

AUTHOR SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Journal Purpose

Scholarship and Practice of Undergraduate Research (SPUR) serves as the leading international, cross-disciplinary, and scholarly destination for those committed to effective, inclusive, and diverse experiences in mentored undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry. *SPUR* advances knowledge and understanding of novel and effective approaches to mentored undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry by publishing high-quality, rigorously peer-reviewed studies written by scholars and practitioners of undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry.

Journal Audience

The audience includes many individuals interested in quality undergraduate-level education and professional preparation, such as post-secondary administrators, faculty, staff, researchers, and student mentors both on and off campus, as well as industry professionals, all those involved in the scholarship and practice of undergraduate research around the world.

The journal welcomes manuscript and proposal submissions from anyone (faculty, staff, or administrators) involved in undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry worldwide. There is no requirement that submitters be members of the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR). *SPUR* does not publish the disciplinary research output from undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry experiences. If you are an undergraduate seeking to publish your work, CUR maintains a list of undergraduate research journals [here](#).

Journal Policies

Journal-specific policies are available on the [SPUR website](#).

The [SPUR Authorship Policy](#) provides details of what constitutes authorship. The corresponding author assumes primary responsibility for managing all correspondence between coauthors and *SPUR* and responding to all inquiries from manuscript submission to publication.

The journal adheres to strict publication ethical guidelines detailed in the [SPUR Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement](#). In brief:

- **Prior Publication Policy:** All submitted work should be original and not have been published anywhere else in part or in whole, unless the work represents a significant development of a previously published study. The following does not constitute a prior publication: abstract for a conference presentation, blog post, poster, thesis, or dissertation. The authors ensure that their work has been submitted for exclusive consideration of publication in *SPUR*.
- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is defined by the HHS Office of Research Integrity as “both the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another’s work”; it may encompass copying text, images, or data without proper attribution; manipulating digital images, or reusing text from prior publications. Plagiarism is considered a violation of academic integrity and is unacceptable. Providing statements that are fraudulent or known to be inaccurate is considered unethical behavior and unacceptable. Authors can review their manuscripts using Grammarly (free), Writefull, or another plagiarism detection software before submission.

- **Conflict of Interest (COI):** At submission, the authors must disclose any conflict of interest (a personal or professional situation that could affect the perception of the results presented in the manuscript). Please review the [SPUR Publication Ethics and Publication Malpractice Statement](#) for additional information on what constitutes a COI.
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For human subjects’ research or research using animal models, authors must provide evidence of review and exemption or approval from the Institutional or Ethical Review Board and the animal care committee (uploaded as an “Institutional or Ethical Review Board letter”) or explain why such approval does not apply to their work. Wherever conducted, studies should abide by their institutional and national policies for the ethical and responsible conduct of research on human subjects, including education research, and cite these policies in the manuscript. In addition to submitting the requested evidence, the authors must include an explicit statement within the manuscript (see the “Required Statements” section below) noting that their work has received approval or exemption by the relevant board.

- **Data:** Key data, critical questions used in scripts, and instruments must appear in the body, figures, and tables of the manuscript so that the readers and reviewers of the manuscripts can adequately evaluate the quality of the work performed. Authors must deposit pertinent data and information not included in the manuscript body in a digital repository. *SPUR* encourages authors to select a repository that issues a persistent unique identifier, such as a DOI or an accession number. Include identifiers in the text and in a citation (details below) to facilitate the discoverability and citation of deposited data. To find an appropriate repository for their data, the authors can refer to [re3data.org](#) and [FAIRsharing.org](#) for information on available repositories, certification status, and offered services.

Authors must also disclose (in a Data Availability Statement) where the data, critical questions used in the scripts, and instruments associated with this manuscript are available. Authors are expected to comply with the requirements for data sharing of their funding agencies. Authors are expected to make their raw data available to interested readers and researchers who wish to replicate or analyze the data in new ways.

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- **Post Publication Policies:** CUR follows guidance from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) when considering ethical concerns regarding a published article, retractions, or expressions of concern.

Editorial Practices

All submitted articles are initially reviewed to ensure compliance with the *SPUR* manuscript guidelines. Manuscripts that do not conform will be returned to the author. The Editor-in-Chief will review the manuscript to ensure that its contents align with the aim and scope of *SPUR* and assign the manuscript to an associate editor responsible for shepherding submissions through the review process. Each manuscript is assigned to a minimum of two reviewers for completion of the first reviews within one month. Based on the reviews, the associate editor will make a recommendation to the Editor-in-Chief regarding the disposition of the manuscript, as follows:

- Accept with minor revision – recommended changes will not require further external review; however, the authors must make the requested revisions before publication.
- Major revision - Based on the reviews, significant changes in the manuscript will necessitate another review of the revised manuscript.
- Reject - There are flaws in the study that preclude publication.

The final editorial judgment regarding the publication of manuscripts rests with the Editor-in-Chief. Questions or concerns about editorial policies and decisions should be addressed to the editors.

Content Types

Authors are encouraged to discuss their plans with Editor-in-Chief Patricia Ann Mabrouk before submission (p.mabrouk@northeastern.edu) to ensure the relevance of content and scope.

• Full Manuscripts

Articles within the scope of *SPUR* can be submitted for review at any time.

• Communications

Communications are shorter reports that describe new, original experimental research on undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activity. Like full manuscripts, communications are expected to place the study in the context of the relevant current literature, clearly outlining the gap in the literature that the work is intended to fill, to describe the research methodology and results in sufficient detail that interested readers can judge the quality of the work, and offer specific conclusions and recommendations appropriate given the limitations of the study. If the work cannot be competently communicated using the abbreviated format for communication, the work should be prepared and submitted as a full paper. Communications within the scope of *SPUR* may be submitted for review at any time. All communications will be subject to full peer review.

• Review Articles

Reviews submitted to *SPUR* should be authoritative, critical, and comprehensive reviews of recent peer-reviewed undergraduate research pedagogy and practice studies. Reviews focus on timely topics that are likely to promote new, thoughtful, well-designed, and executed studies by the global undergraduate research community. The best reviews presume no prior knowledge of the topic, make minimal use of acronyms, and are interesting to read. Reviews should have a well-defined scope that

is clearly stated in the Introduction. Subject headings are used to guide the reader through the review. Review authors must exercise special care to credit all those who have made significant contributions relevant to the review. Older authoritative studies should not be neglected because they are "old," nor is it appropriate to ignore seminal contributions made by experts outside one's field. Reviews within the scope of *SPUR* may be submitted at any time during the year. All reviews are subject to full peer review.

• Invited Themed Issue Content

The topic is announced through a call for papers (CFP) process initiated approximately one year before the intended publication date. Articles and communications are invited for submission and peer review based on the review of a prospectus submitted by the deadline listed in the CFP. All invited submissions undergo rigorous peer review. Receiving an invitation to submit an article or communication does not guarantee publication in a themed issue.

• Invited Book Reviews

Book reviews, invited by the book reviews editor, are published monthly on books published in the preceding 12 months. These reviews summarize the main motivation of the author or authors, the intended audience, and the central argument of the book. A publishable review is expected to identify and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the publication. Any critique should be balanced and directed at the author's or authors' work.

• Invited Commentaries

Commentaries are short opinion pieces (1500-2000 words in length, including references) written by experts intended to present or advocate for emerging new ideas, directions, and opinions on issues important to all shareholders of the global undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry enterprise. Commentaries may be invited or contributed. Authors with ideas for these pieces are encouraged to email the editor-in-chief their proposals. Commentaries are reviewed by members of the Editorial Advisory Board and possibly other experts, depending on their technical content.

Checklist for Submission

Before submission, verify that your biographical sketch and manuscript files adhere to the journal style detailed below.

Journal Style

Follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*. A modified Chicago style is used for author-date text citations and references. Headline-style capitalization is used for titles. A digital object identifier (DOI) must be provided whenever it is available. Examples for common source types can be found [here](#).

Journal Language

- English: American English.
- Capitalization: The journal has adopted the capitalization of white, black, and Indigenous in demographic contexts.
- Bias-free language: For freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior, the journal prefers to use gender neutral terms.
 - freshman = first-year student, first-year undergraduate
 - sophomore = second-year student, second-year undergraduate
 - junior = third-year student, third-year undergraduate
 - senior = fourth-year student, fourth-year undergraduate
- Third-person narration: The journal uses a third-person style.
 - Avoid using pronouns such as *I*, *we*, and *ours*.
 - Avoid the use of *he/she*. Use a workaround such as changing from singular to plural so that they can be used instead.

Biographical Sketch Specifications

Biographical sketches are uploaded as separate files from the manuscript files. They are only required for certain manuscripts and are published after the reference section of the full articles.

- Format: One Word document (separate from the manuscript file)

with all biographical sketches listed in order of author listing, uploaded as 'Author biosketch file' at submission if asked.

- Length: 75 words maximum per author
- No professional titles such as 'Dr' or 'Professor'; surname used in the second reference.
- ORCID ID cannot be included at this time

Article and Review Type Specification

• Prospectus

- o Length: 600 words
- o Format: See [SPUR PROSPECTUS TEMPLATE](#)

• Article and Review

- o Length: 2000–3500 words (excluding references)
- o Format: Word (no PDFs)
 - Times New Roman, 12-point, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, with one space after periods.
 - Do not include footnotes or endnotes (instead, incorporate them into the text; use author-date text citations).
- o General organization
 - Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, Data Availability Statement, IRB Statement, COI Statement, Acknowledgments, References
 - Include line numbering to facilitate reference for reviewer comments.
- o Title: maximum of 10 words in length
- o Authors' contact information
 - Full name and institution of each author
 - Corresponding author: provide the institutional title, postal address, and email address.
 - The journal will NOT make changes to the byline after accepting the manuscript.
- o Abstract: maximum of 125 words
- o Keywords: maximum of 6 (one selected from each of the keyword categories - see SPUR website)
- o Text: The authors should present an accurate account of the work conducted, objectively discuss its significance, and provide adequate detail and references so that others can reproduce the work.
- o Figures and Tables: Include Figures and Tables in the manuscript file, correctly labeled, and explicitly called out in the text.
 - Maximum of 8 Figures and Tables (total).
 - Figures should be original artwork explicitly prepared for the manuscript being submitted.
 - Tables must be in Word format (not images).
 - Figures and Tables must have captions.
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 - Figures and Tables must be cited in the text.
 - Figures and tables should be embedded in the text at the point of relevance.
 - Separate higher-resolution figures can be supplied at revision, if necessary. Accepted Figure Formats: TIFF, GIF, JPG, or PDF
- o Data in the manuscript
 - Data mentioned in the text must be consistent with that in tables and figures (e.g., Do sample sizes match? Have you explained why they do not match? Do percentages add up to 100%? If not, why not?)
 - When citing or making claims based on data, authors should refer to the data in the appropriate place in the manuscript text

(and if available with dataset identifier). In addition, authors must provide a formal citation in the reference list using the appropriate style.

o Quotations in the Manuscript

- Short quotations are generally considered to be fewer than 100 words. Long (block) quotations should be indented ½" single-spaced. Quotations, whether short or long, are not italicized in the Chicago Style.

o Required statements to follow the Conclusion

- Data Availability Statement: Disclose where the data, critical questions used in scripts and instruments associated with this manuscript are available and under what conditions this supplementary information can be accessed; select from the options below and include the relevant details to complete the statement:

- (if available in the article itself) The data, critical questions used in the scripts, and instruments underlying this study are available within the text.
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- (if available from a source in the public domain) The data, critical questions used in the scripts, and instruments underlying this study are openly available in [Repository Name] at [persistent link to data in repository, for example, DOI, accession number]. These data were derived from sources in the public domain [list sources, including URLs].
- (if available upon request for legal or ethical reasons) The data underlying this study are not publicly available due to [explanation of reasons for not sharing, e.g., patient privacy issues]. They are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request [list any registration or other access requirements].
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- COI Statement: Provide details of COIs; if none exist, state 'No conflict of interest to declare.'

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- Author contributions: If you wish to note that specific authors contributed equally (for example, they are co-first authors), add a simple statement of equal authorship such as "authors of the study (designated by *) contributed equally".
- Funding sources: project name, funding agency, and grant number in the format required by the funding agency.
- Thank you: Individuals (not authors) adding value to the work.

o References: Use the Chicago Manual of Style citation guidelines, author-date style https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

- See the recent issue of SPUR or this file: *SPUR Reference Format Examples on the SPUR website*.
- Citations in the text must match those listed in the references.
- The references are listed in alphabetical order.
 - For multiple entries for the same author: chronological order beginning with the earliest publication date.
- Reference entries should be complete and correct (e.g., correct spelling of authors' names and titles of works).
- The DOIs listed in the references are correct and working.
- The URLs listed in the references are correct and working.

- If website URLs are listed in the text, convert these to reference entries per journal style.
 - Remove all hyperlinks.
- **Communications**
 - Length: maximum of 1500 words (excluding references)
 - Title: maximum of 10 words in length
 - Authors' contact information
 - Full name and institution of each author
 - Corresponding: Provide the email address
 - Abstract: <125 words
 - Keywords: maximum of 6 (one selected from each of the keyword categories - see SPUR website)
 - Section heads: Minimal or no headings
 - Figures+Tables: 3 total (in style noted for Articles and Reviews)
 - Required statements (same as Articles and Reviews)
 - Acknowledgments (if relevant)
 - References: maximum of 10
 - Biographical sketch
- **Invited Book Reviews**
 - Length: 600–700 words
 - Cover of the book: Upload an image of the book cover
 - Book Title
 - Book Author(s)
 - Publisher, Publisher Location, Publication Year, Number of Pages
 - ISBN (paperback), Price
 - ISBN (e-book), Price
 - Reviewed by name, institution/affiliation, email address
 - For a multi-authored book review, only the corresponding author's email address is needed.
 - Keywords: maximum of 3 (selected from SPUR Keyword list provided on the journal website)
 - No section headings
 - No Figure or tables
 - No References
 - No biographical sketch
- **Commentary**
 - Length: maximum of 2000 words
 - Authors' contact information
 - Full name and institution of each author
 - Corresponding: Provide the email address
 - Abstract: <125 words
 - Keywords: maximum of 6 (one selected from each of the keyword categories - see SPUR website)
 - No section headings
 - Figures+Tables: 3 total (in style noted for Articles and Reviews).

- References: maximum of 10
- Biographical sketch

Submission

Once all items on the appropriate checklist are completed, submit your manuscript at <https://SPUR.msubmit.net>.

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Corrected files and proofs must be returned within five business days to ensure timely publication of the manuscript. Please comply to avoid delayed publication, which may preclude the piece's inclusion in a special themed issue.

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Questions

Questions regarding the suitability of the content and the peer review process should be directed to Editor-in-Chief Patricia Mabrouk at p.mabrouk@northeastern.edu.

Send your questions about the submission system, the production process, and the publication timelines to SPUR@technicaeditorial.com.

All other questions should be directed to SPUR@cur.org.