Editor’s Duties, Expectations, Performance Criteria, and Terms of Employment

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Journal of Mormon History mission statement

The Journal of Mormon History aspires to be the preeminent journal worldwide in the field of Mormon history, fostering independent scholarly research into all aspects of the Mormon past, and publishing rigorously peer-reviewed articles and book reviews that meet the highest levels of originality, literary quality, accuracy, and relevance.

Qualifications

- **Broad knowledge in the field of Mormon history**—
  including an ability and willingness to pay special attention to newly emerging ideas and the potential for applying critical theory in a Mormon context, consider the need for re-examination of past insights, and address issues of particular importance to under-examined historical periods, topics, and populations—and to cultivate quality submissions that reflect such wide-ranging scholarship.

- **Analytic and writing skills**—
  including the ability to assess the quality and publication potential of submitted papers, the facility to nurture worthy but not completely satisfactory submissions to successful publication. Previous experience in editing or reviewing for scholarly publications will be weighed especially favorably.

- **Networking and interpersonal communication skills**—
  including the interest and ability to develop and nurture relationships with a wide array of potential contributors and potential peer review readers—both established scholars and newly emerging writers—and to communicate efficiently and effectively with submitting authors, peer review readers, press production staff, and the MHA board of directors.
● **Time-management skills and self-discipline**—
possessing the proficiency to conscientiously meet production deadlines and to maintain timely correspondence with all persons who communicate with the editor.

● **Commitment to fairness and excellence**—
possessing a willingness to exercise balanced judgment, and a willingness and capacity to spend the time and effort necessary to implement the journal’s mission statement.

**General Duties**

The MHA board of directors is responsible for journal’s funding. A university press production team provides the services of proofreading, art direction, advertising, designing and typography, printing, binding, mailing, digital archiving, and managing subscriptions.

The editor’s duties include:

● **Cultivate a broad network of contacts and provide a public face for the journal**—
Attend professional conferences, participate in pertinent online events, and generally encourage the scholarly research and writing of Mormon history.

● **Solicit submissions**

● **Review all submissions upon receipt in a timely manner**

● **Conduct timely “blind” external peer review of all submissions that pass the editor’s initial review**—
All submissions to be evaluated by at least two readers, and readers’ comments and critiques to be shared with the submitting author (readers and authors anonymous to each other) within a review cycle that averages no more than 90 days.

● **Nominate and consult with a volunteer board of editors**—
Nominate board members (to be approved by the MHA board of directors) who will assist in soliciting, reviewing, and evaluating submissions; determine the size of the board, and the frequency and nature of board meetings. [Having a board of editors does not eliminate the need to develop additional lists of persons specially qualified to serve as peer review readers on occasion as determined by the quantity and nature of submissions received.]

● **Work with submitting authors in performing substantive content editing**

● **Determine journal content by making acceptance/rejection decisions**

● **Obtain signed consent-to-publish forms and other required permissions (such as image reproduction permissions) from all contributors, and maintain timely communication with submitting authors throughout the editing process**
• Provide general oversight of the book review process as performed by the current volunteer book review editor (or another book review editor nominated by the editor)

• Consistently meet editor’s quarterly production schedule deadlines—by delivering word processing content files, illustration submissions, and all consent-to-publish forms and other permissions to the university press’s copy editor, along with the designated order of articles for the table of contents and contributor biographies.

• Approve galley proofs after they have been corrected by authors, proofreaders, and the copy editor—

• Stay within budget—by making sure each journal issue does not exceed page number limitations.

• Provide timely quarterly reports to the MHA board of directors—giving them an updated statistical summary of submissions (such as acceptance/rejection ratios, etc.) and apprising them of other aspects of journal production, achievements, or concerns.

Evaluation Criteria

The MHA board of directors annually evaluates the editor’s performance based on their perception (reflecting their own opinions as well as what they believe to be the general sense of the MHA membership) of how well the editor is meeting the following criteria:

• Content

Do articles generally reflect the highest levels of originality, literary quality, accuracy, and relevance?

Do articles generally reflect topical diversity? [Including, but not limited to, such aspects as time-period (19th century, 20th century, contemporary history); local, regional, and international history; folklore; historiography; women’s history; interdisciplinary history; the history of all churches, ethnicities, and minorities within the Mormon religious tradition.]

Are the most significant new books in Mormon history being reviewed in a judicious and timely manner?

• Operations

Have all issues of the journal been completed and released on schedule?
Have all issues been on budget?

How frequently has the 90-day review cycle been met for refereed submissions?

How well is the backlog of accepted submissions being managed?

- **Relationships**

  Has consistent communication been kept with submitting authors, and have any concerns or complaints been handled in a timely and courteous manner?

  Has the editor constructively utilized the board of editors, and are individual board members made to feel they are used and valued?

  Has consistent communication been kept with peer review readers, and have any concerns or complaints been handled in a timely and courteous manner?

  Is the editor maintaining good communication and relations with the university press staff?

  Have timely quarterly reports been filed with the MHA board of directors?

  Has the editor been making efforts to be a public face for the journal?

- **Innovations**

  Does the editor have suggestions for increasing journal circulation, high-quality submissions, or other recommendations that the MHA board of directors should consider?

**Compensation and Terms of Employment**

- **Compensation**

  Compensation is open for negotiation.

  The editor may be assisted with expenses associated with attending the annual MHA conference and one other professional conference.

- **Term of service**
The editor serves a four-year term (producing sixteen journal issues), which is renewable at the discretion of the MHA board of directors, which under MHA by-laws has “final control” over the journal.

The editor will assume duties in January 2020, with responsibility for the content and production of journal volume 46, no. 3 for release in July 2020. The former editor will be available to assist during the transition period through the end of 2019.

**Application Instructions**

Candidates should submit a proposal to the search committee chair, Alex Baugh at alex_baugh@byu.edu. The proposal should include:

- a cover letter with a statement of qualifications and philosophy/vision for the Journal
- CV or resume
- two letters of recommendation (sent independently of the applicant to preserve confidentiality)
- writing or editing sample

Questions regarding the editor’s duties or the search process may similarly be sent to Alex Baugh.

**The deadline for applications**, including the receipt of letters of recommendation, is **May 3, 2019**.