

UAA Publishing Workshop Handout

Some suggestions/guidelines to guide writing and selection of publication “outlet”

- Study articles/material previously published by a source to which you are considering submitting an article.
- Use online databases to locate potential journals.
- Use online databases and conference proceedings to ensure your idea is unique—that it will add something to the conversation
- Find a “friendly” critic who will give you honest feedback on your idea, your drafts, and so forth.
- Consider forming a writing support group that meets regularly (see Rankin for ideas about how this might function)
- If you are developing a book proposal, make contact with prospective publishers. A discussion with the appropriate editor may save you time and effort in shaping a proposal.
- Use professional conferences as an opportunity to speak with representatives of publishing companies and attend meetings/workshops put on by journal editors.
- Consider how the same material can be shaped for different venues and audiences (practitioners, scholars/researchers, and so forth)
- Read any review comments carefully as they may be helpful in revising an article or choosing another submission source

Some common problems with submitted articles (observed by Susan Imel in articles she has reviewed)

- Lack of a theoretical framework
- Poor synthesis of literature
- Too much like a dissertation; article writer has made no real effort to create a “new” piece for the article. Rankin (2001) says, “If you’re starting work on a new project that overlaps with something you have done before, resist the temptation to open up the old material and try to work from that. Instead, outline a structure and draft an opening for the new piece, making sure it is appropriate to the current rhetorical situation, that is, the purpose and audience you are writing for now” (p. 51).
- Careless errors such as missing references, date disagreement (i.e., one date given in the text and another in the reference list), grammatical errors, and so forth.
- Under citation and plagiarism (whether intentional or not)
- Attributing ideas to sources cited that are inaccurate
- Incomplete or unclear discussion of research protocol
- Failure to refer to theoretical framework or relevant literature in the concluding sections of article

(Over)

Two important points to be used to guide writing (Rankin 2001, p. 91)--

- ***Think always in terms of purpose and audience.*** What are you trying to accomplish with this piece of writing? Who will most likely be reading it? How can you anticipate the needs of your readers and help them follow what you have to say?
- ***Find an engaging professional voice—one that conveys your interest in the subject.*** If you write in a voice that feels comfortable to you, you're more likely to produce writing that others will want to read.

Source: Rankin, E. (2001). *The Work of Writing: Insights and Strategies for Academics and Professionals*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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