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
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

- 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 (e.g., 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
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 to 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