

## A New Requirement for JOE Authors and April Highlights

### Abstract

To expedite the publication process for *JOE* submissions, I am requiring that all prospective authors apply a manuscript submission checklist to their work before submitting it. In "New Requirement for *JOE* Authors," I explain my reasoning and identify benefits I expect will result from implementation of the checklist. In "April *JOE*," I spotlight articles about new methods for addressing less tangible aspects of Extension work, Extension professionals' use of new technologies to overcome long-standing and contemporary challenges, and other interesting topics.

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## New Requirement for *JOE* Authors

Two primary responsibilities of the *JOE* editor are ensuring the quality of the journal's content and assisting prospective *JOE* authors with professional development in the area of scholarly writing. I address both responsibilities by performing a thorough editorial review of all manuscripts submitted to *JOE* before advancing them for peer review (in the case of Feature, Research in Brief, and Ideas at Work submissions) or accepting them for publication (in the case of Commentary and Tools of the Trade submissions).

During my reviews, I find that most manuscripts need moderate to significant revising in at least some of the following areas:

- organization, cohesion, and clear development of topic;
- clarity and consistency in presentations and discussions of data;
- effective sentence construction and clarity and consistency in use of language;
- accuracy of and consistency in source documentation;
- grammar and mechanics; and
- attention to *JOE* style.

As a result, I am now requiring that all prospective *JOE* authors apply the [Journal of Extension Manuscript Submission Checklist](#) to their work before submitting it. This requirement is explained in the *JOE* Submission Guidelines.

The primary purpose for implementing the checklist is to increase the likelihood that manuscripts will make it through the editorial review without being returned for revision and, thereby, progress more quickly through the publication process. I also anticipate that implementation of the checklist will clarify *JOE* submission requirements, assist *JOE* authors with the writing process, increase expertise in scholarly writing among *JOE* authors, reduce turnaround time for editorial reviews, and improve the overall quality of the journal.

## April *JOE*

The lead Feature, Research in Brief, and Tools of the Trade articles in this issue offer new methods for addressing some hard-to-measure aspects of Extension work. "[Capacity Building and Community Resilience: A Pilot Analysis of Education and Employment Indicators Before and After an Extension Intervention](#)" explains how to use difference-in-differences analyses to generate empirical evidence demonstrating the efficacy of capacity and resilience building. "[Personal Sustainability: Listening to Extension Staff and Observing Organizational Culture](#)" illustrates the richness of using participatory action research to investigate and respond to issues of work-life balance, collegiality, and connection to organizational vision among Extension staff. Finally, in "[From Knowledge to Action: Tips for Encouraging and Measuring Program-Related Behavior Change](#)," the authors discuss a method of documenting behavior change that is based on action planning by Extension program participants.

Three articles describe technology-based tools designed to help Extension overcome specific long-standing and contemporary challenges relevant to meeting the needs of farmers, families, and communities. "[Wet Grain Delivery Advice: A Previously Impossible Extension Challenge Solved Through App Technology](#)" introduces an app that has allowed Extension to go from providing vague guidance to generating real-time, spot-on solutions to the perennial problem of dispensing with wet grain during harvest. "[Using Social Media to Engage and Educate Teen Parents](#)" discusses meeting youth where they live—in the realm of social media—by providing asynchronous learning opportunities via closed Facebook groups, an Instagram account, a YouTube channel, and the video delivery and one-on-one communication capabilities of WhatsApp. The web-based assessment tool described in "[An Integrated Pest Management Tool for Evaluating Schools](#)" is particularly useful in this era of ever-tightening school budgets as it helps school system personnel assess and address school pest problems on their own.

Two other notable entries in this issue's interesting mix of articles are "[The Polarization of Agriculture: The Evolving Context of Extension Work](#)" and "[Volunteer Income Tax Assistance: A Community Coalition for Financial Education and Asset Building](#)." The former, a Commentary, offers a perspective on how Extension professionals should address differences in agricultural values. And, offering fodder for tax-month pondering, the latter discusses a community collaboration opportunity that can be used by Extension professionals to assist consumers with tax preparation and financial management.

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