Professional Writing in the Humanities

Charlotte Research Scholars (CRS)
Dr. Sarah Minslow
English Department
Today

• Types of professional writing

• Writing to disseminate your research

• The importance of style guides

• Practice

• Tips and advice
WHAT KINDS OF PROFESSIONAL WRITING WILL YOU DO?
Possible Writing Types

- Graduate school applications
  - Statement of purpose
- Fellowship applications
  - Project proposals
  - Progress reports
- Grant applications
- Curriculum Vitaes (CVs), resumes, cover letters
- Abstracts and conference papers
- Journal articles
- Books proposals/manuscripts
- Emails, recommendations letters, etc.
LET'S LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES

a) Fellowship Project Proposal
b) Grant proposal
c) Curriculum Vitae
d) Abstract/Conference Paper
e) Articles
Focus: Disseminating Your Research
Avenues for Dissemination

- Conference presentations
- Journals
- Books
- Self-publishing
- Social media
  - LinkedIn
  - Academia.edu
2 big questions

• **Who is my intended audience?**
  • Who needs to know?
  • Who cares? And why?
  • Who would be most interested?
  • Who are the key stakeholders?

• **What is my purpose?**
  • To inform
  • To persuade
  • To get feedback/develop my ideas
  • To advance my career
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW
Conference Papers

- Find the right conference with the right audience
  - Some conferences are considered “more prestigious” than others, so aim high and choose wisely.
  - Databases (often sponsored by professional organizations)

- Usually submit a 200-300 word abstract

- Receive acceptance

- Write paper (time limits!)

- Register for conference

- Present paper

- Revise paper to submit for publication to a relevant journal
Journal Articles

• How do I find the right journal?
  • Read the journal
  • When you do your own research, which journals do you use?

• How do I know what the journal article should look like?
  • Submission guidelines

General rules for journal article submissions:
• Only submit an article to one journal at a time.
• If you do a thesis, try to publish ~10% as journal articles.
• Stick to guidelines.
• Stroke the egos of editors. (Ssshhh!)
Process

- Submit
- Receive acceptance
- Peer-reviewed (3-6 months)
- Revisions
- Publication (1-2 years from original submission)
Books

• Finding a publisher

• Proposals
  • It’s a sales pitch!

• Be prepared to spend a long time on the topic

• Work well with editors
Self-publishing & Social Media

- Academia.edu
- LinkedIn
- Blog
- Website

36 Rules of Social Media
Referencing

- **MLA Style**: English and the Humanities
- **APA Style**: Psychology and the Social Sciences
- **Chicago/Turabian Notes**: History and the Humanities
- **Chicago/Turabian Author-Date**: Physical, Natural, and Social Sciences

SAMPLE PAPERS
Some Tips and Advice

- Always be professional
- Always proofread
- Always be consistent (especially in referencing)
- Titles should be interesting and descriptive
- Adhere to word/page/time limits
- Demonstrate an awareness of the field
- Put your argument/thesis up front and explain why it’s original or new
- Choose the right journal & circulate articles
- Write book reviews
- Introduce yourself at conferences and network
- Get a peer review circle going
Any questions?