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Introduction

Introduction to the Teaching & Learning Section

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In this issue of the Teaching & Learning Section we have two articles of emergent importance. The topics of these works are respectively, civility in our classrooms and academic ethics. I doubt we could find a better fit of concepts or ideas and our authors have done a remarkable job of bringing these topics forward with great insight and academic rigor. John F. Kennedy once noted that “civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof.” In this spirit, our authors not only raise important issues but also test their ideas to find significant outcomes.

Most work on academic ethics is focused on what aspect of ethics needs to be taught in our management courses or how to teach the theories. However, “Academic Ethics” by Martha C. Spears looks at professors’ behavior and finds that students and faculty members may see ethics in very different ways when it comes to classroom behavior. The assumptions of what constitutes unethical behavior on the part of a professor is tested here by surveying student and faculty attitudes towards a variety of actions. The results may surprise you and provide some support to the idea that we should first look to ourselves when discussing ethics. I think the data and conclusions can be used to provoke some interesting discussion in our classes.

The gap between student and faculty perceptions is also explored in our second article. In this case, the topic is civil behavior in the classroom. Authors Susan D. Baker, Debra R. Comer, and M. Linda Martinak use leadership theory, and the notion of generational differences to explore a common faculty complaint. The title of the article is “All I’m askin’ for is a little respect: how can we promote civility in our classrooms?” but this is not just a list of well-known gripes about cell phones and late arrivals. The authors explore the roots of uncivil behavior in our society, review relevant aspects of the scholarship of teaching and learning, and look at how behavior is shaped by the academic marketplace. This is done with wit and insight but most importantly, the authors provide some intriguing answers to three important questions. These are: What can we do to *prevent* incivility? How should we *respond* to incidents of incivility as they occur? How do we manage ourselves and our classrooms in a world of changing behaviors? My sense of the findings of this article is that I need to share this with my students to see what they think about the subject and the



methodology. As someone once said, a teacher's working environment is a student's learning environment. Maybe we can use some evidence-based learning on the subject to work together for the common good.

I think readers of *OMJ* will appreciate the ideas in this issue of Teaching & Learning as well as the exceptional writing as the authors test our assumptions about these important issues with good research and interesting conclusions.