**An Editor’s Guide to Publishing for Junior Faculty**

**Some useful resources**

Dan Hamermesh’s website

<https://webspace.utexas.edu/hamermes/www/AdviceforEconomists.html>

How to Publish in a Good Journal

A Young Economist’s Guide to Professional Etiquette

William Thomson’s book

*A Guide for the Young Economist*, M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 2001,

New edition in 2011

Chinese translation, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics Press, 2002

Facts

Economics journals are tough to publish in

Acceptance rates under 10% at many top journals

15-20% at many best field journals and second-tier general journals

(such as Southern Economic Journal)

Economics journals are slow in the reviewing process

(read Glenn Ellison’s work on this)

Referees are agents of the editor (Econometrica instructs referees

that explanations to author are unnecessary)

**Strategies**

Use your advisor as a resource

What journal to submit to?

You might as well ask for an ordered list!

Ask him/her to read your proposed submission

Make your paper of interest to a non-specialist

You might get a referee who is very familiar with your topic

--but chances are you’ll just get a specialist in

a broad area (optimal taxation, for example)

The introduction should explain why your paper is interesting

only then explain where it fits into the literature

Don’t just go through previous literature one by one

organize where you fit in

Make your paper readable

Get a native speaker of English (or someone with plenty of practice)

to read it over line-by-line

—most importantly, follow their advice

many people resent being told their writing isn’t very good

but take the advice!

(if someone tells you something isn’t written clearly, there is no defense!

If it’s not clear to them, it’s not clear)

Check your paper over carefully before final submission

For electronic submissions, create the pdf file

Then print it on another computer

Read it over carefully for typos and other small problems

(don’t try to do this on a computer screen—it doesn’t work

Your career is worth the sacrifice of a few trees!)

Once you send it off, prepare to wait

At six months, it is appropriate to ask the editor about the paper’s status

(of course, you received a manuscript number)

Don’t ask earlier

Many referees are slow and lazy, but you can’t be pushy

If editor hassles the referee, he’ll just figure out why to reject it

The best possible outcome is a revise-and-resubmit

Almost no papers are accepted without some changes

Some revise-and-resubmits read like a rejection

Show your referee reports and editor’s letter to a colleague/advisor

(don’t be embarrassed—we all get rejections)

Think about referees’ comments

If resubmitting, respond politely in a cover letter (one version for editor/referees or a

separate one for each referee is your choice)

If you didn’t follow a suggestion, explain why!

Too hard to do is not a good excuse

Data not available is better

Try to do it relatively quickly

Delay may signal you don’t think it’s important

Delay will cause referee to forget why he said things the first time

and he/she will have to do more work the second time

If you return it quickly, you should have done everything asked for by

editor/referees

When resubmitting, go back to advice about getting paper read for English

Submitting to another journal after a rejection

Good papers get rejected (see Gans and Shepherd)

Akerlof’s lemons paper had 3 rejections!

Don’t delay

Think about referees’ comments

You don’t need to follow them slavishly, but take them to heart

The same referee may get the paper again

(a lack of changes won’t make him happy!)

happens a lot (referees have different views on whether they should

review a paper for a second journal)

Don’t thank referees in this new submission

**Questions?**