

# SUURJ: Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal

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## Welcome to SUURJ

Editors of SUURJ

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# *Welcome to SUURJ*

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Molly Clark Hillard, PhD  
Emma Foster  
Jane Kidder  
Hannah Rips

We are so pleased to welcome you to the inaugural issue of the Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal (*SUURJ*). What you are reading is the result of over a year of dreaming, planning, and hard work. *SUURJ* is the joint effort of collaborators and friends—students, faculty, and administration—across the university. For this reason, it has many origin stories, many points of embarkation. One such moment occurred when English major and Writing Center consultant **Hannah Rips** was standing in line for coffee, and overheard a fellow student say, “I wish Seattle University had an undergraduate research journal!” She returned to the Writing Center with this colleague’s brainwave and pitched the idea to her fellow consultants. A team of students latched on to the idea, and spent six months creating and circulating a proposal for the university’s administration.

Another crystallizing moment came when the proposal found a home. Writing Studies director **Dr. June Johnson**, English department chair **Dr. Maria Bullón-Fernandez** and interim chair **Dr. Charles Tung**, and Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Director **Dr. Nalini Iyer** recognized the proposal’s potential, and recommended it as a joint venture of the Office of the Provost, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the English department. The journal emerged as a co-curricular experience, where student editors would gain course credit in the Writing Studies minor for learning the principles of editing and publishing, and student authors would gain professional experience by having their essays undergo a peer review and editorial process. English faculty **Dr. Molly Clark Hillard** was named as the journal’s Chief Faculty Editor. In the spring of 2016, Dr. Hillard worked with the journal’s original student proposers to develop a strategic action plan for the journal’s first year. She assembled a faculty advisory board, planned the curriculum for the 2016-2017 courses, and, with the help of her student assistants, recruited student editors and contributors for the fall of 2016.

In the fall quarter class, one of the first duties awaiting the student editors was to write a Mission and Values statement, in order to help them reach consensus on what they wanted the journal to represent. For editor **Emma Foster**, this was one of the most powerful moments in her work on *SUURJ*. In that conversation, she thought about what an undergraduate research paper could

mean to SU's campus, and worked to write a mission statement that would set a precedent for a journal that could provide space for voices across campus. From the beginning, Emma felt, there was a focus on the ways the journal was interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary, as well as conversations about how to make the journal a voice for the entire student population, not simply one subsection. This mission was carried into the rest of the quarter, and helped us to think about how we would approach the selection of applicants and the editing process. This journal contains the pieces that we believed best fit our mission, not simply because they are well written, but because they take on important conversations that the community of SU strives to engage with.

Throughout the fall, student editors learned about the differences between publications in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, and practiced the principles of copyediting for each discipline. Late in the quarter, the editing team received our first batch of submissions. We were thrilled to get 30 submissions—a very healthy pool for our first issue—and excited to dig in. Students created a rubric for assessment, spent time reading and ranking, and then came together for deliberation. **Dr. Hillard** remembers it vividly, as it was the day after the presidential election. For her, it was a crystalizing moment, watching students come together to do work that felt purposeful, positive, and hopeful. One student stopped afterward to say, “This felt right to do today.” The students made a set of recommendations to the Faculty Advisory Board, who deliberated, and made a final set of recommendations for publication. These are the articles you have before you.

In the winter quarter, we began our actual editorial work. Each essay was assigned a faculty content editor (a professor in the student's field of investigation) and a student editor. Faculty editors, student editors, and authors worked together over the quarter to shape and polish the essay. Faculty focused on accuracy and conveyance of ideas, while students focused on accuracy, clarity, and style of prose. Student mentor **Dr. Serena Cosgrove** reflects that **Emily Kawahigashi's** essay is the product of a couple of years of dedication to her topic: Dr. Cosgrove reflects glowingly on the peer editorial process, and feels proud that Emily will have this publication on her resume as she applies for fellowships and graduate school.

In spring quarter, student editors dedicated their efforts to the production and publication of the premier edition, which launched May 12, 2017 at SUURA (the Seattle University Undergraduate Research Association), thanks to event organizers Dr. Iyer and **Dr. Mina Rishi**, student committees worked in collaboration with Dr. Hillard to design, market, and unveil the first issue in order to create a lasting identity for *SUURJ*. A special moment for editor **Jane Kidder** was seeing a draft of the *SUURJ* cover, created by talented designer Julie Hamp, for the first time and deliberating with her colleagues to envision the finished product. The cover was something concrete following a period of intensive editing work,

which can often feel abstract, and the inaugural issue and our key role in its realization as student editors became tangible for her then. In that moment, she could see the product of our theorizing, debating, and collaborating over the past year finally come to fruition.

The journal comprises 10 essays from eight varied majors and the University Core and represents the year-long endeavors of countless collaborators. Dr. Hillard is especially proud of how hard the editorial team worked to ensure that the student essays selected were simultaneously very diverse but also reflective of the mission and values statement the editors created. Disciplines represented include biology, history, English, media studies, microbiology, philosophy, and psychology. Essay topics cover matters like ecology, dental health, gender identity and bias, refugee mental health, disability studies, spirituality and stress, and reparations for Black slavery. As editors involved in the process from the journal's initiation to its inaugural launch, we aim to inspire Seattle University students to contribute to the journal's longevity, by submitting their exemplary work or by taking on a role as student editors in years to come.