

TAA Virtual Conference 2023

# Don't Gloss Over the Glossary!

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## Outline

- 1) The challenges of dealing with a glossary
- 2) The idea for the master glossary
- 3) My eight guidelines for working on the master glossary
- 4) Q. & A.

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Working on a glossary can be like  
falling into the abyss ...




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I hired someone to create  
my original glossary



**Polling question:** Did either you or your  
publisher hire someone to create the glossary  
for your book?

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Contemplate all the things  
that need to be  
considered ...



- What qualifies as a term to be included in the glossary?
- Detailed definition or concise one?
- Use examples with definition or no?
- Which pronunciation system to use?
- Include all complimentary pairs of terms?

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When feeling  
overwhelmed by all the  
factors to consider, my  
engineering friends would  
say ...

*"You are feeling  
overwhelmed because  
you do not have a system.  
Create a system of clearly  
defined rules and  
procedures and your  
problem will be solved."*




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My editor, Marta Pentecost,  
suggested the idea for  
a master glossary.



**Problem:** My three books in anatomy &  
physiology were being edited and revised  
independently so they did not have a  
consistent glossary.

**Solution:** Master glossary

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## Eight General Guidelines I used with My Editors for my Master Glossary

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1) Glossary terms should be in singular form rather than plural form.

- Artery not arteries

•**Reasoning:** most textbooks and medical dictionaries use the singular form as the default.

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2) For glossary terms that consist of two words, the pronunciation should be placed after both words rather than *between* them.

- Medulla oblongata  
(meh-DOOL-uh ahb-lahn-GAH-tuh)

•**Reasoning:** this is a matter of preference but I feel the student will be less confused when two-word terms are always kept intact

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3) For two-word terms that contain common words like “body”, “node”, “plane”, “cavity”, “loop”, “cells”, do not include pronunciation for these common words.

- Nephron loop (NEF-rah-n)
- **Reasoning:** this is less cumbersome, simpler, and cleaner

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4) For terms that have an irregular plural form, list both the singular and the plural forms along with the pronunciations for both forms in the following format:

- Villus, pl. villi (VIL-us; Vil-EYE)
- **Reasoning:** this is a matter of preference but I like this best because it is clean and simple.

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5) When an example is used in the definition, place the example at the end of the definition, after a semicolon, then use “e.g.” in italics instead of “for example” or “this includes”.

- ... ; *e.g.* cellulose
- **Reasoning:** this is for brevity, consistency, and better organization

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6) When a more preferred term is offered as a “See other”, the format should be that the alternate term is italicized but not the word “See”.

- Fallopian tube – See *uterine tube*
- Reasoning: this is a matter of preference

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7) When the part of speech for a term is given, the format should be that it is abbreviated and placed in parentheses and in a regular font.

- Mucous (adj.) or Mucus (n.)  
(Mucous membranes secrete mucus)
- Reasoning: this is a matter of preference

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8) When a clarification about a term is given, the format should be that it follows the term in parentheses and the words should be italicized.

- Crest (*as in bone marking*)
- Reasoning: this is a matter of preference

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**Thanks for your  
attention!**

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**Questions?  
Comments?**

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