

SWAAG Board Inquiry into the Future of *The Southwestern Geographer*

Results from the online poll

Andy Hilburn, Texas A&M International University – Chair
Michaela Buenemann – New Mexico State University – Secretary
Randy Pepler – University of Oklahoma – Treasurer
Dayna Dominguez – University of New Mexico – Student Representative
Victoria Johnson – University of Oklahoma – Student Representative

June 1, 2023



Poll Greeting/Solicitation

Dear SWAAG Members,

During the 2022 SWAAG Business Meeting, there was considerable debate regarding *The Southwestern Geographer* and its future. However, it was largely seen as a debate that required more input from the broader corpus of SWAAG members. This is a **brief poll (approx. 2-ish mins)** to gauge consensus on the future of *The Southwestern Geographer*. It is a **non-binding poll** and the results will not be used to ultimately determine the fate the of the journal. Rather, this poll is to allow SWAAG members to voice their opinions on the current state and future of *The Southwestern Geographer*. The aggregated results will be used for further SWAAG Board discussion on this matter and will be presented at the 2023 SWAAG Business Meeting and through a listserv message. Again, this is all **voluntary** and there will be an option at the end to have your results removed from aggregation and reporting. Thank you in advance for your response. Lastly, thanks to all who have served this journal over the years.

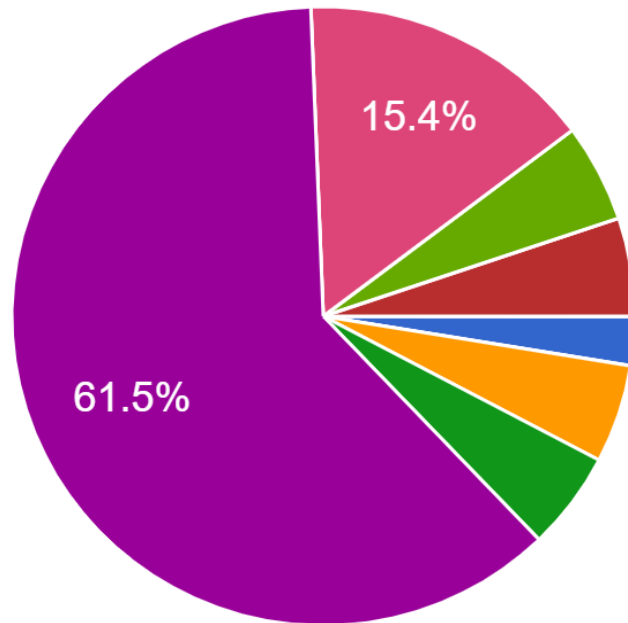
Sincerely,

Andy Hilburn (chair), Michaela Buenemann (secretary), Randy Pepler (treasurer), Dayna Dominguez (student representative), and Victoria Johnson (student representative)

Identifiers for Respondents

Please select the most fitting identifier for your role in geography below.

39 responses

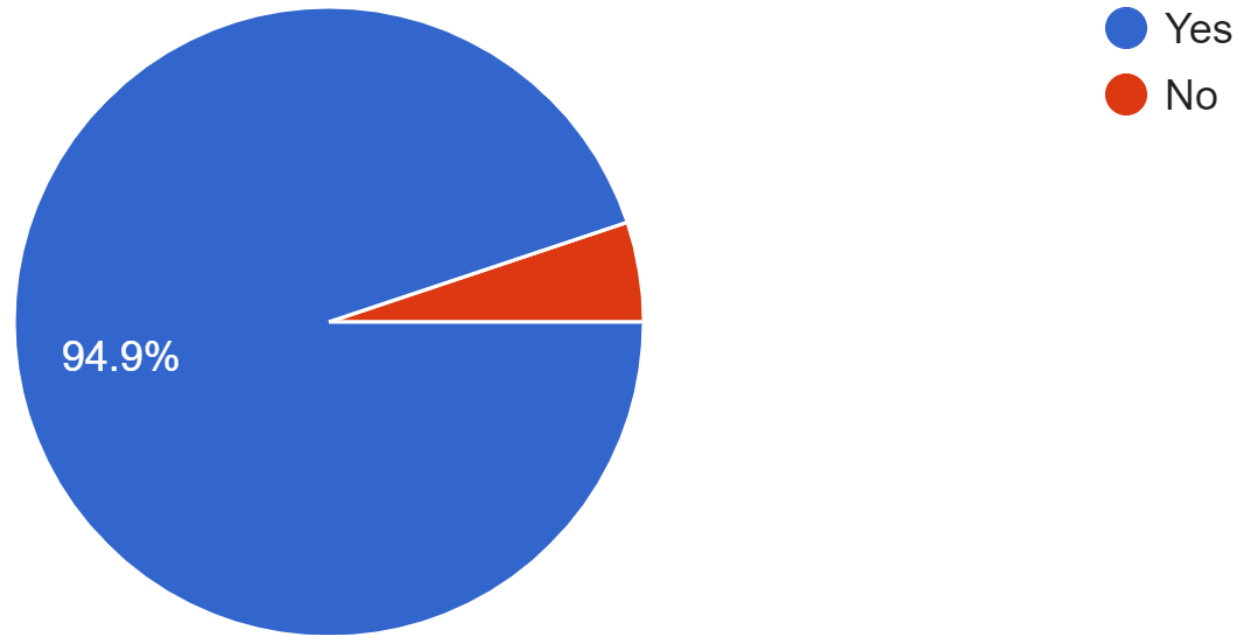


- Undergraduate Student
- MA/MS Student
- PhD Student
- Full-time Faculty - Non-tenure Track
- Full-time Faculty - Tenure Track/Tenured
- Part-time/Adjunct Faculty
- Retired/Emeritus Faculty
- University Researcher
- Government Sector Geographer
- Non-Profit/Private Sector Geographer
- Avocational Geographer/Geography Aficionado

Journal Awareness

Prior to this poll, were you aware that SWAAG had a journal?

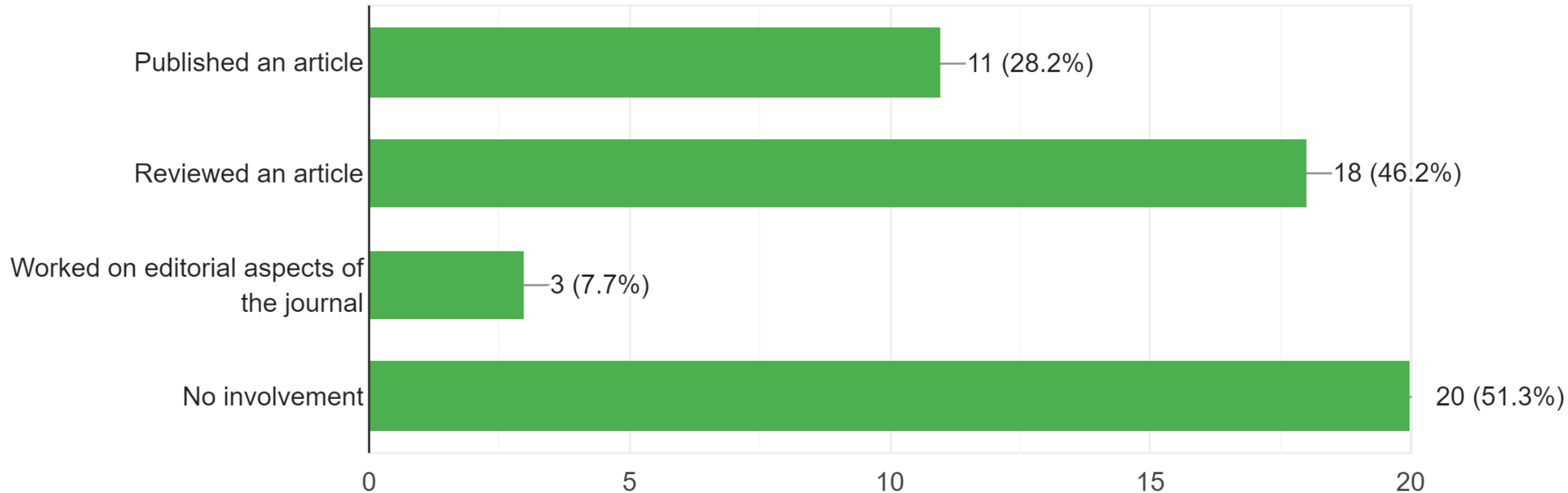
39 responses



SWG Participation

Please describe your previous involvement in The Southwestern Geographer (check all that apply)

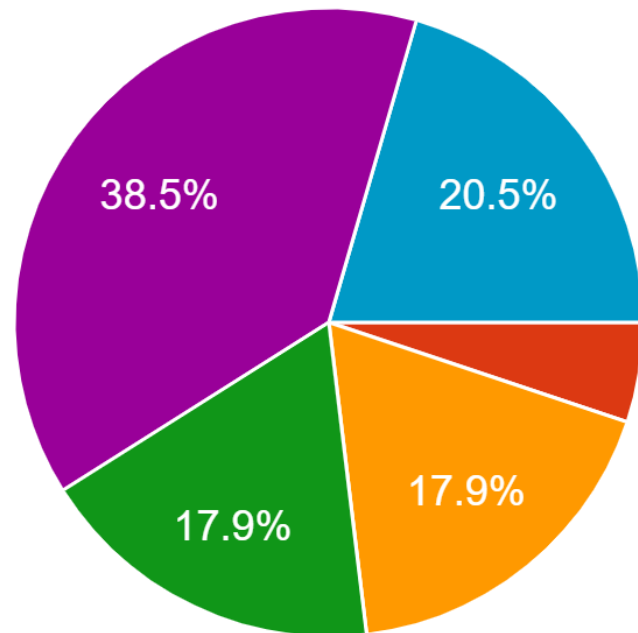
39 responses



Frequency of Use

Please describe the frequency with which you "use" (read, cite, assign...) articles from The Professional Geographer.

39 responses

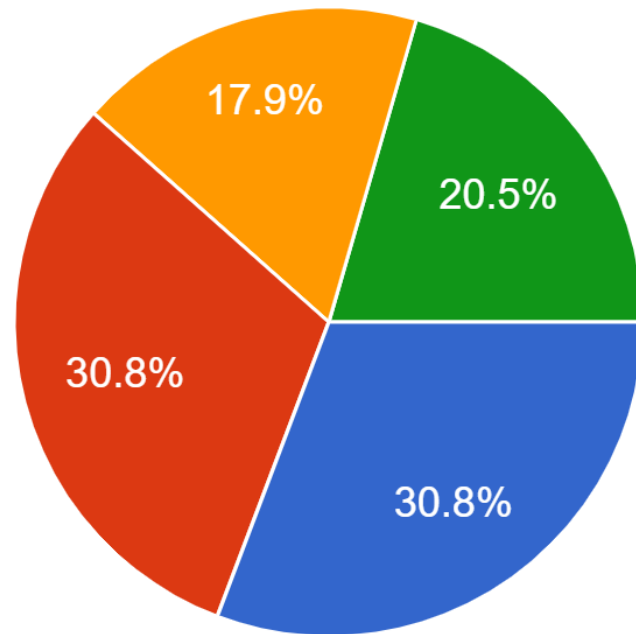


- Weekly
- Monthly
- Semesterly/Quarterly
- Annually
- More Rarely than the Above Options
- Never

Impact Factor and Incentive to Publish

Knowing that the journal does not have an impact factor or DOI, please indicate your feelings of hesitancy toward publishing a manuscript in it.

39 responses

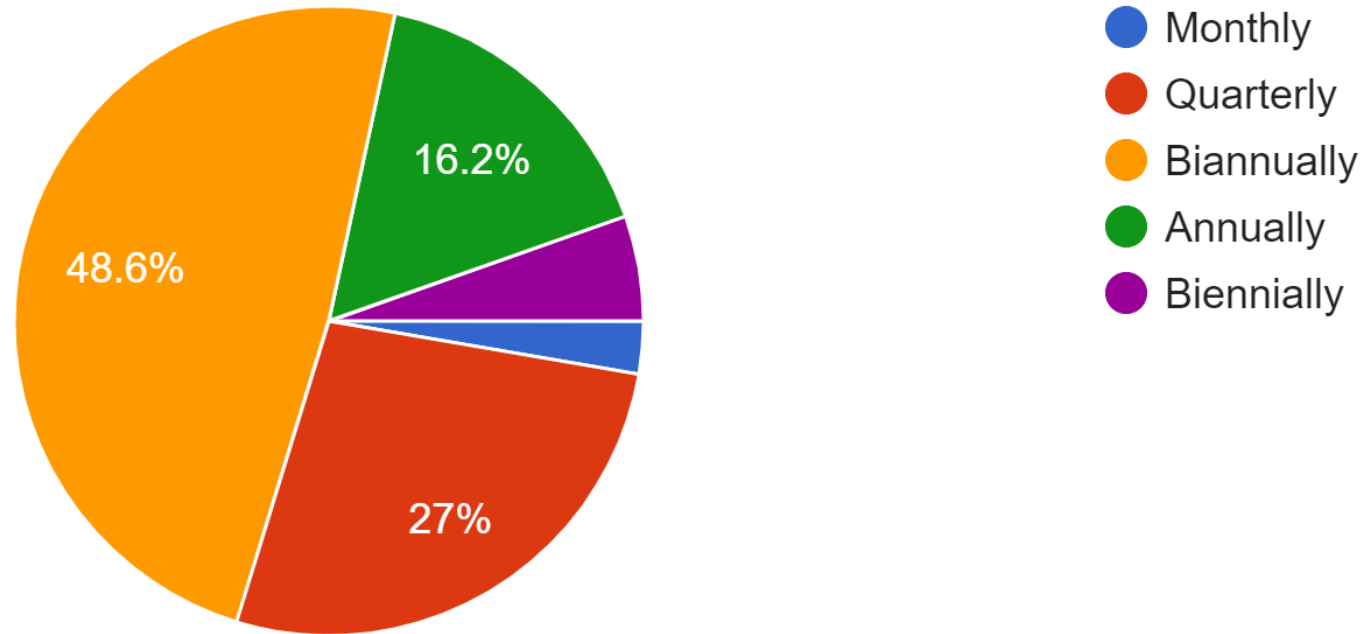


- No hesitancy
- A little hesitancy
- A lot of hesitancy
- Would not publish in a journal with no impact factor or DOI

Preferred Periodicity of Journal

Under practical circumstances, what should be the periodicity of the journal?

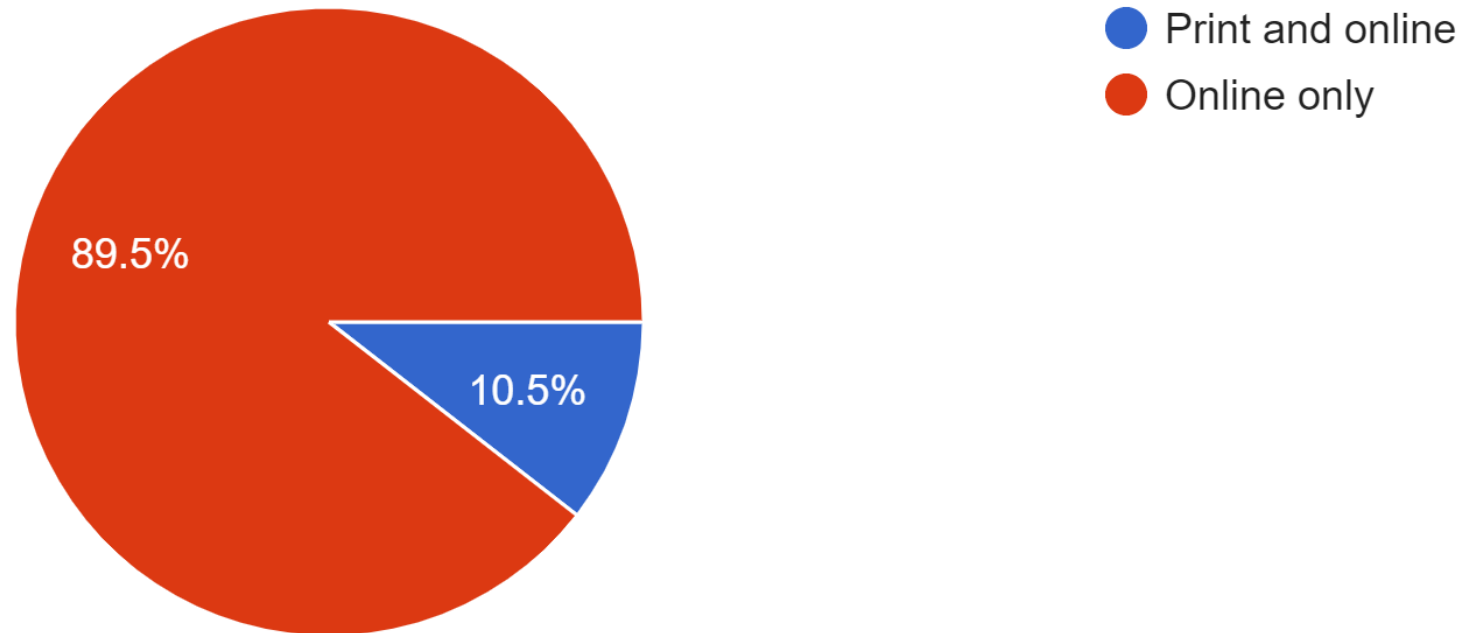
37 responses



Preferred Mode of Publication

Under practical circumstances, what should be the mode of publication for the journal?

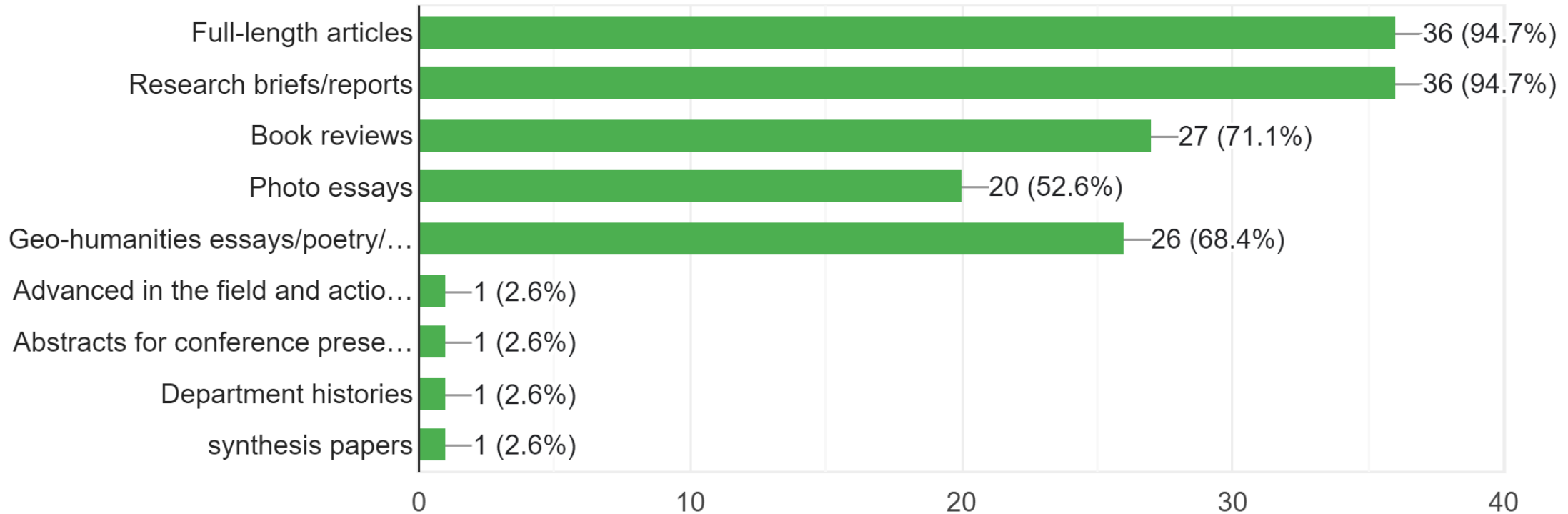
38 responses



Preferred Types of Publications

Under practical circumstances, what type of contributions should the journal publish? Check all that apply.

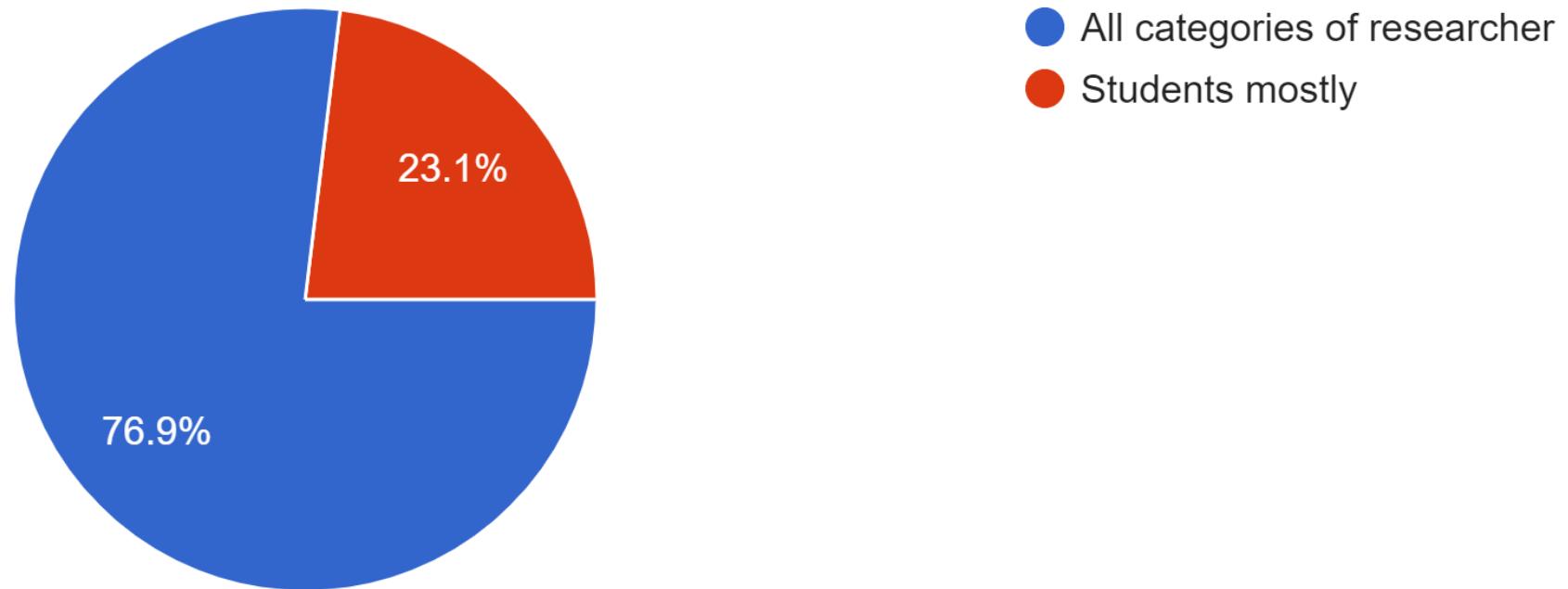
38 responses



Preferred Author Type Focus

Under practical circumstances, where should the journal's focus be regarding potential authors/contributors?

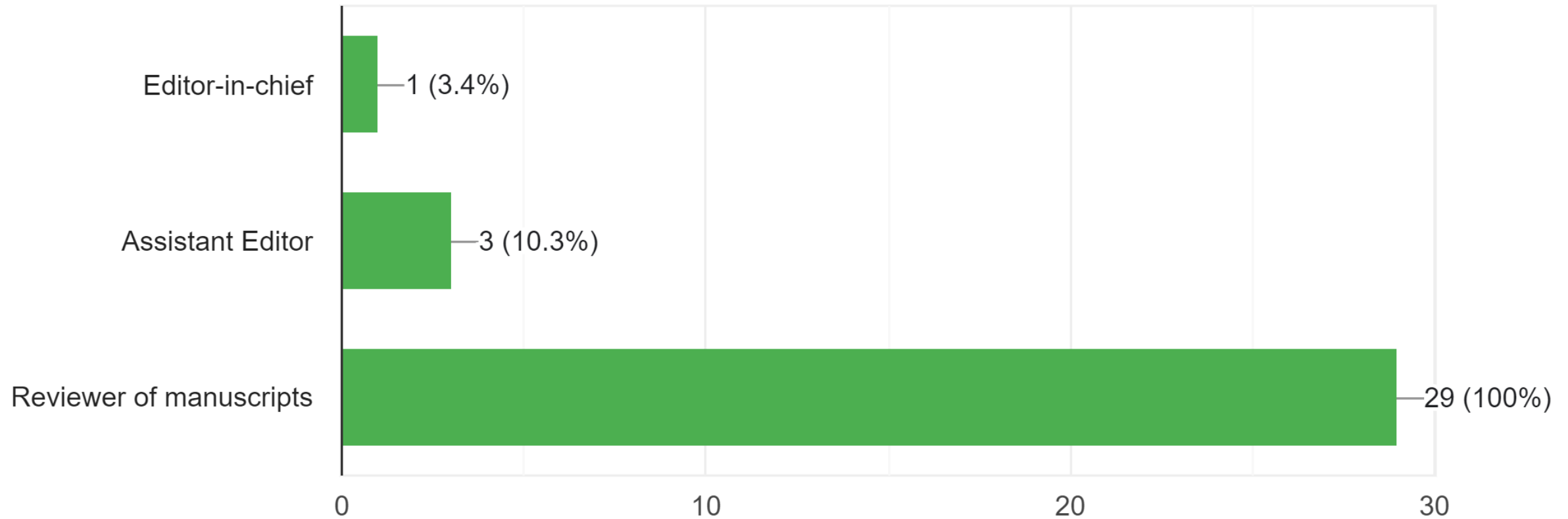
39 responses



Willingness to Serve by Capacity

Would you be willing to serve The Southwestern Geographer in some capacity? Check all that apply.

29 responses



Comments

“SWAAG members should be more diligent (myself included) in advertising the journal as a potential publication venue for undergraduate and graduate students. In my institution, some of our undergrads are engaged in very interesting research and the journal could be a great place for them to publish.”

“Online, quick editorial turn around, financial support for administrative assistant”

“Make more people aware of its existence. Make it sharable on social media.”

“I think something online and open access would be useful. Although all should be welcome, focusing on students would be a good thing.”

“Have more of a student focus.”

“[H]onestly, I don't see value of this journal. Human and financial resources dedicated to it would better serve SWAAG constituency in the form of successfully publishing or - more broadly - making the fruits of scholarly labor available at large.”

“The student-first vibe of SWAAG meetings is kind of the special sauce of the org (in my opinion) so it would be cool for the journal to be an extension of that vibe. One approach would be to make it the "first place a SWAAG student publishes" by offering diverse types of submissions as listed above. Maybe each volume only has 1-2 full peer reviewed research articles, but also 2-3 brief field reports, 1-2 photo essays, etc. Students could essentially work their way up from photo essay to research article as they're research develops through grad school; and get some ink on their CVs while they're in the region. Just one idea.”

Comments – cont.

“If we keep the journal, we should work to increase its visibility and reputation by getting an impact factor and DOI, actively soliciting submissions, etc. I'd like for SWAAG to have a journal but not in its current form. I don't currently have the bandwidth to take the lead on this kind of effort, but would strongly support it once the basics are in place.”

“I would be curious to know how many AAG regions have journals and how the frequency and readership of Southwestern compares to others. Also, how has the strategy of Southeastern Geographer differed from Southwestern, given its pursuit by that journal of an impact factor and upcoming transition to primarily online, print optional...Impact factor and indexing are important when it comes to having tenure track professors publish in the journal due to the emphasis on quality metrics in RPT documents. Without those, it seems like Southwestern may be more of a place for students to try their hand at publishing peer reviewed articles—still a valuable aim.”

“I like the idea of photo-essays. Indeed, I have one ready to submit.”

“No opinion at this time.”

“Remove the requirement to make an account/password. It seems like a small barrier, and I'm sure it's useful, but I definitely just gave up the idea of even reading the journal, much less publishing in it. I figured if I didn't want to make a password just to browse, other people probably wouldn't want to make one to read my work.”

“It would be nice if the journal could be twice a year, but once a year would be fine if it helped to generate a sufficient number of good quality, relevant articles (4-5) per issue. Although I personally prefer print and online, if it would create more difficulties to include the print version, I would be completely on board with a peer-reviewed online journal. To recap, twice a year print + online would be ideal; annually and online would be fine.”

Comments – cont.

“[H]ow about use openreview[?]”

“In order to revive this publication, it will need a clear mission. What purpose could this serve geographers in our region? Could it be a place for focus on southwestern research? Or a place for students/faculty to publish joint research? Or something more structured like one theme/one editor based on the theme/and essays related to that topic? Like a yearbook? Isn't that what the APCG does?”

“I think The Southwestern Geographer could be a great way for students to get experience publishing their work, and working on editing/reviewing material to be published. I also think it gives us the chance to be in community and dialogue with each other with the same spirit of our annual meetings and could reinvigorate people to participate in SWAAG activities.”

“Target students, like the Geographical Bulletin. Involve graduate students in the peer review process and encourage undergrad and grad students to submit.”

“I am unfortunately going to advocate for the journal's demise. It is difficult enough to get people to review for the journal and the idea of making this a student-run, or student focused journal just puts more labor on the backs of students. Additionally, the difficulty in getting faculty reviewers even for special issues that were thematically focused was hard. I worked with [name redacted] to try and help [name redacted] get reviewers and it went nowhere. We had quiet quitting going on years ago, partly because it was a journal no potential reviewer had heard of. Succinctly, our students are seeking larger venues to publish in and the SWG is not a viable option. If there was a relationship with a publisher, such as what SEDAAG has with UNC press, then perhaps there would be the support and ease of access that could help”.

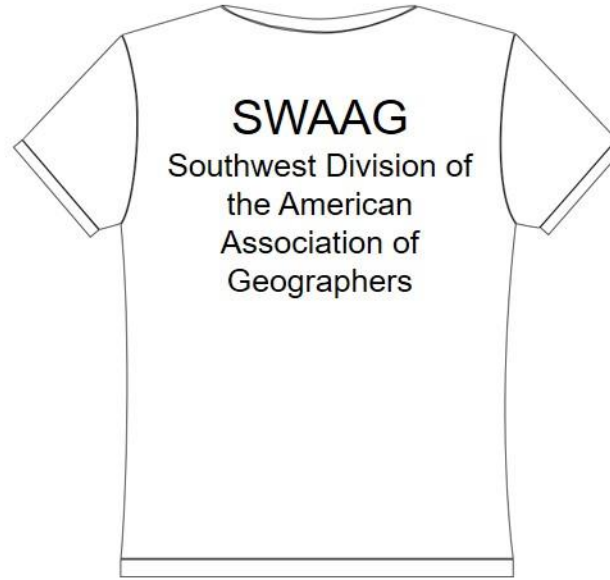
SWAAG 2023

LAREDO, TEXAS - NOV. 2-3

LA POSADA HOTEL



You don't want this to be the SWAAG tee, right? Please say you don't. Let's instead have a t-shirt design contest. Details below.



Get your designs in by 6/30!!!

T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST!!!!

Task: Design a logo (front only) for the SWAAG T-shirt.

Mandatory specs: **1)** Logo must be scalable, **2)** Logo must include "SWAAG" *and* "Southwest Division of the American Association of Geographers", **3)** Logo must be creator's own making and/or derived from open sources, **4)** Logo should not be single meeting specific

Req's: Creator/submitter must be a SWAAG member or a faculty/staff/student at a geography or geography-adjacent department in the SWAAG region (AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)

Deadline: June 30, 2023 @ 11:59pm Central DST

Judging: SWAAG Board will pick the top 3-5 submissions and SWAAG members and SWAAG listserv subscribers will have one week to vote on their favorite. Single top vote recipient will win **\$250** and have their logo on the tee shirt!

Submit logo to: swaagchair@gmail.com with your logo, name, affiliation, and contact information (name, mailing address, and email)