The Process of Publishing

Shannon McGillivray, Weber State University
Kelly Cuccolo, University of North Dakota
Matthew Rhodes, Colorado State University; Associate Editor Perspectives on Psychological Science and Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory and Cognition
Debi Brannan, Western Oregon University; Editor of the Psi Chi Journal

Webinar presented Tuesday January 28th, 5pm EST.
This webinar will guide you through the process of publishing, from drafting and formatting your manuscript to addressing reviewer comments and editing your paper.

1. From thesis to manuscript
2. Submitting your manuscript
3. Revisions
Thesis □ Manuscript

• The Good News
  • You CAN get your thesis published.

• The Bad News
  • It’s likely going to be a lot of work.

• Where do you start?
  • Start with a discussion with your advisor.
  • Ask their honest opinion as to whether they think the study and findings are publishable.
  • Keep in mind - this may involve running a 2nd or 3rd study, or even running more participants.
What do I need to change in my thesis?
- Likely - quite a bit. Be prepared for a substantial rewrite.
- Needs to be clear and concise.

Editing the Introduction
- Get rid of tangential literature, but make sure you have enough literature that does appropriately address your question.
- Getting to the point quickly in the Introduction
- Making sure you clearly explain the theoretical or practical contribution the manuscript makes.
Thesis Ⅲ Manuscript - Part 3

- Editing other sections of the paper
- Methods
  - Remember, it needs to be written for someone who has no clue what you’ve done.
  - Don’t lose sight of the clear and concise goal, though!

- Results
  - Be prepared to run new analyses, edit the existing Results section

- Discussion
  - Tighten up the Discussion. Hit on the major finds and what they suggest in light of your/other research.
  - Temper your conclusions.
Some other considerations
- Type?
- Sample size
- Analyses

Preparing
- Look at journal articles on similar topics
- Seek feedback
- Play reviewer

Other resources

Preparing to Submit Your Manuscript

- Finding a good journal
- Why Psi Chi Journal can be a good fit
  - Support given by Editor, Managing Editor, AE’s and Reviewers
- A journal’s aim and scope
- Check which journals your key references came from.
Preparing to Submit Your Manuscript Cont.:

• Specifications by journal
  • Formatting
• Editorial perspectives on initial submissions
  • Should not be a “class paper” but manuscript style
• Use APA formatting - 7th edition
Submitting Your Manuscript
What Happens When Your Paper is Submitted?

- The paper is first checked by the Managing Editor
  - Goal is to ensure required materials are in place.
  - e.g., reliability coefficients, correct APA formatting, JARS requirements.
- After being cleared, passed on to the Editor.
  - Some journals also involve an Associate Editor (e.g., Psychological Science).
Submitting Your Manuscript: The Magic of Triage

• The Editor determines whether the paper should be assigned for review.
  • “Does this paper have a chance?”
• Top 3 reasons to decline:
  • 1. Poor fit.
  • 2. Poor quality.
  • 3. Small sample size. Many authors are students, but we still adhere to APA requirements.
Submitting Your Manuscript: The Magic of Triage Continued

• Triage rates vary by journal and by editorial policy.
• If the paper has no chance at the journal better to be told ASAP.
  • A triage story.
In the *Psi Chi Journal* if it is passed through the editor it will then go to an Associate Editor who is an expert in that area. They will then pass it to 3 reviewers.
A Word On: Silence and Patience

- Timing of other projects
- Waiting period
- The reviewer/decision process is not a democracy

Psi Chi Journal - it takes approximately 10-12 weeks for feedback.
Submitting Your Manuscript
The Reviews Are In!

• The Editor will lay out the manuscript decision in an action letter.
• Potential outcomes:
  • Reject.
  • Major revision.
  • Minor revision.
  • Accept as is.
Submitting Your Manuscript: Revision

• An ideal decision letter will identify the central themes that need to be addressed.

• Pay great heed to this…

• But you may also be told “…attend to all reviewer comments.”
Submitting Your Manuscript: Approaching Revisions

• Copy and paste your decision letter into Word.
• Go through each point and write a response.
• Use the responses as a guide for your revision and the basis for your response letter.

The Psi Chi Journal gives a template on how to respond to reviewers - most journals do not do that.
Submitting Your Manuscript
Writing the Revision Letter

• Hang out near the line of obsequious.
• Never ignore points made Editor/reviewers (they will notice).
• Provide clear indications of where revisions can be found in the manuscript (e.g., p. 15, line 20).
• Learn how to do the humble rebuttal (e.g., “We apologize for not being clearer…”).
• If a requested change truly cannot, or you feel strongly should not, be made then clearly explain why in your response.
Editorial Perspectives on Revision Letters

• A strong, thorough letter is disarming.
• A poor letter can increase opposition.
• **An assumption:** If authors follow the recommendations made, most papers will be acceptable.
• Remember to be respectful. These are colleagues who took time to give *you* feedback.
Rejection

- Addressing review comments, multiple revisions
  - The value of being thorough and polite.
- Evaluate the reason for the rejection (i.e., was it an issue of fit, statistical methods, sample, etc).
- Seek feedback!
  - Colleagues, professors
- Preserve
Grit

• Once you get your foot in the door do not relent until they tell you to go away.
• A story of 4 revisions…
• The lesson: Keep plugging away!
  • Rare that an Editor would suggest multiple revisions if the manuscript will not be acceptable.