2020

Prologue

Michiko Nohara-LeClair
Lindenwood University

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Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair

This year's Research Methods Journal is extra special because the students who contributed their papers to it are extra special. For the first time since 2002 when I first started these journals, every contributing student was accepted to present their work featured in this journal at a research conference in April of 2020. In addition, some of these same students were accepted to present other scholarly work at one or more research conferences in the spring. Among the seven students featured in this journal, we are talking about 11 conference presentations – the most productive of any class I have ever had the privilege of teaching.

In all these years of teaching Advanced Research Methods, Psychology Research Labs, and Senior Thesis, I have never had a group of students who were collectively more enthusiastic and hardworking than this group of students. However, just as the students and I were getting prepared for their conference poster and/or paper presentations, the corona virus pandemic (COVID-19) hit the U.S. in March 2020. From that point forward, everything we took for granted had to be reevaluated and adopted to a new normal.

The sudden onset of the pandemic resulted in all academic conferences either canceling or postponing their event. Our own Social Science Student Symposium 2020 scheduled for November 2020 also had to be canceled because of the pandemic. These seven well-deserving students did not have the opportunity to showcase their scholarly achievements at academic conference in 2020 as planned.

However, all but one of these students who had already graduated in December 2019 were able to present their work at our semester-end project presentation conference, which was held virtually on Canvas Conferences for the first time. Despite the unfamiliar format, the students all rose to the occasion, showed resilience and creativity, and performed remarkably. Faculty, staff, and students from outside of the participating courses who came to hear their presentations were very impressed, and I could not be prouder.

Although our lives are still very much influenced by the current pandemic and we have had to endure our share of disappointments, I believe that the students whose work is represented in this journal will turn their hardship into strength as they move forward, and I do expect them to continue to achieve great things in their futures.

Lastly, in addition to thanking the student authors in this journal for sharing their work, I would like to thank Isabella Boccia for designing this year's journal cover and Alfa Ramirez for serving as editor for this journal.

Michiko Nohara-LeClair

Course Instructor