

EDITORIAL

Introduction to the Special Issue

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The teaching-of-psychology community often likes to refer to itself as a close-knit family or tribe. On the surface, there may appear to be factions or competing interests at times, such as teachers who tend to affiliate more with the American Psychological Association (APA), the Association for Psychological Science (APS), or the National Institute for the Teaching of Psychology (NITOP). Some teachers of psychology may prefer to read or publish in *Teaching of Psychology (ToP)*, the official journal of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP); others may prefer *Psychology Learning & Teaching*, published by SAGE. This special issue of *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*—a publication of the APA—is published in cooperation with our scholarly siblings at *ToP*. Although it may appear at times that different entities are in competition for the same audience, the fact of the matter is that similar journals (and similar organizations, conferences, etc.) can serve the same audience. The central topic of the shared special issue—assessment—is indeed important enough that it warrants examination from multiple perspectives, and we are honored to collaborate with our gifted colleagues and friends at *ToP*.

To formulate this special issue on assessment, we made an early decision that would ensure it would be truly thought-provoking—we lured Dr. Jane Halonen from the University of West Florida to serve as the special guest editor for this special issue. In our opinion, Dr. Halonen is one of the foremost experts in assessment in psychology and higher education in the English-speaking world. Together, we placed an open call for articles about assessment. Article ideas were vetted, and those articles that were submitted underwent the standard peer-review process. In addition, in a bit of a two-for-one special, we also asked Jane to write a piece for this issue. When you have one of the foremost experts in the world around, how can you not? In the spirit of transparency here and peer review, we served as peer reviewers for that article.

We are proud of this special issue and the timeliness of the articles and contributions. Assessment remains a critical topic for all teachers of psychology in higher education, and that has not changed in the era of COVID-19. High school, college, and university instructors who have made the grand pivot to online instruction need to know, now more than ever before, if their students are

Editor's Note. This is an introduction to the “Special Issue on Assessment” Please see the Table of Contents here: <http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/stl/6/3/>.—R.E.L. and R.A.R.G.

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learning, and they need to know how to improve their own instructional practices.

We note with sadness that one of the authors in this special issue, Scott Lilienfeld of Emory University, died in late September 2020 from Stage IV pancreatic cancer. First, we are thankful Alan Bensley was able to collaborate with Dr. Lilienfeld and contribute to this special issue. Second, Scott was a prominent, eminent scholar and leader in psychological science as well as a good friend to many of us—he will be truly missed, and our condolences go to his colleagues, friends, and family.

It seems that it is in the DNA of all the faculty we meet that there is the triumvirate: teaching, research, and service. Workload formulas are calculated based on this trio. Institutions often have awards in each category. Here's the rub: meaningful assessment allows us to know if our teaching is effective with regard to student outcomes, and well-designed assessment also yields information for faculty about continuous improvement. Assessment done correctly allows for a department and an institution to tell the story to parents, trustees, regents, legislators, and accrediting bodies that students are learning and faculty are continuing to improve. Want that type of job security during a pandemic? Keep reading this issue, and be sure to read the companion collaborative, *Teaching of Psychology*, Volume 47, Issue 4. Perhaps the classic triumvirate of teaching, research, and service should become the quadrumvirate (or tetrad, or quadrivium) of teaching, research, service, and assessment.

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