

Helping Master's Students Turn Scholarly Projects Into Publishable Articles

Patricia Gonce Morton, PhD, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor
Editor, Journal of Professional Nursing



Purpose

- Differentiate the characteristics of a school paper versus those of a journal article
- Discuss common problems in getting papers published
- Explain solutions for the problems



Why Do We Want Students to Publish

- Desire to help students learn the process
- Want students to disseminate their work
- Help students launch a career of scholarship including publishing



Characteristics of Student Papers

- Purpose is for student to demonstrate their knowledge of the topic to faculty
- The audience is the faculty member grading the paper
- The paper is written in term paper format



Characteristics of Student Papers

- Often the topic is covered superficially because there are other requirements as part of the assignment
- There is often excessive or scant use of references
- Some students use a large number of direct quotations perhaps to avoid the accusation of plagiarism



Characteristics of Published Articles

- Provides the reader with new information or a new way to think about the topic
- The audience is determined by the targeted journal
- The paper is formatted per the journal requirements



Characteristics of Published Articles

- The topic is narrowly focused
- An article has only one main purpose
- An article is written at a level appropriate for the target audience
- A reasonable number of references are cited and few direct quotes are used



A Viewpoint from an Editor

Issue

- Students are required to have one or more papers **accepted** in order to graduate
- Editors receive letters asking for the paper to be reviewed with a decision returned in two weeks to meet graduation deadlines



A Viewpoint from an Editor

Solution

- Help students develop reasonable timelines
- Plan for the review process to take months



A Viewpoint from an Editor

Issue

- Students are told they must have one or more publications **submitted** in order to graduate
- Often these students refuse to revise their paper after peer review



A Viewpoint from an Editor

Solution

Make an agreement with students that if they do not revise, the faculty advisor will revise and the advisor's name will be listed as an author



A Viewpoint from an Editor

Issue

Students are told their **paper is good** and they should submit it for publication

- Paper is submitted to the journal in the same way it was submitted to faculty



A Viewpoint from an Editor Issue

- The paper contains content that is unique to the assignment and of no interest to readers of a journal
- The paper summarizes what is already known and offers nothing new or unique



A Viewpoint from an Editor Issue

- Assignment was to review a small sampling of the literature to learn the process of critique; not meant to be comprehensive



A Viewpoint from an Editor Solution

- Paper must be rewritten in journal style
- Write in journal style and format from the start
- Have additional information submitted to faculty separately
- Do not suggest submitting the paper; especially when the review is not comprehensive

A Viewpoint from an Editor Issue

- Authorship: Do faculty members have rights to authorship of students' papers?



A Viewpoint from an Editor

Solution

International Committee of Medical
Journal Editors

- All four of the following conditions must be met to be considered an author:

A Viewpoint from an Editor

- Substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data
- Drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content



A Viewpoint from an Editor

- Final approval of the version to be published
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work; ensure that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are investigated and resolved



A Viewpoint from an Editor

The following factors by themselves do not justify authorship:

- Acquisition of funding
- Writing assistance, technical editing, language editing, and proofreading
- Supervision of the research group
- General administrative support

A Viewpoint from an Editor

Solution

- Have authorship discussions with students at the very beginning
- Develop a college-wide policy about authorship

A Viewpoint from an Editor

Issue

- Students are not taught how to write and submit a paper for publication
- Faculty who supervise students often have limited publication experience



A Viewpoint from an Editor

Solution

- Offer a required course in publishing
- Access Elsevier Publishing Campus <https://www.publishingcampus.elsevier.com>
- Use course by Dr. Patricia Morton funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation <http://nursing.utah.edu/journalwriting>

A Viewpoint from an Editor

Solution

- Develop a faculty mentoring program
- Create writing teams of new and seasoned authors



Additional Tips for Success

- First select the target audience, then find the right journal for that audience
- Use the Journals Directory on the International Academy of Nursing Editors (INANE) website to help find a journal
<http://nursingeditors.com/>

Additional Tips for Success

- Use the reference style required by the journal
- Review other articles in the targeted journal to learn format and style
- Honor the page limits; more is not better



Additional Tips for Success

- Read the author guidelines *before* writing



Additional Tips for Success

- Must have Institutional Review Board approval for studies
- Need a review of the literature (ROL)
 - The ROL should be a synopsis organized by variables, not a string of studies with each discussed in detail
 - How does this study fill the gap in the literature?



Questions and Ideas

