

## Benefits of a Student-Run Research Journal: From the Intern's Perspective

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### Abstract

*The MiMJ aims to support undergraduate research at Millersville by showcasing research and creativity in a digital form, enhancing student inspiration, motivation, and open-ended academic conversation. The journal provides students who present at the Made in Millersville Conference the chance to formally publish a written summary of their research for a general audience—enhancing their skills in academic writing, translation, professional publishing, and providing an opportunity to showcase their undergraduate research. Furthermore, the journal provides opportunities to undergraduate students who want to learn more about the publication process and serve on the Editorial Board. This presentation will cover the experiences of the 2021 intern team and how the students will use the skills they developed throughout the publication process in their future careers.*

There are a multitude of different benefits that come from a student-run research journal—not only for the students who run the process, but additionally for the students who publish within the journal. A journal of this sort, especially when access to it is open and available to campus students, supports the student body's awareness and exposure to fellow students' successful works, providing more chances of inspiration, motivation, and open-ended academic conversation. This also provides students an accessible chance to formally publish a written summary of their work for a general audience—enhancing their skills in academic writing, translation, and professional publishing. Students are then more open to the chance to work for the

journal and gain editor experience members of the editorial team, overall enhancing leadership skills, writing and editing skills, and communication skills, while also giving them professional work experience that can additionally heighten their credibility for future career opportunities. However, the benefits for each of these parties are also in no way independent of each other: students having the opportunity to work with other students in order to publish their work allows a comfortability between the author and editor that might not be found in a professor/student relationship.

**Macy Souders, Web Design Specialist**

From the standpoint of an Applied Engineering major, the idea of working alongside seasoned writers and English majors was quite daunting. However, throughout the introduction portion, it was made clear that, though the experience is advantageous, this internship strives to improve one's soft and hard skills for future industry work. The learning environment instilled greatly aids students in developing qualifications and skills frequently sought out by job recruiters and continued flourishing within their area of expertise. The experience is something that can serve as a résumé builder, but it stretches far beyond that. Participating in internship opportunities like the *Made in Millersville Journal* allows students to strengthen attributes like communications skills, the ability to grow from team feedback and simulates the expectations of a team-driven environment.

Moreover, for individuals studying web development or digital design, the Web Design Specialist's position on the editorial team enables fine-tuning knowledge on website building programs like Wix and adherence to an established image. The Journal pushes the intern's skills by exploring widgets and search engine optimization (SEO) tools offered through Wix. They also gain the experience to develop graphics and diagrams for digital utilization or collaboration with fellow intern positions.

**Leah Freeman, Project Manager for Authors**

English majors benefit greatly from the opportunities provided by working in a journal. Along with exercising the basic skills of reading, writing, and especially editing, the journal also goes ahead and provides its interns with collaborative skills, management skills, leadership skills, and innovative and creative abilities through the chance to upgrade and improve journal processes and

procedures--especially within the position as Project Manager for Authors (PMFA).

Not only does the job allow collaboration between co-interns for constant teamwork and group-problem solving, as each intern's job is related to the others, but the position as project manager specifically allows for interaction between the project manager and student authors--allowing for improvement of one's leadership and people skills. Creatively, it allows the PMFA to have freedom in innovating the publication and editing process, along with planning the yearly budget needed for the journal after thorough discussion and analysis of the yearly plans and processes.

Further, the teamwork among co-workers does not just allow for improvement in one's teamwork, but also allows for the ability to learn through observation. Through constant collaboration with especially the marketing specialist and author support specialist, the project manager additionally gains knowledge in advertising, social media management, creating content, and outreach.

Overall, the role calls for a sense of independence and leadership that many may have not yet had in their life, and therefore throws interns into a real-life simulation of the professional world--not only scaffolding them throughout the process but ensuring by the end that they are able to manage efficiently. Therefore, those who participate for such a journal in a position such as the PMFA, will gain extra preparation for future experiences in professional and occupational opportunities and environments.

**Haley Schott, Marketing and Outreach Specialist**

As the Marketing and Outreach Specialist, my role with the journal gives me experience in marketing and outreach strategies but also experience in a professional work environment and the communication and teamwork that goes along with that. I have

also gained experience in all the different facets of publishing a digital publication as teamwork and collaboration has been highly emphasized throughout the internship.

I have researched and implemented throughout this internship different marketing and outreach strategies and campaigns. I have learned about branding, audience, and engagement strategies. I have learned and gained experience in running social media channels.

A great aspect of the MiMJ is that while it does provide very valuable experience to student interns, the mission of the journal is to provide value to any Millersville student that wishes to present and publish. Interns work toward the goal of publishing a successful journal and ensuring student authors have a beneficial publishing process. The hope is that publishing with us will help student authors in their future endeavors. The journal also aims to showcase the work of Millersville students as a whole.

All in all, the *Made in Millersville Journal* aims to be an opportunity to both student authors and its interns.

### **Sarah Solomon, Author Support Specialist**

One beneficial aspect of being an intern with the *Made in Millersville Journal* has been the prioritization and effective use of communication. Working as an intern in an environment where constant communication is needed in order to effectively complete work is great practice for the future in any field. As a biology major, I have had previous work where there needed to be communication among all participants, however, not at the extent that I have been able to experience working as a team in this internship. Using platforms like zoom, groupme, and outlook or gmail has significantly improved the way each intern works individually, as well as collaboratively. Whether we use the platforms to work on assignments as a team,

or we help one another with individual projects, constantly communicating has helped each other effectively complete assignments, complete our tasks on time, and increased our communication skills.

In addition to communication, this internship also helps build organization, time management, and writing and editing skills. As the author support specialist, I have many tasks to complete weekly, from writing a blog to drafting an email to send to the deans and faculty of each college. With this, I have gradually increased my organizational skills to be able to then complete all of these tasks on time, as well as doing each efficiently. Coincided with my organizational skills increasing, my time management skills have also significantly increased, one example being needing to be on time for any meetings or workshops I organize. Through writing each blog, workshop, email, or through reading the feedback received to weekly writing blogs, I have also greatly improved my writing and editing skills.

Furthermore, the practice of using organization, time management, writing and editing, and most importantly, communication skills in a multitude of ways helps shape each person individually, as well as a team, for the future, no matter what major you are or what position you have in the *Made in Millersville Journal* team.

### **Rachel Hicks, Editorial Team Liaison**

As the Editorial Team Liaison, I spend a majority of my time organizing information and communicating between interns and the faculty directors. Some of my roles include managing the internal documents in our shared Google drive, such as our intern guides, as well as leading and organizing weekly intern meetings. One of my major goals of this year's internship was to use Professional Development Workshops (PDW) to teach the entire intern team, including myself, essential skills to

publishing an academic journal. Some of our previous PDWs included writing professional emails, editing for APA style, and editing for a general audience.

This isn't my first time interning for MiMJ - I was the WDS for the last issue - so I feel like I have a real understanding of the benefits of working for a student-run undergraduate journal. Leadership and problem solving skills are developed in all positions as we work with students in either ENGL 466: Editing for Digital Publication or ENGL 317: Editing for Publication to edit drafts and complete journal work. Also, we create and present our work various times during the course of the semester, for both interns and faculty alike. Furthermore, after working with MiMJ, my organization and

communication skills have improved dramatically. I am so thankful for this opportunity to work with the journal because I know I am a better writer, communicator, and leader because of it.

### **Conclusion**

From the intern's perspective, the benefits of working for a student-run, conference proceedings journal includes working in a disciplinary environment, building communications skills in both writing and speech, and experiencing a professional environment with deadlines and coworkers. We think that any student looking to better their academic, professional, and publishing skills should apply to work with MiMJ in the future.

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### **Recommended Citation**

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