

Reflections

Dr. Kathleen J. Tate, *Past Editor*

As many know, I stepped down from Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Online Learning Research and Practice (JOLRAP) over a year ago. Dr. Linda C. Ashar stepped aboard as Guest Editor for this issue of the journal. Much appreciation to her! Linda is the former Co-Editor of The International Journal of Open Educational Resources (IJOER).

In This Issue

In this issue, you will find a variety of articles covering many topics across U.S. and international settings including professional development, undergraduate, and graduate contexts in the areas of general education and science and more, with themes of equity, OER practices, and artificial intelligence (AI) and some of its ethical aspects. Drs. Johnson and Walton conducted a mixed methods study in the U.S. using the Professional Learning Online Module (PLOM) in professional development courses while Drs. Connolly, Paxton, Centi, and Shiferaw compared graduate students across two cohorts using a commercial textbook versus an OER textbook in an adult gerontology primary care course.

Drs. Jhangiani and Clyne investigated attitudes of post-secondary students in Canada towards OERs. Their study revealed continued equity issues in higher education. Drs. Clobes, Benedetti-Coomber, Jenkins, and Flores qualitatively surveyed more than 500 undergraduate students at a Hispanic-serving institution in Southern California. They found implications of the advantages and disadvantages of OERs with a focus on equity.

Drs. Nischal, Mascareno, and Poon studied student perception of an OER lab manual in an undergraduate introductory biology lab course and found it comparable to a purchased lab manual with a reduction in drop-fail-withdraw rates. Drs. Appert, Packard, Squillace, and Schaffer study examined an OER textbook replacement in a general education humanities course with findings related to sustainable platforms and faculty buy-in leading to various recommendations.

Dr. Parker examined practical considerations for AI in online learning contexts including ways educational leaders may support faculties in adapting to challenges and solutions, including strategies and ethical concerns for leveraging AI tools in the classroom. Related, Dr. Smith conducted a document review with commonality matrices on ethical aspects of AI in higher education.

This issue provides a range of practices and tools for university constituents to consider. Articles capture data, examples, and experience from the field. We

hope you extract discussion points to share with your own students, colleagues, and supervisors to prompt new directions in discourse, research, and practice.

It has been a pleasure to serve as Editor-in-Chief of JOLRAP (2016-2024) and be somewhat involved in this issue in which Linda has served as Guest Editor. As I reflect on my time with the journal, I think about key milestones:

- changing the original journal title from *Internet Learning* to the *Journal of Online Learning Research and Practice*;
- building and working with a great Editorial Board;
- working with authors who wrote passionately about current and innovative topics; and
- conceptualizing, creating, and running a major joint-journal conference that focused on AI: the virtual joint-journal conference, “AI and the Future of Education: Disruptive Teaching and Learning Models” held August 1-2, 2024.

2024 Conference: AI and the Future of Education: Disruptive Teaching and Learning Models

As the JOLRAP Editor-in-Chief, I worked with former Editor-in-Chief of IJOER at the time, Dr. Ron Johnson. Approximately a year later, Linda joined Ron as Co-Editor-in-Chief of IJOER.

Together, we created the Conference. The Policy Studies Organization and American Public University (APUS) JOLRAP and IJOER journals provided an opportunity for this conference, which included keynote speakers from the University of Texas at Austin, MIT, and Microsoft Education, special guest speaker U.S. Congressman Jay Obernolte, and an invited student speaker from the University of Washington.

APUS President Nuno Fernandes opened the conference and presenters from universities and organizations across the country and beyond shared research and practice related to AI. Over 1,000 registrants made this the largest conference in APUS’ history! We appreciate all who were involved and attended! The recorded sessions remain available at <https://www.ipsonet.org/conferences/aiconference/> .

Thank you for your time and involvement with the journal and thank you to those who authored, contributed, reviewed articles, and presented and attended the conference.

Thanks again to Linda. It is all appreciated! Enjoy!

Kathleen J. Tate, Ph.D

Former Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Online Learning Research and Practice

Dr. Tate's Bio

Dr. Kathleen J. Tate serves as Professor and Department Chair of Teaching in the School of Arts, Humanities, and Education at American Public University System. With more than 25 years of experience in education, she has contributed in a variety of roles. Her professional journey began as a special education teacher in a bilingual, Title I elementary school. She has also worked as a researcher, professor, university administrator, consultant, and children's STEM book author. Dr. Tate's primary research interests focus on humane education, mixed methods research, underserved and underrepresented populations, arts-based and multimodal teaching and learning, and integrated or thematic instruction. Dr. Tate earned a BA in Soviet & East European Studies with a minor in Economics and an MEd in Special Education from the University of Texas. She received a PhD in Elementary Education from Florida State University.