Journal Introduction

Editorial Mission

Paw Prints: The Michigan Tech University Journal of First-Year Writing is a student-run academic journal that provides an opportunity for first-year composition students to submit their academic writing. The goal of *Paw Prints* is to publish and support student writers. *Paw Prints* focuses on creating a community where students can submit their work, collaborate with peers, and explore new ideas through scholarly writing. Submissions to the journal will go through an anonymized peer review process.

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(Mechanical Engineering Technology)

Sponsoring Institution

Paw Prints is published under the auspices of Michigan Technological University's Department of Humanities Composition Program.

Communications

Paw Prints editorial staff can be reached at pawprints@mtu.edu.

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Editors' Introduction

The Michigan Tech University Journal of First Year Writing, also known as *Paw Prints*, is a student-run academic journal that features first-year composition students' work. The journal is currently run by the students enrolled in the course HU3606: Editing. The journal serves as both a publication opportunity and a learning experience in the editing and publishing process. *Paw Prints* was founded with the initiative of producing a platform to highlight and recognize student writing. The goal was to recognize quality writing that was produced from the first-year writing course, UN 1015: Composition. The journal highlights research writing from diverse genres that demonstrates the creativity and engagement of the first-year student's work.

Paw Prints aims to build a stronger and more visible writing culture on campus by encouraging students to take pride in their work, see themselves as active voices in academic conversations, and connect with a wider community through peer review and collaboration.

The creation of a new journal is rewarding work, but also lengthy and complex. To simplify it, we broke it up into four phases where we each took on different roles.

- In Phase One, we split up into teams and searched other, similar journals for their mission statements, the publication software they use, and what kind of articles they published.
- We took all of that into Phase Two, where we wrote our own statements and documentation: Our vision and scope, our guidelines for submission and review, our ideas for covers and style.
- We received our wonderful submissions and started on Phase Three. We made multiple reviews of each article for our editorial team to consider when deciding what articles would make the cut.
- Finally, Phase Four was packaging it all up and getting it to the presses: teams of editors, copyeditors, typesetters and proofreaders polishing for weeks.

Our first issue covers a wide range of topics that we believe fellow students will find interesting, timely, and thoughtful. We are proud that our journal reflects the variety of majors and interests to be explored on campus:

The first article, *Nature & the Mental Health of College Students*, was written by Caleb Huibregtse, a Robotics Engineering student from Wisconsin. Inspired by his love of the outdoors, he explored the positive psychological impacts of spending time in nature. The second article, *Women in Wonderland: Japanese Feminism in the Context of Lolita Fashion*, was written by Precious Mubanga, a Chemical Engineering student from Zambia by way of Illinois. She wished to explore the ways in which people carve out a space for self-expression.

The third article, *Beyond Bullets: The Role & Effectiveness of Media in the Russia-Ukraine War*, was written by Cal Gilbertson, a Computer Network and System Administration student from Wisconsin. He explored the war in Ukraine by means of understanding both countries' social media campaigns. The fourth article, *The Representation of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Fictional Media*, also focuses on representation and texts. Written by Emma Schmidt, a Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering student from Michigan, the article synthesizes current research on how characters with Autism Spectrum Disorder are represented in TV and film.

The fifth article, Space Exploration and its Advancing Future, was written by Noah Taylor, a Computer Science student from Michigan. Looking to share his childhood love for astronomy, he explored the present reality and potential futures of space exploration. The final article, School Segregation's Impact on Success, was written by Bella Vasoli, a Human Biology pre-

med student from Minnesota. Wishing to better understand our country's past and how it informs our present, she explored the impacts of segregation in education.

One of our most important goals in publishing this first edition has been to ensure that this process is repeatable in later semesters — "first edition" becomes much more impressive once it's not simultaneously the last edition. We're ecstatic to have made it all the way from concept to publication in just a semester, especially knowing how conditional this success has been: we truly couldn't have done it without the tireless, after-hours work of everyone on the editorial board. Now that we've laid this groundwork, we look forward to the next board of student editors continuing the journal.

We're also incredibly proud of the articles we've selected to include. We initially feared that we might not receive enough submissions, or that we wouldn't be able to represent a breadth of content as wide as we know our student body is capable of, but the moment we began reviewing our submissions, these fears disappeared; in reality, our biggest hurdle in the selection process was in picking which articles not to publish, given our limited budget and timeframe. We're overjoyed to be able to bring some of the incredible writing of our first-year students to the attention of the reading community.

Editorial Leadership Team

Emily Augustyn   Rowan Kerns   Alli McDermitt   Jamie Perlman   Brendan Philo

Submission Guidelines

The guidelines that applicants were provided with when submitting their manuscripts are included here in full.

To prepare your article for submission, review the following guidelines. *Paw Prints: The Michigan Tech University Journal of First-Year Writing* is aimed at members of the campus community (including students, faculty, and staff) as well as readers from the Copper Country.

• Author must be a first-year undergraduate student. In particular, articles prepared for first-year writing courses are prioritized, but all first-year writers are invited to submit.
• The manuscript should be about any academic topic that you are interested in and/or passionate about. We accept articles up to the length of 3000 words (or about 10 pages).
• Aim to include multiple peer-reviewed sources in your reference list. Please contact the review board at pawprints@mtu.edu if your subject is less researched and are struggling to find enough sources of existing literature.
• Your manuscript should be well-written, readable, and understandable for a broad audience with no prior knowledge of your topic.
• Provide a short, written blurb (maximum 200 words) along with your research article that includes an author's note with an explanation of why you wrote the article, your department, and your contact information (MTU email and name). You can put this in the "abstract" box which will not appear to reviewers of your article.
• The use of generative AI is prohibited in your writing. If you use AI for research, you must cite any information, images, text, and sounds according to APA guidelines for AI citations.

Additional details:
• The manuscript should be in a Microsoft Word Document-compatible format. Do not submit PDF documents.
• Do not include your name on the submitted document in order to receive an unbiased review.
• Format your paper in 12-point Times New Roman font.
• The recommended length of your manuscript is eight to ten pages, including figures and tables if applicable.
• Your manuscript can be submitted in any documentation style but a final accepted version should follow APA student paper guidelines.
• You can provide a writer's statement with your abstract, or upload it separately.

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