

PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SLICE-OF-LIFE ATTENDEES: WRITING ARTICLES, COMMENTARIES, AND ESSAYS ABOUT YOUR PROJECTS FOR PUBLICATION IN SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

Lisa R. Dittrich, *Academic Medicine*, AAMC, Washington, DC

Abstract: Scholarship and professionalism are advanced and measured, in part, by successful publication and the communication of ideas in the literature. As peer-reviewed journals proliferate and diversify, the opportunities for publication also multiply. Many potential authors, however, falsely believe that most scholarly journals are primarily interested in original research reports, and feel at a loss when the results of their own work--the development of new curricula, the implementation of innovative technology--are best conveyed in non-research formats. Non-research formats offer medical education professionals both additional venues for publication and access to new audiences. Such formats include descriptive articles, commentaries, and even personal essays.

In this half-day lecture/demo (non-computer-based) workshop, participants will review keys to writing successful articles, commentaries, and essays for submission to scholarly journals. Using examples from the current literature, the presenter will discuss elements of style and content for writing effectively in these formats, including:

- addressing the appropriate audience
- developing a clear thesis
- organizing support for your thesis
- selecting appropriate levels of appeal
- laying out reasonable organization
- using the paragraph as a building block
- writing in your own "voice"

The speaker will also briefly discuss how articles and commentaries are reviewed and selected for publication in *Academic Medicine*.

Statement of Objectives:

- Explore avenues for publishing in scholarly journals
- Review principles of rhetoric important in writing, including ethos, logos, and pathos
- Review principles for constructing an article/essay;
- Explore many commonly-misunderstood principles of effective and clear writing;
- Learn how peer-review works at one journal for non-research articles/essays.

Statement of Benefits: Publication in peer-reviewed scholarly journals remains one of the key criteria for promotion in academia. Participants will learn of many venues available for publication--including articles, commentaries, and essays. The workshop will also introduce (or, for some participants, provide review of) key principles of

rhetoric and writing, as well as provide some hands-on practice in building an essay for publication.

Intended audience: Anyone interested in learning about writing articles, commentaries, and essays for publication in scholarly journals.

Prerequisite skills required: none.

Number of attendees that can be accommodated: 40

Instructor Qualifications: Lisa Dittrich is managing editor of the AAMC's peer-reviewed journal *Academic Medicine*, where she has been on staff for more than 15 years. Before she became managing editor in 2001, she was senior editor, working directly with authors to substantively edit their manuscripts. She has a bachelor's degree in English and an MFA in writing, and has taught writing at Indiana University and Southwest Texas State University. She and the staff of *Academic Medicine* have also given workshops on writing and peer-review at a number of medical education conferences and institutions in the U.S. and abroad.