

From the Editorial Board

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the International Journal of Process Education! We are excited to see how far our efforts have taken us and how much the Academy of Process Educators has grown from the grass roots foundations of passionate educators.

Our vision at the International Journal of Process Education is “to be a catalyst for the scholarship of teaching and learning in support of the efforts of the Process Education Academy to transform higher education.” We intend to accomplish this goal through the steps in our mission:

- To provide a forum for, and an archival record of, scholarly research in Process Education
- To elevate skills in the discipline of the scholarship of teaching and learning
- To explore promising new research areas in Process Education
- To foster classroom-based research

With this journal we invite scholars with interests in constructivism, experiential learning, problem-based learning, and pedagogies incorporating active learning strategies and a learner-centered approach, to join us in a continuing conversation about teaching and learning.

In this inaugural edition the reader will find articles that explain the history of Process Education interspersed with articles applying Process Education to contemporary classroom settings in higher education. Following our principles of constructionistic learning, we begin this edition with applications, merge into our history then follow up with insight into the importance of the learning environment quality.

Our lead articles conceptualize learning and ways to map learners’ growth.

- Duncan-Hewitt, Mount, Beyerlein, Cordon and Steciak, use a developmental model that identifies “six observable levels of cognitive complexity for which there are differences in self-concept, thought-structure, and behaviors.” Student performances can be measured at each level.
- Leise and El-Sayed show that in order to measure growth in learning, there must be quality measurement building upon earlier instructions that have provided clear directions and unambiguous descriptions of desired outcomes. A methodology for constructing course rubrics is provided; such rubrics can make assignments “transparent” for learners as well as guide faculty assessment of learning.

The next two articles discuss learning communities: how to use Process Education in an online course management system to foster a learning community and how to assess the best practice of learning communities in keeping with the commitment to continuously improve Process Education itself.

- Hanson and Heller report on the success of learning communities as a strategy for improving the success of beginning science students in General Chemistry.
- Lawrence and Snyder use the constructivist framework and principles of Process Education to transform an online learning management system into a learning environment in which course activities and gradebook feedback are redesigned to align with learning objectives.

The next two articles address the history and guiding principles of Process Education.

- Burke, Lawrence, El-Sayed, and Apple trace the intellectual history of Process Education. They articulate its philosophy of education, its methodology and its community of practice. Also explained is the organizational history of Pacific Crest, an educational publisher, committed to the development and promulgation of Process Education.
- Utschig and Apple explore, develop and map the different processes and outcomes related to evaluation in contrast to assessment. Assessment, understood as the process that fosters self-growth, is identified as a defining practice for Process Education.

And finally, the next two articles discuss the importance of establishing an environment conducive to learning.

- Cuadrado presents research which affirms the need for a campus environment in which students feel safe and secure in their diverse racial identities as a condition for further learning.
- Smith and Spoelman focus on the role of affect in learning. They present a methodology for creating a quality learning environment that fosters the mutual trust and respect that learners need in order to embrace new challenges.

Because the Academy of Process Educators believes in continuous improvement this inaugural edition constitutes the beginning of a lifelong journey of continuous improvement. During this journey the journal will depend on you, the authors and readers, to improve its performance and accelerate its progress through assessment. We strongly believe that measuring and enhancing performance through assessment in all aspects of academia is the key to quality in higher education. Based on this belief and to frame the journal's evolution, we have articulated the following Guiding Principles:

- All faculty, staff, administrators and students can contribute to classroom research.
- Every researcher's methods can be continuously improved.
- The term "classroom" is a metaphor for all learning environments.
- Mentorship can accelerate the development of research skills.
- There is a role for both quantitative and qualitative educational research.
- Collaboration among authors, reviewer and editors is critical for a vibrant research environment.
- Increasing societal complexity and pace of change make it imperative to accelerate the transition from classroom discovery to disseminated findings that are the basis of shared practice.
- An educational journal can be improved by regularly assessing all aspects of its operation.

In the spirit of true collaboration, we invite you to join us by providing us with your thoughts and improvements along our collective journey to improve higher education. Together we can accomplish great change.

We hope you enjoy reading our inaugural edition!

Sincerely,

Jacqueline El-Sayed, Ph.D.
Founding and Chief Editor

Mary Moore, Ph.D.
Chair, Review Process Committee