

What is a Scholarly Journal?

A scholarly journal is a periodical publication comprised of articles written by scholars in an academic or professional field. Experts in the subject discipline review articles to decide whether they should be accepted for publication. Articles in journals can cover very specific topics or narrow fields of research. More information:

Editorial process:	Before they are published, articles are reviewed by a body of <i>peers</i> , experts in the same field as the writer, who recommend to the journal's editorial board whether the article should be published based on the importance, originality, soundness, accuracy, methodology, and currency of the research. Peer review does not guarantee that an article is somehow perfect, but the rigorous scrutiny does help ensure that data and methodology have met a high standard.
Audience:	Scholars, specialists, and students
Authors:	Specialists in the field; usually scholars with PhDs. The author's affiliation and often his/her credentials are provided.
Content:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describes the results of research done by the authors; includes detailed examinations of a topic or research methodology; incorporates statistical analysis where appropriate; presents discipline-based theoretical discussions of a topic ▪ Always includes bibliographical references (citations) to other research published in articles and books
Slant:	May be difficult to identify because of technical language or jargon. Journals are often sponsored by professional associations; look in Associations Unlimited online for information about the organizations with which the author or journal is associated. Scholarly journals are not usually heavily biased, though a thesis can be put forth with much strength – and be supported by data, original research, other scholarly articles, and new or existing theories.
Appearance:	There is usually no advertising, except perhaps ads for other journals published by the same organization; the look is staid and serious, not slick with the color photos found in popular magazines like Newsweek.
Format:	Besides publication in paper format, the full text of many (not all) journals can be accessed on the Web via paid subscriptions such as libraries have (i.e., not via Google). To see if UCLA has a particular journal (paper or online), go to UCLA Library Catalog and do a journal title search.
Indexing:	Journal contents are indexed in various article databases that are available via paid subscriptions on library and university Web sites. On the Library's webpage under Search and Find, select Article Databases by Subject Area , then Social Sciences or another area. Choose the discipline in which your topic falls to find the databases.