Improving Information-Seeking Behaviors and Knowledge Bases for
Thesis Students in the Applied Behavior Analysis Graduate Program and
Students in the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Counseling Graduate Program

Video 14:   Preparing to Publish

In the world of academia, also known as 'publish or perish,' it is incumbent upon you to not only write manuscripts that will be accepted for publication but also to shop around for the RIGHT peer-reviewed journal to submit and, hopefully, publish your article. To do this you need two basic types of information.

The first type is what happens in the peer review process. Not only are you, the author, invested in the process, but editors and reviewers will both be commenting and critiquing your manuscript.

The second type is determining which journal is right for your manuscript. Impact factors, audience, and more go into that decision.

We'll start this video with a brief review of the peer review process, then move on to how best to review a journal for publication using the web and the resources available here at the USF Libraries.

PEER REVIEW AND YOUR MANUSCRIPT
First, not all journals are created equal. You will want an academic, peer-reviewed journal. All serials (journals and magazines) have some sort of review process. Academic/research societies, professional associations, and popular press all have some sort of review process.

The notion of peer review originated in 1732 in England by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and Royal Society of London. Peer review is an essential and integral part of consensus building. Blind peer review attempts to improve the quality of reviews by removing bias, that is, using anonymous reviewers. Nevertheless, one should remember that peer review varies from place to place in terms of procedures, confidentiality, and comprehensiveness of the review.

During the editorial process, manuscripts are accepted and rejected. The more prestigious academic journals have a rejection rate of around 80-90%. First time acceptances are rare. Authors of manuscripts often are invited to revise and re-submit their manuscript to the journal. After resubmission, the original reviewers re-review the manuscript or the manuscript is sent to new reviewers. Then the paper is either accepted, rejected, or the authors are asked to make further revisions to the manuscript.

The following questions, asked by reviewers as they review manuscripts, are the same questions that an author should ask when writing his or her own papers for publication consideration.

- Are there any major flaws in the paper?
- What were the objectives of the study -- is there a statement of the problem?
- Was the hypothesis (or research question) clearly stated?
- What kind of study design was used?
- Was the study design clearly described and appropriate for the study objectives?
- Was a sample of the population needed?
- Was the sample clearly defined, adequate, and representative of the entire population?
- Were data collection methods clearly stated?
- Were the variables clearly defined?
- What were the problems in data collection?
- Were the statistical analyses appropriate for the study design, concerning validity, reliability, and so on?
- Were the results of the study clearly presented?
- Did the data support the author's hypothesis or research questions?
- Were the tables or figures helpful and clearly understandable?
- Were relevant references cited?
- Did the "Implications" or "Conclusion" section explain the importance of this study and its contributions to the field?

Editors ask these kinds of questions:
- Is this manuscript either a contribution to the field or a unique combination or framing of previously published material?
- Are key issues targeted?
- Is the paper well organized?
- What are strengths and weaknesses of the methods section?

- How good is the quality of the writing?
- How much jargon is there?
- When were the references published? Where were the references published?

As an author, you should
- Minimize "presentation defects."
- Be clear and concise in the introduction of the paper.
- Use relevant literature in the literature section of the paper.
- Ask colleagues to review a draft of the manuscript.
- If you are invited to revise a submitted manuscript, incorporate the comments and suggestions of the reviewers.

A good suggestion is to spend at least one year as a manuscript reviewer to strengthen your skills as a reviewer as well as an author.

SELECTING A JOURNAL FOR YOUR MANUSCRIPT

The next step in the process of a manuscript preparation is the selection of a journal for publication consideration.

The first step is to determine who is the primary audience for the manuscript.

The second step is to investigate a number of journals in terms of their
- acceptance/rejection rate,
- who subscribes and how many subscribe,
- the status in the field, and
- the focus of topics published in the journal, for instance, are they basic/theoretical versus applied research.

The third step is to request and review copies of sample issues (as well as "Information for Authors") in the top three or four journals in the specific field of study.

In addition to the basic steps listed above, do some critical research on the journal. Ask yourself the following questions.

- **Is the journal peer-reviewed?**

The answer should be a resounding yes. On most journal websites, that information is on the 'Information for authors and reviewers' page. For example, the journal *Psychiatric Services* states under the confidentiality section for reviewers that it uses a double-blind review process.

Next…

- **What is the focus of the journal?**

Knowing the focus of a journal is critical. You often can find this information on the journal website. However, sometimes the focus statement is very broad:

[PULL FROM WEBSITE]

- *Psychiatric Services,* established in 1950, is published monthly by the American Psychiatric Association for mental health professionals and others concerned with treatment and services for persons with mental illnesses and mental disabilities, in keeping with APA's objectives to improve care and treatment, to promote research and professional education in psychiatric and related fields, and to advance the standards of all psychiatric services and facilities.

Look through the current year of the journal to see what kinds of articles they publish that address treatment and services. If it seems maybe it would be a match, continue to look at other selection criteria.

- **Who publishes the journal?**

There is a class system in the publishing world. Certain publishers have more cachet than others. In the case of our sample journal, American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc. (APPI) is a subsidiary of the American Psychiatric Association, a national association in the United States.

APPI has ISSNs, that is, international standard serial numbers, for all of its journals. This makes the journal 'findable' in serials directories. It also 'establishes' the publisher in the publishing world.

Let's move on to the next criterion.

- **Who is the audience?**

The audience for *Psychiatric Services* is "health professionals and others concerned with treatment and services for persons with mental illnesses and mental disabilities." This fits within our criteria, however, a review of the current volume of the journal will see if our article falls within the topic areas and perceived audience.

We continue on our review of the journal.

- **Who owns it?**

Bottom line, in academia, researchers use the literature they can access in print or online. If you want to know how many U.S. and some international libraries have subscriptions to the journal, WorldCat, an international bibliographic catalog, is the resource to use.

- **Where is it indexed and abstracted?**

If you don't have access to a journal through the local library or through a personal subscription, then you will probably access the journal through library-supplied databases.

It is always good to have the journal in which you want to publish available in the discipline's research tools , that is, their databases. This ties in the audience out there who may only be able to find your article after it is indexed and abstracted in a database such as PsycINFO or Medline.

In the case of *Psychiatric Services*, that information is not available on the journal website. However, there are other places to look. We'll talk more about those tools later in this video.

- **What is its impact factor?**

The impact factor of a journal is a quantitative tool for evaluating journals. This is possibly the most important piece of information about your publishing activity.

An impact factor is a ratio calculated by taking the number of all current citations to articles published in a journal over the previous two years and dividing by the number of articles published in the journal during the same period.

The impact factor in 2009 for a journal would be calculated as follows:
- A = number of times articles published in 2008-9 were cited in indexed journals during 2010
- B = number of articles, reviews, proceedings or notes published in 2008-9
- impact factor 2010 = A/B

This information is not available on the journal web page. For this information, we use Thomson/ISI *Journal Citation Reports®*.

NOW FOR THE TOOLS
Journal Citation Reports® is available through the USF Libraries. Part of the Thomson/ISI Web of Knowledge, the *Journal Citation Reports* has two editions: Science and Social Science. Always check both editions for your journal under consideration.

In *JCR*, Journals are placed in Subject Categories. Subject categories are important because they can provide additional journals to consider as well as widening an audience base.

Starting in the *Journal Citation Reports® Social Sciences*, our journal is in two subject categories

1.   HEALTH POLICY AND SERVICES
2.   PUBLIC, ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATION HEALTH.

It ranks 10th of 41 journals in HEALTH POLICY AND SERVICES and 10th of 76 journals in PUBLIC, ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATION HEALTH. You can conclude that *Psychiatric Services* is a highly ranked journal.

Subject categories are good to know since they provide an overview of 'like' journals.

In the HEALTH POLICY AND SERVICES category, the other journals (1-9) in the top ten are *Future of Children*, *Health Affairs*, *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, *Medical Care*, *Milbank Quarterly*, *Value in Health*, *Health Services Research*, *Evaluation & the Health Professions*, and *Medical Care Research and Review*.

In the PUBLIC, ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATION HEALTH category, the other journals (1-9) in the top ten are *Annual Review of Public Health*, *Tobacco Control*, *American Journal of Public Health*, *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *Health & Place*, *AIDS & Behavior*, *Social Science & Medicine*, and *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*.

In the *Science* edition of the *Journal Citation Reports®*, the Subject Categories are PUBLIC, ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATION HEALTH and PSYCHIATRY.

In PUBLIC, ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATION HEALTH, *Psychiatric Services* ranks 28th out of 105 journals. In PSYCHIATRY, it ranks 48th out of 101 journals.

Let's look at the two PUBLIC, ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH Subject Categories from the Social Science and the Science editions.

SOCIAL SCIENCE	SCIENCE
Annual Review of Public Health	Epidemiologic Reviews
Tobacco Control	Environmental Health Perspectives
American Journal of Public Health	Annual Review of Public Health

Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health	WHO Technical Report Series
Journal of Adolescent Health	International Journal of Epidemiology
Health & Place	American Journal of Epidemiology
AIDS & Behavior	Epidemiology
Social Science & Medicine	Tobacco Control
Nicotine and Tobacco Research	American Journal of Public Health

You can see just how different the perspectives are in the two disciplines. This may affect who you think your audience really is, based upon the theoretical or epistemological framework of your paper, as well as the practitioner setting, intent of the paper, and implications for a profession or for practice.

Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory
Also available through the USF Libraries, Ulrich's provides snapshots of journals and is an excellent place to start gathering basic information.

[SCREEN SHOT OF PSYC SERVICES Basic Description Tab]

Starting with the Basic Description Tab: APPI started publishing *Psychiatric Services* in 1950, it is a monthly journal, it is considered an academic/scholarly journal, it is refereed, and it is indexed and abstracted. Ulrich's classes it in the subject areas of MEDICAL SCIENCES - PSYCHIATRY AND NEUROLOGY and HEALTH FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION.

Here's a hint: If you click on the subject links, you can see all the other journals in that subject area. These may be possible alternative publishing venues.

Psychiatric Services has approximately 20,000 subscriptions. The editor is Dr. John Talbott, with an email address for the publisher, and a URL for the website. There is a short description: "Interdisciplinary journal providing coverage of all aspects of psychiatric treatment and service delivery." There is also a list of its former titles and the dates the title changed.

[ABSTRACTING/INDEXING & ARTICLE ACCESS TAB SHOT]
From the Abstracting/Indexing & Article Access Tab, you can learn that

Psychiatric Services has an RSS feed to update interested parties.

It is available through 8 different document delivery vendors, nationally and internationally.

You can also find out all of the indexing and abstracting resources in which it is currently indexed, when it started being indexed, as well as which resources have ceased indexing the journal.

WorldCat

WorldCat is a catalog of books and other materials in libraries worldwide. When you look to see who owns the journal, you find approximately 2000 libraries own *Psychiatric Services*.

IN CONCLUSION

In determining which journals are appropriate for your journal, look at subject categories in the Journal Citation Reports. Try to pick journals which

- − have an
- − factor of 1 or higher.
- − And are classed in more than one subject category or across both the Science and Social Science editions

Next, check out Ulrich's as a quick review of who publishes, where it is indexed or abstracted, if Ulrich's ranks it as an academic or scholarly journal, who is the audience, in what subject categories Ulrich's places the journal, and what is its focus.

Then check out the journal website if you are still interested.

Keep a record of the journals in which you are interested .

Because … one day you may need that information to advise new professionals or colleagues about where to publish, or for your own promotion and tenure package.

For additional assistance on getting published, contact us at FMHILibrary@usf.edu.