

## Part 2: Journal Article Submission Process

- You finished writing. Now what?
- Brief overview of submitting and revising a journal article manuscript



# Steps of the Process & Who is Involved

- You submit an article (need cover letter)



# Ex: Initial Submission Cover Letter (excerpt)

Dear EDITOR,

This letter accompanies a manuscript (Applying to  
Learning: An Analysis of Instructional Medical Animation  
an original research article in *Medical Education*.  
has not received any external funding, nor are there any potential conflicts of interest.

Title, the name of the journal, the type of  
manuscript; conflict of interest statement (can  
also be in the last paragraph)

<Short background + summary paragraph >

Brief, lay friendly background.  
Mention what is novel. Briefly  
report findings.

An earlier version of this study was presented at the 2012 annual meeting of the American  
Educational Research Association. I am in  
reference. The current paper has not been  
consideration at any other journal.

Author(s) information; clause about data not being  
under consideration elsewhere, conflict of interest  
statement (if not in paragraph 1), and ideally add  
that all procedures were conducted in accordance  
with APA ethical principles and were approved by  
the institution's IRB.

This manuscript has been read and approved  
requirements for authorship, and we have

We believe these findings will appeal to the readership of *Medical Education* and will help  
advance scholarship in multimedia learning in the medical  
consideration, and we look forward to your decision.

Why the manuscript is a good fit for  
the journal? Use direct quotes from  
that journal's mission statement

Sincerely,



# Steps of the Process & Who is Involved

- You submit an article (need cover letter)
  - article goes to editor-in-chief, then to associate editor
- You wait for a response from the editor
  - associate editor sends your paper to 3 reviewers
  - reviewers submit their reviews
  - editor looks at reviews and your article, makes a decision



# Types of Decisions

- Acceptance:
  - Pure Accept (extremely rare)
  - Revise minor problem(s) and resubmit
  - Revise major problem(s) and resubmit
- Rejection:
  - Rejected but will entertain a resubmit
  - Rejected and dismissed
  - Rejected by editor



# Why do Editors Reject?

- Too narrow/broad, off topic

Journal-specific

- Not scholarly (e.g., poor documentation, tone of paper)

Author-specific

- Not original, not significant
- Theoretically or methodologically flawed

Reviewer, journal, or author-specific



# Why do Editors Reject?

“Dear author/s,

Thank you for your recent submission to *JOURNAL 1*...

As you will see, the reviewers see **considerable merit** in the issues that you are addressing...

At the same time, the reviewers have raised some **questions about the overall strength of the findings** and whether this investigation provides evidence that is compelling enough **to support the conclusions advanced** in the paper. I’m afraid that I share these concerns as well...

In conclusion, I’m afraid that the **evidence reported in the paper is not as definitive as I would like for publication in *JOURNAL 1***, despite the importance of the issues that you are addressing. I, therefore, have decided **to decline** the opportunity to consider the paper any further for publication in *JOURNAL 1*.”



# Embrace Rejections

- One of the most effective ways to improve your scholarly work is to have other scholars tell you what is wrong with your writing. Reviewers will be blunt and direct in ways that friends and colleagues might not be.
- Rejections are **not** personal attacks. Most journals engage in a process of blind peer-review. They (usually) have no idea whose paper they are reading. They are judging the paper for its scholarly contribution, ensuring the integrity of the journal they represent.





# Embrace Rejections

- Revising articles in response to reviewer suggestions develops your skills as a writer in a scholarly community. For example, criticism offers...
  - 1) an opportunity to be more aware of how other scholars read and understand your material
  - 2) an opportunity to learn how to anticipate and respond to potential criticism in future articles (thus, less time spent revising future work)



# Steps of the Process & Who is Involved

- You get an email from the associate editor with a “revise and resubmit” decision
- Respond to reviews by:
  1. altering manuscript
  2. documenting changes
  3. writing another cover letter & resubmitting



# How to Respond to “Revise & Resubmit”

- 1) Often, editors will divide their concerns into “major” and “minor” issues
- 2) Take note of this, and also note similarities among reviewers
- 3) Respond to EVERYTHING
- 4) Make changes (include page numbers or paste new text into the response letter)
- 5) Get feedback from co-authors, revise again
- 6) Write cover letter to editor



# How to Respond in your Cover Letter

*EDITOR:* “...Second, and **that was a more important concern for me.** Why CTML as a theory and are there any competing theories? To be quite honest, I don’t know...I think that an addition of these arguments to your paper would seriously strengthen your paper. So, please provide a more explicit rationale as to why you decided to use CTML as a theoretical framework for your analyses.”

*RESPONSE:* “Although there are many general theories of learning, there is no theory as comprehensive as CTML for learning from multimedia materials. **We have attempted to convey this fact (first paragraph, page 4), as well as any major caveats associated with CTML (pages 5, 6), in the revised manuscript in an effort to present a more critical perspective.**”



# How to Respond in your Cover Letter

Sample cover letter text:

“Both Reviewer 1 and 2 **suggested that we add additional analyses** that compared the last habituation trial to the test trials. Reviewer 1, for example, suggested that this may help to clarify the null results of Experiment 2. **The analysis has been included for both Experiment 1 and Experiment 2. In our view, it solidifies the idea that** infants in the non-sticky mittens condition (and those in Experiment 2) responded qualitatively differently to the events than infants in the sticky-mittens condition of Experiment 1 because...

“**We would also like to thank the reviewer for directing us to the excellent paper** by Schlottman, Ray, and Surian (2009). **We have now included a brief discussion** of the ‘basic’ causality representation to which they refer. Consequently, the text reads...”



# Resubmission Cover Letter

Dear AUTHOR,

I'm appending four reviews of your JAS submission. All four reviewers see merit in the manuscript, but **reviewers 3 and 4 especially offer significant criticisms that seem reasonable to me**. In this circumstance, I cannot accept the present manuscript for publication, but I would be prepared to consider a version that was **heavily revised to meet the reviewers' criticisms and suggestions**.

If you are happy to revise your manuscript...

Dear EDITOR,

Thank you for your letter of April 29, 2009 and for the opportunity to resubmit my article, "Modeling Wood Acquisition Strategies from Archaeological Charcoal Remains," for potential publication in the *Journal of Archaeological Science*. I found the extensive and well-reasoned comments of the four reviewers to be most helpful in improving the manuscript. In the attached manuscript, I have **significantly revised the theoretical structure of the argument in line with the reviewers' comments** and addressed several minor suggestions and corrections outlined in the reviews. In this letter, I detail the changes made to the manuscript based on the four reviews and your editorial comments.

The major criticism of Reviewers 3 and 4 dealt with...

Article title re-stated; include manuscript ID if you have one

Comment about how helpful the reviews were

Statement that article is now significantly revised, brief description of changes made, and indicate that letter details changes



# Steps of the Process & Who is Involved

- After resubmitting, you wait while *either*:
  - the associate editor sends your paper out for another round of review (typically to the same 3 reviewers)
  - OR editor makes a decision him/herself



# Once it's accepted...you're not done!

“Dear author/s,

It is a pleasure to **accept** your manuscript...in its current form for publication in *JOURNAL*...

Please read the instructions below carefully:

## FINAL MANUSCRIPT

- 1) Ideal format for the final files...
- 2) Please provide a cover page with the author details and acknowledgments...

## COPYRIGHT FORM

Please sign the attached Copyright Transfer Agreement and send it directly to the publishers at the address below...

## PUBLICATION PROCESS

Unfortunately at this stage we cannot tell you which issue your work will appear in as the contents of each issue are decided nearer the time...At present the **generation of proofs** is not immediate, so you may have to wait to receive them...”





# After Acceptance

- Schedule additional articles
- Aim for diverse journal outlets
- May be a reviewer for a journal
  
- GRADUATE!



# Further Resources

- Introduction to Publishing Journal Articles Workshop  
[https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/workshop\\_videos](https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/workshop_videos)
- GWC Writing Consultation One-on-One appointments  
<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/appointments>
- Online Writing Groups  
<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/writing-groups>



# Further Resources

## Recommended Reading:

- Silvia, P. J. (2007). *How to write a lot: A practical guide to productive academic writing*. American Psychological Association.
- Schimel, J. (2012). *Writing science: how to write papers that get cited and proposals that get funded*. OUP USA.
- Gopen, G. D., & Swan, J. A. (1990). The science of scientific writing. *American Scientist*, 78(6), 550-558.



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