

Letter of Sponsorship

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January 9, 2014

Dear Mason students, faculty and staff,

Today a new publication opens at George Mason University as a result of hard work and dedication from Mason graduate students. Over the past five semesters they have worked steadily, creatively and to high standards to create this first issue of the Journal of Mason Graduate Research. Congratulations are due to all the students whose names you see in this issue. Feel free to send in your good wishes too!

The support of Dr. Jaime Lester is a steadying force to us all as we begin this student conceived, developed and run on- line journal. Thanks also to the George Mason library for the technical systems and advice to make this possible. Although I am now retired, I am proud to remain connected as a co-sponsor and assistant whenever needed.

You may be interested in how this began. I was privileged to teach CTCH 826 in the fall of 2011. Students were from the MAIS Higher Education, DA in Community College Teaching and the Ph.D. in Higher Education programs.

Toward the end of the class, I asked students what they would like in their program that currently was not available. Students replied they desired to publish, but, as part-time students, found it difficult. They were not eligible for assistantships which are the most common entry into publishing as a junior author. As we discussed ways to address their issues, someone said “Let’s do it ourselves.”

At that moment the JMGR proposal was born.

A series of planning meetings followed and the decision was to open participation to all graduate students, regardless of college or program. A highlight of the planning was the training of peer reviewers. Forty students from across the university answered and participated in the workshop which was entirely planned and conducted by students. I was very impressed with their organization, talents and teaching skills, as well as the ability to mobilize that number of students! At the same time, directions and tutorials were developed so reviewing and submission processes could all take place on line. Another great set of talents exhibited!

The next important step was submission of a proposal to the Associate Provost for a dedicated graduate assistant to provide continuity and support. Again, a completely student developed and presented proposal went forward. Dr. Edwards responded with the grant at the end of their presentation. I think it must be one of the speedier decisions at Mason. We now have a well-qualified and capable graduate assistant supporting JMGR. A third highlight is our partnership with the Graduate and Professional Student Association at Mason, a student created synergy. They have given us a home base in student affairs and proven to be steady partners.

As this first issue is launched, I am quite happy to attend its birth, and deeply proud of the student parents. I am particularly happy as an alumna of Mason and almost 12-year employee and adjunct instructor.

All Mason graduate students are invited to join these efforts, learn about writing and publication and enjoy meeting students across the university. My own very tip top wishes to all, deep thanks to the founding group and expectations of seeing continued growth and achievements.

~ Mary Zamon, Ph.D.