Checklist for Publishing a Journal Article

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This checklist lays out the factors to consider as you identify and evaluate potential journals in which to publish your work.

**Nature of the Project**

**Topic:**

**Type of Article:**
(i.e., research report, literature review)

**Data and Analytical Methods:**

**Argument:**

**Obligations, Limitations, and Goals**

**Obligations:**
(e.g., open access publication or other funding agency requirements)

**Limitations:**
(e.g., publication deadline; lack of funds for publication fees)

**Immediate Personal Goals:**
(e.g., publishing in a journal with a high impact factor)

**Long-range Goals:**
How does this article advance your career? What does your tenure/promotion committee expect? How does this article contribute to your long-range plans for research and scholarship?
**Audience**

Who shares an interest in your topic?

Who shares an interest in your data or methods?

Who cares about your argument?

Is there more than one audience for your article? If so, which audience should you target?

**Surveying Journals**

In order to identify journals in which you might publish your article, look at your bibliography, search the databases which you use most frequently, and visit the websites for the professional societies in your field and neighboring fields.

**Leading journals in your field:**
(e.g., journals published by professional societies)

**Leading journals in your subfield:**
(e.g., journals published by a special-interest group within a larger professional society or a more specialized professional society)

Do you want to aim for a general or a specialized journal? Why? What are the benefits of this choice? What are the drawbacks?

**Leading journals in neighboring fields:**
Your Shortlist
(three or four journals where you’d like to publish this article)

Evaluating Candidates
For each journal on your shortlist, visit the website, read a few recent issues, and gather information about the editors and editorial board members. If possible, speak with recently-published authors. You want to collect the following information:

Sponsor:
(e.g., professional society)

Publisher:
Professional societies often work with international publishers, such as Springer or the University of Chicago Press.

Mission Statement:

Scope:

Audiences:

Types of Articles Accepted:
Favored Topics or Methods:
(found in editorial policy or seen in recent issues)

Qualifications of Editors and Editorial Board Members:

Research Interests of Editors and Editorial Board Members:

Peer Review Policy:
(double-blind; single-blind; open/community)

Timeline for Review:

Impact Factor:

Author Fees:
(e.g., page charges, open access charges)

Access for Readers:
Open access, subscription-only, or hybrid
Submission Requirements:
(e.g., formatting, online submission system, additional documents)

Restrictions on Word Count, Number of Images, or Other Visuals:

Data:
Does the journal have a policy regarding supplementary data?

Timeline for Publication:

Publication Agreement:
If the publication agreement is available online, check the provisions for open access and the rights which you, as the author, will retain.

Experiences of Other Authors:
If possible, ask authors who have recently published articles in this journal about their experiences with submission, peer review, and the publishing process.
**Ethical Concerns**

**Authorship**
The University of Arkansas does not have an official policy regarding authorship, but you may find the recommendations posted in the “Writing and Publishing” guide useful.

Are you working with co-authors? Have you agreed whom you will include in the list of authors and in what order their names will appear?

Have you decided who will serve as the corresponding author?

Have you agreed upon our first-choice journal?

Have each of the co-authors read and approved the version of the article which you are submitting?

**Confidentiality**
are you working with any confidential data which needs to be protected? Have you followed best practices for handling this data?

**Permissions**
For information about copyright and fair use, visit this website hosted by Copyright Advisory Office, Columbia University Libraries.

Do you reproduce any graphs, images, or other elements which were not originally created by you or one of your co-authors? Do you need to obtain permission from a copyright holder to include these elements?
Submission and Peer Review

Have you proofread your article?

Is your cover letter brief and persuasive? Have you proofread it?
Your cover letter should briefly state your argument, highlight the unique features of your research, and explain why your article is a good match for this particular journal. Ideally, the text of your cover letter should be no more than 250 words long.

If the journal permits, have you included a list of potential reviewers? Have you provided their contact information? Do you mention why you consider them qualified to comment on your article? Have you avoided listing someone, such as a close colleague or former mentor, who might have a conflict of interest?

What additional documents does the journal require? Have you proofread them?

Have you fastidiously followed the submission instructions?

References
