

Manuscript 1314

From the Editor

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From the Editor

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Welcome to the Spring issue of the 2023 ICCTE Journal. I hope your transition from the Winter term to the Spring/Summer season has gone well.

I also hope your academic year was an opportunity for you and your colleagues and communities to bless and be blessed. These are challenging and important times for a community of Christian teacher educators. The schools and students we are preparing teacher candidates for are in a strange and unprecedented time of change and flux, and the significance of the work we do has been heightened as a result.

The crisis of teachers leaving the profession and experiencing teacher burnout forces us to ask important questions about the nature and purpose of education, accompanied by an opportunity to take a careful look at what we do in our calling to equip future teachers.

In our institution, the blend of remote and face-to-face instruction we have employed over the past few years has challenged us to carefully consider who we are and what we do. The realities of the pandemic caused us to invest in digital technologies in order to deliver an effective hybrid model, blending face-to-face teaching in the classroom with technologies that allowed remote students to participate simultaneously. The faces of our Zoomers were displayed on a large-screen TV at the back of the room. High quality audio and video systems allowed them to be virtually present in the classroom. The model worked well because our students were highly motivated,

prepared, and engaged. We learned to appreciate the immense and rich potential of online learning.

However, for the upcoming academic year, we will return to fully face-to-face instruction. I will admit, I am very excited to see all of my students together in the classroom. The hybrid approach was exhausting, particularly for a relational introvert. I was very conscious of the fact that I could not fully engage with the small group discussions in the room, as I constantly had to ensure that the remote students had not been “booted out” of their online breakout rooms. And every time I joined the online discussions, I immediately interrupted their dialogue, prompting well-intended students to carefully explain to me what they had been talking about, rather than simply allowing me to eavesdrop and join in their conversation. I don’t feel either face-to-face or remote instruction was as effective as it could have been as a result.

This experience prompted us to try to find ways to name and describe the tensions and challenges. In the end, distinguishing between education as transactional and education as relational and transformational has been helpful and clarifying. Some people view education as transactional, with an emphasis on an exchange of information. In this context, online learning can work quite well. However, we recognize that we view education as

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both relational and transformational. Education occurs in the context of a network of relationship, including students, instructors, and the subject at hand, in what Parker Palmer (1998) would describe as a “community of truth” (p. 102). When this is done well, education can be transformational, affecting a clear change in how people view all aspects of education (e.g., teaching, learning, students, peers, curriculum, instruction, assessment and evaluation, etc.). In this context, the topic of teacher dispositions has emerged as quite significant. What does it mean to be an effective teacher? What are the dispositions of an effective Christian educator? How do we develop these dispositions? How do we provide opportunities for our teacher candidates to develop these dispositions? In today’s complex educational landscape, we believe that education cannot simply be transactional. It must be relational and transformational. To be clear, we are not yet convinced that this cannot be done in an online setting. As technologies and pedagogies develop and emerge, we may find a way to do this well, too. But we have recognized that this vision is best embodied in a face-to-face context. As a result, we are excited to be back to fully in person next year.

In the current issue, our authors raise a number of questions that speak directly to some of these challenges. In her essay, Michelle Hughes (Westmont College), shares an updated version of her Emerging Scholar address from the 2022 ICCTE Conference. Building on the work she and her colleagues have done with teacher dispositions, she reflects on the nature and impact of the disposition of courage. In his article, Jeff Wiesman (Campbellsville University) explores the development and assessment of Biblically-based

dispositions for teacher training programs, addressing the essential question, What makes a great Christian teacher? In her article, Heather Birch (Tyndale University) builds on the foundation of self-determination theory, exploring the link between a motivation to learn, digital technologies, and game-based learning. Finally, in her book review, Christina Belcher (Redeemer University, Emeritus) reviews Kurlberg and Phillips (2020) “*Missio Dei in a Digital Age*.” The book includes a number of compelling chapters exploring the nature and challenge of mission and faith in a digital age.

We hope you enjoy the Spring 2023 issue. Please continue to keep us in mind for the future. We welcome empirical and research-based articles, theoretical essays, and reviews of books that may be of interest to the ICCTE community. We would also like to add to our reviewer panel, in case you are interested, or know of someone who might serve well in this capacity. The deadline for submissions for the Fall Issue is August 1.

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References

- Kurlberg, J., & Phillips, P.M. (2020). *Missio Dei in a digital age*. SCM Press.
- Palmer, P.J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. Jossey-Bass.

Transformative Care Theme Issue – Call for Papers

The ICCTE-J is issuing a call for manuscripts related to *Transformative Care*, to be published as a themed issue in the Fall of 2024. This issue will be edited by a team of scholars, led by Paul Shotsberger and a number of his colleagues.

Transformative care represents a force for purposeful change in educational structures and systems that allows for the communication of authentic care. It is an extension of an ethic of care, drawing upon the literature of disruptive innovation, and seeking to address inequitable practices, challenge unjust educational systems, and advocate for relationally-rich learning communities. This issue offers an opportunity for scholars to contribute articles from a wide variety of perspectives and contexts. We desire to hear voices from higher education and PK-12 schools, administrators and instructors, theory-based, and more practice-oriented.

Possible themes include, but are not limited to:

- *more inclusive curricular development*
- *alternative assessment practices*
- *trauma-informed practices (for students and/or teachers)*
- *student-centered classroom management*

We request that you make your submission no later than February 29, 2024, indicating specifically that the submission is for the themed issue on Transformative Care.