

How Mustang Journals got its start...

I've wanted to start a series of academic journals for some time. I've noticed many are not consumer friendly. Some a cliquey like high school, were the same group of friends always get a paper published, and outsiders are left cold. Some are elitist, and the author's school determines the acceptance, not the quality of the paper. Some are dreadfully slow, and will not give you an answer until long after the need for evaluations by deans.

On the whole, they are intimidating to the new professor.

Remembering my own confusion upon joining academe, I wanted to provide a system of journals and conferences that would help nurture new faculty or faculty new to the publishing endeavor. New faculty members often get pressure to publish for tenure and promotion, but are not sure of the process. What should I write? How do I know if this paper is good? What format or writing style should I use? Where can I get ideas for topics? Who can I ask? The traditional journals did not help.

A few years ago, I received an inheritance from Grandfather, Wilburn Ludlum, Sr., my father's father. Granddad was a quiet man who spent a lifetime farming the land outside of Moran, Kansas. His gift allowed me to start this project. I thought this a fitting tribute to a man who always valued education despite only going as far as the eighth grade. He also supported and encouraged my father to be the first in his family to go to college.

Why Mustang?

The name "Mustang" has several influences. The animal, mustang, is strong and independent, qualities which I admire. During the time I was planning this endeavor, I lived in Mustang, Oklahoma. Mustang is a suburb of Oklahoma City and I liked the name. My son, Justin, wanted a Ford Mustang as his first car. The car was powerful and sporty, also good qualities.

I wanted Mustang Journals to represent all these qualities, especially strong and independent. I think they have achieved this goal.

Response to Jeffrey Beall

First, have no problem with Mr. Beall and his list of evil-doers. Actually I like his goal, expose those taking advantage of new academics. My only dispute is if Mustang Journals fits into his list.

First, Mustang Journals is not making a fortune exploiting faculty. We have not made a profit. My long-term goal is to have this endeavor break even. Every extra penny from a conference or journal is used for mailing several thousand flyers and awards for best conference papers. There is no pool of money left over. Mustang Journals is not the evil cash machine that Mr. Beall imagines.

Second, Mustang Journals is not owned by a printer with no academic background. I started college teaching in 1991, and currently am a tenured professor at the University of Central Oklahoma, where I teach legal studies. I am an academic by choice. I am fortunate to have a school that supports me financially. I do not need Mustang Journals to pay my bills. Just the opposite is true. I pay the bills for Mustang Journals (largely through my grandfather's generosity).

Third, my reviewers (advisory editors) are not imaginary people who I pulled from the old high school yearbooks or non-academics. All of them are professors, and most are close personal friends. I'm sure many of them are smarter than me. I respect each and every one of them.

Fourth, the papers that appear in Mustang Journals are not the low quality articles rejected by other journals. I read each paper, even those outside my academic area. However, unlike most journals, I offer suggestions on how to make the articles better, even if the submission is only 10% of the way there. I want to help the new academics. That is my goal. Some papers get submitted several times before they reach the point of publication. I consider that process a success. There is nothing I find more rewarding than allowing a new professor to get their first publication. That boost of confidence will help them in future endeavors, even if those future plans do not include Mustang Journals.

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Read my final thoughts "All Good Things..." on the website.