

Guest Editorial

***Psi Chi Journal* Now Serves All Psi Chi Members**

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The *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research* has undergone an exciting transformation into the *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*, a peer-reviewed, indexed journal, that now accepts manuscripts from all Psi Chi members. This change provides an excellent opportunity to review the evolution of the Journal and submission criteria as well as the twists and turns that the life of a submitted manuscript takes potential authors through once manuscripts are entrusted to the *Psi Chi Journal* team.

History of the Journal

Volume 1, issues 1 and 2 of the *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research* were published as a joint issue with seven empirical articles and an inaugural editorial by Dr. Stephen F. Davis. In an enthusiastic beginning, Davis (1996) wrote, "The twofold purpose of this journal is to foster and reward the scholarly research efforts of undergraduate psychology students and to provide them with a valuable learning experience" (n.p.). In the editorial, Davis also listed the first 20 reviewers for the journal, a veritable Who's Who of Psi Chi, including such names as Elizabeth Yost Hammer and R. Eric Landrum. Since then, 15 volumes have been published. Each volume since the first has included four issues per year, with five to six articles per issue, amounting to more than 300 published articles authored by undergraduate students.

We take pride in this level of scholarly productivity among our undergraduate students and selfless mentoring by our dedicated faculty. *Psi Chi Journal's* intellectual integrity has been safeguarded by six editors: Drs. Davis (1995–2001), Warren H. Jones (2001–07), Christopher Koch (2007–09), Martha S. Zlokovich (2009–10), and Randolph A. Smith (2010–11). The mentoring of authors has been in the capable hands of countless reviewers

who have shared their time and talents. Notably, some of the scholars in that original group continue to serve as active reviewers of the *Journal* today.

Changes to the Journal

The *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research* builds on the strengths of its predecessor and emerges as an international, fully reviewed, quarterly journal dedicated to the publication of scholarly research authored by members of Psi Chi. In keeping with the tradition of nurturing our members toward scholarly dissemination, the *Journal* will continue to provide supportive feedback to authors. The *Journal* will feature work from any field of specialization within psychology and welcomes a broad range of methodologies.

In keeping with our additional tradition of showcasing substantive contributions that stand to further the science of psychology, manuscripts must be original and empirical (see Domenech Rodríguez, 2011). This stipulation means that work should be largely theoretically driven, include research questions or hypotheses, and apply systematic methods and observations to arrive at conclusions regarding the questions of interest. Manuscripts are also peer reviewed (see Domenech Rodríguez, 2011). As such, each manuscript is reviewed by content and/or methodological experts. For example, a manuscript documenting a qualitative exploration of adolescent identity in incarcerated youths may be reviewed by a faculty expert in adolescent development, a faculty expert in qualitative methods, and another faculty with expertise in incarcerated populations.

One major change in the submissions is that now all Psi Chi members can submit their work as first authors. Undergraduate students who have graduated are no longer limited by the 6-month postgraduation deadline. Graduate students and

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faculty now can submit as first authors as well. Faculty authors must have a student coauthor. Additionally, reviewers are now prompted in their evaluation forms to take into account the first author's developmental level so that a first author who is an undergraduate student will be evaluated according to the level of work expected of an undergraduate student. Furthermore, undergraduate authors will continue to receive detailed, comprehensive feedback on their manuscripts as well as narrative explanations. Graduate and faculty authors will receive mostly narrative feedback.

The Life of a Manuscript

A *Psi Chi Journal* manuscript comes in through our submission portal, which can be found by going to www.psichi.org and following the links to the *Psi Chi Journal*. Once a manuscript is received, the Editor and Managing Editor work together to ensure the basic criteria are met (i.e., author is a Psi Chi member, manuscript is empirical). The Editor then carefully selects three reviewers for each submission. The review process lasts approximately 10–12 weeks, but may take longer during holidays to accommodate reviewers.

The review process is complete when three peer reviewers have provided feedback to the Editor, who subsequently reviews the paper as well and integrates all reviewers' comments. The Action Editor then integrates the feedback into a decision letter, notifying authors of one of the following decisions: (a) the manuscript is accepted pending minor revisions, (b) the author is invited to revise and resubmit the manuscript, or (c) the manuscript

is rejected. Authors whose work has been accepted pending minor revisions or who have been asked to revise and resubmit their manuscript have approximately four weeks to complete their revisions and resubmit the manuscript. The final manuscript is then sent to the Editorial Assistant for a final review of APA style and references. Once cleared, it goes into production under the capable leadership of our Managing Editor. Accepted manuscripts are typically published in the order in which they finish the full process of review and revisions. As the final step, authors wait for the printed *Journal* to arrive via snail mail!

Expanding *Psi Chi Journal's* Potential

Building on a rich history of promoting excellent scholarship among undergraduate student members, the *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research* embraces change and opens new opportunities for all members to become published authors. This shift will greatly benefit authors and readers alike, increasing submissions, the range of research published, and the likelihood of being indexed in PsycINFO and other leading indexing databases (see Domenech Rodríguez, 2011). Indexing will increase our visibility as an academic journal and will extend our reach so that the work of our authors can be more broadly disseminated.

References

- Davis, S. F. (1996). Inaugural editorial. *Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research*. Retrieved from http://www.psichi.org/Pubs/Articles/Article_330.aspx
- Domenech Rodríguez, M. (2011, Fall). How does Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research measure up? *Eye on Psi Chi*, 16(1), 8–9.

Contributors' Checklist

Prior to submission:

- ✓ *Is the primary author a Psi Chi member?*
 - The first author of a submitted manuscript must be a member of Psi Chi at the time of submission.
 - Additional authors may include nonPsi Chi members.
- ✓ *Is the manuscript empirical?*
 - Empirical articles include original data collection, secondary data analysis, or meta-analysis.
- ✓ *Is the contribution original?*
 - Only original manuscripts (not published or accepted for publication elsewhere) will be accepted.
- ✓ *Against whom do you expect your paper to be compared by reviewers?*
 - Reviewers will be prompted to evaluate your paper based on the level of work expected of undergraduate students, graduate students, or faculty.
- ✓ *Is the research timely?*
 - The Editor reserves the right not to review projects completed more than one year before submission.
- ✓ *For faculty authors, is a student coauthor included?*
 - Faculty must have at least one student coauthor.
- ✓ *Has the manuscript been written according to APA Style?*
 - All manuscripts must be prepared according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.).
 - Refer to the "Checklist for Manuscript Submission" found on APA's website (<http://www.apa.org/pubs/authors/manuscript-check.aspx>) to check the accuracy of your paper for APA style prior to submission.
 - Authors are expected to be familiar with reprint corrections to the first printing of the 6th edition of the manual. Check these on the APA website ([pubman-reprint-corrections-for-2e.pdf](http://www.apa.org/pubs/authors/manuscript-check.aspx)) before submitting a manuscript in 6th edition style.

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