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Editorial 2016 - JSEEM 6(1)

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Abstract

Welcome to issue six of the Journal of Student Engagement: Education matters. In the journal's short existence our undergraduate authors have had their articles downloaded approx. 80,000 times. When the journal started, such a figure in such a short time was beyond our wildest expectations. It is a credit to all of the undergraduate authors that, through their dedication to their disciplines and education, the journal has reached such a wide audience. Teaching, however, requires a different set of skills to writing an article. For each of our contributors, their formative teaching skills came not from writing essays but from practical experiences in the classroom. In this regard professional experiences (also known as practicum, prac. or PEX) play a fundamental role for teacher trainees. They allow students to assess their teaching skills, to reflect on their experiences and to adapt and improve in a real-world situation. For some students, it provides an opportunity to realise that teaching is not for them; for the majority, though, practical experience in the classroom is an affirmation not just of the career they have chosen but also of themselves and the value they bring to the classroom. The combination of quality professional classroom experiences and an opportunity to partake in such experiences in the early stages of pre-service teaching degrees is fundamental to the development of teaching competence. It is in the context of professional experience that the genesis for the ideas of each of this issue's contributors lie.



Editorial¹

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Wade Dever examines teacher–student relationships in the classroom, specifically for gifted students and using the framework of François Gagné's DMGT 2.0. This is followed by two articles with a mathematics focus: Elizabeth Giardini puts forward a case for purposeful mathematics experiences, while Sarah Sanders focuses on the need to value, encourage and develop critical and creative thinking skills in mathematics. Courtney Belsito takes a wider view by discussing variances between the terms 'teacher quality' and 'quality teaching', including their misuse. The final article for this issue is by Robert Angelkovski, who discusses the importance of inculcating resilience in children, through consideration of both familial and educational factors.

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¹ The views expressed in this editorial are those of the editor himself and do not necessarily represent the views of the University of Wollongong or its constituents.