Responsibilities for Publication of JEPonline Research

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The American Society of Exercise Physiologists serves the exercise physiology and scientific communities and society at large in several ways, including the publication of journals that present the results of scientific research and professional development. The intent of this editorial is to identify basic but important responsibilities of the peer review process, not to provide a comprehensive list of guidelines for all aspects of the review process.

The Editor-in-Chief has the responsibility of reviewing, accepting, and rejecting research manuscripts and reviews submitted to JEPonline. Ethical standards are derived from the purpose of the online journal, and from the community of researchers interested in health, fitness, rehabilitation, and athletics. The following content reflects the intent of the ASEP leadership and the Editor-in-Chief to observe high ethical standards. Doing so is important to the profession of exercise physiology and the quality of research that undergirds it.

The Editor-in-Chief’s Responsibilities

The Editor-in-Chief has complete responsibility and authority to accept a submitted paper for publication or to reject it. The Editor-in-Chief may delegate this responsibility to the Review Board and other peer reviewers who will provide unbiased and impartial consideration to all manuscripts for publication, judging each on its scientific merits without regard to race, gender, religion, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the author(s). All manuscripts are promptly addressed while making sure that nothing about the manuscript will be disclosed to a third party. The names of the reviewers for papers submitted will not be released.

The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for monitoring editorial processing. This includes monitoring the acceptance and the rejection rates of each manuscript, managing the inventory of accepted manuscripts,
tracking reviewer performance, and assessing staffing needs. The Editor-in-Chief will not disclose confidential information: (a) unless authorized by the source of that information; (b) unless there are allegations of misconduct that required access to that confidential information for proper investigation; and (c) unless required by law to disclose the information.

The Editor-In-Chief oversees all duties for the uploading and online publication of the journal, and is ultimately responsible for all content in the publication, final decisions on layout, article order, and website style. The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for helping to ensure that journal content is credible, authoritative, and relevant. Published manuscripts are expected to be original, important contributions to knowledge, and are expected to present valid results in sufficient detail for readers to assess the quality of the inferences drawn. Additionally, the Editor-in-Chief is responsible for informing readers of work formally found to be plagiarized, fabricated, or falsified.

The American Society of Exercise Physiologists recognizes the rights of submitting authors, and the Editor-in-Chief’s responsibilities in providing a valid and ethical peer review process leading to either the publication or rejection of submitted manuscripts. Authors of manuscripts submitted to JEPonline have the following rights: (1) a valid and ethical peer review process; (2) to cancel or delay the review process at their discretion without any present or future penalty; (3) to communicate to the Editor-in-Chief at any time in the review process; (4) to challenge the scientific merit or ethical nature of any comment in a review, using objective evidence; (5) the expectation that the staff will respect any challenge and make decisions solely based on scientific merit; and (6) to be viewed as the "expert" on the topic of the manuscript, and therefore, held in equal or higher standing to the status of any "expert" reviewer.

As an author, it is reasonable that you have expectations of the Editor-in-Chief and the reviewers of JEPonline. The guarantees provided to you by JEPonline are as follows:

1. One or more reviewers will review your manuscript, at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief.
2. Since one competent reviewer is better than two reviewers who may not be necessarily competent in the topic at question, one person will review some manuscripts.
3. Only reviewers who have a record of professionalism and ethical conduct will be asked to review manuscripts.
4. Any reviewer who has a conflict of interest in the peer review process must rescind an invitation to review your manuscript. All reviewers are informed of this requirement. If this is not done, and evidence of this failure is brought to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief, the reviewer at question will no longer be able to review for JEPonline.
5. Any reviewer who is disrespectful to an author, based on the wording of review comments, will no longer be able to review for JEPonline, and any manuscript rejected in this failed process will be reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief in an expeditious manner.
6. Decision regarding manuscript acceptance or rejection is to be based on objective research evidence, and not personal opinion or other subjective biases. Members of the review board and the Editor-in-Chief will do their best to detect subjective biases expressed by reviewers, and a decision on the manuscript will be adjusted accordingly.
7. Challenges to the content of any review are to be handled by the Editor-in-Chief, and if appropriate, an additional reviewer may be recruited. Decisions on any challenge will be based on published scientific evidence, and if not available, greatest weight will be placed on the author's opinion.
8. The Editor-in-Chief directs the review process and, where deemed appropriate, improves individual manuscripts for eventual publication. If need be, the Editor-in-Chief will help authors better present their data in Tables and Figures, as well as re-write specific sections
of their manuscript. The Editor-in-Chief is interested in not only reviewing manuscripts for publication, but in helping with the presentation of the content as well.

9. Although the duration of the review process is not totally controlled by the editorial staff of JEPonline, effort will always be exerted to reduce the time of the peer review. Journal policy is to try to have the period of the initial review kept to less than 5 weeks. Where the journal has been unsuccessful at accomplishing this, the Editor-in-Chief will expedite the review and pre-publication requirements for manuscripts accepted for publication.

The Author’s Responsibilities
The author’s responsibility is to present an accurate account of the research described in the JEPonline submission. An author should cite publications that have influenced the research. The content must be free of plagiarism. Fragmentation of the author’s research in several submissions should be avoided. It is inappropriate to submit manuscripts that describe essentially the same research design and data to more than one journal. To protect the integrity of authorship, only persons who have significantly contributed to the research and development of the manuscript should be listed as authors. Submission to JEPonline is taken to mean that all the listed authors have agreed to all of the content. The corresponding (submitting) author is responsible for having ensured that this agreement has been reached, and for managing all communication between the publication and all co-authors, before and after publication. The corresponding author attests to the fact that all co-authors participated in the writing of the paper and that they agree to its submission. The corresponding author is responsible for the accuracy of all content, in particular that the names of co-authors are correctly spelled, and that addresses and affiliations are current. No fictitious name should be listed as an author or co-author. It is inappropriate to submit manuscripts with an obvious marketing orientation. Also, where indicated, it is the responsibility of the author to obtain any required government or company review and/or clearance of the content prior to submission.

The Reviewer’s Responsibilities
The purpose of the review process is (a) to ensure quality, that the author’s results support the conclusions, (b) that all human and animal protocols were approved by appropriate institutional review committees, and (c) that the manuscript is original. Members of the Review Board and other reviewers are expected to review a manuscript only if they have adequate time to do so, and they feel qualified to do so. The reviewer should judge the quality of the manuscript objectively. The reviewer is responsible for making sure the content in the manuscript represents JEPonline as best as possible. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript? How can the presentation of the main points be improved? Similarly, the reviewer is responsible for determining whether the author’s writing is clear, intelligible, and concise. Does the paper make an important contribution? Are there major methodological flaws, and are all the figures clear and necessary? If the reviewer senses a conflict of interest, the paper should be returned to the Editor-in-Chief. The reviewer should not evaluate a manuscript authored or co-authored by a person with whom the reviewer has a personal or professional connection if the relationship would bias judgment of the manuscript. The reviewer should treat each manuscript as a confidential document. The reviewer should be alert to failure of the authors to cite relevant work. The reviewer should not use or disclose unpublished information, arguments, or interpretations contained in a manuscript under consideration, except with the consent of the Editor-in-Chief and author(s).