

Formation of an Academic Writing Group at Louisiana State University

Libraries: Background, Guidelines and Lessons Learned

Kelly Blessinger, Stephanie Braunstein, Alice Daugherty, and Paul Hrycaj

LSU Libraries, Louisiana State University

Abstract

Producing high quality scholarly publications is a daunting task for many college and university librarians. In 2007, the LSU Libraries established a writing group to assist in this process. This four-member group makes itself available to review and critique manuscripts submitted by LSU librarians, most of whom are tenure-track. This paper examines the background, formation, and experiences-to-date of this group. Emphasis is placed on the particular characteristics of the LSU group, which make this group different from similar groups at other institutions. Thus, this paper includes, in its Appendices, practical materials such as forms for writers to use when submitting their works for review. It also includes the results of a small survey given to participants in order to gauge their satisfaction with the entire review process. The purpose for sharing this information is two-fold: first, to provide for the group itself a record of the group's rationale and activities; and, second, to provide other college and university libraries with some useful tools if they are considering creating a similar program.

Formation of an Academic Writing Group at Louisiana State University

Libraries: Background, Guidelines and Lessons Learned

Introduction

Producing high quality academic writing for the purpose of scholarly publication is a daunting task, yet it is a requirement for faculty to achieve promotion and tenure in most academic departments. This task is especially daunting for tenure-track academic librarians, whose terminal degree usually does not require writing a thesis, let alone a book-length dissertation. The majority of librarians at Louisiana State University (LSU) are tenure-track faculty members, yet their experience with producing academic writing at the beginning of their positions is generally very slim, sometimes non-existent. To assist LSU librarians in producing publication-quality academic writing, a group was created to review and provide comments on manuscripts submitted to the group. This discussion provides some of the details of the inception and evolution of this group, so that other libraries, and even departments of other disciplines, might take advantage of its experiences to develop such a group of their own.

Background

The Library Faculty Policy Committee (LFPC) at LSU is a representative group of elected library faculty.¹ In 2007, LFPC surveyed other Association of Research Libraries (ARL) member libraries to determine how they provided support to their tenure-track librarians for research and service activities necessary to attain tenure. Two particularly interesting responses came from the University of Colorado, Boulder, and The University of Buffalo, SUNY. The University of Colorado, Boulder, provides one semester leave from any librarianship duties to

focus on research for the faculty who are required to conduct research. The University of Buffalo, SUNY, reported that they had an academic writing group that a junior librarian started to build a support network for the research and writing processes. The LFPC discussed the idea of a semester of leave, and concern was expressed as to how to implement this type of arrangement due to the difficulty of relieving catalogers and others whose primary duties were not related to public service. The idea of a group to support writing, however, was met with enthusiasm, and LFPC decided to research the library literature in search of best practices.

The enthusiasm for the idea of a writing support group at the LSU Libraries is not hard to understand. As noted above, the majority of full-time librarians at LSU are tenure-track faculty. To achieve tenure at LSU, librarians must be notable² in job performance and viewed by the tenured library faculty as notable in one of the two areas of research and service and at least satisfactory in the other of the two areas. It should be mentioned that there is an official mentoring program at LSU, in which tenure-track librarians are paired with tenured librarians to help guide them through the tenure process.³ Mentors help protégées to prioritize and remain on track by providing advice regarding service on university, state and national committees, and serving as reviewers for their protégées' manuscripts. However, not all tenured faculty serving as mentors have the same publishing record, and in some cases the areas of expertise are not aligned to provide feedback relevant to the specific subject of the manuscript. In addition, some protégées may not be comfortable having their mentor review their work or feel like they may be burdening their mentor with this task. A group to support writing projects specifically struck many as a good way to provide assistance in satisfying the research component of the tenure requirements.

Literature Review

The literature review for this paper provided the authors with useful information on two fronts: examples of other similar library faculty writing support groups as well as practical guidance on the mechanics of critiquing papers written by peers. On the first front, a review of the literature indicated that Auburn University, Mississippi State, Texas A&M and the previously mentioned University of Buffalo all had groups for supporting writing activities of librarians. Auburn University's Research Work Group was formed in 2004, and Mississippi State University Libraries developed a research committee in 1999. Both Texas A&M University and the University at Buffalo Libraries groups (formed in 1991 and 2002, respectively) were formed as grassroots efforts to address tenure and promotion needs.

These groups often provided services that went beyond just reviewing submitted manuscripts. For example, the Academic Writing Group established at the University of Buffalo met monthly even when there were no submissions to review. The group discussed other support topics such as reconciling service for research, improving time management, developing a firmer understanding of what is required in a research article, and increasing confidence in one's own writing.⁴ Mississippi State's Library Research Advisory Committee accepts research proposals from the faculty in order to recommend approval for funding of a research projects.⁵ Texas A&M's Tenure Support Group membership included being able to discuss anxiety and common experiences, meeting other library colleagues, receiving assistance for professional development, and generating new ideas for research. According to Miller, "Creating a group to bring together colleagues pursuing a common goal fosters collegiality, encourages excellence, and increases the possibility of a successful finish on the tenure track."⁶ The Tenure Support Group met monthly at "brown bag" luncheon meetings. Sometimes they developed special

workshops, which included such topics as a librarian's overseas fellowship, the library's Promotion & Tenure document, how to have a successful experience with ALA, how to form an ALA poster session, how to fund research, and how to do random sampling.

As mentioned earlier, the literature review also provided guidance for critiquing manuscripts intended for scholarly publication. For example, according to a 1988 article by Stuart Giogoff, in which he discusses the practice of refereeing for library publications, referees for professional journals should be able to perform in the following ways:

- Judge the paper's work quality and subject matter
- Act as an arbiter of priority or innovation by comparison to what is already available
- Recommend changes or reductions in the paper's length
- Relieve the pressure of an unfavorable decision from the editor
- Maintain standards of excellence for the journal and the field⁷

Specific evaluation criteria for manuscripts included: adequate review of the literature; how the work contributes to existing literature; readability (organization, presentation of ideas, and style); relevance to aims and scope of journal; importance of question, issue, or problem solved; originality of contributed knowledge; validity of results; general scholarship quality; and clarity.⁸

The review of a paper can include specific comments that guide the author's revisions and improvement. Explaining how to improve an article helps build scholarship. It is also important to note the positives about the article under review because positive feedback assures the author that something in the work is valid or worthwhile, and it identifies areas of the article worth retaining or building upon.⁹

One peer reviewer offers the following advice to referee an article: know something about the topic or the research method and read the periodical regularly and have a good feel for the type of submission that the editors want.¹⁰ Suggestions for reviewing included pointing out specific examples within the manuscript from which a critique came, limiting the comments to

the substantive aspects of the text, not copyediting, and offering suggestions of additional relevant literature.

Giogoff also points out that journal editors sometimes provide guidelines regarding submission policies: “Some editors write editorials discussing their journal’s scope, editorial policy, and issues” which can highly influence the direction in which a manuscript is written.¹¹ For example, the editors of one highly ranked library and information science journal prefer manuscripts to have a thorough “problem statement.”¹² A detailed editorial has been written about the correct format for problem statements for papers submitted to this journal, but potential authors would need to either ask for such information before submission or risk not knowing the full scope of what was required.

Formation of the Writers Group

The LFPC came up with the idea to form a group to support LSU librarians’ writing efforts, and the dean of the LSU Libraries enthusiastically supported formation of the group. At a meeting of the LFPC, two librarians with strong records of writing and publication and one librarian with previous experience as a college writing instructor volunteered to become members of the group, which was dubbed the Writers Group. Another librarian with a similar record of writing and publication was asked after this meeting to become a member of the group and agreed to do so. One librarian of these four was tenured, and three were tenure track. All group members agreed to serve for two years. After that initial two years, the interest and activity of the faculty would be gauged for continuation with new group members. The group decided not to appoint a chair, so all of the members would rotate responsibilities. As indicated in the literature review, some of the groups established for publication support were also tenure “support groups,” of which writing was a component but not the sole focus. Since the LSU

Libraries already had a formal mentoring program for tenure-track librarians, the LSU Writers' Group decided that it should focus solely on writing.

Following best practices gleaned from studying other writing programs and discussion amongst the members, the group decided to adopt the following guidelines:

- 1) Hold writing workshops on set dates, with deadlines posted on the faculty listserv. In these workshops, members of the Writers Group would meet with the authors who have submitted their work for review.
- 2) Have each manuscript reviewed by two group members and an invited peer reviewer (or "guest" reviewer) for a total of three peer-reviewers. The invited peer reviewer will be someone who has expertise in the subject area of the paper under review.
- 3) Invite both tenured and tenure-track librarians to serve as invited peer reviewers.
- 4) Select a facilitator to lead each workshop the facilitator will be a member of the group who is not reviewing the manuscript for the workshop. The job of the facilitator will be to select the guest reviewer, schedule the date for the workshop, and keep the meeting on track.
- 5) Allow for three weeks between the time a manuscript has been received and the time it is reviewed.
- 6) Review a maximum of two manuscripts per workshop.
- 7) Begin each workshop with a round of positive comments about each piece submitted.
- 8) Hold writing seminars on set dates to discuss general topics pertaining to writing, to which the whole faculty will be invited.

The group created a cover sheet (Appendix A) to accompany submitted manuscripts. The cover sheet and all other forms were made in Adobe Acrobat Professional, so they could be filled out and submitted online. The group also asked authors submitting manuscripts to fill out a form regarding the subject areas of the manuscript (Appendix B). A similar form was used for those faculty members who were willing to serve as invited peer reviewers for specific subject areas. The idea of a guest reviewer from outside of the group was suggested in case the manuscript submitted fell out of the area of expertise of the group members and as a way to involve other faculty who were interested in this initiative. The member of the group who had been a college-level writing instructor placed several books on the craft of writing at the library's reserve desk and made them available to the faculty. Finally, the group created a web page that detailed all of the practices listed above and also served as a medium for authors to submit their work.

Once all the guidelines were laid out and the web page was created, the group sent an e-mail to the library listserv notifying the faculty of the formation of the group. An introductory meeting was set, and the entire library faculty was invited, but the meeting was not made mandatory. The purpose of the meeting was not only to introduce the faculty to the Writers Group but also to encourage them to discuss academic writing. Each of the group members was responsible for a different topic, and the meeting included subjects such as how to get ideas for papers, writing for a specific audience, how to structure an article, collaboration and peer review, and a discussion on some of the higher ranking journals in our field. Faculty members who wished to serve as invited peer reviewers were also encouraged to submit their list of subject specialties at this time.

Reactions from Participants

To get some feedback regarding the effectiveness of the Writers Group, one member of the group created short questionnaires for the purpose of asking participants how they viewed their experiences as either guest reviewers or writers. Since the number of writers responding in the first two years was small (only three), measuring the responses to the questionnaires could not be considered to produce statistically significant results. Nevertheless, these responses provided valuable anecdotal information to the Writers Group.

Responses from Guest Reviewers

While the Writers Group had only three paper submissions, one of the authors resubmitted an article after a first revision. Thus the total number of responses was four, so four separate guest reviewers were sent questionnaires. In the objective (multiple choice) portion of the questionnaire, all responded that they felt comfortable critiquing a colleague's work; two felt very comfortable. All felt at least adequately qualified to review a colleague's work; two felt very qualified, and all felt that their input was at least somewhat helpful to the writer. Three felt as if their input was helpful, without the limiter of "somewhat."

Stressing again that these numbers could never legitimately qualify as a statistical trend because the sample is obviously too small, one can still make the observation that, for reviewers, the experience of participating in the process was generally seen as comfortable and of value. This observation is corroborated in the four sets of responses to the subjective (short answer) portion of the questionnaire.

For example, the question "Overall, would you say that the experience of being a guest reviewer was pleasant; and would you be willing to do it again?" was unanimously answered in the affirmative, with one responder noting that the reason for the experience's being pleasant was

the “writer’s lack of defensiveness and the civility and kindness of the other reviewers.” This responder was apparently so impressed with the attitudes shown by reviewers and writers that he specified that he would be “happy to do it [review] again.”

Interestingly, this same reviewer, in response to a question asking if he would consider having his own work reviewed by the Writers Group, admitted to feeling so “awkward” when his work was the subject of oral review that he was not able to “focus very well on what [was] being said.” He then suggested that members of the reviewing group be required “to submit written comments to authors who are having their work reviewed.” As it stands, though, most of the reviewers have been giving some kind of written response to the writers. This response has been in either a short narrative or a marked-up copy of the article. The only change to the process then would be to formalize the requirements for a written response, which the group has not yet deemed necessary.

Another guest reviewer, in response to the same question, gave a somewhat mixed message by stating that she would not consider submitting her own work—not because she didn’t “value the group” and consider it a “good idea,” but because she would “just . . . grab someone to read my paper if I wanted input, rather than go through a formal process.”

Responses from Writers

The answers to the multiple choice questions on the survey showed evidence of confidence in the process. When asked how writers felt about the qualifications of the reviewers, they answered “Very Qualified” in two out of three responses, with the third response being “Adequately Qualified.” The same held true for the question asking if the critique/review and its process were helpful. The choices were “Very Helpful,” “Helpful,” “Somewhat Helpful,” and “Not at all Helpful.” The same two responders who answered that the reviewers seemed “very

qualified" gave the equivalent highest ranking in the "helpfulness" category, i.e., "Very Helpful." The third responder gave a response of simply "Helpful."

Looking at the short-answer portion of the survey given to writers, one finds more in-depth and thoughtful responses. It is particularly notable that the writer who did submit the same piece of work a second time for additional feedback after revision was most positive about his experience. His answer to the first of the subjective questions—"What made you decide to utilize the Writers' Group as a way of reviewing your work?"—contrasts with the previously mentioned reviewer's comments about not wanting to get involved with a formal process in favor of asking a single individual to respond to writing. After stating, "I've learned that a second or third eye looking at one's work is critical," this writer finishes his answer with the following clause: "I liked the formal set up of the Writers' Group so that I would not have to bother other colleagues who are overstretched work wise as it is." These two opposing answers—from the reviewer who was reluctant to get involved with a formal process versus the writer who specifically wanted a formal process—illustrate that a formal entity to critique writing like the Writers Group will not appeal to all writers.

Two of the longest responses to a question in the narrative section came from a responder who mentioned that she "would have liked a better knowledge of how the meeting would be conducted." She also mentioned a preference for requesting "specific focused attention on certain aspects" of the article to be reviewed.

Although this writer offered a few suggestions for improvement, her final remarks strengthen both her individual approval of the process and a general acknowledgement that the process is beneficial. She says, in responding to the question that asks if the writer would submit work again, "Definitely. I believe this is a valuable process for all concerned. It promotes

mutual understanding among staff. Not only beginners but experienced writers can benefit from 'peer review.'"

A Learning Experience

As seen from the responses delineated above, the members of the Writers Group have learned some valuable lessons in the two years since their formation. The members of the Writers Group have gotten the distinct impression that no matter how good an idea is it might take a while to catch on. While the group braced for an onslaught of submissions, the reality was more of a trickle. As noted above, three manuscripts were submitted in the first two years, and one was resubmitted after revisions for further evaluation. While this gave the group time to get accustomed to their new roles, it also proved hard to remember who was next in line for the positions of facilitator and reviewers, since the duties rotated each time. Keeping better records or selecting a chair might alleviate this problem. Following the best practices recommended by the literature, the group also set regular dates for writing workshops and seminars. Since there was nothing to review when the first few dates came around, it was decided instead to make the workshops available on an "as needed" basis and let faculty submit works when they were ready for review and not by an arbitrary deadline. The first seminar, which discussed the formation of the group and other matters pertaining to writing, while not poorly attended, did not have many junior faculty members in attendance. Since a lot of preparation and time was to go into the seminars that the whole library was invited to, the group decided that they would become available "upon request" or when there seemed to be a greater interest or need.

In 2007-2008 the LSU Libraries hired a significant number of new librarians. Since there were so many new tenure-track faculty members, in early 2009, the Mentoring Committee decided to hold a workshop of mentors and protégées. One of the agenda items was to introduce

(or perhaps reacquaint) faculty to the Writers Group and its services. At that meeting it was suggested by a faculty member that the group be willing to broaden its scope and evaluate presentations in addition to article manuscripts. When faculty members were separated into breakout groups, a faculty member stated that writing, even academic writing, can be a very personal process, and some faculty may be more willing to submit if there was a blind review option in place. It was debated whether a review within the institution could really be blind, since most people are aware of the research that others were working on. Another faculty member who had submitted a manuscript was surprised at how the meeting was run, as she thought she would just be asking questions of the reviewers.

As a result of this workshop, the Writers Group met to discuss these suggestions. Most in the Writers Group thought that reviewing presentations seemed like a natural extension of the group, and a form for the review of presentations was created. Those wishing to have presentations reviewed were given three options: a practice “run through,” which would involve no critique; a custom evaluation, which would allow the presenter to select specific areas of review; or a full evaluation, which would include everything on the form. The request form for the review of presentations is available as Appendix C.

Since authors’ works are reviewed and discussed with them in a meeting, it took the group a little while to discuss the logistics of blind peer review. It was determined that there could be a different submission process for this option in which only one group member would get the submission and then act as a liaison to the author. The workshop would still take place (without the author) and the group liaison would report comments back to the author. Any questions or issues that needed clarification could be asked of the group via the liaison.

The group created boilerplate documents to address the concern of the librarian who stated that the meeting was not run as she had expected it to be. The boilerplates spell out the whole process, so there would be no surprises in regard to how the meetings were run, and each facilitator is now charged with emailing these documents to authors who request manuscript reviews. The boilerplate texts are available as Appendix D.

Conclusion

The guidelines, forms, and experiences of the LSU Libraries' Writers Group are provided here to encourage and assist others who might consider creating similar groups. It must be acknowledged that the optimal structure of such a group will vary depending on particular characteristics of the department that sponsors it. However, this discussion has uncovered a number of different parameters to consider when forming a group to support publication efforts:

1. How should the reviewers of submitted manuscripts be selected? Should they be a fixed group, or should they include some guest reviewers along with fixed members or rotating members?
2. What should be the forums for providing feedback to authors, e.g., group meetings, written comments alone, blind reviewing?
3. Should the group have functions that go beyond review of submitted manuscripts, e.g., providing forums for brainstorming publication ideas, sharing tenure experiences to foster collegiality?
4. Should formats other than manuscripts be considered for review, e.g., presentations, poster sessions?

5. Should the group meet on a regularly scheduled basis whether or not there is a submitted manuscript to review, or should it meet only when there is a completed manuscript to review?

Even in its short lifetime, the LSU Libraries' Writers Group has grown and evolved based on its experiences and participant feedback. It has already proven its value sufficiently to be a permanent feature of the LSU Libraries.

¹This group is charged to "assure that actions of the LSU Libraries and University Administrations, as related to the library faculty, are in accord with Policy Statement-36, *The Louisiana State University Faculty Handbook* and other applicable University regulations. The Committee shall discuss and make recommendations to the University Administration, Faculty Senate, Libraries Administration, or library faculty when appropriate, concerning matters referred to it by any individual or group." Additionally, "the Committee may undertake surveys, formulate policy proposals, and voice library faculty opinions." Library Faculty Policy Committee, "Louisiana State University Library Faculty Policy Committee Bylaws." Revised August, 2005. http://www.lib.lsu.edu/committees/lfpc/LFPC_bylaws.pdf (accessed May 22, 2009).

²The terminology "notable" is from the "Library Faculty Guidelines," LSU Libraries' supplemental information to the LSU Promotion and Tenure Requirements documentation (PS-36). "Notable" is the highest level of performance in the LSU Libraries' rubric, and indicates an effort greater than simply "satisfactory."

³Lois Kuyper-Rushing, "A Formal Mentoring Program in a University Library: Components of a Successful Experiment." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 27, no. 6 (2001): 442.

⁴Cynthia Tysick and Nancy Babb. "Writing Support for Junior Faculty Librarians: A Case Study." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 32, no. 1 (2006): 98.

⁵Tamara P. Lee. "The Library Research Committee: It Has the Money and the Time." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 21, no. 2 (1995): 111.

⁶Jeannie P. Miller and Candace R. Bienfiel. "Academic Librarians and the Pursuit of Tenure: The Support group As a Strategy for Success." *College and Research Libraries* 59, no. 3 (1998): 264.

⁷Stuart Giogoff. "Reviewing the Gatekeepers: A Survey of Referees of Library Journals." *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 39, no. 6 (1988): 400.

⁸Ibid., 402.

⁹Brian Martin. "Writing a Helpful Referee's Report." *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 39, no. 3 (2008): 303.

¹⁰ Phillip M. Edwards. "Developing as a Writer Refereeing Manuscripts for Peer-reviewed LIS Journals." *College and Research Library News* 68, no. 10 (2007): 630.

¹¹ Giogoff, "Reviewing the Gatekeepers," 402.

¹² Peter Herson and Candy Schwartz. "What is a problem statement?" *Library & Information Science Research* 29, no. 3 (2007): 307.

Bibliography

Edwards, Phillip M. "Developing as a Writer Refereeing Manuscripts for Peer-reviewed LIS Journals." *College and Research Library News* 68, no. 10 (2007): 630-631.

Giogoff, Stuart. "Reviewing the Gatekeepers: A Survey of Referees of Library Journals." *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 39, no. 6 (1988): 400-407.

Herson, Peter and Candy Schwartz. "What is a problem statement?" *Library & Information Science Research* 29, no. 3 (2007): 307-309.

Kuyper-Rushing, Lois. "A Formal Mentoring Program in a University Library: Components of a Successful Experiment." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 27, no. 6 (2001): 440-46.

Lee, Tamera P. "The Library Research Committee: It Has the Money and the Time." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 21, no. 2 (1995): 111-115.

Martin, Brian. "Writing a Helpful Referee's Report." *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 39, no. 3 (2008): 301-306.

Miller, Jeannie P. and Candace R. Benefiel. "Academic Librarians and the Pursuit of Tenure: The Support group As a Strategy for Success." *College and Research Libraries* 59, no. 3 (1998): 260-265.

Tysick, Cynthia and Nancy Babb. "Writing Support for Junior Faculty Librarians: A Case Study." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 32, no. 1 (2006): 94-100.

APPENDIX A

COVER SHEET FOR SUBMISSIONS TO WRITING GROUP PEER REVIEW
PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: _____
Date: _____
Type of Project (e.g., journal article, book chapter, etc.): _____
Working title of document: _____

Number of pages to be reviewed: _____
What style manual/citation system are you using? _____

PART II: PREFERENCES

How far into the writing process is this copy?

- First Draft.
- Second Draft.
- Close to Completion.
- Other. Please clarify: _____

How detailed do you want the review to be? *Please check all that apply, and add comments to further guide the reviewers.*

- OVERVIEW:** Give me an idea if I am going in the right direction or need to redefine my purpose, add/subtract substantial content, or refocus my topic.
Comments: _____
- STYLE SPECIFICS:** Give me detailed pointers on how to improve the style.
Comments: _____
- MECHANICS:** Give me assistance with grammar, usage, punctuation, citations/bibliographic entries. (Note that style and mechanics are integrated.)
Comments: _____

MISCELLANEOUS-SELECT ONE:

- I already have ideas/plans on where to submit my work.
- I need suggestions on where to submit my work.

APPENDIX B
SUBJECT AREAS OF MANUSCRIPT

Please place an X next to all of the subject areas that this manuscript falls under.

Name _____

Category	Subject	X
Library Operations		
	Cataloging	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reference/Information Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
	User Instruction/Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Library Issues (practical)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Administration	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Collection Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Indexing/Abstracting	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Acquisitions	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Interlibrary Loan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Public Relations	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Communications	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Library Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Circulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Library Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disability Services	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Library Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research in Librarianship/Users		
	User Studies	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Information Retrieval	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Library/Information Issues (theoretical)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Information Needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Research Methodology	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Research in Librarianship	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Library/Information Science Research	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library/Information Science Profession		
	Librarianship/Professional Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Associations/Committees	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Academic/Research Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Public Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Library/Information networks	<input type="checkbox"/>
	LIS Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Special Collections/Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Archives/Preservation	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Children's Libraries/Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technology		
	Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Information Science	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Indexes/Databases	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Automation	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Software	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Electronic Publishing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishing/Publishing Studies		
	Serials	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Bibliometrics	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Publishing/Publishers	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Literature Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Monographic Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX C:
REQUEST FORM FOR THE REVIEW OF PRESENTATIONS

Presenter: _____ Date of presentation: _____

Venue for presentation: _____

How long should the presentation take? _____

1) Do you want to perform a run through, a full, or custom evaluation?

Run Through Custom Evaluation Full Evaluation

2) Would you like a large audience (message sent to library listserv) or just the members of the Writers Group to review your presentation?

Large Audience Just the Writers Group

3) Please suggest three dates that you would be able to give your presentation. Depending on your answer to the question directly above, you will need to give either a 3-week or a 2-week lead time allowance. (If you want a large audience, 3 weeks lead time; if you want just the Writers Group, 2 weeks lead time.)

Date #1: _____ Date #2 _____ Date #3 _____

4) Take a look at the feedback list below. If you chose "custom evaluation" in question #1, please check the box next to the areas you would like to be evaluated.

(Note: if you chose "Run Through" you will not be evaluated on any of these items, if you chose "Full Evaluation" you will be evaluated on all of these.)

FEEDBACK ON SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRESENTATION:

(Note: These will all be judged on a Likert scale)

THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS:

- The presenter made eye-contact with the audience.
- The presenter spoke loudly and clearly enough.
- The presenter manifested, through body language, interest in the topic.
- The presenter used appropriate body language --not too stiff but not so active as to distract from the message.
- The presenter avoided digression.

THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS

- The slides or other written materials conformed to Standard English spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage.
- The presentation was the required length, leaving some time for audience Q&A.

THE TOPICAL ASPECTS:

- The topic was sufficiently researched.
- The topic was appropriate for the target audience.
- The topic has been made interesting enough to hold the attention of any size audience.
- There were unanswered questions that should be answered.

GENERAL RESPONSE TO THE PRESENTATION:

(Please use this section to give a holistic overview of the presentation while adding any comments that would expand on the statements above. Remember to praise where praise is due!)

Appendix D: BOILERPLATES

For submitted manuscripts (to be sent by Facilitator)

Dear XXX,

Thank you for submitting a manuscript for review by the Writers Group. Research shows that having your paper reviewed before submission to a peer reviewed journal greatly increases the quality of the work and its acceptance rate.

The Writers Group would like to check with you regarding the following dates for a workshop to discuss your work. Please let me know which of the following dates will work best for your schedule.

(ENTER DATES AGREED UPON BY GROUP)

Once we have determined a date, I will get back in touch with you with you to give you an overview of how the workshop will be conducted.

Sincerely,

The Facilitator

Writers Group Members

Meeting overview (to be sent by Facilitator)

Dear XXX,

Now that we have determined XXX as the date for the workshop to discuss your manuscript, I would like to give you an overview of how the workshop will be run so you can know what to expect.

Since the Writers Group has no chair, the roles of the members change with each manuscript submitted. For example, the role of the facilitator, which is to run the meeting and keep it on track, is rotated each time. Also, the whole committee is not responsible to peer review every manuscript, as there is always an outside peer reviewer enlisted by the facilitator to review and give feedback regarding the manuscripts. In total, there will be three peer reviewers commenting on each manuscript submitted. At the meeting, which will be held in the XXX, I will ask each reviewer to give their comments regarding your manuscript in turn, and you will have the opportunity to respond to these comments or ask questions in order to get more feedback. The comments you receive will be influenced by “Coversheet for Submissions” form you filled out when submitting.

Please let myself or the group know if you should need any additional information.

Writers Group Members

Subject Keywords: Writing Group, Scholarly Publications, College and University Librarians, Tenure.