



Teaching Matters and Assessment Center (TMAC)

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Director's Note

I'll let you in on a secret: our students, by and large, *cannot read*. They generally meet the threshold of *functional* literacy for tasks of daily living but fall way short of the *critical* literacy necessary to read complex texts of academic culture.

I suspect those of you who teach already know this, but what to do about it? One of the most important things we do for our students is provide ongoing instruction in reading instead of assuming that their skill set is now complete. That is, reading has to be *taught*, not just assigned. And structures of support and motivation need to be in place to help students benefit from the time required to read well. In the first year Writing Program we help students to become better readers of many kinds of texts, including textbooks, but the task of being literacy educators goes across the disciplines. See below for what you can do to promote effective reading in your classes.

With much talk about the value of experiential learning, it's worth considering both the pros and the cons of recent efforts to bring "real world" approaches to education; are they more superficial than meets the eye? We're curious what *you* think.

TMAC invites your participation in a symposium early in Spring (details below) on research-based writing, including forms of documentation like MLA, APA, etc. What does it mean to ask students to do research and to write it up for an audience? I'll share insights gained from revising two major texts used widely in academia—*The Craft of Research* and *A Manual for Writers* (aka Turabian)—and lead a practical discussion on getting the most out of assigning "research paper" (and why you shouldn't use that term!).

Finally, we end this newsletter with Part Two of our curated guide to journals for teaching and learning across the disciplines. We'll be back with one more newsletter as classes end.

In The News

Need for a Wide Focus on Reading

Teachers in all disciplines may despair at the state of student reading abilities, struggling to convey their own course subjects while students are either not reading the assigned material or having difficulties simply grasping the content. In a new [Reading Across the Disciplines](#) article, rhetorician [Alice Horning](#) argues that there is great value in integrating specific reading instruction in all undergraduate level courses, rather than simply those in the English or composition programs.

In this piece, '[Reading Across the Curriculum as the Key to Student Success](#),' Horning discusses the vast number of ways that instructors in a variety of disciplines can encourage greater engagement with written texts as key parts of the course material. Rather than simply trusting that students have arrived even in upper division classes with the tools they need to adequately read a complex text, Horning argues that instructors would find greater success by actively integrating reading instruction into their own classes.

Her research is backed up by the [Alliance for Excellent Education](#), a D.C. nonprofit that has also worked to diagnose the disadvantage many incoming undergraduates face in terms of their reading abilities. In the full [article](#), Horning provides specific techniques and resources for integrating reading into the non-English classroom.

Pushback on Experiential Learning

While many colleges and universities are continuing to press forward with pitches for classes that offer real-world applications as 'experiential learning', there have been conversations that call into question what the impact of these practices really are. A new article by [John Fawell](#) of Boston University, [Experiential Learning: Some Reservations](#), is particularly critical of the notion of 'real world' as it purportedly stands separate from academia and the university. At a time where college costs and value are called into question, an idea of real world seems to further differentiate practicality from academic study.

Throughout the [article](#), Fowell raises concerns overall about the ways that such practice prioritize more 'experiences' rather than education as "retreat or refuge", looking at the ways that institutions can benefit from standing separate from the so-called 'real world'.

For further perspectives on the issue, the AACU has also released a document discussing '[High Impact Educational Practices](#)' that evaluates experiential learning, among other techniques. Other criticism has come out of the Chronicle of Higher education, which featured a [critique](#) of accessibility in experiential-learning programs.

Serving Hungry Students

As we reach the holidays, a [Philly.com article](#) encourages all to remember the college students who are living in food-insecure households or homeless while still working towards completing their studies. It cites a study by the [Wisconsin Hope Lab](#) that details the many students facing ‘basic needs insecurity’, and provides a number of ways to work towards limiting student hunger. Among the actions to take, the [article](#) encourages spreading awareness about hungry students, advocating for change, and giving towards organizations that work to provide much needed resources.

TMAC Calendar

Looking Forward, Looking Back

Save the Date: Spring Research Symposium

TMAC Director and co-author of [The Craft of Research](#) William FitzGerald will lead participants in a early-spring symposium on the teaching of research, designed for implementation across departments. From 12-2 on January 26th, join TMAC for a guided workshop on approaches to teaching researched-based writing. Look beyond the ‘research paper’ for ways to get students engaged with research in their individual disciplines.

In case you missed it...

If you were unable to attend our events from earlier this semester, you can find many resources from the sessions on the TMAC website, including the following:

- [From Due Dates to Learning Goals: On Syllabus \(re\)Design](#)
- [The Complexities of Responding to Student Writing](#)
- [Responding to Student Writing: Tom Deans, UConn](#)
- [Syllabus and Assignment Design: Dartmouth University](#)

If your department would be interested in holding a particular pedagogically focused event, please reach out to teaching.matters@camden.rutgers.edu.

Resources and Journals

TMAC is adding a collection of top academic journals to its online resources, including the following selection. Check out our last newsletter for a listing of additional general journals, as well as those in other disciplines not listed here.

General Journals

[Arts and Humanities in Higher Education](#) publishes articles, reviews and scholarly comment relating to the arts and humanities in higher education serving the community of arts and humanities educators internationally. Expertly edited, rigorously peer-reviewed and with a truly international outlook and application, Arts and Humanities in Higher Education is a must-have resource for the many institutions supplying courses within the wide scope of the arts and humanities. The journal publishes significant opinion and research into contemporary issues of teaching and learning critical to all educators and researchers in this far-ranging area.

[Education Review](#) publishes reviews of recent books in education, covering the entire range of education scholarship and practice. Education Review is made available to the public without cost as a service of the College of Education at Arizona State University and the Michigan State University Libraries. All submissions are refereed by the Editors.

[Review of Educational Research \(RER\)](#) publishes critical, integrative reviews of research literature bearing on education. Such reviews should include conceptualizations, interpretations, and syntheses of literature and scholarly work in a field. RER encourages the submission of research relevant to education from any discipline, such as reviews of research in psychology, sociology, history, philosophy, political science, economics, computer science, statistics, anthropology, and biology, provided that the review bears on educational issues.

[Science, Technology & Human Values](#) is a peer-reviewed, international, interdisciplinary journal containing research, analyses and commentary on the development and dynamics of science and technology, including their relationship to politics, society and culture. The journal provides you with work from scholars in a diverse range of disciplines across the social sciences. Among the disciplines you will find in Science, Technology & Human Values are: Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, Environmental Studies, Anthropology, Literature, History, and Economics.

Discipline Specific

Mathematics

[Journal for Research in Mathematics Education](#)

An official journal of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), JRME is the premier research journal in mathematics education and is devoted to the interests of teachers and researchers at all levels--preschool through college. JRME is a forum for disciplined inquiry into the teaching and learning of mathematics. The editors encourage submissions including: reports of research, including experiments, case studies, surveys, philosophical studies, and historical studies; and articles about research, including literature reviews and theoretical analyses.

[The Mathematics Educator](#)

The Mathematics Educator strives to provide a forum for collaboration of mathematics educators at varying levels of professional experience. Its purpose is to promote the interchange of ideas among the mathematics education community, locally, nationally, and internationally and to present a variety of viewpoints on a broad spectrum of issues related to mathematics education.

Physics

[American Journal of Physics](#)

The mission of the American Journal of Physics (AJP) is to publish articles on the educational and cultural aspects of physics that are useful, interesting, and accessible to a diverse audience of physics students, educators, and researchers. Our audience generally reads outside their specialties to broaden their understanding of physics and to expand and enhance their pedagogical toolkits at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

[Recent article:](#) How tall can gelatin towers be? An introduction to elasticity and buckling

Political Science

[Journal of Political Science Education](#)

The Editors of the Journal of Political Science Education, of the American Political Science Association, invite submissions that focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning issues in political science in higher education. The journal invites submissions that span a broad scope of issues in political science education, including teaching-related issues and topics, methods and techniques, learning/teaching activities and devices, including technology-related tools, educational assessment in political science, reviews of textbooks and other related sources, and curriculum development.

[Recent article:](#) Effects of Political Knowledge on Political Tolerance

Psychology

[Psychology Learning & Teaching](#)

Psychology Learning and Teaching (PLAT) is an international peer-reviewed journal devoted to enhancing knowledge of how to improve learning and teaching of psychology. To this purpose, PLAT publishes research articles, reviews, target articles and corresponding comments as well as reports on good and innovative learning, teaching and assessment practices. Through PLAT, it is hoped to establish a culture of scholarship in relation to teaching and learning in psychology and related areas.

[Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology](#)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology features teacher-ready reviews of current research and contemporary theories as well as empirical research designed to foster systematic intentional changes to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

Our mission is to leverage psychological science to provide resources that integrate research, theory, and practice to benefit high school, community college, college, and university educators and their students.

Public Policy and Administration

[Teaching Public Administration](#)

Published three times a year in association with the Joint University Council Public Administration Committee, Teaching Public Administration (TPA) is a peer-reviewed journal that focuses on teaching and learning in public sector management and organizations. It offers an international forum for the debate of a wide range of issues relating to how skills and knowledge are transmitted and acquired within public sector/not for profit organizations. This journal is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice

[Teaching Sociology](#)

Teaching Sociology (TS), published quarterly, provides articles, notes, and reviews intended to be helpful to the discipline's teachers. Articles range from experimental studies of teaching and learning to broad, synthetic essays on pedagogically important issues. The general intent is to share theoretically stimulating and practically useful information and advice with teachers.

[Anthropology and Education Quarterly](#)

Anthropology & Education Quarterly is a peer-reviewed journal that draws on anthropological theories and methods to examine educational processes in and out of schools, in US and international contexts. Articles rely primarily on ethnographic research to address immediate problems of practice as well as broad theoretical questions.

[Journal of Criminal Justice Education](#)

The Journal of Criminal Justice Education (JCJE) is an official publication of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS). JCJE provides a forum for the examination, discussion and debate of a broad range of issues concerning post-secondary education in criminal justice, criminology and related areas. The aim of JCJE is to enhance the quality of higher education in criminal justice and criminology. JCJE is an education-oriented journal for those undertaking educational and academic endeavors in the fields of criminal justice and criminology.

World Languages and Cultures

[Foreign Language Annals](#)

Foreign Language Annals is the official refereed journal of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and was first published in 1967. The journal seeks to serve the professional interests of classroom instructors, researchers, and administrators across a range of contexts and is dedicated to the advancement of the teaching and learning of foreign languages, particularly languages other than English.

[ADFL Bulletin](#)

The ADFL Bulletin is a refereed journal published two times a year by the Association of Departments of Foreign Languages, a subsidiary of the Modern Language Association. The ADFL Bulletin prints essays dealing with professional, pedagogical, curricular, and departmental matters.

For additional resources, visit mac.camden.rutgers.edu, or write us at teaching.matters@camden.rutgers.edu

