

Ryerson Folio Editorial Guide 2020/21

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What is Ryerson Folio ?

Ryerson Folio is a Ryerson-affiliated general interest publication that publishes stories related to Ryerson students.

What do we cover?

Pretty much anything... related to Ryerson students.

Whether it's topics interesting or relevant to our Ryerson student audience or pieces that profile Ryerson students, Folio's coverage must loosely relate to Ryerson somehow.

Coverage areas & examples

- Ryerson-related news (things happening at/around Ryerson)
 - Winter semester going online, new head of program, etc
- Initiatives/projects Ryerson students/community members are a part of
 - A film project by Ryerson students, a new research project led by Ryerson faculty, small businesses run by Ryerson students
- Issues, current news that affects Ryerson students or is otherwise interesting to Ryerson students

- Pop culture, things happening in Toronto/Canada, politics, trending topics, issues affecting students
- Content that is useful/valuable for Ryerson students
 - Explainers of topics, listicles of things to check out, how-tos from an expert

If it doesn't fall under these general baskets, ask yourself if it's interesting/newsworthy to a wide enough audience

(no German basket-weavers living in Japan, no sir)

While we have a pretty broad range in terms of coverage and writing styles, there are some key things to remember while accepting pitches from contributors and writing your own pieces.

Things to keep in mind when pitching

- 1. Is it related, interesting or valuable to a Ryerson student audience?**
- 2. Has it been covered by Folio before?** *Search through our website and archives to check.*
- 3. Does it fit in a particular section?** *Check out our website to see our sections. Your pitch should loosely fit into one of them.*
- 4. Is there a specific enough angle?** *Wanting to write about "commuting" or "house plants" is too broad; what specifically does the writer want to report on commuting or house plants (ex. The rise in popularity of house plants on TikTok)?*

Not all pitches that come your way will be perfect. The editor's duty is to work with writers to help them refine their ideas, narrow or widen scopes and brainstorm other topics to touch on in their stories.

Other things to keep in mind with pitching

- **Length should be at least 400 words.** We are pretty flexible with word count, but articles should have enough substance to hit at 400 words.
- **We aren't a blog.** While we value personal essays and opinions, we are mostly seeking pieces from underrepresented/marginalized voices, interesting and well-informed takes on topics, or informative content. First-person pieces will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

How do we cover it?

Again, in a lot of ways! We are open to various types of pieces, including:

Features: Experiences of 2 or 3 individuals that speak to a larger issue

Example: [Lip service: BIPOC students at Ryer feel unsupported by the complaint process, The Eyeopener](#)

Hard news: Shorter breaking/recent news stories

Example: [Ryerson admin to temporarily withhold RSU funding, Ryerson Folio](#)

First-person pieces: Opinion pieces, personal essays/experiences

Example: [Don't confuse alone time with loneliness, Ryerson Folio](#)

Listicles: Informative, researched lists on any topic.

Example: [Winter skincare solutions, Ryerson Folio](#)

Analysis/reviews: Opinion pieces that analyze and review a piece of work, product, thing

Example: [Jon Vinyl "Moments" Review, Ryerson Folio](#)

Explainers: Deep dive into a complicated topic, exploring the past, present and history, wider implications, what it means to X group (students, Canada)

Example: [China's commitment to become carbon neutral by 2060, explained, Vox](#)

Experiences: You, as the writer, do something and write about it, offer insights and back it up with research (going to an event, starting a habit)

Example: [Cutting off social media in the digital age, here's what happened, Ryerson Folio](#)

Photo Essays: Exclusive to the Photo Booth section, photo essays explore a theme, story or idea through photos the writer takes themselves. Photo essays can also cover an event or profile a person/business/group. They should have a written component to it, whether that's journalistic reporting, Q&A, or creative writing. Original photos only!

Example: [An FCAD Conversation: Fashion with Roy Luo and Melanie Mitchell, Ryerson Folio](#)

Profiles: Spotlight on an interesting individual/group/organization, exploring a specific theme. Could be a Q&A form or an article form.

Example: [Writer Spotlight: Professor Laura Fisher, Ryerson Folio](#)

Fiction: short stories, flash fiction, free verse, really anything!

Example: [Fake Summer, Ryerson Folio](#)

We are always looking to push the boundaries of storytelling, so if you have an idea for a format we haven't done yet, feel free to pitch it.

How do we write it?

Researching, finding sources

Finding expert voices

Experts are an authoritative voice that can explain concepts and comment on events/topics with proven expertise/credibility.

- Check out **Resources** at the bottom of the document to find some expert databases
- Experts outside of academia are just as important (community leaders, industry professionals, organizers, etc)

Interviewing students

At Folio, we love to get student voices in our articles and hear what they have to say about things. That being said, we strongly encourage writers NOT to interview their close friends/acquaintances.

- Post call-outs on social media - Twitter, Instagram stories, Facebook student groups (Class of 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023)
("I'm looking to speak to (Ryerson/FCAD/Fashion/whatever) students on (topic). If you're interested in chatting, you can reach me at (contact info")
- Ryerson Folio accounts can help reshare!

Finding research, studies

Solid research and studies anchors the points, statements and claims we make in our stories. Look for PEER-REVIEWED studies from reputable sources. While we don't need to put our research in a bibliography, we will link to studies throughout our pieces.

- Check out **Resources** at the bottom of the document to find some places/sites to find research and info
- Universities aren't the only places doing research. Non-profits, charities, industry associations and other groups conduct surveys and publish reports on things relevant to their industry
- Articles may reference other news organizations or publications who previously reported on a topic (ex. The Eyeopener previously reported that....) but we do NOT use sources from other articles, or center our articles around someone else's reporting.

Interviewing

Everyone has their own way of going about interviews, but here is a general format to follow:

1. **Reaching out to experts:** Usually via email, sometimes over the phone or social media app (depending on what contact info you have).

Introduce yourself as a Ryerson Folio writer/editor working on a piece about (topic) looking to ask them some questions on (topics you want to ask about).

2. **Set up a time for a call:** Usually allot at least half an hour for a call

****IMPORTANT:** We conduct all of our interviews over call, please avoid emailing questions!**

3. **Prepare questions and do background research:** Prepare a list of Q's and follow up Q's. I also like to have a general list of topics I want to touch on beside me when I interview.

4. **Make sure you're RECORDING!** Pls don't forget!! Google Meet, Zoom and most online calling software have a recording option. There are a few phone call recording apps available as well.

5. **Get their basic info at the beginning:** This includes their program, year, pronouns and if necessary, their age, where they live and other relevant details for your story.

6. **Active listening.** Avoid just shooting off question after question during the interview. Listen to what your interviewee is saying and what statements they make about things. Dig into interesting

facts/anecdotes more, ask follow-up questions to clarify things or ask them how they reacted to things

Equity, diversity and inclusion

There is a super, super comprehensive equity guide created by some former Eyeopener editors, please consult this document throughout the writing and editing process.

[Equity Guide](#)

Resources

Experts

[Ryerson Experts Database](#) - This is Ryerson's official database for professors. Includes their area of expertise.

[Expertise Finder](#) - A larger expert database of professors from across Canada and the States. Search by topics/keywords.

[Informed Opinions](#) - This is a Canadian database that features female and non-binary experts.

[Women Also Know Stuff](#) - International database of women experts in political science.

Research

[**The Discourse research database for journalists**](#) - super comprehensive spreadsheet of academic research and other useful information compiled by and for journalists

[**Ryerson University Library**](#) - Available for all Ryerson students, super comprehensive bank of academic material.