

## **Editorial Introduction: Embracing the uniqueness**

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The year 2021 certainly featured unique headlines. We experienced democracy under attack, public health politics, escalating climate change, and supply chain disruptions. There was hope in the uniqueness, too; high-profile athletes taught us that it is okay to not be okay, tech companies were held accountable, live entertainment returned, COVID-19 vaccines were made available, and many campuses welcomed students back for face-to-face if not hybrid classes. Thanks to the pandemic, our communication center community of scholars, practitioners, helpers, and learners ended 2021 disruption-ready, quick to adapt, and more technologically savvy than when the year started.

Amid a good degree of uncertainty, we do now what we have done in years past. We mark the end of the year with the publication of CCJ. As we look at the journal's 2021, we can report unique news of our own. The journal honored its first Distinguished Reviewer, Dr. Armondo Collins of Cal Poly Pomona. [Dr. Collins](#) was honored for providing quality feedback that had a strong, positive impact, and was timely completed. We also adopted a transparent [anti-racist scholarly review process](#). We look ahead to 2022 with hope as we circulate a call for manuscripts focused on centering well-being.

We invite our community to join us in celebrating the uniqueness of the manuscripts published in this volume.

The special topic section called for research and essays that borrow from external approaches to the work of communication centers. We were thrilled to receive the gift of manuscripts for review on the science behind learning, multidisciplinary leadership, business/law/healthcare continuing education programs, and teaching self-advocacy skills to students with disabilities. That last title, in an earlier version, was honored as the Ferguson top-faculty research paper at the 2020 National Association of Communication Centers gathering. Unique to that top prize, the co-author was an undergraduate researcher who also worked in a communication center.

The research and praxis sections stretch our understanding of the work we do. What motivated students who worked in our centers before 2020? What impact did COVID-19 masking have on student presentations? What role should improvisation play in all of our centers, not just in medical training? The notion of shifting our centers from IDEA to IDEAL spaces is where we took inspiration for our well-being special topic call for 2022.

We continue to value the work done by our book reviewers. This edition is the first time the section's selections completely connect to the subject of the special topic. There is literally something for everyone in the collection. We plan to make the special topic connection a tradition our readers can look forward to.

The Excellence at the Center section, essays written by student authors, always bring us hope. These six authors have embraced what they learned through their non-communication center coursework. They twisted, applied, tested, questioned, and challenged the theories and ideas of communication centers through the lens of their coursework in refreshing new ways. Any student interested could follow this model. We invite students who wish to publish an 800 to 1000-word essay to pitch their idea. We are especially interested in new and diverse student perspectives pushing unexplored topics or new angles on previously published reflections. Send the pitch to our current [Excellence Editor](#), who is a graduate student. Related, a much longer version of the published excellent essay “The Importance of Antiracism in Speaking Center Pedagogic Materials: “Neutral” is No Longer Neutral” was previously honored with the Weiss top-undergraduate research paper at the 2021 National Association of Communication Centers gathering.

Finally, co-editing an open-source academic journal is a unique opportunity for community and collaboration. It takes the courage, time, expertise, and belief of authors, section editors, reviewers, copy editor, subscription manager, webmaster, and operating system technical supporters from all over the country to work in unison. We are grateful to those who have participated in this work for 2021. It is an honor to ensure all are working towards providing our readers the quality they and we expect.

In our co-editor roles, we are privileged to have the support of our institutions and our student employees. Even more important, because this work takes us from our families and

loved ones from time to time, we are ever grateful for the support we receive at home.