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Teach Your Students Well

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Teach Your Students Well

Abstract

"Teach Your Students Well" discusses the responsibility teachers have to ensure that graduate students understand what's required in preparing and submitting articles to refereed journals. "Keyword Reminder" repeats an offer I made in the August issue. "October JOE" highlights an excellent Commentary on the increasingly important topic of emergency preparedness, the third of a three-part series on virtual communities of practice, and a very timely article on predatory mortgage education.

Teach Your Students Well

If it hadn't been too long, I'd have made the heading above "Teach Your Students Well--And Take Responsibility for Them."

What do I mean by "teach your students well"? I'm talking specifically here about articles for refereed journals. Preparing articles for refereed journals is an important part of graduate students' education because it will be an important part of their professional lives as academics and Extension professionals. Besides teaching them about methodology, rigor, literature searches, and a myriad of discipline-specific considerations, you should also teach them a very elemental lesson--to follow the rules.

I get a fair number of submissions from grad-student corresponding authors that do not conform to the JOE Submission Guidelines. Some still don't conform in any way, shape, or form and are simply what I have come to call "unrendered thesis gobbets," chunks torn out of theses or dissertations with no regard to JOE article categories, audience, or purpose. Others do not follow the [Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition](#), as mandated by the guidelines, or cite JOE articles correctly, something that's also made clear in the guidelines.

I'm talking about JOE for obvious reasons, but this certainly holds true for articles prepared for any refereed journal. Grad students should learn that different journals have different submission guidelines or specifications and that it is their responsibility to acquaint themselves with those different journals, their guidelines, and any other help they offer prospective authors; select the most appropriate journal for their articles; and follow the appropriate guidelines when they submit them.

It's not journal editors' job to teach them this--it's yours.

What do I mean by "and take responsibility for them"? Virtually all of the submissions I receive from grad students have faculty, presumably their teachers or members of their committees, listed as coauthors. If you're cited as an author, you surely have the responsibility to ensure that the articles that bear your name are appropriate and correct.

When I receive an article from a grad student, I know enough to police it extra carefully during my initial review. I send many of them back to the authors with often quite extensive recommendations for revision before I accept them as suitable for review.

Occasionally, I receive submissions from authors who are not grad students, but it turns out that the articles were actually prepared by graduate students and that the corresponding authors had simply failed in their responsibility to guide them through the process. This is especially galling.

Sure, I'm venting here. But the time I spend doing this portion of your job is time I cannot spend reviewing your submissions and revisions, sending your submissions out for review, and sending you your review results.

So please. Teach your students well--and take responsibility for them.

Keyword Offer

In my August Editor's Page, I explained that *JOE* was going to start using keywords to enhance its search capability and said the following.

Corresponding authors who have an article that has already been accepted for publication in *JOE* but that has **not yet been published** can send me a list of no more than five keywords or key phrases--**along with the article's submission number and article category**--and I will add that list to the article. It has to be the corresponding author, and I need the submission number and category so that I can locate the article.

If you are the corresponding author of an article that has been accepted but not yet published, this an offer you shouldn't refuse.

I believe only three authors have taken me up on my offer. It still stands.

October *JOE*

This issue's Commentary, "[A Kansas and Alaska Example of Extension Opportunities in Emergency Preparedness](#)," discusses an increasingly important area of Extension activity. And--I kid you not--as I was copy editing the Commentary for inclusion in this issue, I got a call from a prospective author with questions about an article he and some colleagues were planning on the same topic of emergency preparedness. Describing this as "an increasingly important area of Extension activity" may be an understatement.

The authors of the Commentary also make a broader point, writing that "just as an early 1900's Extension agent was an invaluable resource to the farm family, today's agent could be just as important when it comes to technology." This brings me to the first Feature, "[Virtual Communities of Practice: A 21st Century Method for Learning, Programming, and Developing Professionally](#)." It's the third in a three-part series on virtual communities of practice. The first article in the series was published in the [June issue](#), which featured many articles on technology-mediated ways of improving our professional lives and reaching our audiences. There were articles on the same topic in the [August issue](#), there are articles in this issue, and they certainly aren't going to stop.

All this attention paid to relatively new topics like emergency preparedness and technology-mediated ways to reach our audiences should not make us think that we ought to drop all of our traditional areas of programming, like, say, financial management, in favor of the new and non-traditional. In this time of economic crisis, I have only to point to the first Research in Brief: "[The Need for Predatory Mortgage Education: Expert Views](#)." Talk about timely.

We in Extension have some job and some responsibility. These three articles and the other 26 in this issue are proof that we are doing the job and fulfilling the responsibility.

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