



ROADMAP

- Discuss writing hopes and challenges
- Understand the importance of context in writing about indigenous communities
- Developing your topic
- Understanding academic writing and structure
- Where does your work fit in?
- Developing a writing plan



HOW DOES YOUR WORK FIT INTO THE LITERATURE

- What is the knowledge base in your area? Is there information on indigenous communities?
- Who is already writing in the area?
- What voices/perspectives are missing?
- What do you want to add?



JOURNAL POSSIBILITIES

- Public Health Journal
 - Social Science Journal
 - Peer-review Chapter
 - Op-Ed Piece
 - Practice Journal
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- What types of research does the journal publish?
 - Who is the journal audience?



YOUR WRITING GOALS

- What story do you want to tell? What implications could your work have?
- How could your work contribute to the knowledge base? Could it help clarify an argument or even reframe assumptions?
- Consider the “audience” for your paper – this is key.

“Research, like schooling, once the tool of colonization and oppression, is very gradually coming to be seen as a potential means to reclaim languages, histories, and knowledge, to find solutions to the negative impacts of colonialism and to give voice to an alternative way of knowing and of being.”

--Linda T. Smith

(2005)



INDIGENOUS RESEARCH ASSAULTS

(FROM WALTERS, SIMONI, EVANS-CAMPBELL ET AL.)

- Historically, there has been little regard to indigenous community needs or the potentially harmful implications of research processes and findings
- Research that communities have deemed as “helicopter” or “drive-by” research.
- Medical impropriety and experimentation often have targeted the most vulnerable of our people, our children.
- Call for revitalization and innovation in indigenous science follows history of research harm (e.g., sterilization)



- What is the knowledge base in the literature about your topic – direct and indirect (eg. data on other groups, different tribes)?
- How about other information is available about the data you want to share? Practice knowledge, reports, traditional teaching
- Consider each question from the point of view of the literature and the community:
 - What are the ASSUMPTIONS about the issue?
 - What CONTEXT will you need to provide readers – Native and non-Native audiences?
- What TERMS do you need to define?



ACADEMIC WRITING



WHY A SCIENTIFIC FORMAT?

(REVISED FROM MURRAY, 2009)

- The scientific format tends to have a fairly rigid structure - quite different from writing in the humanities.
- This structured format is seen as a way to efficiently communicate scientific findings.
- It also allows the paper to be read in section pieces or at different levels.
 - Skim titles
 - read abstracts or
 - just read results and findings



PARTS OF A PAPER



LITERATURE REVIEW

- A review of major literature on the subject – particularly important to note seminal pieces and current literature. What are the main ideas/theories?
- Have indigenous communities been included in research literature in the area?
- *Review articles can be incredibly helpful to get to know the literature but be sure to look at original sources when you write!
 - Ex. ICWA

Length will differ widely by journal



METHODS

- A clear description of how you gathered the data
 - methodological approach
 - A description of the measures
 - Sampling strategies
 - Human subjects



RESULTS

- Describe the sample demographics – this gives the reader a context for your findings
- Focus on the findings related your argument and background. Highlight any unique or unexpected findings.
- Often authors report prevalence, means, etc. first and then go into the relationships between variables.



DISCUSSION

- Be careful to separate out discussion from presenting the results.
- Structure your discussion around your argument.
- Relate your results to similar studies and literature – did your findings confirm the existing lit. or contradict it?
- Highlight what is important to your argument, unique findings.
- What may have impacted your findings?



DISCUSSION 2

- What are the implications for practice and policy?
- Note the limitations of the study. Was it conducted on a small sample? A convenience sample? Is there missing data? What would you do differently next time?
- Suggest future research. What should be explored next or more thoroughly?



THE PURPOSE OF WRITING AN OUTLINE

(ADAPTED FROM MURRAY, 2009)

- Generating ideas
- Developing a structure for your paper
- Connecting and ordering ideas
- Helps improve paper flow
- Helps you to expand and eliminate ideas
- Helps you know where to contextualize your work
- Helps you to identify primary sections and sub-sections



ANALYZING A JOURNAL

- What type of papers does the journal publish? Do most papers use certain kinds of stats or methods? Do the articles have lengthy background sections and lit reviews?
- Is there a focus on implications? If so, are the implications discussed related to research, practice, policy?
- Who is the readership? This is important!
- Review the last few issues – what types of topics are included?
- Which methodologies or theoretical frameworks are used?
- How long are articles?
- What is the timeframe for publication?



NEW WRITER ERRORS (MURRAY, 2009)

- Writing too much background about the research 'problem'
- Putting too many ideas in one paper
- Overstating the problem and the findings
- Overstating a critique of others' work – ideas don't pop out of a bubble
- Not being clear, losing focus through indirect writing