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Submitting Articles for Publication

Connie Foster

Western Kentucky University, connie.foster@wku.edu

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Submitting Articles for Publication (Connie Foster)

1. Study carefully the aims and scope of journals under consideration. In the front and/or back matter, the editors will state the scope of the journal, review policies, and the format required. Above all, look for the peer-review process. Move on if not peer-reviewed.

2. Don’t be deceived by invitations to publish that come mostly via emails. See “Beyond Beall’s List” Better understanding predatory publishers,” (C&RL News, March 2015, 132-135). Scrutinize the email invitations and research the journal. Make sure each is legitimate, relevant to your expertise, and recognized by peers.

3. Check affiliations of editorial board and editors and clarity of policies and fees if any. Your colleagues can refer you to credible publication outlets.

4. Aim for the top journals (national, international, well-known publishers), and then, if rejected, submit to others like regional or state journals or newsletters.

5. Find a good match for your topic; some journal titles can be a bit misleading. If uncertain, email the journal editor and ask if your Abstract might work. Usually editors will be delighted to get an inquiry and respond about possibilities or suggest ways to focus or enhance your proposal.

6. Avoid co-authoring. This is debatable. Who really does the work? Who really gets the credit? Hard to say sometimes. Sometimes first authors, collaborators and others pull together joint submissions. You be the best judge of how to engage another in a research project.

7. Know the guidelines for the submission (abstract, placement of footnotes, style guide – most are using APA now but a few still use Chicago—any spelling conventions—like US spelling or British. In other words, study carefully the requirements). Certainly citations/credits for content not your own!

8. Expect and learn from edits and rejections. Take them to heart as much as possible.

9. Negotiate for a copy in TopSCHOLAR, our institutional repository. Do not be afraid this will affect your acceptance, but study again copyright and distribution statements if you need to negotiate. Check the Sherpa/Romeo site for publisher agreements pertaining to open access.
WRITING WELL

On Writing Well, The Elements of Style, a good handbook (Harbrace) or online style manual and a dictionary are essential resources.

If your manuscript is written well, the editorial review process will be much more in your favor. Each tenure-eligible faculty here will receive a favorite of mine, On Writing Well, and each library location will have a circulating copy. It is fun reading; it is sensible reading, and the points are timeless, even if grammar changes and split infinitives or ending a sentence with a preposition become acceptable.

Have a colleague and someone outside your expertise read your proposed publication. If the editor cannot understand what you are saying and if a novice has no clue, then you need to hit the keyboard again and again. This tip applies to presentations as well. While the experience can be awkward, practicing before a small group is valuable for feedback and jittery nerves. The same for an article—feedback (constructive criticism) is a great learning device.

CREATING YOUR PROMOTION PORTFOLIO

1. Present your case for promotion (and tenure) because an unknown provost will review and ask questions about quality, quantity and overall merit of your application for promotion or promotion and tenure. This person does not know the intricacies of your discipline; you must make clear how what you have achieved is significant for library/information science.

2. Know your department’s criteria. Omit anything irrelevant even if you want to include and mark as non-peer-reviewed or want to display creative talents not related to your position.

3. The provosts scrutinize each request, and the process will only tighten as we move along.

4. One most important category that has changed for some of us: Serving as an editor in any capacity (journal, column editor, reviewing proposals) is SERVICE. Writing book reviews is SERVICE, not scholarly research as it has been categorized by us in the past.