Editor’s Introduction

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With this issue of *LTHE* we announce some exciting developments. Firstly we are now publishing in a dedicated journal publishing system, Open Journal Systems, at the new address http://lthe.zu.ac.ae. As well as streamlining the administration and production of the journal, this enables us to offer a range of tools for readers; for example when you browse a paper in the journal, you will now be able easily to submit a comment on the paper, notify a colleague about the paper or see how to cite it.

We encourage you to sign up for the new publishing notification service for *LTHE*, using the Register link at the top of the journal homepage. This registration will result in you receiving the Table of Contents by email for each new issue of the journal. This list also allows us to claim a certain level of support or readership.

Another exciting development is the upcoming symposium linked to this journal and organized in collaboration between Zayed University and UAE University. Entitled *Higher Education in the Gulf - Research insights in learning and teaching*, the symposium in Dubai on 18 March 2010 will feature plenary talks, poster presentations and workshops by researchers on university/college learning and teaching. Future issues of *LTHE* will feature papers based on contributions to the symposium. See the symposium site http://ltsymposium-gulf.blogspot.com for further details; please note that registration will be closing soon.

We continue to welcome submissions to the journal which present research or innovative practice in teaching and learning with university or college students in the Gulf Region, in any subject area. If you wish to submit a paper or abstract, please visit our page For Authors which tells you how to register and submit your work; or use the “contact” link on LTHe’s About page to ask for any further information. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is the end of February 2010, but papers submitted later than this will be considered for the following issue of the journal.

The first paper in this issue, by Gallacher et al., presents findings of a study of students’ awareness and perceptions of their options for major study at university. It was found that students’ perceptions of different majors varied widely, were influenced by family members and others, and were not always realistic. The second paper, by Raven and O’Donnell, presents an initiative which could be of interest to anyone dealing with internships or work placement programs. They describe and evaluate a social networking system, Tawasul, which they have used to maintain contact with and among students who are off-campus in work environments which they may find both beneficial and isolating. Finally, the paper by Al-Balushi discusses issues of relevance and coherence in a degree program in Oman. This paper contrasts the planning of a program with the goals which it is intended to achieve, and makes recommendations for aligning these better.

The *LTHE* Editorial Group would like to thank the authors in this issue, as well as the peer reviewers who rigorously maintain quality in the papers in the journal.