EDITORIAL

Special Issue: E-learning in the Disciplines of Economics and Business Studies

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We are pleased to present the first Special Issue of *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal*. It is a Special Issue in which all of the articles are devoted to the dissemination of scholarly research analysing the use of e-learning in higher education within the context of a specific disciplinary field: Economics and Business Studies. The works presented here were selected following a Call for Papers. From the 16 manuscripts submitted, only 5 were chosen for inclusion in this Special Issue. This issue also contains an introductory article explaining the importance of instigating studies on e-learning in specific thematic areas, and two reviews of highly topical books on aspects related to the content of the issue. We would like to thank the Economics and Business Studies lecturers from the Open University of Catalonia (UOC), Spain, namely Josep M. Batalla, Eva Rimbau, Enric Serradell and Àngels Fitó, and the international coordinators of this issue, Alison Sheridan from the University of New England (UNE), Australia, and Donald E. Hanna, Emeritus Professor of Educational Communications, from the University of Wisconsin-Extension (UW-Extension), United States, for their collaboration on and dedication to the design and elaboration of this Special Issue.

This Special Issue of *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal* is the start of a new chapter in the journal's history. From now on, while maintaining the regular January and July issues, it is our intention to publish a Special Issue once a year – always after issuing a Call for Papers – on a key topic connected with our thematic areas.

Readers who are familiar with the journal will no doubt notice the new layout that we have adopted for the journal's articles. We have applied a new design to the format of the articles in order to make all of their key referencing information more visible (citation, doi, etc.), and to make their content clearer and easier to read. In the new presentation of the articles, our goal has been to improve the design of the tables, figures and graphs, to highlight the essential information of each article in a clearer way, to provide information of interest about the authors, and to make content reading clearer and more amenable. We consider that this new layout makes for improved reading of the articles, irrespective of whether readers decide to print them out or view them on a screen. When read on a screen, direct access to the links and references contained in the articles is also available. We hope that these changes will be to your liking and that they will contribute to the journal team's fundamental mission of bringing scholarly works ever closer to its readers and fostering exchanges of experience among our thematic area's research community.

In addition, a few months ago we changed the design of the journal's access interface, the Open Journal System (OJS) that we have been using for many years. We have changed the page design and, more importantly, we

have improved the information contained in the pages about the journal and its review processes. We have also made all of the article-related information more visible and easier to access: how to cite them in different formats, metadata, etc. The new interface also facilitates access to article-related tools (printing, e-mail exchanges with the authors, comments, related references, etc.). These can be found on each article's access page, which also includes information about the authors, the abstract and the references. Again, the goal is to improve the journal's usability and to enhance and expand the dissemination of the content we publish. We hope that readers and authors alike will be happy with the latest changes made.

We are making great strides with our continuing improvement plan by selecting and publishing – thanks to our Scientific Editorial Board's collaboration – only the best research articles in the field of e-learning, university and network society. As a result, the journal's position in the citation indices is continuing to rise. Our interest as editors is to disseminate quality research to ensure that it provides researchers in our knowledge area with a useful scholarly contribution. In order to do that, we are conscious of the fact that we need to focus on new channels for disseminating scholarship, and to pay particular attention to the increasingly important role of the Social Web to support it. To that end, last month we opened a Twitter account (@RUSCjournal), which already has around 200 followers. This is a good start, and what it tells us is that it was a crucial step towards being more open to the Social Web as a means of supporting the dissemination of scholarly journals. We are aware of the fact that the impact of scholarly journals or articles now goes far beyond the number of times they are cited, as reported in traditional scholarly databases. Alternative metrics or "altmetrics" have found that the Social Web plays a decisive role when it comes to assessing the social impact of publishing research findings. We at *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal* are convinced that, rather than alternative metrics, they are complementary metrics in the system for computing citations and that, besides helping to enhance the impact of journals and their articles, they clearly contribute to a greater dissemination of them.

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