To our readers:

Our vision was to include rigorous research that provides something new – a new perspective, a new experimental design, a new tested result. This is the heart of scholarship – asking new questions. Thus, the name of the journal – QuaesitUM: to seek or to ask. This volume of selected undergraduate research papers is the embodiment of what we would like the University of Memphis to represent – quality scholarly work that emerges from asking questions and exploring new perspectives.

This journal aims to represent the breadth of research that is ongoing at the University of Memphis. While each of us engages in research in our own disciplines, projects such as this one foster greater awareness of the type of exploration that is taking place in other areas of the University. Through making ourselves more conscious of the research taking place on the other side of campus, we can recognize the broader mission of the University and truly become “Thinkers.”

Any enterprise such as this one is daunting, and takes the commitment and teamwork of a large number of people to come to fruition.

I must therefore offer my sincerest thanks to the Graduate Editor, Baxter Buck, and the Director of the Helen Hardin Honors Program, Dr. Melinda Jones. Without their hard work and creativity this project would never have come to fruition.

The three of us would like to thank the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs, Dr. Shannon Blanton, for the original vision for the project and for lending support at the Administrative level as QuaesitUM has grown and taken shape.
We are also extremely grateful to the faculty volunteers who served as reviewers and consultants: Dr. James Campbell, Ms. Cathy Dice, Dr. David Dwiggins, Dr. Don Franceschetti, Dr. Michail Gkolias, Dr. Mark Kaplowitz, Mr. Steven Knowlton, Dr. Abby Parrill, Ms. Rhonda Powers, Ms. Jennifer Schnabel, Dr. Kevin Smith, and Dr. Jin Yang. Their excitement about this project and the opportunities it presents to students is a testament to their commitment to the growth and development of our academic community.

Thanks also go to the Assistant Vice President for Technology Transfer, Dr. Kevin Boggs for donating funds for individual paper awards and the journal naming contest, Dr. Gary Golightly for the cover design and layout, and Jefferson Carman for proposing the name QuaesitUM.

Further, we would like to acknowledge the faculty mentors who sponsored their students’ papers. Without them to provide encouragement and feedback, these students would have never embarked on their research projects in the first place.

Finally, we would like to thank the students themselves for their contributions. Subjecting one’s academic work to scrutiny can be a frightening thing, but it is for them that this project was begun and we hope that they will benefit from it both now and down the road.

As we continue to expand and grow, it is our hope that QuaesitUM will serve as not only a venue for our most accomplished undergraduates to showcase their work, but also provide a vision to inspire our future students.

Dr. Sage Lambert Graham
Editor-in-Chief