How to publish in academic and scholarly journals
AIR Webinar
Nick Hillman

Introduction (3 minutes)

Welcome and thank you for participating in this AIR webinar on "How to Publish in Academic Journals." My name is Nick Hillman, I am an associate professor in the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

I have been a faculty member for eight years. I teach courses on higher education finance, introductory statistics, and higher education policy in the department of Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis.

This webinar is all about publishing in academic journals. We will focus on the three main roles involved in this process: author, editor, and reviewer. Each role is important and together they constitute the "peer review process."

But what is the peer review process? Who are the peers? How are reviews conducted? What strategies help authors navigate this process? We'll answer these and other questions today.

AIR invited me to conduct this webinar because I have experience performing each of these roles: I have been an author of 24 articles published in a wide range of academic journals and I am currently an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Higher Education*. In addition, I serve as a reviewer on the boards of: *Research in Higher Education, Review of Higher Education, American Educational Research Journal,* and *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.

When I was a doctoral student, I knew very little about this "medieval" sounding peer review process! Even during my pre-tenure years as an assistant professor, I felt unclear and unconfident in my ability to produce publishable work.

As it turns out, I was not alone. Across the field of education – and within higher education in particular – there is little socialization and professional development around the peer review process or publication strategies.

And that is exactly why AIR is hosting this webinar. This is designed for the publishing novice who may be a doctoral student, a recent graduate, or an early career professional (faculty or administrator, including institutional researchers) thinking about ways to share their work more broadly. We have three main goals for today's session:

1) Develop greater clarity and confidence around the publication process
2) Identify strategies for crafting publishable research articles
3) Understand the role academic journals play in advancing scientific knowledge

But before we get started, please know I only speak for myself and my own experiences – I do not speak for the journals I mentioned earlier. With that out of the way, let's get started!

Background (8 minutes)

My experience with publishing academic research started where it probably does for most people: as a graduate student co-authoring an article with my faculty advisor (Don Hossler) and a fellow student (Tim Lum).

I'd like to use this as an example to briefly outline three main tensions in the publication process that set the stage for our later discussion.

While studying at Indiana University, I had no idea what it meant to publish a study. All I knew was that I *read* a lot of research articles, but I never really saw myself *writing* any! I was part of a research team that was studying reverse transfer in the state and had access to data that had never before been analyzed. This was 2007 – policymakers and practitioners were interested in this topic and academic research was getting very interested in measuring and theorizing the various pathways students take through college.

We decided to submit our paper to the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* because it had a relatively high acceptance rate and it seemed like the right audience given our research question.

Without going into more detail, this brief example illustrates three key tensions most authors will likely feel as they prepare their work for publication:

1) Knowing if and when your study is publishable
2) Navigating social expectations and norms
3) Deciding where to publish your study

Let's focus on the first tension: knowing if and when your study is publishable.

Despite being our own worst critics, we as authors are likely to say, "my study is important and aims to make a contribution to the field."

But that does not mean it is ready to submit to a journal. And even if it *is* ready, it doesn't mean that it is publishable.

This is the root of one of the biggest tensions in the publication process – knowing whether and when your work is *publishable*.

As authors, we sometimes get "paralysis by analysis" where we get stuck endlessly revising our work. We may also feel anxious about having experts judge the merits of our work. These conditions often stand in the way of being productive, but they are real tensions we cannot avoid. So take comfort in knowing that *no single study can explain everything* and it is the *collection* of research that tilts the scales of knowledge and discovery.

In that first article I wrote with Tim and Don, we presented our work at a conference, shared drafts with colleagues, and were our own worst critics. I remember not knowing what to do next after writing and rewriting it for more than a year. Not knowing the process, I was surprised and fascinated at just about every turn since I assumed articles "just got published." Like most things, the process was more complicated than I had first thought, and I became increasingly anxious knowing there was no guarantee that all the time and energy spent on this work would even result in a publication. When we finally got sick of reading and editing, and when we could articulate our contribution, we sent it out for review and made ourselves vulnerable to feedback. The outcome was thankfully positive, but this illustrates the challenge of having confidence in our work while knowing there is no guarantee it will be well received.

The next tension deals with socialization and norms.

There is a bit of a "hidden curriculum" when it comes to publishing. Students are unlikely to learn how to publish during their coursework. They are much more likely to learn by experience – working on a research team, getting invited to co-author a paper, or by trial and error.

Advisors play an important role in this hidden curriculum as they can help students identify and avoid common mistakes in writing articles. They can also help students prepare for reviews or determine where to submit their work. In my example, I was a doctoral student and saw my advisor often. I was also around other doctoral students who helped teach one another about the hidden curriculum.

Without guidance, it can be hard to navigate the publication process alone. This can create a tension for prospective authors who are unsure if they are ready to submit, where to submit, or even how to respond to reviewers' critiques.

Even with guidance, authors may still find it challenging to navigate the publication process. I recall reaching out to a journal editor just a couple of months after submitting our paper. I did not know the unspoken norm was to wait "a few months" before reaching out to editors. I didn't even know to ask my advisor if it was okay to reach out to editors directly. I just did it. I was getting anxious! In retrospect, I probably shouldn't have reached out until a month or two later, but that's how we learn as we go.

In this webinar, we will talk about some of the strategies and unspoken norms authors will find useful for navigating the publication process.

The third and final tension deals with "where" to publish our work.

Some journals are designed for academic audiences, some are geared to practitioners. Some journals are highly selective, some are not. Some journals are open access, some require subscriptions. Some have international audiences, some are more domestic. There are many distinguishing features of journals and it is hard to know which one is best for your work.

The study of higher education is a sub-field within the broader education research community. The American Educational Research Association (AERA) is the membership organization for

this broader education research community. AERA's journals are therefore considered top education journals and they include: *American Educational Research Journal*; *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*; *Review of Educational Research*; and *Educational Researcher*.

In the sub-field of higher education, our top journals include: *Journal of Higher Education*; *Research in Higher Education*; and *Review of Higher Education*. Even *within* the sub-field of higher education, there are specialty journals on topical or professional interests that carry prestige. For example, the *Community College Review* focuses exclusively on community college research. The *Journal of Student Financial Aid* focuses exclusively on financial aid. AIR has its own *Professional File* that may also be a good place to share your work with the IR audience and get your feet wet with the publication process.

Admittedly, my assessment of "top journals" is subjective and other members of the higher education community may have different opinions. But when we look at metrics like impact factors, acceptance rates, and examples of studies that have made lasting impacts in the field – these journals tend to stand out from the others.

As I mentioned earlier, Don, Tim, and I chose to submit our article to CCJRP because we knew it had a high acceptance rate and it seemed like the right place to share our work. It was a relatively low risk and high reward outlet for us, and it gave me the confidence I needed to continue publishing – or at least try publishing – additional studies.

With this background in mind, let's shift gears and focus on strategies to improve your chances of getting an article published. Our goal is to help authors think strategically about knowing if and when your study is publishable – or if it is ready to submit to a journal. We will not focus much on "where" to publish in this section; that will come later.

Strategies for writing (10 minutes)

There is no magic formula for guaranteeing that an article will be accepted and published. However, there are three guiding questions that I believe, when addressed, can help increase your chances:

1) What is the motivation behind this study?

Every study should have a justification for why it is needed - A motivation. Articulating "why" the study is needed is one of the hardest parts of writing because it is not always obvious.

I often see early career researchers and doctoral students say "a gap in the literature" is the justification for their study. This is a necessary but insufficient reason and I would discourage authors from saying this.

Instead, explain the problem – it can be a problem of practice, a policy problem, or even a problem with how researchers theorize a topic. And then explain how addressing this problem can advance the field.

By articulating a problem, authors are able to more convincingly explain how and why their approach helps address that problem.

Let's take two examples and gauge which one is a stronger motivation. These are loosely based on some of my research on the geography of college opportunity, a topic that touches on a number of interests and problems across the field of education:

"Little research has been done on the role geography plays in college choice and my study seeks to fill that research gap."

"Policymakers and researchers discuss college choice in ways that overlook geography, and, by focusing on it, they can create new solutions to old problems."

Both statements allow me to "fill a gap in the literature" but the second gives a much stronger motivation and justification for conducting the study. Education is an applied field, so the second motivation focuses on the actors – policymakers and researchers – who can apply the ideas and findings to research and practice. It also suggests there are actions these stakeholders can take to address problems.

The first example does none of this. Its emphasis is on filling research gaps, which suggests filling the gap is the end goal. The end goal, in my opinion, is to have our research be practical and relevant. Filling a research gap and informing practice is a second order goal that you will achieve if the study is well motivated.

2) What contribution does this study make?

This question may sound similar to the previous question about the study's motivation, but it is quite different. The motivation focuses on "why" the study is important, while this question focuses on the "so what" factor.

So, what are we supposed to know after reading this paper that we didn't know previously?

Is there a contribution here? If so, what is it and how will it help advance the knowledge base?

These are very hard questions to answer and it is easy to become so invested in a study that we feel personally offended if someone asks "so what?" But we need to be asking ourselves this question all the time because it is our responsibility to make the "so what" clear. If we don't, then we run the risk of simply "moving the bones in the graveyard" as one of my colleagues likes to say.

What they mean is that we dig up old ideas and replace them without adding new value or knowledge through this pursuit.

To avoid the "so what" trap, consider the following two examples.

"This study examines college choice and finds the following…"

"This study updates and extends the college choice literature in the following ways…"

The first example tells us what the study did, while the second tells us how doing this study contributes to the broader literature. Aim for sentences like the second one. Be very clear about what you are doing and how doing it builds on our knowledge base.

One common mistake I see authors make is that they fail to engage in important conversations taking place in academic journals. Imagine a cocktail party where all the authors studying college choice were hanging out and chatting. Some of these people may be alive today, some may have passed away a long time ago, and still others may no longer be active researchers. Their ideas are still important and the work we do today builds upon their work.

As authors, we need to know how our work extends the work done before us. This is how science operates – someone discovers something new and then others build on and improve that work. If authors are unable to explain how they are building on that work (often through the literature review), their paper is likely to make little impact in the field and may not pass the peer review process.

3) What else might explain my findings?

This question is important to consider when designing a study and interpreting the results. No single study will explain it all, but each study should convincingly answer the research questions at hand. If it does not, then the paper will likely not be published.

This means each study should have clear *research questions*. My advisor liked to say "researchable questions" to highlight the fact that some questions may simply be impossible to answer given data limitations, time constraints, or other factors making research impractical.

That said, be very clear about how your study answers the question it sets out to ask.

If you are doing a quantitative analysis, this means making sure every variable in your statistical model is justified either through the literature review or conceptual framework. And then make sure no omitted variables are lurking in the background that could plausibly explain your results.

Remember "correlation is not causation" so avoid terms like "cause" or "impact" or even "influence" if your quantitative study is correlational. If it is based on observational data (no treatment and control group) and if it does not use an acceptable quasi-experimental technique, then it is correlational. And that's ok! I would rather see a well-motivated correlational analysis that extends new knowledge than a poorly motivated causal study that repeats what we already know.

Some other brief tips for authors:

- Write in active voice. Do not say "the car was hit by the bus" – say "the bus hit the car." Put the subject first and then the verb. This will do wonders for improving your writing

style and clarity. Microsoft Word even has a grammar check feature that searches for passive voice. Use it.

- Cite articles from the journal to which you submit your manuscript. Just like the cocktail party image a few minutes ago, think of a journal as a place where these conversations have been occurring over time. Failing to cite important articles published in the journal suggests the author hasn't thought enough about how it contributes to that literature base.
- If you use a theoretical framework, make sure you come back to it when discussing your results. As a reviewer, I often provide comments like "the theoretical framework could be removed without changing the way I interpret the findings…" Don't force a framework into a paper only to never revisit it after introducing it.

Preparing and submitting articles (5 minutes)

Once you are ready to submit your article to a journal, there are a few things to consider since you cannot submit the same work to multiple journals at the same time. Once you pick a journal, you have to commit to the process. Here are four tips to keep in mind when finalizing your work and deciding where to submit.

First, review a few recent articles from the journal and compare their structure to your own. Do they include a long introduction or a short one? Are the literature reviews typically brief? What headings and sub-headings seem to be most common?

Of course, do not structure your article in a way that doesn't work for you. Getting a sense of published articles' formats can help authors calibrate how much to say in each section. For example, if I were to submit to *Economics of Education Review*, I would likely have a very brief literature review and probably no theoretical framework because many of their articles follow that convention. However, if I were submitting to *American Educational Research Journal*, I would want to have both a thorough lit review and a purposeful theoretical framework.

Second, read your article out loud from start to finish before submitting it. You will likely find small edits that improve the overall prose and help the "flow" of the conversation. Also have someone outside your area of expertise read the article. This will help ensure that the main motivation and findings are clear even to the uninitiated reader.

Third, check to see when the journal last published a paper on a similar topic as your own. There is a good chance that those authors may be invited to review your work. There is nothing you can or should do about this, other than imagining that author reading your work someday. Don't let this intimidate you; rather, see this as putting a face to the audience you seek to reach. This can help polish some of the language you use when referring to prior work.

And finally, be prepared to write a very brief letter to the editor when submitting your article. This step can be a surprise to new authors, but don't overthink it. Say something very brief like, "thank you for considering my manuscript. This is my first time submitting to this journal and I am eager to receive feedback." Don't spend a lot of time explaining to the editor the merits or purpose of your study. That is for the reviewer(s) to decide, and your article should speak for itself.

You might also say something like, “if you believe this paper warrants review and are searching for potential invitees, I would respectfully suggest X, Y, and Z.” This is not a common approach but it is acceptable. Editors appreciate hearing who to invite as a reviewer. In fact, some journals actually allow authors to recommend reviewers.

After submission, be prepared to wait about three months before hearing back from the editor. It takes a few weeks to find reviewers and another month or so for them to review your work. Then, the editor needs time to review the reviews and register a decision, which can take a couple of weeks. Remember, editors and reviewers have other jobs and they are doing this work in addition to a number of other commitments. This doesn’t excuse them for being late, but do know it is why things can often can get delayed.

Once an article is accepted, it will take several weeks to finalize copyright agreements and proof the pre-print version. So, from start to finish, you will be lucky to get your article from submission to publication within six months. I would say most of the time it takes at least a year from start to finish and often even longer. So, be prepared to wait at every stage of the submission, review, and publication process!

The publication process (10 minutes)

Let’s shift gears and focus on the process you might expect to go through as an author submitting your work to a journal. The process you see here is a generic model of peer review and we will walk through each step in the next 10 minutes.

Let’s look at the big picture first and then focus on each of the four stages in the publication process.

In a perfect world, authors submit their articles. The reviewers love them. The authors make minor (if any) revisions, and then the articles are published.

Unfortunately, this perfect world doesn’t really exist.

The four stages of submission, review, revision, and publication are not only not straightforward but they are also unpredictable. It is possible to get stuck in multiple rounds of revision only to be rejected. It is also possible to submit an article only to have it never reach the review stage (an editor’s “desk reject”). It is possible that one reviewer loved the study, while another hated it.

These sound like stressful experiences. And publishing certainly can be!

But in its best form – and I think more often than not – peer review can be a very humane and constructive experience for authors. Yes, there are disappointments, but there are also triumphant and hopeful stories in this process.

Peer review is a central tenet of scientific inquiry, where work must be vetted by experts before dissemination. Sharing our findings is key to building a knowledge base, so we want to be sure

our findings are sound and that the work will stand the test of time. Peer review helps make that happen.

Stage 1: Submission

The publication journey begins with authors who write a research paper – often around 10,000 words in length (about 30 to 40 double spaced pages).

Each journal will have its own criteria for submissions – some will not accept literature reviews or "think pieces," while others will. Some want to see only small amount of data, while others want to see plenty. Some allow briefs and book reviews, while others only publish traditional articles. Always look at – and follow – the submission guidelines before you submit an article.

Once submitted, the editor (or editorial assistant) will review the article to make sure it is a decent fit for the journal and that it meets minimal standards for consideration.

If it does not pass that test, the article will be rejected. This is called a "desk reject" where the article never even goes out for review. The editor would notify the author it has been rejected and the author would have to search for a different journal to share their work.

This makes it sound like the editor has a lot of power, and in many cases they do. So, let's talk about editors for a minute.

Editors are typically established experts in the field who are deeply familiar with the journal's mission and goals. They serve terms – sometimes three- to five-year renewable commitments. To become an editor, some journals may require formal applications while others may invite editors through professional associations.

Regardless, editors are the point person for the journal – they interact with authors, reviewers, and the publication staff involved in preparing the final journal article that goes online and in print.

Editors often have a team of editorial assistants or editorial managers who help screen submissions to determine whether those submissions meet the journal's minimal standards. They may also have a team of associate editors to help carry this work load.

Stage 2: Review

Once the editor determines that an article warrants review, they will search for reviewers.

The author will never know who reviewed their work, and the reviewer should (in theory) not know the author. This is called "double blind" review. Some journals disclose authors, making only the reviewer anonymous, which is called a "single blind" review.

Our professional communities get smaller as our careers progress, so it is not uncommon for reviewers to be able to identify authors. If a reviewer feels uncomfortable reviewing an article by an author they can identify, or if they believe they have a conflict of interest, then they should

ask to be removed from the process. Reviewers may know the author, and it is only okay for them to review the article if they are able to maintain a fair and unbiased assessment of the author's work.

Reviewers are typically established professionals – and are frequently faculty members - in the field who have extensive knowledge on the methods, theory, literature, data, policy context, or anything else related to the article where they can lend their expertise.

Once an editor identifies the right reviewers – typically two or three people – they will invite them to read and respond to your article. Editors typically give reviewers 30 days to conduct the review, though this varies by journal and not all reviewers meet their deadlines.

Reviewers will write a brief report to the editor with frank comments on the merits of the article. They will also write a detailed report to the author with specific comments on their most pressing concerns.

The reviewer will recommend to the editor one of three outcomes:

- Reject
- Revise and Resubmit (R&R)
- Accept

After all reviews are complete, the editor will read each one and will see if the reviewers agreed on the outcome. For example, if all reviewers recommend rejection, then the editor will very likely reject the article. If they all recommend an R&R, then the editor will likely heed their advice.

There are times when reviewers disagree on the outcome and in these cases the editor has to make hard decisions about how to proceed. They may send the article out to yet another peer reviewer to weigh in, or they may consult with their associate editors and board members to make a judgment.

If they decide "revise and resubmit," then the editor is signaling a strong interest in publishing the work. There is still no guarantee, but the reviewers and editorial team both believe there is value in the piece. So, authors need to address all the feedback from their reviewers and resubmit the article – typically between three months to a full year.

In very rare cases will a journal accept an article upon first review. Once accepted (typically after at least one revision), the editor will send the article to the publication team and then the article is printed in the journal.

<u>Stage 3: Revision</u>

Let's say reviewers were positive about your article and the editor gives you an R&R. This is great news, but it also means you have to respond to each of the reviewers' concerns.

As an author, you will resubmit the new and improved version of the article. The editor will review it and then send it back out to the original peer reviewers who will then weigh in on the changes you've made.

However, you will not simply submit a new version of the paper. You will need to also submit a letter responding to each of the reviewers' concerns. This letter should explain exactly how and where you addressed their concerns, which may mean explaining why a reviewer's suggestion does not resonate with you.

Always respond to every reviewer comment and always let reviewers know their points are well taken, even if you disagree with them. For example, in your response letter to the editor outlining the changes you made to the original manuscript, you could say things like "I agree with the reviewer's concern, so please note how I now addressed X, Y, and Z in the response."

Unless an editor tells you otherwise, do not do this via track changes, rather, do this via a narrative letter. This allows you to disagree with the reviewer or to explain your rationale a bit more completely.

The reviewers will read that letter and then they'll read the new version of the paper.

If you have sufficiently addressed their concerns, then they will hopefully recommend "accept" this time around.

It is possible they are still not satisfied and they may now recommend "reject." They may also want to see yet another revision, so they could recommend another "revise and resubmit."

In my experience, it is uncommon for a revised manuscript to be rejected. It is also uncommon for a revised manuscript to go beyond two rounds of revision. Basically, once you've revised the manuscript, the chances of getting accepted grow exponentially.

Stage 4: Publication

Once accepted, the author will have one final review of the manuscript. The journal will provide page proofs, which are formatted to look like the final article. The author will have one last chance to make small stylistic edits at this point, but content changes are usually not accepted at this stage.

Authors will also sign copyright agreements transferring ownership to the journal. This typically means the author cannot (depending on the copyright agreement) distribute the final edited and formatted article – only the journal can distribute that version.

Authors can, however, post pre-publication versions of their papers on their website or repositories like Social Science Archive (SocArxiv). Authors can also summarize their research findings in policy briefs or other venues in order to reach broader audiences.

Final articles take time to find their way into the print version of journals, though most publishers make online first and pre-prints available on the journal's main website. Paper versions of journals are typically contractually bound to certain page limits, which is how editorial teams determine how many articles can go in each issue.

Journals typically publish one volume per year, and it is common to see four or six issues per volume. So, if you see "Volume 68, Issue 2" it likely means the article can be found in the second issue of the journal's 68th year.

The education journal landscape (5 minutes)

As mentioned before, there are a wide range of journals available for authors to consider as outlets for their work.

If you do not know where to publish, consider the Cabell's Directory, which should be available in your university's library. This directory contains hundreds of education journal titles, their acceptance rates, and general descriptions.

In my opinion, there are three levels of selectivity for journals. The most selective accept less than 10 percent of submissions, moderately selective accept around 30 percent of submissions or so, and the least selective accept the majority of submissions. There are no hard and fast rules here, which is why my thresholds are fuzzy, but these loosely translate to "top, second, and third" tier journals.

The value of these tiers is relative to your goals as an author. For example, most faculty members seeking promotion or tenure are required to publish, and selectivity matters. However, practitioners and scholars often write articles that are valued by reaching wide audiences.

The AERA journals mentioned earlier all have acceptance rates around 10 percent or lower. Similarly, the top three higher education journals have acceptance rates in this range.

In higher education, there are several field-specific and topical journals as shown here on this slide.

[insert slide with journal names here]

There are also journals devoted to special issues, typically in the "New Directions" line – such as *New Directions in Institutional Research*. Here, a researcher will propose a collection of papers to be published in a thematic special issue around a specific topic. The researcher proposing the collection will serve as editor and they will usher each paper through the review process.

The *Higher Education Handbook of Theory and Research* is another important peer reviewed outlet where the editors typically invite established and early career faculty to write on a wide range of emerging issues in the field. In full disclosure, I will be editing the methods section of the *Handbook* starting next year, so be on the lookout!

If you are interested in going outside of AERA and higher education journals altogether, then you might consider some of the following. But be careful because it may be harder to anticipate what reviewers are looking for.

Going outside of education journals can be risky because we are a *field* of applied social science, which means we draw from *disciplines* like anthropology, economics, psychology, sociology, etc. But it can be very rewarding by exposing authors to wider audiences and by pushing our field's boundaries.

Anthropologists, economists, psychologists, and sociologists are likely to turn to their professional associations and their academic journals first and then – if we are lucky – they might pick up higher education journals to engage with our field. It is more likely that we in education are the ones turning to the disciplines to help inform and shape our work.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

We covered a lot of ground today and I hope this webinar achieved our initial goals:

1) Develop greater clarity and confidence around the publication process
2) Identify strategies for crafting publishable research articles
3) Understand the role academic journals play in advancing scientific knowledge

The topics we discussed today are not confidential – there was no insider information that editors, reviewers, or publishers wouldn't tell you. Again, I am not speaking on behalf of the *Journal of Higher Education* or any of the journals for which I review. I am simply sharing my experiences and lessons that have been passed my way over the years.

This webinar should serve as a helpful starting point for everyone interested in disseminating their work more broadly. I will always encourage authors – especially those early in their careers, both practitioners and faculty members – to submit their work to academic journals. Even if the work gets rejected, there is much learning that takes place in writing, sharing, editing, and reviewing our work and the work of others.

My advisor told me to "take your work seriously, but don't take yourself too seriously" and this is so important when it comes to the peer review process. Remember, no single study will be perfect, and some may not even be that good. But that doesn't speak to you as a person – it doesn't reflect on your ability, aptitude, or any other intrinsic thing about you. It just means the paper wasn't ready to be published yet! Give it another try. There's nothing to lose!

If you have a paper that gets rejected multiple times, then maybe it is okay to move on to a different project and chalk that paper up to being a lost cause. That is okay, too! I have done this and it feels so good to finally say "this paper is dead." Of course, it always feels better to say "this paper is published!" But, t frankly, publication is the exception to the rule. And often parts of papers that don't "make it" have nuggets of wisdom or information that are the seeds for new areas of exploration.

Don’t be discouraged by rejection. And don’t take rejection personally. This is easier said than done, but that is what I would like to end on today. As with anything in life that’s worthwhile, we have to make ourselves vulnerable to the unknown – we have to put our work out there and see what others think about it. I take great joy and excitement in knowing you all care so much about your work that you are willing to make yourselves vulnerable to the unknown – all for the sake of advancing knowledge and improving education.