2021

Editor's Page

Brandi N. Frisby
University of Kentucky, brandi.frisby@uky.edu

Recommended Citation

Frisby, Brandi N. (2021) "Editor's Page," *Basic Communication Course Annual*: Vol. 33 , Article 2.
Available at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/bcca/vol33/iss1/2

Editor's Page

Brandi N. Frisby, University of Kentucky

The *Basic Communication Course Annual* is the home for scholarship related to all aspects of the basic course ranging from curriculum design and the process of instruction and pedagogy to effective administration and assessment. Volume 33 highlights research along this entire spectrum providing theoretical and practical value for our discipline's introductory course.

The first pair of essays take a critical approach to the current basic communication course and its content, pushing us to think more deeply about the type of students we are teaching and the type of citizens we want to create. In their article, Meggie Mapes, Lindsey Kraus, Elnaz Parviz, and Joshua Morgan of the University of Kansas make a compelling argument for why and how to change the basic course around the pedagogical principles of (dis)information, power, and audience. Importantly, they tell us how to help students become more active producers of media, rather than passive consumers. In their words, "The inability to think about how new media shifts public speaking contexts runs the risk of framing our introductory course as outdated and lacking nuance because it does not ring true to student lives." In a similar vein, focusing on developing active and prepared students who will graduate as active and prepared citizens is Daniel Chick's essay. He powerfully states, "By considering who we are and what we provide to the world, we can create a strong narrative focused on a clear central purpose for the introductory course."

Our second set of studies focuses on the communication center, which is often a critical and supplemental component of successful basic courses. In their study, Brianna Stewart, Andie Malterud, Heidi Lawrence, and Melissa Broeckelman-Post learned more about how invaluable the communication center is for students. Nate Brophy, Adebanke Adebayo, and Broeckelman-Post also explored the influence of the communication center on students' performance. They found that when students attend communication centers before their first speech, they had higher speech

vii

grades, course grades, and attendance as well as more behavioral and cognitive engagement. Taken together, these author teams build strong argument for institutions to invest in coaches, space, and marketing and for directors and instructors to integrate center visits into the course expectations.

One study in particular by Jill Underhill, Victoria Ledford, and Hillary Adams tackled the need for research to address diverse student populations. Through understanding of peer perceptions of students who are atypical learners, they provide insight on how to make the basic course classroom more inclusive through raised awareness, removing stigma, and fostering connection.

Two studies in particular represent strong methodological approaches to understanding the impact of the basic course over time. Sherwyn Morreale, Pamela Shockley-Zalabak, Barbara Gaddis, Janice Thorpe, Constance Stanley, and Erica Allgood analyzed data from 9,707 unique students over 14 years. Their analysis supports that, in their words, "The introductory communication course can be a powerful, transformative teaching and learning experience," while also providing practical advice to guide other directors' assessment efforts. Lynn O. Cooper, Rebecca Border Sietman, and John Vessey studied learning gains between informative and persuasive speeches for over 2,000 students between the year of 2009 and 2019. This study provides evidence that students consistently improve in both speech delivery and structure.

This next set of studies continues the strong theoretical underpinnings of *BCCA* scholarship. First, Chris Sawyer and his colleagues Delwin Richey and Karley Goen applied Regulatory Fit Theory to experimentally examine students' emotional responses to the unavoidable evaluation. This study provides theory driven practical advice for providing feedback to help students remain emotionally engaged, even when they fail to meet expectations. Second, Michael Burns, Kristen Farris, Mark Paz, and Sean Dyhre applied the Reasoned Action Model to understand students' intentions to use skills learned in the basic course outside of class, supporting the value of this course for all students to administrators. Framed by the Instructional Beliefs Model, Beau Foutz, Michelle Violanti, Stephanie Kelly, and Suzy Prentiss' study examined a model depicting the relationships between immediacy and the reduction of public speaking anxiety. Each of these studies have implications for training new instructors or GTAs to provide feedback, elicit behavior change, or to show immediacy to be effective in the basic course. Finally, W. Benjamin Myers and Theresa A. Wadkins experimentally examined social contagion effects finding that sample speeches with vocal fillers resulted in more vocal fillers used by students.

viii

Each of these studies have implications for training instructors, whether new or experienced, to provide meaningful feedback, elicit behavior change, select effective examples, and to show immediacy to be effective in the basic course.

Other studies also focused on important behaviors for training and management of GTAs. In Michelle Hershberger's study basic course directors identified the most common misbehaviors of GTAs and why these actions were considered misbehaviors. Of practical relevance to BCDs, she addresses the strategies to address misbehaviors when they do happen and how to proactively address these behaviors, setting a foundation for approaches to GTA training and management.

Given the important conversations generated by the forum series under the editorship of Joe Valenzano and Joe Mazer, the forum series continued in this volume. The catalyst for this forum was a memory of a discussion about employers' needs at an early Basic Course Directors conference that I attended. Specifically, the forum topic for this volume focused on questions surrounding our ability to cultivate communication skills in our students to meet and match employer's needs. Our authors addressed mentorship, digital skills, and what workforce skills might look like in a post-COVID-19 world. I invited Jon Hess to respond to these essays and encourage deeper thinking regarding the role of the basic course in skills training and employer needs and future directions in this area.

When I decided to pursue the role as *BCCA* editor, I proposed my vision for the journal. Specifically, I wanted to maintain the theoretical, methodological, and programmatic rigor of the scholarship accepted. My vision relied heavily on recommendations by Joyce, Kritselis, Dunn, Simonds, and Lynn (2019) to focus on diversity, GTA training, and matching communication skills with employer desires. Adding to these themes, I also wanted to focus more on technology, communication centers, authentic learning, and scale development/validation. Finally, my vision was continuing a tradition of inclusivity in our journal in terms of our scholarship, but also our authors and reviewers.

I feel confident in saying that meeting these goals was only possible through the extremely thoughtful manuscripts submitted by the authors, the immensely constructive and timely feedback of reviewers and the editorial team, and the incredible support of my administrative assistant, Hayley Hoffman (University of Kentucky), and the e-scholarship manager, Maureen Schlangen (University of Dayton). To summarize, we had 40 unique authors represented, including 7 who were graduate students, and who represented 17 different institutions. Our editorial team was comprised of 27 different reviewers hailing from all theoretical,

methodological, demographic, and institutional backgrounds. Each of these stakeholders worked hard all year to bring the journal to fruition, and especially hard during a pandemic and in the busy time at the end of the semester to make a January publication. I want to acknowledge the extraneous challenges faced in this year and to extend my sincere thanks to this group for overcoming those challenges. Finally, after reflection and consultation, future volumes of the *BCCA* will be published in February instead of January to avoid undue stress because of the overlapping timing of publication and year end responsibilities and holidays.

I look forward to continuing to work with this amazing community of scholars and educators on Volume 34!

x

Research Articles

The *Basic Communication Course Annual* publishes the best scholarship available on topics related to the basic course and is distributed nationally to scholars and educators interested in the basic communication course.

Manuscripts published in the *Basic Communication Course Annual* are not restricted to any particular methodology or approach. They address issues that are significant to the basic course, defined broadly. Articles in the *Annual* may focus on the basic course in traditional or nontraditional settings. The *Annual* uses a blind review process.

1