

EUREKA: UNDERGRADUATES CAN PUBLISH TOO!

Eureka
Volume 3, Number 1 (2012)

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Here you are, with a copy of Eureka in your hands. Between our covers, you can see the research of your fellow undergraduates. But, I am sure you are still left with some questions: What is the purpose of Eureka? How did Eureka get started? And most importantly: How can I submit my work to Eureka? Well, here are your answers.

What is Eureka? How did Eureka get started?

Eureka is a student-founded and student-run undergraduate science journal at the University of Alberta. It is the result of a vision that three undergraduate students had a few years ago, to serve as a platform to showcase the world-class research being done at the University of Alberta. Through Eureka, senior undergraduates can publish their work and experience the peer-review process firsthand, while more junior undergraduates can see the work of the peers and gain a better understanding of what an undergraduate can do in a research setting. Eureka began accumulating submissions in September of 2009, and now published three issues (including the one in your hands right now). The three undergraduate students I mentioned earlier are still involved in Eureka: Braden Teitge, Patrick Jones, and myself – Christopher Madan.

All three of us have graduated, but are still at the University of Alberta: Braden Teitge is now a MD student. Patrick Jones is currently pursuing a BSc in Pharmacy. I am currently working on a PhD in Psychology, with a focus on the cognitive neuroscience of memory.

Why should I submit my work to Eureka?

So you have already conducted research, either through a 200- or 400-level independent studies course, an internship, or even through a literature review in a senior class. Why should you submit your work to Eureka? By having your work published in Eureka, you can gain some experience with the peer-review process. While many professors point out the importance of the peer-review process in their courses, students rarely get the opportunity to experience it firsthand. Papers submitted to Eureka are reviewed by two reviewers (often graduate students, but sometimes faculty members as well), and authors are provided with feedback to revise their work – as is done with ‘full scale’ journals. Additionally, you can list the publication on your CV when you apply to graduate school, and can include a copy of your paper with your submission. Often undergraduates have not published any research by the time graduate school admission deadlines come around, so having published your work in any form will greatly help your application.

What kind of submissions does Eureka accept?

We accept three types of submissions: research articles, published abstracts, and reviews.

Research articles are what you usually think of when you talk about research papers. These are the primary results published by researchers, where an experiment was conducted and data was analyzed and interpreted. These types of papers are often the result of an 400-level independent studies course or summer research internship.

Published abstracts are based on the same work as a research article. However, some ‘full scale’ journals may have an issue if your work was first published with us as a research article prior to being submitted to them. To address this issue, we allow you to publish just an abstract of your work with us. The abstract is like 1-3 pages in length, with less detail included on the exact experimental method and analyses, and instead focusing on the study’s initial motivation and an interpretation of the results. These abstracts are similar to what is often submitted to for a conference’s proceedings.

Reviews are often the term papers you write for a 400-level course. These involve doing a thorough literature review of a given topic, and combining the results of these studies to point a general finding across a large number of studies. However, literature reviews do not need to have been done in a senior-level course, as demonstrated by a recent Science 100 student (see Polet, 2011, Eureka 2, p. 43-46).

In all of these cases, please see works that have been previously published in Eureka to get a better idea of what a completed article looks like.

When can I submit my work to Eureka?

Eureka has several “call for submissions” per year. However, we do accept submissions at any time. As previously mentioned, submissions will be reviewed and the author will need to make revisions prior to the submission being accepted. Thus, it is prudent to submit your work early so that it will not need to be delayed until the following issue.

You can submit your work either through our website (<http://www.eurekajournal.com>) or by emailing your submission to us at eureka@ualberta.ca. Additionally, please email us if you have any questions about submitting your work to Eureka.

How can I become involved with Eureka?

Obviously, the best way is to submit your work to us! However, if you want to become even more involved, you could become an editor. Editors should be in at least their third-year of undergraduate studies, and have a strong background in their field. If you are interested, please email us and we will discuss the roles and responsibilities with you further.

If you do not yet have a strong background in a given field, but still want to become involved with Eureka, we do have other positions as well. To make Eureka what it is, we also need the help of layout editors, copy editors, as well as general volunteers. Layout editors convert the ‘boring’ looking double-spaced manuscripts we receive into the professionally typeset journal you are reading right now. Copy editors proof the text for grammatical and typographical errors. General volunteers help us fundraise, advocates for Eureka, and advertise our call for submissions. If you are interested in any of these positions, do not hesitate to email us and we can discuss the positions with you further.



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