Peer Reviewed Journals

What is a Peer Reviewed Journal?

A peer reviewed (also known as refereed) journal article is a well-accepted indicator of quality scholarship. A panel of scholars or experts in the subject field evaluates an article before it is accepted for publication. This method ensures that information is of the highest quality. The Peer Review method is also a fair way to allocate limited journal space.

- One of the problems with peer review is that the process can take a long time – perhaps up to a year. Another problem is that unpopular or revolutionary points of view can sometimes meet considerable resistance within a peer group. Nonetheless, peer review is the best mechanism we have for scholarly objectivity.

How Do I Find Out if a Journal is Peer Reviewed?

There is no one place that lists all peer reviewed journals.

- One authoritative source is the Serials Directory published by EBSCO. Click on the “Databases A-Z” link on the Library website homepage. After clicking on the link to EBSCO, this source can be found alphabetically in their database menu.

- When you are searching a database in either EBSCO Host or Gale (InfoTrac), there is a tab at the top of the search screen that reads “Publications.” Click on this link and then type the journal name into the search box. Click on the journal name when it displays and near the bottom of the results box a line will read: Peer Reviewed: Yes If the journal is not peer reviewed, you will not see the words “peer review.”

Limiting to “Peer Review” in Databases

Many of the WSU Library’s journals are included in databases which have a filter for “Peer Reviewed” or “Refereed.” For example, Ebsco’s Academic Search Complete or Gale’s Academic One File. On the side of your search screen there will be a box that you can check to limit your search results to return only peer reviewed articles.

- Caution: just because a journal is peer reviewed does not mean that everything in the journal is peer reviewed. Things such as news columns, editorials, guest columnists, book reviews and letters to the editor are not subject to the peer review process.