Chapter 5. Revision, Refinement, Resubmission, and Writing for Publication Trajectories

Part I: Crossing the Threshold

Threshold Concept: *Successful publication is the result of a writer's flexibility and openness to engage in multiple rounds of revision based on expert feedback. This requires deep engagement with the field through positioning work in relationship to previous knowledge, signaling contributions, and offering implications that speak to larger problems of the field.*

In conversations surrounding my teaching of writing for publication courses and in the writing center, I hear a lot of stories about blind peer review. Students engage in revisions on a promising course paper or conference paper and submit their work, only to receive difficult feedback through a typical "revise and resubmit" decision. They often feel completely deflated and demoralized and end up never returning to the article. In fact, in the process of writing this book, I was surprised to hear how many graduate students had not pursued revise and resubmissions or saw them as negative and damaging rather than opportunities to publish. Crossing the threshold of seeing revision as a major part of shaping drafts and having the flexibility and resilience to engage in months or years of revision is a major part of what makes a successful academic writer.

Table 5.1 Crossing the Threshold

Course-based Revision Processes	**T H R E S H O L D**	**Revision for Writing for Publication**
When they are required at all, revisions are completed based a short timeline (due to the confines of a single semester).		Revisions are copious and extensive. Articles undergo multiple revisions over longer periods of time, often spanning months or years.
Feedback is designed to strengthen the writer-as-student and is done in a supportive or constructive way by faculty or peers.		Feedback is designed to create quality new human knowledge and is usually harsh and direct. Writers must develop emotional resiliency and flexibility in order to successfully engage with feedback and revise.
Strength and quality of revision is not necessarily required for passing a course.		Failure to attend to revisions equals failure to successfully publish.

What we can see from this list in Table 5.1 is that revision for publication is an entirely different beast from what students have experienced before. Emerging scholars who have revised in coursework in minimal ways are not generally prepared for the extensive revision process of producing new human knowledge. This is, of course, perpetuated by comments about "Reviewer Two" who is characterized as a smug, privileged, rude, and bitter individual who tears apart one's manuscript and is committed to their own perspectives, issues, and methods. This is the reviewer that everyone dreads having read their work, and Reviewer Two's iconic status sets up adversarial relationships between reviewers and writers before the comments are even given. Reviewer Two has their own memes, social media pages, and has been elevated to some kind of demigod-like status (to see how far Reviewer Two has gone, see Peterson, 2020). Perhaps you've even been afraid of publishing because of Reviewer Two! While there are certainly Reviewer Twos out there, the Reviewer Two phenomenon was not widely encountered by expert and emerging scholars in the three studies conducted for this book. Instead, scholars primarily shared that they had received fair, helpful, and very challenging feedback—feedback that pushed them to deepen their thinking, revise their work in interesting and useful directions, improve their work, and ultimately allow them to be successfully published.

For many emerging scholars, revision after peer review is the "make-or-break" moment when they are either able to successfully engage with the process or where they fail. And this is why this threshold concept is so critical—and why this concept is tied to many others in this book, such as concepts about idea generation, emotional resiliency, and support.

In order to help you cross this threshold, the goal of this chapter is to offer you a realistic overview of the realities of revision—how peer review shapes trajectories of publications, how authors manage and use peer feedback to shape their work, and the steps of review and revision you can take to produce new human knowledge. This chapter focuses on helping you demystify the revision process and set reasonable expectations for the timeline and experience of publication. And if you do have an unfortunate encounter with Reviewer Two, this chapter will offer methods and approaches to move forward successfully. The chapter examines the expert and emerging scholar data to examine how much time is spent on revision, trajectories that articles took to get to publication, how many revisions were typical, the kinds of feedback received, and strategies people used to manage copious amounts of reviewer feedback.

Our threshold concept is explored by examining the trajectories and revision experiences of both novice and expert writers—timelines, the course of a single book chapter or article, and how many revisions people engaged in. We also examine the nature of those revisions to explore common patterns for the kinds of revisions required. Understanding this concept will help you be better prepared for the revision and blind review process and help you set reasonable expectations.

Part II: Article Trajectories and Revision Approaches to Writing for Publication

As we began exploring in Chapter 3, the long process of shaping a text's purpose, content, and argument is far from over once authors produce a successful draft and submit for publication. In many ways, the first submission of an article is one of several major steps in this process. The process continues as those works and ideas are examined, evaluated, and critiqued by others and then authors substantially reshape and revise based on that feedback. The extended peer review and revision process is one of the key features that shape human knowledge—and makes publishing a truly social endeavor.

The first way we will examine the role of peer review is to examine the overall trajectory of a publication and how that trajectory is shaped by peer and editorial review. We will examine the timeline, what happened, and how many revisions were needed to finally see it in print. I offer a presentation of several representative trajectories to show how, while some works can be straightforward, many others end up having a long journey to print and may go through several major changes and iterations. This requires a writer to be flexible and adaptable.

To write this chapter, I traced the publication trajectories of all the manuscripts discussed by both emerging and expert scholars. I asked participants to describe their experiences and what happened sequentially in interviews, I analyzed all editor and reviewer communication collected in the study from both groups, and I also examined multiple drafts and revisions (more on my specific analysis strategies in Appendix B). For the expert writers, as a longitudinal study, I was able to interview them at key stages in their writing process, while for the emerging scholars, they reflected retrospectively.

Table 5.2 offers the overall revision, revision/resubmission requests, rejections, and publication statistics of all of the expert and novice scholars in the study.

Table 5.2 Revisions, Rejections, and Resubmissions by Expert and Emerging Scholars

	Total Rounds of Revision*	**Average Rounds of Revision per Scholar**	**Total Rejections**	**Total Revision and Resubmission Requests**	**Total Successful Publications**
Six Expert Scholars*	16	4	2	11	6
Eleven Emerging Scholars**	52	4	3	16	11

** 2 peer reviewed journal articles, 2 book chapters, and 3 books*

*** 2 conference proceeding articles, 1 book chapter, 5 peer reviewed journal articles, and 3 articles for a special issue in peer reviewed journal*

Table 5.2 offers an overview of the number of major rounds of revision that both groups of scholars described as they engaged in writing for publication. I define "rounds of revision" as any substantial reworking of a text that happens after the scholar has a complete draft—this would not include copyediting a text, but rather, adding, deleting, reorganizing, new analysis, adding literature, and so forth. These rounds of revision are also characterized by taking more than one writing session to revise. Rounds of revision were performed in response to feedback from a range of sources: blind peer reviewers, editors, peer readers, writing groups, and for emerging scholars, faculty and advisors. Editors offered revision suggestions to five emerging scholars and all six expert scholars, and 10 emerging scholars and five expert scholars received blind peer reviewed feedback—with most scholars receiving both.

I'll draw your attention to several key aspects concerning Table 5.2. First, creating an initial draft—the best draft one can write—is only the first step in an often years-long sequence of events to see those initial ideas in print. Consider the initial draft like launching yourself on a journey, but not a completed, ready-to-publish work. As the table describes, writing for publication is considerably shaped by feedback from peers, editors, and blind reviewers, and as our threshold concept describes, being able to engage in an effective revision and take feedback is critical for success. The real and substantial shaping of the article is not just done by the writer, but socially through this peer review process. This requires flexibility and openness, as our threshold concept suggests.

The second critical thing that is illustrated in Table 5.2 is that the process of peer feedback shaping texts happens irrespective of expertise—expert scholars are as likely to receive revision requests as emerging scholars, and both engage in multiple rounds of substantial revision based on others feedback. It doesn't matter how much of an expert you are or how long you are writing—revision and resubmission are part of the writing for publication process. To see how radical the reshaping of these texts can be, we now look at the publication trajectories of three of our expert authors.

Article Trajectory 1: Linear Publication: Proposal → Draft à Revision → Publication

Matt's experience in writing, "Possible Enlightenments: Wikipedia's Encyclopedic Promise and Epistemological Failure" in *Wikipedia @20: Stories of an Incomplete Revolution* (edited by Joseph Reagle & Jackie Koerner, 2020) from MIT press represents, in some ways, one of the most straightforward writing process models. This model is as follows: initial proposal, drafting, receiving feedback from reviewers and editors, submitting revisions, and concluding in a successful publication. This is a model that is common with chapters in edited collections or with calls for special issues in peer-reviewed journals. Three expert writers in the study, Alice, Matt, and Stephanie, experienced a similar trajectory.

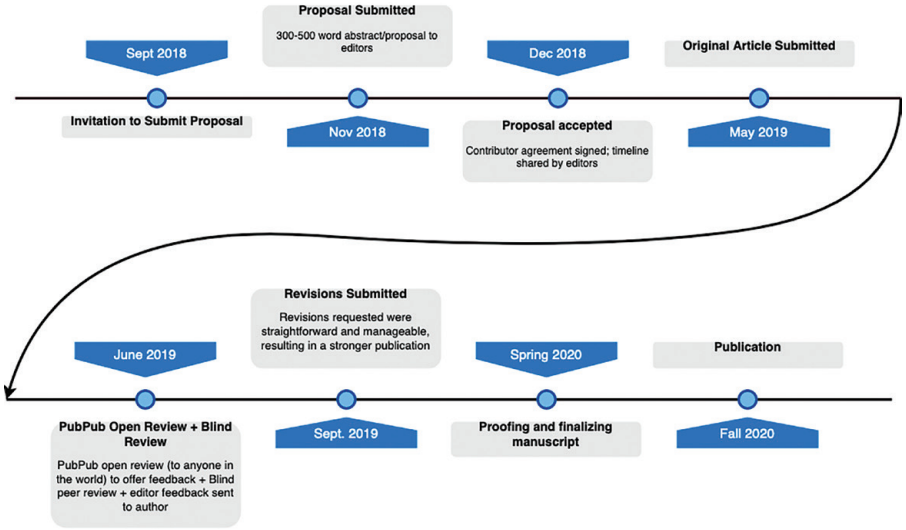

Figure 5.1 Linear publication trajectory for Matt's article.

Matt's article was part of an edited collection for reflecting on Wikipedia's twentieth birthday; as a well-known scholar of Wikipedia, Matt was invited by the editors to submit a proposal. He specifically notes that this article was very different than others he typically wrote, which were usually longer and data-driven. After Matt completed and submitted his draft, he had several different kinds of feedback. In the spirit of Wikipedia's open access, book chapters had an open public review through the PubPub website (an open source, community knowledge building site) as well as the more traditional blind external review and feedback from editors. Additionally, because chapters were short, the timeline was shorter and resulted in faster publication than many CFP edited collections.

Figure 5.1 offers an overview of Matt's trajectory, which we can see is fairly linear. Matt's timeline represents a "best case" scenario for an author—they find a call for proposals, or a journal that they are interested in, produce a quality manuscript, receive good feedback, make revisions, and are able to see their work in print in a timely fashion.

Article Trajectory 2: Massive Revision to Multiple Publications

Ryan's article, "Deceiving Sincerely: The Embrace of Sincerity-as-Truth in Fascist Rhetoric" was published in *The Rhetoric of Fascism: Devices for the Cult of Irrationality* (University of Alabama Press, 2022). Ryan's career as a public rhetorician prior to this article had included multiple books and articles exploring rhetoric of demagoguery. With the rise of Donald Trump, Ryan began exploring aspects of fascism and fascist rhetoric. A conference presentation on Trump in 2016 led to Ryan publishing his book on Trump in 2018, Faking the News: What Rhetoric can Teach

us about Donald J. Trump. As he was attending another conference presenting his book, he was invited, with other conference attendees, to rework their presentations for chapters into an edited collection. Because Ryan's presentation was on his existing book, he proposed a different project on fascism more generally. As he describes, this project represented something he had been thinking about, taking notes on, and considering for some years prior to the start of the project.

Figure 5.2 shows the complex trajectory of Ryan's original book chapter manuscript. After writing and submitting the original manuscript, the editor essentially rejected his manuscript, asking for a complete overhaul of the work. Ryan says, "The feedback from the editor essentially it said like 'This is great, but not good for the book itself.' … And so, he laid out a whole series of things that it could possibly do differently." This feedback led Ryan to revisions that resulted in his rewriting the entire project.

To understand the magnitude and scope of Ryan's revision, I compared the original article he submitted and the final revision (two substantial revisions later) that was published in the book. The original article was 4,397 words long. The revised article was 8,061 words long. From the original article, Ryan retained parts of only three paragraphs (a short paragraph in the body and two in the conclusion) along with five other sentences in total, amounting to 622 words. The remaining 7,439 words were entirely new text.

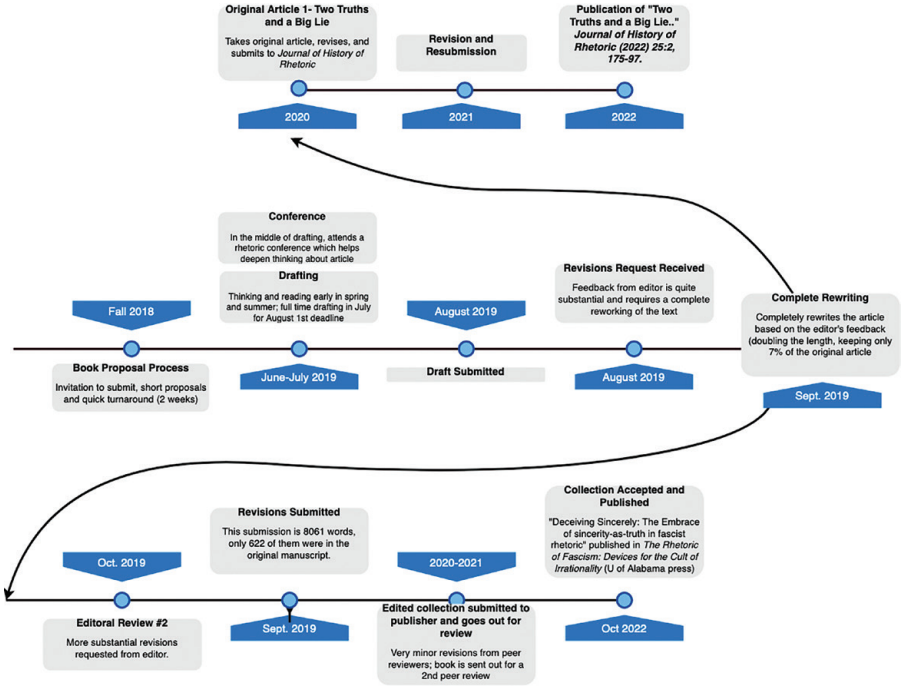

Figure 5.2 Ryan's one article becomes two trajectory.

This means, by the end of his revision process, Ryan had written two full articles. He was able to expand and revise the original first article into a second publication, "Two Truths and a Big Lie: The 'Honest' Mendacity of Fascist Rhetoric" in Journal for the History of Rhetoric (2022).

In the end, all of the effort that Ryan put in (51 hours, 39 minutes in revisions in Google Docs alone, not to mention the 50–100 hours outside of the text) paid off. While he had the longest writing time of the six expert writers in the study (as described in Chapter 3), Ryan was able to publish both pieces successfully and the "Two Truths and a Lie" article led to multiple professional opportunities. Ryan notes that, for him, this kind of thing happens with every six to seven publications, where the revisions lead it in a considerably different direction, and he ends up rewriting the text almost entirely—with multiple publications as the result. This kind of experience was also shared by one other expert writer and two other emerging scholars.

Article Trajectory 3: Article to Book Trajectory

Heather's Falconer's *Masking Inequality with Good Intentions: Systemic Bias, Counterspaces, and Discourse Acquisition in STEM Education* was published by the WAC Clearinghouse in 2022. In our first interview, Heather shared that she had a career in academia prior to moving into a faculty role. Growing from Heather's interest and extensive expertise in supporting STEM writers, she began collecting data in a research-based program for STEM students from 2015–2018. When she began my study in 2019, she had a book under review from that data, and she was developing an article from some of the data surrounding counterspaces. I planned to follow the counterspaces article until publication.

As Heather's trajectory shows in Figure 5.3, a confluence of events happened to shift Heather from thinking about counterspaces as an article to revising counterspaces as the focus of her book. A writing to learn processes made her realize that the scope of counterspaces was larger in scope than one article. A set of unfavorable reviews for the first iteration of the book made her refocus, and further, her ethical response to the racially-charged events of 2020 shaped her writing's trajectory. After her conceptual shift from article to book, Heather notes,

> I was trying to make an argument about how counter spaces can serve as a safe space for marginalized students to work through their identity within a space that's historically marginalizing. As I was working on it, I started to realize that it was too big for an article. The amount of time it takes to set up the whole understanding of what a counter space is and why the field of science has historically been marginalizing to different groups.

> By the time we get through all of that we're already at 15–20 pages before even diving into the data analysis … this wasn't the article. This actually needed to be part of the book and it needed to be a chapter in the book that helped us understand the 180 pages of data that was going to follow.

The other piece of this story is that society changed. In the time from when Heather wrote the original draft until Summer 2020, when the pandemic and a series of racially charged events brought into even clearer focus issues of inequality, oppression, and racism in the United States. Heather says, "I decided around this time last year to give myself the freedom to write the book that I wanted to write versus the one that I thought would get published. … I was holding back in that first draft about my feelings about what was happening … it felt there was just too much more that needed to be included." And later, when I asked about how the pandemic and events of 2020 may have influenced her writing, she said, "Especially because from Memorial Day on with George Floyd and it just made me feel like, let's just go there and write it and see what happens." This approach was successful to her, as the shift in her book led to favorable reviews and publication in October 2022.

The three trajectories offered in this section help us understand that for all writers, regardless of experience, each publication is focused on a unique, somewhat unpredictable journey. Some manuscripts require complete rehauling and revision to become a publishable piece, while others have straightforward revisions. Still others morph into something with a very different purpose and goal than was originally intended based on the feedback and external circumstances. Part of why this book focuses both on idea generation and creativity (Chapter 2) and dispositions and mindsets (Chapter 7) is because these strategies and personal qualities can you engage in this somewhat unpredictable revision process. In order to navigate a process that is unknown, shifting, and complex, you need to be flexible with your plan, and be open enough to take feedback, and the ability to recognize revision as a chance to grow and improve.

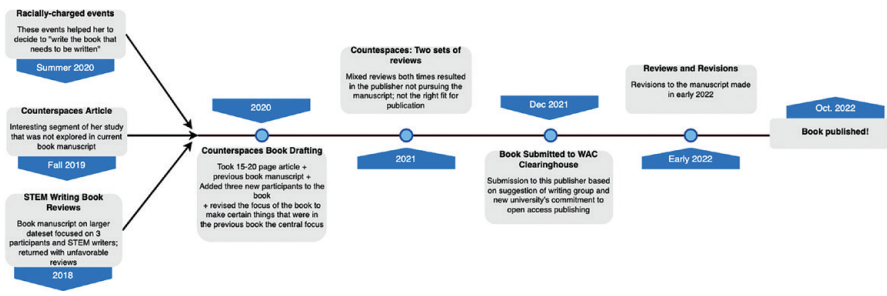

Figure 5.3 Heather's article to book trajectory.

Revisions Made to Manuscripts

As the above trajectories demonstrate, the question is not whether a writer seeking publication will revise, but rather, how a writer will manage, what are often substantive, revisions. This may include managing a large volume of sometimes conflicting feedback from reviewers and editors while also continuing to find joy and purpose in their work and not losing their core goals and vision for writing. We now turn to the emerging scholars to understand the kinds of revisions requested by editors and blind reviewers on their manuscripts.

Eight of the 11 emerging scholars were able to provide a complete set of documents in the study, including their initial article or book chapter submission to the publication venue (peer reviewed journal, edited collection, or conference proceedings), the editor and peer review revision requests, the revised manuscript that they resubmitted for review, and the final publication. In addition to analyzing this set of documents, by using the "draft compare" feature in MS word, I was able to analyze and code the changes present in the revised documents and identify and see the most common kinds of revisions that emerging scholars made in order to achieve successful publication.

Figure 5.4 describes 19 of the most common revisions made in emerging scholars' manuscripts. All but one emerging writer made revisions that totaled at least 20 percent of the text being revised, with three authors revising 70 percent or more of the manuscript.

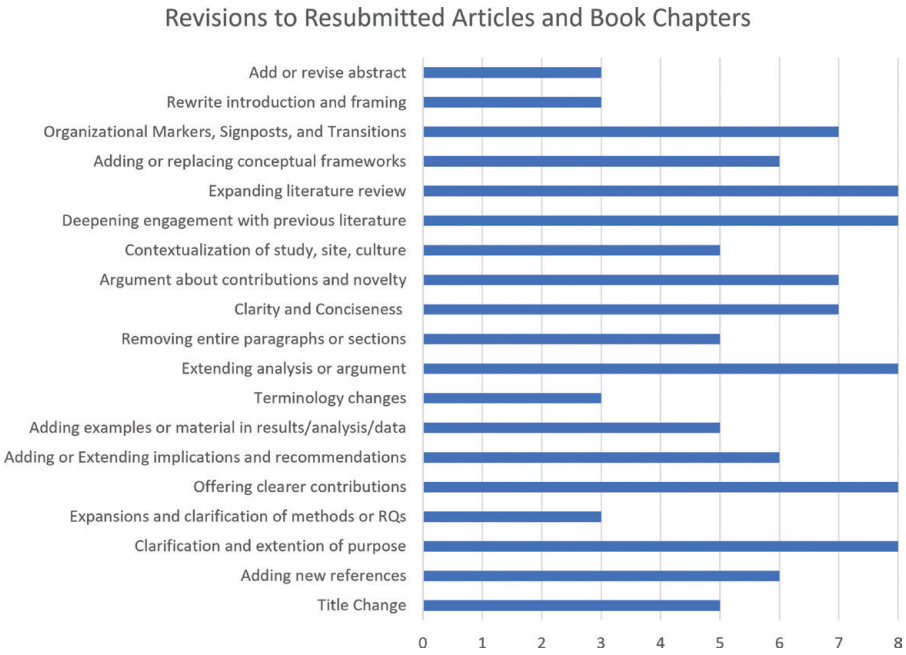

Figure 5.4 Changes to submitted and revised manuscripts.

The one emerging scholar that did not engage in extensive revisions was doing a much shorter piece (3,000 words) that was a reflection on their experience as a minority scholar in transitioning to a fully online conference in 2020, and thus, because it was reflective and personal, revisions requested were limited. The remaining seven scholars made substantive revisions. Many of the revisions are closely tied to areas that distinguish the difference between producing course papers and publications, which were initially covered in Chapter 1. The eight manuscripts increased by an average length of 1,137 words from the initial submission to the published piece.

One major revision that all emerging scholars made surrounded positioning their current work in the broader field. We began to explore this idea in Chapter 2, with idea evaluation—how to position one's work in the field. In the revisions, this is represented by new framing (three scholars), adding or replacing conceptual frameworks (six scholars), expanding the scope of literature reviews (all eight scholars), and deepening engagement with previous literature (all eight scholars). In this regard, emerging scholars were often pointed to new bodies of literature, asked to re-think their own work's positionality, or add more nuance to their reporting on the body of literature present.

The second major category of revision was articulating or extending one's discussion of the contribution to the field, which are covered in extending analysis or argument (eight), adding or extending implications and recommendations (six) and offering clearer contributions (eight) to how their work builds and extends the field.

Finally, we can see that all eight participants revised and/or extended their study's purpose, which ties directly to both producing new knowledge and offering contributions. All three of these macro changes are tied to the larger goal of producing new human knowledge—which is not the point of writing in coursework, and thus, needed to be learned, articulated, and strengthened through revisions based on the peer review process. These textual revisions accounted for 67 percent of the revisions produced during work on the eight manuscripts.

Expert and Emerging Writers' Successful Strategies for Handling Peer Review Feedback and Revision

The interview and journaling data offers strategies that both emerging and expert scholars use to engage with peer review feedback and engage in successful revision. The most common strategies are:

Read feedback then step away if needed. Because feedback is frequently critical and may invoke strong emotions, many authors have developed the practice of reading initial feedback and then stepping away for a time, so that they can have time to emotionally process the feedback that they received. Sara

offers her experience of letting the feedback sit after she was "distraught" when receiving it back from the editors, "If you're taking feedback emotionally, you got to let it sit for a while. So, I let it sit for a while … I knew even then it was going to be useful and generous feedback. That's what I found when I was cool-headed and looked back at it. I was like, no, this is actually really helpful and I totally get what they're saying." With regards to emotionally managing feedback, it is helpful for scholars to remember that "it's not personal" as Amal says. Chapter 7 offers a fuller discussion about strategies for managing emotional reactions to peer reviewer and editor feedback.

Organize revision notes and/or create a revision plan. Due to the often extensive and overwhelming nature of the feedback, many writers develop strategies by organizing the feedback into manageable chunks and creating a revision plan or revision checklist that they can follow. For example, Brita received 2,400 words of editor and peer reviewer feedback spanning six pages, including asking for substantial revisions in most areas of the manuscript. To handle this feedback, Brita creates a three-page revision plan for her article (see Figure 5), where she summarizes the major revisions and then organizes each revision by area of the article. As she works on her revisions, she updates her plan with comments on what she accomplished and where in the draft she made changes. This allows her to tackle the feedback one step at a time, breaking down the work into smaller and more manageable steps. It also allows her to keep track of the revisions she creates to be able to write a revision letter to the editors. Brita also prepares a one-page "scholarship to read for revision" document to ensure that she has found and read all the scholarship that the reviewers or editors suggested she might add.

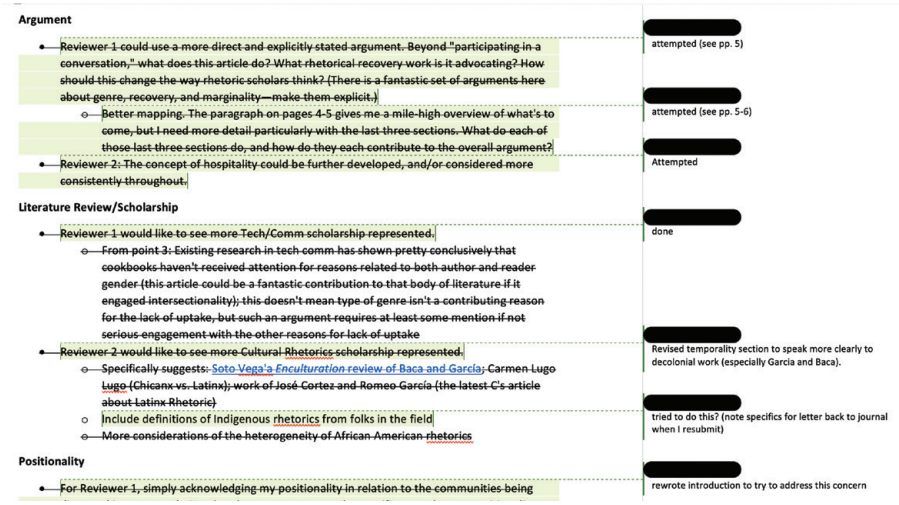

Figure 5.5 Brita's revision plan.

In making revisions based on reader feedback, expert scholar Alice notes that she uses a larger methodological plan that takes her larger work section by section, "My general approach was to take it section by section. … So, I would read through all of his feedback … then I would go and often it was interspersed in the text, but then also there were those more global observations. So, I would take it section by section and keep in mind his general comment on the whole chapter."

Another revision approach that was used in terms of setting goals was to tackle revisions in a particular order depending on how the writer works and the nature of the revisions. For example, emerging scholar Amal prefers to use a "hardest last" approach to keep her motivation high and get a start on the revisions. She says, "I tackle whatever I can I do, the easy stuff first. I don't tackle the hard stuff first because I don't want to lose my motivation. I want to feel that I'm making progress …" Expert scholar Stephanie does the opposite, starting with the hardest thing first: "I will pick the hardest thing first whichever that is … then once that's done then I can work on the next thing." Other scholars started their revision process by creating a list of articles to find and read, and dedicated time to reading rather than writing, which was the case with Brita, who created a "scholarship to read" file and then read that scholarship prior to beginning revisions.

Scheduling time for revision. Another strategy frequently used by all writers is examining the needed revisions, estimating time for those revisions, and scheduling time to complete them within the deadlines provided. Many describe putting the revisions into their calendar and blocking out time to write. Emerging scholar, Gina, sets her own revision deadline so that she can get to work in the article revisions while also managing the requirements of her PhD program, "I knew that I didn't want it looming over me … I was trying to prelim and get to the next stage of my program and finish up with my coursework, so I imposed a deadline."

Expert scholar, Heather, who is an assistant professor juggling administration, teaching, service, and publication, carefully schedules out her revisions so that she is able to maximize her work time on breaks. For her schedule she uses the format described in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Heather's Schedule Format

Dates	**Bucket (Research, teaching…)**	**Professional Project, Chunk and Other Major Commitments**	**Personal Goals (Chunks or Recurring)**
Dates listed by week	Teaching Research Writing Service	Examples: "Create Qualtrics survey for research project" "Meet with editor about book" "Read X and Y articles"	List of goals for each item

Heather describes how she decides what each week's research and writing goals will entail, "Well, it has to do with how's the project going to get done. For me, I need to do these tasks before I can do this thing … What I learned a long time ago I really need to try to incorporate both [research and writing] as much as possible every week so that things don't get lost. … The same thing with writing." Thus, regular progress on projects is important to completing the revisions.

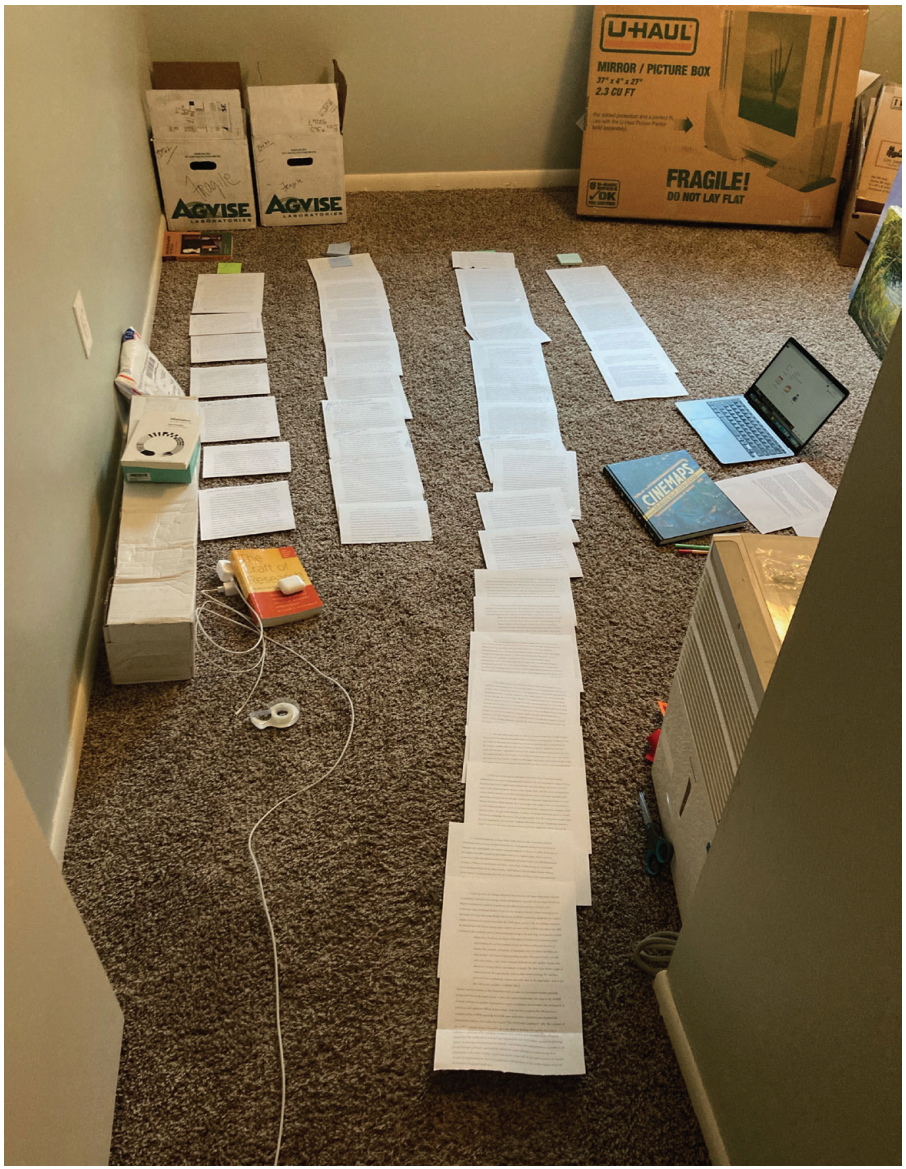

Figure 5.6 Nadia's visual approach to revision.

Involving others. As further explored in Chapter 9, all writers make use of peers, mentors, and/or writing group for supporting revision. This typically happens at two stages—during initial drafting and at the revision. All 11 emerging scholars reached out to their faculty mentors during the revision of their first article to understand and contextualize feedback, plan a strategy, and to ask faculty mentors to read the revisions they made. Faculty mentors, in this case, provided an excellent sounding board both for normalizing the process of revision and also for helping them with specific strategies for their articles. For expert scholars, writing groups or individual peers provided support when they had particularly difficult feedback that they needed assistance to navigate.

V**isual and embodied approaches.** Several scholars also described approaches that they took to revision required stepping back from the page itself and using more visual or embodied approaches to explore revisions. Nadia describes part of her revision process, which is also shared in Figure 5.6, as "A big part of what I did last fall in the last stretch was I printed the whole thing out, my penultimate draft, and I cut it up and taped it together. … I did the reverse outline, but I … laid it all out on the floor, and I had laid out my sections, and I realized that section two was twice as long as the next longest section. Clearly, that's where I need to cut a lot of stuff because I was way over the word count too with that revision draft. I sat on the floor next to my papers and after I had gone through the physical copies, I made notes on the final revisions that I wanted to make, what I needed to cut, transitions I needed to work on." By visualizing her piece, Nadia was able to see where cuts needed to happen to get her under the wordcount.

Part III: Concepts and Activities for Engaging in Successful Revision

Our threshold concept for this chapter is: Successful publication is the result of a writer's flexibility and openness to engage in multiple rounds of revision based on expert feedback. This requires deep engagement with the field through positioning work in relationship to previous knowledge, signaling contributions, and offering implications that speak to larger problems of the field.

We can see this threshold concept woven into the key takeaways for this chapter to help you successfully cross the threshold:

- Regardless of expertise, all authors were asked to make extensive revisions to their manuscripts prior to publication. The average number of major revisions for both expert and emerging scholars prior to publication was four major revisions. Experts and emerging scholars alike experienced rejection, but this did not stop them from revising and then submitting elsewhere. This demonstrates a level of resiliency and flexibility surrounding their text.
- Completing an initial draft of a manuscript, for both expert and emerging scholars represent the first step of a years-long process toward publication.

Articles are subsequently shaped through feedback from editors, blind peer reviewers, peers, and mentors, eventually resulting in publication.

- Experts experienced multiple kinds of trajectories for individual writing projects often spanning years of time. Some were linear and straightforward, in line with their original plan. Other expertise revising one article into multiple projects, and still others going from smaller article-length into larger book-length projects. Thus, what one plans at the beginning of a writing for publication project may change as writers develop and refine ideas and flexibility in this process is key.
- Emerging scholars' revisions to manuscripts based on reviewer and editor feedback were wide-ranging and extensive, often requiring more than 50 percent of the manuscript being rewritten.
- All emerging scholars made revisions surrounding the positioning of their current work in the broader field, which may include new framing, adding or replacing conceptual frameworks, expanding the scope of literature reviews, and deepening engagement with the previous literature.
- All emerging scholars were asked to revise how they articulated and described their contributions to the field, including offering clearer contributions, articulating the contributions in more nuanced ways, identifying the ways they were building the field, and extending implications and recommendations for their field's knowledge.
- Emerging scholar revisions were always accompanied by deep revisions to their work's purpose, where purposes were refined and reshaped.
- All writers used a wide variety of techniques to successfully handle revision based on feedback, including reading feedback and stepping away to manage emotions or give time for thinking; organizing revision notes; creating a revision plan; scheduling and planning revisions; involving others, or more creative visualizing and embodied approaches.

This chapter has offered a comprehensive look at real revision processes: how revision and feedback shapes article drafts, mentoring and support required to successfully revise, and the, sometimes complex, trajectories towards publication. Stepping back, we can learn quite a bit about successful revision strategies from this chapter—concepts that help you as a scholar have a better sense the possible paths towards publication, the time and number of revisions, and how to create a support network to be successful. From the first part of the chapter, we also realize that even the best laid plans end up with massive changes—being flexible, open, and taking the work in the direction it needs to go may mean changing plants and/or extending the time you thought that publication would take. This leads us directly to our threshold concept.

What we have seen from the above data is that multiple paths to publication exist and those paths may be shaped by writers or by the demands of editors or peer reviewers. Texts may end up substantially or completely revised during the writing

for publication process. Because of this deep reshaping, the timeline from initial idea conception to published work frequently spans multiple years. This is a reality for all individuals, regardless of their expertise in the field and differs considerably with any other kind of experience an individual may have had writing in coursework or school settings—hence the need to reframe revision to cross the threshold. Thus, we see a set of habits of mind (CWPA, NCTE, and NWP, 2011) that are associated with writing as a whole. Writers must be open to making revisions, manage their emotions surrounding revision (see Chapter 7), and come up with workable timelines and plans for revision. To return to ideas covered in earlier chapters, these revisions are challenging, requiring writers to re-think their entire approach and purpose (as we saw from Ryan's example), change major directions with their framing (from Heather's example), or address feedback from many different voices that may be contradictory (from Matt's example). It is critical to be able to address this feedback, to preserve, and to not take this feedback personally.

Thus, one of the core qualities of those who successfully publish is embracing the triad of flexibility, openness, and persistence. We can see these qualities reiterated again and again in this data, and every emerging and expert scholar in the study demonstrated these qualities in numerous ways. The definitions for these three qualities are based on the *Framework for Success in Post-Secondary Writing* (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011) with adaptations based in the above data for writing for publication. They are:

- **Openness:** being willing to be open to consider new ways approaching one's topic, new ideas for consideration, and new directions for your work.
- **Flexibility:** being able to adapt to the demands or expectations of peer reviewers and editors, being willing to move perspectives based on feedback, and staying adaptable during these revisions.
- **Persistence:** being willing and able to maintain one's interest and engagement in the publication process, accepting that publication often takes longer than we anticipate or want and taking on a long-term view of the process.

Habits of mind are exactly as the name suggests—they are habits that we can learn, just as we learn skills or strategies for writing. You might consider these as "writing adjacent" skills—you can know all that there is to know about your subject matter, but if you aren't open to feedback, you will not publish on that knowledge. Thus, one of the things you can do to learn to publish well is to strengthen and commit to building these habits in your writing—and in your broader life.

Core Rhetorical Moves for Developing New Human Knowledge

Our threshold concept also ties to the specific nature of revisions that scholars were asked to make. As we first explored in Chapter 1, writing for publication is full of tacit knowledge that is easily identified by experts but can be invisible and

very difficult for emerging scholars to understand. Some of the rhetorical moves—particularly those tied to disciplinary conversation and discipline building—are common challenges for all emerging scholars due to their tacit nature and due to the differences between writing for publication and writing in coursework.

Many emerging scholars identified moves that they needed to make, often with the support of their faculty mentors or more experienced peers. This is also a matter tacit knowledge of the field and the art of learning how to carefully position your work within the broader field. One of the differences between an expert and a novice in this cause is having this "bigger picture" with regards to how to position the work effectively within the broader conversation, identifying the threads of conversation that matter to the work, and offering unique contributions.

Returning to studies of the ways that writing novices become writing experts, we turn to Kellogg (2006). Kellogg's work has detailed three "macro" maturation stages that writers take in order to become experts these stages match the transformations that many emerging scholars' texts had to undergo to be published, reminiscent of Sara's description of the "potato metaphor" in Chapter 1. I have adapted these stages as follows. These stages are:

The knowledge-telling stage. The knowledge-telling stage is where a writer uses writing to convey what they know or have learned. Knowledge telling's focus is solely on the writer and the writer's comprehension of the text. Without full comprehension, the writer cannot move to the next stage. This is where writers are asked to summarize texts to ensure comprehension, which is the case with many basic writing assignments, particularly at the undergraduate levels.

The knowledge-transforming stage. This second stage is where an author uses writing to transform the author's own knowledge. Knowledge transforming's focus is on the interaction between the writer and the text, and the text helping shape a writer's understanding of a concept, leading to additional idea generation, revision, and engagement. The key relationship here is how a text shapes a writer's thinking or gets them to "transform" their own knowledge, through writing. Many advanced undergraduate and graduate-level writing experiences are shaped using this approach.

The knowledge-crafting stage. This final stage, employed typically only by professional academic writers, is where a writer uses writing to craft new knowledge for the benefit of the reader and broader field; this offers a key relationship between a writer, the writing, and the audience and a larger discipline. It is this stage that is conveyed in Figure 1.1. In this stage, a writer must not only comprehend and engage with texts, and allow these texts to shape their thinking, the author must also think about their message in relationship to readers, and to larger disciplinary arguments and conversation. Knowledge crafting requires advanced cognitive processes and memory function (Kellogg, 2006): a writer must not only negotiate the basic meaning of texts but put those texts in relationship to themselves and their own work as well as within larger disciplinary conversations (all of which also must be kept in mind).

It is exactly this third stage that writing one's first article, in contributing to the field, is all about. Not only do you need to develop a basic comprehension of the text (telling) so that you can effectively summarize and understand what has been said in the field, you also have to demonstrate how the text works in relationship to your own project and research (transforming) and how those previous texts shape your current work. All the while, you must keep the larger disciplinary conversations, currents of research and conversation, and readers (many different ones) in mind as you are crafting. This is a very challenging cognitive task, requiring not only an elaborate, extended writing process, but also expert feedback and extensive revision. It is often this third, knowledge constructing stage, that is extremely difficult for novice disciplinary writers.

Activity 5.1: Your Relationship with Revision

As we can see from the above data, a big part of how both emerging and expert scholars are able to successfully create human knowledge is to engage in revision. Every single scholar who was successful in publishing often engaged in extensive revision, with an average of four major revisions per piece. From the trajectories of Matt, Heather, and Ryan, we learn that purposes, directions, and pieces can shift and change quite radically in response to the process of publication, where feedback on manuscripts can create new opportunities, challenges, and approaches.

Examine your own writing process for a course paper or other major piece in your program. If you did the mapping activity in Chapter 3, this is a good place to start. Regardless, consider your process of revising this piece vs. one you might encounter in writing for publication through the following questions:

1. Which of your previous experiences in revision will serve you well?
2. What new skills or strategies might you need to develop?
3. How can you use and adapt the information from this chapter?

Activity 5.2: Setting Reasonable Expectations for Revision

One of the things that helped writers persevere through challenging revisions was having an understanding of the expectations of the revision and peer review process-which this chapter has attempted to illustrate. Expertise in writing for publication includes being able to anticipate and navigate this process successfully. Many of the revision requests and overall processes were new to the emerging scholars, and they often needed faculty mentors to understand and help them navigate these processes. As we will explore more in Chapter 9, emerging scholars often went to their faculty mentors to understand if what they were experiencing was a "normal" part of the process, and a big part of the support that faculty offered emerging scholars was to ensure that what they were experiencing was normal, expected, and simply to work through the revisions.

Thus, setting reasonable expectations for what will happen during the peer review and revision process is a big part of cultivating expertise in this challenging genre. The following discussion questions can be used in a small group or class setting to discuss the information revealed in this chapter concerning timelines and revisions:

1. How does reading about the time investment and article trajectories set your expectations for what writing for publication is about?
2. Which of the revision strategies offered might be most useful to you? Why?
3. What do you see as the greatest challenges for you to successfully navigate this process?
4. How can you work to learn the key rhetorical skills often requested by blind reviewers?
5. What personal might you need to cultivate in order to be successful, given the above information?

Activity 5.3: Cultivating Successful Habits of Mind for Revision: Flexibility, Openness, and Persistence

As we began to explore above, "Habits of Mind" for successful revision include flexibility, openness, and persistence. These are qualities that we can cultivate in our professional lives as writers—and also strengthen in other areas of our lives. In small groups or individually, consider each of these three qualities:

1. Which of these qualities do you feel you already possess as a writer?
2. Which of these qualities might be challenging to you?
3. Do you possess any of these qualities in other areas of life, such that you can "transfer" these qualities to your writing?

From this reflection or discussion, create a plan for how you might cultivate these qualities in your writing.

Here's a reflection from one of my students who was taking my Writing for Publication class and working to cultivate flexibility in her life:

> "I know I need to learn to be more flexible and that's a challenge for me. I think it was how I grew up—my parents were very demanding and I had to adhere to their rigid guidelines. This created a rigidity in me, a desire to 'stick to the plan' at all costs. I have difficulty in deviating from my vision or goals and being open. One of the things I've begun to do is think about ways to do this in my life—and hence, bring this energy into my writing. I started doing abstract painting—it has no plan! And I find it is really freeing. As I started to paint in this freeing manner, I tried

to bring that flexibility into my writing. It is an ongoing process but I am making progress."

Activity 5.4: Building Your Expertise with Regards to Disciplinary Conversations

A lot of the challenge of knowledge crafting is abstracting your knowledge beyond a specific article or concept to see the broader themes in the field. Experts are experts, in part, because they keep both the specific work in mind and are frequently thinking about how to position that work in line with larger conversations and currents in the field.

One metaphor that might help is thinking about the relationship between the local and the global; where local issues or a single study situated in a particular context can connect with broader, global themes that are happening in the field. The challenge here is that there is a "sweet spot" for this kind of work, and if you abstract too much, you end up overgeneralizing beyond the scope of what you can argue. The Venn diagram activity can help you begin to build your expertise by thinking about the broader connections to ideas or articles you are working on.

For a project you are working on (or as a general exercise to help cultivate your expertise), you can use the Venn diagram in Figure 5.7 to help explore the intersection between your work and the broader field. Use this as a springboard for conversations with others about your work. You can also use the following questions:

1. Who are the audience members who might be the most interested in this work? Try to answer this question as specifically as possible and envision individuals: researchers, practitioners, those in industry, etc.
2. How does this work solve a specific problem or set of problems for them?

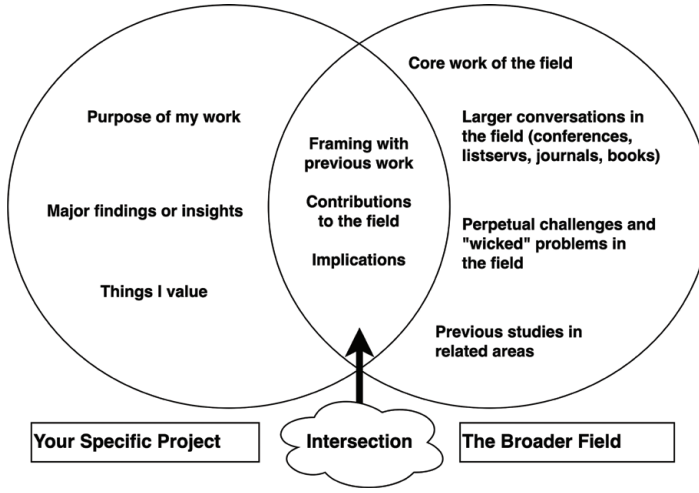

Figure 5.7 Framing, contributions, and limitations.

Activity 5.5: Crafting a Revision Plan

If you are at the stage of revising a manuscript for publication and you have feedback (whether that is from peers, a faculty mentor, editors, or blind reviewers), it can be very helpful to develop a revision plan. You can use Table 5.4 to navigate and plan your revisions. It can be helpful to orient this revision plan table in a landscape-formatted document.

Table 5.4 Revision Tracking Table

Feedback	**My Thoughts and Notes**	**Timeline and Revision Plan**	**Revisions Made**
List each piece of feedback you have received. You can group similar feedback. Keep track of who said what feedback for the purposes of writing a revision letter.	List your thoughts, notes, reactions, and how you hope to proceed. You can also keep track here of things you may want to ask mentors, peers or writing group members for support.	List what you plan to do and the time you have for revision.	Once you have made revisions, list them here. You can also use color coding to highlight sections of the table to help you plan and organize. By keeping track of revisions, it is easier to write a revision letter to the editors.
Example: Reviewer 1 suggested that I need to "lean into the argument more and make a stronger articulation of the relationship of my study to the field." Reviewer 2 indicated that "At present, the literature review is mostly summary and does not fully engage with the field." And offered 5 sources to include.	I agree with this and I'm struggling to find how to do this. I will speak to Faculty X next week and ask questions about this specific feedback.	Faculty X suggested that I review X article and model the writing (Thursday writing session) I also will read and add the 5 sources mentioned by Reviewer 2 (Friday writing session).	Revised introduction and literature review to build in my argument in several places (Paragraphs 1, 2, 5 and 8). Added all five sources to the literature review. Also added them to the discussion section.

The benefits of this kind of planning are numerous. For one, it allows you to break down each piece of feedback and address each piece individually. This allows you to avoid feeling overwhelmed with the amount of feedback. For two, it allows you to engage in a dialogue about the feedback, identify what you are comfortable doing, and seek help for what you are not. Third, it also allows you to set goals and create a specific timeline, checking off each piece of feedback as you revise. Finally, by tracking your revisions, you will be able to much more easily

write a letter to the editors (who expect to see such a letter when you are revising or resubmitting or when you have an accept with revision).