

The Academic Author

NEWSLETTER

Starting Your Dissertation? Rethink Your Lifestyle

BY NOELLE STERNE

You're ready to begin your dissertation, and you deserve congratulations! But realize, though, that your current lifestyle must change.

No Structure

Doctoral students beginning this coveted stage are often shocked at the lack of external structure. No prescheduled class meetings, specific assignments, or grades to goad you on. No classmates to remind you to tackle the next assignment. You've got to make your own schedule and follow through.



If you work away from home, you've already got some structure. You can easily figure out your dissertation time: evenings, weekends, and an occasional call-in-sick day.

But if you work at home, the lack of structure can be insidious. In my dissertation coaching practice, one student took a year off to complete her dissertation. But she found that her time was taken up with all the "necessary" nonacademic activities. To her panic, the year evaporated with little done, and she hired me for structure and accountability. So, to prevent such mistakes . . .

Make a List. Draw up your master list of tasks: research into subtopics, outlines of chapters, chair and committee meetings, university deadlines, actual writing. This list, interminable as it may seem, does have an end. You have it all laid out in front of you and eventually will have the delicious reward of checking items off.

Make a Schedule. You are in training for the dissertation finish line. Allot reasonable times to your training. An hour when you come home from work and two 2-hour stints on weekends? If you work at home, a morning stint, then lunch, even a short nap, and another work session in the evening? Be honest about when you work best.

New Leisure. You'll need to change your definition of leisure. The days of Facebook-clicking and evenings of binge TV are over. Many social invitations must be declined or postponed. No more camping weekends or long afternoons at the mall—except maybe when you complete a chapter.

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Writing is Thinking: Why It Should Be Integrated Early in the Process of Earning Your PhD

One discussion during a December 2023 TAA Conversation Circle on Writing a Dissertation centered on why writing should be integrated early in the process of earning a doctorate. Three academics who have earned their doctorates weighed in. Here are their thoughts.

Dr. Vernetta K. Mosley, a consultant and writing coach with Cultivate the Writer, explains that in her experience, students in non-writing intensive PhD programs tend to wait until the very end of the program to focus on writing, when it should be part of the process from the beginning.

"It's such a developmental process to master the genre of academic writing that under that time crunch and that pressure of having to produce, the learning curve is so steep that it can be difficult to help them to get up to speed,"

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TAA Reaches and Exceeds 3,000 Member Milestone, Other 2023 Accomplishments

It's my privilege to enthusiastically report that we have had a banner year at TAA in 2023!

Thanks to the tireless efforts of our amazing new Executive Director, Kim Pawlak, and our two other new full-time staff members, Sierra Pawlak, and Kiley Thornton, TAA has been flourishing and the future looks brighter than ever. I'm proud to report that we ended 2023 with a record 3,023 members!

Allow me to highlight some other important accomplishments this year. We sent out a membership survey that revealed that thirty-one percent of responders said they joined the organization for our benefits and services. The top three benefits rated as most valuable were: (1) educational webinars (31%), (2) our annual conference (18%), and (3) our monthly print newsletter, *The Academic Author* (14%). With the emergence of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), we formed an AI Committee and sent out another survey to our members. Forty percent of responders reported using AI for various purposes. In response to the question "How have you used Generative AI?", the top three responses were: (1) to make my writing process more efficient (48%), (2) to improve the quality of my writing (35%), and (3) to write a first draft (30%).

In our fundraising efforts, Michael Sullivan amazingly donated \$100,000 to fund a matching gift program and a lecture series at the annual conference. This is the largest donation that TAA has ever received. Thanks so much, Michael! With the help of an attorney, we also updated our policies and procedures, bylaws, and standard forms to be sure that we are in compliance with what other 501 (c) (3) non-profit organizations are doing. In late January, we held a Council Member-Staff Retreat in Nashville to discuss and plan for the future of TAA. Most importantly, we are also very excited to be preparing for our first in-person conference since the pandemic! It will be held in Nashville in June of 2024 and we hope to see you there. We have a fabulous conference planned!

My hope is for TAA to remain true to its mission while also being at the forefront of all issues related to academic and textbook authors. It is truly inspiring to work with such a talented and dedicated group of leaders on TAA's Council. We make a wonderful team and I am excited to do my part to make TAA even better.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Krieger



Jean Murphy Receives \$1,000 TAA Publication Grant

TAA member Jean Murphy has been awarded a \$1,000 Publication Grant from the Textbook & Academic Authors Association to cover manuscript editing costs for her academic book,

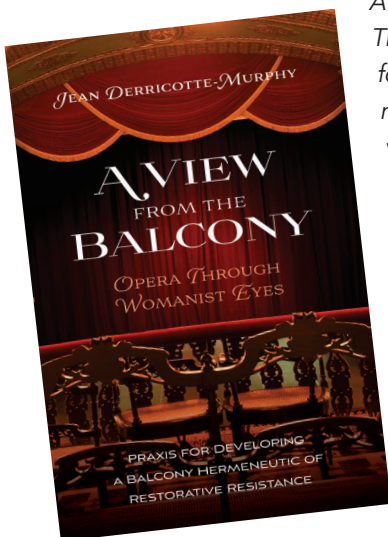
A View From The Balcony: Opera Through Womanist Eyes Praxis for Developing a Balcony Hermeneutic of Restorative Resistance, which will be published by Cascade in early 2024.

"Being a member of TAA gave me access to resources and authors who gave pointers, encouragement, and the incentive to bring this book to completion," said Murphy. "This grant validates all the time and effort spent to bring it to fruition and

certainly assists with the cost of being an author. Please extend my thanks to the selection committee."

Excerpted from the book's abstract: "...this work offers the reader a historical glance at the philosophical and religious underpinnings of systemic racism by presenting a new healing hermeneutic, a Balcony Hermeneutic, from which to view, critique, assess, correct, and reverse the devastating effects Anthropological Poverty has inflicted upon the world."

TAA Publication Grants provide reimbursement for eligible expenses directly related to bringing an academic book, textbook, or journal article to publication. Apply for a TAA Publication Grant [<https://www.taaonline.net/grants>]. The next deadline is April 1, 2024. ●



Textbook, Academic Authors Report Very Little Communication with Publishers Regarding AI

Eighty percent of respondents to the Textbook & Academic Authors Association's latest survey, "Generative AI, Your Publisher & You," said they have not had conversations with their publishers about their position on AI, their use of AI in their work(s), and/or contract clauses related to AI. The purpose of the survey, conducted between December 12, 2023, and January 8, 2024, was to help members advocate for themselves in conversations with their publisher(s) about generative AI (like ChatGPT) in contracts, policies, and statements.

Of those respondents who have had conversations with their publishers about AI, the majority (56%) said that they initiated those conversations themselves. The primary reason for reaching out was to discuss their publisher's position on AI (50%). Thirty-three percent said the reason was to discuss how they can use AI in their works or contract clauses related to AI.

Of those respondents who said their publishers reached out to them about AI, 50 percent said the primary reason for reaching out was to discuss their position on AI. Forty-two percent of respondents said it was to discuss how they can use AI in their works, and 33 percent said it was to discuss contract clauses related to AI.



Only 36 percent of respondents said they felt educated enough about Generative AI to be able to advocate for themselves in conversations with their publishers on the topic.

Only one respondent reported having anything related to AI in their publishing contracts and 32 percent said they didn't know if

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Make a Big Impact With a Future Gift

When you include the Textbook & Academic Authors Association in your estate plan, your generosity ensures that textbook and academic authors will receive support well into the future.

For those who have greatly benefitted from the resources that TAA provides, planned giving represents a way to leave a lasting legacy to the association. Charitable bequests also reduce the size of your estate and reduce estate taxation.

Include a Gift to TAA in Your Will or Trust. Gift TAA a specific amount or percentage of your estate in your will. View bequest language and other information about making a bequest to TAA.

Name TAA a Beneficiary of Your Life Insurance Policy. Designate TAA as the primary beneficiary for a percentage or specific amount of your life insurance policy. You can also make us the contingent beneficiary so that we will receive the balance of your policy only if your primary beneficiary doesn't survive you. You qualify for a federal income tax charitable deduction when you itemize on your taxes. If you continue to pay premiums on the policy, each payment is tax deductible as a charitable gift when you itemize.

There are numerous ways to creatively structure a planned gift. Consult your attorney and/or financial adviser to assure that the optimum benefits are realized for both you and TAA.

Already included us in your estate plans? Let us know so we can thank you (TAAonline.net/legacygift)

If you have any questions, or to discuss making a gift, contact Kim Pawlak, TAA Executive Director, Kim.Pawlak@TAAonline.net or (507) 459-1363. ●

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Considering Writing a Textbook? Questions to Ask

BY SIERRA PAWLAK

In her November 9, 2022, TAA webinar, “Textbook Authoring Inspirations, Insights, and Innovations”, award-winning textbook author Jamie Pope shared several questions you should ask yourself before writing a textbook. Those questions include:

- What’s the book’s primary focus and level?
- Who’s your target audience?
- What are your qualifications to author the book?
- How does it differ from other books on the market?
- Why would someone adopt it over your competitors?

She used these questions to contrast what went right with her successful textbook, *Nutrition for a Changing World*, the recipient of a 2020 TAA Textbook Excellence Award, and what went wrong with a creative trade book proposal that was never published.

What’s the Book’s Focus

Pope described the focus of her trade book idea as a light and humorous but foundational approach to nutrition basics. The

book’s focus, developed in the 90s along with a humorist book co-author, was on fifty weight management tips based in evidence, each illustrated with a cartoon. The book, and especially the title, she said, wouldn’t go over well today.

Her textbook’s focus, however, was quite different and more conventional for an academic intro to nutrition textbook than her trade book idea. Quite a few introductory textbooks were already on the market, she said, some of which were doing exceptionally well. What made hers different was the approach and journalistic style: “It was targeted differently, and truly aimed for student engagement.”

Who’s Your Target Audience

The primary audience for her textbook was initially for students not necessarily majoring in nutrition, but those who were taking it out of general interest or as a prerequisite in another area. Other books on the market were more “heavy-hitting” and geared towards nutrition majors. However, as the textbook progressed into later editions and was widely adopted, it “branched out into mixed-majors and even majors in the evolution of the text,” she said.

With her trade book, however, there didn’t seem to be a well-defined target audience. “Through my literary agent and based on the success of my previous trade books, numerous publishers looked at it, but none ended up going with it even though some editors called me to talk about, because in part there wasn’t a good fit for this book,” she said. “It didn’t fit in how-to, it didn’t fit in humor, and you couldn’t give it as a gift to somebody.” As a result, she said, it never got published, even though editors thought it was an interesting and unique concept.

What Are Your Qualifications

In the 80s and 90s, before she was working on her trade book, Pope, a registered dietitian nutritionist, had written and coauthored several articles and books in the diet and nutrition arena. By 2012, she had become an assistant professor teaching introductory nutrition, was honing her educator skills, and had continued to publish academically. Her publishing experience, along with more than a decade of teaching with various textbooks set the stage to take on the challenge of authoring a textbook that would meet learning objectives while keeping students interested and engaged.

How Does it Differ from Other Books on the Market

Her trade book was certainly different from other books on the market, but there wasn’t a clear sales category for it. While there were competitors in the introductory market, her textbook had enough unique attributes to set it apart from the competition. “We use a story-based approach to provide context and relevance for the science, more visuals and infographics, and organized it in such a way to maximize student engagement and understanding,” she said.

Why Would it be Adopted Over Competitors

For instructors, considering a change from a textbook they use in their course can be a big deal, often requiring the revamping of resources, slides, and other teaching tools, said Pope. They often question whether it is worth changing, so as an author, you need to consider how you can both interest and support instructors in making a change. “That was a big thing to me in 2012 when we first started working on this book,” she said. “I was teaching with another [textbook] and they came to me about writing this intro text, and I was like ‘why would I change, and why would other instructors change?’ So, a big thrust throughout has been providing resources, slides, samples, syllabi, everything we can think of to make that ease of transition better and easier for folks.” And now with evolving digital platforms, that transition is becoming smoother.

In summary, asking yourself these vital questions before writing a textbook can save you a lot of time and headache. You can learn more about Pope’s experience writing academic and trade books, along with more advice in her on demand webinar, “Textbook Authoring Inspirations, Insights, and Innovations.” ●





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HOW TO REGISTER

Registration includes Thursday and Friday evening networking receptions, Friday and Saturday breakfast, all educational content, one-on-one mentoring, and a custom writing journal.

Members receive \$50 off the non-member registration rate with code MEMBER50 and Graduate Students receive 50% off with code GS50 (discount codes do not apply to VIP registration).

Register as a VIP for Exclusive Perks!

Get better swag, a longer mentoring session, your registration materials delivered to your room so you can skip the registration line, and a chance to win a suite upgrade!

VIP registration includes:

- Your badge and other registration materials delivered to your room prior to check-in. Skip the line!
- A 30-minute mentoring session.
- A custom 11 oz. travel tumbler.
- Curated list of things to do in Nashville.
- The chance to win one of four room upgrades to a 400 sq. ft. Grand Chamber King Suite!*



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OPENING KEYNOTE

“The Very Human Experience of Learning”

Speaker: Susan Winslow, MacMillan Publishing

As AI becomes a bigger part of education, we can't forget that at its core, learning is a human thing. This session digs deep into the moments that make learning special: the emotions, the bonds we form, the aha! moments, and those big motivations that stick with us for life. It's all about finding the right mix of tech and touch. The session will help us to understand the different ways to blend modern tech with the timeless human side of learning to help engage and inspire students. Participants will explore the value of authorship alongside the differences between what educators/authors/academics and AI can do for students. Join us as we celebrate and advocate for the human experience in a rapidly evolving AI world.

Susan Winslow has more than 30 years of educational publishing and technology experience. Under her leadership, Macmillan Learning developed, tested and launched its new digital learning platform Achieve.



FRIDAY, JUNE 21



GEOPRIMER: Nashville - Athens at the Grand Ole Opry: A Historical & Geographical Introduction

Geography Textbook Author Robert Christopherson will kick off the conference with an historical and geographical introduction to Nashville.

SESSIONS

Negotiating a Publishing Contract: A Live Mock Contract Negotiation Session for Your Education and Entertainment

Speaker: Brenda Ulrich, Intellectual Property Attorney, Archstone Law Group, PC; Sean Wakely, Vice President, Product and Editorial, FlatWorld

Learn how issues are discussed and negotiated in the context of a textbook contract negotiation.

The Distracted Writer's Guide to Finishing Your Manuscript

Speaker: Christina Inge, Harvard University, and author of Marketing Analytics: A Comprehensive Guide

Learn 20 proven strategies that help distracted writers keep on track.

Break It Down, Get It Done: A Writing Strategy to Reduce Stress

Speaker: Angelica Ribeiro, Adjunct Professor, Houston Christian University and University of Houston-Clear Lake; Nilsa Perez-Cabrera, Spanish Professor, Blinn University

Learn how to use a simple strategy to avoid feeling stressed and overwhelmed when facing big writing projects: Break it down and get it done.

A Guide to the Best Technological Tools for Authors (for the Tech Bewildered)

Speaker: John Bond, Publishing Consultant, Riverwinds Consulting

A review of the best technological tools for authors including reference managers, grammar software, dictation programs, chart and table creation software, video software, book formatting tools, research tools, originality checkers, and of course A.I.

Integrating Ethical AI in Academic Writing: A Guide to Automated Writing Evaluation Tools

Speaker: Kimberly Becker, Academic Insight Lab

Learn how to discern between AI tools that facilitate equitable writing assessments and those that perpetuate biases, thus driving the discourse toward more responsible AI integration.

Peer Review Uncovered: Strategies for An Unbiased Review

Speakers: Laura Frost, Textbook Author, Professor of Chemistry, Association Dean, Florida Gulf Coast University; Shawn Cordell, Textbook Author, Associate Director, Graduate Career Services, Assistant Professor, University of Arizona; and Thomas Valone, Professor of Biology at Saint Louis University

Learn guidelines for equitable peer reviewing in scholarly publishing and what you can do to give your article an increased chance for an unbiased peer review.

Turn Your Textbook Idea into Reality: Best Practices and Interactive Getting Started Workshop

Speakers: Jeff Shelstad, VP and General Manager of Higher Education, XanEdu Publishing; Joyce Mueller, VP of Corporate and Higher Education Marketing, XanEdu Publishing

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Try Thinking Like a Game Designer

Speaker: Thomas Heinzen, Textbook Author, Retired Psychology Professor, William Paterson University

Learn how a game-designed textbook can be made to feel like a game by using established principles and techniques that onboard engagement, direct attention, and reward sustained interest.

Taking the Exit Ramp: A Successful Search for a Successor Author

Speaker: Ken Saladin, Author of Anatomy & Physiology, The Unity of Form and Function

A 30-year, 21-book author approaching retirement will share a process that he and his publisher undertook to identify prospective authors, audition and screen them, choose the most promising candidate, and mentor a new author as a prelude to full coauthorship.

Content Marketing: The Most Comfortable and Effective Way to Promote Your Book

Speaker: John Bond, Publishing Consultant, Riverwinds Consulting

Learn how a content marketing strategy can be used to attract and engage an audience by sharing articles, videos, podcasts, and other media.

I cannot begin to express how much I LOVE this conference. I appreciate the fact that everyone is willing to share their successes and lessons learned. I always leave invigorated.

—Tracy Spies, UNLV, Associate Professor, UNLV



Searching for a Book Series Successor: Struggles, Strategies, and Successes

Speaker: Micki Caskey, Portland State University

Authors and editors will explore the struggles, strategies, and successes when searching for a successor.

How Authors Can Change the World: Social Justice Through Writing

Speaker: Stacie DeFreitas, Associate Professor, Prairie View A&M University, author of African American Psychology: A Positive Psychology Perspective

Learn how to engage in social justice in your writing, reach audiences and foster meaningful change in communities.

Using AI to Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Academic and Educational Materials

Speaker: Abeer Hasan, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University

Learn examples of good practices, ideas and pitfalls of incorporating AI generated materials into articles and textbooks.

Public Platforms for Academic Writers: Real Benefits, Quick Setup, and Easy Maintenance

Speaker: Margarita Huerta, Author, Founder, Real Academics

Learn how using a website and social media platforms can benefit you as an academic writer, recommendations for setting up and structuring different kinds of platforms, and tips on how to easily maintain your platforms.

My Book Transformation from Print to Digital and Interactive

Speaker: Paul Krieger, author of Visual Analogy Guides

Learn about the speaker's experience in moving from print to digital for his anatomy & physiology book after his book was acquired by EdTech company Top Hat in 2021.

Using Learning Science to Guide the Development of Engaging, Accessible, and Inclusive Content

Speaker: Lisa Peterson, TopHat

Explore how learning science guides TopHat's five pillars for creating digital content that engages students and deepens learning.



The TAA conference is a highlight of my year. I love meeting other authors and coming away with fresh ideas and insights into academic publishing.

—Jamie Pope, Co-author of *Nutrition for a Changing World (2e)*

Take a Brain Break!

Take advantage of “brain breaks” throughout the conference to visit The Lawn for a quick yard game, or The Lounge to color our custom coloring book page or work on our custom puzzle!



WORKSHOPS

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

A System for Writing: Do You Have One?

Speakers: Dr. Patricia (Pat) Goodson, Ph.D., author of *Becoming an Academic Writer: 50 Exercises for Paced, Productive, and Powerful Writing*; Dr. Qian Ji, Ph.D., Instructional



By far this was the best conference I have attended! Each session was extremely informative and practical.

—JoNataye Prather, Assistant Professor, Tarleton State University

Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University; and Dr. Margarita Huerta, Author, Founder, Real Academics

This two-hour workshop will challenge participants to examine their current writing systems and will offer a complex adaptable system.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Journal Keeping: Path to Writing Energy, Synergy, and Satisfaction

Speaker: Dannelle D. Stevens, Author, Professor Emerita, Portland State University

Learn how to build a foundation for (or re-energize!) a successful, sustainable, and satisfying journal keeping and writing practice.

AUTHOR TALKS — NEW IN 2024!

Join us for these short Ted-Talk style presentations that give a quick take on an idea or strategy, demonstrates a concept or template, or are thought-provoking.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

How to Take Advantage of the AI Instead of the AI Taking Advantage of You

Speaker: Zara Miller, Author

Learn how to stop looking at AI as an enemy and use its power to make your life easier and expedite line editing.

Supporting and Working with Your Textbook Marketing Team

Speaker: Jamie Pope, Co-author of *Nutrition for a Changing World (2e)*

Learn how to support your publishers' marketing efforts while trusting their expertise and promotional plans.

Navigating the Complexities of Copyrights, Permissions and Royalties

Speaker: Mandy Gagel, Managing Editor XanEdu Publishing

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Elevating Learning: The Power of Five-Minute Free Writing

Speakers: Dr. Qian Ji, Clinical Assistant Professor; Dr. Bruce Hanik, Ph.D., Instructional Associate Professor; and Dr. Patricia Goodson, Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence, Texas A&M University

Learn how integrating 5-minute free writing can routinely improve learning and cultivate potential to enjoy writing and desire to engage more in academic writing.

Co-authoring 'Out of Context'

Speaker: Laura Jacobi, Professor, Communication Studies Department, Communication Studies Department, Minnesota State University, Mankato

Explore the benefits, challenges, and best practices involved in co-authoring across disciplines, positions, and levels.

Interested in presenting an Author Talk?

Contact Kiley.Thornton@TAAonline.net

SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE

JUNE 21, 2024	
7:00-7:45 AM	Registration & Breakfast
7:45-8:00 AM	Welcome & Opening Remarks
8:00-8:30 AM	GEOPRIMER Nashville – Athens at the Grand Ole Opry: An Historical & Geographical Introduction
8:30-9:30 AM	OPENING KEYNOTE The Very Human Experience of Learning
9:30-10:00 AM	Networking Break
10:00-11:00 AM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS Negotiating a Publishing Contract: A Live Mock Contract Negotiation Session for Your Education and Entertainment The Distracted Writer's Guide to Finishing Your Manuscript
11:00-12:00 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS Turn Your Textbook Idea into Reality: Best Practices and Interactive Getting Started Workshop Break It Down, Get It Done: A Writing Strategy to Reduce Stress
12:00-1:30 PM	Lunch On Your Own
1:30-3:30 PM	WORKSHOP A System for Writing: Do You Have One?
1:30-2:30 PM	A Guide to the Best Technological Tools for Authors (for the Tech Bewildered)
2:30-3:30 PM	Integrating Ethical AI in Academic Writing: A Guide to Automated Writing Evaluation Tools
3:30-3:45 PM	Take a Brain Break
3:45-4:45 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS Peer Review Uncovered: Strategies for An Unbiased Review AUTHOR TALKS
5:15-7:15 PM	Networking Reception
JUNE 22, 2024	
7:00-7:45 AM	Breakfast
7:45-8:00 AM	Welcome & Opening Remarks
8:00-9:00 AM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS Try Thinking Like a Game Designer Taking the Exit Ramp: A Successful Search for a Successor Author
9:00-10:00 AM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS Content Marketing: The Most Comfortable and Effective Way to Promote Your Book Searching for a Book Series Successor: Struggles, Strategies, and Successes
10:00-10:15 AM	Take a Brain Break
10:15-12:15 PM	WORKSHOP Journal Keeping: Path to Writing Energy, Synergy, and Satisfaction
10:15-11:15 PM	How Authors Can Change the World: Social Justice Through Writing
11:15-12:15 PM	Using AI to Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Academic and Educational Materials
12:15-1:45 PM	Lunch on Your Own
1:45-2:45 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS Public Platforms for Academic Writers: Real Benefits, Quick Setup, and Easy Maintenance My Book Transformation from Print to Digital and Interactive
2:45-3:45 PM	CONCURRENT SESSIONS Using Learning Science to Guide the Development of Engaging, Accessible, and Inclusive Content AUTHOR TALKS
4:00-4:15 PM	Closing

All activities are at Virgin Hotels – Nashville, 1 Music Square W in Nashville, Tennessee. All times are Central Time (CT).
TAA reserves the right to make changes to the program and speakers or cancel sessions.

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Writing is Thinking continued from page 1

she says. "Obviously, they know their disciplines very well and they most often have a clear research study, but really helping them to meet the standards of academic writing at a late stage can be a huge challenge."

Dr. DeRome Osmond Dunn, an associate professor of mechanical engineering at North Carolina A&T University, said writing should be part of the learning process and happen all along the way. "It's a chance to reflect, and I found that when I started writing, when I started making my charts, graphs and visuals, thoughts came to mind about certain things I could do or things that I didn't need to do," he says. "So that reflection process incorporated by writing should happen early on. It shouldn't be that you do all the work and then you sit down and write. It should be continuous. We learn that in engineering everything is iterative. That's part of the solution process. If you don't iteratively include the writing into your work, you're missing out on doing great work."

Following up on Prof. Dunn's statement, writing coach and editor Dr. Dave Harris, with Thought Clearing, said: "What we're really doing as researchers, is we're trying to think. Often people say, 'Well, I'll do the thinking, I'll do the research, and then I'll write later,' but **writing**, as DeRome suggested, **is a tool that helps you think better**. When you try and write it down, it forces you to think through things." ●

Dissertation Proposals: When Stating Purpose of Study, Keep it Narrow, Focused, Practical

Dr. Laura Markos, owner, writing coach, and editor at WrittenHouse, and founder of Sage's *Journal of Transformative Education*, shares the following advice for stating the purpose of the study in a dissertation proposal:



"When crafting the dissertation proposal, it's important to focus, focus, focus on the research question(s) as narrowly as appropriate, but also on the statement of the purpose of the study, which has implications for both theory and practice. It can be tempting to overstate the purpose, to make the study sound like a larger potential contribution than one discrete, doable study. When stating the purpose of the study, my advice is to keep it narrow and absolutely focused on the research question that's agreed upon with committee, and to be practical about the viability and realistic applicability of the study." ●

2024 WEBINAR SERIES

Navigate Your Writing Process as a Purposeful QuEST



Join Margy Thomas, PhD, ScholarShape, who will walk you through the simple yet powerful QuEST framework as a way of structuring your writing projects in any genre. By the end of the session, you'll have a personalized QuEST map that can guide you through your Story-Argument process with a sense of purpose and help you recognize all the intangible and incremental progress you make along the way.

Wednesday, February 21, 1-2 p.m. EST

Writing Better Literature Reviews: How to Make Them Engaging and Stylish



Join Katherine Fusco, an award-winning scholar and teacher at the University of Nevada, Reno, and an editor and coach, who will cover strategies for writing about previous literature in ways that are more engaging and stylish. You'll also get hands-on time to practice strategies for writing better literature reviews.

Tuesday, April 16, 12-1 p.m. EST

TAAonline.net/webinars



WATCH ON DEMAND

Blunders, Bad Ideas, and Bliss:
My Experience Writing a Textbook

Passion for Learning and Research:
Is Earning a Doctorate the Right
Path For You?

How to Leverage a Textbook or
Academic Book to Launch a
Consulting Career

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Your tax-deductible gift to TAA will ensure that the association can continue to offer quality educational resources to textbook and academic authors. Support TAA by making donations to the TAA Webinar Program Fund, the TAA Conference Travel Grant Fund, or by making a gift to TAA's General Fund, and your donations will be matched 1:1!

Contributions to each of these funds makes a direct impact on TAA's operations, provides high quality resources to members,

Contributions to the TAA Webinar Program Fund allow us to bring in paid presenters on topics of high value to TAA members, including industry topics like AI, piracy, DEI, the future of textbook publishing, and more.

You can also choose to make a gift to TAA's General Fund, allowing TAA's leadership discretion in how your donation will be spent, maximizing our ability to respond to the ever-changing needs of the association.

"I have been involved with TAA for about 35 years and have watched the organization evolve from a membership of 30 to over 3,000. The importance of TAA to the textbook and academic publishing community is notable. But as a nonprofit, TAA must rely on its membership for support beyond dues if it is to continue its role as the only organization dedicated to textbook and academic authors. I hope my gift to TAA will inspire others to help TAA continue its work on behalf of authors." — Michael Sullivan



and supports members in need. All charitable contributions are 100% tax deductible. Your gift will be matched dollar-to-dollar by a \$50,000 matching gift made by long-time TAA member Michael Sullivan.

Contributions to the TAA Conference Travel Grant Fund enable members who cannot afford to attend to gain valuable education and make meaningful connections. TAA will be awarding ten Travel Grants for the 2024 Conference in Nashville.

Members have so far donated almost \$11,000, all of which was matched 1:1 by Sullivan's gift, doubling the funds available to support these programs.

Help us reach our goal to support textbook and academic authoring. Make a Gift Today: www.taaonline.net/donate. You can also mail a check to TAA, PO Box 337, Cochrane, WI 54622. ●



Starting Your Dissertation? *continued from page 1*

Instead, at your self-promised times, you'll be attending dissertation seminars, studying your university dissertation template, making notes, or surfing the Internet—for scholarly materials. On weekends, rather than car tinkering, sports cheering, or friendly spats with your spouse, you'll still be studying, amassing too many articles, reading all of them, and sneaking up on actually writing.

Get Support. To help, get support. Talk to your cohort members, recent "doctors," professors, and scholars. You'll no doubt hear their horror stories but should also glean some ideas about how to best handle your time. Some students arrange a dissertation "buddy system": you and another doctoral student check in regularly on your progress and encourage and prod each other to keep going.

Talk to your family members and ask their cooperation. Explain why you must hole up most of the time and how they too will benefit later.

So, use the methods here that work best for you and others you may devise. With smart decisions and wise planning, you will rethink your lifestyle so you can start—and finish—your dissertation. ●

Noelle Sterne has published over 700 pieces in print and online venues. With a Ph.D. from Columbia University, Noelle has for 30 years helped doctoral candidates wrestle their dissertations to completion (finally). Based on her practice, her *Challenges in Writing Your Dissertation: Coping with the Emotional, Interpersonal, and Spiritual Struggles* (Rowman & Littlefield Education, September 2015) addresses students' often overlooked or ignored but crucial nonacademic difficulties that can seriously prolong their agony. Visit Noelle at www.trustyourlifefenow.com



Communication with Publishers Regarding AI continued from page 3

they did. The one respondent who had something related to AI in their publishing contracts said: "I must agree to follow their global AI policy, which mostly concerns a ban on using any of my textbook content to train an AI system."

Fifty-eight percent of all respondents are textbook authors.

Survey responses will also be used in preparation for future TAA virtual roundtable discussions on generative AI. The majority of respondents (60%) said they would be interested in participating in such discussions.

The survey was sent to TAA members, former members, prospective members and shared on TAA social media; and a total of 89 survey responses were received.

Sign On to Class Action Complaint Against Open AI and Microsoft

Susman Godfrey L.L.P. filed a class action complaint against open AI (the makers of ChatGPT) and Microsoft for damages related to their "large-scale infringement of their copyrighted works, as well as injunctive relief." Contact Rohit Nath, from Susman Godfrey L.L.P., at RNath@susmangodfrey.com to sign on to the class and/or any questions. Learn more about the class action suit at <https://bit.ly/47pMIT7>.



Resources on Generative AI & Authoring

View additional resources on AI and authoring, including other TAA surveys on generative AI and the recording of a 2023 TAA Conference Roundtable Discussion led by Brenda Ulrich, an attorney at Archstone Law, "Generative Artificial Intelligence: What ChatGPT and Similar Technologies Might Mean for Textbook and Academic Authors" at <https://www.taaonline.net/artificial-intelligence-resources>.



SAVE THE DATE

Member Appreciation Day

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20



Our TAA team of staff and Council Members want to say, "Thank you!", for your support as a member of the association's family. Please join us Wednesday, March 20 for Member Appreciation Day. Take advantage of members-only perks including discounts, a special on demand webinar and members-only content releases, available one day only!

TAA Governing Council



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Contact information for

TAA Council members

is available at

TAAonline.net/Council



TAA Contact Information

TAA

P.O. Box 337

Cochrane, WI 54622

TAAonline.net

Info@TAAonline.net



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NEWSLETTER EDITOR: KIM PAWLAK



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BUSY TAA PEOPLE

TAA Members Named to 2024 Edition of Best Lawyers

TAA Members Brenda Ulrich and Zick Rubin, publishing and intellectual property attorneys with Archstone Law Group, PC, were named to the 2024 Edition of Best Lawyers in America®. Brenda is recognized in the areas of education law and media law. Zick is recognized in the areas of copyright law and education law.



Recognition by Best Lawyers is widely regarded by both clients and legal professionals as a significant honor, conferred on a lawyer by their peers. Their lists of outstanding lawyers are compiled by conducting exhaustive peer review surveys in which tens of thousands of leading lawyers confidentially evaluate their professional peers. Both Brenda and Zick have worked with many TAA members on contract negotiations, intellectual property issues, succession matters, and author-publisher disputes.

Congratulations Brenda and Zick!

TAA Member Receives Research Grant From NSF for Wiki Education Projects

TAA Member Dr. Brian R. Shmaefsky, Professor of Biology & Environmental Science at Lone Star College - Kingwood, received a research grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to engage students from a Hispanic-serving institution to write Wikipedia biographical entries of Hispanic scientists who are underrepresented in Wikipedia. The goal is to improve the visibility and reduce citation inequity of scientists from marginalized populations.



As part of the Wiki Education project, students do background research about the scientist using primary sources, learn to write

for an international audience, learn to respond to subject matter expert reviews, learn how to conduct peer reviews, and gain information literacy skills. The program provides students with a detailed schedule of training activities to facilitate the completion of the projects. The goal of the project is to help “students gain key 21st century skills like media literacy, writing and research development, and critical thinking, while content gaps on Wikipedia get filled thanks to students’ efforts.”

The program is being used by dozens of universities. The concept is a follow-up of several NSF-funded Division of Undergraduate Education grants on providing accessibility, equity, and inclusion using Wikipedia and other open-source resources. “We are being awarded \$170 per Wikipedia entry to go towards improving inclusiveness and equity in environmental science education,” said Shmaefsky. “One other benefit of the project is that my students are learning how to search and simplify primary resource academic publications.” Congratulations Brian!

Dr. Dannielle Joy Davis Receives SLU’s James H. Korn Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award



TAA member Dr. Dannielle Joy Davis is the 2023 recipient of the James H. Korn Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award from Saint Louis University’s Reinert Center for her research examining the experiences of marginalized groups in educational settings and the role of policy and practice in academic and occupational outcomes.

The James H. Korn Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Award is an annual award established in recognition of Dr. Korn’s many contributions to research on teaching and learning. Professor emeritus in psychology, Dr. Korn is deeply committed to scholarly teaching; he was also a member of the faculty committee that first established the Reinert Center in 1997. Congratulations Dannielle!