

## *Scientific Writing and Publishing*

Or,

### *How to survive and prosper as a young academic in economics*

This course addresses students considering a scientific career in economics. The course provides a general overview rather than coaching students in writing a specific paper. The entire process of scientific writing and publishing will be covered. Although the course is of interest to various scientific fields, applications will be drawn from economics.

The course addresses the following questions:

What is a “scientific publication”? Why publish? What makes a paper “publishable” in a good journal? How to assess the quality of scientific publications? How do referees and editors evaluate papers? How to write a scientific paper? What could be a promising strategy for submission? What are the right journals for my paper? How should I read, understand and deal with referee reports? How can I be a good referee? Which norms and rules must I observe?

#### **Requirements and Grading:**

- a) 20% for active participation in classroom discussions
- b) 30% for writing a referee report along with a cover letter to “the editor” on a paper I suggest (or some paper of your suggestion). Deadline: **May 25, 2016 (24:00)**
- c) 50% for final paper. Students write a paper on a topic of their choice consisting of (i) title page including abstract of 100 words and JEL-codes, (ii) introduction of max. 2.5 pages, and (iii) references mentioned in the introduction (max. 1 page).  
Deadline: **June 29, 2016 (24:00)**

#### **Times and Places**

Part I: Wednesday, April 27, 09:15-16:00 and  
Thursday, April 28, 09:45-12:30

Part II: Wednesday, June 15, 09:15-16:00 and  
Thursday, June 16, 09:45-12:30

Place: Thurgau Economics Institute, Hauptstrasse 90, CH-8280 Kreuzlingen

## **Outline**

### **Day 1: The publishing process, refereeing**

1. Introduction
  - Why publish?
  - The academic environment
  - Some facts on publishing in economics
  - The players in the publication process
2. Refereeing
  - General remarks (Choi)
  - Some examples (from JPubE, AER, RES)

### **Day 2: The entire publishing process in journals**

1. The entire publishing process in a journal – Case study I
  - How to respond to referee reports and editors' requests
2. Case study II, Case study III

Assignment 1: Write a referee report and a cover letter

### **Day 3: Writing Papers**

1. Discussion of your reports
2. Writing a good paper – Principles and examples
  - Choosing a topic, Drafting, Revising, Writing an Introduction (Cochrane)
  - Selected examples
3. Publication Strategies and Careers – what to do, where to go, whom to know

### **Day 4: Other topics (your suggestions are welcome)**

1. Evaluation
  - Publication- and citation-based evaluation of individuals, journals, and institutions
2. How to write and read a CV
3. PhD programs, the international Job market for PhDs in economics
4. Why is the publication process so slow?

Assignment 2: Write an introduction to a paper (choose a topic)

## Readings

- Althouse, B.M., West, J.D., Bergstrom, C.T. and Bergstrom, T. (2009): Differences in Impact Factors Across Fields and Over Time. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 60(1): 27-34.
- American Economic Review, Submission guidelines  
<http://www.aeaweb.org/aer/submissions.php>
- Amir, R. and Knauff, M. (2008): Ranking Economics Departments Worldwide on the Basis of PhD Placement. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 90(1): 185-90.
- Baser, O. and Pema, E. (2003): The Return of Publications for Economics Faculty. *Economics Bulletin* 1(1): 1-13.
- Boyle, G. (2008): Pay Peanuts and Get Monkeys? Evidence from Academia. *BE Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy* 8(1): Article 21.
- Brodeur, A. Lé, M., Sangnier, M. and Zylberberg, Y. (2016): Star Wars: The Empirics Strike Back. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 8(1): 1-32.
- Camerer, C.F. et al. (2016): Evaluating Replicability of Laboratory Experiments in Economics. *Science* 10.1126/science.aaf0918 ([link](#))
- Card, D. and DellaVigna, S. (2013): Nine Facts about Top Journals in Economics. *Journal of Economic Literature* 51(1): 162-72.
- Cardoso, A.R., Guimaraes, P. and Zimmermann, K.F. (2010): Trends in Economic Research: An International Perspective. *Kyklos* 63(4): 479-94.
- Casey, B. (2009): The Economic Contribution of PhDs. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management* 31(3): 219-27.
- Cawley, J. (2014): A Guide and Advice for Economists on the U.S. Junior Academic Job Market: 2014-2015 Edition. IZA DP No. 8428.
- Choi, K. (2002): How to Publish in Top Economic Journals ([link](#))
- \* Cochrane, J.E. (2005): Writing Tips for PhD Students. ([link](#))
- Coles, P., Cawley, J., Levine, P.B., Niederle, M., Roth, A.E. and Siegfried, J.J. (2010): The Job Market for New Economists: A Market Design Perspective. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 24(4): 187-206.
- Conley, J.P. and Önder, A.S. (2014): The Research Productivity of New PhDs in Economics: The Surprisingly High Non-Success of the Successful. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 28(3): 205-216.
- Ellison, G. (2002): The Slowdown of the Economics Publishing Process. *Journal of Political Economy* 110(5): 947-93.
- Eriksson, K. and Simpson, B. (2013): Editorial Decisions may Perpetuate Belief in Invalid Findings. *PLOS ONE* 8(9): e73364. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0073364
- Fanelli, D. (2009): How Many Scientists Fabricate and Falsify Research? A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Survey Data. *PLoS One* 4(5): e5738. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0005738
- Frey, B.S. (2010): Withering Academia? *Analyse und Kritik* 2: 285-96.
- Goldsmith, J.A., Komlos, J. and Gold, P.S. (2001): *The Chicago Guide to Your Academic Career: A Portable Mentor for Scholars from Graduate School through Tenure*. Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press.
- Hamermesh, D. (2013): 'How Does the Economics Profession Work?'  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WDjfM-83F5I>

- Hamermesh, D. (2013): Six Decades of Top Economics Publishing: Who and How? *Journal of Economic Literature* 51(1): 162-72.
- Heintzelman, M. and Nocetti, D. (2008): Where Should we Submit our Manuscript? An Analysis of Journal Submission Strategies. *BE Journal of Economic Analysis and Policy* 9(1): Article 39.
- Hilmer, C.E., Hilmer, M.J. and Ransom, M.R. (2012): Fame and Fortune of Academic Economists: How the Market Rewards Influential Research in Economics. IZA DP No. 6960
- Howe, S. and Henriksson, K. (2007): *Phrase Book for Writing Papers and Research in English*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Whole World Company Press, Cambridge, England.
- Ioannidis, J. (2005): Why Most Published Research Findings are False. *PloS Medicine* 2(8):e124. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0020124
- Krawczyk, M. and E. Reuben (2012): (Un)Available upon Request: Field Experiment on Researchers' Willingness to Share Supplementary Materials. *Accountability in Research* 19: 175-86.
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- Oswald, A. J. (2007). An Examination of the Reliability of Prestigious Scholarly Journals: Evidence and Implications for Decision-Makers. *Economica*, 74: 21-31.
- Schwabish, J.A. (2014): An Economist's Guide to Visualizing Data. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 28(1): 209-34.
- Starbuck, W.H. (2010): How Much Better Are the Most Prestigious Journals? The Statistics of Academic Publication. *Organization Science* 16(2): 180-200.
- Stern, D.I. (2013): Uncertainty Measures for Economics Journal Impact Factors. *Journal of Economic Literature* 51(1): 162-72.
- Stock, W.A, Siegfried, J.J. and Finegan, T.A. (2011): Completion Rates and Time-to-Degree in Economics PhD Programs. *American Economic Review* 101(3): 176-187.
- The Economist: The Disposable Academic. Why Doing a PhD is often a Waste of Time (Dec. 16, 2010, [link](#)).
- The Economist: Unreliable Research: Trouble at the Lab (Oct. 19, 2013, [link](#)).
- Thomson, W. (1999): The Young Person's Guide to Writing Economic Theory. *Journal of Economic Literature* 37(1): 157-83.
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- Williams, W.M. and Ceci, S.J. (2015): National Hiring Experiments Reveal 2:1 Faculty Preference for Women on STEM Tenure Track. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*; published ahead of print April 13, 2015, doi:10.1073/pnas.141887811
- Young, N.S., Ioannidis, J.P. and Al-Ubayadli, O. (2008): Why Current Publication Practices May Distort Science. *Plos Medicine* 5(10): 1418-22.

\* Denotes required reading, # recommended reading.