

## Editorial

This issue of Higher Learning Research Communications (HLRC) marks the beginning of our third year of publication. We are very excited about the continued opportunity of publishing high quality academic research in the area of higher education policies and practices. During this third year, several new initiatives will be launched, including the publication of selected conference proceedings (Volume 3, No 4) and the launch of a new series (coming in 2014) highlighting the people that have dedicated their life to Higher Education. Please look for additional information in our social media pages through Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

On this issue, our authors focus on the importance and relevance that online and digital means play in reformatting, attracting, retaining, and supporting students in higher education.

Invited authors highlight how the digital era has transformed higher education in several areas, including academic publishing and day-to-day teaching and learning.

Rogério Meneghini discusses SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library of Science) and its relevance in supporting open access scientific journals. The role of the SciELO index is discussed within the context of Latin American countries, with a particular focus on Brazil. Melanie Winter and Frank McCluskey write about the digital university, and the relevance of designing the online classroom experience to support the instructional design and pedagogical aims of the course.

Following the theme set by the invited pieces, authors address a diversity of topics on how online teaching and learning has impacted higher education in recent years. Burkholder, Lenio, Holland, Seidman, Neal, Middlebrook, and Jobe discuss the efforts of a distance education institution to support student retention by developing an institutional culture of retention and persistence. In a case-study piece, Kruse, Bonura, James, and Potler detail the online community strategies used by a distance learning institution to successfully support the accreditation reaffirmation process. Finally, Carver and Todd analyze the student perceptions of content mastery for online courses that were redesigned to support student engagement.

Throughout the papers on this issue, the authors introduce thought pieces, case-studies, and research results highlighting how the internet technology and media has impacted and transformed the teaching and learning process. They also highlight how online tools can benefit and improve the higher education community, touching multiple aspects of our everyday experiences, from accreditation, publishing, teaching, learning, and retention.

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