JACEP Open Editor in Chief Pearls, Updated 01-22-20

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1. General
   Check your spam filter. Make sure you are not missing journal communications because of spam filters. Please add our email address, jacepopen@acep.org, to your list of safe senders.

   Timeliness is essential. This is one of the selling points of an open access journal, and one of the few ways we can distinguish ourselves. Goals you should strive for:

   - [Decision Editor's in-box] to [initial invitation to reviewers] --> within 2 days
   - [Decision Editor's in-box] to [reviewers confirmed] --> within 7 days
   - [Reviewer accepts invitation] to [review completed] --> 14 days
   - [All reviews in] to [editor decision] --> within 5 days for original research and review articles; less (2 days) for case reports and other works.

2. Reviewers and Sending Papers Out for Review
   We need reviewers. Ask your colleagues to review for the journal. Send CVs to jacepopen@acep.org.

   Send all (good) papers out for peer review. With a few small exceptions, all papers accepted by the journal should undergo peer review, preferably by two reviewers. If a paper is substandard and you plan to reject the paper without review, that is fine. However, if the paper has any merit, please invite reviewers to critique the paper. We are trying to test all parts of the editorial process, so you should be liberal with inviting peer review.

   Use “JACEP Priority” Reviewers. Within Editorial Manager, reviewers may be labeled as “JACEP Priority” reviewers. Use these individuals first. These are persons who specifically applied to be JACEP reviewers (vs. cross listing via the Annals of EM reviewer list).

   Aim for 2 reviewers +/- meth/stats review. More reviews tend to overwhelm authors.

   Methodology and Statistics Reviews. Meth/stats editor reviews are required for all research papers “heading towards revision” (i.e., peer reviews look good - anticipate asking for revision from author). Email the JACEP Open editorial staff at jacepopen@acep.org to request a
meth/stats review. If a submitted research paper looks great upon initial submission, you may request the meth/stats review right away.

If you are handling an Annals-to-JACEP transferred original research paper, if the paper already received an Annals meth/stats review, you do not need to ask for a JACEP meth/stats review. (However, the meth/stats editors may have helpful suggestions as you coach the author through the revision process.)

**Do revised papers need to go out for repeat peer review?** For the authors' revised work (denoted by an "R1" on the manuscript number), if you feel that you have enough information from the response letter to make a decision (accept, revise again, or [rarely] reject), you do not need to send the paper out for another round of peer review. However, if you feel that you need the additional advice, you are certainly welcome to invite peer review. In this situation, 1) consider limiting the invitation to only 1 reviewer, and 2) make sure you choose from the one of the same prior reviewers (do not invite new reviewers that have not seen the paper before). In addition, if the paper has numbers, consider asking meth-stats to take a second look.

**Why are my reviewers being un-invited?** When you invite reviewers, they first have 3 days to accept or decline the invitation. If they don’t respond within 3 days, Editorial Manager automatically sends them a reminder to respond. If they still don’t respond within 2 more days (5 days total), the system automatically un-assigns them. If you designated an alternate reviewer, the system will automatically invite the alternate reviewer in place of the reviewer who was un-assigned.

**If a paper was transferred from Annals and underwent Annals peer review, do I need to send it out for additional review?** If the paper underwent peer review at Annals, please try to make a decision (accept, revise, reject) based upon the Annals reviews. Please try not to send these types of papers out for additional JACEP Open peer review unless there a compelling point not addressed by the original Annals reviews.

3. **Making Decisions**

Consult with Henry on your first manuscript decisions. I encourage you to reach out to me (henry.e.wang@uth.tmc.edu) before filing your first manuscript decisions. We are trying to calibrate style and standards. Open dialog is the best way to accomplish this goal.

**What is the “bar” for peer review and acceptance?** We are in the early phases of a new journal. Please encourage all submissions that are reasonably written and that have sensible results. (Novelty and impact are less important for now.) However, it is reasonable to reject papers that are a) poorly written or b) have sparse or questionable results.

**Keep the overall decision letter concise.** Long reviews overwhelm authors. Aim for a max of 500 words per review (preferably less). For example, if you have 3 reviews, try to edit down the decision letter text to 1500 words max. You are allowed to heavily edit or pick-n-choose from the reviewers' comments. You may even delete an entire review if you find it duplicative of other comments. Positive comments are encouraging but also add to the visual burden of the review - you may find it necessary to pare overly glowing comments.
**Editor decision letters.** In your communications with authors, please provide a 1-3 sentence (or more) summary of your overall assessment of the paper. If you are rejecting the paper, provide a summary of why. If you are asking for revision, highlight the reviewer comments that you would like the authors to address, as well as any of your own suggestions. I will share sample decision letters at the editorial board meeting.

**Editor decision options.** On editorial manager, you will submit your decision on the paper using one of the following categories:

- **Reject without review** – The paper is poor, and you wish to reject without inviting peer review.
- **Reject with reviews** – The paper has been reviewed but falls short. We wish to decline further consideration.
- **Revise and resubmit** – This will be the most common outcome. This is our version of "revise and reconsider." The paper has problems, but they can be fixed. With revision, we expect the paper to be good enough for acceptance.
- **Accept with minor revision** – In general, avoid using this decision, as it implies that the paper has been accepted. This category is saved for instances where a paper has already gone through 1 or 2 rounds of revision, and there is a final request to clean up something minor.
- **Accept, send to EIC** – Peer review comments are supportive, revisions look good, and you feel the paper is ready for acceptance.

**What if the paper is interesting, has too many flaws for a "revise," but could be interesting as a brand new paper?** This is a case of "reject - welcome new submission." This situation involves papers that need major reworking to be coherent. In this situation, choose "Reject with reviews," but offer supportive language. Do not use this language if you meant "revise and resubmit/reconsider."

We are so sorry that we must decline further consideration of your current manuscript. However, we would be interested in a new submission with focus shifted to care processes rather than outcomes. We offer this option because the required changes would be major and would likely exceed those of a simple revision request. However, we imagine that there would be considerable interest if the paper were reworked as suggested. If you choose this option, please request me as the decision editor for your new paper.

**JACEP Open formatting.** We will insert this into the standard R&R verbiage, but please ensure that authors revise to our standard format. This level of editing is best addressed at the content editing stage (vs. at copy editing phase) because it impacts the paper's organization and message.

Please remember to revise your manuscript to adhere to JACEP Open's standard format, as detailed in the instructions for authors; [https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/26881152/homepage/author-guidelines?=&]
4. Language for Decision Letters

Here is language you can consider for your decision letters:

**Revise and Resubmit**
Thank you very much for your manuscript. Your study sheds light on an important topic, and we are very interested in the work. However, we feel that the paper could be strengthened in several areas. Please address each of the reviewers’ comments below. Please pay particular attention to providing additional detail on how you created the data set and carried out the analysis. We look forward to your revised paper.

**Rejection Without Reviews (“Desk Rejection”)**
Thank you very much for your manuscript. We are so sorry that we have decided not to give your paper further consideration. There are several problems with your manuscript; most notably, as the paper is written, it is difficult to identify your intended objectives or primary findings. We realize that this decision is disappointing. We encourage and look forward to your future submissions to JACEP Open.

**Rejection With Reviews**
Thank you very much for your manuscript. We are so sorry that we have decided not to give your paper further consideration. The reviewers raised several concerns regarding the organization of the paper and the statistical methods used. They also felt that your conclusion was slightly over-reaching. We appended reviews below with the hope that they will be helpful as you seek another venue for your work. We realize that this decision is disappointing. We encourage and look forward to your future submissions to JACEP Open.

**Rejection – Offer Submission of a New Paper**
Thank you very much for your manuscript. We are so sorry that we have decided not to give your paper further consideration. The reviewers raised several concerns regarding the organization of the paper and the statistical methods used. They also felt that your conclusion was over-reaching.

However, we see that your study has potentially important and interesting findings that may better come to light with a major reworking of the paper. We would be very interested in seeing a new manuscript focused on the processes of care rather than patient outcomes. If you choose this route, please clearly reference your original submission on the cover letter. Please note that this is not a guarantee that your new paper will be accepted or sent out for peer review.

We realize that this decision is disappointing. We encourage and look forward to your future submissions to JACEP Open.

**Rejection of Case Report – Offer Resubmission as Images**
Thank you very much for your manuscript. We are so sorry that we have decided not to give your case report further consideration. JACEP Open tends to be interested in case reports that are highly impactful, either in the novelty of the finding, the intricacies of the case or the value of the
learning points. While your case is interesting, we feel that it does not quite meet our expectations.

However, the photograph that you feature is clearly very interesting. Thus, we strongly encourage you to rework the case as a new submission to the “Images in Emergency Medicine” section of the journal. If you choose this option, please carefully follow the instructions for authors for “Images” and be sure to reference this paper in your cover letter.

We realize that this decision is disappointing. We encourage and look forward to your future submissions to JACEP Open.

Accept, Sent to EIC

When you accept a paper, the standard language that automatically appears in Editorial Manager is this:

We are pleased to inform you that your manuscript, "XYZ," has been accepted for publication in Journal of the American College of Emergency Physicians Open. After editing, you will receive a page proof for approval prior to publication.

If you’d like, you can add your own language too. Here are 4 samples:

Sample 1:
Thank you for making the suggested revisions. It is my pleasure to let you know we will now be accepting your manuscript. Please be aware, editorial staff may reach out to you with technical questions and the manuscript may undergo copy editing and other minor adjustments.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sample 2:
JACEP Open is pleased to accept your manuscript entitled "XYZ." following the latest revision.

We will now be forwarding the manuscript to our publisher for copy editing and typesetting.

You will receive proofs for checking. The publisher requests that proofs are checked and returned within 48 hours of receipt.

Thank you for your contribution to JACEP Open and we look forward to receiving submissions from you in the future.

Sample 3:
I am excited to inform you that your manuscript has been accepted to JACEP Open after your revisions. Please be advised that we may still need to contact you regarding minor copy editing details and changes as the manuscript goes into production review and processing. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sample 4:
Thank you for making the suggested revisions. I am excited to inform you that we will now be able to accept your manuscript. Thank you for completing your revisions so quickly, and I am looking forward to seeing your manuscript published.
5. Editorial Manager Tips and Tricks

How to invite reviewers
- Under Action, click Invite Reviewers.
- Under the Reviewer Search box, you can choose "Select by Classification Match,” “Search by Personal Classifications,” or “Suggest Reviewers.”
- You will see lots of reviewer candidates.
- Favor the reviewers called "JACEP Priority." Others are from Annals - they are of varying responsiveness.
- Choose 2 as primary reviewers, choose 2 as alternates.
- Click on the buttons to make sure the invitations are confirmed and submitted.

![Reviewer Search](image)

How to submit your decision
- On the left of your editor’s dashboard there should be a “submit decision” option.
- Once at that screen, enter your summative comments in the lower “Editor’s comments to author” box. (Do not email author directly.)
- You may find it easier to copy the reviewers’ comments to word, append your note at the top, clean up the reviewers’ comments, then repaste into the editor comments box.
- Edit (or delete portions of) reviewer comments to attain cohesiveness.
- Write an editor’s summative paragraph. You may annotate the reviewer comments with your own thoughts in [brackets]. –e.g., I see no background statement on why this case is unique and deserves the reader's attention. I appreciate that you have detailed labs and imaging, but other manuscripts already display the same. [Editor; this is a fair comment. Please try to give a stronger rationale for your study.]

The difference between “un-assigning” and “terminating” reviewers. If reviewers are not late and you need to make a decision, please “un-assign” the reviewers instead of “terminating” them because Editorial Manager gives reviewers negative marks on their performance records when they are “terminated.” For content reviewers, please feel free to “terminate” them if they are late and you need to make a decision. With meth/stats reviewers, please “un-assign” them so they don’t get negative marks on their records.

How to make note of dates you are unavailable. If you will be travelling, on vacation, taking medical leave, etc., you can let the staff know that you are unavailable during a certain time period. To make a note of the dates, login to your Editorial Manager account and go to Update My Information in the blue bar at top. Near the bottom of the next page, click on Unavailable Dates and enter the times you will be unavailable.
How to “un-assign” reviewers instead of “terminating” them. On the decision page, there is a grey button called “Terminate Outstanding Assignments and Proceed” (screen shot below). Please click this button if content reviewers are late and you want to make a decision. If you want to “un-assign” a reviewer instead, click on the blue text that says “Invite Reviewers.” That will take you to the “Invite Reviewers” page. When you’re on the “Invite Reviewers” page, you can click on “un-assign” next to the reviewer’s name.

How to invite guest reviewers. If you would like to invite a reviewer who is not registered in Editorial Manager, you can invite them as a guest reviewer. To do so, go to Invite Reviewers and then under Quick Action Links on the left, click on Request Unregistered Reviewer (see screen shot below). A new window will then open up and you can fill out the form and send it to the JACEP Open office. The staff will register the reviewer in Editorial Manager and invite reviewer on your behalf.

How to switch between your editor role and reviewer role. To switch between your editor and reviewer roles in Editorial Manager, go to the blue banner at top. Then, under Role, use the drop-down menu to go between your reviewer queue and your editor. See the screen shot below.
How to download the manuscript file in Word, if you want to edit it. If you want to edit the author’s manuscript file in Word, go to Action and then click on the File Inventory link. Then, a window will open up, and you can click “Download” next to the file labeled as Abstract, Article, References. See the screen shot below.

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How to email reviewers and authors. Under Action, click on the Details link. Then scroll down and click on the yellow envelope next to the reviewer’s or author’s name. A window will then open up, and you can send an email to the author or reviewer. See the screen shots below.

How can I see everything that has happened with the paper? In Editorial Manager, under Action Items, you can click on the History link (see screen shots below). The History page will show you when the author submitted the paper, when reviewers were invited, when reviewers were sent reminders, when you emailed authors or reviewers through the system, and when you made a decision.
6. Editor Checklists

JACEP Open Decision Editor’s Checklist for Original Research Manuscripts

Please review this checklist for every “revise” or “accept” decision on “original research” manuscripts:

1. Has meth/stats reviewed the paper?

2. Is the Abstract in JACEP Open format?
   a. Original Research: Background – Methods – Results – Conclusions.

3. Is the Introduction section formatted with JACEP Open subsections?
   a. Background – Importance – Goals of this Investigation
   b. Should be 1-1.5 double-spaced pages.

4. Is the Methods section formatted with JACEP Open subsections?
   a. We typically use a combination of [study design and setting, selection of participants, interventions/exposures, measurements, outcomes, analysis], or suitable alternatives.
   b. IRB statement should be in “design” subsection.
   c. If using an existing data set, data set should be described in detail in “design” or as a new “data source” section.
   d. Methods should span at least 2-3 double-spaced pages. If it is shorter, it is probably missing key information.

5. Is the Limitations section placed before discussion?

6. Is the Discussion reasonable in scope and length?
   a. A good goal is 1.5-2 double-spaced pages; 3 pages should be the absolute max.
7. Are tables and figures placed at end of paper, 1 per page?

8. Does your decision letter have an editor’s summary statement?

9. Have you assigned scores for all reviews?

10. Are reviewer comments edited down to 500 words per reviewer?

11. For accepted papers, have you composed a “Bottom Line” summary?

**JACEP Open Decision Editor’s Checklist for Clinical Review Manuscripts**

Please review this checklist for every “revise” or “accept” decision on “clinical review” manuscripts.

(Systematic reviews and meta analyses should follow the “original research” checklist.)

1. Is the Abstract in JACEP Open format?
   a. Clinical Review Papers: unstructured abstract

2. Are tables and figures placed at end of paper, 1 per page?

3. Does your decision letter have an editor’s summary statement?

4. Have you assigned scores for all reviews?

5. Are reviewer comments edited down to 500 words per reviewer?

6. For accepted papers, have you composed a “Bottom Line” summary?