

THE JOURNAL OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION

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SCOPE

The Journal of Physician Assistant Education is the official journal of the Physician Assistant Education Association and is dedicated to advancing physician assistant (PA) education by publishing scholarly manuscripts germane to PA educators and by providing a forum for the sharing of ideas and innovations that will enhance the education of PA students.

ETHICAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

A submitted manuscript must be an original contribution not previously published (except as an abstract), must not be under consideration for publication elsewhere, and, if accepted, it must not be published elsewhere in similar form, in any language, without the consent of Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. Each person listed as an author is expected to have participated in the study to a significant extent. (Please see the [COPE guidelines](#).) Although the editors and reviewers make every effort to ensure the validity of published manuscripts, the final responsibility rests with the authors, not with the Journal, its editors, or the publisher.

Copyright

In addition, each author must complete and submit the journal's copyright transfer agreement, which includes a section on the disclosure of potential conflicts of interest based on the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals" (www.icmje.org/update.html).

A copy of the form is made available to the submitting author within the Editorial Manager submission process. Co-authors will automatically receive an Email with instructions on completing the form upon submission.

Conflicts of Interest

Authors must state all possible conflicts of interest on the title page of the manuscript, including financial, consultant, institutional and other relationships that might lead to bias or a conflict of interest. If there is no conflict of interest, this should also be explicitly stated as none declared. All sources of funding should be acknowledged on the title page of the manuscript. All relevant conflicts of interest and sources of funding should be included on the title page of the manuscript with the heading "Conflicts of Interest and Source of Funding:" For example:

Conflicts of Interest and Source of Funding - A has received honoraria from Company Z. B is currently receiving a grant (#12345) from Organization Y, and is on the speaker's bureau for Organization X - the CME organizers for Company A. For the remaining authors none were declared.

IRB Review

For all manuscripts reporting data from studies involving human participants, formal review and approval, or formal review and waiver, by an appropriate institutional review board (IRB) or ethics committee should be acquired. For those investigators who do not have formal ethics review committees, the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki should be followed and attested to. For all manuscripts reporting data from studies involving human participants, the corresponding author must include a statement in the Methods section reporting that IRB approval was obtained, waived as exempt, pending, or not obtained; corresponding authors should also state in the Methods section the manner in which informed consent was obtained from the study participants (ie, oral,

written, or implied by voluntary participation). Editors may request that authors provide documentation of the formal review and recommendation from the institutional review board or ethics committee responsible for oversight of the study.

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ARTICLE TYPES

Research Articles: Publication of research articles about and relevant to the PA educational process is the primary purpose of the journal. These articles **must be limited to 4,000 words** unless an exception has been sought and granted ahead of time. They can include original research, scholarly reviews, reports of educational research, or papers describing the content and effectiveness of educational innovations pertinent to PA students. Manuscripts concerning health services research, the health care workforce, and policy issues will also be considered under this category. **In general, smaller scale research, such as single program or single intervention studies (eg, pretest, posttest) will not be considered for this section; the more appropriate venue for these is the Abstracts and Brief Reports feature section.** The best research manuscripts include clear information as to why a study was undertaken and comparison to a baseline of student performance on which an intervention was intended to improve.

Selection of manuscripts for publication is based on anonymous peer review and emphasizes quality, originality, scientific content, and relevance to the discipline. To increase the likelihood of your research article being accepted, please review "Criteria for Research Reports" on the *Academic Medicine* website: <https://journals.lww.com/academicmedicine/Pages/checklistPubCriteria.aspx>

Special Articles: This category is designed to encompass a wide range of descriptive, methodological, or scholarly articles relevant to PA education.

These articles must be **limited to 4,000 words** unless an exception has been sought and granted ahead of time.

Brief Reports: This category is designed for reports on research progress or abstracts of current working projects, as well as reports on completed smaller scale research, such as single cohort studies. Submissions for this category should be **limited to 2,000 words** and 10 references and must include an abstract of approximately 150 words. The intent of this feature is to promulgate new information and provide a platform for additional research.

Authors must submit a cover letter and meet the requirements for IRB review; see "Cover Letter" and "IRB Review" sections.

Features: Features focus on special areas of interest to PA educators. JPAE features include Abstracts and Brief Reports, Academic Law, Compliance Strategies, Cultural Perspectives, Evidence-Based Medicine, Exploring Medicine through the Arts, Global Perspectives, Lessons Learned, and Technology

and Education. Feature articles are **limited to 2,500 words** unless an exception has been sought and granted ahead of time.

- *Academic Law* - Legal issues that affect those working in academic environments. Articles are typically written by the feature editor, but suggestions for topics to be covered are welcome.
- *Book Review* - Designed to present critical reviews of books and certain other types of publications of interest to the physician assistant educational community. Recommendations for books to be reviewed or reviews written by readers are invited.
- *Compliance Strategies* - Brief descriptions of a specific practice, strategy, or technique that programs have used to ensure they are conducting educational activities using best practices for operating an effective PA program. This includes descriptions of unique or non-traditional methods for operating the program in compliance with national standards relevant to PA education. Some examples include: how to effectively assess program function, and how to ensure that all students meet program expectations.
- *Cultural Perspectives* - Issues relating to culture, ethnicity, and diversity, and how PA programs address these issues in such areas as recruiting and retaining faculty and in educating PA students for practice in an increasingly diverse and culturally aware world.
- *Evidence-Based Medicine* - Approaches to teaching EBM. Areas of interest might include reviews of EBM resources; mini-tutorials in areas such as statistics, epidemiology, and study design; ethical, historical, or philosophical perspectives of EBM; and discussion of practice or technological tools that enhance application of EBM.
- *Exploring Medicine Through the Arts* - Designed to share creative ideas and best practices for the application of the arts and humanities in physician assistant education. Topics might include how physician assistant programs can introduce activities into the classroom that connect content to the world of art and the humanities and expose students to various artistic media, including theater, music, works of art, and written prose and poetry.
- *Global Perspectives* - Global issues relevant to PA education. Appropriate topic areas include international clinical student placements, development of PA-type programs in other countries, global or immigrant health care curriculum issues, and first-person reports of international PA educational activities.
- *Lessons Learned* - Brief first-person narrative reflecting on specific lessons learned, successes or failures, that the author has experienced in PA education, eg, sharing valuable insights gained about a process over time. Topics might include an innovation or new educational strategy that is applicable to a wide audience of PA programs, or insights that come out of post-improvement discussions or through experiential learning.
- *Technology and Education* - All aspects of technology as it relates to PA education.

References for feature articles should conform to the specifications listed in "References." Feature authors must submit a cover letter; see "Cover Letter" section. Please indicate in the cover letter which feature category you are submitting to.

Communications: Reports and news from the Association will be published in this category.

Editorials: Editorials provide commentary and analysis concerning an education-related issue. They may include one figure or table. They are often solicited, although unsolicited editorials will be considered. Editorials are **limited to 750 words**, with up to 10 references.

Letters to the Editor: Letters commenting on previously published articles and relevant letters that promote a scholarly dialog will be considered.

MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

Manuscripts that do not adhere to the following guidelines will be returned to the corresponding author for technical revision before undergoing peer review. Concise, clearly written articles are more likely to be accepted for publication.

Cover Letter

All manuscripts (except for letters to the editor and communications) must be accompanied by a cover letter, signed by all authors, which must include the following text:

I (we) certify that all authors have been included on the original manuscript submission and meet all three of the following conditions for authorship credit: (1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data;(2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and (3) review of final version and approval of the final version to be published.

I (we) certify that the enclosed manuscript, entitled [manuscript title], represents original work and that neither this manuscript nor a manuscript with substantially similar content under my (our) authorship has been published or is currently being considered for publication by any other publication. This manuscript will not be submitted to another publication while it is under consideration by *The Journal of Physician Assistant Education*.

I (we) understand that articles will be reviewed by plagiarism software.

I (we) certify that I (we) have not received funding support and do not have a financial affiliation/ interest (eg, employment, stock holdings, consultantships, honoraria) in the subject matter, materials, or products mentioned in this manuscript, except as stipulated below. (If funding support has been received or if financial affiliations exist, they should be described at this point in the cover letter.)

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I (we) certify that (a) I (we) have no other disclosures, or (b) I (we) certify that we have other disclosures [include description of other disclosures].

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I (we) understand that if this manuscript, or a revised version of this manuscript, is accepted for publication by *The Journal of Physician Assistant Education*, the article will be copyrighted and will become the property of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). I (we) further understand that I (we) am (are) solely responsible for the content of the published article, including changes made during editing; I (we) will receive a copy of the edited manuscript to review and approve prior to publication.

Elements of Research & Special Manuscripts

Title page: Titles should be descriptive and summarize the most important elements of the manuscript. Limit titles to 125 characters in length. The name, academic and professional credentials, title, institutional or clinical affiliation, and address of **each** author **must** appear on the title page but nowhere within the body of the article. The corresponding author must be identified by including his or her name, address, phone, and email address.

Abstract: All manuscripts for consideration under Research Articles and Special Articles require an abstract of no more than 250 words. Research abstracts should include four sections: Purpose, Methods, Results, and Conclusion.

Text: Generally, the length of the body of the text should be limited to **4,000 words** (excluding abstract, references, tables, and figures). Manuscripts should provide background information on why the topic of the manuscript is important to PA education. Relevant literature should be reviewed and cited. Manuscripts reporting research or educational interventions should include a statement as to the research objectives and be divided into four sections: Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion.

Introduction: The introduction section should address what is being researched, why it is important, and how PA educators will benefit from the results. A brief review of the relevant literature should be included to establish the need for the research project or the educational intervention being reported.

Methods: The methods of both qualitative and quantitative research should be described in detail to facilitate full understanding of how the research was performed. Complete descriptions of sampling methods, instruments used, and methods of data collection and analysis should be included. Manuscripts reporting educational methods, curricula, or interventions should include the goals and objectives of these activities and the method(s) used by the authors for evaluating change.

Results: Results should be tied to the objectives and methods presented in the manuscript. Results are often most effectively reported in tables, reserving the text for general descriptive statements and clarifications.

Discussion: The discussion section should review the principal findings of the research, point out any methodological weaknesses of the study, and discuss the importance of the investigation. Conclusions should be drawn when supported by the data, and indications for further study should be advanced.

Manuscript Style for Research & Special Articles

Manuscripts should conform to the "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals," which can be found at <http://www.icmje.org>. They must also conform to the requirements of the American Medical Association Manual of Style (Williams & Wilkins, 2007, 10th ed.) <http://www.amamanualofstyle.com/>. Where the Uniform Requirements and AMA style conflict,

AMA takes precedence. Editorial staff will make minor corrections, but manuscripts not fundamentally conforming to AMA style will be returned to authors for correction prior to further review. Authors should pay particular attention to reference and citation style.

Manuscripts should be clear, succinct, and well-documented and should use correct syntax, grammar, spelling, and symbols. Abbreviations and acronyms should be kept to a minimum. Text should avoid gender and racial bias and use inclusive language. Authors are encouraged to pay close attention to the quality of their writing and to repeatedly review and edit their work before submitting a manuscript.

The manuscript should be double-spaced, formatted to 8-1/2" x 11" page size, and have 1" margins. Pages should be numbered and should include a running head. Use one space following the period at the end of each sentence. Do not manually insert hyphens at the end of sentences or column breaks. Use two decimal places for statistics, except probability.

Survey Guidelines

Survey instruments serve as a common tool for data gathering in the PA research community. Obtaining quality survey data that are representative of the survey population and thus generalizable to the study population is especially important. Consequently, research articles should strive to achieve the following response rates for surveys, ideally with studies that are multi-institutional and involve multiple cohorts.

- Mail survey return rates: 50% return = adequate; 60% = good; 70% = very good
- Phone survey return rates: 70% return = good
- Email/online survey return rates: 40% = adequate; 50% = good; 60% = very good
- In-Person survey: 80% = good

While articles will be considered for publication with response rates that are lower than the guidelines presented above, a rationale for why the rates were unattainable should be provided to help peer reviewers understand why the sample is representative of the entire population or is the best available data. Whenever a previously validated instrument exists, the journal encourages its use.

References

References should be numbered in the order in which they appear in the text, double spaced, and written in **AMA style**, as shown in the examples below. Each reference should include the names and initials of the author(s), title of the journal or book (journals should be abbreviated according to Index Medicus), the year, volume, number in parentheses, if applicable, and first and last page numbers.

Examples:

Journal

Flegal KM, Carroll MD, Ogden CL, Curtin LR. *Prevalence and trends in obesity among US adults, 1999–2008.* JAMA. 2010;303:235–241.

Book

Hooker R, Cawley J, Asprey D. *Physician Assistants: Policy and Practice*, 3rd ed. Philadelphia, PA: FA Davis; 2010.

Book Chapter

Glicken A. Qualitative research. In: Blessing JD, Forister JG, eds. *An Introduction to Research and Medical Literature for Health Professionals*, 3rd ed. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett; 2013.

Unpublished Material

Badura D, Ramos V, Muma RD. Evaluation of a physician assistant student admission plan that considers race neutral factors. Presentation at: Physician Assistant Education Association Annual Education Forum, Tucson, Arizona, October 2007.

Website

American Medical Association. AMA Code of Medical Ethics. <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/physician-resources/medical-ethics/code-medical-ethics.page>. Accessed February 2, 2005.

Agency or Institutional Report

US Department of Health and Human Services. Surveillance for selected public health indicators affecting older adults – United States. *MMWR*. 1999; 48:33–34.

Exhibits

Tables, Figures, Charts, and Illustrations: All tables, figures, and illustrations should be uploaded as separate files.

A legend must be included in the manuscript file for all figures, illustrations, and photos. Legends should include sufficient explanatory information to permit readers' understanding without reference to the text of the article. Please be certain that tables, figures, and illustrations do not identify the authors or their institution.

All tables, figures, and illustrations must be "called out," i.e., referred to in the text of the article in the order in which they appear.

Appendices: The use of appendices is discouraged. If the material is essential to understanding the article, it should be included as a table or integrated into the text of the article. All appendices should be uploaded as Supplemental Digital Content.

Tables: Tables should be self-explanatory, concise, and should include labels and explanatory notes sufficient to permit readers to understand without reference to the text of the article.

Illustrations and Photos: Illustrations, tables, or quotations to be reprinted from other publications should be accompanied by a complete citation of the source. Permission to reprint must be obtained from the copyright owner. A signed release is required for all identifiable photographs.

A) Creating Digital Artwork

- Learn about the publication requirements for Digital Artwork: <http://links.lww.com/ES/A42>
- Create, Scan and Save your artwork and compare your final figure to the Digital Artwork Guideline Checklist.
- Upload each figure to Editorial Manager in conjunction with your manuscript text and tables.

B) Digital Artwork Guideline Checklist

- Artwork should be saved as TIFF, Word Doc, PPT, EPS, or PDF files (although PDF is not recommended).
- Artwork is created as the actual size (or slightly larger) it will appear in the journal. (To get an idea of the size images should be when they print, study a copy of the journal to which you wish to submit. Measure the artwork typically shown and scale your image to match.)
- Crop out any white or black space surrounding the image.
- Diagrams, drawings, graphs, and other line art must be vector or saved at a resolution of at least 1200 dpi. If the art is created in an MS Office program, convert to a hi-res PDF. If the PDF creation process is unfamiliar then submit the MS Office doc.
- Photographs, radiographs and other halftone images must be saved at a resolution of at least 300 dpi.
- Photographs and radiographs with text must be saved as postscript or at a resolution of at least 600 dpi.
- Each figure must be saved and submitted as a separate file. Figures should not be embedded in the manuscript text file.
- **All figures will be printed in 4-color**, so we encourage authors to submit figures in color, not in black and white.

C) Remember:

- Cite figures consecutively in your manuscript.
- Number figures in the figure legend in the order in which they are discussed.
- Upload figures consecutively to the Editorial Manager web site and number figures consecutively in the Description box during upload.

Supplemental Digital Content (SDC): Authors may submit supplemental digital content to enhance their article's text and to be considered for online-only posting. Supplemental digital content may include the following types of content: text documents, graphs, tables, figures, graphics, illustrations, audio, and video. Cite all supplemental digital content consecutively in the text. Citations should include the type of material submitted, should be clearly labeled as "Supplemental Digital Content," should include a sequential number, and should provide a brief description of the supplemental content. Provide a legend of supplemental digital content at the end of the text, listing captions in the order in which the material is cited in the text. The legends must be numbered to match the citations from the text. Include a title and a brief summary of the content. For audio and video files, also include the author name, videographer, participants, length (minutes), and size (MB). No patient-identifying information should be used in supplemental digital content unless written consent from the patient, the patient's parents or the patient's guardian has been obtained. Documentation regarding this consent must be submitted with the manuscript. Copyright and Permission forms for article content including supplemental digital content must be provided at the time of submission.

Supplemental Digital Content Size & File Type Requirements:

To ensure a quality experience for those viewing supplemental digital content, it is suggested that authors submit supplemental digital files no larger than 10 MB each. Documents, graphs, and tables may be presented in any format. Figures, graphics, and illustrations should be submitted with the following file extensions: .tif, .eps, .ppt, .jpg, .pdf, .gif. Audio files should be submitted with the following file extensions: .mp3, .wma. Video files should be submitted with the following file extensions: .wmv, .mov, .qt, .mpg, .mpeg, .mp4. Video files should also be formatted with a 320 X 240 pixel minimum screen size. For more information, please review LWW's requirements for submitting supplemental digital content: <http://links.lww.com/A142>.

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

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MANUSCRIPT REVIEW

Peer Review: Research & Special Articles

All manuscripts submitted to *The Journal of Physician Assistant Education* are reviewed by the editor in chief. Manuscripts appropriate for peer review are then reviewed by members of the review panel and independent expert peer reviewers, as appropriate. Author identities are blinded for the peer review process.

A decision about acceptance, revision, or rejection will be sent to the corresponding author within 10 weeks of receipt of the manuscript by the editorial staff of the *Journal of Physician Assistant Education*. Manuscripts are often returned to the author(s) with suggestions for revision. Such manuscripts may require one or more revisions before a decision is made regarding acceptability for publication. It is recommended that authors resubmit revised manuscripts within 6 months. Authors are responsible for all statements made in their published manuscript including changes made in the editing process. The edited manuscript will be sent to the corresponding author for review and approval prior to publication.

Please note that, due to a robust pipeline, accepted articles may not be published for 9-12 months. This timeline is in line with most other scholarly journals.

Statistical Review

All manuscripts submitted as Research, Special, and Brief Report articles are subject to review by the journal's statistical editor.

AFTER ACCEPTANCE

Page proofs and corrections: Corresponding authors will receive electronic page proofs to check the copyedited and typeset article before publication. An email will be sent with instructions on how to access the Portable document format (PDF) files of the typeset pages will be using your Editorial Manager login and password. Complete instructions will be provided with the email for downloading and submitting the corrected page proofs to the publisher. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that there are no errors in the proofs. Changes that have been made to conform to journal style will stand if they do not alter the authors' meaning. Only the most critical changes to the accuracy of the content will be made. Changes that are stylistic or are a reworking of previously accepted material will be disallowed. The publisher reserves the right to deny any changes that do not affect the accuracy of the content. Authors may be charged for alterations to the proofs beyond those required to correct errors or to answer queries. Proofs must be checked carefully and corrections faxed within 48 hours of receipt, as requested in the cover letter accompanying the page proofs.

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