

Traditional Academic Genres

Often, professional writing for college professors takes more traditional forms:

- **Conference Papers**--Conference papers are often great ways to start any scholarly writing project (big or small) because they give you immediate input directly from your audience. So propose, present, and write!
- **The research report**--For original research, the [traditional report format](#) is still favored by many journals. The kind of research favored (quantitative or qualitative) is often discipline specific and different journals often favor particular methodologies.
- **The researched article**--Criteria and format for researched articles is often discipline specific. For specific guidelines for manuscripts, look in a copy of the journal, check out their web site or contact the publisher. Remember, most publications have specifications on electronic file formats, citation systems, and article length. Lead time for many journals may be up to and even over a year. Some journals require queries or send out calls on specific topics.
- **The monograph or book**--Once you have an idea for a book, pull 4 or 5 books from your personal professional library and see what publishers printed them. Consult the web pages (like this one from [MIT](#)) of those companies for information about submission requirements, queries, manuscript formats, writing styles and the publication process.
- **The textbook**--When considering writing a textbook, think about the market (what is currently available, what kind of books are not) and what textbook companies are most likely to appreciate your take on the subject and class. Textbook publishers often have very details proposal information on their web sites, like this one from [Prentice-Hall](#).

What Can I Write?

If you are overwhelmed at the thought of trying to put together a book, a study, monograph or an article, DON'T PANIC! There are writing projects out there that are smaller in scale or commitment. If you want to warm up prior to tackling a major or original project, try one of these writing/communication projects first:

- **Book reviews for journals**--Reviews of new books are a staple in almost any journal; check journals that you are familiar with and see which accept reviews, the approximate length, and tone. Look in the publishing information or contact the journal concerning their review policies and proposing to review specific books recently published in your field.
- **Textbook reviews for publishers**--Many textbook companies are constantly searching for reviewers to look over and offer suggestions for textbooks or other texts currently in development. Reviewing texts is a good way to become familiar with a publisher and with the textbook market in your field. Talk to your textbook representatives on campus--they will usually pass your name onto their editors. Most publisher web sites also have links to forms that will allow you to sign up to review future texts.
- **Letters to the Editor**--These short and simple pieces will allow you to begin forming ideas that you might wish to extend later. With letters, you can gain practice stating a position and focusing your tone and writing style without a huge commitment or time.
- **Reaction/Responses**--As you read through journals in your discipline, take note of articles that provoke strong reactions in your mind. Many journals are happy to consider and accept well-written responses to articles they have published previously.
- **Teaching Tips**--Teaching-oriented publications often take shorter, assignment-oriented pieces describing a strategy or assignment you use in your classes. In addition to professional journals, consider publications like [Innovation Abstracts](#) or [The Centerpiece](#). If you have an idea for *The Centerpiece*, contact [Roz Bethke](#)--she welcomes ideas!
- **Personal Essays, creative prose, poetry**--Although not as common as more traditional academic genres, essays capturing personal memories and experiences are accepted in a number of publications. Many disciplines are developing a new appreciation for the personal narrative, so check out some journals and see who takes what.

Writing Circle

Select a market for a piece of your scholarly work—it might be:

- A publisher
- A journal
- A call for papers or proposals

Bring in a copy of the call, the journal, or the web address for the publisher and any information you can find about their submission requirements. If you want help finding that information, contact Ellen (emohr@jccc.edu) or Maureen (mfitzpat@jccc.edu).

Come with information about your target market and an idea about what you want to write, either written in the form of a proposal or in your mind as an idea.

Meeting Dates and times TBA.

Writing Center