P2P: From Paper to Publication

Course Syllabus

The following is the course syllabus for P2P: From Paper to Publication. Publishing articles in peer-reviewed journals is increasingly important for students who intend to pursue careers in academia. P2P is a course designed around a system to help graduate students in any Political Science sub-field turn already-written seminar papers into peer-reviewed publications. The course combines weekly meetings focused on manuscript development with workshop sessions involving scholars from inside and outside Purdue.

Class time will be divided between short lectures and discussions, “read and critique” writing group meetings, and research workshops with outside speakers. The lectures and discussions will focus on topics like writing productivity and crafting effective introductions. During the “read and critique” writing group sessions, participants in the course present portions of their manuscripts to each other for feedback. Finally, during the research workshops participants will consider the work of outside presenters and hear how experienced researchers turn their projects into published articles.

Outside class, students are expected to revise their manuscripts for publication. The revision process we will follow can be found in Wendy Laura Belcher’s excellent book, Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 2009). Belcher’s book is required for this course. Copies are available at University Bookstore and Follett’s and through on-line sellers like Amazon.com.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grades will be computed based on your success at completing the weekly assignments (70%), the quality of your final paper (20%), and on class participation (10%). Getting your manuscript accepted for publication is the ultimate goal of this seminar, but you do not have to get an acceptance from a journal to get a good grade in this course. Instead, grades in this course are designed to reward determination and persistence in pursuit of publication. The degree to which each manuscript improves over the course of the semester is another salient dimension of the final evaluation for this course.

Note that in the event of a major campus emergency or severe weather event, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by either a revised semester calendar or other unforeseen circumstances. Changes to the course caused by
such events will be described on the Blackboard page for this class. I can also be contacted at the e-mail address and telephone number listed on the first page of this syllabus.

**Policy on Issues of Academic Integrity**

You are expected to adhere to University standards concerning academic integrity. The penalties for those who do not may be severe. If a matter regarding plagiarism or cheating is in dispute, it will be brought to the department Chair and, if necessary, to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

**Course schedule**

Week one (January 16): Introduction

Week two (January 23): Designing your plan for writing

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 1 and pp. 82-92.
  - Assess your writing site.
  - Design a daily and weekly writing schedule; anticipate obstacles and interruptions.
  - Write one 250 word paragraph identifying your argument.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript (e.g., hours spent, time of day).

Week three (January 30): Starting your article.

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 2
  - Revise paragraph long statement of your argument.
  - Print out your chosen paper, discuss it, and make a list of revision tasks.
  - Draft and revise the abstract for your paper.
  - Identify and read a model article on your topic.
  - Prepare 1 minute synopsis of the argument in your paper.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week four (February 6): Advancing your argument.

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 3.
  - Review your article looking for places your argument disappears and should not.
  - Revise your article around your argument.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week five (February 13): Selecting a journal.

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 4.
  - Identify three suitable journals for your work.
Read and skim relevant articles from the selected journals.
Finish revising your article around your argument.
Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week six (February 20): Reviewing the related literature. Part I.

- **P2P workshop, Vincent Hutchings presenting.**
- **Assignments:**
  - Read Hutching’s paper for P2P workshop. Prepare questions/suggestions.
  - Read Belcher, chapter 5.
  - Evaluate your current citations.
  - Identify and read related literature.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week seven (February 27): Reviewing the related literature. Part II.

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Hutching’s paper for P2P workshop. Prepare questions/suggestions.
  - Finish reading related literature
  - Revise your literature review.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week eight (March 6): Strengthening your structure

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 6.
  - Outline a model article on your topic.
  - Outline your paper.
  - Restructure your paper using the model as a guide.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week nine (March 13): Presenting your evidence

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 7
  - Discuss your evidence with colleagues.
  - Revisit your evidence.
  - Shape evidence around argument.
  - Develop check list for presenting evidence.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week ten (March 20): Spring break.
Week eleven (March 27): Opening and concluding your article.

- **P2P workshop, Christopher Gelpi presenting.**
- **Assignments**
  - Read Gelpi’s paper for P2P workshop. Prepare questions/suggestions.
  - Read Belcher, chapter 8.
  - Revise your introduction and conclusion.
  - Revisit your abstract, related literature review.
  - Share your manuscript with someone who will give you feedback by April 2.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week twelve (April 3): Giving, getting, and using others’ feedback.

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 9.
  - Consider the feedback you receive.
  - Make a list of tasks that remain to be done.
  - Revisit your introduction.
  - Send manuscript to MPSA reader.

Week thirteen (April 10): Editing your sentences.

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 11.
  - Revise your article in response to feedback.

Week fourteen (April 17): P2P sessions held at MPSA.

- **Assignments:**
  - Meet with readers.
  - Meet two political scientists you did not know previously.

Week fifteen (April 24): Sending your article.

- **Assignments:**
  - Revise your manuscript in response to feedback.
  - Document time spent on your manuscript.

Week sixteen (May 1): Sending your article.

- **Assignments:**
  - Read Belcher, chapter 12.
  - Finalize your introduction.
  - Finalize your related literature review and bibliography.
  - Finalize your theoretical section.
o Finalize your evidence and structure.
o Finalize your conclusion.
o Prepare illustrations, if any.
o Write the submission cover letter.
o Put manuscript in journal’s style, especially the bibliography and notes.
o Prepare the final print or electronic version and send the manuscript to the journal you chose or prepare a memo outlining the remaining revisions and a schedule for completing them.