

**Title of Session:** Publishing Your Work

**Moderator:** Debra Sprague

**Title of File:** 20050329publishing

**Date:** March 29, 2005

Room: Hot Tub Conference Room

**DebraSp:** Thanks, BJ

**DebraSp:** Why don't you all introduce yourselves?

**BJB2:** please tell us where you are located and what brings you to this discussion

**JamesKA:** Hi, I'm James Aitchison, Director, Technology Service, Livingstone Range School Division, Alberta, Canada. I'm involved in research partnerships centered around Laptops, Thin Client and Video Conferencing.

**DebraSp:** Welcome, James.

**JamesKA:** I have just completed a 3 year study on laptop access on 24/7 basis with Jr. High Students. I'm interested in knowing how become published. Thanks!

**DebraSp:** I have a student about to do her dissertation on laptops usage.

**CarolynJD:** I'm Carolyn and I am a full time student working on my Ed.D in Illinois. I am working on my literature review and have a lot of input for my dissertation. I want to write a couple articles in the meantime about distance and online education. I know more about online education.

**LynneW:** Hi, I'm Lynne Wolters, Ed Tech Professor at Concordia University Portland.

**DebraSp:** Hello, Carolyn and Lynne.

**BrettQ:** Hi, I'm Brett from the greater suburbs of Washington DC where I'm an elementary school teacher. I'm curious about getting published as I progress through completing my masters in technology in education at Johns Hopkins University.

**DebraSp:** Hi, Brett. I am a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

**DebraSp:** I am the editor of the Journal of Technology and Teacher Education so I am very familiar with the publishing process.

**DebraSp:** Do any of you have specific questions you want me to address or should I go through the publishing process?

**LynneW:** I'm willing to wait on my questions until after you give us the info you want to share.

**BrettQ:** I'll have questions as we progress through the process.

**JamesKA:** My question is "What is the best approach to submitting a sample of completed work for publication?"

**CarolynJD:** How does one feel their work is worthy of publishing?

**DebraSp:** Ok. Please, feel free to ask questions as they come up. James and Carolyn, those are two good questions and I will get to them. If I forget, remind me.

**CarolynJD:** Ok, thanks

**JamesKA:** ditto!

**DebraSp:** An article is worth submitting for publication if you feel you have something worthy to say. Only by submitting can you join the community of scholars.

**DebraSp:** Let's begin with the process.

**DebraSp:** Step one is to decide which journal you want to submit to. You want to write the article to meet the interest of the readers so you want to know who reads the journal. Does the journal go to university faculty? To teachers? To specific teachers, like Art or Reading? To speech pathologists? Each of these audiences needs to have the article written in a different way.

**DebraSp:** You can find out who the journal goes to by reading the journal. You want to find a journal that matches with the article you want to write and reaches the audience you want to reach.

**DebraSp:** So you need to do your homework. Read the journal, ask questions, contact the editor, etc.

**CarolynJD:** Is this the same for online web resources (i.e. Distance-Educator.com)?

**BrettQ:** How should the editor be contacted? Should a summary of your own findings and what you want to publish go to the editor?

**DebraSp:** Yes, all journals are aimed toward a specific audience. Some are more general than others, but they have an audience they are trying to reach.

**DebraSp:** No, Brett, You can ask the editor if they would be interested in an article on a specific topic. They will let you know if it meets their goals or not.

**BrettQ:** Thanks

**DebraSp:** For example, my journal publishes articles related to teacher education. We do not publish articles on K-12 use of technology unless it pertains to teacher use.

**CarolynJD:** So I could email an abstract of my article to an editor to see if it is of interest to them?

**DebraSp:** Yes, you could. I get that occasionally. It allows me to say yes or say no. A no means I either don't have to preview it or send it to reviewers so it saves the author time.

**DebraSp:** Step two, read the author's guidelines. If you do not follow the guidelines the article will be rejected, no matter how good it is. The guidelines tell you page limits, font to use, how to submit the article, how the references are to be listed, and how figures and tables are to be addressed.

**DebraSp:** All journals have author's guidelines. It is very important to follow them.

**CarolynJD:** Good to know, thanks

**DebraSp:** Guidelines are usually published on the back cover of the journal or on the website.

**DebraSp:** Pay particular attention to things like "blind copy."

**JamesKA:** If we back up a second to Carolyn's suggestion, do you have a preferred way to receive the information/request?

**DebraSp:** This means that your name and affiliation should not appear anywhere on the article, including a cover page.

**DebraSp:** E-mail is the best way to contact me. Other editors have other ways of being contacted, but the guidelines will tell you how to contact the editor.

**BrettQ:** So just as we tell students, there's a great emphasis on details, details, detail...

**JamesKA:** And is an abstract the best format?

**DebraSp:** Absolutely! If you do not pay attention to details you will make a bad impression on the reviewers and the editors.

**DebraSp:** It is always good to send an abstract or a short summary of the topic.

**DebraSp:** I have seen articles rejected by reviewers because authors did not follow APA guidelines or were careless with their references.

**CarolynJD:** One of my former professors said she is a reviewer, how does one show interest they want to become a reviewer, I'm assuming an expert in your field?

**DebraSp:** Some journals invite you to be a reviewer. Other's have a place where you can submit your interest in becoming a reviewer.

**DebraSp:** Contacting the editor is always a good idea when trying to find out specific information about a journal.

**DebraSp:** Just keep in mind many of us edit on top of everything else we do as professors. This is not our only job.

**DebraSp:** Step Three, write the article. This is the hardest part of the process because you are putting your thoughts and ideas out there for other's to read and critique. That can be scary. But if you don't then you can't join the community of scholars. So jump in and write the article.

**DebraSp:** Once you write it, have colleagues or friends read it to see if it makes sense. If possible get someone from the audience you are trying to reach.

**DebraSp:** Step four, submit the article for review. Send it to the journal, guidelines will tell you how. Some want electronic submissions, some want paper versions.

**DebraSp:** Then the waiting game begins.

**DebraSp** smiles.

**DebraSp:** It takes awhile for an article to be reviewed so be patient.

**BrettQ:** Is there any average time that a person waits to hear back about their article?

**DebraSp:** Average time is usually around 3-4 months. Some are quicker, some are longer. It depends on how much of a backlog there is and how busy the reviewers and editors are.

**DebraSp:** The next steps are out of your control, but here is what happens once the article reaches the hands of the editor.

**DebraSp:** Step five depends on whether or not the journal is peer-reviewed. If it is not, the editor will read the article and make a decision as to rather or not he or she wants to publish it. If the journal is peer-reviewed, as mine is, the editor sends the article out to two or three reviewers. The editor then gets the reviews back from the reviewers and makes a decision as to rather or not to publish it.

**DebraSp:** Peer-reviewed journals are valued more than non-peer reviewed journals.

**CarolynJD:** I am assuming the journal you are an editor for is peer reviewed.

**DebraSp:** Yes, it is peer-reviewed. I make the final decision, but I take the recommendation of the reviewers into consideration.

**BrettQ:** So, are editors constantly reading and reviewing articles?

**DebraSp:** All the time, Brett. I always have a stack to read and carry them wherever I go. You never know when you are going to have a few minutes available to read an article.

**BrettQ:** Based on what you've seen, do you have any idea of about what percentage of submitted articles are actually published?

**CarolynJD:** Good question.

**DebraSp:** In my journal we publish around 20% of the articles submitted.

**DebraSp:** That leads me to the next step.

**DebraSp:** Step six is notification to the author. You will get a letter saying one of three things. First, the dreaded rejection letter. This one is what everyone fears, but we have all gotten them at one time or another. Sometimes the article needs too much work to be published. Other times it is not a good match for the journal you submitted it to.

**DebraSp:** If you get the rejection letter read the comments from the editor and reviewer. If it is a case that it is not a good fit, find another journal to submit it to. Some other journal may like it. If it is a case of it needs to be rewritten, then rewrite it. Don't give up.

**DebraSp:** The second response you could get is Accept with Revisions. This means the journal is interested in the article, but they would like you to revise it somewhat. Again read what they are saying and do what they say. Follow the time line. If they want it back in two weeks make sure it is back in two weeks. If not, it will be rejected because journals have timelines as well.

**CarolynJD:** So be persistent if you are a go getter!

**DebraSp:** Yes. Persistence pays off...unless it is a really bad article in which case you need to rewrite it.

**BrettQ:** Will all returned articles have feedback?

**DebraSp:** Most, if they are peer-reviewed.

**DebraSp:** If it is just the editor making a decision you might get the note I got.

**DebraSp:** "It does not fit our current needs."

**DebraSp:** That tells you nothing as to the quality and you aren't sure why it is being rejected. As an author it is frustrating.

**DebraSp:** I always give feedback and if it is inappropriate for the journal I say that.

**CarolynJD:** Interesting

**DebraSp:** And why it is inappropriate.

**BrettQ:** As an editor do you find yourself flooded by articles with similar topics, as people follow the latest trends?

**DebraSp:** As I said...we all get the rejection letter at some time.

**DebraSp:** Yeah, right now it is online learning. I am getting tired of the subject and would love something different, like James' laptop program.

**JamesKA:** Yahoo...

**DebraSp:** As long as it deals with the teachers...

**JamesKA:** Certainly!

**CarolynJD:** How about the successes of online learning?

**DebraSp:** I have a lot of articles on that as well. We will still take those articles so do not hesitate to send them. I just get tired of reading the same topic (personal preferences as I read all articles submitted).

**CarolynJD:** I find I am reading a lot about theory and various issues, but I am aiming for student and teacher success.

**BrettQ:** Do quality articles often show the positives AND pitfalls of topics, or are they often one sided?

**DebraSp:** The best articles show both. Too often people only aim for the positive but we can learn from the pitfalls as well.

**DebraSp:** The third option is the one we all want to receive...the acceptance letter. This means the article is great and they will publish it. Rarely do you receive this letter when you submit the article. Most always there are revisions required.

**DebraSp:** Step seven. The article has been accepted and proofread by the copy editor. You will see the copy proofs. These are the pages that show you exactly what the article would look like when it goes to press. You will have the opportunity to check these over and correct any typos and errors in the article. Once you approve the page proofs (again pay attention to the due date) the journal is sent to the printer and you will see your article published!

**BrettQ:** What's the approximate turn around time from when I send an article in until I see it published? (assuming of course there are revisions)

**DebraSp:** That is the process from start to finish. James and Carolyn, did I answer your original questions?

**CarolynJD:** Yes you did, thanks

**JamesKA:** Yes! And now I need to get busy

**DebraSp:** Brett, it could be anywhere from six months to two years. It really depends on the journal, how often they publish, and how popular they are.

**DebraSp:** Last thing: Here is a great article on getting published that gives great advice for someone getting started. <http://www.citejournal.org/vol4/iss2/editorial/article1.cfm>

**CarolynJD:** Thank you for the great advise.

**JamesKA:** Thanks Debbie! WE need to chat!

**DebraSp:** You are welcome.

**DebraSp:** James, feel free to contact me and remind me that you were part of this discussion.

**JamesKA:** Okay. I'll e-mail soon.

**BrettQ:** Thank you very much... this opened my eyes quite a bit wider!

**DebraSp:** That goes for all of you if you have an article you want to submit to me.

**DebraSp:** Great, Brett.

**LynneW:** Thank you for the quality of the information you shared!

**DebraSp:** You are all welcome. Thank you for coming tonight. Any last minute questions?

**JamesKA:** Thanks again Debbie. This was very helpful and I'm assuming it's okay to share this transcript with others?

**DebraSp:** Yes, there is always a copy available through the Tapped In archives.

**JamesKA** grins

**BrettQ:** No more questions at the moment. Thanks for taking the time to chat with us!

**DebraSp:** Ok. Good night everyone. Thanks for attending.