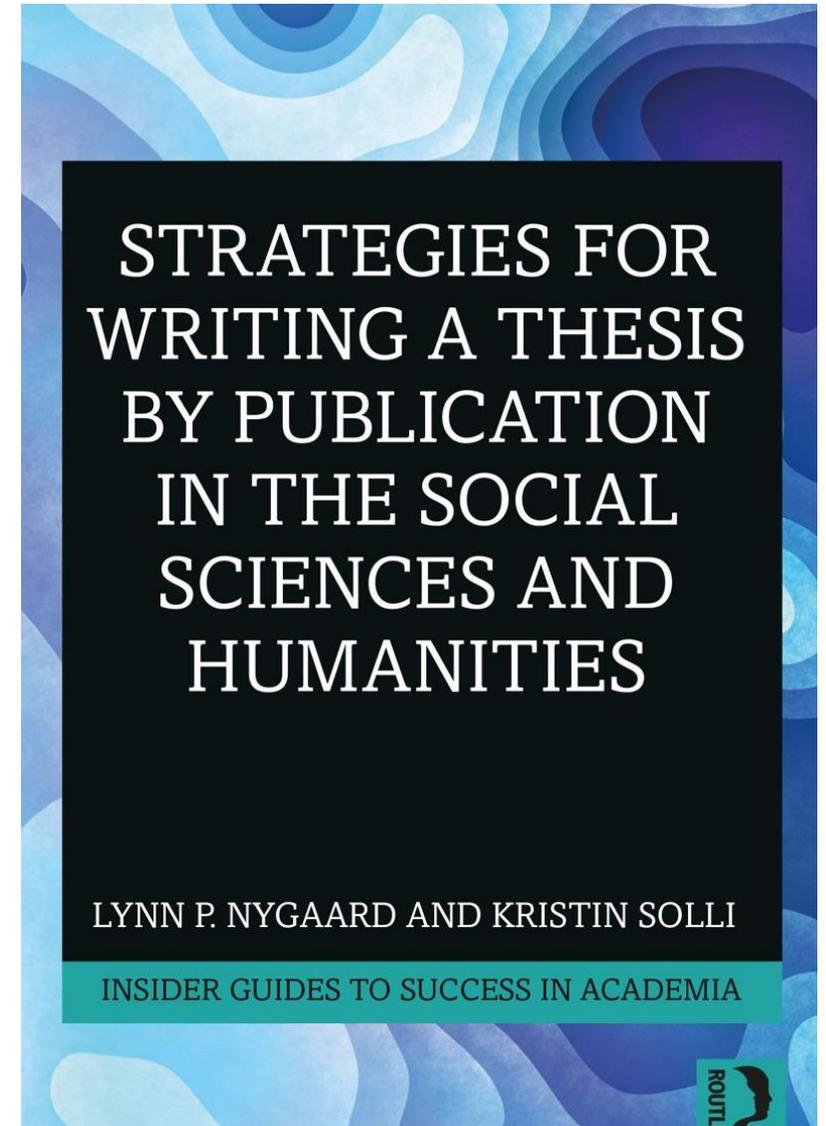


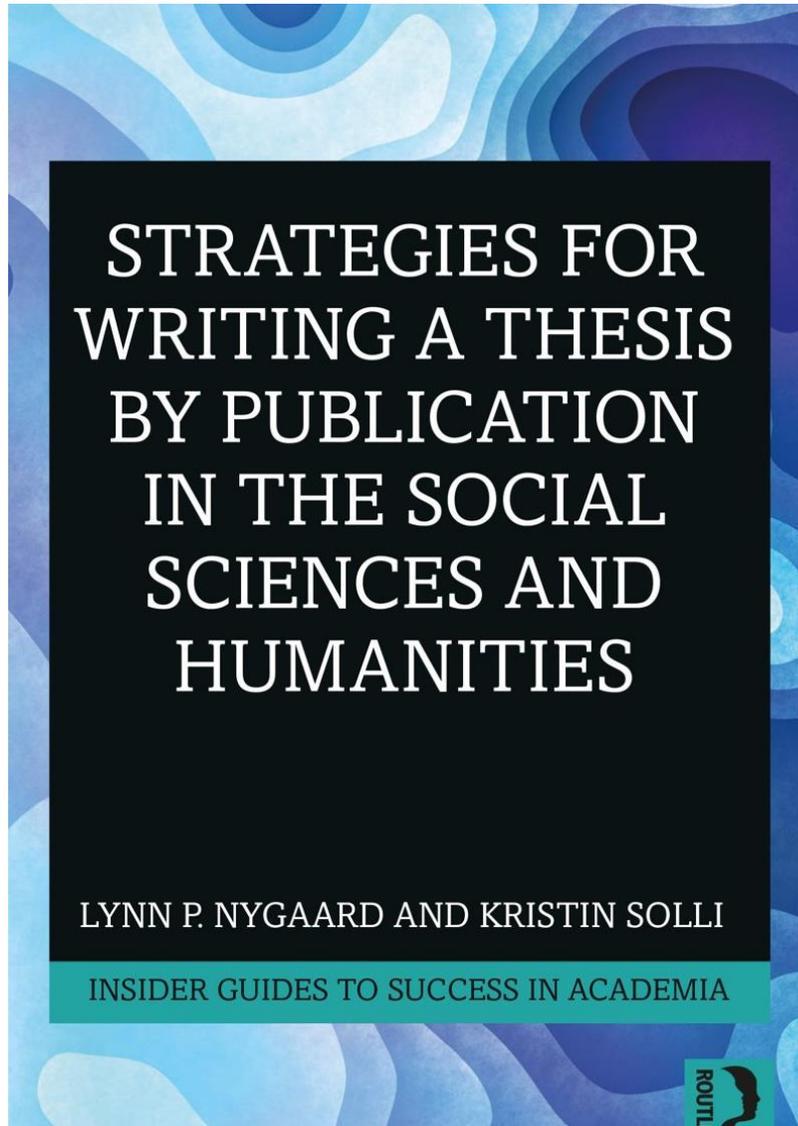
# Writing an Article-based Dissertation: Challenges and Strategies

OsloMet PhD Forum

Lynn P. Nygaard & Kristin Solli

February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021





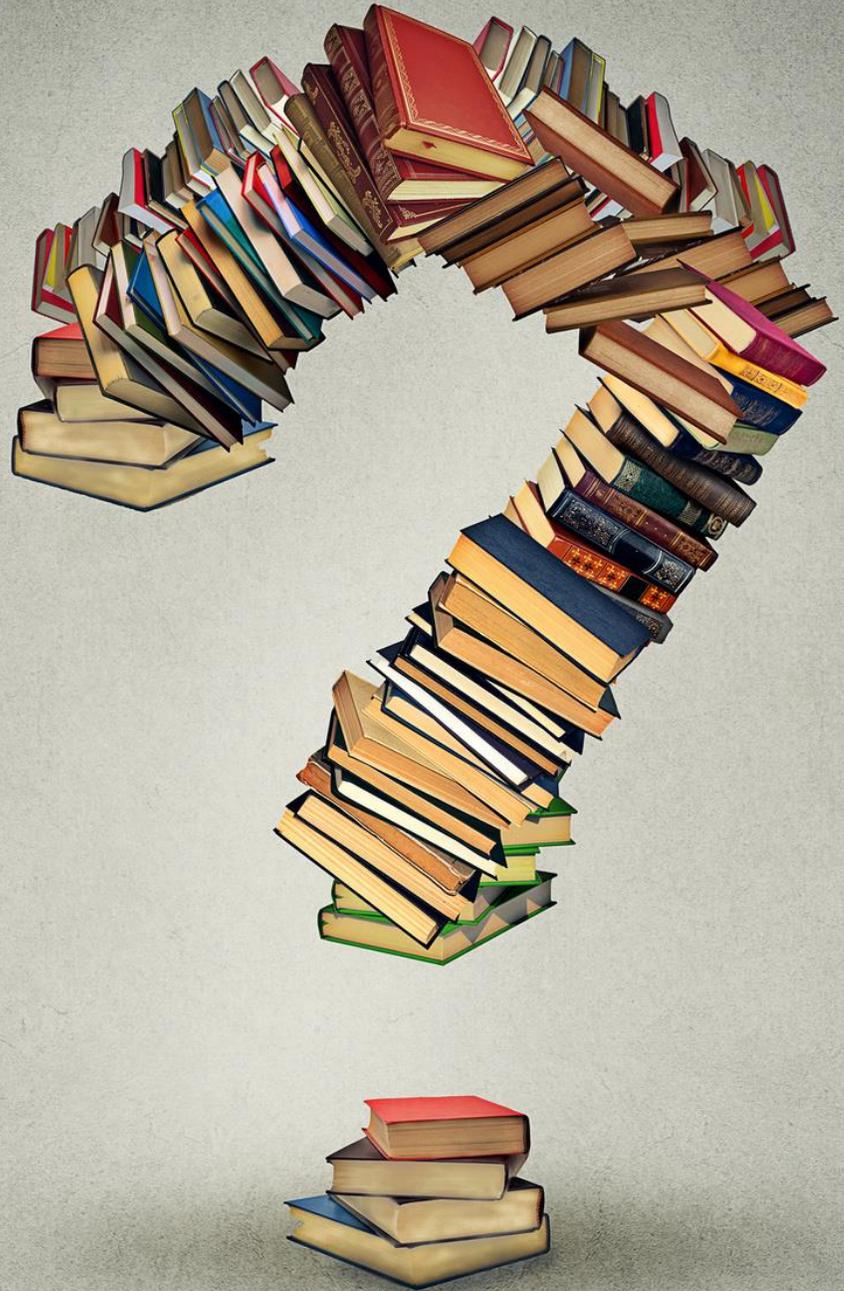
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The e-book is in Oria!



Why this book  
now ?



Emerging  
genre....

...although perhaps more  
settled in Scandinavia than  
in many other places

# What are these things called...?

- Thesis by publication
- PhD by publication
- Article-based thesis/dissertation
- Compilation thesis
- Alternative format thesis
- Manuscript dissertation
- Multiple paper option
- Essay format
- .....and probably more

And what is the part that is not the articles called.....?

- Analysis
- Capstone
- Chapeau paper
- Commentary
- Critical essay
- Critique
- Doctoral statement
- Exegesis
- Extended introduction
- General introduction
- Metatext
- Narrative
- Overarching text
- Report
- Review appraisal
- Summary
- Supporting statement
- Synopsis
- Synthesis
- Thesis text
- .....and Kappe

Great variety in terms of requirements and expectations across disciplines and institutional contexts:

- Number of publications? (Literature suggests anywhere from 1 – 12 (!!!))
- What kind of publications?
- Status of publications?
- Co-authorship?
- Language?
- Structure, length, and content of kappe?

## Phd in Educational Science for Teacher Education

# Examples

## PhD in Behavioral Analysis

Avhandlingen skal bestå av et sammendrag (kappe) og artikler. Avhandlingen skal bestå av minst tre artikler. Minst én av avhandlingens artikler skal være antatt for publisering ved innlevering. Sammendraget skal være faglig oppdatert og normalt omfatte 40-70 sider. PhD-kandidaten må være eneforfatter av dette.

### **Synopsis (“kappe”)**

The synopsis is to be independently produced and written by the PhD candidate, but the work should nevertheless be written under supervision. Work on the synopsis should begin as early as possible so that it can help to structure and guide the candidate's work on the thesis during the PhD period. The synopsis is often modified during the PhD period as the articles' structure and content develops. The synopsis is normally completed towards the end of the PhD period, often in the final semester. The scope of the synopsis is normally 50–90 pages, excluding references and appendices.

The synopsis of an article-based thesis is a scientific text that is to demonstrate a high academic level. The purpose of the synopsis is to provide an overall perspective of the internal coherence between the articles, and summarise and synthesise the research questions, results and conclusions presented in the articles. The synopsis also indicates where to locate definitions or detailed explanations of individual subjects within the thesis. The synopsis outlines and give reasons for the theoretical perspectives, the issues and the conclusions presented in the articles, so that the individual components of the dissertation can be seen and understood as a whole.

The synopsis should normally contain the following components:

### **Abstract, table of content and list of articles**

The thesis should begin with both a Norwegian and an English abstracts of about two pages, where the main research question is presented clearly and precisely, information regarding research methods is given, and main results are clearly stated. The abstract should not be numbered or entered in the table of contents. The abstracts are to be followed by the table of contents, where page numbering starts, adapted to the right side. Following the table of contents, on its own, follows the list of attachments and articles contained in the thesis. This list must clearly indicate the stage of each article in the publishing process.

### **Introduction, purpose and research question**

The introduction presents the purpose of the study and the issue(s)/research question(s) the thesis intends to investigate.

Overall, this chapter should set the scene for the reader.

### **Literature review**

To demonstrate that the thesis makes a significant contribution to the field, the candidate must document awareness of the knowledge status within the relevant field of study. The synopsis must therefore include a review of the literature that shows which results researchers have previously reached in the relevant field. This review should not simply summarize prior research, but critically review the research related to the particular field of study. The candidate must position his/her own work in relation to previous research.

### **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework describes the overarching theoretical approach(es) that bind the individual articles together. This part of the synopsis can also provide a more detailed description of the theory presented in the individual articles. It is important in this respect to specify how theory and key concepts are used.

### **Methodology**

A discussion of methodology is to be given a significant place in the synopsis, not least because there is often limited space for discussions of methodology in journal articles. The design and data collection process should be described here, with emphasis on transparency, and a discussion of the quality of the data and the data analysis process should be included. The synopsis should include a critical reflection of the study's validity, reliability and limitations. The synopsis should also raise and discuss ethical considerations relating to the project.

### **Results**

The section about the results of the study, about three pages, must, in a short and systematic manner, account for the thesis's main findings. This must be done in such a way that the red thread in the dissertation and the connection between the content of the articles is evident.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

The discussion and conclusion should explicitly answer and discuss the overarching aims of the study (the research questions/hypothesis). The synopsis should contain relevant updates, when necessary, based on developments that took place after the articles were published or completed. It should also complement and supplement the analyses included in the articles. However, the candidate should not bring in new empirical data that has not previously been mentioned in the articles. This section should also discuss the theoretical implications of the findings and how they contribute to the prior existing research in the field. The complexity and subtleties of the findings are also to be discussed in light of methodological and theoretical issues and philosophy of science approaches. It is advised that recommendations for further research be included here.

### **List of references**

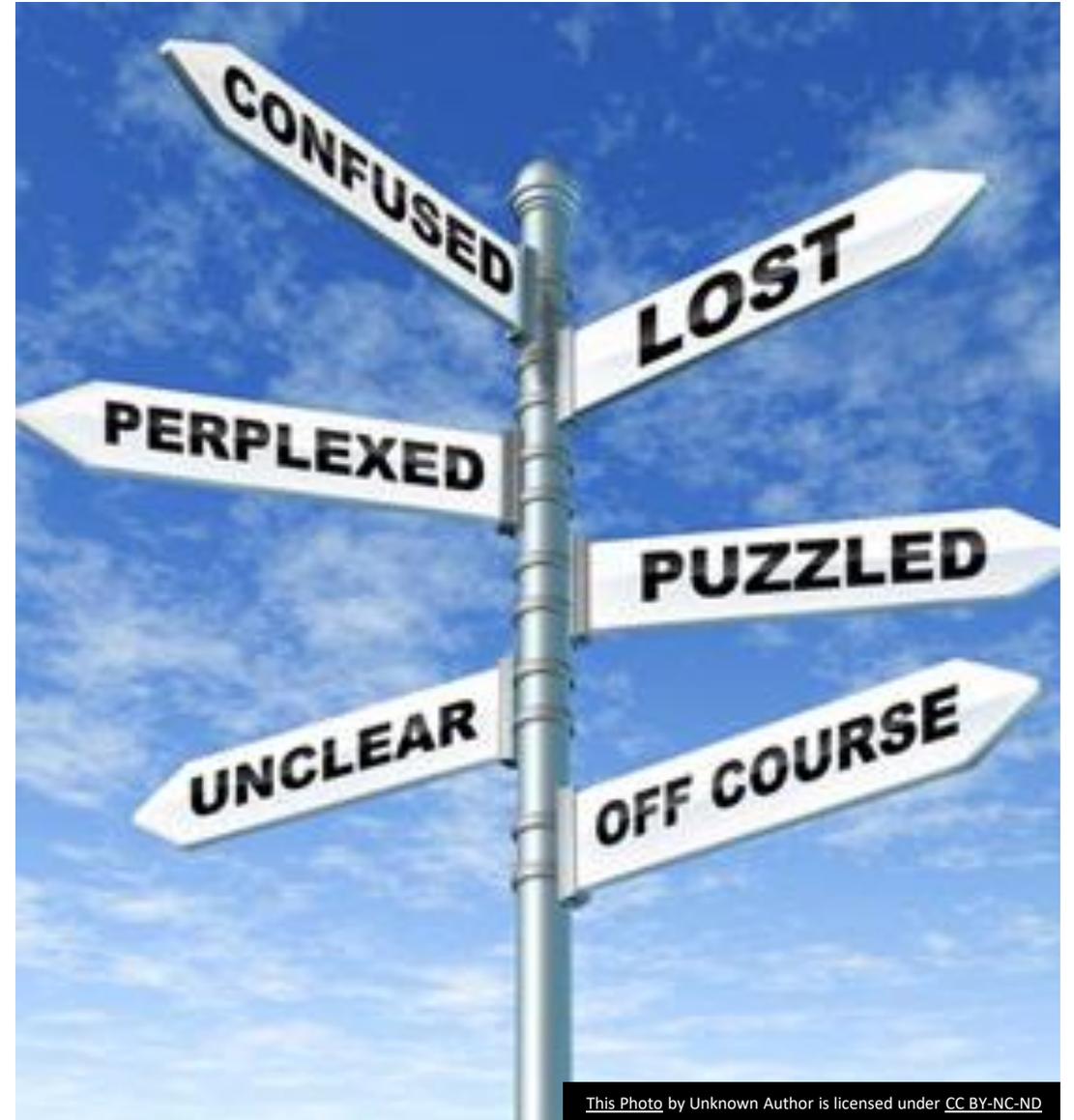
The list of references pertaining to the synopsis should follow the conclusion. The reference list must be in accordance with standards used in the academic environment (APA).

### **Appendix**

The appendix is to be added at the end of the thesis, starting with the complete versions of the articles, with a front page stating the publication status of the article. If an article has been published, it is the published version that must be included in the dissertation.

Second, research instruments such as interview guides, observation guides and questionnaires must be included as appendix. Third, research ethical approvals must also be included (e.g. NSD approvals, information letter to participants etc.).

- The unsettledness and variety can be difficult to navigate for institutions, PhD programs, supervisors, and candidates
- The book is an attempt to outline some of the things it might be useful to think through and some of the most common challenges that doctoral candidates who write this format tend to face
- Not a recipe, but some ways to approach these questions



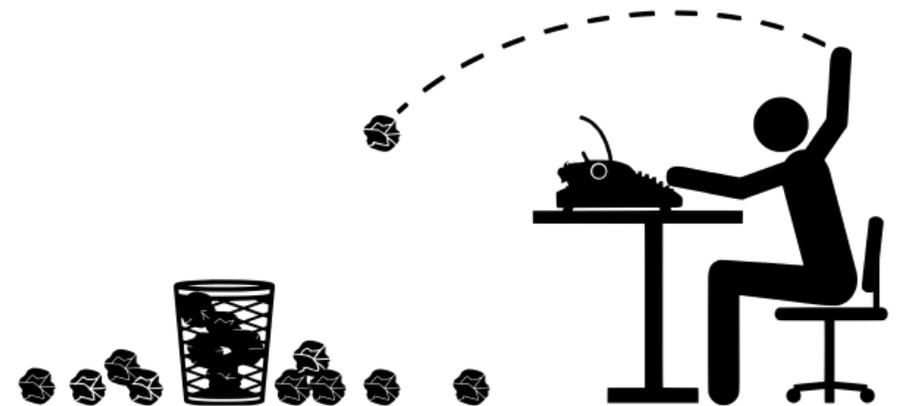
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Find out as much as you can about what is expected in your program as early on as you can

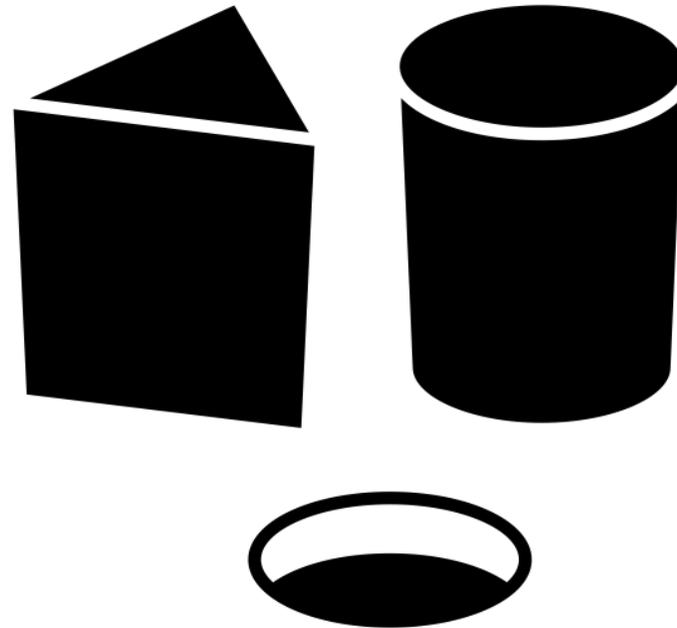
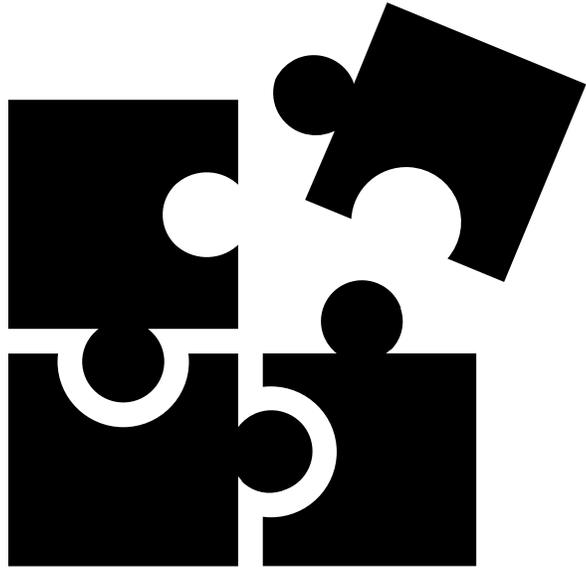
Criteria	What the guidelines say	Your comments
Number of papers required		
Permissible genres		
Status of publication		
Co-authorship		
Language		
Format of narrative		
Total length		
Reference style		
Abstract		
Table of contents		
Pagination		
Required order of items in front matter		
Special requirements (e.g., additional elements for front matter or appendices)		
Other		

# Writing challenges with the TBP (thesis by publication/article-based dissertation):

- many TBP writing challenges will be similar to the challenges that candidates who write monographs face: understanding your research field, methods, types of analysis, time pressures, writing & identity work, finding out how to work with supervisors, etc.
- three challenges that only TBP writers face – and how you can deal with them



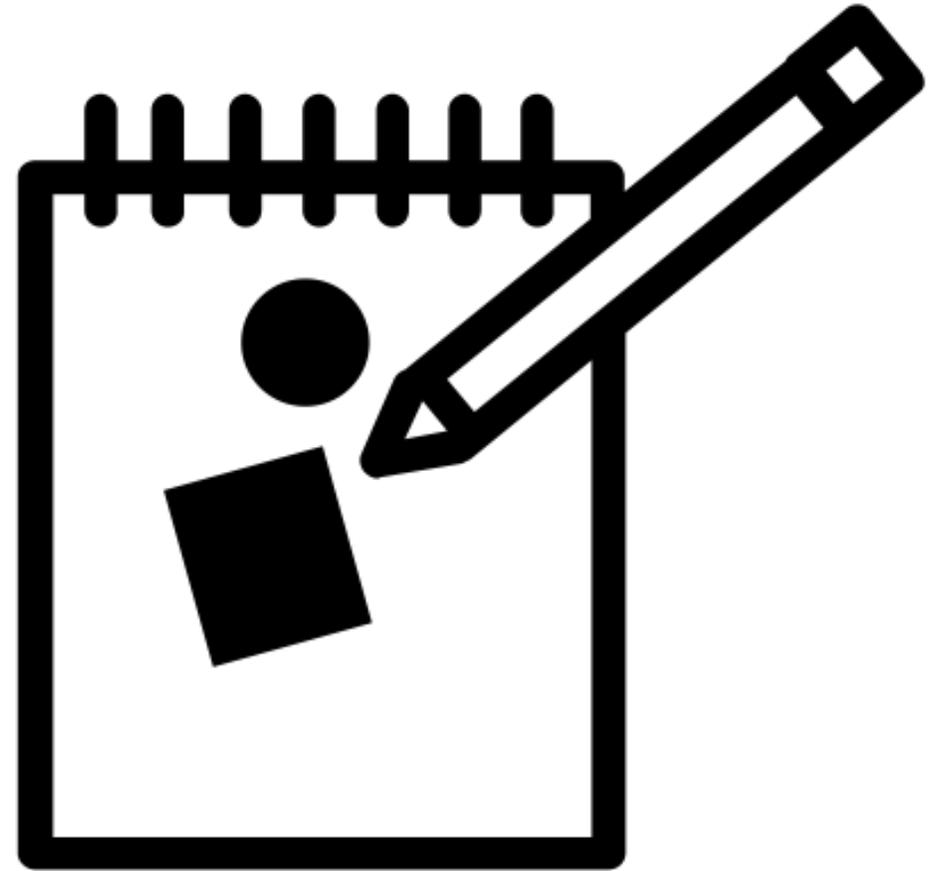
1. Negotiating texts intended to be both stand-alone pieces and part of a larger whole

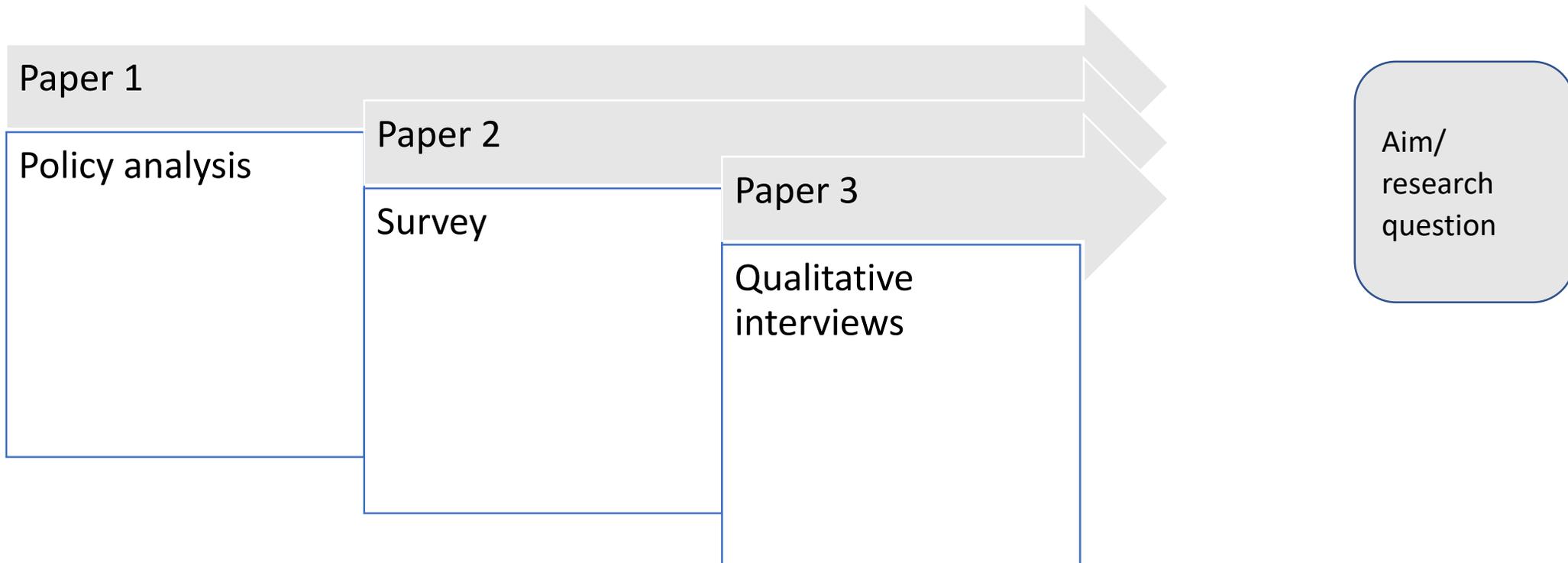


Mapping out the key elements of your papers: an exercise to help you identify your pieces – and perhaps bring greater clarity to how they fit together

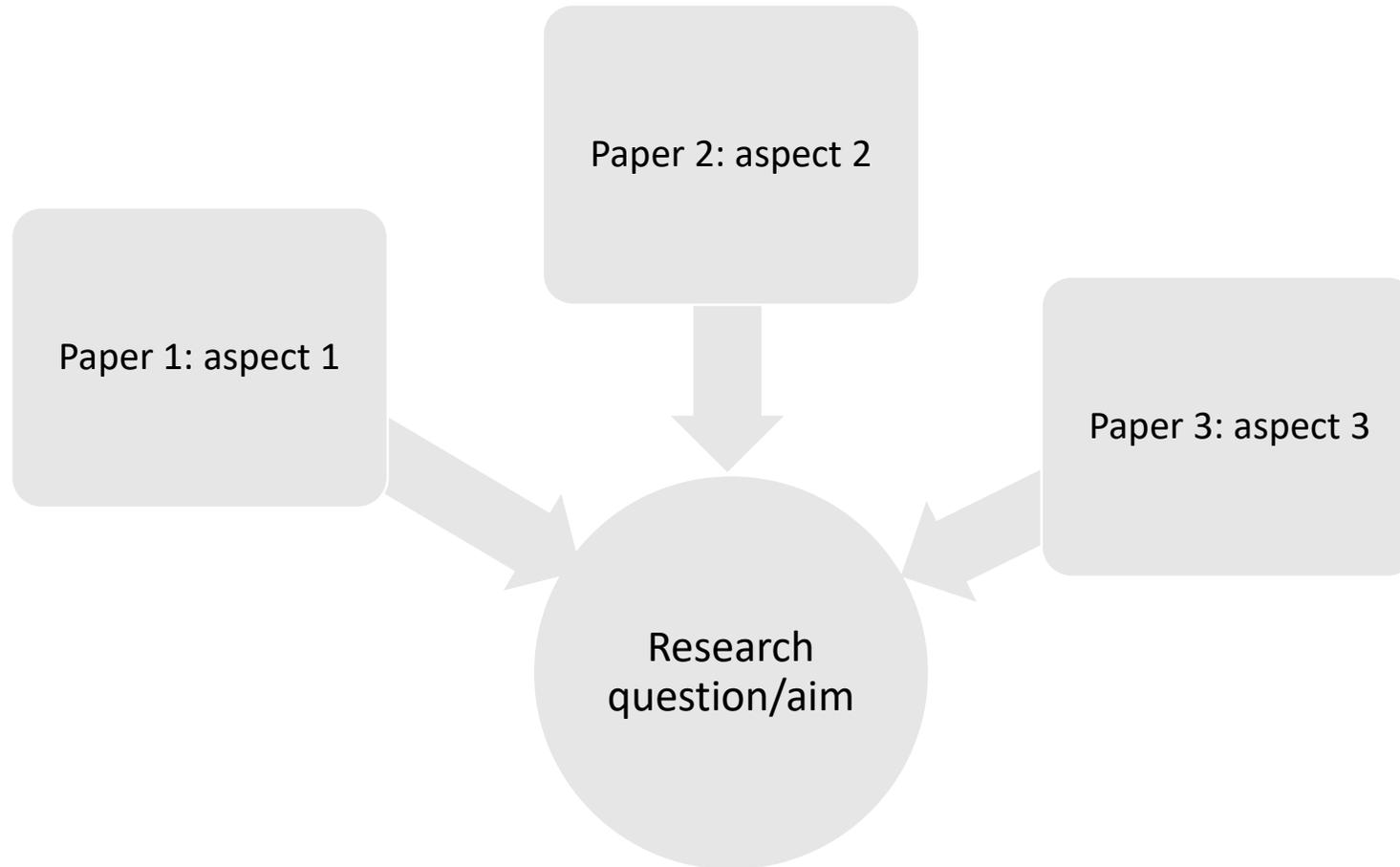
Paper	Knowledge gaps /framing	Research question(s)	Claims	Methods
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

# Draw Your Dissertation exercise

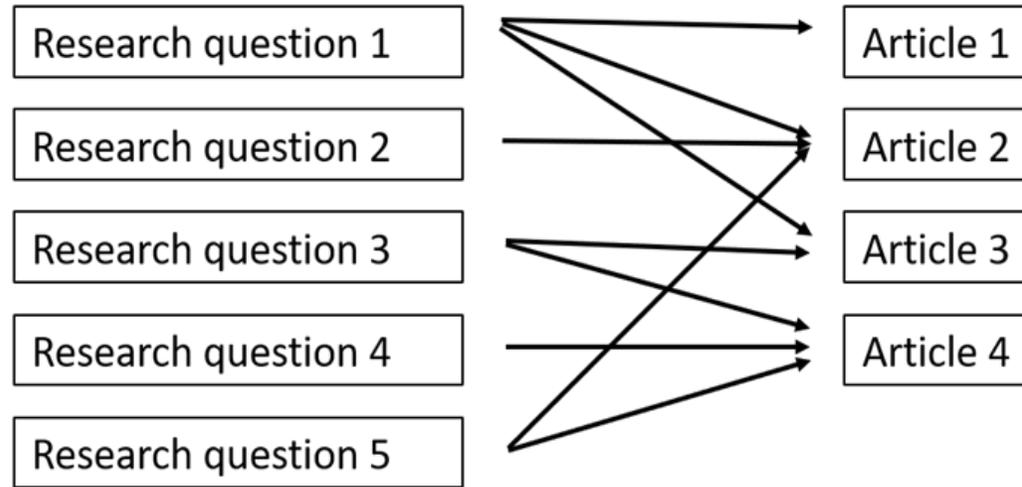




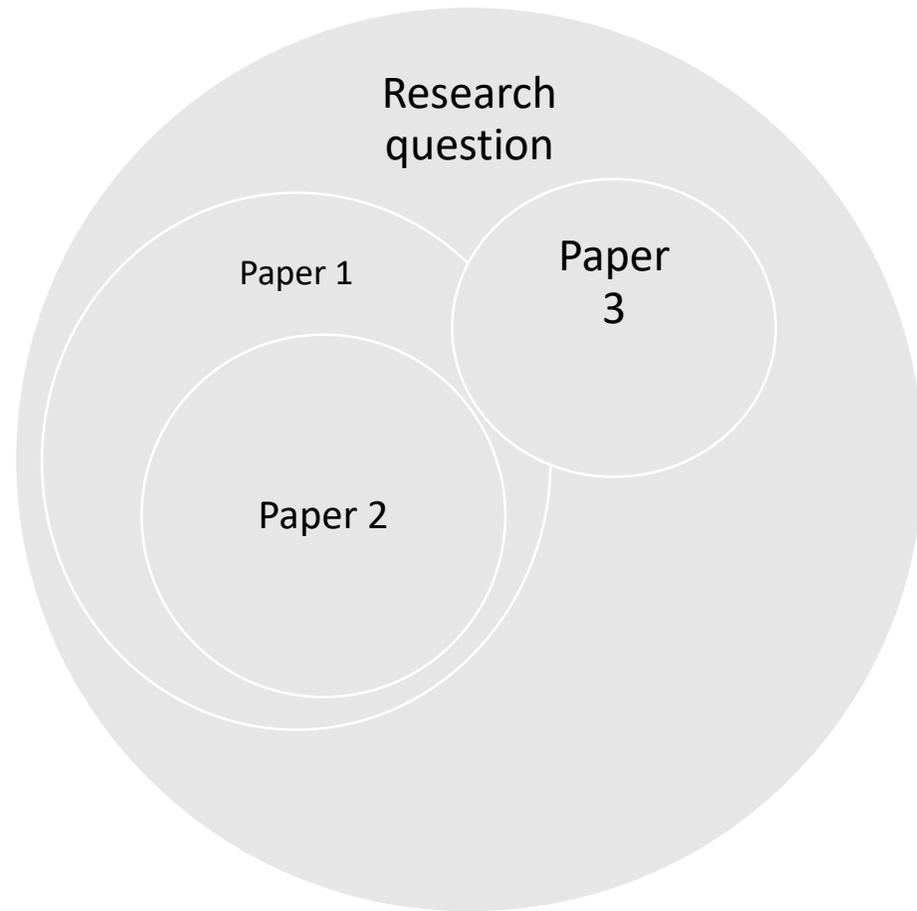
Example of visual representation of relationship between the papers where each of the papers seek to answer the same question and there is a sequential relationship between the papers.



Example of visual representation of relationship between the papers when all of the papers seek to answer the same question, but there is not sequential relationship between the papers.



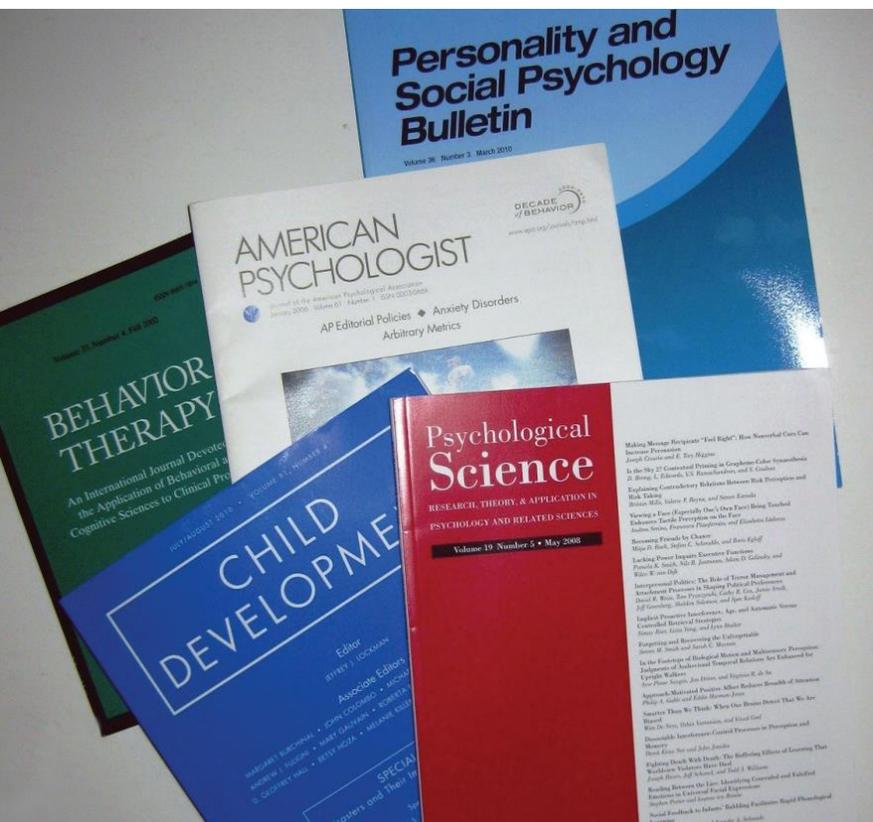
Example of visual representation of relationship between the papers where there is not a one-to-one relationship between the overarching research questions and the individual papers.



Example of visual representation of relationship between the papers where all the papers seek to answer the same question and there is some overlapping relationships between some of the papers.



## 2. Negotiating writing for different audiences and for different purposes



### Writing for different journals

- To learn about different journals: journal analysis and ask supervisors, colleagues, peers
- Research groups in your department/program?
- Workshops: Reading to Write, Writing for International Journals, Academic Writing Course

## 2. Negotiating writing for different audiences and for different purposes

### Writing the articles and writing the narrative/kappe

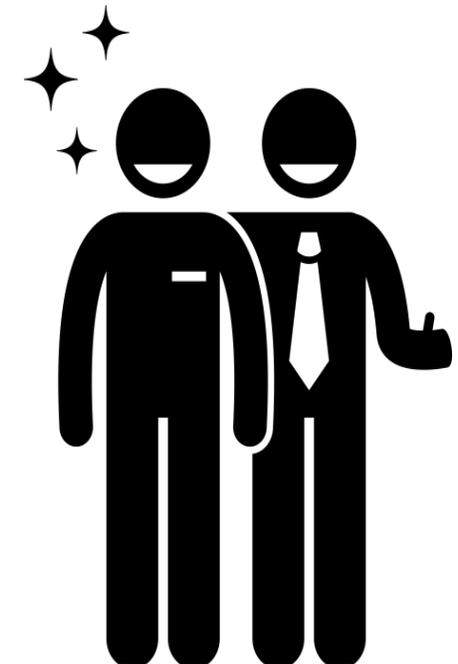
- The audience and purpose when you write the narrative/kappe is different than when you write the articles
- The purpose of the narrative/kappe is to demonstrate “doctorateness” (chapter 4 in the book) + 8-minute YouTube video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMpACZxHJzU>
- Most important strategy: start a “Kappe” folder/document early on to save some of your “behind the scenes” decisions and processes. Lots you won’t be using, but that way you have a starting point.
- Kappe workshop



### 3. Negotiating issues of loss of ownership of process and time

#### Co-authoring (with supervisor(s))

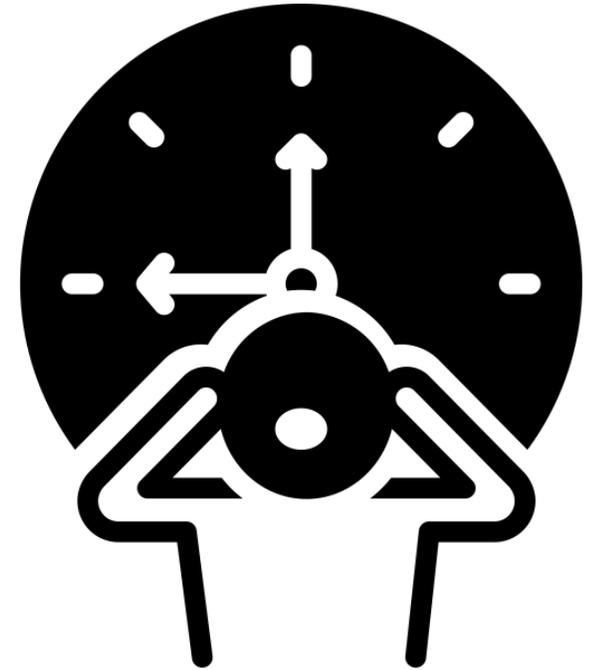
- Discuss what co-authoring means (will your co-authors write parts of the text, provide feedback, contribute with the analysis, etc.)
- Make expectations clear
- Co-authoring as a learning opportunity: when changes are made and you don't understand – ask for explanations

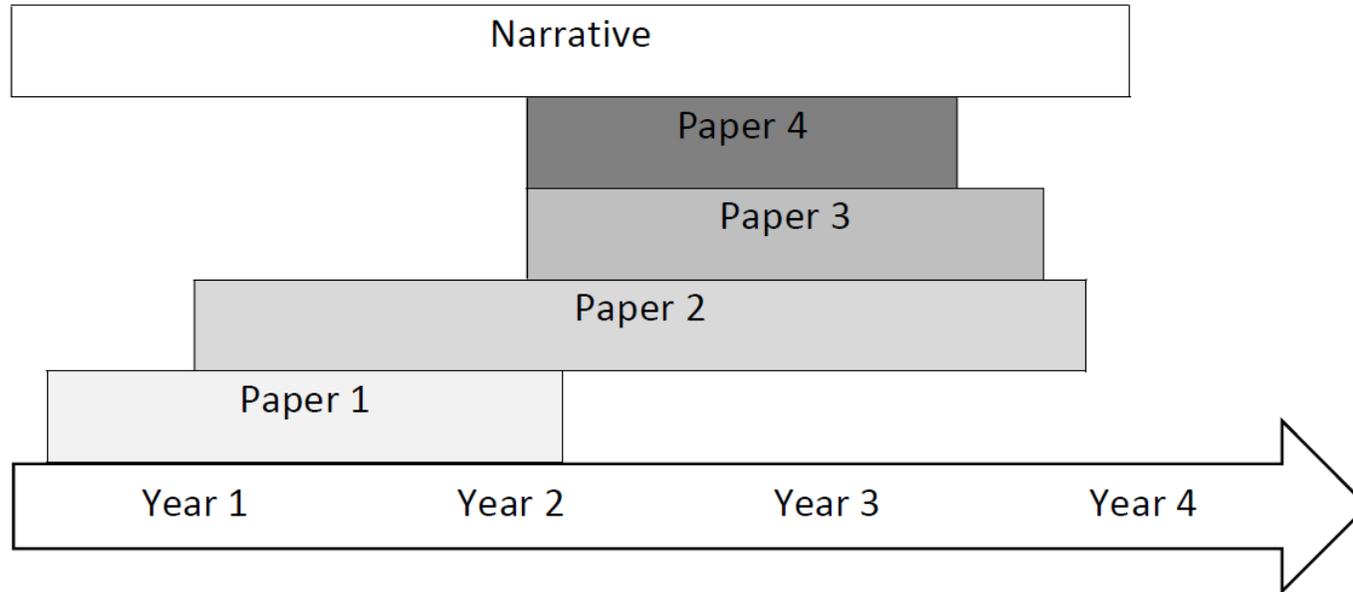
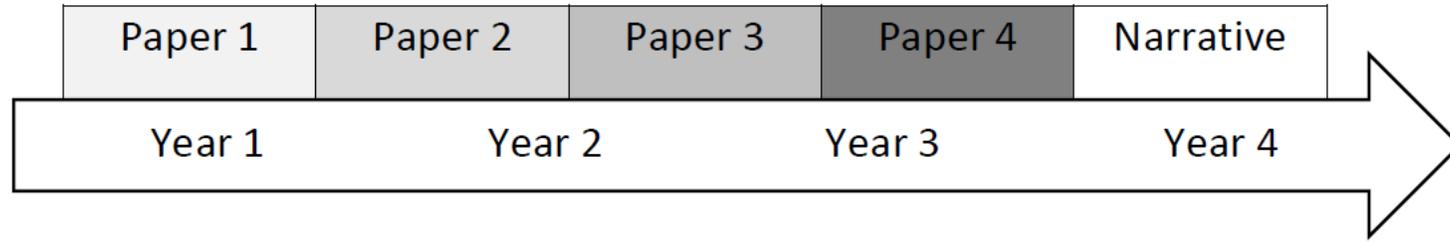


# 3. Negotiating issues of loss of ownership of process and time

## Review processes

- Does the journal give an indication of how long the review process takes? If not, write and ask.
- Check program requirements: how many articles have to be published how many can be “submitted”?
- Be prepared for a non-linear process





# Next Writing for International Journals Workshop

- March 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 – 15:00 both days
- Mix of lecture/discussion and dedicated time to write.  
Read more and sign up here:

<https://ansatt.oslomet.no/oslomet-akademiet/-/kalender/30504/view>

- Next “Reading to Write” workshop and “Academic Writing Course,” next semester stay tuned for dates and sign-up info

# Next kappe- workshop

- Session 1: April 13th, 12:00 – 15:00
- Session 2: April 27th, 12:00 – 15:00
- Session 3: May 11th, 12:00 – 15:00

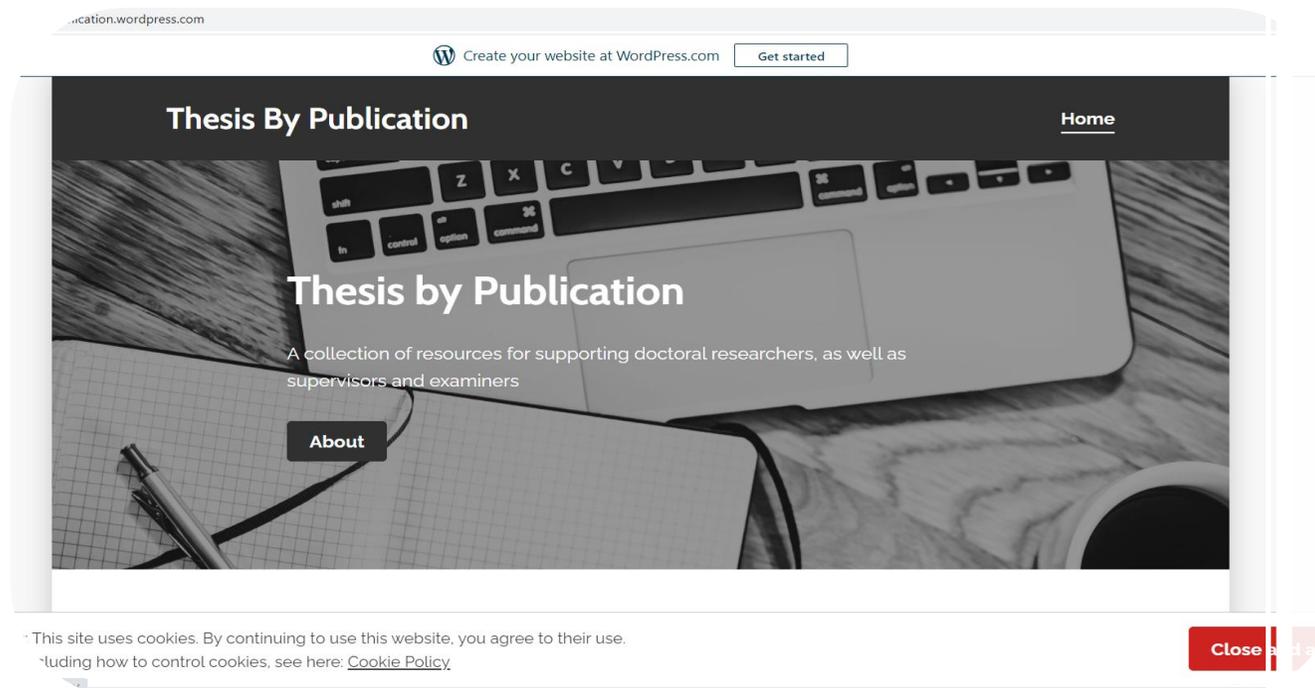
Link for signing up: <https://ansatt.oslomet.no/oslomet-akademiet/-/kalender/30506/view>

# Thesis by publication: a collection of resources

Developed by Dr. Shannon Mason & Dr. Margareth Merga:

Note the context is Australia where the “sandwich model” is more frequently used: articles appearing as chapters with integrative material in between.

<https://thesisbypublication.wordpress.com/>





# Questions??

Take a few minutes: write a question in the chat or just raise your hand