

Special Challenge: Publishing Academic Paper

This topic is obviously for people who hope to publish a paper previously used to meet an academic requirement. I encourage current and former students to consider updating a prior course paper for publication. Note the word “updating” used rather than “submitting”. Never submit an academic paper “as is” to a publisher, regardless of the grade received. It will need work. The challenges in converting your academic paper often start by exceeding the journal’s page, word, or reference limit. Then, there are other important issues to consider.

If you have an academic paper you would like to submit for publication, start by considering the difference between the way you conveyed your content for your faculty and the preferences of typical readers. The journal’s style may be no less scientific or rigorous, but your purpose is different. Instead of meeting course or degree requirements, you will be writing to inform a journal’s general readership. This often means narrowing your content’s breadth, depth, and/or wording to suit you anticipated readers.

Academic papers often provide good content for multiple articles, when approached carefully. Doctoral programs increasingly allow candidates to submit chapter manuscripts rather than a single lengthy dissertation. The multiple stand-alone manuscripts may be easier to edit for publication. Regardless of whether you aim to turn a course essay, master's thesis, or doctoral dissertation into a publishable manuscript, the effort involved is worthwhile. A journal article has a much broader and enduring readership for your work. I’m a big believer in publishing academic work. The reference list includes two articles* I wrote based on some of my doctoral work.

Beyond revisions to create a publishable article, one academic paper actually may support multiple manuscripts. Breaking a thesis or dissertation into “blocks” is sometimes called a “slice and dice” approach. For instance, your review of the literature may inform one manuscript and your patient population or project in another. You must avoid resultant duplication between the manuscripts (same phrases, tables, descriptions, etc.) your careful approach to succeed. The monograph on multiple publications discusses self-plagiarism, one of the risks in multiple related manuscripts, in more depth.

I am sharing a few references specific to academic work. Pollard’s is an excellent non-nursing article related to taking a dissertation to article and a later one by Halpern & Phelan is in nursing literature. Two references are specific to “manuscript option” dissertations. Depending on your project, I hope these references will be helpful. You will always find others on the *Nurse Author & Editor* site.

Finally, I ask that you never submit an academic paper simply because a faculty requires it if you do not intend to later respond to the reviewers' requested revisions. Negotiate that assignment. The manuscript review process is long and work-intensive for volunteer reviewers. In the past, students who had submitted a manuscript and received reviewer feedback requesting revisions informed the editor they were only required to submit the article, not publish. Submit manuscripts only when you are willing to take them to print, if accepted.

Related content is covered in a monograph on the submission, review, and editing process, as well as the special challenge monograph on multiple manuscripts.

Broome, M.E. (2018), The Manuscript Option Dissertation: Dissemination and Challenges. *Nurse Author & Editor*, 28: 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-4910.2018.tb00007.x>

De Jong, M.J., Moser, D.K. and Hall, L.A. (2005), The Manuscript Option Dissertation: Multiple Perspectives. *Nurse Author & Editor*, 15: 3-9. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-4910.2005.tb00554.x>

*Goolsby, Mary Jo EdD(c), MSN, ARNP1. Point of View: Understanding Nurse Practitioner Preparation. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners* 12(2):p 43-48, February 2000. | DOI: 10.1111/j.1745-7599.2000.tb00282.x

*Goolsby, Mary Jo EdD, MSN, APRN-C. The Role of Computer-Assisted Simulation in Nurse Practitioner Education. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners* 13(2):p 90-96, February 2001. | DOI: 10.1111/j.1745-7599.2001.tb00224.x

Halpern, F. & Phelan, J. (2020). Transforming a dissertation chapter into a published article. *Inside Higher Education*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2020/08/27/how-adapt-your-dissertation-so-it-works-published-article-opinion>

Pollard, R. (2005). From dissertation to journal article: A useful method for planning and writing any manuscript. *The Internet Journal of Mental Health*, 2 (2). Great resource for those considering converting academic papers to manuscripts for publication. <http://archive.ispub.com/journal/the-internet-journal-of-mental-health/volume-2-number-2/from-dissertation-to-journal-article-a-useful-method-for-planning-and-writing-any-manuscript.html#sthash.pnMbvMvR.dpbs>