SELF-MONITORING OF ACADEMIC WRITING: A CASE STUDY

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Background

- If it’s not published, was anything done?
- Quantitative measure of productivity for promotion and tenure.

![Citations chart](chart.png)
Background

- **Self-monitoring** “the act of observing and regulating one’s own behavior in a social context.”
  https://psychcentral.com/encyclopedia/self-monitoring/

- **Self-monitoring** has shown efficacy in maintaining lifestyle-related changes.
Background

Daily writing...

“prevents procrastination and blocking.”
“demystifies the writing process.”
“keeps your research [extension and SoTL] always at the top of your mind.”
“generates new ideas.”
“helps you figure out what you want to say.”
“adds up incrementally”

H. Sword. Air & Light & Time & Space. 2017

A time to shut off email….to be undisturbed…to feel accomplishment…BTW, everyone is too busy.
Aim and Methods

• **Aim**: to explore the relationship between self-monitoring of academic writing and publication record.

• **Study Design**: a case study of a faculty member in a college of agricultural and life sciences with a 3-way appointment (teaching, extension and research) logged minutes of writing for 5 years (2013-2017) with a goal of 30 min/day.

• **Primary outcome**: Total publications in research, teaching, and extension.
Results

The chart shows the writing time (in minutes per day) for the years 2012 to 2017. The time is divided into three categories: Extension, Research, and Teaching. The chart indicates that the time spent on Teaching has increased significantly from 2012 to 2017, while the time spent on Research and Extension has decreased.

- **2012**: Extension: 35 min/day, Research: 10 min/day, Teaching: 5 min/day
- **2013**: Extension: 25 min/day, Research: 15 min/day, Teaching: 10 min/day
- **2014**: Extension: 20 min/day, Research: 20 min/day, Teaching: 5 min/day
- **2015**: Extension: 25 min/day, Research: 30 min/day, Teaching: 10 min/day
- **2016**: Extension: 30 min/day, Research: 25 min/day, Teaching: 15 min/day
- **2017**: Extension: 35 min/day, Research: 20 min/day, Teaching: 10 min/day
Results

![Graph showing the relationship between total publications and writing time (minutes per day). The graph indicates an optimal writing time of around 30 minutes per day to achieve the maximum number of total publications.]
Results

- Daily writing: mean = 34 ± 5 min/d; median 15 min/d; range 0-300 min/d.
- On average, 19 min/d extension, 13 min/d research, and < 2 min/d scholarship of teaching and learning.
- 55 refereed and peer-reviewed Extension publications (35 extension, 18 research, and 2 teaching).
- Daily writing – linearly correlated with number of publications in the same calendar year irrespective of lag time – productivity highest at 30-35 min/d
Conclusions

• Various work habits may result in prolific writing
• Self-monitoring of a writing habit may be a key factor to writing productivity.

Future Research

• Controlled studies exploring the efficacy of self-monitoring of writing on academic productivity are needed
• Publications vs pages/words written may be an appropriate outcome of interest.