Academic Media Solutions
Affordable Textbooks, Study Aids, & Academic Custom Publishing

GUIDELINES
FOR PREPARING A TEXTBOOK PROPOSAL

If you are considering writing a college textbook, it is important at the outset to define and describe your project clearly so that we can properly review its market potential. Writing a proposal can help you to organize your ideas and is the first-step in developing a plan for accomplishing your publishing goals. In addition, the proposal should provide us with sufficient information to assess your project and to make a discerning publishing decision. We suggest that you include the following sections in your proposal:

PROSPECTUS OVERVIEW

The prospectus should provide a descriptive overview of your project, including a rationale and a clear idea of your target market. It should tell the publisher why you are writing this text, how you plan to go about it, and for whom the book is intended. Further, the prospectus should clearly outline how your book will be differentiated from currently available texts in the market. A thorough prospectus will include the following information.

The Text (Digital & Print)

1. A Brief Description of the Project: Describe your text. What topics will you cover? How will the content be organized? What approach(es) will you use to convey this content? How do the scope and depth of content coverage you propose compare to those of the current market leaders?

2. Pedagogy: Do specific teaching or learning strategies underlie the approach your text will take? Will you incorporate innovative tools or ideas (e.g., active learning, cooperative learning, and critical thinking) in an effort to enhance student motivation and learning? What other pedagogical features do you plan (case studies, boxes, in-text quizzes, innovative use of illustrations, other)?

3. Art Program: Are there specific aspects of the illustration program that will be particularly unique or innovative? Please describe. How extensive will the line art and photo programs be (i.e., how many illustrations of each kind do you envision)? Will you include cartoons, maps, realia? Can you provide any of these resources and/or suggest other sources for them?

4. Format: Are there special design considerations? How many book pages do you project? What front matter (preface, note to students) and back-matter (glossary, appendices) do you plan to include? Are you proposing an electronic version of the text? Will you prepare your manuscript using a word processing program? If so, what hardware and software will you use? Can the manuscript be submitted in camera-ready form?

5. Digital Layers: Are there special digital layers and/or applications that will enhance the pedagogical effectiveness of your content when it is digested into an interactive eBook platform?

The Market and the Competition

5. The Market: For what course is your text intended? At what level is it generally taken (freshman, sophomore, other)? Is it intended for majors or non-majors? Are there prerequisites for this course? Are there particular current market conditions or trends that your text will address (e.g., reform, use of multimedia)? Is this a growing market? If so, why and how might your project address these conditions? Might this project be appropriate for other markets - international, high school, trade?

6. The Competition: What are the major competitors and how does your text compare and contrast with them? What are their strengths? Their weaknesses? Are you aware of other similar projects in development?

7. Your Competitive Edge: What will be the outstanding or unique features of your text? What needs will your text address that is not currently being met by the competition? What benefits or advantages will your text offer potential adopters that the current market leaders do not?

The Ancillary Program

8. Ancillaries: What ancillaries do you propose for instructors (e.g. digital assets, testbank, instructors guide)? and students (e.g., study aids, multi-media content, and assessment)? Will you author any of these materials?

What video, software and/or on-line ancillaries do you anticipate to accompany your text? Will these be designed for the student or the instructor? Will you develop these materials or the ideas behind them? Do you envision an Internet-based ancillary? If so, please describe.

Other Information

9. Schedule: When do you plan to complete the first draft manuscript?

10. Publisher Support: What are your expectations/needs from a publisher (e.g., market research, photo research, illustration development, grants)?

Annotated Table of Contents

A detailed, annotated table of contents is an essential tool for showing your prospective audience your books scope and sequence of coverage. It not only should convey what is distinctive about the content and/or organization but also should make clear how the textbook will be superior to the competition.

Include in your table of contents all the chapters that you currently envision. Follow each chapter title with a brief rationale for the coverage and a statement of the chapter objectives. Then list all the main headings and subheadings (if you can). Incorporate the titles of any unique pedagogical features that you plan to include, such as special applications, case studies, photo essays, primary source excerpts, and so on.

Preparing a detailed table of contents not only will help you to fine-tune your plans for the text and its features but also will allow the publisher and reviewers to understand the conceptualization and organization of the material, and to assess its pedagogical effectiveness.

Sample Chapters/Modules/Digital Layers & Applications

Your sample chapters should showcase the high quality and distinctive aspects of your textbook. Submit two or three chapters of the work--more if they are available. Ideally, the chapters should be consecutive to show how they build on and flow from each other. The sample chapters/modules should include all the features of your textbook, including such elements as the chapter/module introduction, chapter objectives, problems, questions for review, and so on. They should also contain representative examples of line art (pencil sketches, photocopies from other sources modified to reflect your texts needs, and/or a preliminary list of illustrations); suggestions for photographs and/or cartoons (if applicable); and samples of the unique pedagogical features and digital layers that you're planning to include.

If you have already prepared chapters for one or more of the ancillaries that will accompany your textbook, please also submit samples of these, to help the publisher and reviewers see how the textbook and ancillaries will work together to form a complete teaching and learning program.

Curriculum Vitae

We would appreciate receiving an up-to-date CV. that summarizes your (and fellow authors) academic degrees and your teaching and research experience, as well as your prior publications and any awards of professional recognition you have received.

Special Note

It is in your best interest to submit clear, legible originals of your sample manuscript and supporting materials as these items will be photocopied and distributed to a number of people during the project-evaluation process. Because your prospectus is the first effort on your part to convince the publisher and the academic community of your abilities as an author, you should also carefully check the spelling, grammar, and punctuation in all the items you submit.

Where to submit or request more information:

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