

Journal of Applied Communication Research NCA Report 2025

Editor: Heather Zoller, University of Cincinnati

Editorial Team:

- **Associate Editors:** Julius Riles, U. of Missouri and Jiang Shaohai, National U. of Singapore
- **Editorial Assistants:** Shobha Pai and Andy Cheng, University of Cincinnati

(1) Number of new manuscripts received during this period: 648 (original manuscripts)

(2) Number of revised manuscripts received during this period: 81

(3) Total number of manuscripts accepted for publication: 41

(4) Number of manuscripts returned for revision and resubmission: 143

(5) Number of manuscripts rejected: 481

(6) Acceptance rate (3) divided by (1+2) : 5.6%

EDITOR'S GOALS AND PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THOSE GOALS:

STRENGTHS:

Goals currently being met:

- Maintaining, increasing quality submissions
 - Social media team is engaging in outreach
- Established and receiving more submissions for "Field Report" section
- Reducing waits for authors
 - Significantly reduced time to first decision
 - Timely intermediated and final decisions
 - Note that speed is particularly challenging given the volume of submissions
- I have increased the acceptance rate, but I still think it is low (5%)
- Creating stronger relationships with Editorial Board (established newsletter)

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

Goals that need continued attention:

- Submissions outside the U.S. are up in 2024-2025, but number and relevance should be higher
- Article downloads total was down last year due to lower number of articles in the issues. I have gotten the journal back on track in terms of filling issues fully (after overfilling some early issues to reduce backlog).

- Impact factor can be improved (although quantitative work generally has more citations, and this journal is open to multiple methodologies)
- I have worked to create closer relationships with relevant NCA divisions, but more can be done to create partnerships.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

Progress towards meeting initial goals:

- I re-wrote the reviewer criteria to directly address DEI issues.
- I re-wrote the decision template to direct authors to APA resources for inclusive language.
- I re-wrote the directions to authors to include a statement requiring disclosure of research participant demographics, with a note that submissions with participants that were not representative of relevant populations (without an overarching rationale) would not be sent for review.
 - However, Taylor & Francis removed the language during one of their frequent efforts to “harmonize” the websites so that content is similar across journals. This is not ideal.
- Journal content addresses DEI issues.
 - Invited forums have been inclusive in terms of authorship and content.
 - Currently planning a forum addressing attacks on DEI in higher education.
- Journal content is diverse in terms of methodologies and approaches.
- See note above about submissions from outside the U.S.

JACR NCA Report 2024

Editor: Heather Zoller

MANUSCRIPT ACCEPTANCE/REJECTION RATE: Aug. 1, 2023 to July 31, 2024.

(1) Number of new manuscripts received during this period:	349
(2) Number of revised manuscripts received during this period:	87
(3) Total number of manuscripts accepted for publication:	50

- Manuscripts with a decision date in the chosen range NOT the number of manuscripts accepted out of those received during the chosen range)

(4) Number of manuscripts returned for revision and resubmission: 53

- Not including reject & resubmits. Within decision date and not the number of manuscripts given revision decisions out of those **received** during the chosen range

(5) Number of manuscripts rejected: 331

- Within specific range, and not out of those received during the time frame

(6) Acceptance rate ((3) divided by (1+2)): 11.46%

- $[50 \text{ divided by } 349+87]= .11467 \text{ or } 11.46\%$

EDITOR'S GOALS AND PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THOSE GOALS:

STRENGTHS:

- I have significantly reduced time in review for authors. Authors have been appreciative of feedback from me and from reviewers. I have also reduced publication backlogs.
- I have engaged a media team to promote the journal, article downloads, and recognize board members and reviewers. That team has also helped me to begin a newsletter to create stronger relationships with board members and share insights with potential contributors.
- I am working to establish stronger relationships with the Applied Division at NCA, along with several other divisions.
- I have two Associate Editors with expertise in quantitative and computational methods in order to maintain the journal's broad appeal.
- I created the "Field Reports" section as a way to gain traction with practitioners and attract scholars from outside the U.S.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Post-acceptance: It is challenging to keep track of papers as they go through final copy editing processes outside the system. I also need to continue to balance the length of issues in terms of reducing backlog versus maintaining a cushion of accepted pieces.
- The journal still needs more traction in attracting papers from outside the U.S. and particularly in the global South.
- I am working to increase engagement and downloads.
- It can be very challenging to maintain focus on journal promotion (social media, newsletter, special issues, NCA sessions, etc.) because the volume of submissions at JACR is so high it overwhelms these other activities.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION:

- My editor's call highlighted the need to diversify and decolonize research processes.

- I have re-written the evaluation criteria, call for papers, and author instructions to highlight the need for inclusive research practices including data gathering (e.g., representative samples) and writing (e.g., recommending APA inclusive writing standards).
- I am using the “reject and resubmit” function to encourage quality work from the global South that does not comport with journal criteria in some way (e.g., clear statement of theoretical contribution is missing, language challenges).