

Special Issue Introduction

Guest Editors

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We are pleased to introduce this special issue of the *Federation of Business Disciplines Journal* (FBDJ) for 2023. The issue contains three papers. The papers use different methodologies and address different questions. However, each of them has implications for the future of business communication.

Ashton Mouton's paper, titled "Interpretation of the Policy Matters More than the Intent Behind It: Business Communication's Role in Clarifying Policy and Equitably Distributing Resources," addresses issues of equity in academic settings. Using a framework of structuration theory, Mouton's qualitative study found processes in place for women were both supportive and prohibitive. Implications from her findings provide a list of 14 action items to improve retention and success for women faculty. The findings, situated as a baseline study, can help one to begin dialog concerning resources available to women. This information can serve to increase retention of employees in academia, government, and corporate workplaces. It contributes to our understanding of the operations of universities, a topic that is important to the future of all our academic institutions.

The paper titled, "Incorporating artificial intelligence into the business communication curriculum," by Jamie Keith Humphries and Lucia S. Sigmar, discuss the artificial intelligence skills needed by business students to analyze online content of social media, product reviews, and corporate communications using sentiment analysis and opinion mining in decision making. After describing a pedagogical approach to teach sentiment analysis, the authors provide additional ideas to incorporate AI into the business communication curriculum. Their paper calls for—and illustrates—the development of forward-facing business curricula.

Finally, a case study written by Rachel Dolechek, Stacey Smith, and Karen Thal, titled, “Brew Fest: Communication Agility in Rural America,” provides a case for a class assignment. After providing a detailed fictional case of a small-town business event, students learn about the importance of communication agility in a rapidly changing environment and apply this knowledge to help a business. A corresponding teaching note, which is available upon request from the FBD Journal Editor, provides learning objectives, additional resources, and discussion questions. The case directs student attention to the future of the nation, specifically efforts to sustain and develop (or redevelop) rural regions.

We are grateful to the Association for Business Communication, Southwest United States (ABCSW) for the opportunity to represent the ABCSW in this effort. We are grateful to Federation of Business Disciplines (Federation), the FBDJ, and to editor Mary Fischer for the opportunity to participate in the intellectual life of the Federation. We would also like to thank the reviewers who devoted significant time to reviewing proposals, manuscripts, and revisions to help improve the quality of the special edition.

The ABCSW was one of the founding organizations of the Federation and from the beginning, members of the ABCSW have benefitted from association with the Federation. A number of ABCSW members maintain memberships in two or more of the Federation’s organizations. ABCSW meetings have been enriched by presentations from scholars whose primary affiliations are with other associations. And this special issue will—we hope—encourage further intellectual exchange between ABCSW and the other academic disciplines.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Lamar Reinsch is Emeritus Professor of Management at the McDonough School of Business, Georgetown University in Washington D.C. From 2015 to 2022, he also held the position of Distinguished Professor of Business at the School of Business, Lubbock Christian University in Lubbock TX. His Ph.D. in Communication and Human Relations is from the University of Kansas. His current research interests include business ethics, instructional practices, and the rhetoric of the marketplace.

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