

Inaugural Editorial for the Journal of Mason Graduate Research

MARILYN SHARIF

George Mason University

The Editorial Board of the Journal of Mason Graduate Research (JMGR) welcomes you to our first volume, **Innovations in Education**. As a team of editors, peer reviewers and advisors, we are excited about launching this first issue, and look forward to many more issues of the JMGR in the future.

JMGR is the first peer reviewed research journal by and for all graduate and professional (graduate) students at George Mason University (Mason). The idea for the JMGR was initiated by Dr. Mary Zamon, Associate Director (retired), Office of Institutional Assessment, and shared by her graduate students in the fall of 2011. As a direct result of her enthusiasm and mentorship, several of these students began meeting with her in the spring 2012 semester to brainstorm the development of a journal of graduate student research at Mason.

Today, the JMGR is led by an Editorial Board and team of dedicated graduate students and faculty advisors, and supported by academic and administrative offices across campus. We are especially appreciative of the support we have received from Mason's Library System, the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GAPSA), the Office of Student Media, and University Life (Graduate Life). In addition, we are very appreciative of the funding, support and encouragement that we have received from the Office of the Provost.

Our Editorial Board includes: Stefan Amrine, Assistant Managing Editor and Graduate Assistant, Sydney Merz, Peer Review Editor, Brett Say, Associate Editor, Steve Harris Scott, Marketing Director and Chief Financial Officer, Josh St. Louis, Managing Editor, Marilyn Sharif, Chief Editor, and Josh Yavelberg, Web Director and Publication Editor. In addition, our faculty advisors are Dr. Jamie Lester and Dr. Mary Zamon, professors from Mason's Higher

Education Program, and Anne Driscoll, Mason's Education Liaison Librarian, and consultant to the JMGR for the Open Journal System (OJS), an electronic journal platform supported by Mason and used to launch our online version of JMGR.

JMGR is committed to providing Mason and the broader academic community with a sustainable, quality, peer reviewed, journal of graduate and joint graduate/faculty research readily available online. Also, JMGR provides opportunities for Mason graduate students to engage in positive collaborative leadership through the peer review and publication processes, as well as Mason faculty to contribute service to the university community through academic mentorships. Through such collaborative efforts of graduate students and faculty, it is our mission to:

- publish at least one volume annually of Mason graduate student, peer reviewed research
- provide Mason graduate students with an innovative, multi- and interdisciplinary forum for academic dialogue
- encourage quality graduate student research and writing experiences
- provide graduate students with positive learning experiences through engaging in rigorous editorial, peer review and publication processes
- provide positive leadership and collaborative team experiences for Mason graduate students who participate in the peer review and publication processes
- provide mentorship experiences for Mason faculty, as well as service to the university and academic community at large
- utilize the online Open Journal System (OJS), helping to contribute to Mason's environmental and budgetary goals
- provide academic research content freely, and available online (open access)
- contribute to Mason's greater mission to maintain an international reputation for superior education and public service

In short, our objective is that this volume of the JMGR will be the first of many that will help Mason graduate students publish original research. Focused on **Innovations in Education**, some of the suggested topics included: assessment, STEM, teaching and learning, student services and experience, employability of students, faculty issues, graduate education, international student issues, and more.

Submitted articles were forwarded to a review committee composed of graduate students and mentoring faculty. Each article was reviewed by an editor and then by two trained graduate student peer reviewers who had received training on the peer review process. All reviews were conducted blindly with articles being accepted, or tentatively accepted pending revisions and resubmission, or rejected. Then a team of graduate students copy-edited the accepted articles to prepare them for publication.

The advantage of an electronic publication is that we can accept articles on a rolling basis throughout the academic year. Our goal for this first volume is approximately eight published articles by the end of the 2013-14 academic year. While we are initiating this volume with a letter, an editorial and two graduate student articles, we plan to publish more articles until we reach our targeted number. Therefore, we encourage aspiring graduate student writers to consider submitting articles for publication in this volume. Once it is complete, we will start reviewing articles for the next volume, and so forth.

Our first article in Volume I is by John Lunsford, a graduate student interested in anthropology and cross-disciplinary studies, who participated in Mason's School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Field School in Bali, Indonesia during the summer of 2011. His article introduces us to a unique international opportunity exemplifying the globalization of Mason's curriculum that not only provided valuable first hand field experience for participating graduate students, but also provided useful feedback to the communities that hosted their research. Overall, Lunsford's article is a wonderful representation of the internationalization process occurring at Mason as we pursue the status of a "world-class" university.

We are especially excited about our second article, written by Josh Yavelberg, JMGR's Web Director and Publication Editor. Highly experienced in teaching the Art History Survey, Yavelberg explores what it takes to transform his discipline's foundational course from a traditional, teacher-centered to a more active, student-centered pedagogy. Utilizing personal conversations with his colleagues, a literature review and conference session feedback, Yavelberg suggests a creative, technological approach to extending this professional dialogue on the methods of art history survey instruction, as well as areas of future research.

Our third and fourth articles are currently under review and will be published as they complete the editorial process. We are still accepting articles for Volume I of the JMGR, and

encourage all Mason graduate students to consider submitting a paper to complete this volume. For instructions on submitting an article, see: <http://journals.gmu.edu/jmgr>.

In the meantime, the JMGR Editorial Board is considering the selection of a topic for our second volume, and soon will send out an announcement to Mason graduate students soliciting topic suggestions. Also, there is room for more graduate student volunteers as peer reviewers, copy editors, and help in other areas of the publication process, including editing positions as they open up. If you are interested in participating in this process, please contact us by emailing jmgr@gmu.edu.

Again, we welcome you to the inaugural issue of JMGR, and look forward to the academic dialogue we hope to initiate. Please email all feedback to jmgr@gmu.edu.

~ Marilyn Sharif, Editor-in-Chief