Get AHEAD on Your Writing!

October 23, 2014

http://dukeahead.duke.edu
Click on “Membership”

Agenda
• Introductory Comments – Linda Lee
• “So You Have a Writing Assignment: What Will You Do After You Push the GO Button?”
  – Penny Hodgson
• Q&A
• “Selecting the Right Journal…the Ultimate Quest”
  – Pat Thibodeau
• Q&A
• Remarks and General Q&A – Linda Lee

Duke AHEAD Scholarly Writing Initiative
A Short History
• Late 2013 - Duke AHEAD launch
• June 2014 – Writing Group Leader – “first draft”
• July – Membership Survey
• August-September – Writing Task Force
  – Marilyn Oermann and Megan von Isenburg
• October - “Jump Start” Panel
• November - Boot Camp starts
• February 2015 – Boot Camp ends
• March – Follow Up Panel – Responding to Reviews

So you have a writing assignment....
• Now what?
• An informal guide to getting it done

First, how?
• Multiple choices of method:
  – Old faithful yellow legal pad & #2 pencil
    • Pros: no need for hard/software, portable, omnipresent, readily corrected, easily deleted
    • Cons: slow, temporary, un-hip
  – Computer
    • Pros: one-step, quick
    • Cons: limited by user ability, have to face The Blank Screen
• More choices
  – Recorded conversation with colleague/coauthor
    • Pros: simple conversation, consider broader factors than you would alone
    • Cons: have to transcribe/edit, usually affects just Results and Discussion
  – Dictation into phone or other device
    • Pros: works well for a few but not everyone, device handy
    • Cons: transcription required, no ability to re-look

• Yet another method
  – Tweet
    • Pros: some people love it, use it readily
    • Cons: severe limitations on length (140 characters), need to get into a viable format

Second, when?
• Set aside 2-3 hours
  – No interruptions
  – No corrections
  – No self editing
• Write straight through
• Stop when the time ends
  – Modify as time permits
• Set aside another 2-3 hours and repeat

Third, what?
• Building on Results in Discussion
  – What do your Results mean?
    • “The most important finding of our study is...”
      – Stick to the facts
    – How they differ from or confirm those of others
    • What Limitations should the reader know about?
      – Better for you to point them out than the reviewers
    • Conclusions: the effect of your study on medical practice
      – Need for further study to confirm or extend findings
      – Your opportunity to hypothesize

• DATA (= Results)
  – Without data, no paper
  – Data in any format becomes the starting point: Results
    • Tables, figures, text that do not repeat one another
  – Winnow Results to the essential
    • Text enhances without repeating
  – Results sets up Discussion

• The other parts
  – Methods
    • Select those that are appropriate for your Results and Discussion
      – e.g., in a sub-study, full presentation of the protocol is unnecessary
    • Have your statistician write the statistical section
• Introduction
  – 3 paragraphs
  • #1: general description of the broad topic you have studied
  • #2: specific description of an aspect of that topic that you took on
  • #3: what you aimed to do in your study
  – The 3 paragraphs depend on the journal you have chosen
    • Differs for NEJM/JAMA vs narrow specialty journal

• Abstract
  – Comes last when manuscript written

Fourth, Who?  (me?)

• 10 Errors Physicians Commonly Make When They Write
  – They write in the passive voice.
  – They over-use adverbs.
  – They choose boring verbs.
  – They use good verbs as bad nouns.
  – They use unneeded words.

• 10 Errors Physicians Commonly Make When They Write (cont’d)
  – They use which instead of that.
  – They start sentences with It…that.
  – They use compare to/with incorrectly.
  – They don’t put like things together.
  – They fail to make every word tell.

• QUESTIONS for PENNY?

Selecting the right journal…the ultimate quest

• The options
• Approaches to finding the right journal
  – Basics
  – Tools
• Open Access journals – the newer model
• Warning about predatory journals
Your mission impossible?
...select best, most relevant

- PubMed indexes 5,653
- Open access directory – 10,038
- Web of Science – 12,000 “top tier international/regional”
- Academic Search Complete – 13,832
- Scopus – 21,000
- Estimate 25,000 to 40,000 scientific journals worldwide
- Over 5,000 publishers

Discovering journals…the basics

- What are you reading?
- What are you citing?
- What do colleagues recommend?
- Where are the “experts” publishing?
- What are the “experts” citing?
- What do you want this article to do for you?

Guiding your quest…

- JANE – Journal / Author Name Estimator
- Journal Citation Reports (Impact factors)
- Web of Science
- Directory of Open Access Journals
- Publishers Web page
- Assistance: 919.660.1100
- medical-librarian@duke.edu

Tools for seeking the best/most relevant

JANE…Exploring about best matches

- Uses keywords in your abstract or title
- Advanced search for simple keyword searches
- Matches against titles, abstracts in PubMed/MEDLINE
- Find journals, authors, articles
- Last 10 years and updated monthly
- Confidence level given for similarity
- Ranked list of titles with articles
- Article influence – how often journal cited last 5 years
JCR...Investigating the infamous impact factor

- Easy to use tool
- More disciplines than PubMed, JANE
- Search by subject categories, country, publisher
- Sciences and Social Sciences reports
- Ranked list by impact factor
- Provides data about immediacy of citations, citing half-life
- Data on a specific journal
- Highest impact factor varies by discipline

WOS...Discovering relevancy through citations

- Covers social sciences and bio-medicine and sciences
- Top-tier journals
- Search and analyze by topic
- Search for a critical author or article
- What has been cited, what the cited article cites
- “Analyze” results to see journals

DOAJ...Journey to open access

- True open access – immediate, free access
- Hybrid or delayed open access
- Financial model author fees -- $300 to $3,000
  - Duke COPE fund; grants/funders
- Social/public good
- Increasing visibility and impact factors
- Locate journals and policies
- Keyword or title search
Predators along the way…

“You spend a couple years carrying out some research, another year writing it up, and then you submit your research manuscript to an open-access publisher. It’s accepted, you pay the article processing charges, and then it is published online. A year later, the publisher goes out of business and all its published articles disappear forever. This is the actual scenario for many authors who published with the former open-access publisher…”

Bealls Scholarly Open Access Blog, Sept. 30, 2104

Vanquishing the predators…

  - On Library’s guide for authors
- Be INFORMED
  - Number of articles/books
  - Fee for manuscript
  - Ownership
  - Review process
  - Membership / affiliations
  - ED-itorial boards

Reaching journey’s end…Journal details

- Find best match
- Review selected journal’s policies and processes
- Consider open access
- Be aware of predatory journals
- Submit your manuscript!

End of quest…

Manuscript Submitted
And Accepted
Questions?

Key Points to Remember

Thank you!
Linda
Marilyn
Megan

Writing Boot Camp Interest Forms Due Oct 27
To join Duke AHEAD:
http://dukeahead.duke.edu
Click on “Membership”