Scholarly publishing: don't panic!

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To make an impact, choose a reputable venue

Your work should be evaluated on its own merits: the reliability of your methodology, the strength of your arguments, etc. However, many hiring, tenure and promotion committees still use the venue in which a work was published, and some form of corresponding ranking (impact factor, CiteScore, SJR, h5-index, etc) as a proxy for the quality of the work, even though "the highest ranking journals often struggle to raise above the average reliability levels set by the other journals" (Brembs, 2018). You may be tempted by invitations to publish your work "quickly and easily", but there are no shortcuts to quality.

Journal lists and rankings (from library databases A-Z)

- *Ulrichsweb* lists 91,239 active English or French academic journals, with filters for open access, peer review, discipline, etc.
- *Web of Science* indexes a subset of journals (22,398), heavily weighted towards the sciences.
- *Scimago Journal Reports* indexes the same 39,738 journals as Elsevier's *Scopus*, but includes discipline filtering by open access and discipline, as well as a weighted ranking.
- *Cabell's Scholarly Analytics* includes both a whitelist (3,180) and a blacklist (12,398) of journals. This commercial service claims to consistently apply objective criteria, but is not exhaustive

Employ critical thinking

- Do you read the journal? If the journal is new to you, does the content of a few issues match your field of interest? Have the articles been edited with care?
- Does the journal document its peer review or editorial process?
- Have people you respect in your discipline published in this journal?
- Are the editor-in-chief and members of the editorial board recognizable contributors in your field? Do their CVs or institutional profiles acknowledge their role with the journal?
- Is the publisher a member of the *Committee on Publication Ethics* (https://publicationethics.org/members/publishers)?
- If open access, is it listed on the *Directory of Open Access Journals* (https://doaj.org/)?
- Does the journal have a reasonable turnaround time from submission to publication? Six weeks is a minimum to provide time for proper peer reviewing, responses and revisions.
- Consider other criteria from *Think, Check, Submit*: http://thinkchecksubmit.org/

Open access

Open access publications (articles, book chapters, conference papers, etc) are freely available to all, arguably matching our mandate as a publicly funded university to increase access to knowledge not just for members of our own institution, but globally. This also maximizes the visibility and availability of your work: rather than requiring a subscription to the resource, anyone interested in your work will have access to it. Open access articles receive 18% more citations than average (Piwowar et al., 2018)!

Open access often allows authors to retain copyright over their work. Whether by retaining copyright over your own work, or by being granted a license from the publisher, the ability to legally share copies of your work with your colleagues and republish is important for the visibility of your work. Keep this in mind if you are considering a manuscript-based thesis.

Open access mandates

SSHRC, NSERC, and CIHR, along with an increasing number of grant agencies such as the Gates Foundation, require funded research to be published in an open access venue (graduate scholarships and fellowships excepted). The Tri-Councils explicitly allow you to expense APCs from your funding; build this into your budget.

CARL/CAUT Author's Addendum

If the publisher insists on a transfer of copyright, and you feel you must publish in their venue, you can propose an author's addendum that will enable you to make copies available through your institutional repository, or to adapt the work for presentations, etc. The Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) describes the standard addendum at
http://www.carl-abrc.ca/advancing-research/scholarly-communication/info-for-authors/

Finally…

Reach out to your librarian if you have any questions! Dan Scott (dscott@laurentian.ca) is the liaison librarian for the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

References

Brembs, B. (2018). Prestigious science journals struggle to reach even average reliability. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, *12*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2018.00037

Piwowar, H., Priem, J., Larivière, V., Alperin, J. P., Matthias, L., Norlander, B., … Haustein, S. (2018). The state of OA: A large-scale analysis of the prevalence and impact of Open Access articles.