

Where Do We Go from Here?: Starting an Academic Journal in a Smaller Institution

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Five key decision points in establishing and disseminating a viable scholarly journal

defining a scope and target readership

- an era of long-tail publications
- fulfilling a need, or sustaining an initiative?
- readership v. subscribers

building institutional support and cooperation

- institutional priority
- organizational partner(s)
- budget
- understand/respond to opposition

establishing a submission/production cycle

- submission guidelines
- settle on volume/issue cycle
- production cycle: sequential v. repetitive v. cyclical tasks (samples)

sustaining editorial/production functions

- succession
- editorial board
- peer readers
- key personnel
- admin support
- outsourcing
- production meetings

practical matters of dissemination

- format (print/digital/epub)
- open access
- aggregators; embargo
- distribution list
- Web presence

finally

- think in terms of strategic stability
- craft a written proposal

*If you are going to do something selfish,
make certain you give others a reason
to support it and feel good about it*

—Richard Saunders

Submission/review schedule (in weeks)*

- 0 Submitted article received by Press
- 1 Managing editor determines that a submission is within scope; returns out-of-scope submissions to authors (err on the side of inclusion)
- 1 Clerk/managing editor enters data for an in-scope submission into a spreadsheet for projecting dates and tracking activities; acknowledges receipt to author
- 1 Clerk/managing editor recommends prospective readers, editorial-board member to editor
- 1 Editor confirms prospective readers
- 1-2 Clerk/managing editor confirms availability w/ prospective reviewers
- 2 Manuscript sent to readers
- 6 Manuscript reader reports due
- 7 Clerk/managing editor collates recommendations w/ manuscript
(monthly) Compiled manuscripts, reports sent to editor
- 8 Editor decision on further actions (acceptance to pool, acceptance w/ revision, review pending rewriting, additional review, rejection)
- 9 Clerk/managing editor drafts response letters
- 9 Editor reviews/approves response letters/email
- 9 Clerk/managing editor sends editorial response/readers reports to authors**

* Keyed to an individual submission; the process will be continuous

** Revisions would be handled individually on a schedule determined by the editor if an acceptance is offered pending revision.

Reader recommendations:

Reject—unsuited for publication (out of scope, poorly written, incomplete, flawed research/documentation, unoriginal, erroneous, etc.)

Revise and reconsider—major revisions necessary (structure, interpretation, documentation, etc.)

Accept pending revision—minor revisions recommended (organization,

Accept without revision—ready for copyediting

Editorial/production schedule, January issue

Editorial

- Jun 10 Editor compiles proposed issue TOC from pool of accepted manuscripts
- Jun 15 Proposed TOC to editorial board
- Jul 1 Editorial board approves content

Production

- Jul 5 Manuscripts/art to production
- Jul 25 Art drafts complete, mated to manuscript
- Aug 1 Manuscripts/art drafts to copyeditor
- Aug 20 Copyedits/art drafts from copyeditor
- Sep 1 Copyedits/art drafts to authors
- Oct 10 Copyedits from authors
- Oct 15 Copyedit integration (proofed internally)
- Oct 20 Page makeup
- Nov 1 Page proofs to authors
- Dec 1 Page proofs from authors
- Dec 10 Crx entered
- Dec 15 Revised proofs to editor
- Jan 5 Editor approves revised proofs
- Jan 10 Page-file creation

Distribution

- Jan 15 Page file released to aggregators, subscribers; file uploaded to on-demand printer
- Jan 20 Digital proof of on-demand file
- Jan 30 Print order submitted
- Feb 15 Printed copies received
- Mar 1 Print copies posted

Editorial/production schedule, July issue

Editorial

- Nov 15 Editor compiles proposed issue TOC from pool of accepted manuscripts
- Dec 1 Proposed TOC to editorial board
- Dec 15 Editorial board approves content

Production

- Jan 5 Manuscripts/art to production
- Jan 25 Art drafts complete, mated to manuscript
- Feb 1 Manuscripts/art drafts to copyeditor
- Feb 20 Copyedits/art drafts from copyeditor
- Mar 1 Copyedits/art drafts to authors
- Apr 15 Copyedits from authors
- Apr 15 Copyedit integration
- Apr 20 Page makeup
- May 1 Page proofs to authors
- Jun 1 Page proofs from authors
- Jun 10 Crx entered, paging adjusted
- Jun 15 Revised proofs to editor
- Jul 5 Editor approves revised proofs
- Jul 10 Page-file creation

Distribution

- Jul 15 Page file released to aggregators, subscribers; file uploaded to on-demand printer
- Jul 20 Digital proof of on-demand file
- Jul 30 Print order submitted
- Aug 15 Printed copies received
- Aug 31 Print copies posted