

UMRA committee chair annual report

DATE: 08-15-24

TO: Cathy Lee Gierke, OCC Co-Chair (leegi001@umn.edu)
Julia Wallace, UMRA Archivist (juliafwallace1@gmail.com)

FROM: Kris Bettin, JOIE Editor-in-Chief

RE: Annual Report 2023-24, *Journal of Opinions, Ideas & Essays*

Charge to the Committee

To my knowledge, no charge was given to this committee, although perhaps there should be one.

Committee members (include any designated duties)

Kris Bettin (editor-in-chief), Lynda Ellis, Edward Griffin, Jan Hogan-Schiltgen

Activities (Number of meetings, location, number participating, etc.)

I schedule JOIE editorial committee meetings on an as-needed basis, usually 2-3 times per year. Meetings are conducted via Zoom.

Focus of activities and key outcomes/accomplishments of this committee this year

During the past year, one article and three videos were added to JOIE.

An invitation to submit tributes to deceased UMRA members to JOIE was added permanently to the "In Remembrance" section of the UMRA Newsletter.

Policy issues or changes over the year? Why?

There were no policy issues or changes during the past year.

Changes to the JOIE collection include the addition of videos, primarily submitted by members of the UMRA Photo Club.

Challenges or problems faced/solved? Innovations?

The most urgent problem for JOIE is sustaining an input of submitted articles/videos. Numerous notices requesting articles have been published in UMRA Newsletters, UMRA on Facebook, and UMRA eNews. Solicitations have also been published on the JOIE homepage (UMRA website) and the JOIE Facebook page as well as several locations outside UMRA. There have been no responses to these requests for articles. In addition, we have emailed the entire UMRA membership with requests

for articles on specific subjects; there was a modest response to the first email and a small response to the second.

One innovation, by Will Craig, was to solicit videos from members of the UMRA Photo Club. To date, three videos from this group have been added to JOIE.

Suggestions for future chairs/leaders

Suggestions include maintaining the collection of documents relating to JOIE that I have set up. When I started as editor-in-chief in early 2021, there were no documents relating to JOIE except a handful of emails by Martin Dworkin, who established the journal in 2013. I have set up and maintained operating documents for JOIE to assist future editors and committee members. I have retained all documents related to the review and publication of articles and videos in JOIE. Again, maintaining these records is critical to the continuity of the journal.

Another suggestion is to schedule the editor-in-chief to present an overview of JOIE during at least one UMRA Luncheon Forum per year. We distributed JOIE "business cards" and a selection of printed JOIE articles at a recent luncheon, which did not garner any responses.

It has also been suggested that JOIE be reframed as an e-magazine rather than a journal.

What could UMRA leadership do to enhance your committee's work?

The most effective advertisement for JOIE so far has been word-of-mouth connections. If those in leadership roles mentioned JOIE to UMRA members whenever possible, it might raise the profile of the journal.

It would also be helpful to have a regular column in the UMRA Newsletter similar to those of the UMRA interest groups. I think that JOIE needs to be more visible to our membership and having at least one short paragraph in each newsletter might stimulate members to think about writing an article. I understand that space in the newsletter is somewhat limited.

Suggestions for what you and/or the organization you work with could do that would help UMRA move forward?

Perhaps publish an article on "Why I Joined the University of Minnesota Retirees Association." Other than this, JOIE does not seem to have an integral role in the organization.