How To Get Published & Review
An Introduction to Scholarly Publishing

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What will we cover in this workshop?

- Understanding scholarly publishing
- How to get published
- How not to Publish - publishing ethics
- Peer Review
‘How To Get Published’
Understanding scholarly publishing
Today’s research environment

Every year, 1.2 million researchers begin their careers.

...where the young researchers need guidance.
Peer-Reviewed Journal Growth 1665-2001

Source:
M A Mabe The number and growth of journals
Serials 16(2).191-7, 2003

Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society (London)

2011
40 million articles in >23,000 journals by >2,000 publishers
Role of Scientific Publications

- **Registration**: The timestamp to officially note who submitted scientific results first
- **Certification**: Perform peer-review to ensure the validity and integrity of submissions
- **Dissemination**: Provide a medium for discoveries and findings to be shared
- **Preservation**: Preserving the minutes and record of science for posterity
The Publishing Cycle

- 30-60% rejected by >7,000 editors
- 10 million articles in archive
- >480 million downloads by >30 million researchers in >180 countries!
- 9.8 million articles available
- Nearly ½ million articles accepted
- 500,000+ reviewers

- Nearly ½ million articles accepted
The Digital Age of Publishing

- Solicit and manage submissions
- Archive and promote use
- Publish and Disseminate
- Manage Peer Review
- Edit and Prepare
- Production
- Production tracking systems
- Author submission & Editorial systems
- Mobile content
- Electronic platforms
- Electronic warehousing
- Journal Backfiles eReference Works
What is Open Access Publishing?

The History

- Free availability on the public internet
- Permitting users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles
- Crawl them for indexing
- Licenses to allow use and re-use without financial, legal, or technical barriers
- Accessible online without cost to readers, but not costless to produce. So, funding needed by authors, institutions, funders or others
Publishing with Open Access

• Elsevier’s open access publication fees are market based & provide competitive prices which range from 500-5000 USD.

• Offer authors a choice of user licenses, including Creative Commons.

• Developed a number of institutional and funding body agreements to help streamline processes and manage open access policies.

For more Open Access information:
http://www.elsevier.com/about/open-access/open-access-options
Publishers provide free or low cost access to thousands of peer-reviewed journals to public institutions in over 100 developing countries.
What is it that distinguishes an excellent article from a poor one?

"All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."
George Orwell - Animal Farm
What Makes A Strong Manuscript?

- Clear & useful message
- A logical manner
- Readers grasp the research
Are You Ready To Publish?

- Lack of scientific interest, not substantial advance the field
- Outdated work
- Duplicating previously published work
- Incorrect conclusions

- Present new, original results or methods
- Rationalize, refine, or reinterpret published results
- Reviewing or summarizing a particular subject or field

Not ready – outdated work

New + original results

Ready + considered
Types Of Manuscripts

- Full articles
- Letters or short communications
- Review papers
Citations per Article Type
Your paper is **worthless** if no one reads, uses, or cites it

A research study is meaningful only if...

- It’s clearly described, so
- Someone else can use it in his/her studies
- It arouses other scientists’ interest, and
- Allows others to reproduce the results

By submitting a manuscript you are basically trying to sell your work to your community
Practical Advice

- Evaluate your research area
  - Journals, authors, citations, publications per year (Scopus)

- Evaluate which journal is right for your article
  - Impact Factor
  - Alternative metrics (H-index, SNIP, SCImago)
  - Journal Analyzer (Scopus)

- Find out more about the journals
  - Who are the editors?
  - Guide for authors
Evaluate your research area – free tools
Evaluate your research area – in Scopus

“Save as Alert”: Remind yourself about the new findings.
Evaluate your research area – in Scopus

• **Ancestry Approach:** acquiring a research paper and examining its references „backward searching“

• **Descendency Approach:** identify a paper’s offspring: those recent publications that reference the earlier work „forward searching“
Review the development of your research area

Check the phase in the life-cycle of your research topic.

N.B. Decline may be caused by backlog in publication
Choose the right journal

Do not just “descend the stairs”

Top journals

Field-specific top journals

Other field-specific journals

National journals

DO NOT gamble by submitting your manuscript to more than one journal at a time. International ethics standards prohibit multiple/simultaneous submissions, and editors DO find out!
Choose a target journal

- Use your own references
- Check databases to find in what journals most articles on your topic were published
Is this a prestigious journal?

Impact Factor

*the average annual number of citations per article published*

- For example, the 2011 impact factor for a journal would be calculated as follows:
  - \( A \) = the number of times articles published in 2009 and 2010 were cited in indexed journals during 2011
  - \( B \) = the number of "citable items" (usually articles, reviews, proceedings or notes; not editorials and letters-to-the-Editor) published in 2009 and 2010
  - 2011 impact factor = \( A/B \)
  - e.g. 600 citations = 2
    150 + 150 articles
SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), is a measure of the scientific prestige of scholarly sources: value of weighted citations per document. A source transfers its own 'prestige', or status, to another source through the act of citing it.

- A citation from a source with a relatively high SJR is worth more than a citation from a source with a lower SJR.

Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) measures contextual citation impact by weighting citations based on the total number of citations in a subject field.

- The impact of a single citation is given higher value in subject areas where citations are less likely, and vice versa.

www.journalmetrics.com
Is this a prestigious journal?

Other tools of journal evaluation have become available (e.g. in Scopus)
Determine the level of your achievements: *h index*

**Impact factor** and the **SJR**: based on *journal evaluation*

**h-index**: accounts for a researcher’s body of work without the influence of other factors

Dr. Jorge E. Hirsch, University of San Diego
Assessment often highly based on publications and citations

“not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted”

Albert Einstein (1879-1955)
Choosing The Right Journal

Visit e.g. elsevier.com to find:

- Aims & Scope
- Accepted types of articles
- Readership
- Current hot topics

- Ask for help from your supervisor or colleagues
- DO NOT submit manuscripts to more than one journal at a time
Read The ‘Guide for Authors’

- Find it on the journal homepage of the publisher, e.g. Elsevier.com
- Keep to the Guide for Authors in your manuscript
- Editors do not like wasting time on poorly prepared manuscripts
Do publishers correct language?

No! It is the Author’s responsibility...

...but resources are available

http://webshop.elsevier.com
How not to Publish
Publishing Ethics
Publish AND Perish! – if you break ethical rules

- International scientific ethics have evolved over centuries and are commonly held throughout the world.

- Scientific ethics are not considered to have national variants or characteristics – there is a single ethical standard for science.

- Ethics problems with scientific articles are on the rise globally.
Plagiarism high amongst ethics issues

Sample of cases reported to Elsevier Journals publishing staff in 2012
What is Plagiarism?

“Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit, including those obtained through confidential review of others’ research proposals and manuscripts.”

Federal Office of Science and Technology Policy, 1999

“Presenting the data or interpretations of others without crediting them, and thereby gaining for yourself the rewards earned by others, is theft, and it eliminates the motivation of working scientists to generate new data and interpretations.”

Professor Bruce Railsback
Department of Geology, University of Georgia

M. Errami & H. Garner, A tale of two citations
What may be Plagiarised?

Work that can be plagiarised includes…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words (Language)</th>
<th>Graphs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td>Illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writings</td>
<td>Lectures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Representations</td>
<td>Printed Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Programs</td>
<td>Electronic Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagrams</td>
<td>Any Other Original Work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher Education Academy, UK
A researcher notices a paragraph in a previously published article that would be suitable as the Materials & Methods in his article.

The researcher decides to copy that paragraph into his paper without quotes or attribution.

Has the Researcher violated any ethical boundaries?
Correct Citation is Key

Crediting the work of others (including your advisor’s or your own previous work) by citation is important for at least three reasons:

1. To place your own work in context
2. To acknowledge the findings of others on which you have built your research
3. To maintain the credibility and accuracy of the scientific literature
Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is restating someone else's ideas while not copying their actual words verbatim

Unacceptable:

Using exact phrases from the original source without enclosing them in quotation marks

Emulating sentence structure even when using different words

Emulating paragraph organization even when using different wording or sentence structure

– Statement on Plagiarism

Department of Biology, Davidson College.

http://www.bio.davidson.edu/dept/plagiarism.html
Figure Manipulation

As long as they don’t obscure or eliminate info present in the original image

Brightness
Contrast
Colour Balance
Nonlinear adjustments

Must be disclosed in the figure legend

Enhanced
Obscured
Moved
Removed
Introduced
Figure Manipulation

Example - Different authors and reported experiments

Am J Pathol, 2001
Can you plagiarise your own work?

“Text re-cycling/Self-plagiarism”

A grey area, but best to err on the side of caution: always cite/quote even your own previous work

You publish a paper and in a later paper, copy your Introduction word-for word and perhaps a figure or two without citing the first paper

Editors may conclude that you intentionally exaggerated your output
Plagiarism Detection

Cross Check Initiative (2009)

Huge database of 30+ million articles, from 50,000+ journals, from 400+ publishers

Software alerts Editors to any similarities between the article and this huge database of published articles

Many Elsevier journals now check every submitted article using CrossCheck
The article of which the authors committed plagiarism: it won’t be removed from ScienceDirect. Everybody who downloads it will see the reason of retraction...
Re-cap

- When in doubt, cite!
- Never cut & paste (even to save time in drafts)
- If you suspect: REPORT
- Responsibility
‘How To Get Published’
Reviewing
Principles of Peer Review

- A well understood concept
- Improving, validating, registering, and preserving research
- Without it there is no control in scientific communication
Purpose of Peer Review

- Ensures best quality papers are selected
- Improves quality of the published paper
- Ensures previous work is acknowledged
- Detects plagiarism and fraud
- Plays a central role in academic career development
Role of Reviewer and tasks

- The peer review process is based on trust
- The scientific publishing enterprise depends largely on the quality and integrity of the reviewers
- Reviewer should write reports in a collegial and constructive manner
- Treat manuscripts in the same manner as if they were your own
Reviewers look at:

- Importance and clarity of research hypothesis
- Originality of work
- Delineation of strengths and weaknesses of methodology, experimental / statistical approach, interpretation of results
- Writing style and figure / table presentation
- Ethics concerns (animal / human)
Review Process

Regular articles are initially reviewed by at least two reviewers.

When invited, the reviewer receives the Abstract of the manuscript.

Articles are revised until the two reviewers agree on either acceptance or rejection, or until the editor decides that the reviewer comments have been addressed satisfactorily.

The reviewers’ reports help the Editors to reach a decision on a submitted paper.

The reviewer recommends; the editor decides!

If there is a notable disagreement between the reports of the reviewers, a third reviewer may be consulted.

The anonymity of the reviewers is strictly maintained.

Unless a reviewer asks to have his/her identity made known to the authors.
Review Process (ii)

- Reviewers do not communicate directly with authors

- All manuscripts and supplementary material must be treated confidentially by editors and reviewers
  - The manuscript cannot be distributed outside this small group

- The aim is to have a “first decision” to the authors as fast as possible after submission of the manuscript

- Meeting these schedule objectives requires a significant effort on the part of the Editorial staff, Editor and Reviewers

- If reviewers treat authors as they themselves would like to be treated as authors, then these objectives can be met
Initial Editorial Review

Many journals use a system of initial editorial review. Editors may reject a manuscript without sending it for review.

Why?

• The peer-review system is grossly overloaded and editors wish to use reviewers only for those papers with a good probability of acceptance.

• It is a disservice to ask reviewers to spend time on work that has clear and evident deficiencies.
Rejection without External Review

The Editor-in-chief evaluates all submissions, and determines whether they go into the review process or are rejected by the editor.

Criteria

- Example – “Rules-of-Three”
  - Out of scope
  - Too preliminary
  - Lack of Novelty
- English language is inadequate
- Prior publication of (part of) the data
- Multiple simultaneous submissions of same data
- Etc.,

Each with specific examples.
What can you get back from peer review?

- Accepted without change (very rare!)
- Accepted after minor revision (means you will have to change a few things)
- Accepted after consideration (means you will have to rewrite a few things, possibly sections, figures, provide more data, etc)
- Reconsider after major revision (means you will have to address some fundamental shortcomings – possibly doing additional research and certainly rewriting big sections)
- Rejection (means the manuscript is not deemed suitable for publication in that journal)
What leads to acceptance?

- Attention to details
- Check and double check your work
- Consider the reviewers’ comments
- English must be as good as possible
- Presentation is important
- Take your time with revision
- Acknowledge those who have helped you
- New, original and previously unpublished
- Critically evaluate your own manuscript
- Ethical rules must be obeyed

— Nigel John Cook
Editor-in-Chief, Ore Geology Reviews
Thank You

Further reading on plagiarism:
www.ethics.elsevier.com

For writing/submission tips and author services:
www.elsevier.com/authors

Free webcast tutorials on getting published:
www.elsevier.com/trainingwebcasts
University of KwaZulu-Natal – article output
CPUT—article output
Mangosuthu University of Technology – article output
University of the Witwatersrand – article output
University of the Western Cape – article output
University of Cape Town – article output