Journal of Public Affairs Education

Midterm Report
Presented to
**The Journal of Public Affairs Education Editorial Board
& The Executive Council of the
Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration**

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Co-Editors-in-Chief

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Brief Overview

The *Journal of Public Affairs Education (JPAE)* Co-Editors-In-Chief submit the following report to the Editorial Board and Executive Council of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). The mid-year report presents:

- Data from January 1, 2024- August 20, 2024 (e.g., journal impact, information for submission and processing of manuscripts);
- Areas of future growth and opportunity; and
- Long-term comparisons, when possible.

Journal Impact

Table 1 illustrates *the JPAE* journal impact according to Clarivate's Journal Citation Reports. *JPAE* is indexed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). In 2023, Clarivate changed its journal impact factor approach to include only decimals to one-tenth. Although *JPAE*'s impact factor decreased slightly in 2023, it is impossible to determine how much. One indicator is the reduction in the impact factor was only by a few hundredths of a point because the journal's impact factor rank in the public administration category went from an (estimated) 40 in 2022 to 34 in 2023, but - t three new journals were also added to the category. Notably, this means that *JPAE* is officially a **Q1 journal** in the Public Administration category. Additionally, *JPAE* ranked 144th out of 756 education journals (by impact factor rank), making it *also a Q1 education journal*.

The Journal Citation Indicator (JCI) is largely considered to be a stronger indicator of long-term journal impact because "it is the average Category Normalized Citation Impact (articles & reviews) published by a journal over a recent three year period" (Clarivate, 2024). A JCI score of 1.23 means that *JPAE* has 23% more citation impact than the average journal in the public administration category, regardless of whether it is in the Emerging Sources Citation Index or the Social Science Citation Index. JPAE's JCI score steadily increased from 2020 to 2023. *JPAE's 2023 JCI is an impact increase of 27.8% over 2022*. Additionally, JPAE's JCI ranking demonstrates that our long-term impact places us much higher than the impact factor ranking (19 to 34, respectively).

Table 1. Clarivate Impact Factor & Citation Indicator Scores							
Year	Articles Published	Citations	Impact Factor	Impact Factor Rank in PA	Journal Citation Indicator	Journal Citation Indicator Rank in PA	Journal Citation Indicator Rank in Ed
2019	73	60	0.817*	40/48*	N/A	N/A	315/723
2020	50	73	1.460*	39/79*	1.01	N/A	256/724
2021	53	129	2.434*	30/85*	1.16	N/A	202/743
2022	52	130	2.5	40/89*	1.18	N/A	185/759
2023**	56	119	2.4	34/91	1.23	19/91	159/756
* Estimated – In 2023, Clarivate, who manages the ESCI and SSCI indices, began issuing an impact factor for all indexed journals. The impact factor was simplified to only one point beyond the decimal. For all prior years, Taylor and Francis manually estimated the impact factor at the request of the previous Co-Editors-In-Chief.							

** JPAE was accepted into the Public Administration category of the ESCI for the 2023 calculations, allowing for it to be officially ranked on multiple metrics.

Table 2 presents the Elsevier's SCOPUS Index CiteScore – another widely recognized citation index. The 2024 CiteScore for *JPAE* is 5.0 (i.e., the average article published in the journal was cited five times more than the years considered for the calculation), which is a 13.64% increase from 2022. This score also ranked *JPAE* as 56th out of the 213 public administration journals and 272 out of 1,543 education journals. *This means that Scopus ranks JPAE as a Q1 public administration and education journal*.

Table 2. SCOPUS CiteScore					
Year	Citable Documents	Citations (preceding 3 years)	CiteScore	PA Rank	Education Rank
2018	23	27	0.9*	95/142	696/1179
2019	110	191	1.7	69/157	467/1254
2020	101	209	2.1	75/165	447/1319
2021	97	311	3.2	62/190	327/1406
2022	91	402	4.4	50/213	268/1469
2023	93	469	5.0	56/232	272/1543
* 2018 data is incomplete due to JPAE's accepted into the index in the fall of 2018					

Submissions & Accountability Statistics

Table 3 illustrates the total number of manuscript submissions and the mean turnaround times to various touchpoints in the *JPAE* publication pipeline. In 2023, the journal received 106 submissions. By way of comparison, *JPAE* already received more than that in 2024 (107 submissions between January 1 and September 30, 2024). Importantly, the mean turnaround time for JPAE is 16.7 days as of September 30, 2024. There are two factors that account for this reduction in turnaround time: 1) editors are actively reminding and engaging reviewers, reaching out directly to any reviews not submitted within 30 days; and 2) editors are being more selective about manuscripts going out for review to be respectful of reviewers service work and time.

Table 3. Submission and Accountability Statistics

Touchpoint Metric	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
# of New Submissions	96	82	101	89	87	106	107
Revisions Requested	38	32	30	53	61	51	48
Revisions Received	36	29	31	52	57	57	35*
Submission to Tech Check	0.8	1.3	0.9	1.1	1.3	1	2.3
Tech Check to Editor Assign	0	0	0.1	0.1	0	0.5	0.2
Submission to Editor Assign	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.5	2.4
Submission to Reviewer Invite	2.3	3.1	1.7	2.6	2.8	4.5	5.1
Submission to First Decision	26.8	38.3	32.1	32.5	31.8	26.1	16.7

*01/01 – 09/30/24 with 15 revisions pending

Editorial Decisions

Table 4 illustrates the decision outcomes for initial submissions, first revisions, second revisions, and third revisions during the reporting period. January 1-September 2024, *JPAE* made decisions on 102 manuscripts. To honor reviewers time and service, the editors adopted the principal that if they do not believe the manuscript can be made publishable, it should not be sent out for review. Thus, 66.66% of submitted manuscripts are desk rejected. To date, only one manuscript has been rejected post-revision; there are currently 14 manuscripts under review and 15 manuscripts out for revision.

Table 4. 2024 Editorial Decisions				
Decision	Initial Submission (n=102)	First Revision (n=21)	Second Revision (n=10)	Third Revision (n=3)
Desk Reject - Unsound	22	NA	NA	NA
Desk Reject - Unsuitable	46	NA	NA	NA
Major Revision	27	2	1	0
Minor Revision	7	8	2	1
Reject	NA	1	0	0
Accept	0	10	7	2

Reviews & Referees

From January 1 to September 30, 2024, *JPAE* received 113 referee reports. The mean number of days from the invitation to review until the review is received is 24.7. Table 5 illustrates the distribution of recommendations from the reviews received.

In 2024, *JPAE* has seen a recommendation of *"accept,"* for 20.3% of manuscripts, compared to 45.6% in 2023, 36.8% in 2022, 42.7% in 2021, 35.3% in 2020, 33.9% in 2019, and 43.2% in 2018. We believe this reflects an increase in quality of the reviewers and expectations for what is considered publishable.

Table 5. 2024 Frequency of Reviewer Recommendations	
Recommendation	Percentage (N=113)
Reject	33.7%
Major Revision	25.7%
Minor Revision	20.4%
Accept with Minor Revisions	5.3%
Accept (Normal Editorial Changes)	15%

JPAE made 245 review requests during the report period. We received 113 total reviewer reports from 108 discrete reviewers. Although these numbers are low, they reflect a

common issue faced by journals. Other journals in the field are reporting invitation to review acceptance rates between 1:5 and 1:15. Comparatively, JPAE is excelling at relying on a loyal group of experts to review, which we greatly appreciate. The distribution of responses to the invitation is provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Reviewer Invitation Statistics

Response	Number (n=245)	%
Completed Reviews	108	44.08%
Review in Progress	17	6.94%
Declined Invitation	48	19.59%
Uninvited/Did Not Respond	72	29.38%

Circulation & Readership

Table 7 offers the number of article downloads. Since 2016 and 2017, the journal was accessible through JSTOR and the NASPAA website. In 2018, JPAE moved to Taylor and Francis as the publisher. The previous Co-Editors-In-Chief stated that 2022 saw a decline in downloads due to a glitch in linking NASPAA membership to *JPAE* access. Concerted efforts have been made to rectify this concern. On September 25, 2024, NASPAA sent an email to principal representatives with steps to receive access. In 2024, we have seen the number of article downloads increase to 61,000.

Table 7. Number of Article Downloads

Year	Taylor & Francis	JSTOR	Total
2016*		38,314	38,314
2017*		42,336	42,336
2018	9,906	45,383	55,289
2019	25,865	35,904	61,769
2020	41,232	53,553	94,785
2021	51,605	63,012	114,617
2022	44,670	29,552	74,222
2023	32,930	16,390	49,320
2024	61,000	N/A	TBD

* Represents years that predate journals publishing relationship with Taylor and Francis

** Article downloads from January-September 2024

It is also important to review readership. The link provided in this report here, demonstrates the most viewed articles in the past 12 months. Within this link, Taylor and Francis illustrates the all-time most read articles in addition to those that are currently trending. We credit the creation of new social media channels in addition to the amplification of current resources to increase viewership.

Opportunities for JPAE's Continued Success

JPAE would not be successful without its committed editorial team, editorial board, and the support of NASPAA. To continue forward momentum, we highlight a few areas of continued opportunity.

1. **Reviewers**: Journals across the globe are struggling to find reviewers, in addition to board members being able to review. Although JPAE suggests a minimum number of annual reviews for team and board members, we are inviting creative solution to ensure we can support the work of our colleagues in addition to advancing the integrity of the peer review process. Compared to other journals in public administration, *JPAE* reviewers are performing at a high rate. We will continue to strive to improve our reviewer invitation acceptance ratio while honoring the work of our colleagues. We believe desk rejecting is critical to ensuring we respect reviewers' time in addition to working with potential authors on continuance improvement of their work and understanding about the scholarship of teaching and learning.

2. **Spotlight Articles**: One of our priorities as co-Editors is to support the work of underrepresented scholars. This year, JPAE worked with NASPAA to spotlight articles published in JPAE over the last year that were of exceptional quality and authored by underrepresented individuals in academia. These articles are being highlighted at the NASPAA annual conference award ceremony and will be available for free to anyone on the *JPAE* website for a month. We intend to carry this initiative forward in the coming year.

3. **Peer Reviewing**: The Spring 2024 board meeting led to discussions on how to improve manuscripts being submitted to the journal, in addition to the quality of the reviews. JPAE is collaborating with NASPAA to host the first of several webinars over the next three years that specifically target improving the quality of manuscripts and reviews for new and emerging scholars. The first webinar is scheduled for 12 PM EST on November 4, 2024, and is free for anyone to participate.

4. **Increase readership**: *JPAE* continues to increase readership. To continue this momentum, we are engaging internationally and encouraging meet-the-editor panels and coffee conversations with our board to invite submissions.

5. **Future Work & Collaboration**: central to *JPAE's* work is seeking positive momentum to continue to engage scholars in public affairs education. In the next two years, *JPAE* will work with its editorial board and team to focus on a myriad of items such as as:

   a. Special Issues: Currently, JPAE is collaborating with the Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership on a double special issue, "The Future of Nonprofit Education." In the future, we want to invite scholarship on pressing issues in public affairs education such as artificial intelligence/data governance, community engaged pedagogy, and promotion and tenure issues for women and marginalized communities.

   b. Innovating public affairs education in a world changed by the COVID-19 pandemic – While many journals have issued special issues surrounding COVID-19 pandemic, specific attention is needed on the systemic impacts as a result of the shock the pandemic caused. For example, we have seen a significant increase in the polarized political rhetoric and its infiltration into

the classroom. There has been a 250% increase in proposed educational gag orders, with 36 states introducing 137 bills and six states already passing laws that prohibit the discussion of race in the classroom (Pen America, 2022). As we find a new state of normal after the global pandemic's exogenous shock, public affairs faculty need research and innovation on these significant social shifts.

c. Centering social equity in public affairs education - Public affairs education must actively encourage social equity in the forefront of our research and teaching. This proposed special issue series builds upon the call in the Berry-James et al., article (2020) to advance a social equity curriculum for public affairs education. Specifically, this special issue will focus on innovative approaches to teaching and evolving institutional policies regarding the value of social equity, structural racism, institutional oppression, and systemically reinforced inequalities.

As co-editors, we believe engagement is imperative to serving the mission of NASPAA and the scholarship of teaching and learning. As we discussed with our editorial board, engagement is international, translational, and technological. To continue to increase the international presence of the journal, we are focused on recruiting international authors to submit their work for review by attending conferences such as EGPA and IPRSM, to name a few.

Editorial Team

The current editorial team for the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* is:

Editors-in-Chief
Sara Rinfret – Northern Arizona University, USA
Sarah Young – Kennesaw State University, USA

Engagement Editor
Sungdae Lim – Sam Houston State University, USA

Senior Associate Editor, Pedagogical Practices
Sean McCandless – University of Texas, Dallas, USA

Book Review Editor
Michelle C. Pautz – University of Dayton, USA

Digital Engagement Editor
Ana-Maria Dimand – Boise State University, USA

Assistant Editor
Savanna Stewart – Kennesaw State University, USA

Editorial Board

Members of the editorial board for the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* serve three-year, rotating terms that adhere to the calendar year with service beginning on January 1st in year one and ending on December 31st in year three. Each year, ten members of the editorial board end their service. To select new members, the editors-in-chief of the journal and NASAA's journal oversight committee each nominate five new members. Nominations are then subjected to confirmation by the other nominating group.

The current editorial board for the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* is: