



Instructions for NACTA Authors

NACTA
Journal

Advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning

The *NACTA Journal* is a professional refereed journal published quarterly by the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA). It is directed toward the **scholarship of teaching and learning** and the professional advancement of the teacher of agriculture and related disciplines. The Journal presents papers on all aspects of teaching, including methods, problems, philosophy and rewards. The Journal offers something for every teacher in agriculture or a related discipline. Whether traditional classroom or extension-related, its primary purpose is to strengthen professional competence in college and adult teaching.

Manuscripts are submitted to the NACTA Journal electronically at the following website:
<http://nacta.expressacademic.org/>

Or the submission site can be accessed through the NACTA website: <http://www.nactateachers.org>.

Content

The *NACTA Journal* invites contributions from faculty in agriculture and related disciplines. Contributions should deal principally with: the teachers' role as an educator and communicator; skills, techniques, philosophy and methods useful in such roles and aspects of teacher-learning environment management, leadership, supervision, and administration essential to the effective performance of such roles. Manuscripts are based essentially on research in teaching, on creative thought, such as theoretical models, and on case studies in which an experience is examined through a theoretical framework and the implications for application are fully explored. Manuscripts dealing primarily with technical subject matter in agronomy, animal science, economics, etc. are better published elsewhere.

Present material in easy-to-read language. Avoid jargon and define technical terms when necessary for clarity. Remember your audience spans several disciplines.

Preparation of the Manuscript– General Comments

Paper. Use Microsoft Word set for standard-sized paper (8.5 x 11 inch [216 x 280 mm]) with one inch top, bottom and side margins. Type and submit the first draft in double space using the Times New Roman 12 point font. **Note:** Add line numbers to the initial submission.

Style. Write tight! Expand on important points but do so with economy. Be direct in your statements. If you must hedge in your statements then perhaps they are not worth making. Most manuscripts can be condensed by up to one third without loss of quality.

Opening line. Use important statements in the first line of a paragraph, with the remainder of the paragraph explanatory to the opening statement.

Voice. Use the *active voice* in most sentence constructions. It lends conciseness and certitude to your sentences. The passive voice is less concise and sometimes infuses the text with uncertainty. “The student read the book” (5 words) is more concise than “The book was read by the student.” (7 words)

Tabs. Use no tabs in the manuscript. Begin all paragraphs at the left margin and leave a “ragged right” margin. Set off paragraphs with a double space. Set up tables using Microsoft’s table feature. Point size in unusually large tables may be reduced to no less than 8 pt.

Spacing. Use a single space between the end of one sentence and the beginning of another. In Literature Cited, use single space between author and date, lines of the reference title and end of the title and the journal name.

Page numbers. Include page numbers on all submitted manuscripts.

Quotations. Limit quotations. Use of lengthy quotations is seldom necessary and adds excess verbiage to the manuscript. Further, copyright law does not allow use of extensive quotations without written permission from the copyright holder.

Use ellipsis to indicate you omitted words from a quotation. If the quote contains a misspelled word, acknowledge this with [sic] following the word. You have no legal right to alter misspellings in a quote. You are responsible for making sure your quote is accurate. Use italics on quotes more than two lines long.

Your readers are professionals. Paraphrase important passages and cite their source without quoting them verbatim.

Do not use lengthy testimonials to illustrate points. Suffice it to paraphrase student reaction to a study, etc. Testimonials are not refereed and their authenticity cannot be confirmed.

Pronouns. Use first or third person pronouns for clarity.

Subheads. Use subheadings to emphasize important areas of the manuscript. Center subheadings of the major sections of the manuscript; begin lesser subheadings flush left. Prepare subheads in 12 point bold font.

Numbers. Spell out numbers one to ten unless they are a measurement, page number, scale label in a study or a grade level; for example 2 inches, 6 miles, page 3, scale of 1 to 5, student 1, teacher 4, grade 10, etc. Arabic numerals are always used for figures, tables and lists.

Metric. The Journal has international circulation. Provide the metric equivalent for measurements such as miles, inches, feet, acres, etc.

And. Always spell out and never use &.

Percentages. Use the % symbol unless the percentage begins a sentence.

Significant figures. Use two significant figures; the use of three or more is rarely necessary and makes the data difficult to interpret. Be sure your data is not more accurate than your measurements. Show significance data. You cannot state a significant difference between two numbers without statistical analysis.

Citations in the text. Use the name and date system (Harvard system) rather than the number system. Cite references as follows:
One author: (Gough, 1989) or Gough (1992) depending upon context

Two authors: (Gough and Smith, 1995)

More than 2 authors: (Gough et al., 1996)

Two citations by the same author(s) in the same year: (Gough and Smith, 1995a) or (Gough and Smith, 1995b)

Alphabetize multiple citations by senior author and separate by semicolons: (Gough and Smith, 1995b; Malcom, 1936; Smith et al., 1987)

When there are multiple citations by the same author(s), arrange them in chronological order: (Gough, 1976, 1977b, 1991).

When there are multiple citations with the same senior author but with different co-authors, arrange them chronologically, beginning with the earliest: (Gough and Abbott, 1977; Gough and Smith, 1981; Gough et al., 1990)

When citing a quote, give the page numbers: (Abbott and Gough, 1992, p. 46-47). Do not cite the page if you are not quoting.

Figures. Figures should be clear and neat. Photos or figures should be submitted in the .tif or .jpeg format. (For more details on .tif or .jpeg images contact the Editor.) Computer-generated figures should have black symbols on white background. Do not submit shaded figure backgrounds or bar-graphs where differences are shown by various shades and hues of gray. Use cross-hatching or another method to differentiate among bars.

Reference figures in the text but attach all figures to separate pages at the end of the manuscript, one figure per page. Type captions below the figure.

Tables. Make tables neat and clear. Place tables on separate pages at the end of the manuscript. Type captions above the table. Captions should be inclusive enough to allow the table to stand by itself. All captions and the tables themselves should be in 12 point Times New Roman font.

Use a minimum number of tables to support textual discussion. Tables should be numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Table titles should be in this format:

Table 1. Title of Table

Footnotes in tables should appear as superscript lower case letters beginning at the end of the alphabet, such as ^{z,y,x} etc. Use of "a", "b", "c", etc.

can be confused with indicators of statistical significance.

To indicate statistical significance, use a single asterisk (*) for $P=0.05$, a double asterisk (**) for $P=0.01$, and a triple asterisk (***) for $P=0.001$. Use small letters (a,b,c, etc.) to indicate mean separation and indicate in a footnote the level of significance ($P=0.05$, $P=0.01$, or $P=0.001$ level). “NS” indicates non-significance. You must state the test applied to generate significance. Explain your symbols in a footnote. For example:

¹ Mean separation in rows by Gough's Multiple Range test, $P= 0.05$

² NS, *, **, *** Nonsignificant or significant at $P= 0.05$, 0.01 , or 0.001 , respectively using Gough's Multiple Range test.

Documentation of Institutional Review Board

Documentation of Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or exemption is mandatory:

- State explicitly that human subjects' review was approved and how informed consent or assent was obtained.
- If the protocol was exempt from IRB approval, then indicate this.

These are examples of IRB approval statements:

The <insert institution name> Institutional Review Board approved the study protocol and all participants provided written informed consent prior to participation in the study.

This study was deemed exempt by <insert institution name> Institutional Review Board.

This study was deemed exempt under federal regulation 45 CFR §46.101(b).

The IRB approval or exemption can be provided as a footnote to the title of the manuscript.

Major Divisions of the Manuscript

The major divisions of a research report include:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Materials and Methods
- Results and Discussion
- Summary
- Literature Cited

Authors of predominantly philosophical works may omit one or more of these divisions or may substitute more appropriate categories. Prepare division headings in bold font and type them flush left.

Title: Make this a brief and precise description of the manuscript's contents. Usually, 10 to 12 words are sufficient.

Title Page: Place the names of the author(s) from the same institution on the same line, the institution on the second and the city and state on the third line. If the manuscript has more than one author from different institutions, place the institution information beneath the author name. For example:

R. Parker and R. Rudd
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA

J. Moore
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, NC

Provide complete contact information (department, phone and email) and, if desired, professional ranks or other titles as a footnote to the author/s name/s.

For U.S. addresses, use two letter abbreviations for states, followed by the Zip Code. For Canadian addresses, use city, province (abbreviated), postal code and country name. For other foreign addresses, give name of the city and country in English.

Footnotes: On the cover page: acknowledgments, contribution number and complete contact information (as indicated above) are provided as footnotes. Use Arabic numerals (^{1,2,3}) for cover page footnotes.

Do not use footnotes in the text, but insert the information in parenthetical clauses.

Use of footnotes in tables as discussed under the section headed “**Tables.**”

Text: Prepare all text in 12 point normal Times New Roman font.

Abstract: Limit this to 200 words. Include only significant findings. Do not include review of literature, materials and methods, reference to tables or figures, or other information not pertinent to results. Tell what you found, not how you found it. This is meant to be an informative digest of the significant conclusions of the paper and should be

able to stand alone. It should be intelligible in and of itself.

Introduction: Include the review of literature here, citing only those references that are germane to the manuscript. Be concise.

Materials and Methods: You may head this section as such or simply as “**Methods,**” whichever is more appropriate to the manuscript. Tell how you did the work. You may cite references that explain procedures you used, such as “...using the XYZ test of Koch (1972).”

Results and Discussion: Tell what you found and discuss its importance to the field. Literature citations are appropriate in this section, as well as in the Introduction, with the difference being that here you use them to support your data. Do not use this section as an extension of the Introduction.

Summary: This is a brief restatement at the end of the text highlighting the findings and conclusions with the intent of driving home the point of the paper.

Literature Cited: Include here all the citations referenced in the text. This section differs from a Reference section by including only those titles cited in the text. A Reference section may include other pertinent titles not cited. The Journal style allows only for a Literature Cited section. You should single space the information for each citation and then double space between citations.

Indicate personal communications with citation in the text as (Smith, A.P., personal communication). Alphabetize citations in the Literature Cited. If multiple citations have the same author(s), list them chronologically. If multiple citations have the same senior author, list them as follows:

Journal Citations:

Gough, R.E. 1983. The use of turnips in the classroom. *Jour. of Applied Vegetable Culture* 46(2): 56-62.

Gough, R.E. and V.G. Shutak. 1976. Blueberries are for the birds. *Jour. of Ridiculous Results* 21(3): 1-12.
Gough, R.E., R. Ditterline and D.Cash. 1993. Judging alfalfa. *Jour. of Fair Judging* 23(6):5.

Note: When a reference has only two authors the names are separated by “and” with no preceding comma. When more than two authors appear, use a comma to separate the next-to-the-last name from the

“and” preceding the last name, as in the third example above.

Do not enclose journal titles in quotation marks. Do not italicize journal titles.

Book citations:

Smith, R.B. 1987. *The role of turnips in health care.* 4th ed. Plentywood, MT: ABC Press.

Jones, A.B.(ed.). 1985. *Using the wood lathe in shop.* Roundup, MT: Two-Dot Press.

Note: Do not underline or italicize book titles.

Book chapters:

Best, J.P. 1976. Growing kumquats in Montana. In: Blank, D.P. and H. Bowman (eds.). *The Use of Citrus in Rocky Mountain Agriculture.* Billings, MT: The Cut Bank Press.

Thesis or Dissertation:

Schaff, P.A. 1993. Use of sulfur in ruminant digestion systems. PhD Diss., Dept. of Animal Science, Univ. of East Anaconda, 1100 Long Road, Anaconda, MT.

Proceedings: (Citation of the complete proceedings)

National Society for the Culture of Parsnips. 1985. Proc. 21st Annu. Mtg., Sheridan, WY, 15 – 20 June .

(Citation for a single paper in the proceedings)

Brown, J.P. and I.M. Green.1986. Okra for the ages. In: Proc. 31st Annu. Mtg. Of Okra Enthusiasts, Greenbow, ID, 1-7 Dec.

Bulletin:

Gough, R.E., V.G. Shutak and R. Bates. 1983. Marketing highbush blueberries to undergraduate students. R.I. Agr. Expt. Sta. Bul. 123.

Abstract:

Baker, T.J. and O.Baker. 1995 . Use of overhead visuals in the classroom. *NACTA Jour.* 21 (4):28. (Abstr.)

Web:

Parker, R.O. 2003. Using the internet for publication. (provide complete URL). Thomson Publishing. (date accessed).

Appendices

No appendices accepted in Journal manuscripts.

Composition

Accepted Abbreviations:

Abstract= Abstr.
Agricultural = Agr.
Annual = Annu.
Bulletin = Bul.
Department= Dept.
Dissertation = Diss.
Experiment Station = Expt. Sta.
Journal= Jour.
Meeting = Mtg.
Ph.D. = PhD
Proceedings = Proc.
Review = Rev.
University= Univ.

Do not abbreviate any other words in the citation.

The Latin abbreviations:

i.e.
etc.
vis.
et al.

—must have a period placed in the proper location.

Do not use *ibid.*, *item*, *op.cit.*, or other generally obsolete abbreviations. The construction “and etc.” is redundant and incorrect.

Endnotes: Do not use endnotes.

Font: Use 12 point “Times New Roman” font for the text. Do not change font size and type within a text.

Indent: Do not indent. Do not use tabs in the manuscript, but prepare everything flush left with “ragged right” margin. Do not use the space bar as you would on a typewriter. Using the space bar can cause misalignment of columns.

Margins: Use full-page text with one inch top, bottom, left and right margins. Do not arrange the text into columns and do not justify the right margin.

Spacing: Double space the text but not the tables in the initial submission. If the work is accepted for publication you must submit the final revision single-spaced. Separate paragraphs and divisions with a double space.

Line Numbers: Using the features in word processing software, add line number to the initial submission.

Electronic File Format: Electronic files must be submitted in MS Word or compatible format. Do not submit manuscripts as PDFs.

Submission

The *NACTA Journal* does not accept manuscripts previously published nor does it accept simultaneous submissions. Receipt of a manuscript for review will be assumed to carry with it an intent to publish. If you doubt suitability of a manuscript for the *NACTA Journal*, contact the editor prior to submission.

To submit a manuscript to the *NACTA Journal*, go to this website:

<http://nacta.expressacademic.org/>

To contact the Editor:

Phone: 208-670-3704

Fax: 208-436-1384

Email: nactaeditor@pmt.org

Once a manuscript is submitted electronically the Editor creates an anonymous electronic copy for review. The senior author will be assumed to be the corresponding author unless otherwise indicated.

Upon submission of a manuscript, the FastTrack electronic submission program assigns a **submission ID number**. Refer to this ID number in future correspondence regarding disposition of the work. The ID numbers are in the form: 2012-0502, where the first four numbers represent the year and the last four numbers represent the order of the manuscript in submission sequence.

Review

All manuscripts undergo vigorous, double-blind peer-review prior to publication. The reviewers do not know the identities of the authors, nor do the authors know the identities of the reviewers. The manuscript is submitted to at least three reviewers who serve on the NACTA Editorial Board.

Reviewers are faculty members in colleges and universities throughout North America. Names and affiliations of current reviewers are listed inside the front cover of the *Journal*. All manuscripts are also reviewed by the *NACTA Journal* Editor, who holds final authority on acceptance of material for the *Journal*. Reviews are usually completed about eight weeks after initial receipt of the manuscript from the author.

The results of the review process will be emailed to the corresponding author shortly after the review

process has been completed. The disposition of the manuscript will fall into one of four categories:

(1) Accept. These manuscripts generally will be acceptable for publication with slight alterations, such as expanding on some points of discussion, limited textual condensation and editorial corrections. Final, revised copies of these manuscripts are submitted as attachments to the original submission on the NACTA FastTrack site.

(2) Accept after Revisions and Addressing Reviewer Comments. These manuscripts will be acceptable for publication with some revisions suggested by the reviewers and/or Editor. When the revision is submitted in final form, authors will often be asked to submit a separate document indicating how they addressed each concern of each reviewer.

(3) Reject in Present Form but Invite Resubmission. These manuscripts are similar to those in category (1) but hold promise for reconstruction into acceptable works. The authors will be strongly encouraged to consider the comments of the Editor and reviewers and to resubmit a thoroughly revised manuscript for re-review, and resubmission to the electronic review process.

- **Resubmissions:** Manuscripts that are “Rejected in Present Form but Invited for Resubmission” **must be** resubmitted through the FastTrack submission process.

(4) Reject. Manuscripts will be rejected for publication because they deal with subjects inappropriate for *NACTA Journal* readers, because the data presented does not support the conclusions, or because the information is otherwise poorly presented.

Approximately 33% of the manuscripts have fallen into categories 3 and 4 from 2002 - 2012.

Return of Reviewed and Corrected Manuscripts

Prepare all **final manuscripts single spaced** and without line numbers. Send final, revised manuscripts to the editor by attaching to the original manuscript at the submission site: <http://nacta.expressacademic.org/> Also attach any supporting documents.

The *NACTA Journal* does not provide preprints or reprints, but the Editor will provide an Adobe PDF of

the final article as published in the Journal. Authors can use this to make their own reprints of their articles.

Common Problems with Manuscripts

- Verbosity. Say what you need to say and move on.
- Incorrect or inconsistent style.
- Reference to authors not listed in Literature Cited.
- Authors listed in Literature Cited that is not cited in text.
- Overuse of and lengthy quotations. These make reading tedious.
- Data is insufficient to support conclusions. You cannot generalize findings if data were taken on only one class or a few students.
- Numerous grammatical, syntactical, and spelling errors.
- Nouns and predicate do not agree.
- Incomplete sentences.
- Unnecessary tables and figures. Use tables for presenting data, not for outlining statements. Include figures only if they are necessary to illustrate a point.
- Figures lack sufficient contrast to reproduce properly.
- Tables are overly long and complex. Make them simple. Table and Figure headings do not adequately reflect table or figure content. The caption must be complete enough to allow the table or figure to stand on its own.
- Insufficient review by colleagues prior to submission. Have at least two colleagues read your manuscript before you submit it for publication.
- Little or no attempt to follow the “Instructions for NACTA Authors” guidelines (These are easily obtained via email or on the website.)
- Failing to be consistent in format throughout the manuscript.
- Lack of clear objective(s).
- Using redundancies and restatements, and stating the obvious (verbosity).
- Using too many parenthetical statements.
- Failing to use the spell check.
- Extremely long Introduction sections.
- Using the passive voice.
- Tables or figures that do not contribute to the understanding of the manuscript or that repeat the text.
- Wordy sentence structure.
- Lack of visuals or lists to break up long, long sections of text.

- Long sentences with numerous points.
- Complex sentences with awkward punctuation.
- Nothing new (SOS - “same ole stuff”).
- General lack of clarity.
- Boring reading.

Before Submitting a Manuscript Ask Yourself-

- Is it original?
- Is the paper written in an easy-to-read style?
- Is the subject matter relevant to a significant portion of the readers?
- Does the paper contribute to a new or better understanding of teaching?
- For traditional research papers, was a valid scientific procedure followed and adequately described?
- Were the data analyzed by suitable statistical procedures?
- Are the implications of the results discussed?
- Does the abstract cover the main points of the paper?
- Are the figures and tables clear and capable of standing alone?

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What is NACTA?

The North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) is a professional society that focuses on the *scholarship of teaching and learning* agriculture and related disciplines at the postsecondary level. Members of NACTA are from two-year and four-year colleges, public and private.

Formed in 1955, the mission of NACTA is to:

- Provide a forum for discussion of issues related to the improvement of college instruction
- Seek to improve higher education
- Encourage and promote excellence in instruction

