

Policies and Procedures

I. *TPC* Mission Statement

The Professional Counselor (TPC) is the official journal of the National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc., and Affiliates (NBCC), dedicated to publishing original and innovative peer-reviewed research and scholarship in an electronic, open-access format to inform counselors and members of related helping professions.

II. *TPC* Vision

Our vision is to equip professional counselors for the greatest impact on the communities they serve by bridging research with practice, thereby helping to distinguish counseling as an established resource to anyone in need.

III. *TPC* Values

TPC is committed to the timely dissemination of peer-reviewed, relevant, and wide-ranging research and scholarship meant to empower counselors, students, and other mental health professionals to serve diverse clients and communities with confidence and competence. The journal's open-access, electronic format and dedication to providing credible scholarship across all resource levels enable scholars and practitioners to continually improve their practice and expand their knowledge for the benefit of both clients and the counseling profession.

IV. Editorial Policies, Procedures, and Manuscript Submission Requirements

A. *TPC* Subject Matter

The editors of *TPC* invite original manuscripts relating to mental and behavioral health counseling; school counseling; career counseling; couple, marriage, and family counseling; counseling supervision; theory development; professional counseling ethics; international counseling and multicultural issues; program applications; and integrative reviews from counseling and related fields. The content represented in the articles does not necessarily reflect the opinions of NBCC or its affiliates.

Manuscripts utilizing research methodologies may include quantitative and/or qualitative methods that have direct relevance to the broad practice of professional counseling. In addition, *TPC* may accept literature reviews, case studies, and public policy analyses relevant to the practice of counseling. International authors who prepare manuscripts relating to the global aspects of counseling are also encouraged to submit their work. Consistent with *TPC*'s mission, all submitted manuscripts must include a discussion of the topic in terms of its implications for the counseling profession.

Periodically, special issues of *TPC* will be published on specific topics in counseling, supervision, or research. Authors interested in presenting special topics for consideration should visit <https://tpcjournal.nbcc.org/special-issue-proposal>. All special issue or section manuscripts undergo the standard *TPC* peer review process.

Manuscripts under consideration for publication in another journal, or that have already been published in another journal, will not be accepted for review or publication in *TPC*. Also, a manuscript that has already been published in whole or in part should not be submitted for review. Manuscripts containing inaccurate

research or information or other inappropriate materials will not be accepted. Questions regarding a previous publication issue should be presented to the *TPC* editor by the author(s).

B. Submission and Retention of IRB Approval and Empirical Data

The authors of manuscripts submitted to *TPC* must, upon request, submit the empirical data supporting the content of the manuscript and must maintain such information for at least 6 years after the date of the manuscript's publication in *TPC*. Authors affiliated with an educational, health care, or other institution must also be able to produce at any time a record of their submission to and approval from their Institutional Review Board (IRB). Manuscripts containing research that cannot be confirmed in these ways will not be published.

C. NBCC Code of Ethics and Research Activities

The authors of manuscripts must attest that their research activities have complied with applicable NBCC *Code of Ethics* directives relating to such research, including the treatment of human and animal subjects. See the NBCC *Code of Ethics* directives on research and publication at www.nbcc.org/ethics.

D. Copyright Assignment and Intellectual Property Terms

Upon acceptance of a manuscript for publication in *TPC* and before the editing and publication begins, each author must sign and return to *TPC* a Copyright Assignment and Contribution Use Agreement. This agreement:

- Transfers to *TPC* all copyright and other ownership rights held by the author in their original material, including all rights of reproduction, distribution, performance, and display, and the right to create derivative works.
- Grants nonexclusive, limited rights and permissions to the author to use the author's original material, at no cost, for their own personal and/or academic use, including use of the material in oral presentations or in future books and other publications created by the author, provided that the *TPC* copyright and original publication in *TPC* is properly acknowledged and no NBCC or *TPC* endorsement of the new work is implied.

[Note: Permission to use the original material for any other purpose must be approved by *TPC* in writing prior to such use.]

In the event that the author(s) uses in the manuscript any non-original materials created or owned by a third party, the author(s) must: (a) identify specifically such material to *TPC* upon submission of the manuscript for review, (b) properly credit the copyright holder/author with respect to such material, (c) submit written authorization from the copyright holder permitting the author(s) to use such material in the manuscript, and (d) submit to the editor the copyright holder's written permission to reproduce such material for publication in *TPC*. Failure to satisfy these requirements will result in the manuscript not being considered for publication in *TPC*.

Authors should never assume that material downloaded from the internet may be used without obtaining appropriate permission. Authors bear full responsibility for the accuracy and content of all aspects of their submissions, including but not limited to text, graphs, tables, references, quotations, and artwork. Manuscripts that do not conform to these policies will be returned to the author(s) without review.

Authors will not receive any compensation or royalty from NBCC or *TPC* for submitting original material to *TPC*, having the copyright to their manuscript assigned to *TPC*, or the use of the manuscript for NBCC and *TPC* continuing education. Copyrights related to *TPC* will be registered by NBCC with the Library of Congress U.S. Copyright Office.

E. Manuscript Submission Requirements

A complete manuscript submission consists of two fully executed items: (1) the manuscript and (2) the manuscript submission form and upload contained within the Submittable online platform. Prior to submission, names and information revealing author identities must be removed from the manuscript to enable the fully blind peer review. Such information may only appear in the Manuscript Submission Form. References to authors and specific institutions, or any similar identifying information, will not be revealed until after the manuscript has been accepted for publication. A manuscript submission is considered complete and eligible for editorial review for publication in *TPC* only if all the requirements described below are satisfied:

- The entire manuscript must be double-spaced and prepared in 12-point Times New Roman font.
- The manuscript must not exceed 31 pages, including tables, figures, and references. Submissions over 31 pages will be returned to authors for revision to fit the page limit.
- No names, addresses, or other identifying information should appear on the title page or elsewhere in the manuscript. Identifying information should also be removed from the file name of the submission.
- The manuscript must include an abstract of 100–150 words and five keywords drawn directly from the abstract.
- The manuscript must be in English unless the author(s) demonstrates their inability to write and translate into English. At the editor's sole discretion, the editor may authorize the manuscript to be translated into English at no cost to the author(s).
- The manuscript must be prepared in a professional manner and consistent with the acceptable style of professional literature identified in the seventh edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.
- The manuscript must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document, and all materials must be in one file.
- All images (figures, tables, etc.) should fit within a vertical (portrait) page in the manuscript; do not use images requiring a horizontal (landscape) page. All images must be included within the manuscript and must not be submitted separately.
- Any use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the development of the manuscript must be disclosed according to the AI policy in Section VI.A below.
- Author(s) must submit their manuscript through the Submittable platform. The manuscript submission form to be completed within the platform includes the contact author's name, all professional and academic credentials, position and place of employment, and contact information (i.e., physical business correspondence address, email address, and telephone number). *Coauthor information will not be collected unless the manuscript is accepted for publication.*

Manuscripts may be returned to the contact author without reaching the peer review stage for various reasons, including: (1) the manuscript submission does not meet the submission requirements, (2) the subject matter of the manuscript is inconsistent with the subjects identified in Section IV.A above, or (3) the writing style of the manuscript is deemed unacceptable.

Authors must submit manuscripts electronically to *TPC* through the Submittable platform. Following submission of a manuscript, the submitter will receive a "Manuscript Submission Received" email at the address they provided.

F. Manuscript Review Disposition Process

Upon completion of the review process—for most manuscripts, within 90 days of authors getting the submission receipt email—authors will receive a message through the Submittable platform concerning *TPC*'s determination regarding the manuscript, as well as any review feedback that the editor deems constructive. The disposition message will also contain any information on revision and resubmission, if applicable.

[Note: Authors of manuscripts that are accepted for publication, or revised and resubmitted for consideration, should expect editing for consistency with *TPC* publication style and the seventh edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.]

Any manuscript being resubmitted for further consideration after revisions have been made must be transmitted through the Submittable platform. If revisions and resubmission of a manuscript are requested by the *TPC* editorial staff, the author(s) will be provided with the appropriate follow-up form within Submittable. Authors must identify specific revisions that have been made to the manuscript and address all concerns raised in the editorial review. If applicable, authors should also provide the reasons supporting any decision not to make certain revisions proposed by the editor or the reviewers. At the *TPC* editor's discretion, resubmissions may be routed directly to the *TPC* editor for review, or they may pass through the full peer review process again. Please note that if a manuscript is resubmitted and receives a rejection for the second time, that manuscript should not be resubmitted again unless approved by the editor.

Authors of manuscripts accepted for publication must submit the final manuscript via Submittable only. The editor reserves the right to edit an accepted manuscript according to the *TPC* style guide as needed for publication; however, the essential content of the manuscript will not be changed. Once a manuscript has been accepted, the author(s) must submit to *TPC* a signed Copyright Assignment and Contribution Use Agreement for each author of the manuscript; a 500-word digest summarizing the manuscript in clear, nontechnical language; five multiple-choice continuing education questions about the article; and three learning objectives for the article. In addition, the author(s) have the option of submitting an author video about their article.

V. Timeline of Electronic Manuscript Submission and Publication Processes

Step 1 – Plagiarism Detection: Upon initial submission, all manuscripts are processed using plagiarism detection software. If the processing reveals significant problematic overlap between the manuscript submission and any previously published materials, especially overlap that appears without citations, the manuscript will be returned to the author. Uncited overlap with materials previously published by the manuscript's own author(s), including dissertations, constitutes self-plagiarism and is unethical.

Step 2 – Initial Review Process: All manuscripts will undergo an initial review for suitability for *TPC* and adherence to the applicable terms of the NBCC *Code of Ethics* before being sent to peer review. The manuscript is then reviewed by members of the editorial staff, associate editors, and peer reviewers, always in a fully blinded review process. The *TPC* editorial staff makes every attempt possible to use reviewers with expertise matching the manuscript topics indicated by the author(s) on the submission form. All peer review materials are then sent to the *TPC* editor, who performs their own review and then considers the peer review materials when making the final publication decision on the manuscript.

Step 3 – Manuscript Review and Disposition: Upon completion of the review process—for most manuscripts, within 90 days of authors getting the submission receipt email—authors will receive a message through the Submittable platform concerning *TPC*’s determination regarding the manuscript; any review feedback that the editor deems constructive; and any information on revision and resubmission, if applicable.

Step 4 – Manuscript Revisions: Manuscripts revised for further consideration must be resubmitted to *TPC* through the Submittable platform. Resubmissions must include two copies of the revised manuscript: one clean copy and one copy marked with the Microsoft Word track changes tool to show specific revisions and responses to reviewer comments. Authors are also required to respond to all reviewer comments and give reasons supporting the decision not to make certain revisions proposed by the reviewers, if applicable. Failure to address or respond to all reviewer comments may result in rejection of the manuscript. If an editorial revision cannot be resolved, the *TPC* editor will make a final determination concerning revision and publication of the manuscript.

Step 5 – Author Copyright Assignment and Contribution Use Agreement: Upon acceptance of a manuscript for publication in *TPC*, but before significant work is done on the manuscript by *TPC* editorial staff, each author of the manuscript must sign and return a separate Copyright Assignment and Contribution Use Agreement.

Step 6 – Required Accompanying Materials: Upon acceptance of a manuscript for publication in *TPC*, the author(s) must submit a 500-word digest summarizing the manuscript in clear, nontechnical language; five multiple-choice continuing education questions about the article; and three learning objectives for the article. In addition, the author(s) have the option of submitting an author video about their article.

Step 7 – Manuscript Publication: Accepted manuscripts are usually published in *TPC* within 90 days of acceptance. In preparation for publication, the manuscript will undergo plagiarism checks, reference validation, formatting, copy editing, author queries, page design, proofreading, and other processes. Author(s) should monitor emails and promptly respond to any queries.

VI. Media and Other Policies and Procedures

A. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

TPC and NBCC have developed a set of policies regarding AI use and documentation for any submission to the journal, as well as for members of the editorial and peer review teams. Authors must review the AI policies prior to submitting their manuscript and complete any steps for disclosure both within the manuscript itself and the submission form on Submittable. Any manuscript determined to have used AI in a manner counter to the *TPC* and NBCC policies will be removed from review and consideration for publication. Authors can find the AI policy document here: <https://bit.ly/TPCaiPolicy>

B. Video Submission Requirements

TPC hosts videos of authors discussing issues related to their published article. The video allows the author(s) to share article information from a personal perspective. *TPC* reserves the right to accept, reject, and edit a video and to determine how long the video will remain online. All videos are subject to *TPC* copyright policies.

- **Content and Style Recommendations:** Authors should include a brief overview of the article, a description of what started their interest in the topic, and an explanation of the article's relevance or implications. Authors should have a professional appearance and a casual presentation style.
- **Environmental Recommendations:** Videos should contain a simple or plain background with no windows or lighting in view. Authors should ensure that the lighting on their face is sufficient and without overexposure and that the recording area is quiet. Videos should only be shot horizontally and from a stabilized position; do not have someone hold the camera.
- **Technical Requirements:** Recording from a laptop or smartphone should produce sufficient quality. An author should leave approximately 3 to 5 seconds of silence at the beginning and end of the video to allow for a smooth transition. Videos cannot exceed 3 minutes. If the settings on the recording device are adjustable, please set them to the following:
 - o File type: Mp4 file
 - o Bitrate: 3 Mbps minimum, 6 Mbps best
 - o Video size: 720p (1280x720) or 1080p (1920x1080)
 - o Constraint proportions: 16:9

Authors unfamiliar with these settings or unable to make adjustments should submit the video to tpcjournal@nbcc.org, and the *TPC* staff will assess the video quality and compatibility.

C. Book and Multimedia Review Policy

TPC accepts recent books and videos on topics relevant to professional counseling and related disciplines and will attempt to provide a critical review for the *TPC* audience. Most reviews will be 500 words or less, and the completion of a review is not guaranteed for any submitted publications.

Publishers wishing to have their books considered for review in *TPC* may contact tpcjournal@nbcc.org for more information. Unsolicited reviews will not be accepted. All reviews accepted for publication are subject to copy editing according to *TPC* style. Published reviews will be accompanied by a statement describing the reviewer's credentials and institutional affiliation. Reviews do not reflect the opinions or policies of NBCC or its affiliates.