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Editorial - v8

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The Spring/Summer 2023 issue has arrived, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to all who submitted for their contributions to this Journal. We deeply appreciate the effort and dedication put into each and every submission.

As we observe the world moving out of the pandemic phase, notable examples such as China rescinding its zero tolerance policies and the United States terminating its national emergency signify a transition to a new era. This prompts important questions about the future of international education. How will international education transition out and into this new space? What will be crucial for institutions and those working within them? Will it be noble endeavors, such as equity and access in education and sustainability of the planet through policy and action at our institutions, or will it be the sustainability of institutions and competition that drive this transition, especially as more countries attract students to their campuses in greater numbers? Will it be to control the rise of AI on college campuses, or will it be to find effective ways to employ AI as teaching tools in our classrooms? The answer to these questions may very well encompass all of the above.

"Learn, Educate and Engage" is the official theme of this Issue but the content is dominated by the themes of "competition" and "equity and inclusion." While some states are tearing down DEI initiatives and passing laws to block the teaching of race, gender, and LGBTQ+ history, and rights (we're looking at you, Florida), it is reassuring to see that equity remains at the forefront of our colleagues' minds, particularly in relation to educating international students.

Simultaneously, authors acknowledge the need for institutions to remain competitive and open to advancements in education. As U.S. colleges and universities strive to maintain their position on the global stage, especially amid challenges in certain international markets, institutions are seeking unique ways to attract students. Strong academics and innovation have always been the foundation of the American education experience. By prioritizing both competition and equity, and embracing technological advancements, we can pave the way for a transformative and inclusive educational landscape that prepares students for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

From SEVP's roll back to pre-pandemic policies to the emergence of a post-pandemic global culture in international education, the Advocacy Corner is a must-read., EnglishUSA's Advocacy and External Relations Committee (AERC) remains actively engaged in advocating for our programs, focusing on critical areas such as the significance of a national strategy, accurate data collection and forging stronger alliances with key global and domestic stakeholders. Furthermore, EnglishUSA's latest work utilizing the MDCP award highlights their ongoing efforts to promote and support the industry.

The report titled "Open Access Publishing for English Language Learners" authored by our colleagues at Syracuse University, offers an in-depth exploration of a panel discussion held during EnglishUSA's Professional Development Conference in February 2023.

Through compelling case studies, the report successfully challenges the prevailing assumption that English language learners (ELL) are incapable of producing academically worthy writing for publication. As a result, it presents an inspiring account of how the use of open access publishing promotes equity, access and fosters confidence among the ELL student population.

Continuing with the theme of equity, “Embracing the World Beyond Textbooks by Utilizing Open Educational Resources” illustrates how Atlantic Cape Community College took on the responsibility outlined by their state legislature to address the exorbitant expenses associated with academic textbooks. By designing courses that utilize Open Educational Resources (OER), they successfully reduced students’ costs and increased access to higher education, in turn making the institution more competitive. Furthermore, their ongoing evaluation of student needs and impressions of OER led to further adjustments, enhancing the program and ensuring an even stronger educational experience for their students.

The article titled “Advocating for and Implementing Credit for ESOL Classes” makes a compelling argument that if we strive for equity and inclusion while marginalizing international students at our institutions, our efforts remain superficial and unexamined. The author further asserts that giving credit for ESOL classes not only helps students graduate earlier but also contributes to student recruitment efforts and enhances the standing of English language programs within their institutions. The article also offers a roadmap and provides ideas on how other institutions can advocate for and implement credit courses.

In “Defying Stereotypes in an EFL Lesson” students have the chance to explore the world of stereotypes, learn to establish and defy them, and embrace diversity in the process. The lesson aims to cultivate a strong foundation in critical thinking, empowering students to approach knowledge and understanding with a discerning mindset.

Lastly, getting to know colleagues from the world of international education is always enjoyable, and the interview with Brian Whalen is no exception. Brian has been serving as the Executive Director of American International Recruitment Council (AIRC), one of our sister associations, for the past three years. The editors of this Journal wholeheartedly share his sentiment that the greatest benefit of working in international education lies in the relationships we build with our colleagues. With that in mind, we wish you happy reading and hope you will join us at EnglishUSA’s next Stakeholders’ Conference in Washington, DC on October 12 and 13!

Lisa Kraft is the Director of International Special Programs and Director of ELI Academics at Pace University. She serves as President of the EnglishUSA Executive Board and is a member of the Professional Development Activities Committee. Her work focuses on developing sustainable relationships with international partners and providing the best educational experience possible for international students and visitors.

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