



Writing a journal article – and getting it published (ws12-3)

January 18-20, 2012

Faculty

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Introduction

“Publish or perish” is a widely quoted phrase that refers to the relentless pressure to get your research published to further or sustain a career in academia. It is therefore hardly surprising that many courses on scientific writing are on offer. You might ask “Why another one”? Well, this one is different: its focus is not only on how to structure the article and write its paragraphs but also on the message and anatomy of a successful article, on how to choose the appropriate journal, and on how to deal with your co-authors (who often offer little support while causing much delay) and conflicts on authorship. These are very important but neglected aspects of the process of scientific writing and publishing.

The course is based on the “evidence-based writing” approach developed by Tim Albert, the author of several books on effective writing (see www.timalbert.co.uk). Our own research output and that of our institute has benefited enormously from Tim’s witty and subversive wisdom. We hope that you will too.

Course objectives

The goal of this course is simple: to enable participants to get their articles written and sent off to an appropriate journal. By the end of the course participants will have a good understanding of this process and the obstacles involved.

What you have to bring

Students will bring their own portable computers and an idea for a journal article or scientific paper. Ideally the data should have been analyzed and draft tables and figures drawn up.

Outline of course

The course will run over three days and use the materials and concepts developed by Tim Albert. We start early in the morning with a review of the previous day. During the extended break in the afternoon participants review course materials, catch up on emails or go skiing. We reconvene at 5 pm and may carry on after dinner.

Wednesday

On day 1 we will help you to develop the idea for your article and by the end of the day you should have a clear outline for your article, plus the first draft of the introduction. The content of day 1 is as follows:

- Understanding the publication game
- Understanding the key players
- Setting the brief
- Organising the material
- Planning the article
- Writing the article

Thursday

On day 2 students will be working on their articles. It is important that participants are free from their usual duties to write. Mobile phones should be switched off and email should remain unchecked during much of day 2.

Friday

On the day 3 we will run the second part of the course, and address the following issues:

- Rewriting
- Adding the extras
- Dealing with others
- Completing the package
- Understanding medical journals
- Dealing with reviewers and editors
- Strategies for failure – and success
- Setting a personal action plan

Maximum number of participants

The maximum number of participants on this course will be 12.

Course hotel

Course participants will stay at the Hotel SUNSTAR in Wengen. See <http://wengen.sunstar.ch> or <http://www.sunstar-schweiz.ch/english/wengen/default.htm> for details on the hotel.

Course fee and hotel costs

Course fee: CHF 800

Hotel (including breakfast buffet and four-course dinner, access to swimming pool and steam bath):

Arrival January 17, departure January 21, 2012 (four nights):

Single occupancy: CHF 592

Double occupancy: CHF 552

Please note that the hotel bill will have to be settled by each participant upon departure.