University of Michigan
Undergraduate Research
Forum Constitution

The University of Michigan Undergraduate Research Forum strives to strengthen connections between University of Michigan undergraduate students, graduate students, and the community, as well as between the different academic disciplines. Our mission is to inspire interest in research through the publication of a non-technical, peer- and faculty-reviewed journal that will include articles from all fields of research in the natural sciences, engineering, the social sciences and the humanities.

This constitution is adopted by consensus to outline the organization and aim of the Forum.

**Article One: Organizational Structure**

The Forum will be governed by an elected student editorial board, initially chosen by the founding members of the Forum. Each elected officer will chair a committee that will attend to the functions assigned to that officer’s position.

**Student Editorial Board**

**Editor-in-Chief:** The Editor-in-Chief holds responsibility for the final journal publication and is the head of the Student Review Board. S/he will delegate duties to other Student Editorial Board members. Responsibilities of the Editor-in-Chief include:

1) Reading the abstract of each submitted article and forwarding it to the appropriate member(s) of the Student Review Board
2) Creating and enforcing deadlines.
3) Enforcing the journal constitution and voting process
4) Acting as the official representative of the Forum
5) Communicating with all members of the Student Editorial Board and updating monetary supporters on the progress of the journal.
6) Acting as a final check on the journal’s substance and format before each issue goes to print.
7) Distributing the finished journal.
**Financial Manager:** The Financial Manager will record the budget and control the expenditures of the Forum. His/her responsibilities include:
1) Inventorying all Forum property.
2) Minimizing unnecessary Forum expenditures.
3) Updating the Student Editorial Board with regard to the Forum's budget on a regular basis.

**Internal Relations Representative:** The Internal Relations Representative will ensure that the interests of the Forum and University coincide. S/he will reconcile the Forum’s goals with the goals of all academic departments, University administration, the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), and the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP). Specific responsibilities of the Internal Relations Representative include:
1) Notifying University groups of the Forum’s activities on a regular basis by mailing lists and other methods.
2) Recruiting faculty members to help with the submission-review process.
3) Assisting the Editor-in-Chief by distributing the finished journal to University departments and administration.

**External Relations Representative:** The External Relations Representative will promote the Forum to those outside of the university community who share our interests (industry, interest groups, and governmental institutions). S/he will also work towards the sponsorship and promotion of the Forum by the aforementioned agencies. Specific responsibilities of the External Relations Representative include:
1) Speaking with external interests (including but not limited to those mentioned above) about advertising in the Forum.
2) Soliciting funds from industry, government, and other sources.
3) Connecting authors of Forum articles with representatives from relevant external industries.
4) Corresponding with the publications of other universities.

**Student Publicity Manager:** The Student Publicity Manager will promote the Forum to University undergraduates and ensure that the Forum and its aim are known by all students. Specific responsibilities of the Student Publicity Manager include:
1) Promoting the Forum by advertising in other publications (especially those distributed to or written by University students).
2) Advertising for article submissions through the formulation and distribution of posters, handouts, and brochures.
3) Creating and maintaining an award process for outstanding publication in the journal.
4) Maintaining a “publicity” budget (the expenditures necessary for adequate promotion of the Forum among University undergraduates).
5) Communicating the publicity budget to the Financial Manager.
6) Acting as a direct representative of the Forum to undergraduates interested in submitting.
7) Communicating the writing style of articles published in the Forum to prospective article writers.

**Copy Editor:** The Copy Editor will integrate all components of the finished journal into a publishable form using Adobe Pagemaker or similar software. S/he will also send the publishable version of the Forum to the publisher. Specific responsibilities of the Copy Editor include:

1) Constraining all articles to similar formats (chosen and approved by the Student Editorial Board).
2) Integrating visual aids into written articles.
3) Acting as a final check on the journal’s substance and format.
4) Ensuring that writing styles in every review, proposal, interview, and original-work article are consistent.
5) Corresponding with the publishing company.
6) Maintaining a “publishing” budget (the expenditures necessary for publication of the Forum).
7) Corresponding with the External Relations Representative and Student Publicity Manager to ensure adequate promotion and distribution of the Forum.
8) Receiving, cataloging, and storing published issues of the Forum.

**Graphics Editor:** The Graphics Editor will work with the article writers and Student Editorial Board to include pertinent and visually appealing graphics in the Forum publication. Specific responsibilities of the Graphics Editor include:

1) Corresponding with article writers to create appropriate visualizations of data, results, and theories.
2) Creating logos and graphical styles for publicizing and popularizing the Forum online and in print.
3) Working with the Copy Editor to integrate visuals into the Forum.

**Webpage Editor:** The Webpage Editor will create and maintain the Forum webpage. S/he will also create the online version of the Forum and monitor its content. Specific responsibilities of the Webpage Editor include:

1) Developing the Forum’s official webpage.
2) Ensuring the Forum is available online in an easy-to-access format.
3) Maintaining a budget related to electronic publication.
4) Collecting biographical information on staff and student writers for inclusion in the Forum webpage.
5) Publicizing the webpage on internet search engines and related sites on a regular basis.
Editorial Board Meeting Rules

A quorum will be needed for an Editorial Board meeting to occur. A quorum will consist of no less than half of the Student Editorial Board. The Editor-in-Chief (unless absent) will set the agenda but not be allowed to vote on any issue raised in discussion. If the Editor-in-Chief is absent, s/he will inform the Student Editorial Board of his/her agenda for the pending meeting and offer a permissible excuse for his/her absence. On each issue, every Student Editorial Board member will be allocated time to express his/her opinions. An anonymous, majority vote, impartially recorded by the Editor-in-Chief, will be conclusive and binding. If a tie occurs, the Editor-in-Chief will cast the deciding vote.

Student and Faculty Review Boards

Review Boards

The Student and Faculty Review Boards have the authority to approve or deny article submissions. A quorum of the Student Review Board will decide which articles are worthy of publication based upon an anonymous majority vote. Members of the Editorial Board are automatically members of the Student Review Board.

The Student Review Board will be responsible for preliminary decisions on all submissions. Each submission will be categorized as accepted, rejected, or delayed. The “delayed” submissions will be reconsidered for publication after the evaluation of all other material judged as “acceptable” for publication in each issue of the Forum. Acceptance may be provisional pending revisions. After a submission is accepted, the Student Review Board may request the author for revisions. The approved version of the submission will then be submitted to the Faculty Review Board.

The Faculty Review Board will be made up of University faculty interested in and knowledgeable about various research topics. It will function in the same manner and under the same constraints as the Student Review Board. Only submissions accepted by both review boards will be published.

Selection of Board Members; New Members

Selection of the First Student Editorial and Review Boards

All students interested in serving on the Editorial and Review Boards of the Forum, including those who assisted in its design and founding, must apply through the application form. These applications will be reviewed by the founding members of the Forum (listed below) in groups of two or three. Interviews will then be offered to qualified applicants (chosen by consensus of the founding members based upon the recommendations of the sub-groups).
The final selection of individuals for positions will be made by the consensus of the founding members of the Forum.

The founding members who will participate in the selection process and who will have the right to vote for applicants are: Adam Brzezinski, Wei Gu, Howard Lei, Shauna Puhl, Sanyo Tsai, and Shahzad Zafar.

**Nominations and New Members**

New members will specify the Editorial Board officer with whom they would like to work. Editorial Board members have the authority to delegate tasks and responsibilities within their departments according to the commitment, experience and interests of each member in their department. A member of a department may be dismissed by his/her Editorial Board officer, but the dismissed member may then appeal his/her dismissal to the Editorial Board and be reinstated in his/her previous position if s/he receives the affirmation of a two-thirds majority vote from the Editorial Board. Otherwise, his/her dismissal is final.

When graduating or leaving the Forum for any other reason, an Editorial Board member must nominate a replacement from within his or her department. This nomination and any others will be considered by the Editorial Board, and a two-thirds majority vote will be required for installation of the new board member. The exiting board member may vote in this decision. Elections for the Editorial Board will be held between February 1 and March 1 annually, but the newly elected Editorial Board members will not take office until May 1. They are, however, expected to work closely with existing Editorial Board members so that a smooth transition will result when the retiring officer leaves.

Any student may join the Student Review Board with the prerequisites of (1) one semester of experience in the Forum and (2) Editorial Board approval (simple majority vote). The first Student Review Board will be selected by the founding members by consensus.

**Responsibilities of Members**

Members of the Forum are expected to accomplish their assigned tasks by the given deadlines or contact their Editorial Board member or the Editor-in-Chief to make other arrangements. Members are expected to attend weekly Forum meetings during the times they serve on the Forum staff. If a member cannot attend a meeting, s/he must report the proposed absence to an Editorial Board member and the Editor-in-Chief, preferably before the meeting occurs. Excuses for absences will be accepted through the day after the meeting. If any member is absent more than three times per semester without a valid excuse, s/he will be dismissed. Members are expected to be on time to meetings; three tardies will count as one absence. However, members will be able to make up missed
meetings based on an agreement with their Editorial Board members and the Editor-in-Chief.

**Dismissal Policy**

The Editor-in-Chief has the power to dismiss any Research Forum Board member but needs the approval of the entire Editorial Board (through a three-fourths majority vote). Dismissal is effective immediately. Grounds for dismissal include:

1) Unprofessional Conduct.
2) Failure to perform duties or uphold responsibility as stated in position description.
3) Failure to communicate with other Board members.
4) Frequent absence at Forum meetings without warranted excuse.
5) Actions which damage the reputation of the Forum (subject to the judgment of the Editorial Board).

The Editor-in-Chief can be dismissed on the above grounds by a three-fourths majority of the Editorial Board.
Article Two: Rules for Submission and the Submission Process

All submissions will be reviewed by the Student Review Board and, if accepted, by the Faculty Review Board.

General Submission Guidelines

The Forum will accept reviews, non-technical papers, interviews and letters from University of Michigan (Ann Arbor) undergraduate primary authors. Secondary authors may be mentors and faculty members, but the original work must be created by the University of Michigan student. Excellent examples of the writing style we are looking to publish can be found in articles in Scientific American. Articles will be accepted if experimental or survey evidence is the basis for the conclusions of the article.

Members of the University of Michigan Undergraduate Research Forum may submit works in the same manner as any other student if they are not members of the Student Review Board. Members of the Student Review Board are only permitted to submit review articles.

The student will submit a complete soft copy of the work (in Microsoft Word format) through an online form. All submissions will be evaluated based upon the quality of research and its presentation.

A submitter must:
1) Create an original work in a Word document format. Visuals are to be proffered separately and the location cited in the text. All visuals should be numbered and accompanied by a title and brief caption/explanation. Sources are to be cited in endnote form according to the guidelines below.
2) Submit the article by attaching it to the submission email found on the Forum web site. The submitted work must contain the submitter’s name, uniqname, UMID, concentration/major, year, mentor, and lab contact information.
3) Complete and turn in the Author and Mentor Agreement Forms.

Types of Submissions

Review

A review summarizes past research and possible future directions of a particular academic concentration in a non-technical manner. This is the only article type that members of the Student Review Board will be permitted to submit. The submitter may make recommendations for future research in a review.
Letter

A letter to the journal expresses an opinion related to an area of humanitarian or scientific concern backed with the logical application of experimental or survey evidence. It may also convey an interesting personal research experience unrelated to the University of Michigan as long as the person writing the letter is a University of Michigan student.

Original Work Article

An article reports on experimental data and conclusions without going into technical detail. The main purpose of an Original Work Article would be to communicate research objectives, motivations, and conclusions. Publication in the Forum will not hinder the publication of the author’s work in any professional journals due to the non-technical style of the work.

Interview

An interview may be conducted with a researcher or other individual closely connected to research and submitted in written form to the Forum with the signed consent of the person interviewed.

Author Agreement Form text

I affirm that the submitted material is my own work unless otherwise acknowledged according to the citation guidelines outlined in the constitution of the University of Michigan Undergraduate Research Forum. All information contained within is correct to the best of my knowledge. I agree that the University of Michigan Undergraduate Research Forum has the right to publish and reproduce any of the submitted materials. However, I retain the right to present and publish these submitted materials in any other form or venue.

(Signed)……………………………………………………………………

Mentor Agreement Form text

As the research supervisor of …………………………………………………… (student submitter’s name), I affirm that his/her submitted work is original and that all contributions by other parties are cited and acknowledged. The aforementioned student has my permission to submit this material to the University of Michigan Undergraduate Research Forum for publication in a non-technical research journal.

(Signed)……………………………………………………………………
alternative for students working alone:

I affirm that I have conducted the research for my submitted work without the aid of a mentor.

(Signed)…………………………………………………………………………………

Citation Guidelines

The format of citations is as follows:

(number) Author’s last name, author’s first initial; author’s last name, author’s first initial, etc. Title of journal in which article was published. Year, Volume, Page.

Example:

All citations of other works are to appear in numbered endnotes, not in footnote form.
Article Three: Honor Code

Members of the Forum will represent our organization to the community and are expected to behave ethically at all times. Plagiarism or other forms of cheating, discrimination, failing to report a violation of the honor code or violating the honor code of the member’s college will be considered violations of this honor code.

Members of the Student and Faculty Review Boards will review submissions objectively and without bias. If a reviewer feels that he or she cannot consider a submission impartially, he or she must abstain from voting on it.

Possible violations of the honor code will be considered and judged by the Editorial Board with a three-fourths majority necessary for guilt. A violation of the honor code will result in immediate dismissal from the Forum.
Article Four: Ratification and Amendment

All founding members must ratify this constitution in order for it to be valid. Consent to ratification is shown by the signatures of the founding members at the bottom of the constitution. This constitution must also be approved by the sponsors of the Forum: the Vice President for Research, the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), and the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE).

Amendments to the constitution must be approved by all Student Editorial Board members. Amendments may be suggested by any member of the Student Editorial Board, but they must be ratified by the signature of all Student Editorial Board members.

By-laws and other guidelines

Forum officers, in particular the heads of individual departments, may compose by-laws or other guidelines for their own sections. Officers can also propose by-laws for the Forum as an organization. These by-laws will be adopted pending the consent of the Student Editorial Board (simple majority vote). By-laws may not conflict with the Forum constitution. If a by-law is suspected of violating the constitution, it must be challenged before the Editorial Board, which may agree by consensus whether or not the by-law has violated the constitution. If a consensus is not reached, the by-law must be discarded. By-laws may be challenged at any time by any member of the Forum; however, each by-law may be challenged no more than once per academic year.

Ratifying Signatures: