

Scholarly Publishing for Graduate Students in the Humanities

a condensed syllabus and bibliography

So you want to publish an article?

Great! Publishing is an integral part of the ongoing scholarly conversation. Read the following sections in order, read/watch the cited content as you go, and think about the questions for consideration in every section, to get a librarian's perspective on the information-creation process and inform your entry into the scholarly conversation.

1. Publishing and the scholarly conversation

Watch the video "[Join the Scholarly Conversation!](#)" on YouTube. Primarily aimed at college students, and crafted by librarians at Kishwaukee College Library, it illustrates how the cycle of study, writing, conferences, and publication shapes a conversation among experts -- including students like you.

- **Question for consideration:** *what's going to be YOUR role in your discipline's conversation?*

2. Understanding the publishing process: the Editor's point of view

Some of the best advice for prospective authors comes from Editors. Read these [Top Tips from Editors](#) of scholarly journals on starting out as a graduate student. Then read journal editor Devoney Looser's essay "[How Your Journal Editor Works](#)" to see what the process of selecting and editing papers looks like. Before you start writing, it is essential to get a sense of WHO the publishers themselves are as people, and their role as stewards in the scholarly conversation.

- **Question for consideration:** *from reading these selections, what's the most surprising thing about an editor's job?*

3. Conferences and Calls For Papers (CFP)

The first step in participating in a scholarly, theological, or professional discipline is often to attend -- and present papers at -- conferences held by organizations that put out calls for papers. Knowing the "key players" and introducing yourself to colleagues in your area can literally be the first step in joining the conversation. Follow organizations like the [American Academy of Religion](#) and **mark your calendar** with upcoming paper proposal submission deadlines and conference dates. Identify and reach out to co-chairs, section leaders, and your own professors, and ask them how they plan and execute their own research projects and how they participate in the world of conferences and publishing.

- **Question for consideration:** *can you name one conference you'd like to present at? Can you name a colleague who has presented there? When is the CFP for next year's conference?*

4. Writing and editing as an academic

This [essay on the concept of "publish or perish"](#) offers helpful guidance for graduate students from a young professor with plenty of recent writing experience, from classroom writing to blog posts to book reviews to articles in scholarly journals.

- **Question for consideration:** *how might your term papers, weekly responses, annotated bibliographies, etc. fit into the body of your written work and influence your future writing?*

5. From submission to revision: the editorial process

This [process guide from science publishing giant Elsevier](#) offers a great how-to resource for would-be authors entering the world of academic journals. For an overview of the process from beginning to end, read it alongside Faye Halpern's essay "[10 Tips for Getting Published](#)."

- **Question for consideration:** *what is the hardest part of editing and revision, for you?*

6. Selecting a journal

Journals are complex social organizations, and each one is different. Some have paid editorial boards, some partner with universities, some operate without a central office, some offer peer reviewing, etc. Each journal has its own structure and guidelines for authors submitting work for publication. Here is the page about [policies for authors from the Journal of Biblical Literature](#) as an example.

- **Question for consideration:** *what journal do you find yourself citing most often when you write? Look up that journal's policies for authors, would you want to submit to this journal yourself?*

7. Quality control: predatory journals and questionable conferences

In the scholarly conversation, everyone speaks from a different platform, and the quality of your platform will influence the quality and structure of the conversations you participate in. Read about the current phenomenon of [predatory publishing](#) -- especially dangerous for newer scholars -- and think about your motivations and goals in publishing. Take a look at [Beall's List of Predatory Journals](#). Read these [guidelines for conference content](#) and think about how conferences are created and by whom.

- **Question for consideration:** *how do you feel about Open Access publishing (or, should you do some more research to find out more about what it means and who is affected by it)?*

8. Ask a librarian for more about the information cycle or the scholarly conversation any time.

Bibliography

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