

PEER REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS | Fall 2017

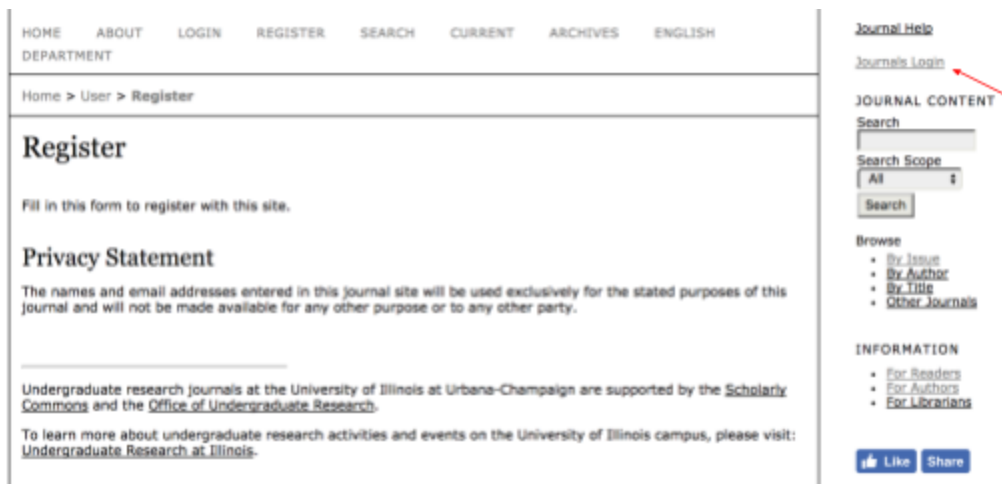
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- Once logged in, click Re:Search, the Undergraduate Literary Criticism Journal at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Click on Edit my Profile
 - Scroll down to the section that says roles--check the box that says reviewer. Press save at the bottom
- At this point, you should be registered in our system as an author. You should be listed as a reviewer under the journal page.

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The Undergraduate Journal of Literary Criticism at Illinois

PEER REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

About Peer Review

The peer review process models the peer review component of submission acceptance in professional and scholarly journals. This process is triple-blind, and benefits not only the Executive Board while making the acceptance decisions, but provides authors with feedback that will contribute to their projects moving forward, regardless of whether or not they publish with the journal. As a peer reviewer, you *will* be credited in the final publication of the journal!

Expectations & Deadlines

As a peer reviewer, we expect you to offer thoughtful feedback on one to two (1-2) proposals within about a week's time. You should expect an email from Professor Lori Newcomb next Monday (11/13/17) or Tuesday (11/14/17) letting you know which article(s) you have been assigned to (in a numbered format, e.g. Article #167), linking to a document of the proposal.

You will also receive a peer review form in a separate email with questions listed—these are the questions you are expected to respond to. The questions are also listed later in this document. If you don't receive an email with the peer review form within 24 hours of your assignment, please let us know at uiucelitjournal@gmail.com.

You may offer feedback outside the scope of these questions, but please make a meaningful effort to engage with each question listed, as these are the criteria most useful to the Executive Board. Once you have completed your feedback on the form document provided, you will upload the document through the OJS system (which you can do by logging in at <https://ugresearchjournals.illinois.edu/index.php/ujlc/login> using your NETID and password).

➤ YOUR REVIEW FEEDBACK IS DUE BY **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17th at 11:59 PM.**

PEER REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. *Quality of the project's conception* – Is a central question stated clearly and interestingly? Are terms well defined, the critical context grasped, and the larger stake of the argument articulated? (Note: asserting a thesis is not required at this stage.)
2. *Originality of the project* – How does this project advance critical conversations? What distinguishes this project from other work on these texts or in this theoretical area? What do you see as the author's personal investment in this topic?

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3. *Appropriate scope of the project -- Is the project achievable in the time available, at the length proposed, and with the resources stated? If not, could it be re-scaled, or resources added?*
4. *Potential impact of the project -- Is the question framed only for specialists in a certain author, or does it engage issues that might interest readers of literature more generally?*
5. *Adherence to Aims & Scope -- Does the proposal clearly convey intent to engage in textual/media analysis as a major source of evidence for the project? Are there ways in which textual/media analysis could be applied to the project, but that the author has not considered?*

THINGS TO CONSIDER & POTENTIAL STRATEGY (*Optional*)

It might be useful to first do a close reading of the proposal, and then answer the questions below—keep your initial thoughts brief and focus on specific parts of the proposal that catch your eye.

1. What research topics or questions are being addressed in this proposal? Note title(s) and author(s) described by the proposal.
1. Underline the one or two sentences that indicate the main focus of the project. Was it easy to find? How could it be more interesting?
1. How clear is the author in explaining his/her project? Are the primary and secondary sources being discussed relevant to the focus of the project? How could the author be more precise in articulating his/her ideas?
1. What kinds of evidence or issues will the author be investigating in their project? How does the author intend to develop his/her ideas?

When you're done, do a second read-through and think about how the author could develop the research topic(s) and/or question(s). Is there anything at stake in this proposal/is it original? Is the proposed project too ambitious or does it need further development?

A FEW FINAL REMINDERS

These are things to think about when you read the proposals. If you aren't sure what to say about a proposal, please refer back to these points for guidance.

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- An explicit thesis *is not* required at the proposal stage. A well-formed, strong research question is what we are looking for.
- Does the topic adhere to our aims and scope? Is the author engaging in textual/media analysis of any sort? If not, are there any possible ways in which textual/media analysis could enrich the project? Do you see any ways in which textual/media analysis could be applied usefully to the question at hand? (This is mostly a concern for submissions from majors outside of English, Creative Writing, and/or Comparative & World Literatures.)
- Do not discard the topic because *you personally* are not interested in it. If, however, you do not see the relevance or originality of the research topic, please note why in your feedback.
- In a similar vein, please do not make overt judgments on the proposal (i.e. “this is poor work” or “this proposal was good”). Rather, explain the tensions or strengths of the research question being presented. If you are interested, explain why. If you are disinterested, explain why.
- You may comment on the overall quality of the writing if it causes significant distraction from the argument; however, this should not be your focus. The quality of the ideas and significance of the argument are most important. Keep in mind that writing style can be worked on over the course of the next semester.
- Please compose thoughtful responses. Your responses do not have to be considerably long, but they should address the proposals meaningfully. Peer review feedback is not only useful to the board in making acceptance decisions, but it is useful to the writer, who may wish to expand upon the project regardless of acceptance.

Thank you for your help with the peer review process! If you have any questions, please email us at uiucelitjournal@gmail.com.

Quick Reminder!

ASSIGNMENTS DELIVERED: Monday, Nov. 13th & Tuesday, Nov. 14th,
2017

DEADLINE for FEEDBACK: Friday, Nov. 17th, 2017 at 11:59 PM