
FROM THE EDITOR

When I applied to be the editor of the CTAM Journal, I wanted to build on the value of our state journal for early-career academics. State journals are an inclusive place for all sorts of publications; they have served as a steppingstone into the world of academic publishing for me and many other authors. The contents of our state journal are also a valuable place for readers at all levels in their careers to stay on top of the communication and theater work being done in Minnesota. I appreciate the work of our authors to edit and refine their articles to create a strong set of publications to represent the field.

My passion for early-career academics comes from my experience growing up in a working-class family. I never imagined myself in the world of academia growing up. My dad spent over forty years doing maintenance in a plastic factory, and my mom spent most of her life working as a lunch lady (and sometimes working a second job at night). My parents worked hard to provide a comfortable life for my siblings and me. The only piece of education advice my dad provided me was to go to college, so I did not have to work as hard as he did.

I wound up in the field of communication studies because those were the classes I liked the most during my first semesters in college. I fondly remember Aimee DuBois' interpersonal communication class at Normandale Community College where I took classes as a PSEO student. When I graduated and transferred to St. Cloud State University, I was most engaged in Dr. Diana Rehling's introduction to communication class. I did not know what I wanted to major in, so I went with the classes where I felt at home. As an introvert, I thought communication was an odd choice, but the classes were practical and enjoyable. I knew I was where I needed to be.

As I continued my journey into graduate school, I continued to be reaffirmed that I was taking my career in the right direction. Dr. Kristi Treinen was a great mentor overseeing the teaching assistants at Minnesota State University, Mankato where I built my passion for teaching. To transition from a blue-collar family into a white-collar profession took significant support from many faculty members across multiple institutions. Not everyone is as lucky as I am to receive support every step along the way.

I want the CTAM Journal to be a place where others can feel affirmed regarding their place in academia as well. Academia can be a challenging place, especially for first-generation college students like myself. I regularly follow the hashtag #AcademicChatter on Twitter where many graduate students and early-career faculty vent about the difficulties in finding a place in the academic world. While our state journal may be small, I want everyone to know they are welcome in this corner of academia.

I want to thank our associate editors for their kind and detailed feedback to our authors to help the articles move toward publication. Even if we are an inclusive place, we still want to ensure we are producing a high-quality journal for others to enjoy. We have four general interest articles and eight open-education resource (OER) textbook reviews. As the editor, I appreciated the opportunity to see these articles be revised and improved into their current respective states.

The OER textbook reviews served as a great way to get new authors an easy publication while providing value to the many educators who read our journal and may be interested in adopting free textbooks for their students. As a student, I remember shopping for textbooks one or two editions out of date to make them affordable for me. By promoting OER textbooks in this forum, I hope more educators will give their students equal access to education by using the high-quality OER textbooks available in the field.

Thank you again to our authors and associate editors for creating a high-quality journal that can be enjoyed by many people in our field. As readers, I hope you enjoy the final product for this year's journal. As we intend to be an inclusive place for all authors, I hope you consider submitting an article to future issues.

Take care and enjoy the journal,
Bradley

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