

Editorial: A Call To Share The Diversity Of Our Teaching Practices

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We are often quite insulated in our teaching habits, too infrequently hearing about teaching practices beyond our own organisations. This can lead to teaching practices becoming quite insular, with institutions adopting the usual lecture/seminar formats their lecturers and tutors have themselves known in the assumption that most universities function in a similar way. As we write this editorial, we are approaching the end of our first year as Editors in Chief of *Teaching Anthropology*. This year of reading, reviewing, and engaging with submissions has shown us two distinct things. The first ought to be obvious but warrants constant reaffirming: there is profound diversity in the contexts of anthropology teaching and the audiences to which this teaching is delivered. Whether it is teaching anthropology to cohorts at different educational stages or to non-anthropologists within or outside universities – teachers around the world adapt in endless configurations to meet diverse pedagogical challenges. Sharing these experiences can proffer solutions to what may be common problems, but it can also cause us to reflect on the things we take for granted in our own teaching – our students' backgrounds, access to technology, political context, ways of learning.

The second realisation we came to was just how experimental anthropology teaching can be. With the freedom to determine class formats, choose field visits or assessment criteria, teachers are able to experiment with new approaches that respond directly to the needs of their students. This should cause us to reflect on those institutional practices or dictates that restrict our ability to innovate and adapt. It is clear then, that the most useful thing this journal can be, is a forum for those actively engaged in teaching anthropology to share their experiences to shape best practice. Their innovations can inspire us to revisit our own practices anew, to challenge our own pedagogical orthodoxies, and most importantly, to push for greater freedoms to shape our own courses in ways that allow us to experiment and innovate.

In the spirit of anthropological enquiry, what we find when we do share our experiences is that colleges, universities and teaching institutions face a range of barriers and local contexts that subtly influence the pedagogical decisions they have to make. In reading all these diverse approaches, we can begin to distil down answers to the central question: What is anthropology? What is it that we consider essential for our students to learn? What core tenets remain despite the diversity of countries and levels of institution? Is there a core, shared understanding of what we, as educators, want to instil in our students about anthropology?

The collection we have put together highlights some of the innovative teaching practices happening around the world. Our Articles section continues to grapple with academic debates and scholarship through the traditional article format but allows greater space for drawing upon and situating personal teaching experiences within these discussions. Our Developing Teaching section is, in contrast, a much freer space to share and reflect on experimentation with innovative methodologies, personal experiences and challenges raised by teaching at all levels of anthropology. We encourage those unused to writing for academic journals to consider submitting in this reflective section. We want to hear from those voices who are seldom heard in traditional anthropology journals but nonetheless have experiences to contribute to our understanding of anthropological teaching. To this end we welcome more experimental formats and are open to thinking more expansively about how we might give voice to teaching experiences.

We hope that reading the papers in this Issue, you will be inspired to develop new ways of teaching and begin to ask new questions about anthropological pedagogy. With this collection, and indeed future Issues, we aim to provide a repository of teaching that serves as both practical resource and historical archive for the evolution of anthropological teaching practices across the world.