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Editor's Page

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Editor's Page

Without question, the popularity of the basic course in communication continues to grow, further entrenching it as a staple of the communication discipline. As several basic course scholars have persuasively noted, in the last 20 years, more and more colleges and universities in the United States have been charged with the daunting task of establishing an introductory course in communication as a central feature of general education curriculum. Given the popularity of the course and increasing pressures on basic course instructors/directors to document the effectiveness of the course, basic communication course scholarship is more important now than ever. For more than 20 years the *Basic Communication Course Annual* has been the preeminent outlet for such scholarship.

The articles presented in this volume of the *Annual* cover a wide range of topics that advance our understanding of basic course practice and pedagogy. Initially, Jones and Schrodtt examine the influence of out-of-class support (OCS) and sex differences on student's perceptions of instructor credibility. Their study has clear implications for training basic communication instructors in the use of appropriate OCS communication strategies. The article by Hodis and Hodis provides readers with a better understanding of the roles communicative self-efficacy beliefs play in the context of the basic

course. Additionally, the article authored by Sidelinger, Frisby, McMullen, and Heisler presents a novel examination of the importance of student-to-student connect- edness in public speaking courses.

The next two manuscripts examine the use of communication/speech centers in the basic course. Dwyer and Davidson extend our understanding of such centers by exploring the ways speech center usage influences students' public speaking anxiety, confidence, and skills. Similarly, the article by Nelson, Witfield, and Moreau provides an important examination of the relationships between students' help seeking behaviors, communication anxiety, and communication center usage.

The final two articles in this volume examine pedagogical strategies familiar to all readers of the *Annual*. Kinnick and Holler use content analysis to examine guidelines for oral citations in some of the most widely used public speaking textbooks. Their findings are sure to stimulate debate amongst basic course faculty about best practices for teaching oral citation skills. Finally, Mojacha's manuscript offers a Burkean analysis basic course syllabi. She provides a number of suggestions for how basic course instructors can construct syllabi with form in mind.

In conclusion, this volume contains essays that address some of the most pressing issues facing those concerned with the basic course. Taken as a whole, this scholarship allows the reader to reflect on what the research tells us about what works in the basic course, what does not work, and what still needs to be investigated. The introductory communication course provides a context for fruitful investigations that assess how we

can effectively develop, deliver, and assess our discipline's "bread and butter" course.

We extend our sincere thanks to all those who assisted in our efforts to bring this volume to print. Our editorial board deserves special acknowledgement for their tireless commitment to the *Annual*. In the coming months, we look forward to receiving your scholarly submissions for future volumes of the *Annual*. Together, we can offer readers a journal with abundant scholarship that best informs basic course administrators, teachers, and scholars—all in an effort to improve the basic communication course experience for our students.

Sincerely,

Steve Hunt (Editor)

Joe Mazer (Associate Editor)