

# Journal of Public Affairs Education

**Editor's Annual Report  
to the Executive Council of the  
Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration**

**February 28, 2022**

*Editors-in-Chief*

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NC State University**

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This report from the co-Editors-in-Chief of the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* to the executive council of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration covers operations and editorial activities from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. The report presents information about the journal's status and its influence on the field and details regarding the submission and processing of manuscripts and any relevant news from the editorial office. As appropriate, we have provided information from previous years for comparison. Finally, the report lists both the members of the editorial team and the editorial board for the reporting period.

### Importance and Impact

The *Journal of Public Affairs Education* strives to achieve a position as a leading journal in the field of public administration. To this end, we are undertaking efforts to improve the overall quality of the journal and our reputation throughout the discipline. Currently, the journal is not indexed in the Social Science Citation Index. This means that the journal does not have an impact factor calculated for the journal. At our request, Taylor and Francis manually calculated the impact factor for the journal. The result of this calculation is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Impact Factor

Year	Articles Published	Citations	Impact Factor	Rank
2017	62	28	0.452*	44/48
2018	56	33	0.589*	44/47
2019	73	60	0.817*	40/48
2020	73	50	1.460*	39/47

\* Estimated

We are happy to report that our estimated 2020 impact factor for the journal is 1.460, a 78.7% increase over the estimated 2019 impact factor and a 148% increase over the 2018 impact factor. The estimated 2020 impact factor for the journal places us at 39<sup>th</sup> of 47 among public administration journals. The impact factor gives the average number of citations in 2020 to articles published in the journal during 2019 and 2018.

Table 2. SCOPUS CiteScore

Year	Citable Documents	Citations	CiteScore	Rank
2018	23	27	0.9*	95/142
2019	110	191	1.7	69/157
2020	101	209	2.1	75/165
2021	97	306	3.2**	---

\* 2018 data is incomplete due to JPAE's accepted into the index in the fall of 2018

\*\* As of February 7, 2022

In the fall of 2018, the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* was accepted for inclusion in Elsevier's SCOPUS Index. After collecting data on the journal's publications and citations for nearly two years, the journal is now receiving a "CiteScore." The CiteScore is a measurement of a journal's impact, as measured by the ratio of citations to documents over a period of four years. The 2020 CiteScore, for example, counts the citations received in 2017-2020 and divides this by

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the number of publications published for the same years. Table 2 provides the journal's CiteScore, along with the journal's ranking among public administration journals indexed in SCOPUS.

The 2020 CiteScore for the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* is a 2.1. This means that the average article published in the journal was cited 2.1 times during the years considered for the calculation. This score also ranked the journal as 75<sup>th</sup> out of the 165 public administration journals for whom scores can be calculated. This effectively places the journal in the top 54% of public administration outlets. In addition, the 2020 CiteScore experienced a growth of 23.5% over the 2019 score. The journal will not receive a final CiteScore for 2021 until June 2022; however, as of February 7, 2022, the journal's 2021 CiteScore is estimated at 3.2. This estimated score is 52.4% higher than the 2020 score and 88.2% higher than the 2019 score.

The improvement that we have seen in the impact factor and CiteScore is significant and reflects the journal's growing standing in the field. The continued improvement of the scores, however, is slow. As we continue to publish higher quality and impactful research, we expect that the scores will continue to increase. Also of importance is the role that social media plays with the journal. Previous research has suggested that scholars are more likely to become aware of and cite research that they see on their social media accounts. This highlights the continued importance of our social media editor and social media strategies.

### Submissions and Turnaround Time

The total number of manuscript submissions and the mean number of days from submission until the first editorial decision is made are provided in Table 3. The table provides the annual data beginning in 2011 when records in the Editorial Manager web service began and is extended through 2021. In 2021, the journal received 89 submissions. The number of submissions is lower than our record from 2021; however, it is worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic has produced similar declines in submissions with most other journals in the discipline.

Table 3. Yearly Submissions and Mean Turnaround Time

Year	Number of Submissions	Mean Turnaround Time (Days)
2011	47	34
2012	48	43
2013	69	40
2014	94	79
2015	93	64
2016	52	51
2017	41	72
2018	96	26
2019	82	38
2020	101	32
2021	89	26

As Table 3 also shows, the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* editorial team has been successful at reducing and maintaining a reduced turnaround time for the processing of manuscripts. Between 2011 and 2021, the journal experienced an average mean turnaround time of 45.9 days. A goal of our editorial team is to maintain a quick review process of 30 days or less. Since beginning our editorial term in 2018, we have maintained an average turnaround time of 30 days. Thus far in 2021, we are happy to report that we are currently maintaining a mean turnaround time for the first decision on manuscripts of 26 days. As the number of submissions received by the journal has increased, finding reviewers has become a challenge. Since the pandemic started, many potential reviewers are either not responding to requests to review or responding that they cannot review due to time constraints placed on them as a result of the pandemic. As a result, we have ensured that reviewing the journal's imposition is minimized, leaving us to take a more active approach to find adequate reviewers.

### Editorial Decisions

Table 4 provides the decision outcomes for initial submissions, first revisions, second revisions, and third revisions during the reporting period. As outlined in this table, in 2021 we made decisions on 91 manuscripts.

Table 4. Editorial Decisions

Decision	Original Submission (n=91)	First Revision (n=33)	Second Revision (n=16)	Third Revision (n=3)
Desk Reject	38	---	---	---
Reject	18	3	2	---
Revise and Resubmit	32	17	---	---
Accept	3	13	13	3

We have tried to take a preemptive approach with our desk rejects in making editorial decisions on manuscripts. To preserve a positive relationship with our reviewers, we have sought to desk reject those submissions that were inappropriate for the journal or unlikely to merge from review with a favorable decision. At the same time, we have seen a dramatic increase in the quality of manuscripts being submitted, leading to higher than expected positive decisions.

### Reviews and Referees

In 2021, the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* received 124 referee reports. The mean number of days from the invitation to review until the receipt of the review is 22.4 (or 21.1 days from the day the referee accepts the invitation). The distribution of recommendations from the reviews we received is provided in Table 5.

Table 5. Frequency of Reviewer Recommendations

Recommendation	Percentage (N=124)
Reject	12.1%
Revise and Resubmit	45.1%
Accept with Minor Revisions	24.2%
Accept as is	18.5%

We believe that the frequency of the reviewer recommendations shows a skewed relationship. Upon taking over as editors in 2018, we realized that many reviewers recommended accepting all manuscripts sent to them regardless of the manuscript quality. At that time, we adjusted our assigning of manuscripts to include the use of the rating tool in which we can quickly indicate the quality of a review. This allows us to ensure manuscripts are sent to reviewers to provide a more accurate perspective of the manuscripts. In 2021, we have seen a recommendation of accept for 42.7% of manuscripts, compared to 35.3% in 2020, 33.9% in 2019, and 43.2% in 2018. We have also seen a decline in recommendations to reject manuscripts. This may reflect an improvement in the quality of manuscripts submitted to the journal and efforts to desk reject manuscripts that were unlikely to emerge from the review process; however, it may also be reflective of long-standing reviewer perspectives about the kind of research that appears in the journal.

While 124 reviewer reports were received, a total of 164 review requests were sent out during the reporting period. The distribution of responses to the invitation is provided in Table 6.

Table 6. Responses to Invitation to Review a Manuscript

Response	Percentage	Subtotal
Completed Review	72.6%	
Review in Progress	0%	
		72.6%
Declined Invitation	12.2%	
Never Responded	0%	
Review Not Submitted	15.2%	
		27.4%

### Circulation and Reads

We believe that it is essential and valuable also to monitor the circulation of the journal and what is being read within its pages. Table 7 provides the total number of institutions with access to the journal. Access includes NASPAA member programs that have access as part of their NASPAA membership and institutions that receive access as part of a subscription or subscription package. In 2018, when the journal transitioned to Taylor and Francis, only 172 institutions had access to the journal. In 2020, 2,763 programs had access. This is a 1,506.4% increase in accessibility to the journal. Data on 2021 circulations and downloads will be available in September 2022.

Table 7. Number of Institutions with Access

Year	Number
2018	172
2019	2,603
2020	2,763

The number of article downloads that the journal experiences are provided in Table 8. In 2016 and 2017, the journal was accessible through JSTOR and the NASPAA website. Download information on articles through the NASPAA website is not available. However, these downloads are expected to have been minimal as all major indices at the time pointed towards access through JSTOR. Since the publishing relationship with Taylor and Francis began in 2018, we have seen a significant increase in the number of article downloads. Thus far, 2020, has been our greatest year of downloads, with a total of 94,784 downloads. We do, however, expect to exceed that our 2021 article downloads will have exceeded the previous record when final 2021 data is available.

Table 8. 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**	28,554	46,882	75,436

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

\*\* Represents article downloads from January 1 through August 31

## News

In addition to the data reported above, we would like to highlight several pieces of news. As mentioned previously under “Importance and Impact,” the estimated impact factor for the journal is 1.460. If we were listed in SSCI, this would place the journal at 39<sup>th</sup> of 47 journals. On the recommendation of Taylor and Francis, we are waiting to apply for inclusion in SSCI until our impact factor places us in the top 60% of public administration journals. Journals have a limited number of times they can apply for SSCI, and our publisher reports their highest rates of success with applications when the journal can pass the 60% mark.

In 2020, we began a discussion with the editors of the journal *Teaching Public Administration* about the broader recognition of scholars who have made significant contributions towards public administration education and research into public administration education. The decision was to establish a new award that would be jointly presented by the two journals, titled as the Joint Journal of Public Affairs Education and Teaching Public Administration Award for Excellence in Public Administration Education. Both editorial teams decide on the recipient. The presentation of the award will rotate between NASPAA’s conference in odd years and the Joint University Council’s Public Administration Committee’s annual conference in the UK in even years. The award intends to encourage research into public administration education further. We the first winner of the award is Mary Guy from the University of Colorado Denver.

One last area of news that we would like to highlight relates to symposia. We frequently receive requests to editor special issues of the journal. Unfortunately, the number of requests far exceeds the number of issues we publish. To ensure that we continue publishing the highest quality of research, we have limited the number of symposia we publish to an average of one per year and focus only on those with the broadest reach. In 2021, we published a symposium on ethics education scheduled. The symposium was edited by Jonathan West from the University of Miami. The second is a symposium on international and comparative public administration, edited by the journal’s current editorial team. The publication of the symposium is tentatively scheduled for December 2022. We are also currently working with a group of leading scholars in the field regarding a potential symposium on mentorship that would be published in December 2023. We anticipate announcing the team and the CFP for the symposium later this spring. We believe that these symposia help further the journal’s reputation and support our mission to advance teaching and learning scholarship in public affairs programs.



## **Editorial Team**

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

### **Editors-in-Chief**

Bruce D. McDonald – North Carolina State University  
William Hatcher – Augusta University

### **International and Engagement Editor**

Kendra Stewart – College of Charleston

### **Case Studies Editor**

Sean McCandless – University of Illinois Springfield

### **Book Review Editors**

Rachel Emas – Rutgers University  
Stephanie Dolamore – Gallaudet University

### **Social Media Editor**

Megan Hatch – Cleveland State University

### **Assistant Editor**

Michaela Abbott – North Carolina State University

## **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 1<sup>st</sup> in year one and ending on December 31<sup>st</sup> 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 team for the *Journal of Public Affairs Education* is:

Domonic Bearfield – Rutgers University  
Erin Borry – University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Ian Elliott – Northumbria University  
Michelle Evans – University of Tennessee at Chattanooga  
Aimee L. Franklin – University of Oklahoma  
Tia Gaynor – University of Cincinnati  
Ting Gong – City University of Hong Kong  
Doug Goodman – University of Central Florida  
Mary E. Guy – University of Colorado Denver  
Jeremy Hall – University of Central Florida  
Renee Irvin – University of Oregon  
Myung H. Jin – Virginia Commonwealth University  
Meagan M. Jordan – Old Dominion University  
Jamie Levine Daniel – Indiana University, Purdue University Indianapolis  
Peng Liu – Renmin University of Hong Kong  
Jeannine Love – Roosevelt University  
Elaine Yi Lu – John Jay College  
Craig S. Maher – University of Nebraska Omaha  
Charles E. Menfield – Rutgers University  
Janine O'Flynn – University of Melbourne  
Rosemary O'Leary – University of Kansas  
Cristian Pliscoff – Universidad de Chile  
Gabriel Puron-Cid – Centro de Investigacion y Docencia  
Sara Rinfert – University of Montana  
Jessica Sowa – University of Baltimore  
Edmund C. Stazyk – SUNY University at Albany  
Ador Torneo – De La Salle University  
Sally Wallace – Georgia State University  
Sarah L. Young – Kennesaw State University  
Yahong Zhang – Rutgers University

We want to express our appreciation to the editorial board members whose term ended in 2021. These members are:

William Brown – Texas A&M University  
Carol Ebdon – University of Nebraska at Omaha

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Kathleen Hale – Auburn University  
Jason Jolley – Ohio University  
Michael D. Siciliano – University of Illinois at Chicago  
Katherine Willoughby – University of Georgia  
Clayton Wukich – Cleveland State University  
Jong-II You – KDI School of Public Policy and Management