

## What is Peer Review?

What's the deal with peer-review? Why do professors care so much about it? What's wrong with just using the information from Google? Well you may not know this but your instructors are up to a lot more than just teaching. In fact, they're also doing research so they can create new knowledge. Most of this new knowledge is tracked through the production of articles published in scholarly peer-reviewed journals.

These articles can be about an idea, a study, or an experiment. The articles in these journals are different from ones published in magazines or on websites because they are reviewed by experts in a particular field.

Once an author submits a copy of their work their manuscript to a journal it'll be judged on whether it's worth publishing. Things that will be considered will be things like does the content of the manuscript align with the journal scope values and mission? Does it follow proper citation guidelines and other rules for submission? If the article fits the journal it will get passed on to several other scholars or peers studying in similar areas. These peers will evaluate the manuscript. Are there omissions, errors or biases? Is the methodology appropriate? Is the writing sound? Are the conclusions valid?

Because these scholars are experts in their field they'll know whether the information presented is worthy of study. If the reviewers think that something should be changed, elaborated or removed they'll send their comments back to the author for revision.

Sometimes the manuscript will bounce between the author and their viewers many, many times before it's finally accepted for publication. This rigorous process is what peer-reviewed articles are the gold standard for most academic research so next time your instructor tells you to find peer-reviewed sources you'll know why! The information is new, important and scholarly! If you're having trouble locating peer-reviewed sources or understanding their characteristics, help is always available in person and online.