

***MUSE*, Vol. 1, Issue 1—An Introduction**

The *MacEwan Undergraduate Student eJournal (MUSE)* is a project of MacEwan's Undergraduate Student Research Initiative (USRI). The product of incredible commitment and effort, *MUSE* has been several years in the making. Students, faculty, and staff across MacEwan have worked tirelessly from the outset. The publication of this first issue is thus a major achievement, one certainly worth celebrating. Most obviously, this inaugural issue represents what some of MacEwan's very best students are up to, but it also represents the outstanding work going on in our classrooms—or rather, the potential that is realized every time MacEwan's students engage with its faculty.

The driving mandate of *MUSE* goes far beyond providing a forum for the online publication of student work. In many ways, publication is merely a happy outcome of the publishing process—a process that provides students with the opportunity to reconsider already superb work, to develop as scholars or artists, and to gain insight into one of the most important facets of academia (i.e., the peer-reviewed journal). These opportunities speak to *MUSE*'s true value as an undergraduate journal. At every level, *MUSE* fosters these opportunities by having students work side-by-side with faculty while engaging critically with the work of their peers. Not surprisingly, then, the process—from submission to publication—is somewhat unique. A student first submits their work to *MUSE* along with a "Faculty Endorsement." Blind review by a student peer is then facilitated by the Editorial Board and a Faculty Mentor. Finally, a recommendation (concerning publication) is made by the student reviewer. In this way, both student author and student reviewer are carefully guided through the often bewildering peculiarities of academic publishing. Once the contents of an issue have been determined, student copyeditors and student layout specialists prepare the accepted works for publication.

So... What can be found in the (hyper)pages that follow is remarkable in its own right—representing, as it does, the impressive student projects, papers, and creative work being produced across MacEwan in every faculty and school. But it also represents a wonderfully dynamic interplay of efforts: An Editorial Board made up of faculty members representing each faculty and school; representatives from the library, the USRI, and the student body; faculty members engaged in "mentoring" students through the peer-review process; incredible administrative support; students unbelievably committed to the review process (producing reviews that often rival those conducted by the most prestigious professional print journals); and, above all, students willing to submit their best work and embrace the thorough critiques of their peers.

In short, *MUSE* is more than a testament to the great work our students can do; it is a testament to what MacEwan (as a whole) is capable of doing.

So take a look. Share it with your fellow students or your fellow faculty members. Use the works as source material or as models for your own work. Use it in the classroom. Use it as a teaching tool. What follows, after all, are examples of what students can do, what they have learned, and what they have to teach.

The other option, of course, is to simply enjoy it.

Josh Toth
Associate Professor, English
Managing Editor of *MUSE*