Development of editors and assistant editors

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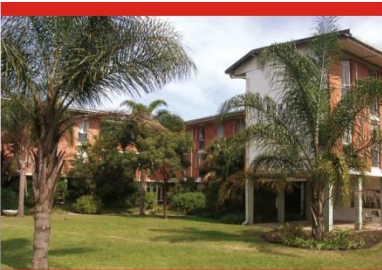
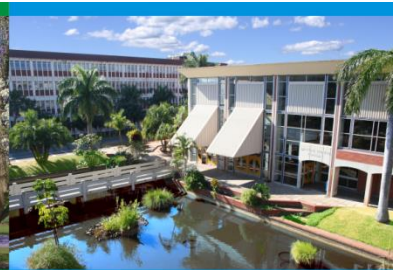EDGEWOOD CAMPUS   HOWARD COLLEGE CAMPUS   NELSON R MANDELA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE   PIETERMARITZBURG CAMPUS   WESTVILLE CAMPUS

UKZN – INSPIRING GREATNESS

Structure of presentation

- Introductory comments on becoming an editors – lessons that I learnt
- Technical competence – especially with on-line systems
- Quick review of submission – what should we look for
- Administration and finance
- Managing review process

Introductory comments

- Becoming an editor of a journal

- Excitement/reality dilemma

- Workload re-organization

- Accountability issues – accountability up; accountable to the team, accountability to authors and accountability to readers/scholars

- Scope of the journal – are we clear what the scope is? How often should the scope of the journal be reviewed?

- Bring a new perspective to editing (identity as an editor) – reviewing the editorial team and editorial board

- When and how do we end a wave (cycle) of publications in a particular focus area – e.g. articles published on COVID-19 in relation to T&L ?

Technical competence for on-line platforms

- Knowing the system intimately
- Awareness of updates

Quick submission review: what should we look for?

- Articles located within the focus of the publication (journal/book/report)
- Ideas built up/extend/critique of papers published by the journal in its previous editions
- Recency of information
- Dealing with a topical/current issue that has national/global/sectoral attention/interest
- Innovation in ideas/methodology/context
- Length
- Range of article type
- Special edition

Managing and mediating reviewers' comments

- Title and purpose of paper

- Coherence and clarity of focus

- Development of paper – logical development from purpose to conclusion

- Adequacy and recency of literature

- Methodology

- Clarity and relevance of claims/arguments made

- Evidence supporting claims/arguments made

- Coherence between focus, claims, evidence, conclusion

- Technical details relating to language, writing styles, paragraphs, subsections, references

Quick review of manuscript – what should we look for?

- Backward mapping – my preference

- Purpose statement

- Three (perhaps four) things the author/s want to say through their paper

- Explain how they arrived at the three/four things they want to say

- Methodology

- Evidence

- Locate within current discourse identified through a literature review

- Identified body of knowledge they are making a contribution to

- Contextualise paper (background info showing relevance and interest)

- Establish coherence between purpose, claims, evidence, literature, conclusion

Academic writing

- Sentence construction
- Paragraph construction
- Section (sub-section) construction
- Sub-section headings (avoid one word headings)
- Strong/weak arguments
- Types of evidence
- Personal experience
- Empirical evidence (prim/secondary)
- Literature review
- Introduction
- conclusion

Administration and finance of a journal

- Data metrics – keep track of key metrics:
  - Submissions
  - Downloads
  - Citations
  - Author frequency

- Finance
  - APCs
  - Copy edition
  - Administrative and tech support

Reviewing challenges

- Pool of reviewers – concerns about experience, relevant knowledge base and emerging scholars exposure to the discourse

- Time delays in reviewing manuscripts - even though they have agreed to do the review within the time frame

- Delay in receiving the revised manuscript

- Who checks on the revised version

Some parting thoughts

- Be part of the editorial committee before becoming an editor/assistant editor

- Be an active researcher/scholar

- Have earned credibility institutionally and in the research community

- Work collaboratively – especially in decision making related to complex issues

- Don't rush to conclusions in complex issues

Thank you

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