

Submission Guidelines

We would like to publish your original research, reviews, methodological and case studies, and theoretical articles that offer new insights on current topics. We seek submissions from undergraduate students and their research groups. Original work based on honours theses, independent research projects, special topics seminars, research assistantships, summer internship programs (e.g., NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award), and similar projects are appropriate for submission.

This journal is concerned with novel, original, and meaningful contributions to the scientific community. Accordingly, we do not accept lab reports based on in-class ‘canned experiments.’ Furthermore, manuscripts must meet stringent content and style guidelines prior to consideration. For instance, it would not be appropriate to submit an honours thesis in its entirety; manuscripts for consideration in JUST@Dal must have the look and feel of an article in an established scholarly journal.

We accept submissions on a rolling basis. Contact us at just@dal.ca to express your intention to submit an article. When you are ready to submit, email the article as a Word document (not pdf) to just@dal.ca or drop it off at the Main Office of the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, addressed to JUST@Dal, c/o Dr. Tim Juckes.

1. Conditions for Publication in JUST@Dal

Our mandate is to disseminate well-written papers demonstrating scientific skill to a broad, scientifically sophisticated readership. Articles should be interesting and comprehensible to non-experts, while still offering novel insights to those already acquainted with the topics at hand. JUST@Dal values the following qualities of polished scientific writing:

- Precision, objectivity, and comprehensiveness
- Accuracy, conciseness, and correctness
- Clarity, organization, and style
- Active voice over passive voice
- Thoughtful interpretation of results
- New insights advancing the topic of study

Intellectual Property

All articles we publish remain the property of the authors, who retain all rights to their work. However, we do reserve the right to print and reprint published articles. Articles may be submitted to and accepted in other journals after publication in JUST@Dal; however, some professional journals have policies against work submitted or accepted elsewhere from being reviewed.

Authors intending to resubmit their articles to other journals, or incorporate it into larger submissions, are responsible for determining whether publication in JUST@Dal precludes submission to particular periodicals.

Consent

All coauthors and faculty supervisors must be aware of JUST@Dal policies, and support submission of the manuscript. The undergraduate student author(s) and their faculty supervisor(s) must all sign the consent form available at <http://just.science.dal.ca>. If a faculty supervisor is considered a co-author, his or her name must appear also in the co-author list.

2. Editorial Process

Review

The review process is an important characteristic of scientific communication. It allows the editorial board to make informed decisions based on a fair, scientifically-relevant assessment, and gives authors an opportunity to improve manuscript quality by identifying specific areas for revision.

To aid in the selection of reviewers, we request that authors nominate three potential reviewers, preferably Dalhousie-affiliated faculty or graduate students, who can make informed decisions about the manuscript. At least one reviewer should be a recognized expert in the field. Reviewers should not be coauthors or work under the same faculty supervisor as the authors. Authors must refrain from contacting potential reviewers prior to or during the review process, even in order to confirm their availability or interest.

Copies of the original manuscript will be sent to at least two reviewers, one selected independently by the Editorial Board, and one recommended by the author.

Review Process

The JUST@Dal editorial board will critically assess submissions using the criteria for quality scientific writing. Manuscripts that do not meet these criteria will be returned to the authors, along with a brief explanation for rejection. Articles that meet JUST@Dal's standards will be shortlisted for faculty review.

Shortlisted articles undergo a faculty review process, and copies of the manuscript are distributed to reviewers and a team of editors on the Editorial Board, who will then comment on shortlisted articles. Authors will receive evaluation reports, listing three possible outcomes:

Rejection. Major concerns or irreparable flaws are identified by one or more reviewers.

Rejection with possible resubmission. Reviewers judge the manuscript to need extensive editing. Authors are encouraged to submit their revised manuscript to a future issue of JUST@Dal.

Conditional Acceptance. Reviewers give suggestions to improve the manuscript. Authors may resubmit their article for final evaluation after addressing the reviewers' comments.

The editorial board and faculty advisor will make the final selection of articles. Accepted manuscripts will be edited and electronic proofs will be sent to the authors for approval, with the expectation of an expeditious response. Layout discrepancies and other outstanding issues must be reported at this stage, before the journal goes to press.

Anonymity

JUST@Dal employs a double-blind review system, making the evaluation process anonymous for both authors and reviewers. Reviewers' identities will not be released to authors and authorship information is stripped from manuscripts before they are distributed to reviewers.

3) Manuscript Preparation and Style

JUST@Dal follows the style guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA). The use of a consistent style spares readers from the distraction of a variety of different formats, and helps direct attention to content. All printed articles will be presented in APA style, based on the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.), so it is important that manuscripts be formatted in APA style before submission.

There are useful guides to APA style online, such as the Quick Guide provided by Dalhousie University Libraries (http://www.library.dal.ca/Files/How_do_I/pdf/apa_style6.pdf). It may also be helpful to use citation management software such as RefWorks, which is available free of charge to the Dalhousie community (<http://www.library.dal.ca/How/RefWorks>).

Cover page

Include the following information, in order:

- Name, degree expected/received, academic program, and departmental affiliation of each author (in order of contribution)
- Email address of corresponding author
- Names, contact information, and departmental affiliation for three potential reviewers
- Full title of article (maximum of 12 words)
- Abridged title (maximum of 50 characters); this will become the running head
- Number of figures and tables
- Total number of pages
- Word count

Text

- Total length should be no longer than 3,500 words.
- Margins are 1" on all sides, on 8.5"x11" paper.
- Text is double-spaced and set in Times New Roman, 12 point font.
- Include a running head on the top left of the page, with the page number flush right.

Body

A suggested organization for an experimental article follows. There may be subheadings under some of these sections, depending on the conventions of each respective discipline (e.g., Participants, Apparatus, etc., under Method in a Psychology article) or to accommodate the design of a particular study.

1. *Abstract:* The purpose of the abstract is to briefly outline the background, purpose, method, results, and interpretation of the study. Abstracts should be concise, not exceeding 150 words.
2. *Introduction:* This should overview previous research in the area, and explain the purpose and significance of the present research. Use in-text citations to reference relevant literature.
3. *Method:* This should describe experimental protocols showing the reader how the research was conducted, in sufficient detail to allow replication.
4. *Results:* This should report relevant summarized data and accompanying statistical analysis. Figures and tables will greatly help reader comprehension.
5. *Discussion:* This should represent a significant part of the manuscript. Interpret the results of the experiment and show how they compare with past work. What conclusions can be drawn from these data, what is their significance, and what future research directions do they suggest? It is also appropriate to discuss study limitations.
6. *References:* Use peer-reviewed articles and books. Popular press, Wikipedia, and other informal sources are discouraged.
7. *Acknowledgements:* This section is optional. It is intended to recognize non-author collaborators, assistants, and sources of funding.
8. *Figures and Tables:* Append figures and tables one per page at the end of the manuscript, in the order they should appear in the text.
9. All images will be printed in black and white. Please note that the minimum resolution for photographs is 300 dpi.

As soon as you create your figures, immediately save them in a lossless file format (e.g., .gif, .png, .tiff), then import the file into your Word document (rather than cutting and pasting). Please do not save images in lossy formats such as .jpg. Lossy formats compromise image quality in order to save space. While these files may look fine on your computer, they can look quite poor when re-scaled in the journal's typesetting software, or in print. Please note that re-saving an image from, for example, a .jpg to a .png format will not automatically improve the quality of the file; rather, if the quality of your file is compromised, simply re-generate the image (if possible) and save it appropriately.

Finally, authors should retain data and files in order to modify figures or adjust analyses if necessary.

4) Converting a Thesis into a Journal Article

A logical first step to publishing a research article is to have an experiment already completed, or at least well underway. Thus, honours theses or independent research projects may serve as a useful basis from which to write a journal article. However, there is much more to preparing a successful manuscript than simply mailing in an unaltered honours thesis.

The greatest challenge for converting such projects into promising journal articles typically lies in trimming the length of the original papers to a length that is more reader-friendly, yet still describes the experiment in sufficient detail. In research papers for classes, authors are generally required to discuss in great detail all aspects of their work, to convey to markers that they are well-versed in the techniques and theory of their projects, and that they can competently conduct research. In an academic journal, many of these details are no longer needed, as the aim of journal articles is rather to convey new insights and findings.

Cutting and pasting material from a thesis may be a good way to start drafting a manuscript, but additional work needs to be completed to ensure that length, style, organization, and other considerations are appropriate for publication. Theses often do not share the same writing style as journal articles, since they are intended to serve different ends.

Some Helpful Tips

- Trim extraneous details from your paper. For example, in theses and independent research, Method sections are often particularly verbose.
- Consider what results are most insightful or make the greatest contribution to the field of study.
- Do not inundate readers with too many references. Choose those that contribute most to the article.
- If the paper covers multiple topics or involves many experiments, consider narrowing the focus to a single topic or concentrating on the most relevant experiments.
- As always, our editors are on hand to help you prepare and revise your manuscript. Do not hesitate to ask for assistance.

5) Steps to Publishing with JUST@Dal

Consider whether any of your previous or current research is suitable for publication in JUST@Dal.

- Review our submission guidelines.
- Determine if your manuscript will be sent to other journals. If so, ensure that you are familiar with their editorial policies and whether publication in JUST@Dal will preclude republication of your work.
- Consult with supervisors and potential coauthors about your intention to submit an article to JUST@Dal, and obtain their approval on the journal's consent form (available on our website or upon request).
- Contact us and declare your intention to submit (just@dal.ca). If you send a draft abstract or copy of the manuscript, we can let you know if it would be a good candidate for publication.
- Prepare a manuscript based on your research, according to the current APA formatting and style guidelines.
- Ensure that your graphics files are high quality, and save them in a lossless format.
- Be sure to include in your submission: consent form, manuscript, and graphics files.
- Email your submission package to just@dal.ca.
- Revise the article as requested over the course of the evaluation. Keep hold of data files in case it is necessary to regenerate figures or revise the analysis.