

Developing a Textbook Proposal

By Mary Ellen Lepionka

This one-day workshop on developing a textbook proposal incorporates lecture, discussion, application, and tutorial. It begins with an appreciation of the prerequisites: what is involved in stating your textbook idea, discovering the market for your textbook idea, and finding the right publishers for the kind of textbook you want to do? What kind of a track record and author profile do you need? Hands-on activities include completing a market analysis and competition grid. The workshop goes on to explore in greater depth what should be in a textbook proposal. Working on a prospectus template, participants will have opportunities to develop descriptions of their content, organization, apparatus, pedagogy, and presentation. Hands-on activities include completing a pedagogy plan and supplements plan. Participants also will have opportunities to develop plans for supporting materials, including the table of contents, sample chapters, and cover letter. The workshop concludes with advice on making contact with editors, observing publishing calendars and submission guidelines, and interpreting outcomes.

9:00 Introduction and Discussion

9:30 Stating Your Textbook Idea

- Telling Your Story
- Identifying Your Audience
- Selling Your Mission

10:00 Discovering the Market for Your Textbook Idea

- Surveying Course Syllabi
- Analyzing the Competition
 - Hands-On: Competition Grid*
- Becoming Market Savvy
 - Hands-On: Market Analysis*

10:45 Finding the Right Publishers

- Using Publisher Directories
- Conducting Online Research
 - Hands-On: Useful URLs*

10:45-11:00 Break

11:00 Establishing a Track Record

- Matching Publishers' Author Profiles
- Reviewing and Contributing
- Developing an Author Team

11:30 Developing the Prospectus

- Story, Audience, Mission
 - Hands-On: Prospectus Template*
- Markets and Competition
- Content and Organization
- Apparatus and Pedagogy
 - Hands-On: Pedagogy Plan*
 - Hands-On: Feature Strands*

1:00-2:00 LUNCH

2:00 Completing the Prospectus

2:30 Developing Support Materials

Table of Contents
 Hands-On: Text Headings
Supplements
 Hands-On: Supplements Plan
Sample Chapters
Cover Letter
 Hands-On: Cover Letter Template
4:00 Making Contact
 Whom to Contact and When
 What to Say and What Not to Say
 What to Send
 Hands-On: Textbook Proposal Checklist
4:30 Conclusion and Discussion

Mary Ellen Lepionka is a developmental editor in higher education and has worked with many major textbook publishers, such as Allyn & Bacon, Prentice Hall, McGraw-Hill, Wiley, Houghton Mifflin, Sage, and others. She is also the founder of Atlantic Path Publishing in Gloucester, MA, and author of *Writing and Developing Your College Textbook*, second edition (2008) and *Writing and Developing College Textbook Supplements* (2005). Mary Ellen is a proud member and sponsor of the Text and Academic Authors Association.

To schedule this workshop, contact Mary Ellen Lepionka at (978) 283-1531 or me.lepionka@verizon.net

This workshop is sponsored by the Text and Academic Authors Association (TAA). TAA is the only nonprofit membership association dedicated solely to assisting textbook and academic authors. TAA's overall mission is to enhance the quality of textbooks and other academic materials, such as journal articles, monographs and scholarly books, in all fields and disciplines, by providing its textbook and academic author members with educational and networking opportunities.

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