

Editorial

Navigating the publication process: The missing piece in graduate education

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Keywords: student journal, graduate studies, publishing

For nearly two decades, the *Dalhousie Journal of Interdisciplinary Management* (DJIM) has published outstanding works submitted by graduate students at Dalhousie University. Founded in 2005 by library and information science students, the DJIM quickly became the Faculty of Management's *de facto* student journal. Once a thriving student journal, the DJIM published at least one volume per year between 2005 and 2019. However, since 2020, only two volumes have been published. I fear the journal's struggle to remain active in recent years may partly be due to its outdated scope.

When asked if I would be willing to revive the journal, I couldn't help but wonder how the DJIM should evolve. I will not pretend that the DJIM is anything other than a student journal. I will also not go as far as saying that the DJIM is always the right journal for graduate students to submit their works. So, what exactly is the purpose of the DJIM?

The purpose of the DJIM

Whether you are interested in publishing an essay you are proud of, getting involved as a reviewer, or simply reading the works submitted by your colleagues, the purpose of the DJIM is to provide an accessible way in

which early-career researchers and early-career professionals can gain experience in the world of scholarly communication. Formal training on navigating the publication process is the missing piece in graduate education. Although several graduate students enrolled in thesis-based programs can gain experience by publishing with a faculty member, many of us – especially students enrolled in professional programs – are unsure where to start.

There are several barriers to publishing in traditional highly reputable journals. First, a significant number of journals are adopting a gold open-access model. Article processing charges (APCs) are often very expensive, and most graduate students do not have the means to cover the cost of an APC. Second, many journals tend to undervalue knowledge syntheses and reviews. To preserve their reputation, such journals tend to be more interested in original research that features some form of primary data collection. In the context of a course, a seminar, or a side-project, graduate students rarely have the time or agency to undergo primary data collection. This does not mean, however, that their work is unoriginal or uninteresting. In a world where researchers and policymakers suffer from information overload, syntheses and reviews have tremendous value – yet most scholarly outputs

produced by graduate students inevitably end up in the recycling bin once the term is over. Third, processing times for highly reputable journals tend to be very slow. This is partly due to the sheer number of articles editors receive and send out for review. Graduate students must usually wait several weeks or months before being notified of the editor's decision. Although established researchers have the ability (to some extent) to work around such delays, graduate students rarely have the same luxury. By the time the editor's decision finally arrives, students may have committed to other projects or worse – graduated.

The DJIM is designed to provide a platform for student works that may otherwise never see the light of day. It is a diamond open-access peer-reviewed journal, meaning it is free to publish and free to access. The DJIM welcomes the submission of research articles (empirical research using primary or secondary data), reviews (literature reviews, book reviews, syntheses, meta-analyses), and commentaries (opinion pieces, essays, guest editorials, letters). Submitted works are reviewed by other graduate students through a single-blind peer-review process. The editor-in-chief is responsible for assigning reviewers based on expertise and experience within a field of study. Reviewers are tasked with leaving constructive comments on the submitted manuscript and making a recommendation to the editor-in-chief. In most cases, if reviewers recommend the publication of a manuscript, corresponding authors will be asked to make final revisions on their submission. Works will be published on an ongoing basis as the academic year unfolds.

The scope of the DJIM

The scope of the DJIM has not changed since 2008, the year when the journal was renamed to better reflect its interdisciplinary nature (for its first three years, the periodical was known as the *Dalhousie Journal of Information and Management*). In the past, submissions to the DJIM were restricted to graduate students enrolled in a program in the Faculty of Management. However, times are changing,

and as the DJIM enters its 18th volume, it is time it expands its scope.

We will continue to accept submissions from graduate students enrolled in the Faculty of Management (this includes students enrolled in a program in the Department of Accountancy; the Department of Finance; the Department of Leadership and Organizations; the Department of Management Science and Information Systems; the Department of Marketing; the Department of Public and International Affairs; and the Department of Strategy, Entrepreneurship, and International Business). However, we will now also encourage submissions from graduate students enrolled in the Marine Affairs Program (Faculty of Science), the School for Resource and Environmental Studies (Faculty of Science), the School of Health Administration (Faculty of Health), the School of Planning (Faculty of Architecture and Planning), the Department of Economics (Faculty of Science), the Department of Political Science (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences), and the newly founded College of Digital Transformation (Faculty of Computer Science).

It is time for the DJIM to become what it was always destined to be: an interdisciplinary space where Dalhousie University graduate students can share valuable insights. As I take on the role of editor-in-chief, I look forward to seeing our beloved student journal flourish once more.

Acknowledgements

I sincerely thank Shannon Bateman, Rebecca Marjoram, Emily McLean, and Philippe Mongeon for reviewing this editorial.