

Foreword

Doctoral Seminar 2017: An International Journey

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Gina

Welcome readers to the Emerging Perspectives Special Issue on the International Doctoral Seminar. The International Doctoral Seminar (IDS) is a collaborative project involving three universities, one each in Australia (Queensland University of Technology—QUT), Canada (University of Calgary—UC), and China (Beijing Normal University—BNU). This Special Issue idea began serendipitously on a beautiful evening in Brisbane after a meal of delicious Vietnamese and Chinese food, shared amongst the doctoral seminar participants during the 2017 cycle, at which I was a student participant. We were standing outside the restaurant chatting and saying goodnight when one of the faculty mentors and one of the student participants approached me. They told me that they had been discussing publishing opportunities for international graduate students. The faculty mentor knew I was one of the editors of EPIGREP and exclaimed, “wouldn’t it be neat to publish a Special Issue of our IDS 2017 experience?” We continued to talk about the possibility and let it sit. The next day, we headed to a market and beach. While we were loading the bus, the faculty mentor asked me to pick up the microphone and introduce EPIGREP to everyone, where I asked if they would be interested in collaborating for a Special Issue. Thinking back, the ride was bumpy, and I had to think organically to represent our journal positively. There were some questions and excitement in the air, despite it being a long and somewhat tiring day already.

Upon returning to our respective homes, our Canadian group met, and we decided to pitch the Special Issue idea to the EPIGREP team. First, we invited Jon Woodend, also an EPIGREP editor, to assist, as he was part of IDS 2015. Jon showed enthusiasm and the EPIGREP team invited Lena, another EPIGREP editor, to edit the special issue since we wanted to mentor and work with her to become a full editor. At the time, she was a guest editor and this seemed like a good fit as she was considering joining the IDS at a later cycle.

Jon

When Gina presented the idea of a special issue covering the learning discovered through the doctoral seminar to the EPIGREP board, I was excited to join and assist in this project. I had also participated in the doctoral seminar during the inaugural cycle, including UC, and I knew firsthand how the seminar advances doctoral work. For me, a critical insight from my experience of the 2015 seminar was that, often, we are not aware of our biases or gaps in knowledge until we are exposed to them. The seminar provides that exposure by bringing together international scholars and reciprocally expanding perspectives, regardless of one’s research topic. A Special Issue could then allow participants to only consolidate and continue their learning, as well as provide an opportunity to share the wealth of experience with students who were not able to take

part in the seminar. As a proponent for the seminar, I also hoped that this Special Issue would inspire future participants.

Lena

As well as Jon, when I was invited to be an editor in this special issue, I was really excited to join the team. In my journey as an international student, I have witnessed and lived cultural processes that provided me with unique opportunities to immerse myself into other cultures; immersions that could not be done otherwise. Participating as an editor in this Special Issue granted me an additional opportunity to closely live the authors' initiatives in their search for making sense of their own transcultural experiences. Similar to my journey, authors in this Special Issue were exposed to a large and diverse pool of people and ideas. Their papers show how this event in their lives has strengthened their knowledge creation, enhanced their diversity of knowledge, and raised their awareness of new outlooks and cultures. Overall, authors in this issue are opening their understandings to the readers, who will encounter distinctive analysis on the authors' transcultural experiences.

Using this special issue as an opportunity to highlight the remarkable quality of the experience, we would like to thank the organizers and participants who made the 2017 International Doctoral Seminar possible. The seminar's contribution to the students' lives is exemplified in the articles of this Special Issue.