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## The Submission & Review Gauntlet

Emily Faulconer

*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University*, [faulcone@erau.edu](mailto:faulcone@erau.edu)

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# The Submission & Review Gauntlet

A Research Scholars Workshop

Presenter: Emily Faulconer, Ph.D.

**EMBRY-RIDDLE**  
Aeronautical University



# Workshop Outcomes:

- ❑ Understand the manuscript submission process
- ❑ Explain why articles are rejected
- ❑ Develop a strategy to respond to reviewers
- ❑ Discuss options when rejected
- ❑ Optional: Practice working with reviewer feedback



# When preparing your paper, follow the author guidelines for the journal.

- Text formatting & style
- Figure and table formatting
- Author responsibilities
  - Acknowledgements
  - Conflict of interest
  - Funding
  - Human subjects
- Submission steps



# When you are ready to submit, prepare a cover letter that explains why your work fits.

- Check information for authors
- Consider using a template
- Be succinct
- Focus on:
  - Importance/novelty
  - Broader impact
  - Connection to aims/scope
  - Potential readership alignment with journal



# Track the journal's decision using their portal.

- Add to your workflow
- Decide when to contact the editor



# Know that rejection is a *normal* part of the process.

- Academic venues are selective.
- Reviewers and editors are human.
- Your work may need development.
  - Hypothesis
  - Methodology
  - Analysis
  - Lack of novelty
  - Low priority topic



# In my current research, I have failed 9 times.

**Faulconer, E.,** Gruss, A., and Griffith, J.C. (2021) The Impact of Positive Feedback on Student Outcomes and Perceptions. *Assmt. and Eval in High. Ed.* (1 rejection, 1 round of revisions before acceptance)

Griffith, J.C., **Faulconer, E.,** and McMasters, B. (2021) Does Instructor Quality Affect Student Grades in a College Statistics Course? *Online J. of Dist. Learn. Admin.,* 24(1). (1 rejection, 1 round of revisions before acceptance)

**Faulconer, E.,** Griffith, J., Faulconer, L., Dixon, Z. (2021) A course in context: video course trailers. *J. of Gen. Educ.,* 69(1-2), 60-85. (1 rejection, 5 rounds of revisions before acceptance)

Griffith, J. C., **Faulconer, E. K.,** and McMasters, B. L. (2021). Does Learning Mode Affect Student Performance in an Undergraduate Elementary Statistics Course? *Int. Rev. of Research in Open and Dist. Learn.,* 22(1), 166 – 179. (1 rejection, 1 round of revisions before acceptance)

**Faulconer, E.** (2021) eService-Learning: a decade of research in undergraduate online service learning. *Am. J. Dist. Educ.* (1 rejection, 2 rounds of revisions before acceptance)

**Faulconer, E. & Griffith, J.** (2021) Science assessments as a learning opportunity: feedforward with multiple attempts. *J. Coll. Sci. Teach.* (1 rejection, 1 round of revisions, Under Review)

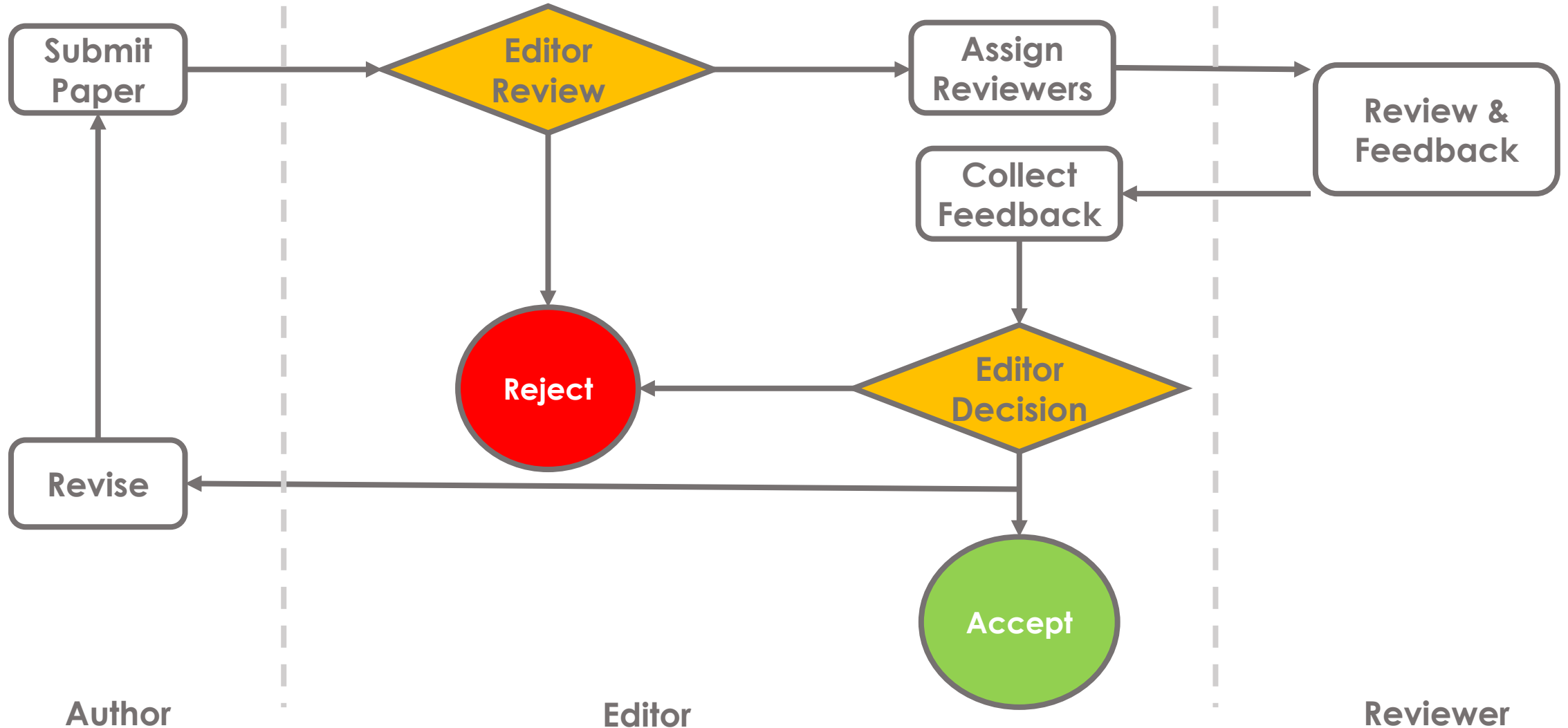
**Faulconer, E.,** Griffith, J.C., Morgan, M. (2022) A comparison of Chemistry Anxiety between Online and In-Person Students. *J. Coll. Sci. Teach.* (3 rejections, Under Review)



I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.  
- Thomas Edison



# There is a standard review process used by many journals.



# The quickest form of rejection is a desk rejection from an editor.

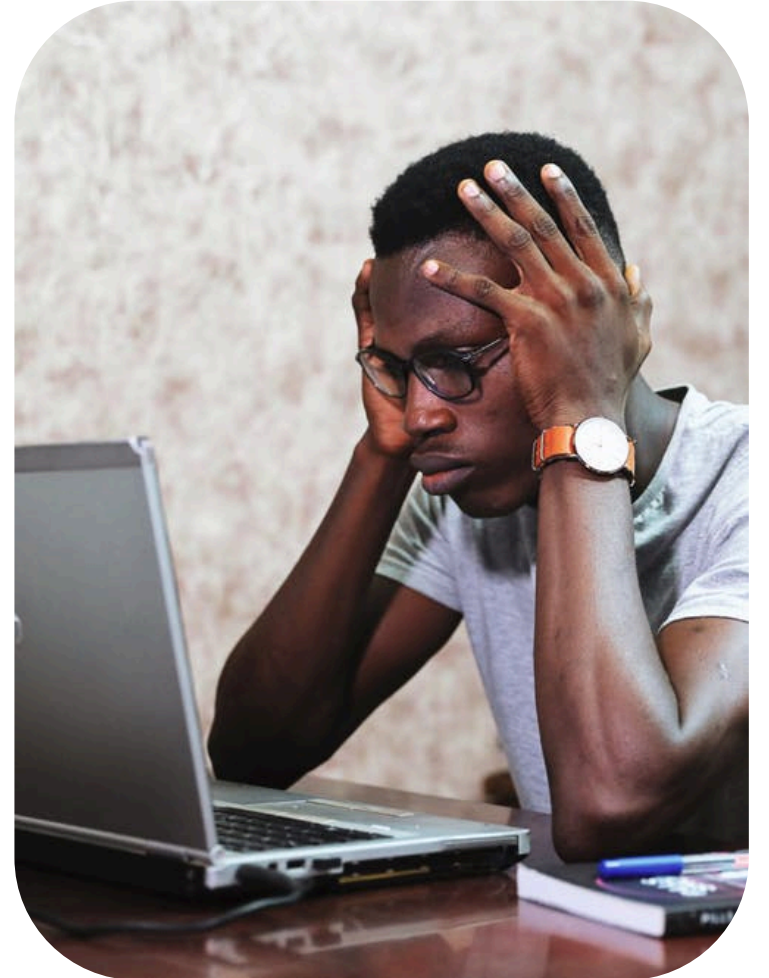
- Scope fit
- Formatting
- Overall quality
- Conflict of interest
- Novelty
- Impact
- Ethics (animal, human, plagiarism, etc.)

If you make it past the editor's initial review, your work will be sent for peer review.



# After peer review, you may still get the dreaded “We regret to inform you...” email.

- Give yourself a defined amount of time to be upset but don't take it personally.
  - You are not your output.
- Get back to work – on something else.
- Come back to it.
  - Look for whether they will consider a resubmission.
  - If not, turn to your backup journals.



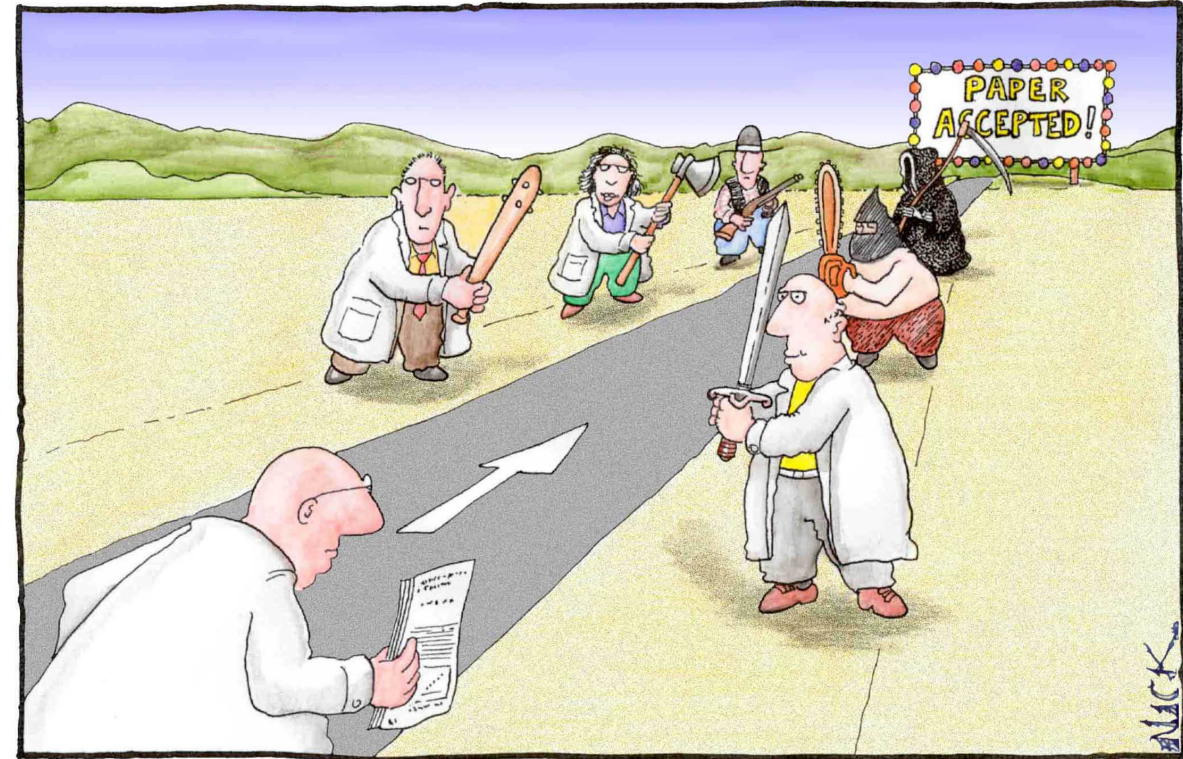
# Don't let rejection trigger your Imposter Syndrome.

- Revisit your successes so you see yourself in context.
- Mind your self-talk. You're listening.
- Learn how to accept critical feedback.
- Be realistic about failure in the research process.



# If your paper went to peer review, you will get feedback, even if your paper is rejected.

- The quality of reviews will vary.
- Scale your efforts based on whether you can resubmit your work.
- Read through the feedback line by line.
  - Strengths & weaknesses
  - Explicit and implicit feedback
- Ask for help from mentor and/or research supervisor.



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as 'quite an improvement.'

# If given the opportunity to resubmit, you will need to prepare a Response to Reviewers.

- Create a numbered list from each reviewer.
- Create a table to organize your work.

#	Comment	Response	Changes
1	Weak abstract		
2	Missing citation		
3	Discuss limitation X		

- If you do not understand a comment, contact the editor.
- Do not ignore *any* comments.



# If you disagree with a reviewer comment, cautiously and respectfully rebut it.

- We agree with the referee that ....., but ...
- The referee is correct to point out ....., yet ...
- It is true that ..., but ...
- We too were disappointed by the (low response rate, etc.) ...
- We support the referee's assertion that ....., although ...

If a reviewer was confused, a reader may be too.

**The editor is the judge if you disagree with a reviewer.**



# Some reviewers just aren't very nice.

- Take time to decide if they are rude or if you are sensitive.
- Even if rude, they may still have valid points. Look for the useful information.
- Decide if you think you can get a fair review of your revision. If not, contact the editor.





# When resubmitting, prepare a new Cover Letter.

- Include manuscript title and ID.
- Summarize the major revision themes.
- If the changes did not influence the major conclusions, state that. If they did, explain.
- Address any disagreements or comments that did not garner changes.
- Invite more feedback on your work.



**Resubmissions have deadlines. Mind them.**



# Once your work is accepted, you're not done!

- Review and approve proofs
- Copyright or publication forms
- Biographical information
- Promote yourself!  
(but mind the embargo)




# Key points to remember:

- Manuscripts are rarely outright accepted on first submission.
- Pick the right journal. Follow guidelines for authors.
- Have a back-up plan so you can quickly move on to another journal.
- All forms of rejection are an opportunity to grow as a researcher and as a writer. Do not take it personally.
- Carefully craft your Response to Reviewers if given the chance to resubmit.

**Failure is not a problem. Not learning from failure is.**

# Workshop Activity

- If you have recently received peer review feedback, practice putting this feedback into a table.
- Use the discussion forum for this workshop to engage the workshop presenter and attendees.



Thank You  
*Any Questions?*

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7CH5PC6>

# Resources to share:

- Cover Letter
  - [template](#)
  - Learn more [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)