

Scholarship Made Easier: Best Practices for Writing and Publishing



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Participant Outcome

You will be able to maximize your production of well written manuscripts with a high likelihood of publication (presentation) in an appropriate journal (conference).

Main Sources

Boice, R. (2000). *Advice for new faculty members*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
Gray, T. (2005). *Publish and flourish: Become a prolific scholar*. Los Cruces, NM: Teaching Academy, New Mexico State University.
Mikhailova, E. and Nilson, L.B. (2007). Developing prolific scholars: The "fast article writing" methodology. *Journal of Faculty Development*, 21(2, April), 93-100.

Best Practices for Effective and Efficient Productivity

1. Get publication ideas: conferences, "further research needed," "limitations".
2. Set yourself up.
3. Follow a formula.
4. Control your writing time.
5. Write to communicate.

Best Practices *continued*

6. Stop before returns diminish and get feedback.
7. Select the "right" journal(s).
8. Query target journal editor.
9. Submit!
10. Study the reviews.

2. Set yourself up.

- Detach yourself from the product; stay open to criticism and change.
- Moderate emotions.
- "Wait actively" to develop plans.
- Start early.
- Get organized.

	“Wait actively” to plan.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Don't rush into next step, sentence. ■ Reflect first on <i>what</i> to say/do, <i>how</i> to say/do. Breathe. Visualize. Meditate. ■ Pause to notice alternatives and simplifications. ■ Do this anytime, anywhere. <i>≠ Procrastination, which puts focus on something else.</i>

	How to “wait actively”
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Close your eyes and imagine yourself at your work place. ■ Focus on something you're in the process of writing or designing. ■ Breathe deeply, relax, and visualize or reflect on the next steps.

	Start early.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Before you feel ready, pushed to start. ■ Outline, concept-map, free-write. ■ Give your subconscious time to conceive, organize, refine ideas. ■ Enjoy freedom from stress, pressure. ■ Do this almost anytime, anywhere.

	Get organized.
	<p><i>“Fast Organizing”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 2 e-folders: In Prep, Submitted ■ One e-folder per article, named key idea/title ■ Adjusted article checklist (sections) http://people.clemson.edu/~eleanam/ ■ Subfolders: Article, Data, References ■ Key lit (or links) in Refs subfolder

	3. Follow a formula.
	<p><i>“Fast Writing”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Select & flag model article. ■ Article subfolder: adjusted article shell http://people.clemson.edu/~eleanam/ ■ Write into shell, easiest sections first. ■ Tables & figures first, then simply describe in Results and Discussion.

	4. Control writing time.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Say “no” to <i>non-essential</i> tasks. ■ Limit time for <i>low-consequence</i> but <i>essential</i> tasks (email, ms reviewing, writing tests, grading). <i>They take as long as you allocate to them.</i> ■ Limit student time; draw boundaries. <i>See “Time and Work Mgmt Tips for Academics.”</i>

	Control time <i>continued</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Don't wait for long blocks of free time. ■ Research/write daily at least 15-30 minutes, and keep track. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quadrupled aver number of ms pages written/ revised in a year (17 to 64 pages) ■ <i>Write</i> something every day.

	Control time <i>continued</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep your flow from day to day; eliminate start-up time. ■ See your progress every day; increase your motivation. ■ Find writing buddy or group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increased aver number of ms pages written/ revised in a year by a factor of 9 (17 to 157 pages)

	5. Write to communicate.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Post thesis and write to it. ■ Write simply (words and sentences). ■ Avoid sweeping generalizations. ■ Use visuals to clarify. ■ ID key message for each paragraph = "key (topic) sentence" (→outline).

	Communicate <i>continued</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use transitions. ■ Read ms aloud. ■ Not a great writer? English your second language? Get an editor. Or use ServiceScape.com. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1-week or + delivery \$3.95/page (40pp or more) ■ 2-day delivery \$7.95/page (60pp or less) ■ 1-5-hour delivery 14.95\$/page (25pp or less)

	6. Stop before returns diminish, get feedback.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoid perfectionism. ■ Share with colleagues for advice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early drafts with non-experts (no need to impress) - Later drafts with experts—and ask for journal recommendations ■ Revise to readers' comments.

	7. Select "right" journals.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Colleagues ■ Recent foci (type, content, methods) ■ Your references (niche) ■ Specialized readership (niche) ■ Special issue (niche) ■ Lag time in reviews and in press ■ Impact: www.journal-ranking.com ■ Have back-up journals in mind.

8. Query journal editor.

- Email.
- Ask about interest/fit.
- Emphasize *importance* of your ms.
- Wait 2 weeks, then resend.
- Reply w/thanks to any response.

9. Submit!

- Avoid electronic submissions on Mondays and Fridays (busy).
- Follow journal's rules (see web site or issue):
 - Style (e.g., APA, MLA); use Endnote or RefWorks to convert.
 - Length limitations
 - File format (.doc, .docx, .pdf, LaTeX, etc.)

Submit! *continued*

- Submission (cover) letter to editor
 - Refer to query email.
 - Other reasons for *this* journal, audience
 - Emphasize *importance* of your ms.
 - Not submitted or published elsewhere
 - Contact info of corresponding author
 - Request receipt confirmation

Submit! *continued*

"Fast Record-keeping"

- File receipt and record journal's log-in info in article e-folder.
- Move e-folder to "In Submission."
- Keep spreadsheet listing of submissions.

Submit! *continued*

- While waiting for a response...
 - Don't pester the editor.
 - Email cordial inquiries after 4 months.

10. Study reviews.

- Don't take them personally.
- Expect differences among them.
- It's your job to be clear to *all* readers.
- Decide whether R&R is worth it.
- Respond professionally, gratefully.
- List changes in resubmission letter to editor; justify those not made without insulting reviewers.