g., moved into the *accepted bucket)*, there are two possible options based upon the extent of the recommended revisions. If the required/recommended revisions are minor (formatting, minor wording, minimal content revisions), the editor will typically avoid re-assigning the revised manuscript for additional reviews and the decision will be made by the editor. The paper may eventually be accepted based upon whether the suggested/required revisions were appropriately addressed. If the required/recommend revisions are extensive, the manuscript will either be reassigned to the original reviewers or reassigned to a new set of reviewers. This decision is also based on the nature of the original reviews and the extent of the reviews. Once reassigned, the manuscript undergoes the same review process as the original submission.

Lastly, there is an option for a manuscript to be accepted for publication *as is*. Throughout the history of JTATE, this has rarely—if ever—been used. Reviewers have always provided useful commentary—even if those comments only lead to minor changes.

Once a paper is returned and accepted by the EIC, the manuscript is then sent to the *formatting bucket*. Proofs of the article are sent to the author(s) for review, with authors given a deadline to return the annotated proofs to the publisher. Once returned, the manuscript is assigned a volume and issue in which to be published. JTATE has worked tirelessly to improve the speed of the article submission and review process. Where a paper may have had to wait years for publication, today's papers, once initially accepted, can be published in as little as 3 months.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE TO AUTHORS

In this section, we provide a series of tips and recommendations for authors considering submitting their work for consideration of publication in JTATE. While this is a rather extensive list based on the experiences of the authors, we encourage you to explore the other chapters in this book for additional tips and advice for consideration in submitting any manuscript to a scholarly journal. Many of the tips throughout the book also apply to JTATE.

Read JTATE Editorials

One of the main missions of JTATE is to support authors. An important way to do this is by publishing two editorials annually. In the second issue of each year, an editorial is published that provides a detailed review of the prior year's submissions (both those that are accepted and those rejected), acceptance rates, concept saturation, and distribution of submissions throughout the year. Additional data, such as the total number of submitted manuscripts, the total number of accepted manuscripts, submissions received each month, and recommendations to authors based on a particular year's submissions, provide several considerations for authors as they prepare to submit their article. Perhaps most importantly, the editorial contains key reasons why manuscripts were rejected and advice on addressing those shortcomings. JTATE editors and ERB members have frequently commented that authors have seemingly failed to read JTATE and/or failed to address the shortcomings that are clearly identified in the editorials.

The second editorial is published in the final issue of each year. These end-of-the-year editorials are used to provide a retrospective of articles published throughout the year. They serve as a meta-summary of these articles, exploring what was learned from these articles; they also encourage authors to extend the work presented. They also include topical recommendations for exploring emerging technologies and innovative applications of those technologies in teacher education as JTATE transitions to the following year.

Both yearly editorials serve as excellent resources for authors considering submitting manuscripts to JTATE. Other editorials are published as warranted (e.g., when consistent methodological issues are noticed; Ferdig et al., 2007; Maddux et al., 2007) and also deserve consideration prior to author manuscript submission where appropriate.

Address the Basics: Fit, Length, Formatting, Grammar, Cohesiveness, Blinding

All manuscripts submitted to JTATE are initially reviewed by the EIC and managing editor to determine appropriateness for full review. This process is commonly known as a desk review. While there are a variety of reasons that will lead to a desk rejection decision, manuscripts are often rejected if they:

1) address topics that do not align with the aims and scope of JTATE (i.e., the intersection of technology and teacher education)
2) are either too long or too short (approximately 6000 words, not including the abstract, references, tables, and figures)
3) do not follow the appropriate formatting for manuscript submissions (*Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7th edition; American Psychological Association, 2020)
4) contain numerous grammatical and/or typographical errors
5) have a disconnected or difficult to follow narrative
6) are not blinded for review
7) are not copyedited, particularly articles from authors who are non-native English writers.

While a well-formatted manuscript submission will not hide conceptual, methodological, or other weaknesses, a poorly formatted manuscript will often disqualify an otherwise well-written work from consideration for publication, at least until formatting and other issues are addressed, resulting in unnecessary delays in potential publication. Authors that are desk rejected will receive notification as to the reasons for the desk reject and advised on next steps, such as suggesting corrections and resubmission to JTATE, or suggesting an alternative publication venue.

Worth special attention here is the importance of ensuring that manuscripts submitted to JTATE address research at the intersection of technology and teacher education. This is perhaps one of the most ignored—but critical—aspects of manuscript submission. Papers are most often rejected because their scope or focus is outside of what gets published in JTATE. For example, researchers who are only writing about teachers, only writing about teacher education, only writing about technology, or simply using teacher education students as research subjects for non-TE and technology related studies should consider submitting their work elsewhere. Conversely, authors that include research about how technology can be used more effectively to support teacher preparation, and authors that write about development and research related to how teachers can be prepared to use technology more effectively are encouraged to submit to JTATE.

Clarify Novelty and Situate Findings

JTATE seeks to publish innovative, novel, and emerging research at the intersection of technology and teacher education. As such, submissions that include novel and emerging research that is appropriately situated in the existing knowledge base are highly valued by our ERB. Authors should ensure that their submissions are novel to the field at large and should make explicit efforts to highlight various aspects of the uniqueness of their work through the identification of gaps in the literature. This includes, for instance, highlighting methodological innovations in preservice and/or inservice teacher education. It could also mean addressing how a work extends the current literature related to a particular topic.

While novelty is valued, another key reason for desk rejection (or at best a paper receiving major revisions) is a lack of attention to JTATE publications. This advice goes beyond reading the editorials for seeking helpful advice. This is about joining an existing conversation about technology and teacher education. For instance, we have had authors submit papers about video technologies and never cite or recognize a special issue on the same topic that was released in JTATE the previous year. This recommendation is not about self-promotion; we encourage authors to read any journal in the field addressing their topic. However, to ignore any JTATE article on the same topic is like barging into an existing conversation and pretending to be the first one in the room.

Said differently, JTATE articles need to be novel but also need to situate their work in JTATE and other journals that address the given topic. Authors need to answer questions like:

1. How does this work align with past research, practice, and/or policy?
2. How does this research confirm or contradict past research, practice, and/or policy?
3. How does this work add to existing and emerging research, practice, and/or policy?

Ensure Methodological Soundness

As with most peer-reviewed research journals, methodological approaches and reporting of the results are common reasons for low ratings from reviewers. There are a variety of common methodological issues, such as:

1. failing to align the design with the research purpose and questions,
2. omitting the rationale for the selected methods,
3. excluding requisite quantitative data, statistical procedures, and analyses,
4. failure to rigorously present and analyze qualitative data (e.g., using single quotes, triangulation, etc.) (Ferdig et al., 2007),
5. implementing inappropriate statistical approaches.

There is an expectation that these methodological issues are seamlessly addressed, and that the methods and instruments implemented should be appropriate. There should be a clear alignment and connection between the purpose/research questions, methods implemented, the reporting of the findings, and the resulting implications.

Provide Extensive Implications for Practice, Research, and Policy

JTATE prides itself on making sure that all publications have direct implications for research, policy, and practice. While failing to include direct implications will not automatically result in a desk rejection, it will prevent a paper from ultimately being accepted and moved to the formatting bucket. In short, authors must sufficiently address the implications of their work for practice, research, and policy.

It is not uncommon to see a manuscript submission with extensive introductions, reviews of the literature, discussion of theoretical frameworks, and appropriate examinations of methods and results. However, those same papers then have significantly limited exploration of the 'so what?' and 'now what?' questions for technology and teacher education, elaboration of the importance of their work, and invitations to others to engage with their findings and work. Authors will want to avoid addressing implications for only practice, only research, or only policy. Rather, they will want to ensure their writing takes a multi-pronged approach, highlighting individual implications for all three, while also highlighting the connectedness of these implications for practice, research, and policy.

Ensure Alignment of Rationale and Purpose, Theoretical Framework, Literature Review, and Research Questions

Cohesiveness is a critical aspect of a well-written scholarly article. One way to help ensure cohesiveness, at least initially, is through the alignment of core sections of a scholarly work, including the rationale and purpose, theoretical framework, literature review, and research questions. It is important that these sections are clear and explicit, and the reader (i.e., the editor and reviewer in the submission phase) is not left wondering how these various elements are related. Authors do not want readers left trying to fit the sections together like pieces of a puzzle. For example, it is not uncommon for an author to present a problem statement and/or rationale for a study, but to subsequently present a series of research questions that do not address the issue(s) outlined in the problem statement. Further, it is unfortunately common for authors to either omit a discussion of the theoretical framework entirely or provide a standalone discussion of the theoretical framework. Authors will want to situate the narrative and/or include a connection to the problem statement, rationale for the study, or research questions.

The literature review also plays a pivotal role in supporting cohesiveness. For example, identifying gaps in the existing knowledge base is important for the problem statement and rationale. A thorough and up-to-date literature review can situate a project in seminal literature, as well as more recent research, and can be useful in providing a connection be-

tween the current work, recent works in the field, as well as more historical works in the field. It can also help the author present their work in the evolution of an existing topic area. The connection and clarity of these core elements of a scholarly journal will help to ensure a more readable work for consideration for publication in JTATE.

Be a Good Reviser

Papers that are accepted with revisions—or rejected but asked to resubmit—require author work. They must take revision comments seriously. We have seen two main practices that demonstrate authors acting as good revisers of work. First, communication is key. If a paper is accepted with revisions, authors should immediately contact the editor, letting them know they plan on revising and resubmitting. They should give or acknowledge a requested date of resubmission. The same is true for authors of papers that were rejected but asked to resubmit. Authors need to then be sure dates and deadlines are met.

Communication here also means asking for clarification on revisions prior to the resubmission. This does not mean that every revision must be done, or at least done to the specificity of the reviewer comments. Authors often face this challenge when reviewers give conflicting advice. While editors try to contextualize the discrepancies in overarching instructions back to the authors, this can occasionally be missed. Authors are more successful when they communicate these concerns or misunderstandings prior to resubmission.

A second successful practice we have seen is the use of a reviewer table. Some journals require two resubmissions—one with and one without track changes. In either case, a reviewer table can help editors and/or reviewers see how authors responded (or how they chose not to respond). The table is simple; it has two columns, one labeled *reviewer comment* and one called *author response*. Each row contains the reviewer comment (or set of collective comments) as well as where and/or how the author decided to respond.

This practice is important because it immediately allows the editor to see changes. It is even more important in articles sent back to the same reviewers. Reviewers want to know their voices were heard, even if the response is a detailed argument about why a change was not made. And, again, even when track changes are used, the reviewer table provides a 10,000-foot summary. It lets the editor and reviewers know the author took their comments seriously.

Explore Special Issues as Opportunities

Journals are places to publish individual research articles. Over time, those articles can pair with other submissions of similar topics to advance the field in a given area. For instance, one could examine JTATE and all the articles written on the use of videos for teacher training. Those articles might include 10-15 years of publication dates. Comparatively, journal editors like special issues because they compress the timeline of topic exploration. Where a single journal article may be like attending a single conference presentation, a special issue might be thought of as a symposium, giving readers deep exploration of a topic.

JTATE editors have always appreciated and encouraged authors to submit proposals for special issue topics. This is particularly true when the topic being explored is timely and when readers or policymakers need insight to inform research, policy, or practice. For instance, JTATE has had special issues on teacher education and computational thinking as well as teacher educator competencies. Authors may initially be unsure about the process of serving as guest editors, but most journals (including JTATE) have processes and procedures in place to support the process. Authors interested in proposing a special issue of JTATE need only to contact the EIC to start the process.

EXEMPLARY AND USEFUL READINGS

In this section, a snapshot of exemplary articles from JTATE have been provided. These articles, selected from the almost 500 JTATE publications and categorized as either seminal/recent articles, editorials/commentaries, and special issue articles, have been included for a number of reasons, but are all of high quality, exemplify the tips and resources cited previously in this chapter, and provide illustrations of both the breadth and depth of the diverse types of articles published by JTATE.

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Special Issue Articles

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Publishing in *TechTrends*: A Journal Linking Research and Practice in Educational Technology

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INTRODUCTION

History of the Journal

TechTrends is a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) published by Springer New York, LLC. The journal is published as six print issues per volume year and is available to individual subscribers, AECT members, and through institutional library subscriptions. Additional details about the journal are available at https://www.springer.com/journal/11528.

Each issue of the journal typically contains 8 to 13 original papers and a selection of columns focused on the general field of Educational Technology. Original papers are reports of research, evaluations, or reviews of literature, and are subjected to a double-blind review process. Reviewers for the journal have earned a terminal degree and have experience in the field of Educational Technology. Columns are editorially reviewed. Authors have the option of publishing articles as open access for a fee. Accepted articles are published on the journal's website prior to them appearing in a print issue.

TechTrends begins 2021 with Volume 65, indicating 65 years of publication. The journal was originally titled *Audiovisual Instruction,* and was published under that title from 1956 to 1978. It was then published as *Audiovisual Instruction with Instructional Resources* from 1978 to 1980, and as *Instructional Innovator* until 1985. In 1985 the title became *TechTrends.* The journal has evolved over time with the leadership of various editors (Table 1) from a newsletter and magazine-like publication to its current academic journal format.

Table 1
List of Recent TechTrends Editors-in-Chief

Editor-in-Chief	Years	Volumes
Charles B. Hodges	2014 - Present	58(5)-Present
Daniel W. Surry	2012-2014	57-58(4)
Abbie Brown	2010-2011	54-56
Sharon Smaldino	2007-2009	51-53
Elizabeth Boling	2004-2006	48-50
Don E. Descy	2000-2003	44(3) - 47

Types of Articles Solicited

TechTrends is a publication of AECT and includes content contributing broadly to the field of Educational Technology as defined in the AECT book, *Educational Technology: A Definition with Commentary* (Januszewski & Molenda, 2008):

> "Educational technology is the study and ethical practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using, and managing appropriate technological processes and resources." (p. 1).

Articles and columns published in *TechTrends* contribute to the advancement of Educational Technology knowledge and practice with topics addressed such as the management of media and programs, the application of educational technology principles and techniques to instructional programs, and corporate and military training. Replication studies are critically needed in many fields of research. Authors are encouraged to conduct replication studies to confirm or strengthen research findings in Educational Technology. Replication studies have been specifically called for in *TechTrends* by Hodges (2015), and in other journals and the field in general (i.e. Spector et al., 2015). While the journal is a publication of AECT, authors are not required to be members of the organization. Authors who publish their work in *TechTrends* consider themselves educational technologists, instructional designers, learning scientists, educational psychologists, and the like.

Ideally, content published in the journal overtly describes implications for practice. Stauffer (2017) published a content analysis of *TechTrends* covering the years 2010 through 2015. Stauffer noted that during the six years of his analysis papers published in *TechTrends* were focused on learning, education, and technology with the specific areas of distance learning, online learning, mobile learning, instructional systems design, and technology integration being represented in the majority of the papers. Stauffer only reported one paper published in the area of corporate and military training. The categories and types of papers observed by Stauffer continue today with the broad categories of p-12 technology integration and higher education as the main focus of most published articles.

Each issue of *TechTrends* includes at least a few entries in long-running, editorially reviewed columns. The number and themes of the columns has changed over time, but some consistent columns in recent years include: Book Reviews, History Corner, and Rethinking Technology & Creativity in the 21st Century. Columns are editorially reviewed and do not accept unsolicited entries.

Special Issues

Each volume year of *TechTrends* includes at least a few special themed issues and calls for papers for those issues are circulated several months in advance of publication of the issues. These calls are distributed online via the journal's website, through AECT's many communication channels, and through personal email and social media accounts.

To propose a special issue, contact the Editor-in-Chief via email with your idea and proposed timing as well as a team of guest editors. Based on past experience, a guest editing team consisting of one to three individuals works best. The Editor-in-Chief may seek guidance from the journal's Editorial Board regarding the fit of the proposed theme for the journal. Once an idea is approved and a timeline is determined, it usually takes one calendar year to get the special issue published in print.

Journal Structure and Details

TechTrends is led by an Editor-in-Chief, who is appointed by the AECT Board of Directors. The journal has an Editorial Board and a board of reviewers. A member of the *TechTrends* editorial board is expected, at a minimum, to review manuscripts for the journal, promote the journal to potential authors, and participate in the annual meeting of the Editorial Board. The Editorial Board is composed of division representatives from the AECT divisions and at-large members invited by the Editor-in-Chief. Term lengths vary depending on bylaws of the AECT divisions. At-large members typically serve three-year terms and may have multiple terms. A member of the board of reviewers reviews manuscripts at the request of the Editor-in-Chief. Members of the review board are recruited by the Editor-in-Chief and must have earned a terminal degree in a field related to Educational Technology.

At the present time, the journal is abstracted and indexed in over 30 databases including EBSCO Education, ProQuest Education Database, Google Scholar, the Emerging Sources Citation Index, and SCOPUS. As of January 2021, *TechTrends* is listed as number 10 on Google Scholar's list of top 20 journals in the area "Educational Technology. The acceptance rate for 2020, the most currently completed volume year at the time of this writing, was 23% from 293 submitted papers. Also during 2020, there were 217665 downloads from *TechTrends*.

SUBMISSION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The Submission Process

Authors who decide to submit their work to *TechTrends* must do so using the publisher's online system. Currently that system is Editorial Manager and the specific link for *TechTrends* is http://www.editorialmanager.com/tech. The most common file format for submissions is Microsoft Word. Authors should have their work formatted with current APA style and it should be blinded for peer review. During the submission process authors will be asked to include statements declaring they have no conflict of interest related to the work and that the appropriate research ethics were followed. At this time authors are not required to have an ORCID (https://orcid.org/) for submission, but they are encouraged to include it during the manuscript submission process, if they have one. It may be a requirement in the near future. All work submitted is pre-screened by the publisher to make sure that appropriate declarations have been included and that the paper is an original work.

The Review Process

Once a paper is forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief from the publisher, it is read to make sure that the topic aligns with the journal. If the Editor-in-Chief determines the paper to not be a good fit for the journal, it is rejected for consideration of publication and the author is notified via email. Papers that meet formatting requirements and fit the scope of the journal are forwarded to three peer reviewers. The reviewers typically submit their feedback to the editor within 4 to 6 weeks with recommendations to accept the manuscript "as is", to reject the manuscript, or to accept it pending major or minor revisions. The Editor-in-Chief evaluates the reviewer feedback and makes a decision on the manuscript and notifies the author via email.

It is rare for a manuscript to be accepted "as is", but it is possible. The more common outcomes are for a paper to be accepted pending major or minor revisions, or for the paper to be rejected. Rejected articles will include reviewer feedback, which can be used to revise the paper. Note, however, that once rejected the paper should not be re-submitted to the journal unless the suggested revisions are incorporated, and the resulting paper is sufficiently different from the original submission so as to be considered a new paper. Manuscripts that are accepted pending major or minor revisions will include feedback to guide the author while revising the paper. These decisions mean the Editor and reviewers see promise in the work, but that it needs some improvement. Making the revisions is not necessarily a guarantee of acceptance. Revised papers are resubmitted to the online system and the same pre-screening is performed. The Editor-in-Chief may send the revised paper back to reviewers, or in the case when very minor revisions are requested, the Editor-in-Chief may check the revisions without sending the paper back for review.

The possible outcomes for revised papers are the same as for original submissions. Manuscripts that finally receive a decision of accept "as is" are forwarded to the publisher's production team for light copyediting and layout. Before production begins authors are asked via email to assign copyright to the journal and to make various decisions about offprints (e.g. print or electronic). After production, the author is given an opportunity to check the typeset manuscript before it is published. The Editor-in-Chief also has a final check of the manuscript before it is published. Once published, the article appears on the journal's website in the "Online First" collection of papers. Papers in the online first collection are officially published and will have a permanent assigned document object identifier (DOI). The only details missing for online first articles are specifics like the page range and the journal volume and issue numbers, which will be determined once the article is assigned to a print issue of the journal.

BEST PRACTICES AND ADVICE FOR AUTHORS

Getting Your Manuscript to Reviewers

There are a few simple ways that an author can improve the chances that their work submitted to *TechTrends* makes it through the process to the stage of peer review and consideration for publication. First, authors should familiarize themselves with the content that is typically published in the journal. Authors should browse some recent back issues of the journal and make a determination of *fit* for the journal. Next, the author should format the manuscript according to the journal's published guidelines and proofread the manuscript for readability and proper writing mechanics (e.g. grammar, punctuation, etc.) for scholarly written English. Attending to these basic elements can help make sure the work is not rejected before it makes it to reviewers. While necessary, this initial advice is not sufficient to ensure that the work makes it to the eyes of reviewers. The following are some additional considerations that can improve the chances of your manuscript making it to reviewers.

Because of the history of *TechTrends* and its evolution over many years from a newsletter-type publication to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal, some authors believe that simple expository writing is appropriate for the journal. For example, at times in the distant past it might have been appropriate to submit a manuscript to *TechTrends* that was simply a description of something the author had tried in a class. Older articles along those lines would typically not include reviews of literature, research questions, methods, data, or findings. They would simply relate something to the reader that was tried, with perhaps some short commentary from the author about the success of the endeavor. That structure is no longer sufficient for *TechTrends.*

The modern version of such an article for *TechTrends* would be expected to include, in one form or another, a brief review of literature, a purpose, research questions, methods, data, or findings. Authors are given some latitude in what each of those elements look like, but the described general structure should be there. *TechTrends* publishes articles that use various approaches to research (i.e. qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, etc.). Given that *TechTrends* often receives articles covering emerging technologies, sample sizes of participants might be smaller than ideal and findings might be qualified as *preliminary* like one might see from a pilot study.

Manuscripts that do not report work involving a treatment also are considered for publication in *TechTrends.* For example, reviews of literature are considered important to update readers on findings on a particular topic over a period of time. Traditional systematic reviews of literature are appropriate as are scoping studies that cover somewhat more recent findings. Meta-analyses are also acceptable, as are qualitative meta-synthesis. Articles advancing theory or policy related to Educational Technology also can be contributed. Papers in these categories must be constructed as scholarly papers, situated in theory and literature, and not simply opinions of the authors. Authors who wish to contribute a manuscript aimed at advancing theory or policy are advised to correspond with the Editor-in-Chief in advance of submitting their work to ensure fit. This correspondence also gives the Editor-in-Chief extra time to find appropriate reviewers for these unique types of manuscripts, which will likely require reviewers with specialized knowledge and/or expertise.

Explicit implications for practice are important to *TechTrends* reviewers and readers. This can be seen through the subtitle of the journal, "linking research and practice to improve learning." As such, authors are strongly encouraged to note in the abstract that specific implications for practice will be discussed, and to include a section near the end of the article that addresses implications for practice in detail. These elements are not requirements for publication as some work is so practically applicable that they are not necessary. Authors who struggle to clearly describe practical implications of their work should reconsider whether their work is a good fit for *TechTrends.* Even some well-executed and well-written manuscripts may be inappropriate for the journal for other reasons.

Avoid Over-Represented Topics

Technology in society is constantly changing. Educational practitioners and researchers have no shortage of new and emerging hardware and software offerings to explore. This often results in an abundance of trendy papers submitted to *TechTrends* focusing on the latest technology (think hardware) innovation. Items such as 3D printers, iPads, Chromebooks, etc., and new applications or services excite practitioners and researchers. There is certainly nothing wrong with exploring the educational potential of new technologies, but not connecting those explorations to learning theories or technology integration frameworks like TPACK (Koehler & Mishra, 2009) is the downfall of many authors in terms

of possible publication in a journal like *TechTrends.* For a current and excellent commentary on researching *things* see Reeves and Lin (2020).

Do not Submit Media Comparison Studies

Another common problem with papers submitted to the journal is the desire some researchers have to pursue media comparison studies. Media comparison studies will not be sent for review and will be rejected at the level of the Editor-in-Chief. Media comparison studies are studies constructed using the delivery medium as the independent variable and student achievement as the dependent variable. This is an inappropriate research design for testing the effectiveness of educational technology, and often results in the finding of *no significant difference*. For a complete discussion of the failings of media comparison studies along with meaningful alternatives, see Lockee, Burton and Cross (1999). During the COVID-19 pandemic there was a resurgence of media comparison studies (Hodges et al., 2020) that to date seems to be playing out in submissions to *TechTrends.*

Focus Your Manuscript on Technology AND Learning

Articles published in *TechTrends* must include a clear connection between learning and technology. Learning is an essential element of a *TechTrends* article. Manuscripts that focus on technology in the absence of learning will be rejected without review. Technology is interpreted more broadly than some may think and goes beyond hardware or software. In AECT's definition of Educational Technology, Januszewski and Molenda (2008) explain that *technology* can describe resources like hardware and software, but also processes "that have some claim of worthy results, based on research or at least reflective development" (p. 11). Processes include systems approaches to instructional development as well as processes of using and managing instructional resources.

Do not Propagate Education Myths

Authors must make sure their work does not promote concepts of dubious educational value such as learning styles or digital natives. Reading *Urban Myths about Learning and Education* by De Bruyckere, Kirschner, and Hulshof (2015) is a good idea to help researchers avoid some common pitfalls of Educational Technology research.

To assist interested readers with some examples of *TechTrends* articles, a few exemplary articles will now be shared. The selected articles are not intended to be models to dictate the exact structure of all future submissions, but simply as examples of scholarship that was well-received by reviewers and readers. There are certainly many examples of excellent papers in the journal and readers are encouraged to explore the journal to find more for themselves.

EXEMPLARY READINGS

Exemplary Articles

Articles accepted for publication in *TechTrends* span a broad spectrum of research paradigms and contexts. The numerous different types of articles accepted to the journal makes selecting one *best article* impossible. The first article shared is *Learning through Making: Emerging and Expanding Designs for College Classes* by Trust, Maloy, and Edwards (2018). The full-text of the article is available at https://rdcu.be/bUTEn or via the QR Code in Figure 1. This article was selected because the authors have done an exemplary job of integrating learning and technology, not simply writing about technology. Also, at the time of publication, makerspaces were a topic of especially great interest in the field of Educational Technology.

Figure 1. QR Code for full-text of Trust, Maloy, Edwards (2018).

Trust et al. are reporting on their work about *learning* and the integration of makerspace approaches to learning. Since makerspaces is a current hot topic discussed in several Education contexts and the paper focuses on learning in makerspaces, the paper is a good fit for the journal. The abstract includes a clear description of the purpose and major elements of the article, as well as specific information about its usefulness to readers. The authors provide an introduction and a short review of relevant literature, connecting the concept of makerspaces to a learning theory, constructionism. The particular cases presented by the authors are described in detail. Many articles are submitted to the journal that stop with the description of a particular learning design. Those articles are not typically sent out for review but are rejected at the Editor-in-Chief level. Importantly, Trust and her colleagues continue by presenting data that has been collected and analyzed that addresses the success of their designs. The data and analysis elements of the Trust et al. paper is essential for reviewers and readers to know if the learning designs presented have value. Finally, the authors end the paper with meaningful discussion and conclusions relating their findings back some of the literature cited earlier in their paper.

The next example is one that falls into the category of *advancing theory or policy,* which was mentioned earlier as a somewhat unique type of submission. The article, *Intended and Unintended Consequences of Educational Technology on Social Inequality* by Tawfik, Reeves, and Stich (2016), was written to advance thought in the field of Educational Technology regarding social inequality. The full-text of the article is available here: https://rdcu.be/bUVXO or via the QR code in Figure 2.

Figure 2. QR Code for full-text of Tawfik, Reeves, and Stich (2016).

In this article, Tawfik et al. provide a brief review of literature, discuss intended and unintended consequences of educational technology on social equality, and challenge researchers and practitioners to consider the social contexts in which their work is conducted along with the intended and unintended consequences it might have on social inequality. Note that the article does not involve an intervention, but is written to initiate a discussion around an important missing topic from our conversations about Educational Technology.

As a third example, a review of online course evaluation instruments will be shared. Baldwin, Ching, and Hsu (2018) examined six national evaluation instruments for online courses used in the United States. The full-text of their article can be viewed at https://rdcu.be/cd3CN or via the QR code displayed in Figure 3. The authors were exploring the three research questions:

- What are the characteristics of the national and statewide evaluation instruments for online courses?
- What do national and statewide evaluation instruments for online courses identify as common standards to guide design of online courses?
- What are the unique features of the identified national and statewide evaluation instruments for online courses?

This paper is of particular note because of the detailed approach the authors took for their review, combined with the excellent value of the work to practitioners. Through the authors' work they identified and summarized the leading online course evaluation instruments used in the United States, thus servings as an excellent source of information for scholars, practitioners, and policy makers in online learning. Beyond their summary of each instrument, they compared and contrasted them all leaving the reader with what is proposed as a list of absolutely essential course design elements. This article by Baldwin, Ching, and Hsu really exemplifies "linking research and practice to improve learning."

Figure 3. QR Code for the full-text of Baldwin, Ching, and Hsu (2018).

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