Publishing Your Research
Link to captions
Publishing your research

• Step 1: Do some great research ✓
• Step 2: Write it up into a great paper
• Step 3: Get it published in a top venue
Writing a great paper

• A great paper conveys several things:
  • Adds to the existing body of knowledge
  • Presents and validates an idea through evidence.
  • Provides influencing perspectives.
  • Connects its contributions to the broader body of knowledge.
Structure

• Introduction
• Overview
• Method
• Evaluation
• Related work
• Discussion/Conclusion
Writing the Introduction

• An good introduction tells a story.
  • What is the problem
  • Why is important
  • Hint at the idea and its promise
  • (here or later) what are your research questions?
  • Why should one keep reading?
• The introduction is a contract.
  • Do not overgeneralize
  • Separate opinion from facts
  • Do not over promise
What’s your idea?

• This may show up throughout the paper (but probably the intro)

• Build intuition
  • Use a running example
  • Favor intuition over precision
  • Examples:
    • What does your algorithm do on a concrete example?
    • What is it like to use your new interface?
Related work

• Sometimes it goes at the end, sometimes it goes in the beginning.
• The context where your work exists
  • What you build upon
  • Different solutions to the same problem
• Choose your research tools
  • Semantic Scholar, arXiv, ACM DL
Method

• What you did. Why.
  • Why this method, algorithm, system, etc.
  • Break it into meaningful components.
  • Make sure the level of detail is appropriate to the audience.
  • Make sure you introduce every term before you use it.

• Peer review happens here
Evaluation / Results / Findings

• The evaluation should connect back to specific research questions

• It should be clear that you went out of your way to try to disprove your hypothesis.

• Separate data and observations from opinions
Evaluation examples

SIGPLAN evaluation checklist

https://www.sigplan.org/Resources/EmpiricalEvaluation/

7 research contributions in HCI

Discussion/Conclusion

- Don’t just repeat what you did.
- People don’t remember numbers, they remember stories.
- What are the opportunities arising from this work and its results?
- What comes next?
Paper writing advice
Building Publishing Muscle

• Non-Archival Publications
  • Workshop papers
  • Poster Abstracts
  • Doctoral Symposia
  • **ArXiv**

• Archival Publications
  • Full-length Conference and Journal Papers
Know Your Audience

• Read lots of papers from the target venue
• Attend the venue (if a conference)
• Review for the venue if possible (ask your advisor to recommend you for this)
• Program Committee meetings
  • Senior students may get invited if their advisor pulls strings
  • You may be able to observe as a student volunteer
Make an Outline

• Iterate and agree on the outline with your co-authors before you start writing
• You often have a story beforehand… what are the plot points?
• You don’t need to write in the sections in order
Start Early

• The more iterations, the stronger the paper
• Set an internal deadline with your team
• Perfect is the enemy of done
• Leave ample time for advisor and peer feedback, making submissions accessible, creation of video or other supplementary materials
Leverage Resources

• writing courses at your university
• reference books (Strunk & White)
• professional or pro bono proofreaders
  • Can you or your advisor apply for funding for this type of resource?
  • Free resources often include paper mentoring programs offered by conferences & professional societies
Becoming a good writer

- Read, write, repeat
- Is a practice, not an event.
- Be succinct
- While you get better at it, get help
  - Courses
  - Professional editing services
- AI tools can be helpful, but do not let them take over the writing from you.
Supplementary materials

- Videos, appendices, instruments, datasets
- Presentation that goes with it
Getting a Paper Published
Communicate with Co-Authors

• Agree on deadlines (for outline, drafts of sections, full draft, feedback, etc.)
• Agree on division of labor
• Be explicit about authorship (who & in what order)
Pick a venue

Many factors to consider

- Venue quality
- Topic alignment
- Review pool and process
- Desired publication date
About Deadlines

• What to do if the submission site crashes near the deadline…
• When is it OK to request an extension?
Metadata Matters

• Abstract Pre-Registration
• Keywords = Reviewer Matching
• What name should you publish under?
Rebuttals & Reacting to Reviews

- Sleep on it!
- Get the venom out in a throw-away draft
- What if your scores are very low or high?
- Prioritize reviewers’ comments & group by theme
- Pro tip: spreadsheet your rebuttal plan
- Start early, get feedback, iterate
- aka.ms/rebuttals
Things to Avoid when Writing

• Plagiarism (including self-plagiarism)
• Dual submissions
• All-nighters (start early, iterate often!)
• Complaining about reviews on social media
• Submitting without knowledge of advisor/co-authors
Parting tips & reminders

• Publications stay on your CV forever
• Determine authorship early - be explicit and generous
• Reviews – learn from them and improve your work
• Send a paper because it is ready, not just for feedback
• When doing reviews, imagine the authors reading them.
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Questions / Discussion

Discussion topics:

● What are you working on?
● How would you most like to improve your writing?