

Editorial

In this issue of *Learning and Teaching: The International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences*, authors from Denmark, Jamaica, the United States, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom analyse measures to encourage students to change their educational expectations and complete their degrees earlier; the experience of inclusive pedagogy on a doctoral programme; the impact of new managerial practices on the teaching of qualitative research; the positive effects of using the online platform Socrative to involve less confident students and stimulate discussion; and a game that reinforces students' understanding of important issues in research ethics.

In the first article, Laura Louise Sarauw and Simon Ryberg Madsen explore some of the implications of the Danish Study Progress Reform of 2014. This initiative was intended to reduce the average time students take to complete a combined BA/MA programme by giving extra financial grants to those who graduated in less than five years and withholding grants from those who had not completed it within five years and six months. The reform was justified with reference to the need to get graduates into the labour market earlier, and the incentives and sanctions were designed to appeal to students' economic self-interest. The authors found instead that the students they surveyed and interviewed identified how valued aspects of their learning were put at risk by the pressure to move through their studies more quickly. Examples included the opportunity to go more deeply into their chosen discipline, to participate in volunteering and other extracurricular activities and to study abroad for a semester. Paradoxically, the government was disincentivising activities that often help students' chances of employment.

The second article is a collaborative autoethnography by Saran Stewart, Chayla Haynes and Kristin Deal about the doctoral programme in higher education they studied at the University of Denver. The programme had been recently redesigned to integrate the tenets of inclusive pedagogy into all aspects of its curriculum, teaching methods and assessment requirements. The inclusivity of the course refers to not only its focus on social justice and diversity but also its emphasis on the holistic intellectual, social and personal development of each student. Reflective writing is central to this process, and the authors draw on their earlier writings to highlight some of the struggles and successes they experienced as doctoral students and advocate for the



value of graduate programmes explicitly committed to inclusive pedagogy for students from historically underrepresented groups.

In the third article, Joost Beuving and Geert de Vries consider the impact of new public management, academic culture wars and the rise of big data on the practice and teaching of qualitative research. After a brief history of the rise and decline of qualitative research and its teaching in universities, they explain how the standardisation and rationalisation imposed by new managerialist practices, the increasing fragmentation of social science disciplines in the age of social media and the attraction of the extensive quantitative data gathered by corporations pose threats to the popularity and legitimacy of qualitative research. They argue that naturalistic enquiry is the craft at the core of qualitative research and ‘qualitative literacy’ is not only valuable for students’ academic understanding but also for their future professional roles in, for example, advocacy work, management, policy-making and journalism.

Sam Pryke discusses the online platform Socrative in the fourth article. Socrative enables tutors to put questions to students in class and for students to respond using their smartphone or tablet. Academic studies to date show that Socrative is popular with students when used to test their knowledge or elicit their views. A digital question and answer session adds some fun and variety to the lecture, and the anonymity of the answers encourages less confident students to participate. The author’s own survey of students produced similar findings, and he has used three of the emerging themes – the value of light-hearted competition between students, tests as an aid to memory and questions that stimulate group discussion – to inform his subsequent use of the software.

In the fifth article, Sarah Rodriguez reports on an end-of-semester board game she devised to enable Global Health students to practice applying what they had learned about global research ethics before embarking on a placement in a low- or middle-income country. In the game, students take turns picking a scenario card and responding to its contents. In the first version of the game, drawing certain cards enabled them to move forward a square or obliged them to move back a square on the board, lose a turn, or return to the start. For example, drawing the card ‘your proposal observes and recognises local health care systems’ resulted in moving forward one space. Other cards instructed students to start a discussion with the group or to specify what they would do in the circumstances on the card. The direction they should then move on the board was decided by the group. When surveyed in the fall of 2018, the students were not enthusiastic about the cards that



mandated the moves so the author removed these for the next iteration. A substantial majority of students in both cohorts had positive reactions to the game, with 92 per cent of students in the fall of 2018 and 88 per cent in the winter of 2019 saying that the exercise had alerted them to potential research problems they had not previously contemplated.

The issue ends with a review by Thomas Eveland of Maryellen Weimer's *Essential Teaching Principles: A Resource Collection for Adjunct Faculty*. Our thanks go to the authors of the articles and the review, the anonymous referees who commented on the manuscripts, our publisher (Berghahn Journals) and the Editorial Board.

Penny Welch and Susan Wright