

Introduction to our First Issue: Spring and Flourishing

Galia Solon Theresa Blackman

Editor in Chief, *Pedagogical Inquiry and Practice*
MacEwan University

Where can educators at a teaching-focused undergraduate university join existing conversations about teaching and learning? This first issue of our journal is the audacious response to that question. We are grateful to our distinguished authors who have taken the leap with us, showing that you can spring into the scholarship of teaching and learning from wherever you are in your teaching and learning practice—in the classroom, in partnership with students and staff, in leadership, in exploration, or in simply asking questions about your pedagogical choices. In this season of blooming and vitality in the natural world, we are thrilled to share the flourishing that has emerged from our authors' commitments to sharing their understandings of teaching and learning and our board's dedication to supporting their scholarship.

For our first issue, we have arranged the 11 articles according to submission types, in keeping with the journal's aim to take a scholarly approach to teaching and learning. We recognize that the scholarship of teaching and learning begins in the intricate interplay between teaching practice and inquiry. Thus, we begin with an inquiry lens by presenting research papers coming out of studies into disciplinary learning. In "Greater Realism in Authentic Assessments Promotes Student Motivation and Engagement," Pacher and Honey share that students in a design program demonstrated increased motivation and engagement when involved in more realistic learning. The implications for student agency and commitment to learning make this work a salient contribution to educators who might need support for choosing authentic assessments. Munro and King also focus on the intersection between learning and assessment by addressing the importance of "Supporting Learner Development Through Self-Assessment." Emerging from an inquiry in a sustainability course, their paper reminds us that students benefit from guidance with self-assessment.

Our research papers are followed by a research brief, which is a concise overview of a study in progress. Leung et al. take us along with them in the midst of their research project about tailored resources to support student learning. In "Exploring the Impact of Customized Academic Technology Resources on First-Year University Students' Digital Competency," they offer insight into how educators can think of supports for first-year university students. We hope research briefs serve as entry points for scholars embarking on their own SoTL investigations.

Next, we feature a SoTL conversation. Kriz and Mack engage in a faculty-student SoTL conversation about their “Experiences with Experiential Learning: Learning from our own Experiential and Conceptual Insights.” By drawing out the connection to emotional intelligence in experiential learning, Kriz and Mack illustrate the value of powerful conversations between faculty and students for learning. We invite future authors to consider the “SoTL Conversation” submission category as a way to explore and interrogate teaching and learning practices, processes, and outcomes.

The six essays in this issue are rooted in the complex relationship between teaching practice and scholarship. They offer granular reflections on teaching and learning experiences, situated in practical contexts or disciplinary interrogations, framed through applied understandings of pedagogy. In this way, essays return us to the core of our journal’s mission—applying a scholarly lens to practice.

Sperano et al. affirm our commitment to faculty-student partnerships by presenting the outcome of an intentional exploration of teaching and learning with generative AI in “Unmasking Chatbots’ Multiple Personalities: A Student-Faculty Collaboration.” This partnership attends to the recognition that “students are the primary participants and hopefully beneficiaries of the work” (Yeo et al., 2024, p. 210). We hope that students continue to see themselves in partnership with us, not only as learner-participants but also as co-creators in SoTL.

How do faculty approach the wave of generative AI in higher education? Allana and Ali present another angle for the discourse on generative AI, by acknowledging that faculty are in liminal states with the new technological wave for higher education in “Artificial Intelligence in Nursing Education: Balancing Reluctance and Embracing Innovation.”

As our campuses become increasingly diverse, the actions we choose will trickle into the relationships we have with each other, our students, and our communities. Ntibinyane applies a critical lens to the disciplinary conventions of journalism education to discuss the importance of “Integrating Global Indigenous Knowledge Systems.” Oyelana acknowledges the value in recognizing diversity on campuses with “Internationalization of Education and the Experiences of International Students: What is Known.” We do not shy away from these conversations and the implications for our Canadian higher education classrooms and their neighbouring communities and industries.

Benson reminds us of the need for educators to consider graduate skills as students get ready for industry. No matter how many times we have facilitated group assignments, we can’t lose focus on the importance of “Teaching University Students How to Succeed in Group Assignments.”

Stasiewicz presents a paradox that warrants attention—the demands of higher education that challenge our commitment to deep reflective teaching practice. As we are on the cusp of a technological shift that impacts how we do teaching, learning, and scholarship, Stasiewicz’s revisiting of Ellen Rose’s views on reflection in higher education is a timely

reminder of the need to reexamine the frameworks that have shaped our teaching and learning practices.

We conclude this issue with a book review to engage with emerging theories and developments in higher education scholarship. Dyer's review of *The Artistry of Teaching in Higher Education: Practical Ideas for Developing Creative Academic Practice* asks us to think about our own creative processes in how we move forward in scholarship, teaching, and learning.

These contributions offer insight into our classroom practices and possibilities for the future of teaching and learning. Our contributors, our board, our peer reviewers, our dedicated section editors, Geneve, Leslie, Sam, and Susan, our meticulous managing editor, Carol, all affirm that "a strong, positive campus culture focused on learning is an enormous asset" (Felten et al., 2016, p. 170). Regardless of where you are situated in Canadian post-secondary learning contexts, we invite you to spring into conversations with the authors in this first issue, for mutual flourishing (Kimmerer, 2024).

References

- Felten, P., Gardner, J. N., Schroeder, C. C., Lambert, L. M., Barefoot, B. O., & Hrabowski, F. A. (2016). *The undergraduate experience: Focusing institutions on what matters most*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Kimmerer, R. W. (2024). *The serviceberry: An economy of gifts and abundance*. Penguin Books.
- Yeo, M., Miller-Young, J., & Manarin, K. (2024). *SoTL research methodologies: A guide to conceptualizing and conducting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Routledge.