

## Going Viral: Expanding a Student-Run COVID-19 Journal Club to Social Media

**Authors :** Joseph Dodson, Robert Roth, Alexander Hodakowski, Leah Greenfield, Melissa Porterhouse, Natalie Maltby, Rachel Sadowsky

**Abstract :** Introduction: Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, countless research publications were released regarding SARS-CoV-2 and its variants, suggested treatments, and vaccine safety and efficacy. Daily publication of research became overwhelming for health professionals and the general public to stay informed. To address this problem, a group of 70 students across the four colleges at Rush University created the "Rush University COVID-19 Journal Club." To broaden the available audience, the journal club then expanded to social media. Methods: Easily accessible and understandable summaries of the research were written by students and sent to faculty sponsors for feedback. Following the revision, summaries were published weekly on the Rush University COVID-19 Journal Club website for clinicians and students to use for reference. An Instagram page was then created, and information was further condensed into succinct posts to address COVID-19 "FAQs." Next, a survey was distributed to followers of the Instagram page with questions meant to assess the effectiveness of the platform and gain feedback. A 5-point Likert scale was used as the primary question format. Results: The Instagram page accrued 749 followers and posted 52 unique posts over a 2 year period. Preliminary results from the surveys demonstrate that over 80% of respondents strongly agree that the Instagram posts 1) are an effective platform for the public presentation of factual COVID-19-related information; 2) provide relevant and valuable information; 3) provide information that is clear, concise, and can be easily understood. Conclusion: These results suggest that the Rush COVID-19 Journal Club was able to successfully create a social media presence and convey information without sacrificing scholarly integrity. Other academic institutions may benefit from the application of this model to help students and clinicians with the interpretation and evaluation of research topics with large bodies of evidence.

**Keywords :** SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19, public health, social media, SARS-CoV-2 vaccine, SARS-CoV-2 variants

**Conference Title :** ICACPHSM 2022 : International Conference on Advances in Communication and Public Health and Social Media

**Conference Location :** Sydney, Australia

**Conference Dates :** August 30-31, 2022