

Editorial

This issue of Higher Learning Research Communications (HLRC) features research focused on faculty development from scholars across both sides of the Atlantic. The opening piece, *Enhancing faculty performance through coaching: Targeted, individualized support*, describes the culture within a US-based higher education institution, where emphasis is given to supporting faculty. One of their latest approaches has been to implement coaching as a means for professional development, with positive results.

Promoting critical thinking skills has always been a challenge for higher education professionals. Different models and techniques have been researched and described in different contexts. And, as higher education makes its way into the 21st century, developing critical thinking skills in online learning environments can prove to be an even bigger challenge. Laura A. Schindler and Gary J. Burkholder present a literature review related to instructional design and facilitation approaches that promote critical thinking in asynchronous online discussions (AODs) across multiple cognitive constructs (cognitive domain, cognitive presence, knowledge construction, and perspective-taking). According to their review of the available literature, certain design approaches are effective for promoting critical thinking.

Another 21st century challenge has been globalization, with higher education professionals being able to teach face-to-face and online across the globe. However, cultural differences and language barriers may present teaching and learning challenges. In the article, *Communicative differences between domestic and foreign instructors*, authors Narissra Punyanunt-Carter, Jason Wrench, Stacy L Carter, and Daniel Linden researched how students perceived their instructors, depending on whether they were local or foreign. Their findings may aid international faculty make a better transition into US-based campuses and classrooms.

From Spain, research conducted by Ana Cruz-Chust reveals the challenges college teachers face when dealing with working adult students (WASs) and mixed classrooms. She found that, even when teachers might not have previous training on how to approach WASs, they can recognize the characteristics and needs of these students, and implement appropriate teaching methods in order to face the challenges these students present. Interestingly, some of her findings contradict the current literature, revealing more research is needed in this area.

Finally, researchers Akram AbdulCader and Peter John Anthony present an overview of faculty in Saudi Arabia and how motivation affects higher education within the Saudi context. Although Saudi Arabia's economy and workforce seem to be expanding, their research found that faculty in the largest country in the Arab League do not feel motivated to participate in academic program development because of a lack of incentives, feeling irrelevant in the decision making process within universities, and a lack of recognition and moral support. Since the Saudi economy is rapidly growing, their findings point to a need to engage and motivate faculty in order to keep Saudi higher education at par with the challenges that will certainly come during the 21st century.

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