

October 2017

Letter from the Director of Undergraduate Research

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Recommended Citation

Kehoe, Robert (2017) "Letter from the Director of Undergraduate Research," *SMU Journal of Undergraduate Research*: Vol. 3 , Article 1. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25172/jour.3.1.1>

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Dear Members of the SMU Community,

I am very pleased to share with you a new entrant into the scholarly activities in which SMU student researchers are now engaging – the *SMU Journal of Undergraduate Research (JoUR)*.

SMU's *JoUR* is an exciting, student run initiative spearheaded by the Honors Research Association (HRA), with an ongoing collaborative and advisory role played by the Office of Undergraduate Research and the faculty of the Undergraduate Research Council (UGRC). Crucial encouragement, support and resources are provided by SMU's Engaged Learning program. The HRA has been an energetic and productive force on campus bringing students together into meaningful discussions of research as well as efforts to improve opportunities for SMU students. Their development of *JoUR* provides outstanding opportunities to student researchers that are highly aligned with the mission and stated goals of the University.

The past year has been an exciting period of development in the journal, with all aspects of the publication being reviewed and enhanced. HRA has further developed the format and mission of *JoUR*. They greatly strengthened professional rigor in the paper submission policies, and in the subsequent referee and editorial processes. This includes SMU faculty as referees of papers in their disciplines, an important element to ensure student researchers' experience best reflects practices in professional journals.

The functionality and utility of *JoUR* has also been dramatically improved by integration into SMU Scholar, facilitated by the Central University Libraries. This highly flexible resource provides excellent web-based capabilities to read, archive and disseminate the scholarly accomplishments of SMU undergraduates.

I have been impressed by HRA team's hard work to ensure that *JoUR* is a publication that they and SMU can be proud of, and that can be sustained well into the future. Their efforts help knit *JoUR* into the research endeavor at SMU, providing another critical way to strengthen and expand the pedagogical function of undergraduate research on campus. It has been a real pleasure to work with Man Qi and her team on this project. They have shown great professionalism and dedication to their work. I look forward to SMU benefitting for a long time to come.

Sincerely,



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