Student Guide to Getting Published  
Marilyn Smith-Stoner, RN-BC, PhD  
mstoner@csusb.edu  
February 2011

As a student you produce a lot of intellectual work during your education. Many journals and newsletters/e-magazines would be interested in reviewing the work.

- First manuscript is likely to be a reflection piece
  - Think about a topic you are interested in
    - An experience you had
    - Experience that was powerful
    - Goals you have for your education or career
    - Reaction to something you studied and saw in practice
    - Description of someone meaningful such as a faculty member, patient or nurse

- Look at author guidelines for (in order), see Appendix
  - Web publications
  - Trade publications

- Consider writing with a staff nurse or colleague the first time, makes it more fun and you can motivate each other to keep going

- Campus writing resources
  - Asking a question:  
    http://www.questionpoint.org/crs/servlet/org.oclc.home.TFSRedirect?virtcategory=11352
    - Search guides
    - APA guide
    - You can look at back issues of most nursing publications in the online library, log on to: http://www.lib.csusb.edu, then CINAHL and then in the upper left corner of the page look at “publications”, you can look through current and prior issues of the journal you may be writing for.
  - Writing lab, need an appointment, once you have a first full draft of the article, take it to them, do not wait until you think the article is finished
  - Faculty may want to help mentor you, visit during office hours, doesn’t have to be a faculty member you have in class, see if one faculty member is an expert in your interest area, send your documents ahead of time for the faculty to review

- Develop an aim for your manuscript, be clear about what you want to say
  - Create an outline of the author guidelines for outlines:  
    http://www.lavc.edu/library/outline.htm
  - Conduct of brief literature search on the topic, see what others have written
    - Include their comments in your outline, cite properly, look for reviews of the literature, look in professional organization websites & government sites
- Create a reference list, only include articles and web sites you are using for the article
  - Consider adding interviews to strengthen the content of your article. Local nursing experts or patients with the experience you are writing about can help your manuscript. Cite accordingly as a personal communication according to APA
- Select the publication you will submit to
- Focus your article to the guidelines of the journal
- A complete review of journals is available at: 
  Nurse Author Editor
  http://www.nurseauthoreditor.com/library.asp
- Before deciding on a journal, read a few issues to get a sense of the publication
- Consider sending a query letter to the editor of the publication/web site
- Never send a query to more than one editor at a time
    - State the aim of your article
    - Let the editor know when the manuscript will be ready
    - Describe any photographs or multimedia that will be available to supplement the article
  - Allow 1-2 weeks for a response, check your email regularly and respond promptly, even if you find out the editor is not interested in your article, send a thank you note for taking the time to review the proposal
  - Be sure to check your email regularly when waiting for a reply
  - Do not attach an email note that you want to be notified when the editor reads the email
- The first draft
  - Follow the format of the author guidelines, no deviation
  - Not all publications use APA as their formatting guideline
  - Follow the outline you created, especially if you submitted it to the editor of the journal, the editor will be expecting an article that follows the outline
- Once you have created your first draft, go the writing lab and have them review it
  - The writing lab staff gives excellent advise, but not necessarily directed at a nursing publication, get a faculty member to look at the draft after you’ve corrected the writing lab issues
- Consider how to illustrate the main points in your article
  - Get help with photography. Some tips for photography:
    - Use the draft of your paper to determine which key points need to be illustrated. Underline those points and work with your photographer to develop the images. If you are using a university photograph they will appreciate all the detail you can give them to what the image is supposed to represent
    - Be flexible in scheduling their time and prepare the environment so their time is minimized
You will need to get consent from people for their photograph to be published. Don’t be shy about asking. Use the university photo consent (See below) or the one the publication would like to use.

- If you are photography someone who does not write or understand, and is an adult, you can record their verbal permission and keep on file.
  - Get a professional picture of yourself that you can submit for publication with the article
  - Set up clinical shots in the skills lab or ask permission of the clinical site, to reinforce the key points of the story
  - If you have a drawing skill, consider using that to illustrate your article
  - Create a podcast or movie to go with the article, upload to YouTube, must have written permission from subjects

- Ensuring integrity
  - Before you submit the final article, put the article through an online plagiarism detection service like Turnitin. If you do not have access to Turnitin, at least put key phrases in Google or other search engine to make sure you have not inadvertently left off a reference, and may seem to be taking credit for someone else’s work.
  - If someone helped you write the article, you can list them in the acknowledgements. Always ask their permission to include their name in the acknowledgements
  - The most common mistake writers make is in the references. Misspelling names, incorrect titles, and the like is a sign you were not focused on ensuring accuracy of original sources. Check, recheck and triple check references. When you are doing your literature search, you can also copy and paste the exact reference format using many styles from the library. See the librarian for help. Copy and pasting the reference will save a lot of time and ensure the accuracy of your final manuscript.

- Final Article
  - Once you complete the final draft, sleep on it one more night before you turn it in
  - Double check the author guidelines, note HOW the article is to be submitted and an additional items such as a photograph.
  - Never submit to more than one journal at a time.

- The Review Period
  - Articles can take from days to months to be reviewed and receive notification of acceptance
  - Be patient!
  - The editor will review the article and determine if it is the going to receive a full review. Not all journals are peer reviewed, trade magazines are generally managed by an editor and are a great place to have your first publication. Journals dedicated to research and scholarship will be peer reviewed and the review can take 2-6 months.
  - No matter what type of journal you select and selects your article, the article is not complete until it is in print.
Every journal needs to format the final version of the article given the page restrictions of the journal issue your article will appear.

A copy editor will review the content, grammar, punctuation and suggest changes. The copy editor will also find additional areas that may need further clarification.

Every editor I have ever worked with has improved even the most cherished thoughts I have had. Be humble and open to changes suggested by the professional editors at the publication

Post Acceptance Work

- Once your article is accepted for publication, there is still work to do to. Ensure the final printed version is correct
  - Acknowledge acceptance, usually in the form of an email, promptly
  - Complete any paperwork that transfers copyright to the publisher promptly, generally speaking you do not own the article once it is published

Suggested list of Publications for First Time authors

Advance for Nurses: [http://nursing.advanceweb.com](http://nursing.advanceweb.com)

Nurseweek: [http://www.nurse.com](http://www.nurse.com)

StuNurse: http://www.stunurse.com/


Dimensions in Critical Care Nursing: [http://journals.lww.com dccnjournal/pages/default.aspx](http://journals.lww.com dccnjournal/pages/default.aspx)

Examples of student published work:

**A Cell Phone Policy for Nursing Students**
Star Hartzell and Lydea Millet
Stunurse
[http://www.stunurse.com/content/a-cell-phone-policy-nursing-students](http://www.stunurse.com/content/a-cell-phone-policy-nursing-students)

**C.A.R.E Model for Postmortem Care**
Pair of Students: Ng Eboka and Genevee Fallesgon
ADVANCE for Nurses

**Critical Care Visitation and the Headache that Follows**
Nijhenee Chakma and Justin-Paul Ocampo,
Dimension of Critical Care Nursing Jan/Feb 2011
[http://journals.lww.com dccnjournal/Fulltext/2011/01000/Personal_Reflection___Critical_Care_Visitation_and_8.aspx](http://journals.lww.com dccnjournal/Fulltext/2011/01000/Personal_Reflection___Critical_Care_Visitation_and_8.aspx)

**Discharge of Homeless Patients**
Pair of students: Cathi Patterson & Bunni Brown
Nurse Week
http://news.nurse.com/article/20100614/NATIONAL02/106140071/-1/frontpage

Shackles in the Hospital
Jennifer Reyes Cruz and Julian Canlas
ADVANCE for Nurses

The Nurse’s Role in Medication Reconciliation
Darcy Cloutier-Fernald and MariGrace Bauer
http://nursing.advanceweb.com/Student-and-New-Grad-Center/Student-Top-Story/Medication-Reconciliation.aspx

Central Line Care Saves Money
Pair of students: Jeremy Arcaira and Rai Claronino

Did you know?

- Most published work is done for free? There are exceptions.
- You do not own the rights to the publication, unless that is specified in the copyright transfer form
- You cannot photocopy or distribute copies of your article without the publisher’s permission, since they usually own the copyright after publication
- You should add the reference to your resume under a special heading: Publications
- You can cite your own publication in your work, include on your resume
- Many nurses have a subject they feel passionate about and write many articles on the topic in their professional career. Each time you write a new article on the topic, the next article should have a different focus and not simply be a restatement of what you have said in other articles. This is called self plagiarism
- Sign up eTable of Contents alerts to stay current on your topic of choice. Once you find publications that interesting to you, go to the journal website and sign up for emails to receive the Table of Contents when a new issue is published
- Sign up for Medscape Nursing email alerts to get a general sense of important topics:
  http://www.medscape.com/nurses