



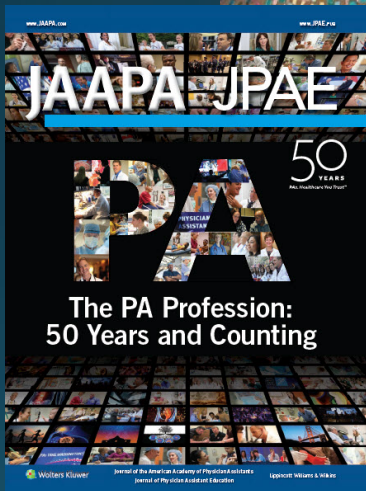
Peer Reviewing Manuscripts for PA Journals

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Objectives

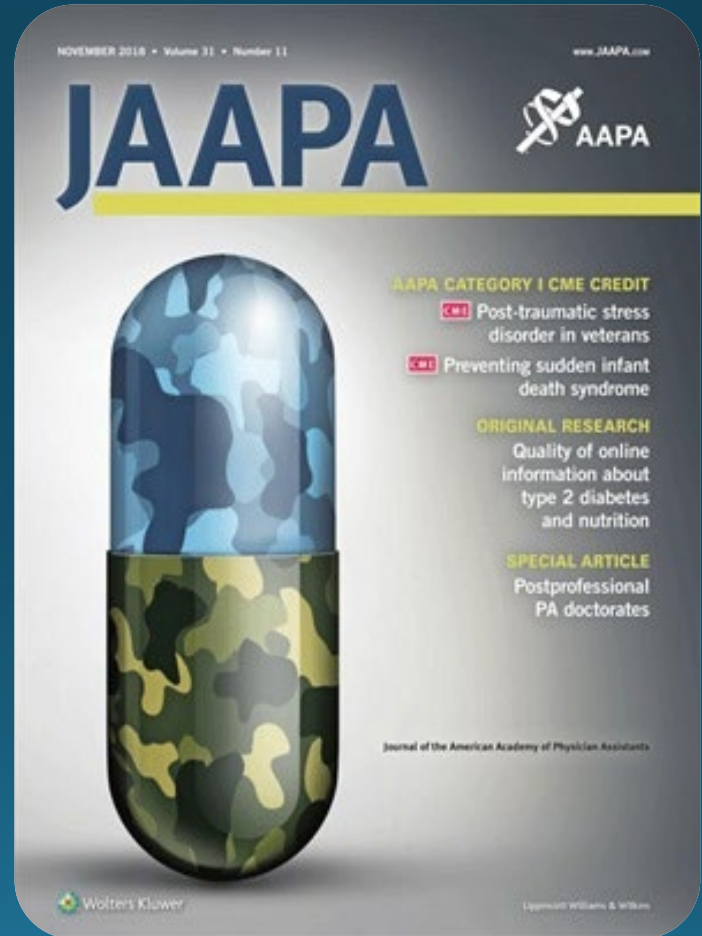
The attendees will be able to...

- Describe the purpose of peer review
- Articulate the steps in the peer review process
- Identify the best practices associated with peer reviewing manuscripts for PA journals
- Apply the principles of peer review to a sample article

Agenda for this Session

- Introductions/roles of presenters
- Rationale for peer review
- Steps to complete a manuscript review
- Best practices associated with quality peer reviewing of manuscripts
- Interactive Session: Manuscript review with feedback
 - Clinical Article (JAAPA)
 - Educational/Research Article (JPAE)
- Wrap-up

PA Journals



Peer review

“Peer review ... is a process of subjecting an author’s ... work ... to the scrutiny of others who are experts in the same field.”

– *EJIFCC*. 2014;25(3):227-243.

Peer Review Purpose

- The peer review process often receives criticism and definitely has limitations
 - It still plays a fundamental role in helping to ensure published research is accurate, trustworthy, of importance to the intended audience.
 - It helps ensure content meets the highest standards of research/publication within a given field.

What are some reasons to peer review?

- To support development of a robust literature and evidence for the PA profession
- To learn what you really know
- To share your expertise with colleagues
- To improve patient care
- To improve PA education and research
- To increase awareness of and respect for the PA profession
- To advance your career

Why serve as a peer reviewer?

This is a fair question as...

- We are all pressed for time
- It is hard work
- You have to engage in serious critical thinking
- There is no financial reward
- You have to deal with editors
- You may have to convey unwelcome news

It is a Professional Responsibility

- Most academicians and clinicians consider it a honor to be asked to be a peer-reviewer
- It is participation in a time-honored academic activity – the peer review process
- It is a duty of being a member of a community of professionals
- It is a recognition of your expertise and standing in the field

Strengthen Your Critical Thinking Skills

- It is an opportunity to apply critical thinking skills to a clinical or research work
- It can broaden your awareness of research being conducted in the field or patient care
- Makes you assess your knowledge of research design and methodologies
- Gives you a chance to participate in high-level academic dialogue
- Considered in career advancement (e.g. P&T, career ladder programs)

Guidelines and Training for Peer Reviewers

In the *JAAPA* guidelines

- Descriptions of the types of articles accepted
- Length and format requirements
- Instructions for how to prepare and submit the manuscript
- Details on the publishing process
- *The answer to nearly all the questions that would-be authors and reviewers ask me*

www.jaapa.com www.editorialmanager.com/jaapa



In the *JPAE* guidelines

- Descriptions of the types of articles accepted
- Length and format requirements
- Instructions for how to prepare and submit the manuscript
- Guidelines for Reviewers
- Rubrics
- Step-by-step instructions for submitting an article or review in Editorial Manager

<https://journals.lww.com/jpae/Pages/informationforauthors.aspx>

<https://www.editorialmanager.com/paea/default.aspx>



Guidelines and Rubrics

JPAE

New Rubrics

- Research and Abstract and Brief Reports; Special Articles

Guidelines

- <https://journals.lww.com/jpae/Pages/informationforauthors.aspx>

Decisions

- Accept as is, Minor revision, Major revision, Reject

JAAPA

Rubrics

- Clinical Article; Research Article

Guidelines

- <https://journals.lww.com/jaapa/Pages/authorguidelines.aspx>

Decisions

- Accept, Revise, Reject

Peer Review Process

General Peer Review Process

- E-mail Invitation to peer review a manuscript
- Decision on whether to review or not (COI?)
- Respond with decision
- Access web site and manuscript
- Review manuscript
- Submit comments and recommendation
- Obtain credit for review
- Review decision by editor
- Review other peer review comments
- Possibly asked to peer review revised manuscript.

Manuscript Review Process

- Editorial Manager (EM) System notifies the Editor in Chief (EIC) that a manuscript has been submitted
- Staff review manuscript and associated document to ensure all material is completed
- EIC reviews manuscript for appropriateness for identified article type
- A manuscript may then be delegated to a special editor before being assigned to peer review
 - Clinical editor, Department editor, Statistical editor

Manuscript Review Process

- An editor will typically assign 3-4 peer reviewers from the EM System or Publons© database.
- Manuscripts may go through multiple stages of revision and resubmission.
- After acceptance, the article is screened by Wolters Kluwer using a plagiarism algorithm.

Manuscript Review Process

- Once all the review are received, the EIC will make a final decision and communicate this to the author(s).
 - Department or section editors may recommend a disposition to EIC
- Reviewers have an opportunity to read the reviews submitted by the other peer reviewers.
- Obtain credit for the review (Category 1 CME; Publons©)

Reviewers may be asked to look at their previously reviewed articles, if revised.

Before Saying Yes

Before agreeing to review for a journal, consider the following:

- What form of review does the journal operate? (single/blind/open)
- How you will need to submit your review – for example, is there a structured form for reviewers to complete or will you be required to write free text?
- Do you have any conflicts of interest? If so, make the editor aware immediately.
- Whether you can complete the review in the allotted time. If you later find yourself struggling to meet the deadline, let the editor know, so they can inform the author of any delays.

Importance of Confidentiality

- Submissions to journals are confidential!
- The PA and PA education communities are small and well-networked.
- Respect your colleagues by maintaining their confidence.
- Do not contact authors directly to discuss the submission - work through the editor.

Elements of a Good Review

- Documents the paper's strengths and weaknesses.
- Present your opinion of the weaknesses in an objective, constructive tone.
- If the study design is inappropriate, clearly outline why.
- Give the editor some sense of the relative significance of the paper from your perspective.
- Suggests ways to improve the manuscript.

Reviewer Example #1 (Research)

Results Section:

1. Was a second email sent out to the students to increase the return rate of the survey?
2. Develop a table displaying the results
3. Include a breakdown (distribution) of responses by program. Need to demonstrate this for bias and discuss later.
4. What is the female to male ratio of PA students in the state? Include for comparison to results.
5. It is stated that 43.3% of students indicated geriatric clinical exposure or coursework during the second year of school. Geriatric exposure occurs in family practice, internal medicine inpatient and outpatient, etc. Were you surveying for a formal geriatric rotation or general exposure?

Reviewer Example #2 (Clinical)

1. The General Features section is too long – refocus on content relevant to PA readers, reduce management statements which are better suited for later in paper.
2. Consider re-ordering your Etiologic Factors, starting with the most common
3. Key elements from History are missing (e.g. weight gain/loss, cough, nocturia, exercise intolerance, abdominal distension). Were these assessed?
4. In Diagnostics, the use of cardiac MRI as described here is not consistent with current evidence – revisit this section and consider role of stress testing
5. In Diagnostics, CXR is not defined but an important tool
6. In management, readers would benefit from more discussion of approaches and benefits of restoring NSR
7. Some drugs and surgical interventions may contribute to/worsen HF, but this is not mentioned. Also, no discussion of vaccinations in patients with HF is noted.
8. In Management, numerous standard therapies for treating late state disease are missing from the paper. No studies on ivabradine are mentioned.

Steps in Completing the Review Process

The First Read-Through

- Following the invitation to review, you'll have received the article abstract and should already understand the aims, key data and conclusions of the manuscript. If you don't, make a note now that you need to give feedback on how to improve those sections.
- The first read-through is a skim-read. It will help you form an initial impression of the paper and get a sense of whether your eventual recommendation will be to accept or reject the paper.
- Jot down your first impressions as you read or mark areas you identify for questions and comments,.

Consider Major or Fatal Flaws

Examples of possibly major flaws may include:

Research

- Drawing a conclusion that is contradicted by the statistical or qualitative evidence presented
- The use of a flawed methodology

Clinical

- There are key elements missing or deviation from best clinical practice or current evidence
- The author offers opinion without synthesis of evidence

Any

- Topic or research question that is already well documented
- Not a good fit with the journal or may not be of interest to the readership

Methods

Repeatable Methods

- Provides enough detail that other researchers are able to carry out the same research. For example, sampling methods should all be described in detail so that others could follow the same steps.
- Where methods are not detailed enough, suggest the methods section to be revised.

Methods

Quality Methods

- Is the technique or method for gathering data appropriate?
- Did they gather sufficient data to draw conclusions?
- Is the population representative?
- Will it allow the conclusions to be generalizable?

Results and Discussion

This section should tell a coherent story - What happened? What was learned or confirmed? How does this information compare to existing published literature (if applicable)?

- Start by describing in simple terms what data show
- Make reference to statistical analyses, such as significance or impact
- Evaluate trends observed and explain significance of results to wider understanding.
 - This can be done by referencing published research
- Outcome should be a critical analysis of data collected

Conclusions

- This section is typically no more than a couple paragraphs and often is in a separate section.
- The conclusions should reflect upon the aims - whether they were achieved or not - and, like the aims, should not be surprising.
- If the conclusions are not evidence-based, it's appropriate to ask for them to be re-written or supported.

Images, Graphs and Tables

- Is each of the figures necessary/beneficial?
- Could some text be replaced by a figure or graph?
- Appropriately labeled and scaled?
- Relevant to the study aim?
- Presented in a logical, coherent manner?
- Easy to glean information from?
- Missing elements?
- Permission for graphics, figures from other sources.

References

- Are important parts of the argument poorly supported?
- Are there published studies that show similar or dissimilar trends that should be discussed?
- References should be relevant, recent, and readily retrievable.
 - Primary literature is optimal (versus reviews, etc.)
 - Indexing sites (e.g. Up-to-Date, DynaMed are not appropriate as references)
- Ensure landmark or key studies are referenced.

References

Check for a well-balanced list of references that is:

- Helpful to the reader
- Fair to competing authors
- Not overly-reliant on self-citation
- Gives due recognition to the initial discoveries and related work that led to the work under assessment

Interactive Peer Review Exercise

Let's get to work.

Wrap-up

- Let us know how we can help; we invite you as a reviewer!
- ealesbury@paeaonline.org
- Thank you for your contributions to PA journals!
- jaapaeditor@wolterskluwer.com

