



## **Trends and Issues in Student-Run Peer-Reviewed Journals of Education**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this mixed methods bibliometric study was to identify the trends and issues in student-run peer-reviewed journals of education and to determine predictive factors of journal longevity. To that end, a search for journals was conducted, yielding 11 journals and 1,105 records. Journals were coded for editorial procedures, goals, and guidelines. Records were coded for publication characteristics, author characteristics, keywords, and abstracts. The analysis consisted of calculating descriptive statistics for journals, authors, and affiliations, implementing text mining on titles, keywords, and abstracts, and fitting a logistic regression model to predict journal longevity. Results revealed that student-run journals are somewhat prone to gaps in publication, but that effective editorial practices such as requiring abstracts and publishing issues consistently predict journal longevity. Three themes emerged across the content of journals: a transformative focus (e.g., content aimed at analyzing and transforming inequitable structures in and beyond education), leaning into the margin (e.g., content that challenges the boundaries of academic knowledge production), and inconsistent guidelines & processes related to the formal aspects of manuscript submissions (e.g., paper abstracts,). Recommendations for student-run peer-reviewed journals of education are to (a) form sustainable editorial structures, (b) publish consistently, (c) solicit authors purposefully, and (d) continue leaning into the margin.

**Keywords:** student-run journals, journals of education, mixed methods, bibliometric analysis

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### **Trends and Issues in Student-Run Peer-Reviewed Journals of Education**

Student-run peer-reviewed journals of education are hubs of scholarly research that are generally housed within a college or university. By the nature of their name, they are distinct from mainstream academic journals of education in that they are managed by students rather than

academics with terminal degrees. They vary in their editorial structure, goals, and publishing practices. There is a dearth of information about student-run peer-reviewed journals of education in the United States. Presently, there is no definitive list of student-run journals and no common location to access them; they are mostly unavailable on *Education Resource Information Center (ERIC)*, which is the foremost database for educational journals, despite overhauls to existing indexing practices in recent years (Corby, 2009). Accessibility issues, and the related lack of impact factor calculation, contribute to why student-run journals typically garner far less attention from educational scholars and practitioners alike than do more mainstream education journals (e.g., *Review of Educational Research*, *Exceptional Children*, *The Elementary School Journal*), in terms of both submissions, readership, and citations. That scholars in other fields, like medicine and law, have underscored the value of student-run journals—from their formative role in the training of future researchers and practitioners (Hopwood, 2010) to their increasing visibility and impact on the production and dissemination of new scholarship (see Alamri, 2016, 2018; Murray et al., 2017)—the lack of attention paid to student-run educational journals strikes us as curious. Rather than accept this inattention as indicative of a lack of value, we start from the opposite assumption: there is indeed a value in student-run peer-reviewed educational journals.

Value is subjective. Does an educational journal's value lie in its impact factor? Its rate of publication? Its number of downloads and citations? Of course, student-run journals are not at all competitive with long-standing mainstream journals if their value is conceived solely in terms of these metrics and standards. Unlike mainstream journals, student-run publications typically do not have access to dozens of editors, are not supported by publishing giants such as *Sage*, *Elsevier*, or *Wiley*, and are unable to produce an equivalent quantity of publications. However, student-run peer-reviewed journals offer other value. Existing on the margins, they are an outlet for creative and unorthodox scholarship on pressing topics and issues, highlighting perspectives and orientations that may not fit within the more restrictive methodological scope and stylistic boundaries of higher-ranking journals. They provide invaluable editorial experience for student researchers and serve as a veritable first step into scholarly service to the field. Most importantly, student-run peer-reviewed journals provide spaces for commentaries on critical issues in education and alternative perspectives that break down barriers between research, teaching, and practice.

## Purpose

Given the complete lack of synthesis work on the content and publication processes of student-run peer-reviewed journals of education, there are many questions that have not been investigated. There is incredibly limited quantitative and qualitative data on the foci and methodologies of articles published in these journals. Additionally, the review processes, publication rates, and contributions to databases have not been analyzed. Therefore, there exists an incomplete understanding of the work of student-run journals and their contribution to the field of education. To address this knowledge gap, we performed a bibliometric analysis. Bibliometric analyses rely on metadata commonly aggregated by journals, such as records' titles, authors, affiliations, dates, keywords, abstracts, and citation metrics. They can be used to identify publication trends in a specific journal, in a particular research area, or more broadly across a field. Systematic reviews and meta-analyses differ from bibliometric analyses in that they rely on data contained within publications, rather than their metadata. Simply put, a bibliometric analysis can be performed without performing full-text reads, while systematic reviews and meta-

analyses cannot. To date, there are no bibliometric analyses of student-run journals. Thus, the purpose of this bibliometric analysis is to synthesize the work of student-run peer-reviewed journals of education in the United States. Using quantitative and qualitative methodology, we investigated the following research questions:

1. What are the trends in student-run peer-reviewed journals of education?
2. Which factors predict maintained patterns of publication in student-run journals?

## Method

### Search Strategy

As previously mentioned, there is no definitive list of student-run peer-reviewed journals in education. Moreover, because these journals are often not included in common databases, it would be difficult to be confident in the ability of a typical systematic review to identify every journal that meets our criterion. Instead, the search for journals consisted of three procedures. First, the authors consulted two non-definitive lists of journals that may be relevant provided by the editor-in-chief of a student-run peer-reviewed education journal (I. L. Vilches, personal communication, January 25, 2023; Available from [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12b9u6c-srymtuRWDbi8n\\_hyDtX0cxpszo6L0fxkb7UU/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12b9u6c-srymtuRWDbi8n_hyDtX0cxpszo6L0fxkb7UU/edit?usp=sharing); <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1K2JMHvE2htWtNekJhBSrijpS3PovtKK3LqvRNlf5aO4/edit#gid=0>). Next, the authors reviewed the list of databases housed by ERIC for any student-run journals. ERIC is a widely-used database of educational research that includes both professional and student-run journals. Additionally, the authors completed a non-exhaustive internet search for student-run peer-reviewed journals in education. This internet search included various combinations of keywords such as ‘student-run,’ ‘student-led,’ ‘journals of education,’ ‘education journals,’ ‘graduate journal,’ and ‘university journal.’ Given that there is no centralized source of student-run journals, this broad search was used to capture lesser-known journals that were not identified by the aforementioned search procedures. Finally, the authors reviewed the websites of Tier I universities with education programs in which relevant journals are most likely to be housed.

In conceptualizing the framework of this analysis, it was necessary to limit the scope of included journals so as not to synthesize journals with fundamentally different goals and editorial procedures. The following inclusion criteria were applied:

- The journal’s website indicates that it is student-run, meaning that the editorial board consists of students, rather than scholars who have graduated with a doctoral degree.
- The journal focuses primarily on education as a whole (e.g., not psychology, social policy, or primarily higher education).
- The journal is based in the U.S.

Notably, we chose to exclude the longest-standing and most broad-reaching student-run journal of education: *The Harvard Educational Review*. Upon analyzing the content and editorial processes of *Harvard Educational Review* relative to the other journals listed below, we determined that it was too dissimilar to the corpus we created in terms of the number of publications per year, editorial scope, longevity as a journal, and prestige. We suggest that it would be more appropriate to perform a separate bibliographic analysis on the published works of the *Harvard Educational Review* than to include it in the present analysis.

## Data Collection

All included journals housed their published issues on a university repository or affiliated website, making the data available digitally. The first author created a spreadsheet of every record published by included journals on or before March 1, 2023 (see Supplementary Materials). Introductions written by editorial board members were excluded because they summarized articles that were already included in the corpus. Video media were excluded because their data could not be effectively represented within the coding sheet. All other records, including manuscripts, commentaries, reviews, and short essays were included.

## Coding

The first author developed a coding sheet including the following variables: journal name, publication title, volume number, issue number, issue type (i.e., open call or special issue), authors, author affiliations, keywords, abstracts, current activity, and availability on *ERIC*. The first author coded 100% of identified records. In cases in which data were not available, 'NA' was indicated. The second author double-coded 10% of identified records, spanning across all included journals. Interrater reliability was 99.8% between the authors, and discrepancies were settled by agreement.

## Analytic Procedure

Constraints to running a full bibliometric analysis were identified due to the limitations of the corpus of data available from the student-run peer-reviewed journals. First, the journals do not index with the same rigor expected of mainstream academic journals. Second, the journals are mostly not housed in large databases, such as *ERIC* or *PsycINFO*. This greatly increases the difficulty of performing network analyses. Therefore, a procedure using the data available was devised to perform a limited bibliometric analysis.

## *Quantitative Analysis*

After coding was completed, the spreadsheet was converted to a CSV file and analyzed using *R* (R Core Team, 2022). The CSV and R files are available in the Supplementary Materials. First, the following publication-related metrics were calculated for each journal: total publications, number of volumes and issues, number of open calls and special issues, number of contributing authors, number of sole-authored publications, number of co-authored publications, number of active years of publication, and productivity per active year of publication. Second, a word analysis was conducted in which keywords and full abstracts, when available, were analyzed to determine which words appeared at the highest frequency for each journal. Third, an authorship analysis was conducted to determine whether there were patterns in repeated publications by authors within and across student-run journals and to assess the spread of affiliations (e.g., universities, school districts) present in each journal. Finally, logistic regression was used to create a predictor model for journal longevity.

## *Qualitative Analysis*

Alongside the quantitative methodology described, a supplemental qualitative content analysis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) was conducted. Examining the student-run journals' webpages, key discursive contents—including author guidelines and expectations, the core principles and aims of the journal, and other contents indicative of the journals' orientation

toward the field of education—were interpretively coded for emergent and intersecting themes. The authors deployed a “winnowing” approach to categorizing and classifying codes, distilling from a greater number of contents the most relevant statements across journals, attending to key signifiers that expressed the “desire” of journals (e.g., “we seek,” “we encourage,” “we strive,”); once identified, coded statements were aggregated into three thematic strands representing common or underlying ideas (Creswell, 2013). Consistent with our mixed-methods approach, the authors interpreted these themes by situating them alongside the key trends and patterns identified and unfolded in the quantitative analysis, allowing for a more contextualized and holistic interpretation of data related to abstract keyword frequency, thematic foci, and other important factors identified as predictive of journal longevity.

### Results

The present bibliometric analysis addressed two research questions using a mixed methods approach: “What are trends in student-run academic journals of education?” and “Which factors predict maintained patterns of publication in student-run journals?”. The quantitative and qualitative analyses for each question are presented in this section.

#### What Are the Trends in Student-Run Academic Journals in Education in the U.S.?

##### *Quantitative Analysis*

**Table 1**

*Peer-Reviewed Student-Run Journals of Education*

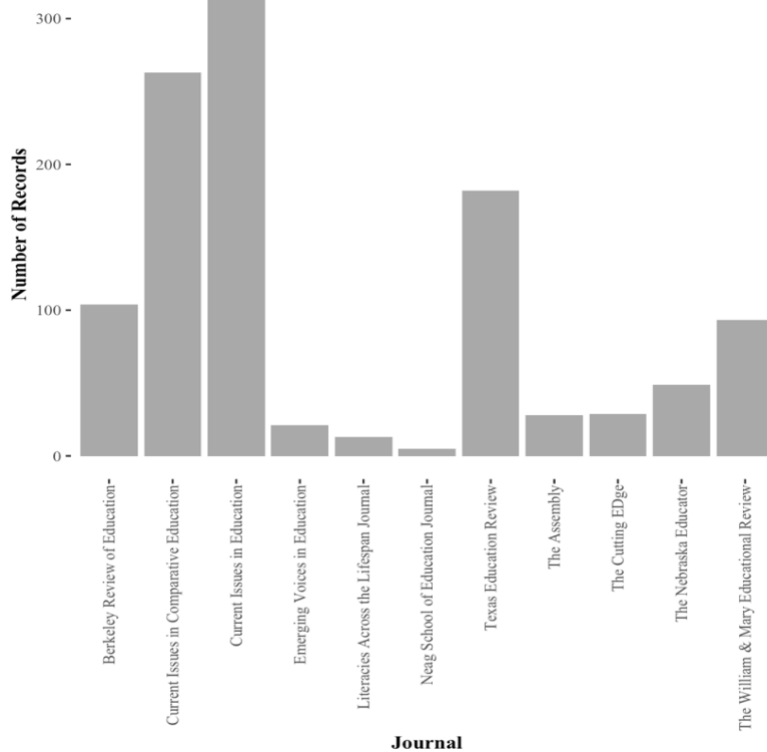
Journal Name	Abbreviation	Affiliated University	Pubs./Year	Status
<i>Berkeley Review of Education</i>	<i>BRE</i>	University of California, Berkeley	8.00	A
<i>Current Issues in Comparative Education</i>	<i>CICE</i>	Columbia University	10.52	A
<i>Current Issues in Education</i>	<i>CIE</i>	Arizona State University	14.45	A
<i>Emerging Voices in Education Journal</i>	<i>EViE</i>	Drexel University	10.50	I
<i>Literacies Across the Lifespan Journal</i>	<i>LAL</i>	University of Illinois Chicago	6.50	A
<i>Neag School of Education Journal</i>	<i>NSEJ</i>	University of Connecticut	5.00	A
<i>Texas Education Review</i>	<i>TxE</i>	University of Texas at Austin	18.20	A
<i>The Assembly</i>	<i>The Assembly</i>	University of Colorado Boulder	9.33	I
<i>The Cutting EDge</i>	<i>The Cutting EDge</i>	Stanford University	7.25	I
<i>The Nebraska Educator</i>	<i>The Nebraska Educator</i>	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	6.12	A
<i>William &amp; Mary Educational Review</i>	<i>W&amp;M</i>	The College of William & Mary	15.50	I

Note. A = Active, I = Inactive, Pubs./Year = Mean publications per year. Status was determined at time of submission.

Eleven student-run educational journals met the inclusion criteria for this study (see Table 1). Notably, this list includes journals that are currently active, were formerly active, and that are in the process of publishing their first issue. Collectively, these journals have published 1,105 records that are included in the present analysis. Figure 1 displays the number of records published by each journal. Journals primarily published two issues per volume, consisting of roughly three to ten articles per issue. However, journals published up to four issues during select years. Figure 2 displays the years in which journals published at least one issue. At the time of submission, the most recent issues were published issues in 2023.

**Figure 1**

*Total Publications by Each Journal*



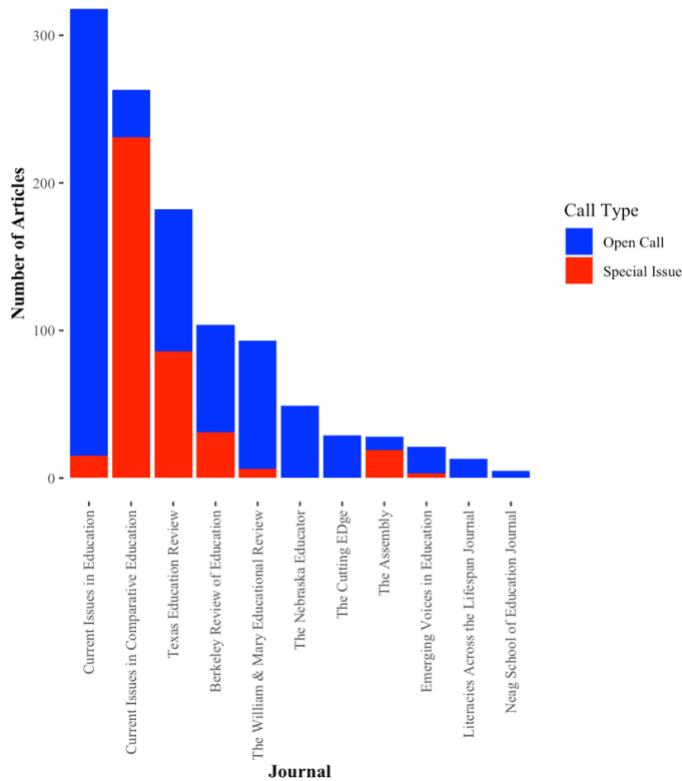
**Figure 2**  
*Timeline of Issue Publication*



*Note.* Gaps indicate years in which the journal did not publish at least one issue.

Additionally, student-run journals varied in their publication of records as part of open calls and special issues. Publications in open calls are not solicited and do not conform to a specific theme. Alternatively, publications in special issues center around a common theme and are submitted in response to a call for papers. Figure 3 highlights differences in journals' publishing habits in terms of call type. Most student-run journals published articles in open calls. However, *TxED* published roughly equally between call types, and *CICE* and *The Assembly* primarily published articles in special issues.

**Figure 3**  
*Number of Publications by Call Type*



Authorship for each record was coded in order of first to seventh author in the order in which authors were listed by the journal or the title page of the record. Authors’ affiliations, including institutions of higher education, agencies, businesses, and governmental organizations were also coded sequentially. The number of publications in student-run journals of education by each author was calculated. Table 2 displays data on the affiliation(s), number of publications, and the most frequent journal in which authors with four or more publications in student-run journals of education published. Notably, some top-publishing authors were affiliated with the universities in which the journals are housed. Taylor, Charran, and Khan completed their doctoral studies at the universities that correspond to the journals where they published several studies. Additionally, Ginsburg and Steiner-Khamsi held faculty positions at Columbia University, where *CICE* is housed.

**Table 2**  
*Authors with Four or More Publications in Student-Run Journals of Education*

Author	Affiliation	# of Pubs.	Most Frequent Journal
John R. Slate	Sam Houston State University	7	<i>CIE</i> (7)
Zachary W. Taylor	University of Texas at Austin	7	<i>TxED</i> (6)
Chelseaia Charran	University of Texas at Austin	5	<i>TxED</i> (5)



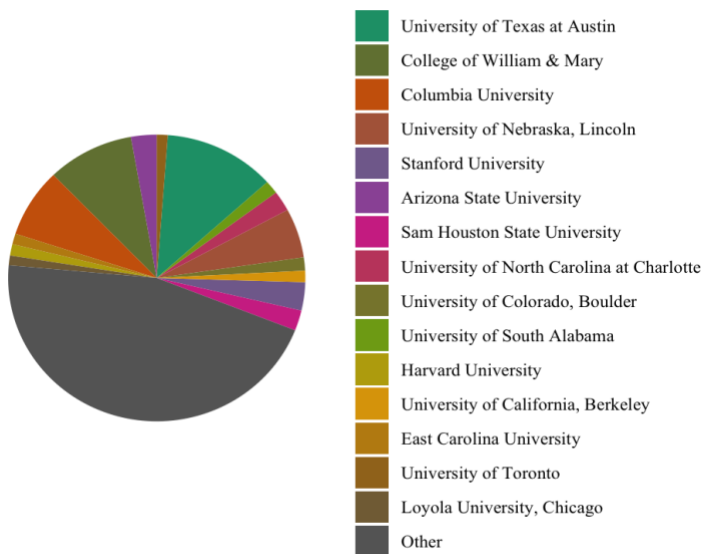
Author	Affiliation	# of Pubs.	Most Frequent Journal
Steven J. Klees	Florida State University, University of Maryland	5	<i>CICE</i> (5)
Minha Khan	Stanford University	5	<i>The Cutting EDge</i> (5)
Mark B. Ginsburg	University of Pittsburgh, University of Maryland	4	<i>CICE</i> (4)
Gita Steiner-Khamsi	Columbia University	4	<i>CICE</i> (4)
Diana J. LaRocco	University of Hartford	4	<i>CIE</i> (4)
Evan Ortlieb	Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, Monash University	4	<i>CIE</i> (4)

Note. Multiple affiliations are listed, when reported. Pubs. = Publications

The 15 most common affiliations of authors (i.e., first to seventh author) across all journals are shown in Figure 4. Many of the most common affiliations are represented by the universities that house the journals themselves. Frequency of submissions by authors from the College of William & Mary, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Stanford University were inflated due to their journals (i.e., *William & Mary Educational Review*, *The Nebraska Educator*, and *The Cutting EDge*) primarily publishing work by authors affiliated with their own university. Moreover, records published by multiple authors may have skewed this distribution if several authors were affiliated with the same university.

**Figure 4**

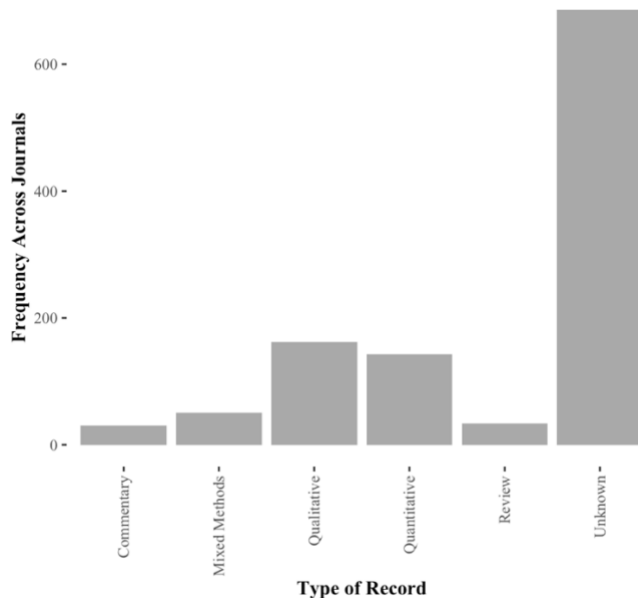
*Top-Publishing Affiliations for Student-Run Journals of Education*



Lists of words that commonly relate to a specific type of publication (e.g., commentary, mixed methods manuscript, qualitative manuscript, quantitative manuscript, review of research)

were formed (see Supplementary Materials). Text mining was used to analyze the titles, keywords, and abstracts of each record. For instance, the word “regression” and the absence of any words related to qualitative research or reviews of research would yield a label of “Quantitative,” whereas the word “editorial” would yield a label of “Commentary.” Records that did not contain any of the code words in the five publication categories were labeled “Unknown.” Fifty-eight point five percent of records had at least one keyword, and 73.2% included an abstract; thus, many records had incomplete data in the text mining analysis, yielding a high number of unknown record types. Importantly, record type was not coded explicitly, and the categorization of the records in Figure 5 are assumed based on the inclusion or absence of words commonly related to types of articles. An anecdotal and non-systematic review suggested that many of the records in the “Unknown” category are commentaries that do not include keywords to be sorted into the “Commentary” category.

**Figure 5**  
*Record Types in Student-Run Journals*



### ***Qualitative Analysis***

For the eleven journals included in the study, a thematic coding of discursive contents contained in the journals’ publicly accessed websites (see Table 3 for links) revealed three overarching motifs. It is important to note that the location of relevant statements varied according to each journal’s website design and interface. Information regarding the journal’s thematic focus, for example, might be detailed in the Call for Papers, the About section, the History page, the Mission Statement, or the Front Matter. Such variability may be partly attributed to design differences in the Content Management Systems (e.g., WordPress, OJS) made available to editorial teams at a given college or university. At any rate, website management marks a key difference between student-run journals and mainstream outlets, such as those managed by *Taylor & Francis* (which regularly contain “About this Journal” and “Aims

and Scope” sections), where prospective authors can quickly find useful information on thematic focus, thematic emphases, issues of concern to the journal, and so forth.

The first thematic motif, registered in each of the eleven student-run publications examined, is a *Transformative Focus* (see Table 3). *Transformative Focus* conveys a thematic, interdisciplinary, and practical focus on advocacy-based scholarship, or research aimed at analyzing and transforming inequitable structures within and beyond education. That overarching term emerges from more distinct and localizable themes designated across the journals in question: the *BRE* is perhaps the most direct in this regard, specifying interest not just in “educational diversity and equity,” but “critical scholarship... that analyzes, evaluates, and problematizes power and dominant structures, and helps us to imagine something new.” Similarly, *NSEJ* solicits work that aims to “improve educational and social systems in order to facilitate increasingly effective, equitable, and socially just practices for educators.” Such *Transformative* emphasis is likewise reflected in discipline-specific terminologies: expressed across the outlets is avowed interest in research exploring the *political economy* of education (*CICE*); sociopolitical issues in education *policy* (*TxED*); and critical, culturally sustaining approaches to rethinking *curriculum* and teaching *practice* (*LAL*). Lastly, *Transformative Focus* is evoked in journals’ philosophies and/or guiding principles. *The Assembly* and *W&M*, for example, speak of a journalistic orientation toward “service,” both in terms of social engagement and justice-centered action, and in terms of the development of novice researchers seeking to disseminate new scholarship.

**Table 3**  
*Transformative Focus*

<b>Journal</b>	<b>Website Location</b>	<b>Relevant Journal Statements</b>
<i>Berkeley Review of Education (BRE)</i>	<a href="#">Call for Papers</a>	<i>The Berkeley Review of Education (BRE)</i> encourages senior and emerging scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers to submit articles that address issues of educational diversity and equity from various intra/interdisciplinary perspectives. <b>Critical Scholarship.</b> The <i>BRE</i> welcomes a broad range “critical” scholarship, particularly work that analyzes, evaluates, and problematizes power and dominant structures, and helps us to imagine something new.
<i>Current Issues in Comparative Education (CICE)</i>	<a href="#">History</a>	<i>CICE</i> aims to provide a multi-faceted view of comparative education by addressing changes in world politics, economic markets and the social milieu as they affect education, as well as by welcoming submissions from professors, researchers, students, advocates, policy-makers, and practitioners.
<i>Emerging Voices in Education (EViE)</i>	<a href="#">About</a>	<i>EViE</i> , a journal run by doctoral students, seeks to advance theory and practice of education by cultivating, disseminating, and archiving innovative scholarly research by doctoral students and early career researchers throughout the globe.

Journal	Website Location	Relevant Journal Statements
<i>Current Issues in Education (CIE)</i>	<a href="#">Front Matter</a>	<i>CIE</i> publishes articles on a broad range of education topics that are timely and have relevance nationally and internationally. We seek innovative scholarship that tackles challenging issues facing education using various theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches. <i>CIE</i> welcomes original research, practitioner experience papers, and submissions in alternative formats.
<i>Literacies Across the Lifespan Journal (LAL)</i>	<a href="#">Front Matter</a>	<i>Literacies Across the Lifespan</i> seeks to represent diverse and new paradigms, methodologies, and perspectives, and to promote ethical scholarly writing that honors learners and educators. <i>Literacies Across the Lifespan</i> is run by graduate students at UIC’s Center For Literacy.
<i>Neag School of Education Journal (NSEJ)</i>	<a href="#">Mission Statement</a>	Aligning with the mission of its governing institution, the <i>Neag School of Education Journal</i> places significance on pieces seeking to improve education and social systems in order to facilitate increasingly effective, equitable, and socially just practices for educators and practitioners from a variety of fields, perspectives, and theoretical lenses as they serve their local communities.
<i>Texas Education Review (TxEd)</i>	<a href="#">Front Matter</a> , <a href="#">Call for Papers</a>	The <i>Texas Education Review (TxEd)</i> is located directly on The University of Texas’s campus in the heart of downtown Austin. Its close proximity to the Texas Capitol, Texas Education Agency, and State Board of Education offers unparalleled access to the thought leaders, policy makers, and academics who are driving education policy in Texas. We are currently accepting submissions that address sociopolitical, economic, cultural, and organizational issues in education on a rolling basis.
<i>The Assembly</i>	<a href="#">About</a>	We are particularly interested in publishing work aimed at both transforming systems and local practices in the service of educational equity and social justice. Because we are a Colorado-based journal, in addition to publishing work by national contributors, we highlight work that engages with critical issues in our state and the Rocky Mountain region.
<i>Cutting EDge</i>	<a href="#">About</a>	Our mission statement is as follows: E – Explore educational research D – Disseminate diverse opinions and experiences G – Gather creative scholarship E – Encourage intellectual curiosity
<i>The Nebraska Educator</i>	<a href="#">Front Matter</a>	This journal is produced by UNL graduate students and publishes articles on a broad range of education topics that are timely and have relevance in the field of all levels of

Journal	Website Location	Relevant Journal Statements
<i>The William &amp; Mary Educational Review (W&amp;M)</i>	<a href="#">About</a>	<p>education. We seek original research that covers topics such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Curriculum, teaching and professional development</li> <li>2. Education policy, practice and analysis</li> <li>3. Literacy, language and culture</li> <li>4. School, society and reform</li> <li>5. Teaching and learning with technologies</li> </ol> <p>The <i>William &amp; Mary Educational Review</i> is grounded in a philosophy of service. Our mission is to provide scholars with the guidance, experience, and reach needed to become successful in their research pursuits.</p>

Note. Website locations link to journals’ websites.

The second found theme of interest is *Leaning into the Margin* (Table 4). The margin is not just a useful and evocative term for identifying the “place” of student-run journals in the hierarchy of scholarly production, it informs the boundary-challenging and subversive tone struck by many of these journals. In one sense, this is reflected in an explicit desire to solicit work that challenges the foreclosed *bordering* or *policing* of academic knowledge (we note the fact that these outlets are open access), and to undermine the exclusions, in and beyond the academy, that this hierarchy maintains. *BER* states that its goal is to foster “new and existing relationships within and *beyond* the academy”—reaching activists and practitioners in the field. *The Assembly* seeks *accessible* scholarship understandable by those “who most feel the impact,” which tacitly connotes a repudiation of the jargon-heavy language of mainstream social science and educational research. Beyond this ostensible emphasis on border-breaking language—a kind of scholarly discourse transcending divisions usually erected between the university and community, the school-world and home-world (see *LAL*, Table 4), *Leaning into the Margin* is also indicated in student-run journals’ stated commitment to showcasing work from individuals “traditionally *excluded from academia* in the publishing process” as stated by the *W&M*. Further analysis suggests that this attention to the “margins” is reflected not only in the individuals or communities declared to be featured (as contributors) and reached (as audiences), but in the “non-traditional” categories or types of academic work solicited and accepted. *The Cutting Edge* welcomes creative works of fiction for example, while the *NSEJ* directly mentions publishing research in its preliminary or germinal stage. Across these outlets—in mission statements, paper calls, and “About” sections—we find expressed an “ethos of the marginal,” one which leans into the blurry space between traditional categories, authorial practices, and audiences typically associated with academic production, publication, and dissemination.

**Table 4**  
*Leaning into the Margin*

Journal	Website Location	Relevant Journal Statements
<i>Berkeley Review of Education (BRE)</i>	<a href="#">Call for Papers</a>	<b>Pushing Borders &amp; Boundaries.</b> The BRE seeks to promote scholarship that re-conceptualizes and transcends academic identities, labels and categories. We encourage

Journal	Website Location	Relevant Journal Statements
<i>Literacies Across the Lifespan Journal (LAL)</i>	<a href="#">Front Matter</a>	<p>work from all disciplines, as well as interdisciplinary work that builds towards new understandings of educational processes and practices.</p> <p><b>Forging Communities.</b> The BRE seeks to foster new and existing relationships within and beyond the academy. As an open-access journal, we aim to democratize knowledge and encourage work that originates from and speaks to a wide range of scholars, practitioners, activists and educators.</p> <p>Literacies Across the Lifespan contributes to ongoing conversations about literacy across learners’ lives, from early childhood to adulthood, and in contexts across home, school, and community settings. The investigation, exploration, and pedagogizing of non-textual literacies (e.g., artmaking, oral storytelling, digital/media literacies, etc.) is welcome, in addition to studies of textual reading and writing meaning-making practices.</p>
<i>Neag School of Education Journal (NSEJ)</i>	<a href="#">Mission Statement</a>	<p>Of particular interest are pieces providing reflection on student experience with their research processes and manuscripts showcasing research in the preliminary stages. The journal offers students and early-career scholars the chance to publish work through diverse types of academic writing including, but not limited to, research articles (e.g., qualitative and quantitative research), essays, literature review, as well as personal experience and reflective pieces.</p>
<i>The Assembly</i>	<a href="#">About</a>	<p>Public scholarship is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Timely:</b> it is responsive to and engages with current debates and realities.</li> <li>● <b>Relevant:</b> it is relevant to educators, policymakers and community members seeking to make informed decisions about their work.</li> <li>● <b>Critical:</b> it illuminates and interrogates the power dynamics that shape policy and practice.</li> <li>● <b>Place-based:</b> it informs the socio-political context from which it emerges and for which it is used.</li> <li>● <b>Accessible:</b> it can be understood by and is useful for those who most directly feel the impact of the scholarship.</li> <li>● <b>Expansive:</b> it broadens the boundaries of what counts as scholarship and redefining expertise in education research.</li> </ul>
<i>The Cutting Edge</i>	<a href="#">About</a>	<p>The Cutting Edge is Stanford University’s undergraduate educational research journal. It is a platform where</p>

Journal	Website Location	Relevant Journal Statements
<i>The William &amp; Mary Educational Review (W&amp;M)</i>	<a href="#">About</a>	students can publish their research papers, opinions, fictional works, or other pieces pertaining to education. We strive to break barriers and build sustainability in academia by actively seeking opportunities to include undergraduate and master’s students who have traditionally been excluded from academia in the publishing process. Change begins with those who are positioned as gatekeepers.

Note. Website locations link to journals’ websites.

It was important to consider submission guidelines considering student-run journals’ focus on boundary-transcending work. We deploy the term *Inconsistent Guidelines & Processes* to capture the third theme. *Inconsistent Guidelines & Processes* highlights certain symmetries and dissymmetries across the student-run journals (see Table 5), restricting our focus to the “Main Submission Type” discussed in each outlet (i.e., the submission type having the most extensive description and prescribed formal criteria, viewed in relation to other manuscript types). These summarized findings reveal characteristics common to the genre of academic literature. Each journal, for example, requires Abstracts (normally 150-200 words), with the notable exception of *LAL*, which does not publish abstracts. Relatedly and with more variation, journals specify the inclusion of Keywords—this is *explicitly* mentioned in guidelines in *five* of the eleven outlets. Interestingly Keywords appear in papers published in *three* journals in which they are not *explicitly* asked for (*CiCE*, *The Assembly*, *W&M*), reasonably leading us to conclude that some outlets may be soliciting Keywords at a later stage in the review and/or formatting process. Of the eleven journals surveyed, all but *two* provide prospective authors information regarding peer-review processes: seven specify a double-blind review process, and require submission of anonymized documents, one (*The Assembly*) indicates a peer-review, but does not discuss methodology, and three outlets (*CiCE*, *NSEJ*, *The Cutting EDge*) give little to no information regarding peer-review processes and practices. Finally, it is important to note that all journals set standards for manuscript length of the main submission type (whether by word count or page length) and require style and formatting according to APA guidelines. Other notable requests included are *EViE*’s “Why This Matters” feature that asks authors to include a 200-word synthesis of “practical applications of their research” and *NSEJ*’s requirement that manuscripts submitted be first-authored by a current graduate student.

**Table 5**  
*Inconsistent Guidelines & Processes*

Journal	Main Submission Type	Summary of Submission Guidelines
<i>Berkeley Review of Education (BER)</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● Up to 5 keywords</li> <li>● Limit 30 pages</li> <li>● Double-blind peer review (2 rounds)</li> <li>● APA 6</li> </ul>

<b>Journal</b>	<b>Main Submission Type</b>	<b>Summary of Submission Guidelines</b>
<i>Current Issues in Comparative Education (CICE)</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● Keywords (in papers, but not specified in guidelines)</li> <li>● 5000 – 7000 Words</li> <li>● Review process not detailed</li> <li>● APA (Latest)</li> </ul>
<i>Emerging Voices in Education (EViE)</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● Five Keywords</li> <li>● 3000 – 5000 Words</li> <li>● Double-blind peer review (2 rounds)</li> <li>● APA 6</li> <li>● 200 Word Synthesis for “Why this Matters” feature</li> </ul>
<i>Current Issues in Education (CIE)</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● Up to 5 keywords</li> <li>● Limit 12000 words</li> <li>● Double-blind peer review</li> <li>● APA 7</li> </ul>
<i>Literacies Across the Lifespan Journal (LAL)</i>	Empirical Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No abstract specified</li> <li>● No keywords specified</li> <li>● 4000 – 6500 words</li> <li>● Double-blind peer-review</li> <li>● APA 7</li> </ul>
<i>Neag School of Education Journal (NSEJ)</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● No keywords specified</li> <li>● Limit 30 pages</li> <li>● Must be written by graduate students (as first author)</li> <li>● Review process not specified</li> <li>● APA 7</li> </ul>
<i>Texas Education Review (TxED)</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● 3-5 Keywords</li> <li>● 4000 – 7000 words</li> <li>● Double-blind peer-review</li> <li>● APA 6 or Latest</li> </ul>
<i>The Assembly</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● Keywords (not specified, but appear in papers)</li> <li>● 3000 – 5000 Words</li> <li>● Peer-review (process not specified)</li> <li>● APA 6</li> </ul>
<i>The Cutting Edge</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● No keywords</li> <li>● 4000 – 6000 words</li> </ul>



Journal	Main Submission Type	Summary of Submission Guidelines
<i>The Nebraska Educator</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Peer-review process not specified</li> <li>● APA                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● Up to 5 keywords</li> <li>● Limit 7500 words</li> <li>● Double-blind peer-review</li> <li>● APA 7</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>The William &amp; Mary Educational Review (W&amp;M)</i>	Research Manuscripts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abstract</li> <li>● Keywords (not specified, but appear in papers)</li> <li>● Limit 5000 words</li> <li>● Double-blind peer review</li> <li>● APA 6</li> </ul>

**Text Analysis.** Examination of the most frequent *Keywords* (Figure 6) and words identified in *Abstracts* (Figure 7) across published articles in the eleven student-run journals reveal some striking connections between the articles’ contents and the overarching themes of interest already identified on the journals’ websites (Mission Statements, Calls, Guidelines, etc.). We note that data in Figures 6 and 7 overrepresents outlets whose published articles contain these elements and underrepresents those that do not (see Limitations below); additionally, these representative snapshots necessarily favor outlets with the highest number of published records (*CiCE*, *CiE*, *TxE*; see Figure 1 above).

As other researchers suggest (see Kim et al., 2022), *Keywords* signify concepts, and offer a handy point of entry for identifying thematic and conceptual foci within and across academic journals. We here offer a modest set of preliminary connections: given the journals’ *Transformative Focus*, and their aim to solicit critical, inter-disciplinary, and community-focused work, do we see a thematic resonance between these stated aims and the conceptual contents represented in published work? The centrality of *Teacher education* (Figure 6), for example, might serve as an indicator that publications across outlets are indeed involved in exploring connections between theory and practice, specifically as it pertains to processes or challenges related to the training of educators (*Teacher preparation*, and *Professional development*, also strike us as relevant here). It is, however, curious to note that the most frequent *Keywords* connote very “traditional” educational contexts and institutional settings: *schools*, *teachers*, and terminologies specific to university-based professional development (*Field Experiences*, *Preservice Teachers*, etc.), one can well reason, seem in part to recapitulate the very institutional and discursive “enclosures” that many journals explicitly seek to challenge and transcend.

Evidence for the latter is suggested in *Keywords* that convey theoretical orientation. *Critical race theory*, *Equity*, *Whiteness*, *Critical pedagogy*, and *Bilingual education* will connote both a conceptual and methodological leaning toward a critique of school power structures articulated along the axes of racism and white supremacy, linguistic and cultural hegemony, and class-based domination. More suggestive of this intersectional critique of institutional power is the striking frequency of terms such as *Neoliberalism* and *Charter schools*, signifiers which, taken together, evoke pejorative descriptions of market-based and privatized school reform



These conclusions are given further credence when examining the 50 most frequent terms used in titles, abstracts, and keywords across the 12 student-run journals (Table 6). Organized by category, where Focus designates terms related to the thematic, phenomenal, or ontic unit of study, Context terms related to institutional settings, and Orientation terms related to research methods and/or theoretical framings, we see evidence of “traditional” education-related foci and settings. Terms such as “Students,” “Teachers,” and “Learning” appear quite salient for Focus, and for Context, we find “School” and “Schools” appearing together (n = 1,243) almost eight times as often as “Community” (n = 159), for example. Meanwhile, the frequency of terms for Orientation seems to evoke “transformative” standpoints and lenses, as reflected in the relative salience of signifiers such as “Social” (n = 351), “Critical” (n = 237), “Theory” (n = 179), and to a lesser extent, “Political” (n = 135), giving added weight to the notion that although “traditional” sites and categories of education-based research are emphasized in the student-run journals, the standpoint for analysis remain broadly reflective of a social-critical theoretical focus, rather than, say, a more strictly individualistic, cognitive, or behaviorist focus, which to us would suggest a much more “status quo” educationalist approach to the salient foci: Students, Teachers, Learning, Development, and so on. One final point of interest, which we take up in the Discussion section, is that despite the abundance of methodological terms, like “Research” (n = 467), “Data” (n = 233), “Analysis” (n = 225), and “Findings” (n = 183), we note a striking absence of terms related to specific methods-related criteria, like “Qualitative,” “Quantitative,” or “Mixed-Methods.”

**Table 6**  
*50 Most Frequent Terms in Titles, Abstracts, and Keywords Organized by Category*

<b>Focus (n)</b>	<b>Context (n)</b>	<b>Orientation (n)</b>
Education (1511)	School (818)	Study (578)
Students (1143)	Schools (425)	Research (467)
Teachers (716)	College (256)	Social (351)
Teacher (624)	Public (214)	Critical (237)
Learning (593)	Academic (199)	Data (233)
Student (471)	Classroom (199)	Analysis (225)
Educational (438)	Program (184)	Article (190)
Teaching (296)	Programs (166)	Findings (183)
Policy (289)	Community (159)	Theory (179)
Development (257)	Texas (154)	Studies (168)
Language (246)	University (137)	Results (154)
Experiences (213)		Literature (153)
Practices (193)		Implications (149)
Curriculum (183)		Black (136)
Reading (170)		Political (135)
Support (165)		Impact (133)
Experience (160)		
Literacy (157)		
Educators (156)		
Instruction (147)		

Focus ( <i>n</i> )	Context ( <i>n</i> )	Orientation ( <i>n</i> )
Knowledge (146)		
Assessment (136)		
Faculty (134)		

**Which Factors Predict Maintained Patterns of Publication in Student-Run Journals?**

*Quantitative*

A primary outcome related to student-run journals’ success is active publication. Journals were labeled as active if they published an issue in Fall of 2022 (i.e., the most recently completed semester at the time of submission). The following predictor variables were created using the data that were coded: number of authors, number of keywords, presence of an abstract, mean publications per year, and indexing in *ERIC*. These variables were selected because they were either numerical or vector class variables that could be derived from the coded data and feasibly be used as predictors. A logistic regression model was created to predict active publication using these variables. We attempted to include a variable defining whether a journal was included in the *ERIC* database; however, the model did not fit appropriately, leading to its’ exclusion as a predictor. Table 7 displays the outcome of the predictor model.

**Table 7**  
*Logistic Regression Predicting Journal Activity*

	$\beta$	SE	Wald	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$
Intercept	- 5.92	.87	46.48	< .001	-
# of Authors	.05	.10	.25	.622	< .001
# of Keywords	.04	.06	.49	.472	.001
Presence of Abstract	5.04	.76	44.25	<.001	.206
Mean Pubs./Year	.15	.03	20.05	< .001	.040

*Note.*  $\beta$  = Unstandardized regression coefficient, SE = Standard error, Wald = Wald chi-square value, *df* = Degrees of freedom, *p* = p-value,  $\eta^2$  = Partial eta squared, Pubs. = Publications

Based on the predictor model, two predictors of active publication were not statistically significant: number of keywords and number of authors. For each one-unit increase in the number of keywords, the estimated log odds of a journal actively publishing increases by 0.04. This coefficient is not statistically significant (*p* = 0.472), so we cannot conclude that the number of keywords has a significant effect on active publishing. Moreover, the number of keywords explained less than 0.1% of the variance in active publishing. For each one-unit increase in the number of authors, the estimated log odds of a journal actively publishing increases by 0.05. This coefficient is not statistically significant (*p* = 0.622), so we cannot conclude that the number of authors has a significant effect on active publishing. The number of authors explained approximately 0.1% of the variance in active publishing.

The model identified two statistically significant predictors of active publication: the presence of an abstract and the mean number of records a journal publishes per year. The coefficient for presence of abstract (5.04) represents the estimated difference in log odds of a journal actively publishing between articles that have an abstract and articles that do not have an abstract. This coefficient is statistically significant (*p* < 0.001), so we can conclude that it is a

significant predictor of active publishing. Moreover, the presence of an abstract explains 20.6% of the variance in whether journals published actively. For each one-unit increase in mean publications per year, the estimated log odds of active publishing increase by 0.15. This coefficient is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), so we can conclude that mean publications per year is also a significant predictor of active publishing. Mean publications per year explain 4.0% of the variance in whether journals published actively. See Table 1 for the mean number of publications per year for each journal.

The fifth predictor, whether journals indexed in *ERIC* or not, was not an appropriate fit for the model. Since few student-run peer-reviewed journals of education index in *ERIC*, the standard error was very large compared to the coefficient. Therefore, it is not a useful predictor of active publishing and was excluded from the analysis.

### *Qualitative*

Having identified two key predictive factors for the “success” of student-run journals (maintained patterns of publication), we will remark on two interesting implications with these findings in mind. First, we recall the fact that for the student-run journals in question, the overarching themes related to vision, mission, and purpose stressed the solicitation and publication of transformative, boundary-transcending work. This discourse was further couched in a thematic of “the margin,” and resonated with the position of the student-run journals themselves within the hierarchy of academic publishing in education. Leaning into the margin, journal leaders spoke to concerns of community outreach, critical and transformative scholarship, and with that, conveyed a tacit repudiation of at least some of the standardized practices associated with academic publishing. One might say it is somewhat anticlimactic, then, to find that of the variables we analyzed, it is precisely those “standard” elements (e.g., the presence of abstracts, the mean quantity of papers published per year) that are most suggestive of long-term success for student-run journals. As noted, success is subjective: one can easily argue that quality, however defined, is more important than quantity. Yet the “mainstream” metrics indicative of a maintained pattern of publication, we argue, does not entail that journals compromise their critical, disruptive, and transformative aims. As leaders of one of these journals, we will confidently say that we have not sacrificed anything in this respect. It suggests that student-run outlets should maintain practices consistent with *certain* academic standards—requiring and making available abstracts, in this case—and establishing internal processes for optimizing the flow of manuscripts from submission through to publication. We are aware that this is a material question as much as it is one related to internal policy, vision, guidelines, and transparency for prospective authors regarding expectations for manuscript formatting and the peer-review process (see Table 5 again for consistencies and inconsistencies with respect to these criteria).

By material, we mean labor and resources. While we do not have the space here to go far into the topic of austerity in higher education (Hall & Bowles, 2016) and its disproportional effects on graduate students (see O’Regan, 2021), we will suggest that, as graduate students are continually asked to do more with less, it may be an increasingly difficult task to establish and maintain the labor division and resource management necessary for student-run journals to sustain pipelines of production, to review and publish research at sufficient rates, maintain their websites, and market themselves to prospective authors and audiences.

As leaders of one of the longer-running student-run journals as indicated by our review, we can point to strategies that have helped us navigate these structural and material barriers. The

first and perhaps most important is our strategic focus on special issues. In our approach, when a new graduate editor is added to our team, they are asked to outline an issue in their subfield of expertise, and either create a call for papers or solicit manuscripts from established or rising scholars (oftentimes both) on this topic. With the assistance of the editors-in-chief, this editor will serve as the “lead” for their issue, which has a double benefit. On the one hand, it allows every editor the opportunity to build professional skills related to the planning, organizing, and publication of a volume. On the other hand, it distributes labor in a more manageable way throughout our journal’s biannual publication schedule, allowing us to maintain a consistent flow of papers through our pipeline without overburdening our editorial team (who, when not leading an issue, serve as blind peer-reviewers of one to two manuscripts a semester).

We are not saying this is a panacea for the structural, labor-related, and logistical challenges that student-run journals may regularly confront. Rather, given what our analysis has demonstrated regarding predictors of student-run journal longevity, we want to give one qualitatively informed account of how, given our own institutional setting and context, we navigate the demands of an increasingly competitive and monopolized “market of ideas.” For us, that has meant upholding consistent, transparent expectations for submissions, distributing labor in a way that is sensitive to the lives of our editorial teammates while drawing on their disciplinary expertise, all the while maintaining an uncompromised focus on critical, transformative scholarship in various areas and subfields of education, including policy and leadership, curriculum and instruction, and teacher education, among others.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this mixed methods bibliometric analysis was to identify trends in student-run academic journals in education in the U.S. and identify factors that predict maintained patterns of publication in student-run journals. Below is a summary of recommendations for student-run peer-reviewed journals of education based on the current trends and issues identified in this corpus of journals.

### **Recommendations for Student-Run Journals of Education**

Student-run journals of education should (a) form sustainable editorial structures, (b) follow consistent publication patterns, (c) solicit authors purposefully, and (d) continue leaning into the margin.

#### ***Form Sustainable Editorial Structures***

It is vital that student-run peer-reviewed journals of education form sustainable editorial structures. Firstly, sustainable structures help ensure the longevity of the journal, allowing it to continue publishing quality research and contributing to the wider field of education. Several journals in the field have become inactive, and although it is difficult to determine the precise reasons why, it is highly likely that their editorial structures were not built for sustainability across years. Student-run journals require students to be editors, and those students eventually graduate and often move on to become editors for mainstream journals of education. The window for student editors to contribute to student-run journals is typically narrow. Newer doctoral students may not be adequately trained to serve as editors, and more experienced doctoral students have a short countdown to graduation. We suggest that journals establish a common period for students to serve as editors and continuously recruit new editors from consecutive cohorts. Maintain enough editors so that each editor reviews approximately two

submissions per semester. Finally, the editor-in-chief must identify and train their replacement. For a successful transition, this training should occur over two semesters: one in which the incoming editor-in-chief shadows and one in which they co-manage. Some journals rely on faculty to help manage the transition, which may also be a useful approach as they offer a lasting presence that students cannot.

Additionally, sustainable structures promote consistency and efficiency in the editorial process, which can enhance the reputation of the journal and attract more high-quality submissions. Authors may be attracted to the faster peer-review process typically provided by student-run journals relative to mainstream journals. Ultimately, forming sustainable editorial structures is crucial for the success of student-run peer-reviewed journals of education, as it helps ensure their continued growth and impact in the academic community.

### ***Follow Consistent Publication Patterns***

Broadly speaking, journals should create and enforce guidelines both for the editorial team and authors. Our analysis identified the presence of abstracts as a significant predictor of journal longevity. We see the absence of abstracts as a proxy for the journal's integrity to following guidelines. Those that keep fidelity with guidelines, whether those set by the American Psychological Association (APA) or another organization, are more likely to survive during leadership transitions. Several journals posted guidelines that called for authors to follow APA guidelines (see Table 5) but did not regularly enforce these policies based on our analysis. Additionally, the majority of the articles included in this corpus contained undescriptive titles, abstracts, and keywords (see Figure 5). Journals should call for revisions to these important indicators in cases when it is unclear what the record will contribute to the field. Overall, we recommend that journals enforce APA guidelines more consistently to promote longevity and overall quality.

To support these practices, journals should consider indexing with *ERIC* in addition to their institutional repositories. This transition has several positive impacts. First, *ERIC* gives journals much more publicity than institutional repositories because it is a widely searched database in the field, whereas repositories are not (Callicott et al., 2016). Second, journals that wish to index in *ERIC* must undergo an audit to ensure that they follow several of the practices recommended in this section. Therefore, making this transition will likely improve the quality of a journal's editorial practices and their reach in the field of education.

### ***Solicit Authors Purposefully***

We calculated the mean number of publications per year for each journal (see Table 1). This publication statistic was a significant predictor ( $p < .001$ ) of journals being active at the time of analysis. Therefore, we encourage student-run editorial teams to develop policies and practices that promote consistent and persistent article publication. There are several strategies journals can implement to achieve this goal. First and foremost, disseminate information about the journal to potential authors. Given the short reach of student-run education journals, editors need to be actively engaged in identifying and inviting prospective articles to submit to their journal in order to promote growth. Journals should also consider developing special issues on timely topics. Special issues allow for specific calls to be developed that are more likely to draw in potential authors than open calls, particularly during the early years of the student-run journal. Special issues should be planned in advance. For example, an editor might plan a special issue in the summer and invite several potential authors to contribute with a Spring publication date set.

Special issues might be published in tandem with open calls or separately, depending on the journal's procedures. Some student-run journals elect to only accept submissions from authors from the university in which the journal is housed. We do not recommend arbitrarily limiting the number of potential authors and submissions in this way.

### ***Continue Leaning into the Margin***

It is important for student-run peer-reviewed journals of education to continue leaning into the margin for several reasons. Firstly, leaning into the margin allows for the amplification of marginalized voices and perspectives within the field of education. By prioritizing research and submissions from scholars who have been historically underrepresented, these journals can help diversify the academic discourse and challenge dominant narratives. Additionally, leaning into the margin can help address gaps and blind spots in research, providing a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of educational issues. Moreover, student-run journals that prioritize marginalized voices and perspectives can help create more equitable and inclusive academic spaces where scholars from diverse backgrounds feel valued and represented. Ultimately, leaning into the margin is crucial for student-run journals of education to fulfill their potential as agents of change and progress in the field.

### **Limitations**

The present study was limited by a few factors. First, the search procedure for identifying student-run peer-reviewed journals of education was not systematic. It would be difficult to achieve a systematic review of student-run journals because they are not commonly housed in databases, like other professional educational journals. Instead, a review of *ERIC*, internet searches, and personal communications were used to identify journals. It is possible that this search strategy resulted in unidentified journals, which would negatively affect confidence in the findings.

Additionally, due to resource constraints and the number of identified records, the records could not be coded deeply. Without performing full-text reads, several interesting variables related to themes, record types, and record length could not be measured. Full-text reads could both quantitatively and qualitatively shed light on the ways in which published works relate to the journals to which they were submitted. This task may be more manageable for editorial boards of individual journals.

Although bibliometric analysis can provide valuable insights into the journal's publication patterns, authorship, and content, it has several limitations. For example, it may not capture the quality of the articles published in the journal, and it may not reflect the impact of articles beyond the academic community. Furthermore, bibliometric analysis relies on the quality and completeness of the metadata associated with the articles, which may not always be accurate or consistent. Missing data, particularly the absence of keywords and abstracts, was common among student-run journals.

### **Conclusion**

We started from the premise that student-run academic journals of education provide real value to the field of educational studies. We acknowledged that value is not just a contested term by nature: it is, in the context of student-run journals, more elusive to define, given the absence of systematic studies on their purpose, thematic content, and long-term trends. Through this mixed methods bibliometric analysis, we have taken a decisive step in the direction of



quantifying and qualifying characteristics and patterns in student-run journals, identifying predictors of their longevity, discovering overarching thematic consistencies, and recommending certain practices that, as leaders of a student-run journal ourselves, have been crucial for navigating and overcoming structural and institutional barriers. Given the persistence of these barriers and roadblocks—where socio-economic trends in higher education, and their effect on graduate students especially, give us reason to think they are not only here to stay, but will intensify over time—we hope that our study, and the snapshot it provides, might serve as a tool for student-run journals to make more informed decisions pertinent to their long-term success. We believe graduate students enter the field of education based on their desire to change things, address shortcomings, and shake up status-quo ways of thinking—and, indeed, we have seen how these tendencies are reflected in the philosophical stances and dispositions of the student-run journals examined here. But as the old idiom goes, “the devil is in the details,” and our review suggests that the small details (the formal processes and guidelines, the criteria necessary for building consistent pipelines of review and production) are just as important for the success of student-run journals as are philosophical principles, ethical stances, and moral imperatives to disrupt dominant perspectives and recenter conversations around marginalized perspectives and voices. We are of the opinion that student-run journals can, and must, do both.

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