“The publication process”

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Plan

- Presubmission
- Submission
- Review process
- Revising / resubmitting
- Rejection
- Acceptance
Presubmission

• Draft, get feedback. Repeat. Repeat. Repeat. Repeat.
  – Minimize chances of “triage” or annoying editor and reviewers
    • Don’t submit unclear text!
    • Don’t submit typos!
    • Be careful of style / voice changes
    • Be painstaking in your citations
    • Design your manuscript to help the editor

• Read the guide for authors. Conform to it!
Submission

• Most (all?) journals now have on-line submission systems

• Many can be difficult to navigate – it may take a surprising amount of time!
Submission

• Cover letter + manuscript (+ tables) (+ figs)
• Cover letter
  – Say directly or clearly imply why you are submitting to this journal
  – *Briefly* describe your major findings and their implications (one sentence may suffice; more than a couple of paragraphs is perhaps too much)
  – Suggest reviewers to invite
  – You can suggest reviewers *not* to invite, but there has to be a solid rationale – they have made ad hominem remarks about you in past reviews, for example – it can’t just be that you know they will disagree with you!
Submission

• Manuscript (+ tables) (+ figs)
  – Make sure you have conformed to journal guidelines!
Now wait... ...and wait... ...and wait...

- Most journals specify the turn-around goal time
- Few achieve it routinely!
- Some systems let you check manuscript status
  - “editor assigning reviewers”, “awaiting review”, “with editor”
- But there’s little you can do when reviews are behind schedule
- Remember: reviewers are volunteers, and editors may be as well (if not, they are paid a pittance). Be patient.
- What if things are WAY behind schedule?
  - Polite, friendly email to the editor (or better, to any email address that came with the submission confirmation email)
Action letter

• Some AEs just keep score, others act as the $n^{th}$ reviewer

• Letters that just tell you to address everything in reviews are not very helpful…

• But often, the editor highlights the most important issues to address
  – If editor does not mention something, this does not mean you don’t need to address it
Reviews

• Take a deep breath. Many reviewers seem not to have heard of the Golden Rule.
• Read the reviews. If you are angry / depressed, leave them alone for a day or so.
• Make a plan: what would it take to satisfy the AE and the reviewers?
Revising

• You do not **have** to do everything every reviewer suggests
  – But when you don’t, you need to provide a clear rationale for
    why you didn’t in the resubmission letter (more soon)
  – Reviewers may still disagree, and an “accept with revisions”
    recommendation may turn to “reject” if they think you are not taking them seriously!

• What if the things the reviewers + editor say are crucial are unreasonable (either wrong or would require unrealistic / impossible additional effort)?
  – Submit elsewhere
  – …or try to make a compelling case against that point
Resubmitting

• Cover letter + response to reviews + revised manuscript
• Some journals request that changed passages be indicated with, e.g., vertical rules
Resubmitting

• But the “response to reviews” is your most formidable tool
  – One easy approach: put the AE/reviewer text in one font, and your response in another
  – For each point, acknowledge the AE/reviewer (“The reviewer makes an excellent point”, “We thank the reviewer for pointing out this issue”) even when you want to say “the reviewer is a colossal ass who obviously never took stats!”
  – Say how you have addressed the change (citing page numbers in the revised ms) or justify why you have not made a particular change

• If you do this well, the AE may not even read the revision and might accept the paper

• Most often, however, the paper goes back out for review
Now wait... ...and wait... ...and wait...

- It could be several more weeks or even months. That’s just the way it is (for now – work to change it!).
Rejection

• First or second (or third or fourth!) submission may be rejected
• Go ahead and mourn for a bit…
• But then use the reviews to improve the paper and submit elsewhere (unless reviewers have identified fatal flaws!)
Acceptance!

• First or second (or third or fourth!) submission may be **accepted**
• Remember mourning rejection?
• **Turvey’s Rule**: Celebrate successes as long and often as you would have mourned a failure!
• Proofs: you need to carefully read every word on every line to make sure you agree with changes
• Tell people about it: local community, but also email it to other researchers interested in your topic (or even better: email them a link to the paper on your website)