

The Future of CourseSource: Beginning an Active Growth Phase

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Dear CourseSource Readers,

I want to share some big news at *CourseSource*. The first is that Dr. Robin Wright, who was the Editor-in-Chief, is now the Division Director for the Division of Undergraduate Education at the NSF. We appreciate everything Robin did to get *CourseSource* established and wish her well in her new position.

The advisory board asked me to become Editor-in-Chief, which I did on January 1, 2018, and I am thrilled to be a part of the path forward. *CourseSource* provides a wonderful opportunity for instructors to publish and get credit for their innovative instructional ideas. *CourseSource* publications have the potential to increase active learning, encourage new collaborations, and provide evidence of a commitment to high quality teaching. I have benefited greatly from being a reader, lesson user, author, and Lesson Editor for this journal. On top of this, the partnership with scientific professional societies has strengthened ties between teaching and research.

Now we are in an active growth phase in part because *CourseSource* received NSF funding to expand the number of articles. We have added a Senior Editorial Assistant, Erin Vinson, who has been doing a wonderful job of collaborating with our member societies. We are presenting talks and workshops at several biology society meetings (GSA, ESA, Plant Biology, SDB), writing articles about the importance of publishing innovative classroom lessons (ex. <https://academic.oup.com/femsle/article/365/11/fny099/4975272>), and guest blogging for societies (ex. <http://genestogenomes.org/why-publish-your-class-activities-in-coursesource/>). We also will be hosting a Writing Studio before the Society for the Advancement of Biology Education Research (SABER) meeting in July to help prospective authors organize and write their lessons. If you have additional ideas about the best way to promote the journal, please let us know (<https://www.coursesource.org/forms/contact-us>).

We also have started a new Essay Series about how readers use *CourseSource* articles. The first essay in the series is about using a *CourseSource* lesson to teach meiosis in a prison classroom (<https://www.coursesource.org/courses/teaching-about-fatherless-snakes-in-a-prison-classroom>). We are looking for new submissions for this series, so please let us know if you are interested (<https://www.coursesource.org/forms/contact-us>).

us). Possible topics include, but are not limited to: using a *CourseSource* lesson for a job interview, how lessons can help when teaching a class for the first time, or how collaborations can be started through the development of a lesson. We welcome your innovative ideas for this essay series.

We also are curious to learn more about how instructors use *CourseSource* resources, and have been sending out surveys and reaching out to individual readers. We greatly appreciate any feedback you can provide and will use your comments to understand how to structure this journal to meet your needs.

We know from authors that we need to speed up the review process. We have made changes to accomplish this goal. We have streamlined the evaluation rubric for publication, added additional Course Editors (<https://www.coursesource.org/people>), and developed a new review process where authors work directly with Course Editors to make editor- and reviewer-requested changes. The article goes to the Editor-in-Chief for approval and then to a Senior Editor for final copy editing and any last changes. Throughout this process, we promote a culture where reviewers and editors are providing helpful comments that coach the authors through the review process.

Dr. Jess Blum is remaining as the Managing Editor and is working to make the review process more efficient by making improvements to the website. She also is working to provide new metrics that authors can use in job application and promotion materials, such as number of downloads for each publication.

Finally, we are planning for the future of *CourseSource* by establishing a business model to sustain the journal after the NSF grant funding has ended, and I welcome your ideas and help to complement our ongoing efforts. Our goal is to keep publication costs as low as possible (ideally free) for readers and authors, and we are actively seeking creative solutions.

Thank you for using *CourseSource* lessons and sharing your innovative ideas with us! We look forward to publishing and promoting your next innovation.

Thank you,
Michelle Smith, Editor-in-Chief