

The Write Stuff

*Boosting your writing
into a higher orbit*



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Grant Writers' seminars return in March

-- Dawn Chalaire

The Department of Scientific Publications is bringing back to MD Anderson the widely acclaimed "Write Winning Grant Proposals" and "Write Winning NIH Career Development Award Proposals" series of seminars, presented by John D. Robertson, PhD, of Grant Writers' Seminars and Workshops. The two seminars address both practical and conceptual aspects of the proposal-writing process.

The "[Write Winning Grant Proposals](#)" seminar, which will take place on Monday, March 4 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm in MD Anderson's Dan L. Duncan Building, is a thorough description of what study sections look for in well-written applications. This seminar will focus on

- writing for reviewers and engendering advocacy for funding
- developing ideas and organizing grant proposals using a linear progression of logic to guide reviewers through the application.

The "[Write Winning NIH Career Development Award Proposals](#)" seminar, which will be held on Tuesday, March 5 from 8:30 am to 11:30 am in the Dan L. Duncan Building, will focus on individual mentored training grants and Career Development Awards and is recommended for trainees, junior faculty members, and their mentors and/or advisors. This half-day seminar will include tips and strategies for

- requesting reference letters
- selecting a mentor
- using review criteria for writing a Career Development Award proposal
- deciding what type of research and training to include in the proposal.

A significant discount will be offered to individuals who attend both seminars.

Attendees will receive extensive handouts, including the slides and examples used during the seminars, as well as a copy of the *Grant Application Writer's Workbook*.

For more information about Grant Writers' Seminars and Workshops, visit www.grantcentral.com.

[Registration is now open](#). The deadline for registration is **Friday, February 15, 2019**.

For details, contact John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.

How to disagree with an NIH research grant proposal review

-- Kathryn Hale

You've applied for your first National Institutes of Health (NIH) research grant. The bad news is that your proposal didn't get funded; the good news is that it got respectable scores. This means that your proposal was considered promising enough by a group of your peers (the Scientific Review Group [SRG], sometimes called "study section") for serious discussion and review. As the PI, you will receive a Summary Statement that outlines key information related to the review of your proposal, including the reviewers' written comments. This is an opportunity for you to revise and resubmit your proposal, armed with helpful suggestions from reviewers on how to make your proposal more fundable on the next try.

If you're lucky, you will see the merit in every point of the reviewers' critique and will be able to use the reviewers' comments to make substantive improvements in your proposal. However, you may find that you disagree emphatically with one or more of the reviewers' comments. How should you proceed?

First, what you should not do: do not overreact. On first reading the Summary Statement, you may naturally feel some uncomfortable emotions, including plain old anger. Whatever you do, resist the urge to immediately fire off an emotional email or phone call to NIH personnel or reviewers. Venting your frustration in this way may cause NIH program officials to view your future applications less positively and may damage your personal and professional reputation.

Instead, put the Summary Statement down after reading it through. Work on something else. Pick the Summary Statement up in the next day or two and read it again, carefully. Read it as many times as necessary until you can read it calmly and with a real understanding of what the comments say and do not say. In the meantime, share the comments with collaborators and key colleagues on the project, as well as any other trusted colleague whose experience might be helpful (e.g., someone who has served on an SRG or has been very successful at obtaining NIH research funding). Allow each of them time to process the comments fully, just as you have. Then call a meeting of this group and discuss the critique as calmly and objectively as possible. Go through each point in depth, discussing the group's reactions to it and developing a strategy for responding to that point.

The resubmission application includes the revised research plan as well as a one-page (or for a few grant types, three-page) Introduction that summarizes the response to each reviewer comment. Resist the urge to ignore the comments you disagree with. It is essential to respond to every major comment.

Only after you and your project team have completed your analysis of the reviewers' comments should you take the next step: contacting the Program Officer named on the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). The Program Officer is the NIH employee who monitors the scientific and technical aspects of grant applications and provides scientific guidance to applicants and awardees. He or she is typically present at the SRG meeting where the applications are discussed and will be very familiar with the reviewers' comments as well as what might have been said about the proposal that did not make it into the Summary Statement. A call to the Program Officer might solidify your thinking about how to respond to the reviewers' comments or might change your thinking about how to respond to certain comments. If you continue to believe that you must challenge one or more of the reviewers' comments, the Program Officer may be able to offer tips that will increase the likelihood that this challenge will be successful. This contact with the Program Officer is a tool that you should not forgo.

Do not call the Scientific Review Officer (SRO) to discuss the review. The SRO is the NIH employee designated for the FOA to steer the applications through the review process and to ensure that each application receives a fair review and that all rules and policies are followed. Although this person is present at the SRG meeting and supervises preparation of the Summary Statement, he or she is not charged with recording the details of what was said about your application in the meeting. The SRO should be contacted only if you have a reasonable challenge to the process under which your application was reviewed.

After you've talked to the Program Officer, finalize your ideas for changes to the research plan, including how you plan to address or not address the reviewer comment(s) you disagree with. Revise the research plan to incorporate these changes.

The steps you've taken so far lay the groundwork for writing the Introduction to your resubmission application. It is possible at this point that you and your research team have changed your thinking and that you now see the merit of every reviewer comment. If not, and you still believe that your best course is to disagree with or not address one or more of the

comments, it is essential that you present a strong, logical, and persuasive justification for doing so. Be courteous and nonconfrontational. In developing this justification, you probably will draw on your conversation(s) with the Program Officer.

To increase your chance of success:

- Acknowledge the reviewer's concern in the Introduction.
- Be clear and polite; avoid apology, argument, and emotion.
- Avoid defending your experience, expertise, credentials, or qualifications.
- Describe any revision you made in response to the comment, citing the scientific reason for your position; if you made no change in your research plan in response to the comment, indicate that.
- Do not use cost or logistics as a reason for not addressing a comment.

Finally, always ask one or two trusted colleagues to review the Introduction before submitting the resubmission application. Confirm that you have addressed the reviewers' comments in a rational and non-argumentative way.

Further reading:

For additional information on how to disagree with reviewers' comments in the Summary Statement:

National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research. Frequently asked questions: resubmission of NIH applications. Available at: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/resubmission_q&a.htm#3428. July 24, 2018. Accessed January 30, 2019. [Question C.2. specifically addresses comments with which you disagree.]

Chasan-Taber L. *Writing Dissertation and Grant Proposals: Epidemiology, Preventive Medicine, and Biostatistics*. New York: Chapman and Hall/CRC Press; 2014. [Chapter 20 of this book, Resubmission of the Grant Proposal, contains very useful tips no matter what your field of research. This chapter is currently available without charge on a website dedicated to this book. Available at: <https://people.umass.edu/lisact/textbook/Chapter20.pdf>. Accessed January 30, 2019.]

For general information on resubmission applications:

National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research. Resubmission applications. Available at: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/amendedapps.htm>. Updated September 27, 2018. Accessed January 30, 2019.

National Institutes of Health. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. Revise and resubmit an application. Available at: <https://www.niaid.nih.gov/grants-contracts/revise-resubmit-application>. Content reviewed October 25, 2017. Accessed January 30, 2019. [This page includes links to some excellent examples of full resubmission applications that were successfully funded.]

Using Publons to track and show peer reviews

– *Stephanie Deming*

Researchers interested in publicly documenting their journal peer-review service can do so using an online database, [Publons](#). This researcher profile tool includes a feature that allows researchers to track and show their verified peer reviews of manuscripts. For researchers who choose to include such information in their profile, Publons will show the total number of peer reviews completed for each journal that the researcher has reviewed for (in the Peer Reviews section of the researcher's profile) and the total number of peer reviews completed per year (in the Metrics section of the researcher's profile).

There are two main ways to [submit information about peer reviews](#) to Publons. For journals that formally partner with Publons (approximately 200 journals in the category Biochemistry, Genetics, and Molecular Biology as of January 2019), once the peer review is complete, the journal will offer the reviewer the opportunity to add the peer review to the Publons profile. The researcher clicks a link to accept, and the peer review is automatically added to the profile. For journals that do not formally partner with Publons, the researcher must e-mail evidence of the peer review to Publons. This evidence can include an e-mail from the journal thanking the researcher for completing a review or a screen shot of confirmatory information in the journal's peer-review submission system. Researchers who submit evidence of reviews to Publons must be careful to respect each journal's rules about confidentiality in peer review.

See this [concise summary](#) for more information.

Journal initiatives aim to improve transparency and reproducibility

– *Amy Ninetto*

Reproducible results are a hallmark of science, but for several years, researchers, funders, and publishers have been concerned that a substantial portion of published preclinical cancer research may not be reproducible (1-3). The publication of irreproducible data wastes time, money, and effort on work that is unlikely to have a clinical impact (2). One culprit in this "crisis of reproducibility" is inadequate and nontransparent reporting of experimental and analytical methods; another is the strong disincentive for researchers to publish negative results (3). Even though everyone benefits when science is transparent, the incentives for individual researchers may encourage minimal, *pro forma* transparency (4,5). Several recent initiatives by major journals and journal publishers aim to improve transparency in the reporting of biomedical research.

Detailed methods reporting. Recently, some publishers developed detailed reporting checklists that can be used to make sure that authors of basic science articles provide all information needed for others to critique, build upon, and systematize the results. For instance, in 2016, Cell Press revised the way experimental procedures are presented in articles published in its journals. Cell Press's [Structured, Transparent, Accessible Reporting \(STAR\) Methods](#) eliminated word limits for descriptions of methods so that authors can provide full details without having to use overly broad descriptions or refer readers to other sources (6). Similarly, the *Nature* group of journals requires authors of life sciences manuscripts to submit a detailed [Reporting Summary](#) document to ensure that all relevant details of statistical analyses and

study design are mentioned in the manuscript and that data are presented in a clear form that can be used by other researchers. These publisher guidelines resemble the checklists that are widely used to ensure the proper design, conduct, and reporting of clinical studies, such as [CONSORT](#) for randomized clinical trials or [CARE](#) for case reports.

Repositories for research data, code, protocols, and materials. Another major barrier to reproducibility is the limited accessibility of research products—not just data sets, but also the computer code, protocols, and materials used to generate the data. Many top biomedical journals, including ones published by Cell Press, Nature Publishing Group, the American Association for Cancer Research, and the Public Library of Science, now request or require that this information be deposited in reputable public repositories with a persistent link (such as a [PMID](#), [DOI](#), or accession number). For instance, computer code can be deposited in a community repository such as [GitHub](#), detailed protocols in [Protocol Exchange](#), and gene expression data in [GEO](#). (Exceptions can be made where legitimate concerns about confidentiality—for instance for the protection of research participants or intellectual property—preclude data or material sharing.) These efforts are expected to encourage authors and journals to make negative preclinical data more accessible.

Disclosure of research product availability. Another effort to change the incentives that work against transparency in science has been launched by [The Center for Open Science](#), a Virginia-based nonprofit, which established a Transparency and Openness Promotion (TOP) Working Group that includes representatives from journal publishing, professional associations, academia, and funding agencies. Most major biomedical journal publishers are signatories to the [TOP guidelines](#) and have agreed to encourage or even require authors to “disclose the availability and location of all research items, including data, materials, and code” in a “TOP Statement” to be included with accepted articles (4). Even though implementing research transparency standards across dozens of fields and subfields is challenging, the TOP Working Group hopes that more openness will benefit researchers, authors, peer reviewers, journals, funders, and patients.

Some evidence suggests that these transparency initiatives are working. For example, one study noted substantial improvements in the completeness of methods reporting in a sample of articles from several Nature Publishing Group journals after reporting guidelines were implemented (7). Another study found that sharing of protocols and raw data increased from 2015 to 2017 in a random sample of articles indexed in PubMed, although the overall rate of sharing remained low (8).

Authors who are interested in taking action to improve the transparency and accessibility of their work can contact the Research Medical Library for assistance in making a [data management plan](#).

References

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2. Begley CG, Ellis LM. Raise standards for preclinical cancer research. *Nature* 2012;483:531-533. DOI:10.1038/483531a
3. Mobley A, Linder SK, Braeuer R, Ellis LM, Zwelling L. A survey on data reproducibility in cancer research provides insights into our limited ability to translate findings from the laboratory into the clinic. *PLoS One* 2013;8:e63221. DOI:10.1371/journal.pone.0063221

4. TOP Statement Working Group. Making science transparent by default: Introducing the TOP Statement. [preprint first posted February 15, 2018.]. DOI: 10.31219/osf.io/sm78t. Accessed November 30, 2018.
5. Nosek BA, Alter G, Banks GC, et al. Promoting an open research culture: Author guidelines for journals could help to promote transparency, openness, and reproducibility. *Science* 2015;348:1422-1425. DOI:10.1126/science.aab2374
6. Marcus E. A STAR is born. *Cell* 2016;166:1059-1060. DOI:10.1016/j.cell.2016.08.021
7. NPQIP Collaborative Group. Findings of a retrospective, controlled cohort study of the impact of a change in Nature journals' editorial policy for life sciences research on the completeness of reporting study design and execution. [BioRxiv preprint first posted September 12, 2017.] DOI:10.1101/187245. Accessed November 30, 2018.
8. Wallach JD, Boyack KW, Ioannidis JPA. Reproducible research practices, transparency, and open access data in the biomedical literature, 2015-2017. *PLoS Biol* 2018;16:e2006930. DOI:10.1371/journal.pbio.2006930

New NIH videos demystify the grant review process

– *Sunita Patterson*

The NIH Center for Scientific Review has produced two new videos describing how grant applications are reviewed and scored.

[What Happens to Your NIH Grant Application](#). In this 21-minute presentation, James Mack, PhD, a Scientific Review Officer, discusses step by step how the review process works after a grant application is submitted to the NIH. This video would be particularly helpful for new applicants who don't know much about the organization of the NIH or the review process. Topics include assignment of the application to a study section, how grant reviewers are selected, ethical policies for reviewers, what happens at study section meetings, what reviewers look for, and whom to contact at the NIH when you have questions.

[Top 10 Peer Review Q&As for NIH Applicants](#). In this 15-minute presentation, NIH officials answer not 10, but 11, specific questions about peer review of grant applications. These questions may be of interest to new and established applicants alike. Examples are

- What is the difference between “significance” and “overall impact”?
- I don't like the review group you put my application into. What can I do?
- I addressed concerns from prior critiques and my score got worse. Why?
- What are the biggest problems reviewers find in applications?

The video includes further resources and contacts for more information.

Sources

CSRNIH. What Happens to Your NIH Grant Application. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gg2nppTaLUw&feature=youtu.be>. Published September 28, 2018. Accessed January 31, 2019.

CSRNIH. Top 10 NIH Peer Review Q&As. <https://public.csr.nih.gov/FAQs/ApplicantsFAQs>. Published September 28, 2018. Accessed January 31, 2019.

NIH launches new version of NIH Data Book including 2018 funding statistics

– *Stephanie Deming*

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has launched a new, interactive version of the [NIH Data Book](#) that includes data through fiscal year 2018.

When you open the NIH Data Book, you will now find a menu of topic categories at left and a “dashboard” area at right that includes “slides” of charts and tables of NIH data. Clicking the arrow at the upper right of a slide will expand it to full-screen mode. On individual slides, you can obtain additional information by hovering the mouse over the slide, and you can change how data are displayed by clicking slide labels.

Dr. Michael Lauer, NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research, recently published a blog post with [helpful advice](#) on searching and using the new NIH Data Book.

Dr. Lauer’s post was published on the [NIH Extramural Nexus blog](#). If you would like to receive notifications of new posts to this blog, which includes not only posts by Dr. Lauer but also posts about important NIH policies and procedures, you can subscribe using the “Subscribe to Blog via Email” or “Subscribe to Open Mike” box found near the upper right of each blog entry.

Unusual terms used in scientific writing and publishing: Sentence case and title case

– *Bryan Tutt*

The terms *sentence case* and *title case* refer to different styles for the capitalization of words in the titles of published works (e.g., books, journal articles).

Sentence case, also called *sentence-style capitalization*, means that the title follows the same capitalization rules used in writing a sentence of text (1). The only words that begin with capital letters are the title’s first word and proper nouns; acronyms and initialisms may be in all capital letters or mixed capital and lower case letters (e.g., *DNA*, *mRNA*). An example of a title written in sentence case is “Incidence trends, rates, and ethnic variations of primary CNS tumors in Texas from 1995 to 2013.”

Title case, also called *headline style*, means that the first word of the title and all important words (i.e., verbs, nouns, pronouns, adverbs, adjectives) begin with capital letters (1,2). Typically (although some style guides differ), prepositions (e.g., *at*, *before*, *during*, *from*, *with*) are capitalized in titles if they are at least 4 letters long, whereas articles (i.e., *a*, *an*, *the*) and coordinating conjunctions (i.e., *and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, *nor*, *so*, *yet*) are not capitalized (2). An example of a title written in title case is “Incidence Trends, Rates, and Ethnic Variations of Primary CNS Tumors in Texas From 1995 to 2013.”

Titles of published material and works of art, including journal articles, books, plays, television series, paintings, and musical compositions, should be written in title case when mentioned in the text of a written composition such as a book or journal article. However, in reference lists, many style guides (including the *AMA Manual of Style*) require sentence case to be used for the titles of journal articles and title case to be used for book titles and journal names or abbreviations (2). For example, using AMA style, the article whose title was used in the examples above would be cited in a reference list as follows:

Ambe SN, Lyon KA, Nizamutdinov D, Fonkem E. Incidence trends, rates, and ethnic variations of primary CNS tumors in Texas from 1995 to 2013. *Neurooncol Pract*. 2018;5:154-160.

References

1. *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press; 2017: 526-527.
2. *AMA Manual of Style*, 10th ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press; 2007: 372, 924.

Upcoming events for authors

Please see the [Scientific Publications](#) website for more information on our educational courses.

Write Winning Grant Seminars

“Write Winning Grant Proposals” and “Write Winning NIH Career Development Award Proposals” will be presented by John D. Robertson, PhD, of Grant Writers’ Seminars and Workshops, LLC.

Seminar 1: [Write Winning Grant Proposals](#)

March 4, 2019 (8:30 am – 4:30 pm)

Dan L. Duncan Building (CPB), Floor 8, Rooms 1-8

Seminar 2: [Write Winning NIH Career Development Award Proposals](#)

March 5, 2019 (8:30 am – 11:30 am)

Dan L. Duncan Building (CPB), Floor 8, Rooms 1-8

[Registration is now open](#). The deadline for registration is **Friday, February 15, 2019**.

Details: John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.

Short Courses in Scientific English for Non-Native Speakers of English. Courses last 7 weeks and meet twice a week for 1 or 1.5 hours each day. Classes are held early in the morning, during the lunch hour, or late in the afternoon. Classes are free of charge. Participants must speak English at the intermediate or higher level and be familiar with research and general biomedical terminology.

Dates are subject to change. Registration is required through the Department of Scientific Publications and will run January 28 through February 22, 2019.

Details: Mark Picus (mapicus@mdanderson.org), 713-792-7251, or John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.

Session 2 – March 11 through April 25, 2019

Pronunciation 1, Pronunciation 2, Conversation 2, Making Presentations, Writing 1

Friday Conversation Group. The Friday Conversation Group provides an informal atmosphere for non-native speakers of English to practice their conversational abilities, learn more about American culture, and meet new friends. The class meets every Friday in the Mitchell Building (BSRB), room S3.8003, from 12:00 to 1:00 pm.

No registration is required. Details: Mark Picus (mapicus@mdanderson.org), 713-792-7251, or John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.

Third Thursday Writing Retreat. The Department of Scientific Publications and the Research Medical Library are sponsoring afternoon writing retreats for faculty and trainees. These retreats, offered the third Thursday of every month from 12 to 4 pm in the Research Medical Library conference room (FCT21.6040), allow 4 hours of protected time for researchers to work on their grants and manuscripts. A scientific editor is present the entire time to answer questions, offer advice, and provide consultations on early drafts. (A separate room is available for lengthy consultations.) A librarian is also present to help with literature searches, reference formatting, EndNote issues, etc. *Details: John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.*

February 21, 2019

March 21, 2019

April 18, 2019

Writing and Publishing Scientific Articles (WAPSA). WAPSA is a structured, practical, in-depth writing-education program for postdoctoral fellows and clinical trainees at MD Anderson taught by the Department of Scientific Publications. This 16-contact-hour course provides an excellent opportunity for advancing participants' skills in writing and publishing research articles while developing their in-progress manuscripts under the guidance of scientific editors.

Locations and times to be announced. Registration is required through the Department of Scientific Publications. Details: John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.

April 23 and 30, 2019

Writing Persuasive R01 Proposals. This grant-writing workshop for clinical and basic science research faculty at MD Anderson focuses on the content, organization, and structure of an R01 grant application. Taught by senior editors in the Department of Scientific Publications, this 1-day workshop includes lecture, discussion, and guided grant outlining and development.

Locations and times to be announced. Registration is required through the Department of Scientific Publications. Details: John McCool (scipubseducation@mdanderson.org), 713-792-3174.

May 16, 2019

Scientific Publications Now Charging No-Show Fees. Scientific Publications' popular full-day courses—Writing and Publishing Scientific Articles, Writing Scientific Articles, and Writing Persuasive R01 Proposals—are available to MD Anderson faculty and trainees free of charge. For many courses, we have more applicants than spaces available; and sometimes those accepted do not show up for the courses. Therefore, to ensure that as many faculty and trainees as possible can participate in our courses, we implemented a new cancellation/no-show policy. Registrants are able to drop a course without penalty until a specified date and time (typically 2 work days before the course begins), but those who do not withdraw from the course by that deadline and who do not show up for the course will be charged \$95 to the chart string provided at the time of registration.

Webinars Presented by the Department of Scientific Publications. The Department of Scientific Publications continues to host a series of webinars on various topics. Dates and times, as well as links to upcoming webinars, will be posted as they become available on the [Department of Scientific Publications](#) website and in the department's "Educational Events" newsletter.

The following webinars have already been presented and recorded:

- **Techniques for Preparing an Efficient, Effective Grant Proposal** (presented January 16, 2019)
In this webinar, Don Norwood, a scientific editor in the Department of Scientific Publications, discusses some strategies for compiling an appealing, easily accessible NIH grant proposal. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.
- **Comma Basics** (presented November 7, 2018)
In this webinar, Bryan Tutt, a scientific editor in the Department of Scientific Publications, offers some general guidelines for using commas properly and reviews some examples of correct and incorrect comma use. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.
- **Essential Steps in Scientific Publishing: Services for MD Anderson Authors** (presented September 12, 2018)
In this webinar, Laurissa Gann, a manager in the Research Medical Library, and Joe Munch, a senior scientific editor in Scientific Publications, discuss how the Research Medical Library and Scientific Publications can help authors achieve some essential

steps in preparing, submitting, and revising a manuscript for publication in a biomedical journal. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Writing Clinical Case Reports** (presented July 19, 2018)

In this webinar, Amy Ninetto, a scientific editor in Scientific Publications, discusses the essentials of writing an informative case report for publication. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Navigating the Peer Review Process** (presented May 23, 2018)

In this webinar, Erica Goodoff, a senior scientific editor in the Department of Scientific Publications, talks to Dr. Shine Chang, a professor in the Department of Epidemiology and the director of the Cancer Prevention Research Training Program, about navigating the peer review process used by biomedical journals. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Choosing a Journal** (presented March 20, 2018)

In this webinar, Stephanie Deming, a senior scientific editor in the Department of Scientific Publications, discusses strategies for selecting a journal and avoiding disreputable journals. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Creating Effective Graphs** (presented January 31, 2018)

In this webinar, Sunita Patterson, a senior scientific editor in the Department of Scientific Publications, reviews the fundamentals of good graph design and data presentation. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Addressing ESL Issues in Scientific Writing** (presented November 9, 2017)

In this webinar, Mark Picus, PhD, training specialist, and Ann Sutton, scientific editor, both in the Department of Scientific Publications, discuss some of the challenges in scientific writing that scientists who trained at institutions outside the United States are likely to encounter as they transition to working at a U.S.-based institution. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Avoiding Wordiness** (presented October 4, 2017)

In this webinar, Don Norwood, a scientific editor in the Department of Scientific Publications, explains how to identify wordiness—the use of too many words to express an idea—and shares strategies for eliminating it from scientific writing. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Ask the Editors** (presented July 26, 2017)

In this webinar, two editors in the Department of Scientific Publications field questions about writing, editing, and publishing. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available.

- **Avoiding Plagiarism and Self-Plagiarism** (presented April 19, 2017)

In this webinar, two scientific editors in the Department of Scientific Publications discuss the pitfalls of plagiarism, how plagiarism is detected, and how authors can avoid plagiarizing. The concept of “self-plagiarism” is also discussed. A [recording of the webinar](#) and the [webinar slides](#) are available.

- **Creating Effective Tables** (presented January 19, 2017)

In this webinar, Joe Munch, a scientific editor in the Department of Scientific Publications, discusses when to use a table, the elements of a table, some basic principles of effective table design, and how to use Microsoft Word to design a clear and useful table. A [recording of the webinar](#) and the [webinar slides](#) are available.

Grant Writing Advice. The Department of Scientific Publications now offers grant writing suggestions ([Writing R01 Grant Proposals](#)) in the [Writing Advice](#) section of our website. This information, stemming from the Grant Writers' Seminars and Workshops (developed by Drs. Stephen Russell and David Morrison and presented annually at MD Anderson) and from the NIH's SF424 (R&R) Application Guide, focuses on R01 grants but can be applied to other types of NIH grants as well.

Writing the Specific Aims Section of a Grant Application. In this video, Sunita Patterson, senior scientific editor, presents a summary of the National Institutes of Health's grant-review process and how it affects the grant proposal, an overview of the structure of an R01 grant proposal, and a model for writing the Specific Aims section. The [video](#) is available on the Scientific Publications website.

Writing Abstracts Online Tutorial. [Writing Abstracts](#), an interactive, Web-based tutorial, covers the most important aspects of writing good abstracts. The lesson includes many examples and an optional self-assessment.

Improve Your Chances for IRG Funding. This [PDF presentation](#) by Walter Pagel, the former Director of the Department of Scientific Publications, guides researchers through the process of applying for institutional research grants.

Anatomy of a Research Article Video Presentation. In this [video](#), Stephanie Deming, senior scientific editor, presents advice on writing the parts of a research article: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, title, and abstract. The [slides shown in the presentation](#) and the [presentation handout](#) can be downloaded as well.

Classes and Webinars Presented by the Research Medical Library. More classes will be posted on the [Research Medical Library](#) website once they have been finalized.

Classes are located in the Research Medical Library classroom in the Pickens Academic Tower (in either FCT21.6008 or FCT21.6040). Details: Laurissa Gann (lgann@mdanderson.org), 713-794-1111.

February 8, 10:30 am, class: Introduction to Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses

February 12, 10:30 am, class: EndNote: The Basics

February 14, 9:30 am, class: Systematic Reviews: Constructing the Search – Part 1

February 15, 9:30 am, class: Systematic Reviews: Constructing the Search – Part 2
February 19, 11:00 am, class: EndNote: Advanced Tips
February 25, 11:30 am, webinar: Visualizing Demographic and Health Data Using PolicyMap
March 5, 10:00 am, class: EndNote: The Basics
March 7, 11:00 am, class, Library Essentials for Administrative Assistants
March 12, 10:00 am, class: EndNote: Advanced Tips
April 11, 10:00 am, class: PubMed for Advanced Searchers
April 17, 10:30 am, class: EndNote: Basics
April 24, 11:00 am, class: EndNote: Advanced Tips

To register for a Research Medical Library webinar or class, please visit the library's [Education & Events Calendar](#).

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