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## Editor's Introduction

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# THE INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

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*Keywords:* IJPBL, The Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning, PBL, problem-based learning

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#### Overview of this Issue

In this issue, we feature a special guest-edited edition in collaboration with the *PBL 2016: Promoting Competences—Shaping the Future* conference in Zurich, Switzerland. At this international meeting, scholars representing a wide range of contexts, audiences, and nationalities discussed PBL foundations, implementations, and outcomes. Guest Editors Claude Müller, Monika Schäfer, and Geri Thomann, who also worked to organize the conference, worked with numerous authors to bring about our largest special issue to date. The 12 papers in this issue are worth reading collectively to gain a sense of the ideas that connected them to the themes of the conference, and they are worth reading individually to understand more deeply how PBL and PjBL are adopted and adapted for contexts such as science education, law, writing composition, health sciences, English language learning, physics, and teacher education. With authors from six different countries representing three continents, this issue represents a diverse cross-section of PBL and PjBL implementations and foundations. For example, authors Hendry, Hays, Challinor, and Lynch present their one-day interdisciplinary implementation within an Australian High School, and discuss how the model and their approaches have evolved over multiple years. In contrast, authors Wijnen, Loyens, Smeets, Kroeze, and Van der Molen discuss circumstances and outcomes associated with a shift to PBL across an entire law school curriculum. As a result, we get a sense of the wide variety of scale and curricula in which PBL can be accomplished, while also considering some of the many common, persistent tensions that tend to be associated with time constraints, resources, and facilitation in general.

Finally, this issue includes three book reviews. Dole reviewed Ron Ritchhart's book, *Creating Cultures of Thinking: The 8 Forces We Must Master to Truly Transform Our Schools*, and her thoughtful insight surfaces some of the intersecting features between Ritchhart's ideas and PBL. Dias and Dias reviewed *Setting the Standard for Project Based Learning* by

John Larmer, John Mergendollar, and Suzie Boss, and their review helps us to see the wide coverage of topics embedded in the book along with some ideas about PBL and PjPBL that *IJPBL* readers and scholars will want to consider in their own work. Leary reviewed *Educational Technologies in Medical and Health Sciences*, edited by Susan Bridges, Lap Ki Chan, and Cindy Hmelo-Silver, and Leary lends insight into the text, specific contributions, and some ideas for taking PBL further and deeper. All three book reviews highlight some critical ideas, and I look forward to adding the books to my shelf.

#### Overview of 2017

For the third year in a row, we are closing the year having published more than 20 papers per year. This is important, as *IJPBL* is becoming more widely international and collaborative. While we continue to maintain a rigorous and competitive acceptance rate of 15 percent, we are publishing more papers than ever. Scopus places our journal in the top quartile ranking (77<sup>th</sup> percentile) of education journals according to their 2016 indexing metrics. Our open access status ensures that we are available to a readership from all over the world, representing almost 10,000 institutions from over 200 nations and including the newest nation of South Sudan. We attribute our gains and metrics to the hard work of our board, reviewers, authors, and staff at Purdue Press, and thank you does not seem adequate. Nevertheless, Michael Grant and I thank all of you.

#### Welcomes and Thank You

In Issue 1 of this year, we thanked Andrew Tawfik and Kun Huang for their three years of service on the board of *IJPBL*. We also extend additional gratitude to Victor Law and Susan Bridges, each of whom are extending their role from author and reviewer to that of *IJPBL* board member. In addition, we have transitioned to a new editorial assistant, recently saying

goodbye to Ai-Chu Ding and hello to Haesol Bae. Both have worked tremendously hard to ensure a smooth transition. Most of you have already started seeing review requests and other communications from Haesol.

## Upcoming Opportunities for 2018

We encourage you to check out a Call for Manuscripts for the *IJPBL* special issue that will appear in 2018. Papers are

due November 30, 2017, and the full call can be found here: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/ijpbl/vol11/iss2/15/>. Finally, you may be interested in checking out the newly formed consortium of PBL affiliates *PAN-PBL: Association of Problem-Based Learning and Active Learning Methodologies* (<http://www.panpbl.org/about/>), and they are sponsoring an upcoming conference themed as *PBL for the Next Generation* (<http://pbl2018.panpbl.org>).