

UMD Libraries Research and Teaching Fellowship Journal Club Best Practices

Journal club attendance

- Journal club is open to anyone working within the University Libraries, as well as faculty, staff, and students of the College of Information Studies (iSchool).

Journal club purpose

- The proposed overarching goal for the journal club is to promote lifelong learning and evidence-based practice in academic librarianship, with particular emphasis on teaching and learning, research support, and public services.
- The overarching journal club purpose will be reviewed regularly, and agreed upon by the participants.
- At the beginning of each meeting, the purpose of the journal club will be shared, and linked to the paper being read or the skill acquisition being addressed.

Structure of an effective journal club

- Regular attendance by R&T Fellows is expected. Virtual participation (either through asynchronously through ELMS or synchronously through Adobe Connect, Skype, etc.) will be offered when available.
- Journal clubs will be offered at regular intervals, ideally 4 times a semester
- Journal club will be offered during regular business hours, Monday-Friday.
- When available, journal club will include light refreshments.

Leading / moderating the journal club

- Leading the journal club will be the shared responsibility of senior R&T Fellows, with Fellows alternating duties of serving as a moderator for meetings. The journal club leaders will be responsible for identifying relevant articles for discussion, but also will invite members to submit articles for consideration.
- The moderator for each session will direct group discussions on the paper being read. Questions can be distributed in advance, or not, at the discretion of the moderator.
- The moderator's questions for discussion may include, but are not limited to: research question, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, conclusions, suggestions for further research, and possible applications at UMD Libraries.

Choosing articles for discussion

- While theoretical articles may be considered, preference should be given to relevant practitioner-based articles that have clear implications for guiding professional practice.

Articles should be chosen in line with the overarching purpose of the journal club (see above), as these papers should be of interest to all participants.

- Identify one journal club member (either the designated leader or a member) who has the responsibility for identifying the literature to be discussed for each meeting. This person should also lead the discussion on the article at the journal club.

Circulating articles for discussion

- Provide all participants for each journal club with pre-reading at a suitable time period prior to the journal club (may be up to two-weeks prior), along with a copy of the Journal Article Appraisal Sheet. If non-compliance becomes an issue, assessment of whether pre-reading has occurred may be appropriate.

Efficiently running the journal club

- Use established critical appraisal approaches and structured worksheets during the journal club session, which leads to healthy and productive discussion
- Formally conclude each journal club by putting the article in context of local professional practice, and how these findings might be applied at UMD.

Journal club effectiveness

- Depending on the journal club purpose, it may be appropriate to evaluate knowledge uptake formally or informally
- Evaluation should specifically relate to the article(s) for discussion, critical appraisal, understanding of statistics reported in the paper, and translating evidence into practice.