

## ASSIGNMENT # 7

### Astro 597 – Winter 2020 Writing Workshop

#### 1: TRACKING PROGRESS

Please continue to note how many words you wrote on each of 4 different days each week and discuss your progress/concerns. For this week's #3, I anticipate your needing to do more reading than usual, possibly at the expense of writing; feel free to comment on your progress in reading as well. Remember that just reading the introduction, skimming the figures, and digesting the high points of the discussion counts as "reading" as well.

2: PLEASE READ THE ATTACHED EXCERPTS FROM "WRITING SCIENCE" BY JOSHUA SCHIMEL, AND RE-FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH STEPHEN HEARD'S CHAPTER ON "FINDING YOUR STORY"

#### 3: WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Develop *two* possible "stories" for your writing project. For each, write down a ~3 sentence description of Heard's three stages: (1) Define the topic; (2) Define a niche; (3) Occupy that niche. Based upon this breakdown, decide which is the stronger approach. Which has the most appeal to the largest community (i.e., is one more exciting)? Which framing makes your work the most obvious approach to solving the problem you've identified? Do not hesitate to do additional background reading to better understand the scientific landscape before you position yourself within it (i.e., this brainstorming make take a fair bit of work on your part, and it's not unreasonable to treat it like a tiny general exam topic). Also think about whether your story contains an effective "challenge" within the Schimel framework.

#### 4: WRITE AN OPENING PARAGRAPH OF A PAPER BASED ON #3

After deciding on your winning story framework and re-reading Chapters 5 & 6 ("The Opening" & "The Funnel") from "Writing Science", please write an opening paragraph for your paper. Use the same skills you've been practicing all quarter (rough draft to get ideas down, then revisit the paragraph over several days to edit it into something that better frames the story you're trying to tell). You may want to try a few different options to see what works better – do *not* compulsively delete these attempts, as you may decide to go back to them! As you work on editing, return to the Chapters 5 & 6 handouts to look at the possible issues to correct.

## 5: GET INPUT ON #3 AND #4

Make plans to exchange your favored “story” and your opening paragraph draft with a classmate or outside “peer” reader. Discuss whether they found the “story” compelling and brainstorm ideas to improve the reader’s response. Discuss what they thought the paper was going to be about from the opening paragraph. Make a plan for revisions in response to your test reader’s input.