Best practices for submitting, reviewing, and publishing manuscripts in JVDI

Grant Maxie, Editor-in-Chief
Holly Farrell, Managing Editor
Francisco Uzal, Images Editor

Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation

With credit to: Jeff Caswell, EIC, Veterinary Pathology
Susan A. Elmore, EIC, Toxicologic Pathology
Topics

• Overview of JVDI
• The publication process
• How to write and submit to JVDI
  – Instructions to authors
  – Tips for success
  – Figures
• How to review for JVDI
• Questions and answers
Organizational structure of JVDI

AAVLD Executive Board
AAVLD Publications Committee
JVDI Editorial Board

Grant Maxie, Editor-in-chief

Holly Farrell, Managing editor

Francisco Uzal, Images Editor

Donal O’Toole, Book Review Editor

Peer Reviewers on the Editorial Board (n = 61)

Section Editors
Anatomic Pathology - Francisco Uzal, Jesse Hostetter, Asli Mete
Bacteriology and Mycology - Pat Blackall
Clinical Pathology - Paula Krimer
Molecular Biology - Kathy Toohey-Kurth
Molecular/Immunology - Steven Bolin
Toxicology - Stephen Hooser
Virology - Ed Dubovi, Jianqiang Zhang
“The Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation is the official journal of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians.

The mission of the Journal is to educate by informing readers of progress in veterinary laboratory medicine and related fields of endeavor.

The key objectives of the JVDI are to promote the science of veterinary laboratory medicine and the betterment of animal and public health.”

AAVLD Executive Board approved 2016.02.05
JVDI mission

“The Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation (J Vet Diagn Invest) is an international peer-reviewed journal published in English as the official journal of the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD). JVDI is devoted to all aspects of veterinary laboratory diagnostic science including the major disciplines of anatomic pathology, bacteriology/mycology, clinical pathology, epidemiology, immunology, laboratory information management, molecular biology, parasitology, public health, toxicology, and virology.”
JVDI Instructions to Authors

https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/societyimages/jvdi/JVDI%20Instructions%20to%20Authors%2020160718.pdf

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  3.3 Adequacy of title, references, figures, and tables ........................................................................ 5
JVDI content

• Three manuscript formats are accepted for review:
  – Review Articles
  – Full Scientific Reports
  – Brief Communications

• Letters to the Editor
• Commentaries
• Book Reviews
Initial considerations for authors:

• Topic?
  – Is it within the scope of JVDI? Of interest to readership?

• Copyright
  – the same material or a substantial part thereof is not presently being considered for publication or has not been published elsewhere

• Ethical considerations
  – Animal welfare - JVDI requires that authors obtain the relevant national/state/institutional approval prior to animal experimentation
Plagiarism

- JVDI employs the software program iThenticate to detect plagiarism (http://www.ithenticate.com).

- The U.S. Office of Research Integrity considers plagiarism to “...include both the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work.... Substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work means the unattributed verbatim or nearly verbatim copying of sentences and paragraphs which materially mislead the ordinary reader regarding the contributions of the author” (https://ori.hhs.gov/ori-policy-plagiarism)

- Detection of plagiarized material in any manuscript will result in its immediate rejection, regardless of its scientific merit. The author’s institution may be notified.
| Microsoft Word file, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, left-justified, 25 mm (1 in.) margin on all sides, pages numbered at the bottom center (i.e., Page X of Y). |
| For styles, do not use Heading 1, etc. Use the Normal style setting. |
| Number text lines consecutively throughout the manuscript; begin page 1 with line #1; do not restart numbering on each subsequent page. |
| Indent paragraphs and do not include spaces between paragraphs. |
| Allow 1 space (not 2) after a word or period. |
| JVDI number style is one, 2, 3, 4… within the text, but 1, 2, 3, 4… when in a series in the same sentence. |
| Include tables in the main document, but do not embed figures. Supplementary tables should be submitted as a separate .doc file. |
| SI units of measurement (International System of Units) must be used (may include conventional units in brackets). |
| For anatomic terms, use the English equivalents of terms in Nomina Anatomica Veterinaria. Names of infectious agents should follow the current published standards for viruses (ICTV, International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses), bacteria (NCBI), and fungi (NCBI). |
| In-text citations are listed in superscript after the punctuation as shown. 1,2,4,8 |
| Arrange references alphabetically, numbered consecutively. |
| Submit Figures in .tiff or .jpg formats only (see section 5). Do not exceed maximum file size of 5 MB per figure. |
| Submit supplementary tables as Microsoft Word files (see section 6). Submit supplementary figures following the figure guidelines (see section 5). |
Review and acceptance criteria

- Adequacy of format, style, and language
- Novelty of contents
  - Single case reports .....?
- Usefulness and impact for veterinary laboratory diagnosticians
- Adequacy of experimental design
- Adequacy of title, references, figures, and tables
How do I edit (decide)?
Screen all proffered manuscripts for content and formatting – preserve the time of section editors and reviewers!

Make a Decision

- Immediately accept for review  
  ✓ 25%
- Reject based on content  
  ✓ 25%
- Reject based on formatting  
  ✓ 50%

Initial decision re review:

JVDI initial outcomes:

Please take note of the following comments. Manuscripts must comply with our instructions in order to preserve the time required in review by section editors and reviewers:

- A cover letter is missing.
- The JVDI Authorship Form is missing. The JVDI Authorship form is blank – if you are using a Mac computer, please use the Mac form. The authorship form details the role of each co-author in the study and in the preparation of the submitted manuscript. The form is to be downloaded and filled out during the submission process.
- Please be reminded that adequate English grammar, syntax, and spelling are the responsibility of the authors and not the Journal staff or reviewers. Please have a revised manuscript reviewed by a native English-speaking scientist.
- An editing service http://languageservices.sagepub.com/en/ , including translation from Spanish, Portuguese or Chinese, is available from the publisher, SAGE; use of this service does not guarantee acceptance of the paper by the journal.
- The American form of English must be used.
- Number text lines consecutively throughout the manuscript; begin page 1 with line #1; do not re-start numbering on each subsequent page.
- Microsoft Word, double-spaced (including References and Tables), 12-point Times New Roman font, left-aligned (not justified), 25 mm (1 in.) margin on all sides, pages numbered at the bottom center (i.e., page X of Y). Please use “Normal” setting, not Heading 1, etc. in Styles. Indent paragraphs. Punctuation (comma or period before superscripts; semicolon after superscripts); no spaces before or between superscripts. One space (not 2) after a word or period. JVDI number style is: one, 2, 3, 4... within text, except 1,2,3,4... when numbers are within the same sentence. Use page breaks (= Ctrl-Enter) rather than a series of hard returns.
- Please set-up title and authors as in a recent issue of JVDI. Use sentence case for Article title; Title Case for authors’ names. For example:

Toward a multiplexed serotyping immunoassay for foot-and-mouth disease virus

Julie Perkins, Alfonso Clavijo, Josue I. Ortiz, Timothy J. Salo, Hilary J. Holland, Benjamin J. Hindson, Mary T. McBride

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Livermore, CA (Perkins, Ortiz, Hindson, McBride); Canadian Food Inspection Agency, National Center for Foreign Animal Disease, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada (Clavijo, Salo, Holland).

1Corresponding author: Mary T. McBride, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 7000 East Avenue, Livermore, CA 94551. xxxxx@llnl.gov

Running head: Multiplexed serotyping immunoassay for FMDV

- A short running title is required, not to exceed 60 characters (including spaces). Please add to title page.
- Full Scientific Reports: Abstract (≤250 words), Key words, Introduction, Materials and methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgments (if any), Declaration of conflicting interests, Funding, Supplementary material (if any), References, Tables (if any), and Figure legends (if any). Do not use
“Top 10” reasons for rejection

1. “Content” – out of scope of JVDI, lack of novelty.
2. “Formatting” – various combinations of:
   a. Missing cover letter.
   b. JVDI authorship form incomplete – note Mac version.
   c. Incorrect manuscript preparation – MS Word, TNR, 12 pt, line numbering, ……
   d. Title page formatting incorrect, no Running title, etc.
   e. Approval of animal care and use missing.
   f. Sources and manufacturers cited incorrectly (sources and brand names appear in the text).
   g. SI units not used.
   h. Figures submitted as text or PowerPoint files.
   i. Figures not formatted according to the Instructions to Authors (e.g., resolution is too low; blurry; text is too small to read; figure size is too small or too large – 5 MB max).
   j. Tables submitted as embedded figures.
   k. References do not follow the Instructions to Authors. (Beware EndNote!)
   l. Sections are missing (Declaration of Conflicting Interests; Funding; Figure legends).

Bottom line: Read and follow the Instructions.
General format and style

• Layout
  – Review, Full Scientific Report, Brief Communication

• Language and style
  – American form of English
  – SAGE editing service available
  – ABCs of good writing – **Accurate, Brief, Clear**

• Units of measurement
  – SI units (conventional)
Layout

– Title page, Running title
– Abstract, Key words
– Introduction, Materials and methods, Results, Discussion
  • Brief communication - body only, no subheadings
– Acknowledgments
– Declaration of conflicting interests
– Funding
– References
– Tables
– Figure legends
Abstract

• Summarize the main points of an article
  – *What you did* - your objective or subject background
  – *How you did it* - study design and methods, *n* of subjects
  – *What you found* - primary results
  – *What it means* - principal conclusions
Tips for excellent Figures
- Paco
Image editing

The fun part

Francisco Uzal

California Animal Health and Food Safety laboratory, San Bernardino Branch, UC Davis; Associate Editor JVDI
FORMAT

✔ Figures must NOT be embedded in the text document, but submitted separately
✔ .tiff or .jpg files
✔ **Do not exceed 5 MB!** (painful to download!)
✔ 1-column width: 85 mm, 3.3 in
✔ 2-column width: 174 mm, 6.8 in
✔ 300 pixels/inch: photographs, histo images
✔ 800 pixels/inch: line art (i.e., graphs, charts)
✔ Re-sizing?
  ✔ Most graphs: OK
  ✔ Gross, histo: NOT OK
✓ Submit gross and histo in color
✓ Submit figures UN-flattened to allow for editing if needed
✓ Use LZW compression to reduce file size
✓ Save as separate files:
  Fig. 1
  Fig. 2
  Figs. 1-6
Gross pathology:

✓ Head to the right
✓ Avoid fingers, numbers, scales
✓ More-or-less uniform background
✓ No case numbers or other identification
Histopathology:

- No photographic or tissue artifacts
- Even (Kohler) illumination
- Sharp focus
- Background where there is no tissue = white
- Surface of skin, mucosae at the top
- Scale bars acceptable
✓ Group multiple color figures into a composite figure separated by a thin white line
✓ Panels: 2 columns (174 mm, 6.8 in total)
✓ Perfect square or rectangle
✓ No empty spaces
Converting figures

1. Start with PowerPoint (user-friendly)
2. Save as pdf
3. Open pdf with Photoshop
4. Save as .tif or .jpg

Labeling figures

✓ 14-point Arial font, capital letter
✓ Bottom left corner of each image
✓ No “Fig. a”, etc., letter only
Scale bars:

Black or white

Bottom right corner

No text above, below, or inside
Figure legends

• Every figure must have a legend
• Self-explanatory and free-standing
• Animal species, organ/tissue, stain
• Scale not required but acceptable

• Figure legends follow Tables
Images Editor limits all image modifications to:

- White balance
- Contrast, brightness
- Background replacement/cleaning
- Cropping

• If in doubt, contact our Images Editor: fauzal@ucdavis.edu
• Figures should be able to stand alone from the text narrative.
• Keep incremental numbers large and clear along X- and Y-axes.
• Sentence case for axis titles, show units of measurement
• In a composite figure, label panels in lower left-hand corner.
• If your figures are not in color, label your lines with shapes such as squares, circles, or pyramids to display your data clearly to the reader.
• Spell out abbreviations used in the graph in the figure legend so that the reader does not have to hunt for the meaning.
Two widths are available in JVDI:
• single-column width is 20 picas (85 mm, 3.3 in).
• double-column width is 41 picas (174 mm, 6.8 in).

Which width is appropriate? Print out your figure at each size and see which is easier to read. Is single-column concise and clear, or should you use double-column and add more information, such as a key or relevant equations.

Resolution for line art should be 800 dpi minimum.
Finally ready to submit!

Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation

Statement of Authorship

The submitting author affirms that all individuals listed as authors agree that they have met the criteria of authorship and agree to the conclusions of the study. In order to meet the requirements of authorship, each author must have contributed to at least one aspect of each of the four criteria, as listed below. Please note that for Criteria 1 and 2, authors only need to meet one of the two items listed. These criteria are not to be used as a means to disqualify colleagues from authorship who otherwise meet authorship criteria by denying them the opportunity to meet criteria 2 or 3. Therefore, all individuals who meet the first criterion should have the opportunity to participate in the drafting, review, and final approval of the manuscript. All authors are expected to agree to criteria 3 and 4. Any individuals not meeting the criteria may be mentioned in the Acknowledgments section of the manuscript.

Per the criteria defined by the International Committee for Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), please note the contribution made by each author listed in the manuscript.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author (Last name, Initials)</th>
<th>Criterion 1 (and/or)</th>
<th>Criterion 2 (and/or)</th>
<th>Criterion 3</th>
<th>Criterion 4</th>
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<td>Substantially contributed to conception and/or design of the study</td>
<td>Contributed to acquisition, analysis, and/or interpretation of data</td>
<td>Drafted the manuscript</td>
<td>Critically revised the manuscript for important intellectual content</td>
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Submit online:
https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jvdi

Welcome to the submission site for
Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation

To begin, log in with your user ID and password.

If you are unsure about whether or not you have an account, or have forgotten your password, go to the Reset Password screen.
The publication process

1. Author submits a manuscript (ms) to JVDI through MSCentral (SAGE Track).
2. Editor-in-Chief (EIC) checks ms submission and accepts for review or rejects ms.
3. EIC assigns Section Editor (SE).
4. SE selects Reviewers; SE can also stockpile alternative reviewers at this time.
5. SE invites Reviewers.
6. Reviewer accepts or declines invitation using the links provided in the invitation email.
7. Reviewers submit review via SAGE Track.
8. SE Decision is rendered.
9. Author submits a revised ms in SAGE Track, and steps 4–8 are repeated.
10. SE rejects or recommends the ms for acceptance via SAGE Track. If EIC accepts ms, then EIC will send an informal acceptance email manually to the Author. EIC then notifies the Managing Editor (ME) that desk-editing is needed.
11. The ME desk-edits ms, and emails ms to the EIC. Upon approval by EIC, the ME issues a formal acceptance letter by rendering an Editor Decision in SAGE Track and attaches the desk-edited ms to the decision letter.
12. Author checks ms and sends final edited copy of ms to the ME who then uploads and exports the files to Sage.
13. SAGE sends proofs to Corresponding Author via email.
14. Author returns the proof to SAGE Edit, EIC reviews proof and returns corrected proof to SAGE. Proof is corrected and uploaded to OnlineFirst.
15. After all the edited proofs have been corrected at SAGE, the paginated issue is sent to the ME and EIC for final review. Usually a 1-day turnaround from the ME and EIC back to SAGE.
16. SAGE posts issue online (and sends an eTOC Alert to subscribers). The issue is sent to the printer, and then mailed out to subscribers.
## Turnaround times (TAT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editorial statistics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avg. from submission to first decision</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. reviewer TAT - Original</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors’ revision TAT</td>
<td>variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. reviewer TAT - Revision</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. from submission to final decision</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. pre-publication editing, etc.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JVDI, Oct 24, 2019
Revision(s)

Track Changes settings in MSWord
Publication!

**OnlineFirst**

Last updated October 14, 2019

**Brief Communication**

*Plasma cell leukemia with plasmablastic morphology in a dog*

Elie Dagher, Nicolas Soetart, Florian Chocteau, Bérengère Dequéant, Esther Piccirillo, Catherine Ibiseth, Jérôme Abadie, Laëtitia Jaillardon

[https://doi.org/10.1177/1040638719882045](https://doi.org/10.1177/1040638719882045) | First Published October 14, 2019

**Abstract**

› Preview

**Focus Issue**

*Clostridium perfringens* type D epsilon toxin produces a rapid and dose-dependent cytotoxic effect on cerebral microvascular endothelial cells in vitro

Kimberley A. Mander, Francisco A. Uzal, Ruth Williams, John W. Finnie

[https://doi.org/10.1177/1040638719882745](https://doi.org/10.1177/1040638719882745) | First Published October 14, 2019

**Abstract**

› Preview
Fun with words!

Diagnose or detect?

• Detection or identification – of disease agents. Agents are detected, not diagnosed.

• diagnosis = “1. the determination of the nature of a case of disease. 2. the art of distinguishing one disease from another.” Dorland’s 28th ed. Diagnoses are made by clinicians or pathologists.

• Detecting or identifying a microbe, antigen, or other analyte does not in and of itself constitute a diagnosis.
Fun with words!

rtPCR, RT-PCR, qPCR – Ct, Cq, Cp?

• AAVLD-JVDI PCR terminology
  – real-time PCR = rtPCR
  – reverse-transcription real-time PCR = RT-rtPCR

• We recommend using **qPCR** (quantitative PCR) and RT-qPCR only when performing real-time PCR with a standard curve.

• We use cycle threshold (Ct) notation rather than **Cq** (quantification cycle) or crossing point (**Cp**)
Fun with words!

Humanely euthanize?

• “euthanasia/euthanize” (= good death) rather than “euthanatization/euthanatize”. Not “humane euthanasia” (redundant) – as opposed to “inhumane euthanasia”?

‘present’

• rather than ‘dogs present with...’ (jargon), use “dogs are presented with ...”; “the horse had ...”; etc. (Humans present themselves for examination, animals do not.) A lesion can never present itself – lesions occur, are seen as, display as, etc.
Fun with words!

Signs or symptoms?
• **signs** are observed in, and **symptoms** are reported by, humans
• we observe only clinical ‘signs’ in animals (they can’t relay their ‘symptoms’ to us – headache, etc.).

Autopsy, necropsy, postmortem?
• autopsy = to see for one’s self; necropsy = to examine after death. My preference has been to use ‘autopsy’. Acceptable is “postmortem” or “postmortem examination”.
Fun with words!

That or which?
• ‘that/which’ – “the straw that broke the camel’s back” = a restrictive clause; needed for the meaning of the sentence
• use ‘which’ for non-restrictive clauses – “the straw, which was heavy, broke the camel’s back”.

Sex or gender?
• ‘sex’ is used in preference to ‘gender’ (PC, politically correct) - there are 2 sexes of animals (male, female), but 4 genders of nouns grammatically (masculine, feminine, neuter, common – he, she, it, they)
Fun with words!

Brevity - eliminate redundancies and wordiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Redundant, wordy</th>
<th>Better</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>multifocal foci</td>
<td>foci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>histopathological lesions</td>
<td>histologic lesions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large in size</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red in color</td>
<td>red</td>
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<tr>
<td>soft consistency</td>
<td>soft</td>
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<tr>
<td>at the present time</td>
<td>now</td>
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<tr>
<td>in terms of</td>
<td>in, of, for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the majority of</td>
<td>most, many</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
STRETCH BREAK!

And then on to reviewing
Major goals of the review process

• To provide topic-specific expertise in evaluation of manuscripts
• To indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the paper in sufficient detail to help the author make revisions, or to understand reasons for rejection
• To communicate this information to the Editors to allow an appropriate decision
  – minor revision, major revision, rejection, acceptance
• Respond in a timely manner
Outline

• How do I become a reviewer?
• Ethics
• Before you begin the review
• Assessing the elements of the manuscript
  – Title, key words, abstract
  – Introduction
  – Materials and methods
  – Results
  – Tables and Figures
  – Discussion
  – References
• Constructing your review
• Follow-up
Why become a peer reviewer?

• Keep up with developments in your own field
• Contribute to science by fostering scholarly communications and sharing your expertise
• Career-building experience when early in career – build CV
• Learning experience – sharpen your own critical thinking and writing skills
• Acknowledgment – thank you and shared reviews, published annual list of reviewers, discounts on publications
How do I become a reviewer?

• Important roles of peer reviewers
• Define the narrow topic(s) in which you have specific expertise
• Inform editorial staff that you wish to review manuscripts
• Establish your credibility – your CV – we need SMEs (subject matter experts)
• Add to the roster of reviewers
How do editors preserve reviewers?

• Screen all proffered manuscripts for content and formatting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make a Decision:</th>
<th>JVDI initial outcomes:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Immediate accept</td>
<td>✓ 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Reject based on content</td>
<td>✓ 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Reject based on formatting</td>
<td>✓ 50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Initial decision re review:

JVDI initial outcomes:

• Select reviewers with appropriate expertise

• “Thank you”s!

Please take note of the following comments. Manuscripts must comply with our Instructions in order to preserve the time required in review by section editors and reviewers:

- A cover letter is missing.
- The JVDI Authorship Form is missing. The JVDI Authorship form is blank – if you are using a Mac computer, please use the Mac form. The authorship form details the role of each co-author in the study and in the preparation of the submitted manuscript. The form is to be downloaded and filled out during the submission process.
- Please be reminded that adequate English grammar, syntax, and spelling are the responsibility of the authors and not the Journal staff or reviewers. Please have a revised manuscript reviewed by a native English-speaking scientist.
- An editing service http://languageservices.sagepub.com/en/ , including translation from Spanish, Portuguese or Chinese, is available from the publisher, SAGE; use of this service does not guarantee acceptance of the paper by the journal.
- The American form of English must be used.
- Number text lines consecutively throughout the manuscript; begin page 1 with line #1; do not re-start numbering on each subsequent page.
- Microsoft Word, double-spaced (including References and Tables), 12-point Times New Roman font, left-aligned (not justified), 25 mm (1 in.) margin on all sides, pages numbered at the bottom center (i.e., page X of Y). Please use “Normal” setting, not Heading 1, etc. in Styles. Indent paragraphs. No spaces after paragraphs. Punctuation (comma or period before superscripts; semicolon after superscripts); no spaces before or between superscripts. One space (not 2) after a word or period. JVDI number style is: one, 2, 3, 4, ... within text, except 1,2,3,4... when numbers are within the same sentence. Use page breaks (= Ctrl-Enter) rather than a series of hard returns.
- Please set-up title and authors as in a recent issue of JVDI. Use sentence case for Article title; Title Case for authors’ names. For example:
Ethics

• Anonymity
• Confidentiality
  – Communication to others
  – Personal use of unpublished information
• Might you have a conflict of interest or a bias?
  – Close collaborator or competitor, same institution, personal relationship
  – If so, let the Section Editor know ASAP
• Delaying or rejecting manuscripts of competitors
Before you begin the review process

• Can you review and verify all or most aspects of the paper?
  – Statistics, clinical pathology, molecular methods, etc.

• Can you complete the review in a timely manner, and do it well?

• Is English usage adequate for review?

• Has the work been published previously?
The review form

19-0327.R1 - View Abstract - View Author's Response

Diagnostic detection of live attenuated influenza vaccine virus and evidence of reassortment in the United States swine population

*= Required Fields

Do you want to get recognition for this review on Publons?

Don't let your reviewing work go unnoticed! Researchers the world over use Publons to effortlessly track their valuable peer review contributions for any journal. If you opt in, your Publons profile will automatically be updated to show a verified record of this review in full compliance with the journal's review policy. If you don't have a Publons profile, you will be prompted to create a free account. Learn more about Publons.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Please note that in the event of the rejection of this paper, in conjunction with the author's decision to refer their manuscript, it may be transferred for consideration in another SAGE journal. Your review comments may also be transmitted as well. Your identity will remain confidential to the author but will be disclosed to the editor.
The review form (cont.)

Would you be willing to review a revision of this manuscript?
- Yes
- No

Recommendation
- Accept
- Minor Revision
- Major Revision
- Major Revision AND conversion to brief comm.
- Reject

Confidential Comments to the Editor

Comments to the Author

Attach Files

Drop files here or click to begin. (Max of 10 at a time)

No Files Attached

Save as Draft  Save & Print  Submit Review
Title, key words, abstract

• Will interested readers find the article when searching PubMed & Google?
• Do these effectively reflect the manuscript as a whole?
Title

• Is the title concise, specific, and informative?
• Avoid
  – Overly general titles, declarative titles, questions, use of subtitles when the main title cannot stand alone
• Style recommendations
  – AMA: 150 characters including spaces and punctuations
  – APA: 12 words
"Correlating histologic and innate immune gene expression findings based on quantitative RT-PCR in sheep with paratuberculosis caused by *Mycobacterium avium* ssp. paratuberculosis"

Better:

"Relationship between histologic lesions and innate immune gene expression in ovine paratuberculosis"

- 12 words, 99 total characters
Key words

• Have the most salient key words been used?
  – Best if words are specific rather than general
  – Should represent the key topics presented
  – Include alternative disease names
  – See if some or all key words are also present in the title and abstract
Abstract

• Should summarize the main points of an article
  – objective or subject background
  – study design and methods
  – primary results
  – principal conclusions
Introduction

• Provides the reader with the necessary background
  – An exhaustive review of the literature is not necessary or appropriate
  – Is it coherent and readable?
• Should present a rationale or argument for the communication
• Are objectives, hypotheses, questions stated clearly and specifically?
Materials and methods—overview

• Review thoroughly to ensure validity and reproducibility of the methodology.

• No results should be presented in this section.

• Confirm that animal care is adequately described, and ethical requirements are followed. Who approved?

• Are the number of animals and other information consistent across methods, results, tables, figures?
Materials and methods—details

• Assess the study design, methodology, validation & controls, interpretation
  – Sample size: number per group; number of cases
  – How were cases obtained?
  – Inclusion/exclusion
  – Allocation to study groups
  – Blinding
  – Assay validation, negative and positive controls
    • AAVLD, ASVCP test validation guidelines followed?
• Verify that the statistical analysis is appropriate
Results

• Should be presented clearly and concisely
• Should the raw data be made available?
• Should any data be moved to Supplementary Mats?
• Limit the results to the observed data. Avoid:
  – reiteration of the methodology
  – reiteration of Table content
  – inferences, interpretations, or conclusions
• If relevant, indicate justifiable and specific additional studies that should be done to fill gaps
Tables and Figures

• Should improve the readability of the manuscript by presenting details of the findings without repeating the text
• Should be clear and concise
• Review all Figures for scientific content
  — Images Editor and Managing Editor will review for size, resolution, and figure quality and will do additional work on figures if needed
Tables and Figures (cont.)

• Confirm that the legends adequately describe the figures
  – These should “stand alone,” allowing the reader to understand the figure without reading the text
  – Items described in the legend should be clearly visible in the figure

• Determine if any of the tables or figures can be supplementary data - this can save valuable pages
Elements of the Discussion

• Explain and interpret the study findings
• Justify controversial aspects of the methodology
• Acknowledge and discuss the limitations
• Discuss plausible alternative explanations
• Do the study findings fulfill the objectives stated in the introduction?
• Describe the implications and applications of the findings
Critique of the Discussion

• Are the interpretations of the findings adequately justified by the data, or is there excessive speculation based on inadequate data?

• Are the conclusions stated clearly, and in a way that will be useful for readers?

• Is the discussion well-organized, does the writing flow well, and are the ideas clear and compelling?
References

• Do the references adequately provide the evidence on which key statements are based?
• An exhaustive list of references is not required
• Citation of main (original) sources, not “bounce” references
Opening paragraph of the review

• Describe your overall opinion of the paper
  – What contribution will this paper make to the field?
  – Does it provide new information?
  – Does it contradict existing knowledge?
• Highlight strengths and weaknesses of the work
• If there are any concerns that may make the paper unpublishable, these should be stated at the end of this paragraph
  – Use the confidential comments to the Editor to indicate whether you think it should be published
How to be a great reviewer

• Maintain a professional and respectful tone throughout the review.
• Be **objective, constructive, and specific**.
• Provide feedback that improves the **scientific merit** of the manuscript, and the **communication** of that science
• An opinion on the strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript is useful
  – Do not indicate your opinion on the publishability of the manuscript in your comments to the author
Final points

• Manuscripts with uncorrectable fatal flaws will warrant a shorter review
  – Flawed design, inappropriate methods, etc.

• For comments on minor spelling, grammar, or publication style errors, please state that “The manuscript contains numerous spelling and grammatical errors” or “References do not follow journal style guidelines”, etc.
Next steps in the review process

- Section Editor gathers (and rates) reviews

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**Recommendation**
- Accept
- Minor Revision
- Major Revision
- Major Revision AND conversion to brief comm.
- Reject

**Would you be willing to review a revision of this manuscript?**
- Yes
- No

**Comments**
- Confidential Comments to the Editor
- Authors have responded to reviewer suggestions.
- Comments to the Author
- Authors have responded to reviewer suggestions.

**Timeliness**
- 3 - Review was on time
- 2 - Review was slightly delayed
- 1 - Review was severely delayed

**Quality Assessment**
- 3 - Review was highly relevant
- 2 - Review was sufficient
- 1 - Review was below average

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JVDI, Oct 24, 2019
Next steps in the review process

• SE corresponds with authors – editor’s comments on the ms, plus the reviewers’ comments (edited) to the authors and blind-copied to the reviewers

• Reviewers may accept or decline to review subsequent revisions

• Penultimate version sent to the EIC for final approval

• EIC to ME for desk editing, to EIC and authors for final queries

• To SAGE for publication!
Sources of information

– How to Edit a Scientific journal – Claude T. Bishop, ISI Press, 1984
– SAGE how to review articles
  https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/how-to-review-articles
– COPE peer review guidelines (Committee on Publication Ethics)
– Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC:
  http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/page/preferred-usage
– International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE),
  Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing and Publication of
  Scholarly Work in Medical Journals
Questions?