Professional Writing in the Humanities

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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
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

If I'd known they wanted me to use all this info— I would never have asked for it!
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. (Ssshhhh!)
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?