3.4: Providing the Right Resources for Reviewers

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Providing the Right Resources for Reviewers

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Council of Science Editors Meeting
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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

• Co-Inventor of SERAS (Systematic Expert Risk Assessment for Suicide).

• Equity stake in WISER Systems, LLC – holds license from UVM to commercialize SERAS.

• Grant support from NIMH, NIDA, Klingenstein Third Generation Foundation.

EXPERIENCE

• Have been instructing psychiatry residents, child psychiatry fellows, and psychology graduate students in the review of scientific papers for the past 13 years

• Have been involved as a peer reviewer since 1997

• Began ad hoc editing, as a contributing editor, editorial board and then as an action editor for two Journals before becoming Associate Editor of JAACAP

• Have developed a strategy for teaching students, but built on experience only. No training program given.
WRITING THE CRITIQUE

• Search yourself, young Jedi: Before you start, ask yourself these questions:
  – What is the purpose of the study?
  – What questions were asked? How did the study address these questions?
  – What assumptions did the author make?
  – What were the major findings?
  – What surprised you or struck you as interesting?
  – What questions are still unanswered?

• Start with a paragraph that succinctly names the authors (if not blinded), the title of the article, a statement of the problem or issue, and a very quick summary of the main findings. Finish that opening paragraph with a comment about the strengths of the article and whether you think that the issue is important and current.
• The remainder of the critique should consist of your qualified opinion
WRITING THE CRITIQUE

• Number your points to allow the authors to respond quickly to your comments
• Organize your points in some way. Some choose to do this by section of the manuscript
• Address the issues that you addressed above, highlighting major concerns.

• Have a section at the bottom for minor concerns (FORMATTING, mispelings, etc.,)
• Make concrete suggestions to improve the manuscript.
  – Are there places that need to be expanded or contracted in the discussion?
  – Challenge ambiguous and unreferenced statements.
A CRITIQUE THAT IS NOT HELPFUL

“While the review is thorough and generally well written, I am concerned that it covers fundamental information and is not appropriate for the journal.”

SUMMARY

• The key for me as an editor is to have something specific that I can point to when I am making a decision about what to do with a manuscript
• If I am going to be offering a resubmission as an editor, I need to be able to direct the attention of the authors to these few specific items.
QUESTIONS?

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http://childemotionregulationlab.org

ACS Reviewer Lab

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May 7, 2019
CSE Meeting

Image Credit: U.S. Department of Energy Human Genome Program
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• I am an employee of the American Chemical Society

• No financial or other conflicts to disclose

• Huge thanks to a number of ACS team members for helping with this project!

Limits of current peer review training

Of the 50+ top research institutions we informally canvassed, only one has a course on Peer Review (Northwestern University)

Most scientists learn to perform peer review from trial-and-error and/or informal discussions with mentors

This was not taught in my graduate education…

I wish I had had this [course] when I was a graduate student.
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79% of respondents ranked peer review resources as important, more than any other resource (ACS, 2018).

77% of respondents desired further peer review training (Wiley, 2015).

What is ACS Reviewer Lab?

• Free online course with six interactive modules covering every step of the peer review process.
• Content informed by ACS Editors-in-Chief, authors, and early career researchers.
• Effective pedagogical tool, with exercises and a rigorous final exam.
• Designed for user accessibility and also available in Chinese and Japanese.

www.acsreviewerlab.org
Modules

Introduction to Peer Review: the basics of peer review and its critical role in science publishing

Ethics in Peer Review: how to deal with difficult ethical issues, conflicts of interest, and personal biases

Preparing for Review: how to prepare before evaluating a manuscript

Assessing Significance and Technical Quality: how to gauge impact and technical quality of the manuscript

Assessing Presentation and Readiness for Publication: how to evaluate the way results are described and suitability for publication

Writing Your Review: how to compose a quality review that conveys ideas to authors and editors clearly

Interactive elements and handouts

EXERCISE 3
Can a professor ask a student or postdoc to assist in reviewing a manuscript?
- Yes, and no need to ask the Editor if the trainee is in the professor’s lab.
- Yes, if the professor gets approval from the Editor first.
- No, this is never OK.

www.acsreviewerlab.org
Results so far

- Over 9,000 enrolled researchers and 3,000 graduates
- Two-thirds of graduates opt to receive a badge signifying their accomplishment in ACS’s peer review environment

“Will definitely recommend all my students to take it. First of all, it teaches them how to write papers—not just how to review—it teaches them what will be assessed.”
Results so far

Before Chinese and Japanese site launch

After Chinese and Japanese site launch

Conclusions/next steps

Conclusions:
• Researchers value peer review resources and make use of them when they’re available
• Helpful resources can expand your reviewer pool
• Translating resources can broaden their reach

Next steps:
• Facilitate use of course materials in class/offline/after completion of the course
• Reassess content to clarify confusing sections or address other common scenarios
Thank you!

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Academic Medicine’s Resources for Reviewers

Elizabeth S. Karlin, MA
Senior Staff Editor

May 7, 2019
Council of Science Editors
Columbus, OH
Disclosures and Thanks

I am a member of the Academic Medicine editorial staff.

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This work represents the efforts of the entire Academic Medicine team: Laura Blyton, Mike Cameron, Jen Campi, Mary Beth DeVilbiss, Toni Gallo, and Heather Grimm.

Brief Outline

• Background
• Academic Medicine's resources for reviewers
  - Description
  - Usage data
• Investment and lessons learned
The “Invitation to Review” shows up in your inbox, and you briefly consider pretending that it went to your spam folder. Now couldn’t be a worse time. You have manuscripts to revise, and your own reviewers to revile. You can’t get paid (believe me, I’ve tried). You convince yourself you’d rather sit in committee meetings or fill out pre-authorizations for meds. You dread the prospect that, even after pouring your energy into that review, somewhere out there the authors will be cursing your nameless existence and diagnosing psychopathology in your every word choice. You will be labeled an idiot, a narcissist, or the worst thing you could be called in academic medicine…”out of touch.”

- Grace Huang, MD
- The (Re)View From the Other Side

- Posted 2013 and 2014
- 3,407 views as of 4/17/2019
Guide to Reviewer Recommendations

Posted March 2015


Review Criteria for Research Manuscripts, 2nd edition

- Published August 2015
- 533 downloads/purchases (4/18/2019)

What Editors Want

The role of your review
Follow reviewer etiquette
Use the journal's preferred review format
Comments to the author: Give constructive feedback
Comments to the Editor

Questions the Editors want answered

✓ Will this manuscript advance the literature?
   Is the topic important? Will it change how we think about an issue?

✓ Is there a fatal flaw in the design or the argument?
   Is there a problem so serious that the authors would not be able to fix it in a revision?

✓ How can this manuscript be improved?

Practice Review Exercise

• Posted September 2017
• 321 visitors (1/1/2018 – 4/18/2019)
Podcast: Advice from a Master Peer Reviewer

Available August 2018
2,391 plays (4/29/2019)

Reviewer Workshops

Expanding Group Peer Review: A Proposal for Medical Education Scholarship

Lena Suverno, MD, Deborah L. Engle, EdD, MS, Kristen Goodell, MD, Alisa Nagler, JD, MAs, EdD, Robin K. Oviedo, MD, and Shari A. Whicker, EdD, MEd

Abstract

After participating in a group peer-review exercise at a workshop presented by Academic Medicine and MedSUPPORT at the 2014 Association of American Medical Colleges Medical Education Meeting, the authors realized that the way their work group reviewed a manuscript was very different from the way by which they each would have reviewed the paper as an individual. Further, the group peer-review process yielded more exact feedback for the manuscript's authors than did the traditional individual peer-review process. This realization motivated the authors to reconvene and collaborate to write this Commentary to share their experience and propose the expanded use of group peer review in medical education scholarship.

The authors consider the benefits of a peer-review process for reviewers, including learning how to improve their own manuscripts. They suggest that these benefits of a team review model may be similar to those of team work and team-based learning in medicine and medical education. They call for research to investigate this, to provide evidence to support group review, and to determine if a peer review model for manuscripts dispenses with the need for individual peer review journals in which each individual peer review would be needed.

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• Time
• Working with designers and others
• Experimenting with new media
• Once developed, available
• A hub for reviewers

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@mshegal: Looking for resources to help peer review critique articles. Are there published guides? Help me out @harvardmacy

@javeedsukhera: The @AcadMedJournal has fantastic resources on their reviewer page journals.lww.com/academicmedi ...

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