The lands on which Denver was built are the ancestral homelands of the Arapaho nation as well as Cheyenne and Ute peoples. We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory, and honor and respect the many diverse Indigenous peoples still connected to this land.
Part I: Before you begin and as you are writing

- A few things to think about before you start
- Some best practices in constructing a manuscript

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From the beginning

• You’re finishing up your research and thrilled about your results
• You have a novel idea that apparently hasn’t been discussed before
• You have an enormous pile of maps / seismic / analyses / video footage / remote imagery and synthesis

IT’S TIME TO WRITE THAT PAPER!
From the beginning

• Audience!
  • choose the most appropriate journal – think about your
    primary idea
  • check the website for each journal
• Think about who your co-authors should be (if any)
• Refine the topic
• WRITE!
Audience:
use the journal
Audience: use the journal

- Model how you construct the manuscript on a published paper (structure, formatting, diagrams, tables, etc.)
A caveat about journals and choice

- “Predatory journals”
  - flashy emails promising the world
  - “your colleagues will all see your work”
  - ask around – ask colleagues/mentors
Audience

• keep in mind that if you are writing for a “general” journal, you must assume relatively little inferred knowledge (your reader knows much less about your topic than you do...)
Who are your co-authors?

• Everyone who had a substantial contribution in framing the problem and its resolution.
  • all authors must contribute to writing the paper, whether literally or through ideas
  • many journals require confirmation

• When in doubt, consult your dissertation / thesis / post-doc supervisor
What is important?

• Most ideas have value
• Frame your idea in a way that your officemate / partner / colleague can see its value: why would someone read about this?
Write!

- Hourglass structure
- IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion)
  - what parts of the paper will deliver the greatest impact of your work?
  - most impact = most words
Hourglass structure

Introduction

findings (Methods, data, Results, comparisons...)

Discussion

BIG concepts & context

the ‘meat’

relevance, synthesis, implications, predictions — more broad context

% impact
Write!

• Think very seriously about writing an outline first...
• Make a list of likely figures and insert them in the outline
• Are you writing a paper from your thesis/dissertation (the „Q“ in following slides)?
Write the Introduction

• Follow the scientific method
  • what is known
  • what is not known / poorly understood / contradictory to the previous ideas: What is the problem you are addressing?
• ”Q” – cut the text as much as possible – be focused on most important points
Write the Introduction

- Follow the scientific method
  - why you used the method / field site / images you did – how it/they are THE way to solve the problem
  - a bit about your conclusions
  - SET THE STAGE for the paper
- Some people write the Introduction last
The other parts

• Methods
  • sufficiently descriptive that they can be replicated
  • (“Q” – mind what was important for the thesis)

• Data (results):
  • all your results whether they support your ideas or not
  • no bias, no interpretation at this point
  • “Q” – may not need everything
The other parts

**Discussion**
- your ideas and interpretations!
- no new data in this section
- how your data and ideas mesh with other studies
- “Q” – probably most of this 😊

**The title (!!!) (write this last)**
- why would someone choose to read your paper?
- be descriptive and specific
Other tips for preparing the manuscript

• Write to your figures
  • “a picture paints a thousand words...” (what words are you replacing)?
  • how does a figure support the text?
  • a figure caption should concisely highlight the take-away points

• Write, put the manuscript down for three days, and rewrite
Other tips for preparing the manuscript

• Put your co-authors to work! At minimum, make them read a draft.
• When using contributions from co-authors, don’t hesitate to rewrite in your own voice
Last but not least

• NEVER start your paper (Abstract or Introduction) with “We” or “I”. The paper is about rocks or techniques or many other things, but not about you.

➢ Don’t write to be understood, write so that you cannot be misunderstood
Some questions from the applications

- Time line
- Disagreements between authors
- Use of jargon