

Journal of Public Affairs Education

**Midterm Report
January 1 – December 31, 2024**

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 Co-Editors-in-Chief of the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* (JPAAE) present this report to the Editorial Board and Executive Council of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA). This annual report includes:

- Data covering the period from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024, including journal impact metrics and details on manuscript submissions and processing;
- Potential areas for future development and expansion; and
- Long-term comparisons where applicable.

Journal Impact

Table 1 presents the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* (JPAAE) journal impact as reported in Clarivate's *Journal Citation Reports*. JPAAE is indexed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI). In 2023, Clarivate adjusted its journal impact factor methodology, rounding impact factors to one decimal place. While JPAAE's impact factor experienced a slight decline in 2023, the exact magnitude of the decrease is unclear. However, an indicator of this minimal change is that JPAAE's rank in the public administration category improved from an estimated 40th place in 2022 to 34th in 2023, despite the addition of three new journals in the category. Furthermore, JPAAE ranked 144th out of 756 education journals by impact factor, placing it in the Q1 tier for education journals.

The *Journal Citation Indicator* (JCI) is widely regarded as a more reliable measure of long-term journal impact since it reflects the *average Category Normalized Citation Impact* of articles and reviews published in a journal over the past three years (Clarivate, 2024). A JCI score of 1.23 indicates that JPAAE's citation impact is 23% higher than the average journal in the public administration category, regardless of whether it is indexed in ESCI or the Social Science Citation Index. JPAAE's JCI score has shown consistent growth from 2020 to 2023. ***The 2023 JCI represents a 27.8% increase over 2022, solidifying JPAAE's classification as a Q1 journal in public administration according to JCI rankings.*** Additionally, JPAAE's JCI ranking reflects a significantly stronger long-term impact than its impact factor ranking, positioning it between 19th and 34th place, 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	--	60	0.817*	40/48*	N/A	N/A	315/723
2020	--	73	1.460*	39/79*	1.01	N/A	256/724
2021	--	129	2.434*	30/85*	1.16	N/A	202/743
2022	30	130	2.5	40/89*	1.18	N/A	185/759
2023**	38	119	2.4	34/91	1.23	19/91	159/756
2024***	39	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

* 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.
*** 2024 data have not yet been released

Table 2 displays Elsevier’s *SCOPUS Index CiteScore*, a widely recognized citation metric. In 2023, JPAE’s CiteScore reached 5.0, indicating that, on average, each article published in the journal was cited five times within the years included in the calculation. This reflects a 13.64% increase from 2022. JPAE ranked 56th out of 232 public administration journals and 272nd out of 1,543 education journals based on this score. ***As a result, SCOPUS classifies JPAE as a Q1 journal in both public administration and education.***

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
2024**	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
* 2018 data is incomplete due to JPAE’s accepted into the index in the fall of 2018					
**2024 data have not yet been released.					

Submissions & Accountability Statistics

Table 3 provides an overview of the total number of manuscript submissions and the average turnaround times at key stages of the JPAE publication process. In 2023, the journal received 106 submissions, while in 2024, this number increased to 125, reflecting JPAE’s growing prominence. This rise in submissions is largely attributed to the editorial team’s efficient manuscript processing and the high-quality feedback provided by reviewers and editors.

Notably, the average time from submission to the first decision in 2024 was 21.8 days—the fastest average turnaround since 2018. Three key factors have contributed to this improvement:

1. Editors are proactively engaging with reviewers, sending reminders, and directly following up when reviews are not submitted within 30 days.
2. The editorial team has become more selective in determining which manuscripts proceed to review, ensuring that reviewers' time and service contributions are respected.
3. Editors are carefully matching manuscripts with appropriate reviewers, selecting those whose work aligns with the submission and crafting personalized invitations that highlight these connections.

Table 3. Submission and Accountability Statistics							
Touchpoint Metric	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
# of New Submissions	96	82	101	89	87	106	125

Submission to Tech Check	0.8	1.3	0.9	1.1	1.3	1	2.2
Tech Check to Editor Assign	0	0	0.1	0.1	0	0.5	0.1
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	21.8

Editorial Decisions

Table 4 illustrates the decision outcomes for initial submissions, first revisions, second revisions, and third revisions during the reporting period. In 2024, *JPAE* made decisions on 125 novel submissions. To honor reviewers' time and service, the editors adopted the principle that if they do not believe the manuscript can be made publishable, it should not be sent out for review. Thus, 62.4% of submitted manuscripts were desk rejected.

Table 4. 2024 Editorial Decisions				
Decision	Initial Submission (n=125)	First Revision (n=35)	Second Revision (n=12)	Third Revision (n=3)
Desk Reject - Unsound	26	--	--	--
Desk Reject - Unsuitable	52	--	--	--
Major Revision	37	2	1	0
Minor Revision	10	11	2	0
Reject	--	6	0	0
Accept	0	16	9	3

Reviews & Referees

In 2024, *JPAE* received 164 referee reports. The mean number of days from the invitation to review until the review is received is 26.3 days. Table 5 illustrates the distribution of recommendations from the reviews received.

In 2024, *JPAE* has seen a recommendation of “accept,” for 14.3% 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=164)
Reject	33.7%
Major Revision	26.6%
Minor Revision	22%
Accept with Minor Revisions*	3.7%
Accept (Normal Editorial Changes)	14.3%

* This option was removed in mid-2024

JPAE made 302 review requests during the report period. We received 164 total reviewer reports from 122 discrete reviewers. Although these numbers are low, they reflect a common issue faced by journals. Other journals in the field are reporting invitations to review acceptance rates between 1:5 and 1:15. Comparatively, JPAE excels at relying on a loyal group of experts to review, which results in our roughly 1:2 ratio. We are greatly appreciative of our loyal reviewers. The distribution of responses to the invitation is provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Reviewer Invitation Statistics

Response	Number (n=302)	%
Completed Reviews	164	54.31%
Review in Progress	174	1.33%
Declined Invitation	54	17.88%
Uninvited/Did Not Respond	80	26.49%

Circulation & Readership

Table 7 offers the number of article downloads. Since 2016 and 2017, the journal has been 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. NASPAA has dedicated substantial staff resources toward working with Taylor and Francis to address this issue.

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	61,318	16,390	77,708
2024	60,083	NA	

* Represents years that predate JPAE's publishing relationship with Taylor and Francis

It is also important to review readership. [The link provided in this report](#) demonstrates the most viewed articles in the past 12 months. Within this link, Taylor and Francis illustrate the all-time most-read articles in addition to those that are currently trending.

Opportunities for JPAE's Continued Growth & Success

JPAE's success is a direct result of the dedication of its editorial team and editorial board and the ongoing support of NASPAA. To maintain this forward momentum, we have identified several key areas of opportunity:

1. **Reviewers:** Securing reviewers remains a challenge for academic journals globally, including ensuring that editorial board members fulfill their reviewing responsibilities. While JPAE sets a recommended minimum number of reviews for team and board members, we are exploring innovative strategies to sustain peer review integrity while supporting our colleagues' workloads. Compared to other public administration journals, JPAE reviewers demonstrate high engagement. We aim to further improve our reviewer invitation acceptance rate while respecting the time and effort of our colleagues. Desk rejections remain a critical tool for both preserving reviewers' time and guiding potential authors toward refining their work and deepening their understanding of the scholarship of teaching and learning.
2. **Spotlight Articles:** A core priority of our editorial leadership is supporting underrepresented scholars. This year, JPAE collaborated with NASPAA to highlight outstanding articles published over the past year by scholars from historically underrepresented backgrounds. These selected works are featured at NASPAA's annual conference award ceremony and will be freely accessible for one month on the JPAE website. We plan to continue this initiative in the coming years.
3. **Enhancing Peer Review Quality:** At the last board meeting, discussions focused on improving both the quality of submitted manuscripts and the rigor of peer reviews. In response, JPAE partnered with NASPAA to launch a series of free, online webinars over the next three years. The first one was about tips and tricks for publishing and reviewing for new and emerging scholars. The webinar was held on November 4, 2024, and was attended by almost 100 scholars. We have received overwhelming positive feedback and are already planning the next webinar for Fall 2025.
4. **Expanding Readership:** As co-editors, we recognize that meaningful engagement is essential to fulfilling NASPAA's mission and advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning. Engagement must be international, translational, and technologically adaptive to ensure JPAE's continued growth and impact. To sustain our increasing readership, we are expanding international outreach efforts by hosting *meet-the-editor* panels, informal networking sessions with our editorial board, and actively recruiting submissions from a diverse range of scholars. To further strengthen JPAE's global presence, the editorial team is increasing participation in international academic conferences. In 2025, the journal will be represented at IRSPM, the NASPAA Regional Conference (Saudi Arabia), ARNOVA Asia, PMRC (Seoul, South Korea), and EGPA. These efforts aim to encourage international submissions, foster scholarly exchange, and broaden JPAE's reach within the global public affairs education community.
5. **Future Work & Collaboration:** JPAE is committed to sustaining positive momentum in engaging scholars in public affairs education. Over the next two years, our editorial team will prioritize several initiatives, including special issues on:
 1. *The Future of Nonprofit Education* (in process): JPAE is currently collaborating with the *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership* on this double special issue which will be released in early 2025.
 2. *Pedagogy of the Emotionally Exhausted: Uncovering, Designing, and Coping with Academic Stressors*: We recently announced a call for papers for this special issue, which is being guest edited by Staci Zavattaro, Rachel Emas, Nicole Humphrey, and Sean McCandless. Abstracts are due March 31, 2025 with invited drafts due October 31, 2025.

3. *Artificial Intelligence in Public Affairs Education*: This special issue will be announced shortly and is being guest-edited by Victoria C. DeFrancesco Soto, Robert C. Richards, and Sunny Nillasithanukroh. Abstracts are due April 15, 2025. In October, there will be a symposium for interested authors at the NASPAA annual conference, and final invited drafts are due November 15, 2025.
4. *Public Affairs Education in the Gulf (Preliminary Title)*: This is a new special issue in development by guest editors Kim Moloney and Laila el Baradei focused on public affairs education in the MENA region. Abstracts will be due June 30, 2025 and invited drafts will be due December 31, 2025.

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

Senior Associate Editor, Pedagogical Practices

Sean McCandless – University of Texas, Dallas, USA

International Engagement Editor

Sungdae Lim – Sam Houston State University, 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:

Hunter Bacot – University of North Carolina Greensboro
Brandi Blessett – University of Minnesota
David Campbell – Binghamton University
K. Jurée Capers - Georgia State
Victoria De Francesco – University of Arkansas – Clinton School
John Diamond – Emeritus, Edge Hill University
Luke Fowler – Boise State University
Ting Gong – City University of Hong Kong
Mary Guy – University of Colorado at Denver
Meagan Jordan – University of Arkansas
Meagan M. Jordan – Old Dominion University
Soonhee Kim – KDI School
Christopher Koliba – University of Kansas
Christopher Larimer – University of Northern Iowa
Shin Kue Rye – Idaho State University
Peng Liu – Renmin University of China
Luis Luna-Reyes – University at Albany
Lindsey M. McDougale – Rutgers University
Cullen Merritt – University of Maryland at College Park
Roseanne Mirabella – Seton Hall University
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Edmund C. Stazyk – SUNY University at Albany
Kimberly Wiley – University of Florida
Staci Zavattaro – University of Central Florida