It has been another exciting year for undergraduate research at the University of Florida. As a longstanding mentor of undergraduates in the humanities, it has been enlightening to step into the role of Managing Editor of the Journal of Undergraduate Research and to see how vast and varied the scope of undergraduate inquiry truly is. The thirty essays that make up this year’s volume come from undergraduates across our many departments and colleges: covering topics from agriculture to architecture and everything in between.

Our student authors have explored new models for teaching and learning, plotted the development of new industries, and demonstrated the effect of our changing climate on industry, ecology, and the food that we consume, to name just a few topics. Any undergraduate, at any level, in any field, may submit to the JUR as long as their work is supported by a faculty mentor.

We recognize and celebrate the faculty mentors who have supported our student authors through their research process, and who often appear as co-authors alongside their students. As mentors, they provide an open door and a helping hand to our authors, sometimes beginning with their arrival on campus. With their help, students discover the potential their work has to reach audiences beyond the classroom, and the possibilities that exist for them beyond undergraduate study. This includes the dedicated mentors and staff at the Center for Undergraduate Research, who help provide structure and paths to opportunities to hundreds of students per year.

This work would not have been possible without the efforts of the more than 100 graduate students who volunteered their expertise as reviewers and editors. In addition to those acknowledged in the Editorial Board section, many more volunteers gave careful feedback and evaluation to papers we could not ultimately accept for publication. Thank you all for allowing us to publish research of the highest standard, and helping it to appear in the best form possible.

So read on. I know you will find much in this issue that is novel and thought-provoking.

Thank you,
Neil Weijer, PhD
Managing Editor, UF Journal of Undergraduate Research

Every January, we offer training to prospective authors on how to submit an article to the UFJUR. The submission is open to all current UF undergraduate students, in any major, who work with a faculty mentor. The submission opens in mid-March and closes April 1 of each year. JUR is a double-blind peer reviewed, open access publication. Students retain copyright through Creative Commons licensing. Each article has a unique DOI and we encourage the student authors, faculty mentors, and colleges to support these student authors by announcing their publication via social media.