

The Functions, Appearances, and Publishing Locations of the Eleven Genres

Genre	What the genre <i>typically</i> does	What the genre <i>typically</i> looks like and where it is published
Books and edited collections	Offer the opportunity to go into more depth and breadth about a topic or theme. Edited collections allow a bringing together of people working in the same field to explore the topic from different perspectives.	May involve a mixture of review, conceptual thinking, empirical data, and reflection. Learning and teaching books are published by a limited number of commercial and university presses. Several new publishers are entering the open-access market. Some edited collections are published as special issues of journals.
Case studies	Delve deeply into, and provide rich descriptions of, specific examples of successful learning and teaching practices, often within a single course, program, or institution. They also influence others to enhance their practices.	Case studies are usually organized around a “rich description” of a learning and teaching practice or context and include an introduction, discussion of the case study, and implications for other scholars. Some journals publish case studies, but blogs are also a common platform for case studies, and case studies might also be included in award or fellowship applications.
Conference and Workshop Presentations	Communicate your research, practice findings, and stimulate conversations with colleagues in real time.	Presentation formats vary widely and include conference papers, workshops, panel discussions, and poster presentations. Posting slides online following a presentation is a common practice.
Empirical research articles	Gather and use observable data (e.g., from interviews, surveys, document analyses, reflections, and narratives) to offer evidence to support a particular aim or question.	Research articles in the natural and social sciences include an introduction, a literature review, sections on methods, findings, discussion, and implications, plus a conclusion. The humanities have a different format with many variations. This genre is typically published in journals, book chapters and books.
Literature reviews	Synthesize what is known and reveal what else we can learn about a topic by reviewing existing research.	Free-standing literature reviews tend to be organized around a guiding question with an introduction and methods, findings, and discussion sections. They are commonly published as journal articles, book chapters, or research reports.
Opinion pieces	Assert a value judgement about learning and teaching that draws directly on the writer’s experience and informed perspective.	Opinion pieces tend to be short (usually less than 1000 words), written in the first person, and focused on a single point with no conventions for headings or sub-headings. Blogs are a common forum for opinion pieces or journals that explicitly publish this genre.

From *Writing about Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Creating and Contributing to Scholarly Conversations across a Range of Genres* by Healey, Matthews, and Cook-Sather. Elon University Center for Engaged Learning, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.36284/celelon.oa3>.

Reflective essays	Share lived experiences of the messy, unfinished, personal, and relational work of learning and teaching. They also offer analyses of the resulting insights.	Reflective essays are written in the first person and present insights rather than empirical findings or arguments while describing the learning and teaching practice. Reflective essays are typically published either in journals that explicitly name this genre or via blogs.
Social media	Enables fast self-publication and raises awareness of your work. Social media can accommodate any writing genre, although stories, case studies, reflective essays, and opinion pieces tend to be more common than publishing a research article, for example.	Social media by definition means to publish online. Publishing on social media can look vastly different from written text because you can design the layout and use images creatively.
Stories	Share the everyday experiences of learning and teaching from the perspective of the writer to articulate what happened in practice along with the writer's experience of the practice. The author and the story are intertwined in ways that privilege the subjectivity of the story.	Stories include information about the context: what happened, who was involved, where it happened, and what happened in a narrative flow. They are unlikely to have headings at all. Award and fellowship applications typically include a story, and book chapters and blogs are also common media for publishing stories.
Teaching awards, fellowships, and promotions	Make the case and provide evidence that you meet the award, fellowship, or promotion criteria, based, at least in part, on the excellence of your teaching, support of learning, and leadership.	In contrast to the other genres, these applications are usually private. Some involve completing highly structured forms, while others emphasize critical reflection and discussion of the evidence of impact of a <i>selection</i> of activities and experiences structured under a few broad headings. These typically go to a committee or panel for assessment.
Theoretical and conceptual articles	Draw on literature and theories (without presenting new data) to provoke, deepen, or expand thinking about a particular concept or practice.	Theoretical and conceptual articles typically describe the method or approach guiding the writer's process but otherwise do not follow a prescribed set of headings typical of data-driven research articles. They are typically published as journals, book chapters, or books.