

WIS 6934 – Scientific Publishing
Assignment 2: Semester Writing Plan w/ Deadlines
Due Date: 8/29 (50 points)

One of the things that we will learn this semester is that scientific writing requires discipline and sustained effort (coupled perhaps with the occasional burst of activity). It is much easier to do this, and to keep track of progress, when you have a schedule and deadlines.

Assignment: I'd like you to draft a schedule of writing goals for the semester for your personal writing project based around the following four milestone dates: 10/1, 11/5, 12/3, and 12/10. The components of the schedule are as follows:

1) A timeline: Your schedule of goals can be daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly...whatever you like. Too fine a scale (e.g., daily) and it can be hard to keep up, which can be frustrating and demoralizing. Too broad a scale (e.g., monthly) makes it hard to track progress and adjust accordingly. I suggest a weekly schedule, to which you add goals like: "complete analyses", "prepare figures", "complete methods section", "complete results section", "format for submission", "send outline of introduction to co-authors for review", etc.

2) Major milestones for 10/1, 11/5, 12/3, 12/10: While the first one is assigned – the Draft of your introduction is due 10/1 – you choose the other milestones for the those above. These should be major milestones, like "results section complete". This will help you schedule the tasks that make up that larger milestone (complete figures, complete tables of statistical analyses, write results of experiments 1 and 2, etc).

3) list and dates of key events during the semester that might throw off your timeline: football games, conferences, birthdays, major assignments for other classes. This is especially important the week before major milestones.

4) The list of target journals and justification you prepared in class on 9/27

Assessment: I will not be grading the schedule *per se* – you don't get more points for a more ambitious schedule than a more conservative one. The last date does not have to be "submit paper" or send final draft to co-authors", though it can be if you like. Rather, I will be assessing if you have thought through the work you have to do and how best to approach it.

Note for future status checks: On your syllabus you'll notice that 11/5, 12/3, and 12/10 are "status checks". *You grade of these Status Checks will not be based on whether you met the goals – I will be grading your self-assessment of why you did or didn't meet them.* I'll ask you to look back over your schedule, review your goals for that date, what you did to help you meet them, what might have kept you from achieving them, and how you will revise your writing behaviors (and the schedule) accordingly.