

## **Editor's Introduction**

It is my distinct honor to welcome our readers to the twelfth volume of *Higher Education in Review*. Over the past year, our graduate student editorial board has worked tirelessly to not only continue *Higher Education in Review's* (HER) tradition as the premier graduate student-run, peer reviewed, academic journal in the field of higher education, not only through our twelfth volume, but a number of other activities and accomplishments.

This past spring, HER was involved in a workshop, hosted by past editor Talia Carroll, for student-run journals at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual conference in Chicago. During this workshop, editors of student-run journals, and those hoping to start them, shared best practices and continued building a community of editors to support the work of student-run journals. It is my hope to continue the networking started by previous editorial boards in the following year. Editorial board members were present at multiple conferences including the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), the Association for Institutional Research (AIR), and AERA, handing out business cards and calls for submissions for HER to graduate students in attendance.

In what I hope will become a tradition for the journal, HER is pleased to announce it will be publishing a special edition on the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA). The special edition will feature editorial pieces written by students from Penn State and other institutions, focusing on how past higher education research can guide policymakers in the reauthorization of the pivotal piece of higher education legislation. Chapters will examine the historical impact of the HEA, for-profit policy, international education, online education, Pell grants, and student loans. Our hope is that this special edition will spark discussion and provide potential research-driven solutions to problems faced by policymakers as they revise the HEA. This special edition will be published online early in the 2016 year.

In continuation of a strategic plan, this year's editorial board has worked hard to expand the online presence of the journal, publishing two book reviews and two editorial pieces. Our Higher Education in Review Online (HERO) section has seen an increase in the number of submissions, which we hope to expand more over the next year.

Finally, over the past year we received over forty submissions for our twelfth volume. As a part of our mission, the editorial board prides itself in developing graduate students into better scholars, providing substantive feedback on all

submissions we receive. We received submissions on a wide range of topics across higher education that posed and answered important scholarly questions in our field. The pool of submissions led to extremely difficult editorial decisions, but with the help of the review board, I am happy to introduce an invited piece by Dr. Jason Lane and two peer-reviewed pieces that have been selected for print publication in this volume. The manuscripts selected for this edition are exemplary works both in their rigor and contributions to the field of higher education.

These three pieces are joined by three online publications. The first piece by William Eger, titled *Is College Worth It? What Different Groups of 10<sup>th</sup> Graders Know About College*, provides a unique case study that examined the college knowledge of 10<sup>th</sup> graders from three different inner-city high schools. The second and third pieces are book reviews of *Academically Adrift*, reviewed by Pamela Snyder and *Quiet: The power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking*, reviewed by Rachel Montgomery. All of the online publications can be found on our website ([www.HigherEdInReview.org](http://www.HigherEdInReview.org)).

In our invited piece, *Five Transformative Trends in Higher Education and How They Affect Our Writing*, Dr. Jason Lane draws upon his experience as both a practitioner and researcher to identify five trends in higher education, and their impact on how we write as scholars. He argues that higher education has changed significantly since he completed his graduate coursework, including the consolidation of institutions into systems, which now educate 75% of four-year degree students, the internationalization of higher education, and the amazing changes put in motion by new technologies, such as big data and social media. The common thread throughout Dr. Lane's piece is that scholars must integrate the traditional scholarly foundation with these new realities that are transforming the practice of higher education, while providing research that is accessible to both researchers and practitioners.

As Dr. Jason Lane alludes to, technology is transforming many parts of higher education. Our first peer-reviewed piece entitled *Enriching the Participation of Undergraduate Women in Higher Education: A Qualitative Exploration of the Experiences of Female Bloggers*, written by Laura Parson and Donna Pearson, examines the relationship between the enrichment of academic experiences and empowerment, and blogging among female undergraduate students. The authors provide a stimulating discussion of how the women in their study grew both individually and as students as a result of their blogging.

Our final peer-reviewed piece, *The Black-White Dichotomy of Race: Influence of a Predominantly White Environment on Multiracial Identify*,

Veronica Jones investigates how and why multiracial students self-identify racially. The author unpacks the participants' notions of their racial identity within a system that only classifies them within a dichotomy of white and black.

Serving as the Editor for this volume of *Higher Education in Review* has been a pleasure and an honor. I have learned so much, not only from reading countless submissions from graduate student scholars from across the country, but also from working with the amazing editorial board at HER. I would like to thank our consulting editors, our first line of reviewers that have put in countless hours to provide substantive feedback on each submission we receive. I am thankful for our external reviewers, the doctorate holding faculty and practitioners that have provided numerous reviews and insightful feedback for promising pieces, as well as your support for our journal.

Finally, a huge debt of gratitude is owed to the senior editorial team, who have given me support with the journal, as colleagues in our graduate program, and as friends. Allie Goldstein (Managing Editor) has been the rock of HER, ensuring our double-blind process and serving as the point of contact between the editorial board and authors. Frank Fernandez (Associate Editor for Digital Content) has provided more online content than ever before in addition to reviewing numerous submissions and creating current website. Our work would not be complete without Michael Flaherty (Associate Editor of Production), who ensures a high standard of quality and worked hard to ensure we complete each volume in a timely fashion. Finally, I would like to thank our Assistant Editors, Rachel Montgomery, Azalea Hulbert, and Maeghen MacDonald for their contributions and support.

Mark R. Umbricht  
Editor

