



2008

A New Beginning: The Undergraduate Economics Review

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Recommended Citation

Garg '05, Mahi (2004) "A New Beginning: The Undergraduate Economics Review," *The Park Place Economist*: Vol. 12

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/parkplace/vol12/iss1/8>

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For the past seven years, students at the Economics Department of Illinois Wesleyan University have been actively involved with online journals such as the *University Avenue Undergraduate Journal of Economics*. This year the department decided to take that involvement further by creating its very own online journal - *The Undergraduate Economics Review (UER)*.

The *UER*, although still in its conceptual stage, aims at becoming a peer-reviewed online journal which is committed to supporting and encouraging high quality student research in all areas of economics by publishing the best undergraduate papers from across the world. Chief Faculty Advisor Dr. Mike Seeborg, Editor-in-Chief Mahi Garg, Managing Editor Iftexhar Ahmed, Articles Editor Ranmali Abeysinghe, and Webmaster Robbie Gallagher have worked hard to create a strong foundation that will enable the journal to achieve its mission. The plan is to complete the website and have it uploaded by the end of March. Article solicitation will begin in fall 2004, and will be aided by the journal's several unique features, such as a guarantee of review within three weeks of submission, immediate posting of accepted articles, and separate sections for students with varying levels of experience. Thus, the journal will use advanced technology to cater to a large clientele and provide them with significant advantages through time savings.

Within IWU as well, Dr. Seeborg believes that the *UER* will benefit both students and the Economics Department in several ways. To start with, the process of creating a journal from scratch will serve as an excellent co-curricular activity that develops leadership and teamwork skills, encourages learning about editorial policies and procedures, and promotes engagement with economic concepts. Further, the journal will allow students to showcase and review top quality research from universities across

the globe. In terms of the department, the *UER* will provide recognition and contribute to the excellence of the economics program. Although the *Park Place Economist* does this to a considerable extent, the *UER* will play a different role by reaching out to more universities.

Mahi Garg agrees with Dr. Seeborg's assessment. She feels that the last few months have been an incredible learning experience in several ways. The various aspects involved in the creation of an online journal ensure that the founders develop an ability to brainstorm creative ideas, perform internet research and combine gathered information into tangible forms that sustain the mission of the journal. Although the conceptualization has been challenging, team members Dr. Seeborg, Iftexhar Ahmed, Ranmali Abeysinghe and Robbie Gallagher have used amazing ingenuity and sincere effort to make the journal happen, and have undoubtedly learned a lot in the process.

By the end of the 2003-2004 academic year, the foundation for this unique endeavor will be created. The journal's distinct advantages and features promise to impact undergraduate economics students around the world by providing them with a high-quality environment to showcase their work. It will undoubtedly serve as a source of pride and admiration for economics students and faculty members not only at IWU, but also at participating universities all across the globe.