**First, please ensure you understand the journal’s current aims and scope**, available at: <http://newprairiepress.org/jac/about.html>. The editor screens submissions for suitability, but if you have concerns about the submission’s relevance, please email [editor@journalofappliedcommunications.org](mailto:editor@journalofappliedcommunications.org).

**Second, please read the manuscript in its entirety** to understand its context within the discipline, rigor, contributions, and importance.

**Next, evaluate the manuscript using the criteria** in the table provided on the following pages. **Provide specific positive comments and constructive criticism, and refer to line numbers, when appropriate.** When constructing comments, consider the following points adapted from Jones[[1]](#footnote-1):

* Use your comments to the author as an opportunity to seek explanation on any unclear points and for further elaboration.
* Please make suggestions as to how the author can improve clarity, succinctness, and the overall quality of presentation of the manuscript.
* Confirm whether you believe the subject of the paper is sufficiently interesting to justify its length; if you recommend shortening the piece, it is useful to author(s) if you can indicate explicit areas where you believe shortening will benefit the manuscript’s impact (or similar language).
* It is not the job of the reviewer to edit the paper for technical writing and mechanics (such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, and syntax), but it is helpful if you correct language where the technical meaning is or may be unclear. If you do notice a few errors, making note of them is greatly appreciated by authors and the editorial board. As an open-access journal, we do not have editing services available.
* Reviewers may disagree with author(s’) opinions, but should allow them to stand, provided the author’s opinions are consistent with the evidence provided.
* Remember, authors will welcome positive feedback as well as constructive criticism from you as a reviewer.

Being critical whilst remaining sensitive to the author isn’t always easy and comments should be carefully constructed so that the author fully understands what actions they need to take to improve their paper. For example, generalized or vague statements should be avoided along with any negative comments which aren’t relevant or constructive.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Comments to Author(s) (use the manuscript’s line numbers, when appropriate)** |
| Clear documentation of the work being reviewed (title, author, date, etc.) |  |
| Clear and succinct summary of the reviewed work (e.g., thesis of the work, main points, and intended audience) |  |
| Critique of the reviewed work (e.g., weighs strengths and weaknesses of the work, offers a unique perspective of the work, and uses sound logic and/or documented evidence in the critique) |  |
| Applicability of the reviewed work to agricultural communications and the JAC audience |  |
| Writing quality (clear and succinct, appropriate use of grammar, and adheres to APA style) |  |
| References (if needed; adheres to APA style and quality of the references cited) |  |
| Adherence to submission guidelines (double-spaced, Times New Roman or similar font, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, 500-1000 words for review and 30-50 words for abstract) |  |
| Overall quality of the submitted review |  |
| **Enter your decision onto the journal’s website when you login to submit your review. The context of each decision type is detailed here.** | **Accept** – if the paper is suitable for publication in its current form.  **Accept with Minor Revisions** – if the paper will be appropriate for publication after minimal revisions.  **Major Revisions Required** – if the paper would benefit from substantial changes such as expanded data analysis, significant widening of or substitutions to the literature review, or rewriting sections of the text.  **Reject** – if the paper is not suitable for publication with this journal or if the revisions that would need to be undertaken are too fundamental for the submission to continue being considered in its current form |
| Upload this completed template/file when you log onto the review system. There, you will also have the opportunity to write and submit confidential comments that only go to the editor. | |

1. Jones, L. (2017, June 22). Reviewer guidelines and best practice. Retrieved from: http://editorresources.taylorandfrancisgroup.com/reviewers-guidelines-and-best-practice/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)