

**TAG
YOU'RE
IT!**

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PAPER CHASE
COLLABORATIVE WRITING PROCESS**
Alicia A. Dahl, PhD, MS – Assistant Professor – UNC Charlotte – ADAHL3@UNCC.EDU

AGENDA

- Welcome & Introductions
- Honesty Hour: Pitfalls of Writing
- Paper Chase Method
- Best Practices
- Lessons Learned
- Q&A



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

INTRODUCTIONS

- Please drop your name & role/affiliation in the chat
- How many manuscripts do you currently have “in preparation”?
- What are your current professional expectations for writing? (RPT criteria, annual reporting, etc.)

THE PITFALLS OF WRITING

- How many of you are currently working on a manuscript?
- How long have you been working on that specific manuscript?
- What stage is it at?
- **What are some of the reasons your work is stalled?**

Time

Co-Authors

Data Lag

UGH...REVISIONS

ENTER...THE PAPER CHASE METHOD

- Imagine if you could get all of the co-authors in a shared space at once for a long period
- Minimal interruptions
- Dedicated attention for writing the manuscript
- AND handle all of the revisions together through a collaborative approach???

~~Time~~

~~Co-Authors~~

~~Data Lag~~

~~UGH...REVISIONS~~

A graphic featuring the text "YES, PLEASE" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The text is centered within a horizontal teal brushstroke that has a textured, painterly appearance. The background of the entire slide is light gray, with a dark brown wavy border on the left and a solid yellow vertical bar on the right.

YES, PLEASE

Alicia A. Dahl, PhD, MS – Assistant Professor – UNC Charlotte – ADAHL3@UNCC.EDU

HOW IT WORKS

- All data work is done ahead of time - this is purely a *writing exercise*
- All coauthors are present and available
- Scheduled, structured writing blocks that rotate after a set amount of time – each person gets to contribute to all sections
- Collaborative in nature *discuss authorship order early*
- **GOAL: Develop a paper from the first word through journal submission in 24 hours.**



BEFORE THE CHASE

CONSIDERATIONS & PREPARATIONS

STEP 1: RESEARCH QUESTION & DATA

- Develop a research question – make sure you have the data to answer it!
- Establish the analyses needed to answer the question
- Estimate the timeframe for the data to be analyzed
- Since this exercise is *dissemination* focused, a good rule of thumb is “use data you already have”

STEP 2: CONFIRM YOUR COAUTHORS

- Decide who needs to be at the table
- Authorship order – establish at the beginning so people understand their expectations
- Those who can't make the paper chase commitment might be best included as an acknowledgment, or be required to take on tasks outside of the scheduled chase.
- Plan for several group meetings ahead of the chase to discuss the project, analysis, and address any concerns.

STEP 3: SELECT THREE POTENTIAL JOURNALS

- Review their guidelines
- Consider the review time
- Create a list of 3 target journals (rank) and get to know the authorship guidelines for your top choice
- Consider special issues

STEP 4: CONFIRM A DATE AND PLACE

- Coordinate schedules with co-authors
- Typically, a complete paper takes about 24 working hours
 - Sweet spot: 3 consecutive working days or a weekend
 - Other options: 4-5 consecutive half days, 2 full days with 2 half days following, 2-hour weekly writing blocks over the course of a semester
- The writing space should be comfortable with plenty of outlets!
Zoom is a possibility, though less preferred



DURING THE PAPER CHASE

AIM FOR EFFICIENCY & EFFECTIVENESS

STEP 5: CREATE A ROLE ROTATION SCHEDULE FOR THE EXERCISE

- 1-2 people per paper section at a time (google docs is helpful!)
- Roles include:
 - Introduction
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion
 - Journal Tasks – References & Cover



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

Play to your strengths to start

STEP 6: PAPER CHASE!!!

- Write, write, write (Day 1 Goal)
- Fill in gaps & edit (Day 2 Goal)
- Refine & Submit (Day 3 Goal)
- Consider a facilitator to manage the assignment of tasks and to serve as a peer reviewer
- Consider a scientific editor to review prior to submission



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)



AFTER THE PAPER CHASE

STAY COMMITTED

STEP 7: SUBMISSION & REVIEW

- Decide who will handle the revisions once the paper is peer-reviewed (First/Last Author)
- CELEBRATE!!!
- Develop an infographic to pair with the finished product


















This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)












EXAMPLE OF THE PAPER CHASE

Alicia A. Dahl, PhD, MS – Assistant Professor – UNC Charlotte – ADAHL3@UNCC.EDU

| Name  | Owner | Last modified |
|---|-------|---------------|
|  Data | me | Mar 24, 2022 |
|  Day 1 - Friday | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Day 2 - Saturday | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Day 3 - Sunday | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Journal Materials | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Paper Chase 2022 - MamaView | | |
|  Reference PDFs | me | Mar 1, 2022 |

| Name  | Owner | Last modified |
|---|-------|---------------|
|  Discussion | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Introduction | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Methods | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Results | me | Mar 1, 2022 |
|  Day 1_Compiled.docx  | me | Mar 26, 2022 |

| Name ↑ | Owner | Last modified |
|--|-------|---------------|
|  Intro_Round 1_Sophie  | me | Mar 25, 2022 |
|  Intro_Round 1&2_Alicia  | me | Mar 25, 2022 |
|  Intro_Round 3&4_Annalise  | me | Mar 25, 2022 |
|  Intro_Round 5_SB   | me | Mar 25, 2022 |

Day 1 - Friday

Blocks are for content generation; use breaks & group discussion time for Q&A or problem solving

| | Shanika | Farida | Sophie | Annalise | Alicia | Priyanka |
|----------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 9:00-9:30 AM | Welcome & Agenda Setting | | | | | |
| 9:30-10:30 AM | Results <i>Goal: summarize findings from survey analysis</i> | Methods <i>Goal: detail data analysis methods; review research process details</i> | Introduction <i>Goal: write section on SDoH and pregnancy</i> | Discussion <i>Goal: write section on strengths and limitation</i> | Introduction <i>Goal: write section on public health outcomes related to Black pregnancies</i> | Methods <i>Goal: detail recruitment & data collection processes</i> |
| 10:30-10:40 AM | Break (10 minutes) | | | | | |
| 10:40-11:45 AM | Results <i>Goal: summarize findings from analysis</i> | Results <i>Goal: summarize findings from analysis</i> | Introduction <i>Goal: write section on coping strategies for mental health</i> | Discussion <i>Goal: write section on recontextualizing reader</i> | Introduction <i>Goal: write section on COVID related to Black pregnancies</i> | Methods <i>Goal: paragraph form - detail the survey tools with # of items, measures used, sample items</i> |
| 11:45-12:00 PM | Group Check-In & Goal Setting for next session | | | | | |
| 12:00-12:45 PM | Networking & Lunch | | | | | |
| 12:45-1:50 PM | Methods <i>Goal: detail data analysis methods</i> | Results <i>Goal: summarize findings from analysis</i> | Methods <i>Goal: paragraph form - detail the survey tools with # of items, measures used, sample items</i> | Introduction <i>Goal: write section on COVID-19 and prenatal care (racism, access, etc.) continuing covid problems</i> | Journal <i>Goal: draft cover letter</i> | Results <i>Goal: describe sample demographics</i> |

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)



BEST PRACTICES

FROM A TIME OR TWO...OR SIX

BEST PRACTICES

- Use a collaboration tool like Google Docs with separate files for each paper section & day
- Upon completion of the working day, download and compile all paper sections for a “group read through”
- Live edit the paper together prior to submission for consistency & flow. Aim for “one voice”
- Save reference integration until the final day (use comment feature until then) Related: Cite as you go
- Create tables & figures before the chase

LESSONS LEARNED

- This is HARD work & exhausting in a different way
- Take breaks and energize throughout the long writing days
- A facilitator makes a huge difference in the efficiency of the team!
- Team should be made up of people strongly familiar with the project
- Active learning helps! Create mind maps, keep running lists of common terms/abbreviations, and discuss title ideas throughout
- Great way to pull students and community partners into academic research



**WITH THE
RIGHT TEAM,
IT WORKS!**

**PUBLISHED 5 PAPERS IN 4 YEARS
ADDITIONAL 3 PAPERS UNDER REVIEW**

**THANK
YOU!**



**ALICIA A. DAHL, PHD, MS – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR –
UNC CHARLOTTE – ADAHL3@UNCC.EDU**