Welcome to SURG’s Winter 2013 edition!

I am delighted to present to you the 12th issue of Studies by Undergraduate Researchers at Guelph (SURG). As always, we continue our tradition of highlighting undergraduate research from throughout the University of Guelph.

Our current issue brings together a compelling mix of articles that highlight the diverse research interests that exist at our university. Our issue begins with an assessment of land-use problems in the Arctic followed by an examination of the legal systems that regulate multinational corporations’ human rights practices globally. After this, we feature a student’s insightful exploration of the “liberalism of fear” before delving into the humanities, where student researchers explore the deeper meaning of texts written by scholars on themes such as the Jewish experience and treatment during the 20th century, the age-old battle of empiricism versus inward reality, and machismo as a representation of the male gender in Mexican culture. Our next articles tackle two important environmental issues: afforestation as a means of achieving carbon neutrality in Eden Mills, Ontario, and plant tissue uptake of platinum, an environmental contaminant found in many common crops due to emissions from vehicle exhaust. Finally, you’ll get a chance to explore the fascinating world of microbial biofilms through a student’s engaging review article, and experience life in the marine world through this issue’s Special Series, which includes three mini-studies on marine life conducted as part of ZOO*4300, a marine biology and oceanography field course offered through the university in collaboration with the Hunstman Marine Sciences Centre in New Brunswick.

I am incredibly grateful to the SURG editorial and advisory teams, faculty reviewers at the University of Guelph, all student authors whose work is featured in this edition of SURG, and of course, our readers – we could not have produced such a successful issue without your generous contributions. I look forward to continuing to work with SURG to feature undergraduate research at the University of Guelph.

Happy reading and may you have a wonderful summer,

Anita Acai
SURG Editor-in-Chief