

MANUSCRIPT WORKSHOP GUIDE

FACULTY AFFAIRS

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PLANNING YOUR MANUSCRIPT WORKSHOP

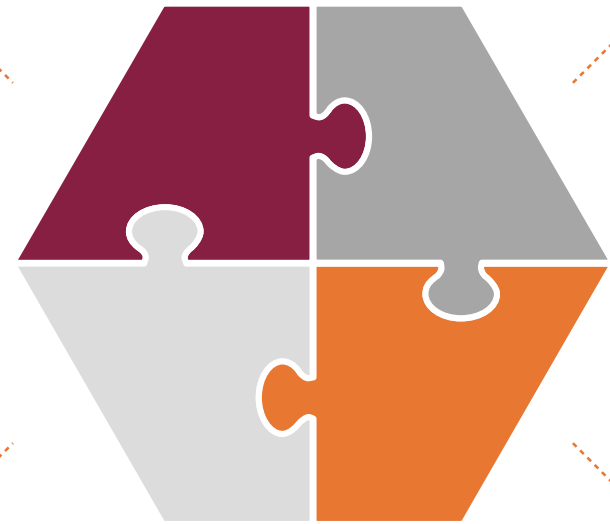
A manuscript workshop, or “book scrub”, can be an efficient and productive way to prepare your work for publication. From a mentoring standpoint, you may be inviting several potential mentors in your field to take part in your panel, or you may have a single mentor who can help guide you through the process. New Faculty Mentoring Grant funds may be put toward travel, food, and honoraria for attendees.

1 / BEFORE

3 / DURING

2 / WAITING

4 / AFTER



1 / BEFORE

3 / DURING



2 / WAITING

4 / AFTER

Preparing for your workshop:

- Select your participants – academics in various states of their career, with a diverse panel. Consider their mentoring potential. Include your editor if you are working with one
- Select a date – try to pick a date about 6 months in advance, and allow the availability of your participants to help determine the date

- Select a site – locations home to multiple universities (i.e., Boston, Raleigh-Durham) will allow you to tap into a larger source of academics while reducing their travel requirements
- Set expectations – be clear with your participants that you want them to read your entire manuscript and offer helpful feedback. Let participants know if you will be asking for their marked-up manuscripts
- Set a deadline – let participants know when you will be sending them your manuscript, usually about a month in advance of the workshop, and whether they will receive a hard or electronic copy

1 / BEFORE

3 / DURING



2 / WAITING

4 / AFTER

Anticipating your workshop:

- Stop working on your manuscript! Once participants are marking up your submitted manuscript, you will be wasting your time and theirs if you make changes to it prior to the workshop
 - Finalize details such as location, catering, agenda, and travel plans for you and/or participants
- Recruit a moderator – a peer or mentor to keep the discussion flowing, freeing you to participate fully in the event. Choose someone with whom you are already familiar, who you trust to help set expectations and follow the schedule
 - Employ a notetaker – have a graduate student or assistant take notes during the workshop, so you can focus on the back and forth of the discussion
 - Reread your manuscript a final time and highlight areas of concern. Pick a couple issues for each chapter you wish to discuss

1 / BEFORE

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During your workshop:

- Begin your time with introductions, of the participants to each other, and also of your work to the group. Review expectations of the discussion
- Commit to holding productive discussions, rather than bland consensus. Remind yourself to listen to suggestions rather than defending your writing
- Be certain to schedule regular breaks for snacks and stretching
- Keep track of the time! Your moderator should be sure to keep the conversation flowing, and not get caught up in any one area for too long. Take some time to summarize feedback for each section
- Before ending the workshop, ask each participant for their top three things to address. Areas of consensus will help you prioritize your edits
- Celebrate! At the end of the session, if possible, share a meal or drinks and some time for casual conversation

1 / BEFORE

3 / DURING



2 / WAITING

4 / AFTER

Following your workshop:

- Respond to your participants. Send a personalized thank you for their time and effort. If necessary, follow up with questions for clarification on concerns they may have raised
 - Give your participants a general sense of the edits you will be making and your timeframe for completion
- Dive back into your writing! You will have a lot of edits, comments, and suggestions, so don't let yourself feel overwhelmed. Decide on an approach – tackling big-picture issues versus sentence-level edits first – and keep an eye on your deadlines
 - Let your participants know when your manuscript heads to the editor, or when they can expect to see your finished project
 - Celebrate!

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The workshop should help the author articulate (or articulate more elegantly): 1) what question the manuscript poses; 2) what answer it offers; and 3) why it matters at all—to others who study similar phenomena but also to people outside of academia. - Priya Nelson, CISSR Book Workshop Guide

References:

<https://msalganik.wordpress.com/2016/07/16/planning-a-book-manuscript-workshop/>

https://cissr.uchicago.edu/sites/cissr.uchicago.edu/files/CISSR_Book-Workshop-Guide.pdf

- Make sure to leave plenty of space in your manuscript margins for notes on the hard copy
- Consider making an audio recording of the discussion for future reference
- Make every effort to have a complete manuscript ready to send to participants, so workshop time is not spent discussing hypothetical sections or unformed ideas
- Understand you may not have time to address every concern. Make sure you coordinate ahead with your moderator on the areas you most wish to cover



CAITLIN JEWITT

“I really put myself out there in asking "big names" to be part of my book workshop. I took a chance and asked people to participate who I had never met or only met briefly. They were willing to help, and I received invaluable feedback on my book project while also creating mentoring relationships and promoting myself and my work. I would encourage others to be mindful about what will help their career the most and to *take a risk, even if it seems scary.*”

MAURO CARACCIOLI

“My visit was primarily arranged as part of a book manuscript workshop, which included four faculty mentors and five doctoral students in the Department of Political Science. I used my funds for travel, lodging, and sponsoring a lunch for the workshop participants...As part of the visit, I was also hosted by the Wormuth Presidential Chair for two dinners with my mentors, where my book manuscript and career plans were further discussed.”

