



EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Staying Normal under Abnormal Circumstances: Publishing during a Global Pandemic

These are unusual times. Around the world, in all parts where *Teaching & Learning Inquiry* has readers and well beyond, we are affected by the current COVID-19 pandemic. In March, our editorial team decided to make our best efforts to keep the publication process going as best as we could. We have had contact with authors and reviewers to make sure that our intentions come across, with a sincere and honest empathy for all the personal and professional effects this pandemic has on people's lives. From most, we have heard back with gratitude. From some, with disappointment and anger over things like delay in the process or absence of responses. Our goal has been to stay as normal as possible under the current circumstances, but it's been a challenge and continues to be so. Everyone is affected. We want to express our heartfelt gratitude to all who contribute to *TLI*--authors, reviewers, and readers alike--for your patience and understanding while we do our best to juggle the many tasks that come with editorial responsibility and scholarly publication processes.

One thing that has become more clear in recent conversations with authors is that the review processes of *TLI* differ from what is familiar for many of our prospective authors. We assign three reviewers per submission and intentionally seek a mixture of nationalities and disciplinary backgrounds, which means we also seek varying levels of familiarity with the submission's topic. Given the diversity of our readership, we believe this range of perspectives is the most helpful for our authors and ultimately for the readers too. *TLI* reviewers are encouraged to hold high the standards of [our criteria](#), be constructively critical, and practice collegiality and a sense of mentorship in the writing of their reviews. And we are deeply grateful to all our reviewers who take their time to do this. In turn, this means that a manuscript often goes through more than one round of revisions and reviews, all in our goal of helping authors write most clearly for our range of readers. Of course, some authors may choose not to complete many rounds of revisions, and that is fine too. We constantly strive to have a clear, detailed, and constructive dialogue with authors as well as reviewers, all in the joint aim of getting high-quality SoTL work published.

Meanwhile, we also have some news and updates about *TLI* that we want to highlight here. First, we have a continued commitment to increase the diversity of publications in *TLI*. We are proud of its current diversity (authors hitherto from 31 countries, and readers in even more), but we can and should increase that geographical diversity even more. We want to read about SoTL in all parts of the world, so please revisit and share our call for "[SoTL Around the World](#)" pieces. As we wrote in our Editors' Introduction to issue 8.1, what is submitted to *TLI* shapes *TLI*. Help us shape an even more diverse *TLI*.

Second, and very much related to the above, we have created a guide for authors to [write for *TLI*'s diverse and international audiences](#). As the common ground for *TLI* publications is SoTL, our readers represent a great variety of disciplines, research paradigms, institutions, and regional contexts. This diversity is very important to keep in mind when writing for and publishing in *TLI*. We

also encourage all to explicitly use inclusive language in writing, no matter your personal voice and preferred writing style. We hope that this guide provides some good, specific strategies to help our authors meet this commitment to diversity.

We also have updated the journal's [Style Guide](#) in terms of referencing. As of now and going forward, we will use the author-date style of Chicago Manual of Style 17 to accommodate the interdisciplinary nature of the journal. Additionally, in the editorial team we have often discussed the length of submissions. As we are now an online journal, there are no longer the limitations due to cost and printing. Our word limit recommendation remains between 3,000 and 8,000 words, including the bibliography but not any supplemental materials. However, we have recently decided that occasionally longer pieces will be considered if the depth and scope of the manuscript warrant the extra length, rather than unnecessarily wordy sentence construction, unnecessary sections, or multiple articles treated as one.

Finally, we have another major update on the horizon. After 9 years, *TLI*'s founding co-editor Nancy Chick will be stepping down in January 2021, so we'll begin the search for her replacement on the *TLI*-team in September. Follow ISSOTL's newsletter and blog for the call for applications.

We end this introduction by repeating that we are keenly aware that the current global pandemic affects us all in different ways, personally and professionally. We are grateful to all of you who help keep this journal going by reading, by sharing, by reviewing, and of course by submitting. Indeed, the number of new submissions has dramatically increased in recent months. Thank you all for all you have done for *TLI*. Together we will shape this abnormal into something of a new normal.

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