

Writing a Paper

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May 26, 2014

Preparation

- ▶ Be happy with your latex set up.
- ▶ Know the parameters/specifications of the target journal/book, e.g. page limits, form of references, allowable numbers of tables and figures, form of supplementary materials, reproducible research?
- ▶ Often the journals have their own latex style guides, and recommended bibstyle.
- ▶ Get your bib file in good shape.

I have a file with shorthand commands:

```
\def \N{\mbox{N}}
\def \v{\mbox{var}}
\def \E{\mbox{E}}
\def \bident{\mbox{\boldmath{I}}}
\def \c{\mbox{cov}}
\def \s2{\sigma^2}
\def \hs2{\hat{\sigma}^2}
\def \siga2{\sigma_{\alpha}^2}
\def \sige2{\sigma_{\epsilon}^2}
\def \sig2{\sigma^2}
....
\newcommand{\bpi}{\mbox{\boldmath $\pi$}}
\newcommand{\bmOmega}{\mbox{\boldmath $\Omega$}}
\newcommand{\bOmega}{\mbox{\boldmath $\Omega$}}
\newcommand{\bmupsilon}{\mbox{\boldmath $\upsilon$}}
\newcommand{\bmxi}{\mbox{\boldmath $\xi$}}
\newcommand{\bxi}{\mbox{\boldmath $\xi$}}
```

Structure of the Paper

- ▶ If there are co-authors, talk with them about who will do what...Dropbox (and similar) are very useful.
- ▶ I often start with the abstract, this gives me “the story”
- ▶ I then usually write out the section headings.
- ▶ Within each section I write a few brief sentences giving me a roadmap of what’s in that section.
- ▶ I then write the introduction or the methods section.
- ▶ Fill out details within sections...this often highlights more work that needs doing.

Structure of the Paper

- ▶ When I'm developing a method I often have a working document, with details of the approach.
- ▶ Having the details worked out as you go along is a good idea, as decisions/steps which are difficult to justify can be rectified early.
- ▶ This document can then be imported into the paper.
- ▶ The discussion section is written last.

The Final Version

- ▶ Some (most?) reviewers find typos and grammatical errors very annoying, so minimize them!
- ▶ It may be boring, but rejections are even more work...
- ▶ Use a spellcheck.
- ▶ Proofread.
- ▶ Proofread.
- ▶ Proofread.
- ▶ Proofread.
- ▶ Proofread.
- ▶ Proofread.
- ▶ And then proofread again!