

Postdoc Workshop – 14 April 2015

Notes by Casey Leffue and Robin Dienel

“Navigating *Nature Geoscience*”

Workshop led by Tamara Goldin, *Nature Geoscience*

Tamara Goldin, associate editor for *Nature Geoscience*, was compelled to enter her field after reading the theory that a meteorite collision caused the great extinction of the cretaceous period.

- Alvarez et. all. (1980) "[Extraterrestrial cause for the Cretaceous–Tertiary extinction](#)". *Science* **208**

To stay current and up-to-date with new research, Goldin keeps up with scientists, recent research projects, and attends conferences/meetings throughout the year

- Learns who is who/who studied with whom/who's new
- Finds experts in different ranges of the geoscience field to review papers
- Gets ideas for content (reviews)
- Receives feedback about the journal and the submission process, etc.
- Finds potential papers and reviewers

This helps her to more acutely determine which submitted papers are best for *Nature Geoscience*.

- It is important to select the ideal reviewers:
 - Unbiased/objective
 - Expertise of the field and sub-focus
 - Constructive reviews/edits/questions

Nature first published in 1869

Nature Geoscience first published in 2008

- Monthly journals that contain 10-13 papers:
 - Opinion pieces
 - News
 - Reviews
 - Overviews of emerging science
 - Highlights of cutting edge science
- Goldin strives to keep a wide diversity of the geosciences represented in each edition

Paper submission requirements:

- Letter: >2,000 words
- Article: > 3,000 words
- NEW online only site allows for 3,000 additional words to cover more detail/references

Review process:

- 30-50 papers submitted a week.
- 15% make it to peer review
 - 10% accepted

When submitting your paper, ask yourself:

- Does it appeal to a wide variety of geosciences
- Can your paper concisely and clearly describe your research under 2,000 words?
- Would you be excited to review the paper?
- Does it meet two thresholds?
 - Editorial threshold: novelty/importance of paper
 - Technical threshold: accuracy/robustness of paper

The editors

- 5 editors total
- All have their Ph.D.
- The rest of the office is the production staff
- Much smaller office than *Nature*

Selection criteria:

- Editorial threshold
 - Novelty and importance
 - Editorial decision made by the editor
- Technical threshold/robustness
 - This is the technological assessment made by the reviewers
 - Reviewers inform the editors of their assessments
 - Editor makes the final decision from there

Peer review

- Reviewers must be:
 - Unbiased, objective
 - All expertise covered
- Editors respect requests to exclude/include certain reviewers

Should you submit?

- Is the paper of interest to other geoscientists?
- Are you able to support your paper in a short format?
- Would you accept your paper as a referee?

Common myths about editors:

- Only big names get published
- You need to befriend an editor
- Submission inquiries are required to get published
- We don't like papers about subject X
- We like to reject papers!

Writing and Submitting

- Think about your reader
 - Short, concise papers
 - Pay attention to your abstract
- Think of the editor
 - Write a good cover letter (we actually read them!)
 - It should be short and complementary to your paper and abstract
 - Don't repeat your abstract
 - Put your paper in context
 - Don't oversell your work with phrases like "paradigm shifting"...etc.
- Follow general formatting rules

Double blind peer review

- The paper is anonymous to the reviewers
 - This is optional
 - This potentially will cut down the biases reviewers might develop when editing a paper
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Workshop Participants:

Geophysical Laboratory Postdocs:

- Neil Bennett
- Stephen Elardo
- Qingyang Hu
- Colin Jackson
- Jabrane Labidi
- Charles Le Losq
- Xiaoming Liu
- Irene Mamajanov
- Ileana Perez-Rodriguez
- Rajasekarakumar Vadapoo
- Haidong Zhang
- Ronit Kessel (GL Visiting Investigator)

DTM Postdocs:

- Amanda Lough
- Brad Foley
- Rita Parai
- Marion Garcon
- Christopher Thissen

Administrative:

- Rick Carlson
- Robin Diemel

- Janice Dunlap
- Shaun Hardy
- Mary Horan
- Casey Leffue
- Diana Roman
- Lara Wagner