



## “Provando e riprovando”:

# On how to write, submit and re-submit an academic paper

**Workshop, 1<sup>st</sup> term 2017-2018**

**23-24 November 2017**

Organised by **Fabrizio Bernardi & Giulia M. Dotti Sani**

TA: **Katy Morris**

Please register via [Osiris](#) or with [Martina.Selmi@eui.eu](mailto:Martina.Selmi@eui.eu)

The form and structure of an academic paper varies enormously even across neighbour disciplines. Suffice it to mention that the word limit for an original article is 4.000 words in Epidemiology, 8,000 words Demography, 10.000 words in AJPS and no word limit in AJS. There are therefore two caveats to start with. First, this workshop focuses on the art of writing and submitting a paper in the area of *empirical sociology*. Second, we will not engage with the content of the paper, nor with language style. We will assume that we live in a perfect world where we all have an interesting research question, a well-performed empirical analysis and are able to write in proficient academic English.

In this workshop we will rather focus on a) manuscript preparation, especially its form, structure and complements (title, abstract) and b) the mechanics of a submission. Often a professional preparation and a cautious submission can make a difference for the acceptance of the paper and later for its academic impact.

You should not expect a list of rules or easy recipes for each step in the preparation and submission that we will discuss below. We will rather engage in a *bottom-up hermeneutic* exercise. We will try to let these rules/recipes emerge out of a collective reading and interpretation of articles that we deem good in our profession.

If you enroll in this workshop, you are asked to select and send us the following items that you can find in the top-field journals<sup>1</sup> in your field of research:

---

<sup>1</sup> Estimated time for the task: 1 hour. Suggestion: choose your favorite journal and consider the articles published in the last 5 years. You can also mention best/worst titles you already know.

1. The best *title* or the title you like most of a published article
2. The worst *title* or the title you like least of a published article
3. A very good *abstract* of a published article
4. An abstract from an article published in the same issue as n. 3 (e.g. you can take the preceding or following article in the same issue)

You are also asked to send the latest title and abstract you have written (unpublished and unpolished). All materials must be sent in word format (PRW\_yoursurname.doc) to katy.morris@eui.eu no later than November 16<sup>th</sup>. Earlier submissions are welcome.

The chosen titles and abstracts and your abstract plus others selected by the instructors will be the material we will analyze during the workshop to come up with some guidelines to professionalize future manuscript preparation and submission.

### Registration:

Given the collaborative and hermeneutic nature of the workshop, it is open to a maximum of 20 participants. A number of slots are reserved for researchers in their 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year working in the area of empirical sociology and social stratification. Those who are struggling with their first submission are those who can benefit from the workshop. The remaining slots will be assigned on a first come first serve basis.

No credits are awarded for this workshop.

### Schedule and outline

**Thursday 23 November 2017, 14.00 – 17.00** (Seminar Room 2, Badia Fiesolana)  
**Friday 24 November 2017, 10.00 – 13.00** (Emeroteca, Badia Fiesolana)

#### *First day: Manuscript preparation*

##### Title & abstract

Choosing the right title and writing an informative, crystal clear abstract can be key to quick publication and can immensely help the circulation and impact of an article. In this part of the workshop, participants will read and compare titles and abstracts from different journals and they will engage in collective exercises to understand what are the core elements that make for a good title and a good abstract. Participants will also get a chance to work on their own abstracts and get feedback from instructors and peers.

##### Introduction, data-section and conclusion

Beyond the research-specific content of each article, there is a common way of structuring an article in most journals in the area of empirical sociology. What are the essential elements of the introduction, data & methods section, and conclusion? In this part of the workshop, participants will read and reflect upon the content of these sections from published articles and will derive a tentative checklist of the must-haves for each part.

## ***Second day: Submission and re-submission***

Having covered manuscript preparation, we discuss some strategies that we find useful in getting published. We cover three areas: what to do before submitting, what to do if you get an R&R (revise and resubmit) and what to do when your article gets rejected (which will happen sooner or later).

### Pre-submission:

- Choose the journal that is perfect for your article
- Think about your audience: adapt the literature review
- The cover letter

### After R&R

- Doing the revision
- Replying to the reviewers and eventually the editor

### After a reject:

- Dealing with the criticism
- Understanding what went wrong
- Preparing for resubmission to another journal

*updated 07.11.2017*