PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR
PUBLISHING RESEARCH: SOCIOLOGY 995D

Instructor: Philip Schwadel, Ph.D.
Office and contact: 740 Oldfather Hall
                        Phone: 472-6008
                        E-mail: pschwadel2@unl.edu
                        Office Hours: T & TH 9:30-11:30, and by appointment

Meeting Time: Friday 11:30-12:20
Meeting Place: OLDH 707

REQUIRED BOOK

SUGGESTED BOOKS

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE
This class is predominantly about writing a publishable paper. Consequently, writing and reviewing are key course activities. Written assignments must be uploaded to Blackboard by 9:00 a.m. the day before class. You will often be expected to review other students’ writing before class. Your grade is based on your submitted writing and your active participation in discussion of other students’ writing. A good faith effort for each required writing/posting is required to pass the class. Assigned reading must be completed before class. This course is structured to improve writing for a sociology audience.

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE
• Provide necessary skills and information to facilitate successful writing (writing that gets cited).
• Provide feedback on professional and public writing.
• Clarify the steps in the processes that are most likely to produce published and funded work.
• Help to turn class papers, theses, and dissertations into published work that gets cited.
• Scientists are writers; this class provides a foundation for a writing career.
• Provide guidelines and practice doing article reviews.
• Learn to use critical feedback to improve written work.
• Provide examples of multiple drafts of work that have eventually been successful.
• This class formalizes what students should be doing informally with professors/mentors and with other students.
COURSE OBJECTIVES
- Learn to write multiple drafts of work
- Learn the sections of articles, and what belongs in each section
- Learn how to select appropriate journals
- Learn to write constructive reviews of others’ work
- Learn to edit your own work
- Improve your writing
- Develop habits of regular, frequent writing
- Learn the kinds of writing for different stages of completing projects
- Learn to be effective, constructive colleagues
- Learn to write in a style appropriate for the audience
- Learn to craft stories that capture the attention of readers
- Learn to write articles that “stick” with readers

ASSESSMENT
- This is a pass/fail seminar in which we will all learn from each other.
- Students that do the assigned reading, complete writing assignments, and engage in class activities and discussions of other students’ work will pass the class.
- There will be weekly short assignments.
- Often your work will be shared with classmates, and you will be asked to evaluate classmate’s work.
- It is far better to hand in writing that you are not thrilled with than to hand in nothing.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS
- Students with disabilities should contact me as soon as possible, or have the office of students with disabilities contact me. If you suspect that you have a learning disability, get assessed as soon as possible and take full advantage of the services that the university offers to help students.
- Check the class webpage on Blackboard regularly for information and assignments.
- If you find something that will be useful to the class, please share it.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS
All essays are due the day before class (Thursday) on the discussion forum by 9:00 am. Please save your essays in Microsoft Word. Name your file with your last name followed by the week the assignment is due (e.g. SchwadelWeek2.docx). Most weeks you will write quick drafts. You will need to write and post on more than one thing some weeks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Topic: Introductions and class overview. *To be in this class you should have a complete paper that you are revising for this class. You should be working from an existing draft, NOT starting from scratch.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Topic: Introduction to sociology journal articles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1-23    | Read: a. Becker chapter 1 
|         | b. Belcher “Myths About Journal Articles”                                                      |
|         | Write and post: a. Describe your writing plan (1 page); b. Write a 300 word description of what is important about your project for a general sociological audience. |
|         | Class: Critique student posted writing; discuss abstract construction                           |
| Week 3 1-30 | **Topic**: The Abstract  
  b. “Optimizing Your Writing Process: Write Nonlinearly” by Rettig  
**Write and post**: a. Describe your plan for finishing your article in 12 weeks, b. Write a draft abstract (less than 200 words); c. Describe what kind of article you will write and why (see Belcher’s list from week 2 reading)  
**Class**: critique student abstracts |
|---|---|
| Week 4 2-6 | **Topic**: Your argument  
**Read**: a. Belcher “Advancing your argument”  
  b. Becker chapter 2  
**Write and post**: a. Draw a picture of your argument – a conceptual model. b. Draft less than 1 page describing your argument – this is a draft, you’ll revise it later. Focus on the “So what” or the question you will answer.  
**Class**: critique student diagrams; explore strategies for taking notes on published work |
| Week 5 2-13 | **Topic**: Understanding journal diversity  
**Read**: a. Belcher “About Journals”  
  b. Becker chapter 3  
  c. a published literature review relevant to your paper  
**Write and post**: a. Find three journals that are good candidates for your article. Write a paragraph explaining why each one is a good choice for your article. b. provide two examples of your notes on the articles and books that you are reading for your paper.  
**Class**: critique journal choices; explore strategies for picking journals; study published literature reviews – what engages you? |
| Week 6 2-20 | **Topic**: The introduction  
**Read**: Becker chapter 4  
**Write and post**: draft of introduction to your paper (usually about 6 paragraphs).  
**Class**: critique introductions; discuss different ways to construct an introduction; review the first 3-6 paragraphs of published articles – which openings “grab” you? How do authors make you want to keep reading? |
| Week 7 2-27 | **Topic**: Why we should ban the term literature review  
**Read**: Becker chapter 5  
**Write and Post**: a. a draft of your “literature review.” b. list three questions for the class about your “literature review” – what help do you want? What are you unsure about?  
**Class**: critique student’s “literature reviews;” use Lynn White’s article to help think about the story |
| Week 8 3-6 | **Topic**: Model articles and “literature reviews” revisited  
**Read**: a. Becker chapter 6  
**Write and Post**: a. Identify a “model” article – one that you want your article to look like. Give the full citation for the article. Write one paragraph summarizing the main argument of the article. b. Add another page or two outlining your exemplar article – how does each paragraph or section support the argument? You’re basically “reverse engineering” the article, and you’ll use this outline to help you to organize your article. c. revise your draft “literature review” based on your study of the structure of your model article (use track changes).  
**Class**: Critique “literature reviews” and discuss model articles. |
| Week 9 | 3-13 | **Topic**: Data, methods, and results (or relevant concepts)  
**Read**: Becker chapter 7  
**Write and Post**: a. Draft of your concepts/measures/data/results as appropriate. b. list 3 questions you have – what are you struggling with in writing your results?  
**Note**: The expectations for this section will vary depending upon the methods that you use (qualitative, quantitative, both, other) and the audience. If possible, your results should follow the same patterns that you have established in your literature review, statement of the problem, and methods. If you have hypotheses or expectations, try to discuss your results in the order of your statements, and refer back. For empirical papers, particularly quantitative analyses, be sure to describe results in ways that make them meaningful for reader (e.g. concrete examples of what results mean). Pay careful attention to good results write ups when you find them; and emulate them if you can.  
**Class**: critique student results sections; review published “results” sections – what works well? What does not? How does the journal/audience matter? |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 10 | 3-20 | **Topic**: Conclusions  
**Read**: Becker chapter 8  
**Write and Post**: a. Draft your discussion/conclusion – use your model article.  
  *Summary/Discussion/conclusion* So what? What does it all mean? How does this study change what we know? How does it add to, alter, support, change theory/knowledge? What is the “citable” idea?  
**Class**: Critique conclusions; study discussion/conclusion from published works. |
| Week 11 | 3-27 | SPRING BREAK |
| Week 12 | 4-3 | **Topic**: Full paper and revisiting the argument  
**Read**: a. reread Belcher “Advancing your argument”  
  b. Becker chapter 9  
**Write and Post**: A full draft of your paper; include all of the sections including the title page and reference section. Add a page at the beginning that summarizes the requirements of the 1st journal you selected (e.g. number of words, number of words in the abstract, tables and figures requirements, etc). Okay if paper is not polished.  
**Class**: Discuss problems, questions, and other issues related to producing full paper and meeting journal guidelines. |
| Week 13 | 4-10 | **Topic**: Reviewing other peoples’ work  
**Read**: “Strategies for Reviewing Manuscripts” by Brunsma, Prasad, and Zuckerman  
**Write and Post**: a. Write a critique two other class members’ work based on instructor assignments. Write the reviews as if you were a reviewer for a journal. Your goal is to improve the contribution to science. Offer concrete suggestions.  
**Class**: Review the critiques – what is most useful? |
| Week 14 4-17 | **Topic:** Cover letters and responding to editors and reviewers for an R&R.  
**Read:** Becker chapter 10  
**Write and Post:** a. Write your cover letter for submitting the article; b. assuming the reviews from last week accompanied an R&R, write your letter back to the editor and write your response to the reviewers. What did you change? Why did you change it? Who did you show your editor letter to and get help from? Did you make a table of changes that you needed to make and check them off as you made them?  
**Class:** Critique student work; discus elements of a cover letter and how to respond to journal decisions – particularly revise and resubmit letters. |
| Week 15 4-24 | **Topic:** Formatting and final drafts  
**Write and Post:** a. Revise your article based on the feedback that you got from reviewers in Week 13; make sure that your references match the citations in text and citations in the text match the references. Is everything formatted as necessary for the journal? Do you have the correct number of words overall and in the abstract? Try reading your paper out loud to help you see if sentences are awkward or you have typos. Remember, reviewers consider carelessness in your text as a signal that they should not trust you otherwise. Sentences should not start with “however.”  
**Class:** Discuss and critique student work. |
| Week 16 5-1 | **Topic:** Authorship issues and final drafts continued  
**Read:** “Reflections on determining authorship credit” by Fine and Kurdek  
**Class:** Make plans for submitting articles – resolve remaining issues. Discuss authorship issues and writing as a career. |