

iConference 2021  
March 28-31, 2021 Virtual  
Theme: Diversity Divergence Dialogue  
**iConference Virtual Interactive Session Workshop Proposal**

**Title:** Finding the Write Time: Strategies for Productivity and Time Management

**Organizer(s):** Marie L. Radford[1], Kaitlin Costello [2], Diana Floegel [3], Vanessa Kitzie[4],

**Keywords:** writing, time management, collaboration, productivity

**Abstract:** (117 of 150 words)

Feeling overwhelmed by writing deadlines as well as pressure from the many different demands on your time? This interactive workshop will provide strategies for researchers, faculty, and doctoral students wishing to gain control of their time, designating and committing to dedicated writing, and setting priorities. Speakers will address different aspects of time management and each will provide information, as well as lead participants in activities that help you to consider life-work balance, prioritize activities, manage multiple responsibilities (teaching, research, service), and find or organize a collaborative writing partner or group. The second part of the workshop will model a virtual writing group, so come prepared with a writing project that you will work on for 45 minutes.

## **Description**

### *Purpose and Intended Audience*

Researchers, including faculty and doctoral students, frequently report that they feel stressed by the need to multitask, to keep up-to-date, and to manage tight schedules. There never seems to be enough time to get everything done. Tight deadlines may cause one to feel overwhelmed and anxious. What does it take to work more efficiently and effectively and to feel calm and in control? Is work-life balance possible, or do all academics/researchers work 24/7/365? What is the key to greater productivity? This workshop will provide strategies for researchers, faculty, and doctoral students wishing to gain control of their time, designating and committing to dedicated writing, and setting priorities.

### *Goals or Outcomes*

Participants will learn practical strategies for:

- Considering life-work balance.
- Managing multiple responsibilities (teaching, research, service).
- Prioritizing deadlines and projects.
- Taking control of their time.
- Finding or organizing a collaborative writing partner or group.

Participants will also learn where they are spending their time, what apps are available to help with time tracking, how to avoid mistakes people make in allocating their time, and how to practice the best strategies for maximizing productivity.

**Marie Radford** will moderate this two-part workshop to be presented in two, 90-minute sections.

### **Part One**

In the first 90-minute section, Marie Radford will introduce four, 20-minute presentations.

**Diana Floegel** will give an overview of why “work-life balance” is difficult to achieve for most academics; they will explain gendered and raced implications of “work-life balance.” Diana will also discuss effective strategies for graduate students who have overlapping demands including completing coursework, publishing, teaching/TAing, pursuing service opportunities, and completing the dissertation. Diana will offer strategies for maximizing opportunities to write publishable material during coursework. They will also discuss completing a dissertation in a reasonable amount of time. Finally, Diana will guide participants through a list-making activity to help people schedule daily academic and non-academic tasks.

**Vanessa Kitzie** will address transitioning from a doctoral student to a tenure-track faculty member with a focus on establishing research independence and balancing multiple responsibilities of teaching, research, and service. She will overview strategies to lay the foundation for new research projects, including extending one’s research agenda from a dissertation, identifying and developing research partnerships, and applying for/managing research funding. She will address leveraging demands of teaching, research, and service in complementary ways. Examples include writing with students (research/teaching), developing webinars and public-facing presentations for practitioners based on research findings (research/service), and engaging classes in service learning (teaching/service). Finally, participants will be engaged in an activity to integrate what they have learned into a personalized plan.

**Kaitlin Costello** will discuss strategies for managing writing time using SMART goals, a writing schedule, and accountability tools and strategies. Kaitlin will begin with an overview of how to develop a three-month schedule for preparing a journal manuscript. Next, we will introduce using SMART goals to develop and maintain a near-daily writing practice. Attendees will develop a weekly writing schedule in a short exercise. Kaitlin will close with an overview of strategies for staying accountable to writing schedules, including the role of virtual writing groups and using time management apps.

**Marie Radford** will discuss strategies for participants wishing to gain insight into current practices, to get perspective on why it is important to schedule and commit to dedicated writing, and the benefits of collaboration. She will describe the worst time-related mistakes that academics make, highlighting important considerations like identifying your peak productivity times and how to set clear priorities to enable you to make

decisions that are based on your priorities. Marie will end with an activity that engages participants in diagnosing where they spend their time and making an action plan to increase time for research and writing.

## Part Two

The workshop organizers will lead participants in model virtual writing groups. Participants will join four breakout groups in Zoom, led by one of the organizers. Each group will set goals, write individually for 45 minutes, and debrief, both in small groups and in the full group.

Below is a timeline for the two, 90 minute back-to-back virtual interactive sessions.

	<b>1st 90-minute block</b>
5 min	Welcome, Overview, Introduction - Marie Radford
20 min	Diana Floegel speaks/leads activity
20 min	Vanessa Kitzie speaks/leads activity
20 min	Kaitlin Costello speaks/leads activity
20 min	Marie Radford speak/leads activity/concludes 1st block.
5 min	Break
	<b>2nd 90-minute block</b>
5 min	Introduction of Collaborative Writing Model Break into 4 groups, 1 organizer per group
12 min	Participants set goals
45 min	45-minute writing block
12 min	Participants debrief in small groups

15 min	Larger group debrief, Wrap-up, Q & A
	Official Closing - Marie Radford

*Relevance to the Conference/Significance to the Field*

Learning how to find time to write is often part of the "hidden curriculum" in information science and academia. Books about academic writing often focus on style advice, and writing advice from other academics is often highly personal or overly general. As a result, this advice is hard to put into practice. Finding writing time is not a new struggle, but current working conditions have added additional responsibilities to already-full schedules, disrupted precarious work/life balances, and have eroded our experience of time. They have also isolated us, which is detrimental to writing because academic writing is a fundamentally social activity. Even when we are not writing collaboratively, we are writing for an audience and are in conversation with other authors. Now more than ever information scientists need pragmatic, implementable strategies for writing productively and for writing socially. This workshop will help demystify activities leading up to, and including a writing practice. Workshop organizers have had successful experiences leading/participating in virtual writing groups since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and have based the format of our workshop on these experiences. The workshop will give participants a variety of strategies to apply to their writing, and will allow them to experience the benefits of virtual co-writing.

**Virtual Technologies:** We will use Zoom to facilitate this session.

**Duration:** This Virtual interactive Session will require two 90-minute sessions, back-to-back.

**Special Requirements:** N/A

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