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EDITORIAL

It is not possible to ignore the growing relevance of technology in today's educational landscape. Thus two of the articles in this issue address the use of technology in specific teaching and learning contexts. The other articles put the spotlight on continuing challenges in other aspects of education, from education and training in a global village; to the development of entrepreneurial skills, and the prickly problem of assessment weightings.

The first article in this issue addresses the use of a web-based application that allows students to collaboratively create, answer and develop multiple choice questions. Lenandlar Singh, Department of Computer Science, University of Guyana, reports on the experiences of two cohorts of programming students at his university, located in a developing country, which used the PeerWise software. He examined their interactions, contribution to and perception of the tool as a learning support mechanism. Evidence from this review suggests that most students were able to effectively contribute to PeerWise and that approximately 25% of students contributed much more than was expected. An overall moderate correlation was obtained between students' contributions and final examination scores with students with higher levels of participation scoring high in their final examination. Students likewise reported significant support for the use of the tool to aid teaching and learning. This review also highlights the potential of PeerWise to support collaboration and suggests that this has specific implications for developing countries.

Perspectives, experiences and use of Internet-based technologies in social work education is the focus of the article by Kernita-Rose Bailey, School of Social Sciences, University of the Southern Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago and Emmanuel Janagan Johnson, Department of Behavioural Sciences, The University of the West Indies, St Augustine,Trinidad and Tobago. The authors highlight the dilemma of social work educators who continue to debate the role of Internet-based technologies in social work education even as e-learning shows massive growth in institutions of higher learning. In their paper, they particularly seek to draw into this debate the views of Caribbean social work educators. They attempt to do this using a grounded theory approach to determine their perspectives on the use of Internet-based technology and the factors that influence their perspectives. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight social work educators from four tertiary institutions in Trinidad and Tobago that offer degrees in social work. Results indicate that prior experience with Internet-based technology influenced the perspectives of social work educators and ultimately the range and mode of technologies used. The debate continues although the research found that in

Trinidad and Tobago there is a movement toward consensus about the utility of Internet-based technologies.

The article by Paul Pounder, Department of Management Studies, The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados examines the teaching of entrepreneurship in the Student Entrepreneurial Empowerment Development (SEED) programme, which uses a non-traditional teaching/learning approach. This paper gives insight into the students of the SEED programme and how they perceive non-traditional facilitators (entrepreneurs and service providers) as providing them with the key tools needed for success in their entrepreneurial journey. The programme targeted the entire student population. The SEED programme has no official lectures given by faculty, but exposes students to a series of presentations by entrepreneurs, faculty and entrepreneurial supporting agencies. Assessments and student activities in the programme are also non-traditional and students perceive these to be effective in helping them develop entrepreneurial acumen. Student demographics were used to provide data relevant to the programme goals and students were surveyed to determine their perspectives of the programme in fostering appropriate attitudes. Overall, while the programme seems to be making some strides in infusing an entrepreneurial spirit in the institution's students, mainly students of the Department of Management Studies were most deeply engaged.

The concept of "Generation I" is introduced by Deborah Ferdinand, School of Education, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine to describe international students in workforce education programmes in a hosting developed country. The descriptive study is part of a larger curriculum inclusiveness study that included an examination of students' perceptions on international responsiveness of their workforce education and development graduate programme's curriculum course content. The author used a combination of the follow-up explanations model and the within-stage mixed model, coupled with pragmatism, as the overarching paradigm for guiding the collection and analysis of the study's census survey data and follow-up focus groups. The findings indicate that the curriculum content showed a decided lack of material by international authors as well as global views to include those from developing countries. As a result, students from outside the host country were virtually immersed in a parochial curriculum that rendered them invisible with respect to the curriculum content. Given the tuition costs to students who engage in such education programmes, it is felt that greater benefits would accrue to both local and international students if the curriculum content were internationalised. The author suggests that curricula that target international students should have enough of an international flavour that all students, irrespective of origin, would have a sense of inclusiveness and not be rendered invisible.

Damian Cohall and Desiree Skeete, Faculty of Medical Sciences, The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados studied the impact of a change in assessment weighting on student academic performance in a first year course. The change in weighting was made to improve learning outcomes among students who were approaching the clinical training years. The change was prompted because the course – Fundamentals of Disease and Treatment (FDT) is considered an

important introduction to the integrated approach in the delivery of the system-based courses in the preclinical phase of the medical programme. The change made was to have a heavier weighting of 60% for the final examination and 40% in the course assessment, a reversal of what obtained previously. Further, the students had to pass the final exam in order to successfully complete the course. This study investigated the effect of the modification of the assessment weighting on the academic performance of students taking the FDT course during the academic year 2012/2013. The study quantitatively assessed the first year students' performances before and after the change in the course assessment during the academic years 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 respectively. In-course and final exam grades were categorised and analysed separately. T-tests were used to determine any differences between the means of academic performance between the cohorts over the study period. There were significant improvements in mid-semester tests, final course exams and overall course grades in the subsequent student cohort after the change. The results suggest some relationship between assessment weighting and academic performance and that this relationship may be a result of the students' perceptions about the differently weighted assessments.

Anna-May Edwards-Henry
Executive Editor