

Dear Contributors, Reviewers, and Readers:

In the past year, the effects of COVID-19 have touched nearly all aspects of life, including the review and publication process for scholarly journals like ours. We are grateful for the work completed by our authors and reviewers during these difficult times and want to thank everyone for their contributions to the current issue of *Journal of Effective Teaching in Higher Education (JETHE)*. We also want to reiterate our hope that you and your family have stayed safe and healthy as we continue to navigate the ongoing global pandemic.

Although the pandemic slowed down our review and publication process this year, it did not prevent us from curating the eight articles and our first-ever book review included in *JETHE* volume 4, issue 1. The current issue demonstrates our continued commitment to high quality, data driven scholarship across a diverse range of topics on the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) that we publish in *JETHE*. Several of the articles address classroom-based practices and interventions that enhance student learning and development, including teaching art online (Lai), engaging English language learners (Lewis & Brown), encouraging creativity in the classroom (Miller, Cruz, & Kelley), presenting outcomes from student-centered approaches to teaching (Murphy, Eduljee, & Croteau), and highlighting the value of reflection as pedagogy (Virtue). Wonder's article focuses on student perceptions of class participation in the Philippines, while Ericksen and Williamson-Ashe examine the relationship between high-impact educational experiences and the emerging values model approach to group work. The eighth article included in this issue shares findings from a study of students' optimism, resilience, and other health factors during COVID-19 (Burt & Eubank)—the first article *JETHE* has published that focuses on the effects of the ongoing pandemic. As always, all articles include implications for the practice of teaching across disciplines—an important contribution that is emphasized in *JETHE*.

As previously mentioned, we included our first-ever book review in the current issue of *JETHE*: Laura Harrison's review of David Epstein's (2019) book *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World*. If interested in submitting a book review for *JETHE*, please email the editors at [jethe@uncw.edu](mailto:jethe@uncw.edu) with your proposal.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we continue to seek improvements to our review and publication processes as well as the accessibility and

notoriety of *JETHE*. In the past year we have secured DOIs for all past and future articles and applied to list *JETHE* in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). *JETHE* is also included among the open-access journals supported by the University of North Carolina System and listed on their new site: <https://openunc.org/>. Additionally, we also welcomed a SoTL Faculty Fellow to our journal team. Dr. Indranil Ghosh, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Statistics at UNCW, started as a Fellow in Spring 2021 and is assisting with article reviews and conducting data analysis on the article review and publication process.

We also want to highlight the continued demand for access to articles published in *JETHE*: as of April 2021, readers have completed over 6,300 full-text downloads of articles published in our first five issues. On average, articles have been downloaded approximately 210 times/each.

Our next issue will be published in Summer 2021 and will be the first time we have published a special issue. The special issue focuses on "*In the Along*": *Curricular and Pedagogical Imperatives for Black Mattering* and is edited by Dr. Wilson Okello, UNCW, and Dr. TJ Stewart, Iowa State University. The editors have curated a set of articles that contribute to a transdisciplinary understanding "of what Black freedom wants [and] what Black freedom requires of us" (Dumas, 2018, p. 35) as we teach and advise in and around schools. Marginalization and oppression from racial injustice persist in the US and throughout the world, but we hope that this special issue provides meaningful insights and encouragement for all educators to contribute to creating more inclusive and equitable classrooms, institutions, and communities.

We invite you to engage with the pieces in our Spring 2021 issue and consider making your own contributions to this work. To submit an article or download full-text copies of current and past issues please visit <http://jethe.org>. We also invite you to become a reviewer for *JETHE*. If you are interested in reviewing for our journal, please send an email to the editors at [jethe@uncw.edu](mailto:jethe@uncw.edu) indicating the subjects related to SoTL in higher education that most interest you and about which you have expertise. Please also attach your CV to that email.

Thank you for your continued support of *JETHE*!

James DeVita and Colleen Reilly  
Coeditors, *JETHE*