



Who Watches the Watchmen?

Evaluating Editors-in-Chief with Metrics & Goals

Jonathan Schultz

Managing Editor, *Circulation Research*
American Heart Association

Council of Science Editors - May 17, 2015



American Heart Association Journals

- **12 AHA Journals**

- 5 Core journals
 - ◆ *Circulation, Circulation Research, Stroke, Hypertension, & ATVB*
- 6 *Circulation* Sub-specialty journals
- 1 Open Access journal: *JAHA*
- 12 Editors-in-Chief
 - ◆ ~20,000 Submissions in 2014
 - ◆ ~2,300 Original Research Articles published in 2014
 - ◆ Standard term 5-10 years
- Prior to 2011, standard metrics tracked
 - ◆ Time to First Decision, Submissions, Acceptance Rate, etc
 - ◆ But no real accountability or ownership of metrics



First Attempt at Editor Goals

Criteria	Measurement (for baseline, use prior year's numbers)	Meets expectations (should not be worse than prior year's numbers)	Exceeds expectations (stretch goal)
Review times (original research)			
Submission to first decision	Establish baseline		
Submission to acceptance	Establish baseline		
Acceptance to print publication	Establish baseline		
Acceptance to online publication	Establish baseline		
Acceptance rate (%) (original research)	Establish baseline		
Total submissions	Establish baseline		
Page budget	Pages used	N/A	Within Budget
Editorial office efficiency	Budget status at end of year	Within budget	Under budget by 5%
Impact Factor	Impact Factor (category ranking)		
Ethnic/racial diversity of editorial board	Establish baseline		
Gender diversity of editorial board	Establish baseline		
Geographical diversity of editorial board and associate editors	Establish baseline by region (eg, China, Japan, other Asian countries, North America, South America, Africa, Australia, Europe, Middle East)		
Referrals to JAHA	Establish baseline		
Goals set by each editor (reported and updated every SPC)			

Reject & Revise

Most everyone was unhappy with the process and many of the metrics being evaluated.

Working with Kaufman Wills Fusting & Company (KWF), Editors and the AHA Scientific Publishing Committee (SPC) were interviewed about the Editor Goals process.

Interview Insights

Editor Views of Previous Metrics

- Many metrics **indirectly measure editor performance** although may be relevant when measuring journal quality.
- Not all metrics are not under **editor's control**.

Areas within Editor Control

- Full control over **selection of articles** from among submitted papers.
- Great deal of control over **peer review process**, including time to first decision.
- Some control over other **timeliness** metrics.

Interview Insights

Successful Journals

- Supports **AHA mission** and strategic plan.
- Publishes most **important articles** in field.
- Authors submit **best work**.
- Reaches large number of **readers**.
- **Impacts practice**.

Successful Editors

- **Visionary** with broad expertise.
- **Wide network** of expert colleagues.
- **Curator** who assembles best work in optimal mix for journal's audience.
- **Experienced** author who ensures that peer review process is timely, objective, fair, and efficient.

What Do We All Want From Goal Process

- Collaborative, flexible, and encouraging process
- Core metrics central to editor fulfilling AHA mission
- Attainable goals, expressed as range
- ~~Stretch goals~~
- Each editor should provide:
 - Vision for journal
 - Goals to carry vision forward

New Editor Goals Template, part 1

Editor performance criteria	Purpose	Prior year actual [CY----]	This year's goal [CY----]	This year's actual [CY----]	Met this year's goal? [CY----]	Next year's goal [CY----]	Comments
Peer Review							
Change in manuscript submissions	Trends may indicate journal in trouble or one that may need additional resources; editor and SPC may agree to modify or add another metric to create goal to increase submissions from particular geographic region or on particular topics	X manuscripts, up/down X% from prior year	X to X manuscripts, X% to X% up/ down from prior year	X manuscripts (X% up /down from prior year)	Yes or no	X to X manuscripts (X% to X% up / down from this year)	
Time from submission to first decision	Measure of review timeliness	X days	X days to X days	X days	Yes or no	X days to X days	
Time from acceptance to FTP	Indicator of issues with backlog or other glitch in process	X days	X days to X days	X days	Yes or no	X days to X days	
Acceptance rate (original research, or as otherwise defined by SPC)	Indicator of selectivity, quality	X%	X% to X%	X%	Yes or no	X% to X%	
Editorial Organization							
Associate editor diversity	AHA commitment to encourage diversity	X% women	X%-X% women	X% women	Yes or no	X%-X% women	Adjustments to goals will be determined as needed in discussion with the SPC
		X% outside US	X%-X% outside US	X% outside US	Yes or no	X%-X% outside US	
		X% other (eg clinical v basic science, or specific region, or ethnicity)	X%-X% other	X% other	Yes or no	X%-X% other	
Editorial board diversity	AHA commitment to encourage diversity	X% women	X%-X% women	X% women	Yes or no	X%-X% women	Please indicate response rate here:[__]. Adjustments to goals will be determined as needed in discussion with the SPC
		X% outside US	X%-X% outside US	X% outside US	Yes or no	X%-X% outside US	
		X% other (eg clinical v basic science, or specific region, or ethnicity)	X%-X% other	X% other	Yes or no	X%-X% other	

New Editor Goals Template, part 2

Editor performance criteria	Purpose	Prior year actual [CY----]	This year's goal [CY----]	This year's actual [CY----]	Met this year's goal? [CY----]	Next year's goal [CY----]	Comments
Publication							
Text pages published as compared with page budget	Indicator of availability of sufficient quality content; efficient publication or backlog; budget compliance	X published pages of X budgeted pages	X to X published pages of X budgeted pages	X published pages of X budgeted pages	Yes or no	X to X published pages of X budgeted pages	
Review articles (or other article type/s) published	Incentive to meet goal determined to be important to editor and SPC	X articles	X to X articles	X articles	Yes or no	X to X articles	If needed, please provide name of article type(s) being tracked.
Journal Influence							
Impact Factor		X.XXX	X.XXX to X.XXX	X.XXX	Yes or no	X.XXX to X.XXX	
Category rank (top X% of category)	Flawed but internationally recognized measure of quality	X of X in X category (X%)	X to X of approx X in category (X%)	X of X in X category (X%)	Yes or no	X to X of approx X in category (X%)	
Journal Highwire Usage [Optional]	To gain familiarity with statistic and determine value over time	X page views	X to X page views	X page views	Yes or no	X to X page views	
Altmetric score for journal [Optional]	To gain familiarity with statistic and determine value over time	X	X to X	X	Yes or no	X to X	
Social media [Optional]	Optional metric to provide incentive to create sense of community among authors	Eg, # tweets; # followers	Eg, X tweets	X to X tweets	Yes or no	X to X tweets	Please edit as appropriate for journal's social media activities
Operations							
Editorial expenses	To ensure budget compliance	Expenses X% of budget	Expenses X% to X% of budget	Expenses X% of budget	Yes or no	Expenses X% to X% of budget	
Participation in cascading peer review process	Measure of inter-journal cooperation to improve ease and speed of publication for authors; retain quality papers in AHA family of journals; reduce reviewer fatigue	Eg, X articles cascaded to X AHA journal; X articles to X AHA journal, etc.	Eg, X to X articles cascaded to X AHA journal; X to X articles to X AHA journal, etc.	Eg, X articles cascaded to X AHA journal; X articles to X AHA journal, etc.	Yes or no	Eg, X to X articles cascaded to X AHA journal; X to X articles to X AHA journal, etc.	
Other							
<i>Other criteria as proposed by editor or SPC</i>							

Key Differences

- Goals provided as a **range**
 - No more stretch goals
- **More Context**
 - Purpose for each goal provided
 - 3 years worth of data and goals provided in 1 view
 - ◆ Prior Year's Actual; Current Year's Goals/Metrics; Next Year's Goals
 - Single master spreadsheet for easy multi-year review
 - Accompanied by Editor Letter & meeting with SPC
- **Focus on actionable and/or strategic/mission goals**

Peer Review

Change in manuscript submissions

Trends may indicate journal in trouble or one that may need additional resources; editor and SPC may agree to modify or add another metric to create goal to increase submissions from particular geographic region or on particular topics

X manuscripts, up/down X% from prior year

X to X manuscripts, X% to X% up/down from prior year

X manuscripts (X% up/down from prior year)

Yes or no

X to X manuscripts (X% to X% up/down from this year)

Time from submission to first decision

Measure of review timeliness

X days

X days to X days

X days

Yes or no

X days to X days

Time from acceptance to FTP

Indicator of issues with backlog or other glitch in process

X days

X days to X days

X days

Yes or no

X days to X days

Acceptance rate (original research, or as otherwise defined by SPC)

Indicator of selectivity, quality

X%

X% to X%

X%

Yes or no

X% to X%

Editorial Organization

		X% women	X%-X% women	X% women	Yes or no	X%-X% women	
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Publications & Operations

Text pages published as compared with page budget	Indicator of availability of sufficient quality content; efficient publication or backlog; budget compliance	X published pages of X budgeted pages	X to X published pages of X budgeted pages	X published pages of X budgeted pages	Yes or no	X to X published pages of X budgeted pages	
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Journal Influence

Impact Factor		X.XXX	X.XXX to X.XXX	X.XXX	Yes or no	X.XXX to X.XXX
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Social media [Optional]	Optional metric to provide incentive to create sense of community among authors	Eg, # tweets; # followers	Eg, X tweets	X to X tweets	Yes or no	X to X tweets

Please edit as appropriate for journal's social media activities

What has been the response?

- Implemented earlier this year to report CY2014 metrics and establish CY2015 goals
- Cautiously optimistic
 - Some Editors annoyed by change, but appreciate being (mostly) listened to
 - SPC appreciates ability to better organize and track metrics & goals
 - Hope to encourage adoption of more personalized goals
- True test will come when Editors meet one-on-one with SPC later this year

Thanks!

- Thanks to Cara Kaufman & Lisa Marshall of Kaufman Wills Fusting & Co and the AHA Scientific Publishing Committee.

QUESTIONS?

Jonathan Schultz
jonathan.schultz@heart.org

<http://ahajournals.org>



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