

# Guidelines on Writing for Statistical Science

The Editorial in the February 1992 issue provided a description of the kinds of articles *Statistical Science* seeks to publish. If possible, it is highly advisable to submit an outline or rough draft as a proposal for a paper so that feedback may be given prior to the expenditure of effort on a full draft. In considering articles or proposed articles, the usual initial questions are the following:

- Is this topic likely to be of very wide interest?
- Is the scientific importance of the topic clear?
- Why should more statisticians be aware of the work under discussion or review?
- Why is this a good time to discuss or review the proposed body of work?
- What will be the “value added” by this piece, beyond a straightforward recapitulation of recent work?

Once it is clear that the concept is appropriate for a *Statistical Science* article, the subsequent concerns are as follows:

- Is the exposition clear and easy to follow?
- Have the main points been summarized sufficiently well that a novice reader can appreciate them in a single session of casual reading?
- Have inessential formulas and technical details been avoided?
- Is the material organized so that a reader may avoid any deeper or more detailed portions?

Authors should remember there are three kinds of readers: casual, seriously interested, and expert. The journal must continue as a priority its service to casual readers—those who will skim through an article quickly, stopping to read carefully in selected places; such readers are greatly aided by informative introductory and concluding sections. The second group includes graduate students and the many readers who become interested enough to read an article in its entirety quite carefully; because these people are novices, good explanations are important. *Statistical Science* does not intend to be a forum for the transmission of results among experts; on the other hand, experts should appreciate a fresh look at their subject, or an overview with an interesting perspective.

An article’s length per se is not usually of great concern. The scientific story should be told as efficiently as possible, but what constitutes an adequate treatment depends on the subject matter.

## Some Specifics

- All manuscripts and commentaries should be double-spaced.
- In addition to a hard copy, an electronic version of each manuscript, commentary or rejoinder should, if possible, be submitted. Either plain text or  $\text{\LaTeX}$  should be used. If electronic mail is not feasible, a standard floppy disk may be submitted by first-class mail. Manuscripts submitted in the  $\text{\LaTeX}$  format should use the “article” style and should not use any special macros.
- Papers should contain an abstract and key words.
- Refer to a recent issue for reference-list style.
- References should include page numbers and volume for journals; page numbers, editors and publishers for books.
- The first reference to multiple-authored papers should include all authors (unless there are more than five); subsequent references should use *et al.*
- Footnotes are sometimes appropriate, but parenthetical statements in the text are usually preferable.
- In equations in text,  $1/2$  is preferable to  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Use  $\sum_{i=1}^n$  in displayed equations,  $\sum_{i=1}^n$  in text.
- To indicate multiplication use  $\cdot$  rather than  $\times$ .
- Use the correct ellipses:  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  or  $x_1 + \dots + x_n$ .
- If proving a lemma or theorem, end the proof with some mark such as  $\square$ .
- Figures will appear exactly as they do in the manuscript unless it is requested they be re-drawn. Please supply professional-looking artwork, labeled clearly with author(s)’s name(s) and figure number. Alternatively, a postscript file accompanying the electronic version is usually acceptable.
- Equation numbers must be on the left-hand side.
- In the Introduction, when summarizing the contents of a specific section, information not already apparent from the section heading should be conveyed; typically at least a couple of sentences will be needed.
- Sectioning should generally be used extensively in both manuscript and commentaries; section headings should be informative and should help define organizational structure.