

## Twelfth Issue of the Journal of Problem Based Learning in Higher Education

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### INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the second issue of the eighth volume of the Journal of Problem Based Learning in Higher Education. The first issue of this volume was a special issue on “PBL for Sustainability and Sustainable Cities”, which we published earlier this year. This second issue is a regular issue and contains five papers and four cases. Once again, we are pleased to be able to gather a wide variety of authors and topics, all with their specific input to the field of problem based learning in higher education. The two issues in this eighth volume nicely express the rich and deep flavors of our research field; and we as an international journal in the field, are proud to publish the scientific insights that spring from the dedicated research performed all over the globe. Here, at the end of a year so profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is most gratifying to be able to publish this issue, and to show that the world of scholarship goes on, and that some of the regularities remain.

As in previous issues, here we provide two tables for you. The tables give you an overview of the papers and cases, informing you of the papers’ and cases’ country of origin, education program in focus, and a brief statement on the topic. This allows you to view the content of the issue, and quickly find your way to the reading that is most intriguing for you.

### THE FIVE PAPERS

Country of origin	Education program	Topic
Kuwait, Australia	Engineering	Arab and Chinese managers’ evaluation of engineering competencies gained from PBL versus traditional learning.
Denmark	Medicine	A scoping review presenting papers and perspectives on the relationship between PBL and professional identity in medical education.

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Finland	Law, Social Science	An analysis of an interdisciplinary PBL simulation allowing students to gain insight into conflict analysis, management and resolution.
Denmark	Engineering	Applying the structure of IMRaD as a systematic organizational strategy for PBL project reports.
Azerbaijan	Educational management	Benefits and obstacles that follow the implementation of PBL pedagogic at two Azerbaijani universities.

Table 1. The five papers

Table 1 shows the five papers and their distribution across countries, programs and topics. It is always nice for us to have papers focusing on education programs from all faculties. It is an important issue for the PBL research to find ways to incorporate the varieties and differences that disciplinary conditions and traditions inevitably demands, without losing the core values, ideas and principals of PBL. This is truly where PBL must prove itself as a *university* pedagogic.

The topics in this issue has something for almost everyone. There is one paper on a broader or general implementation of PBL; that addresses the ongoing effort, some might say struggle, of expanding the PBL awareness and activity. Another paper gives us a fresh and concrete look at the never-ending issue of PBL versus traditional formats. Two papers reflect the use of specific didactics or models, aimed at aiding the students learning process, while incorporating a PBL pedagogic. These two papers are fascinating reading for educators and supervisors looking for new and well-grounded inspiration. It is most satisfying to conclude that the models in these two papers are explicitly shaped and suited for higher education. Finally, there is a review paper. In general, we do not have many of them, but they represent a valuable part of scholarship and are appreciated by many of us. We hope to see more of them in the future.

## THE FOUR CASES

Country of origin	Education program	Topic
USA	Interdisciplinary course	Design of a course with a service-learning project aimed at social problems is at the core of the project.
Brazil	Project management	Problems that impact the quality of a Project Elaboration and Management course, developed following a project-based learning approach.
USA	Law School	The opportunity to learn creative problem solving and collaboration skills in a classroom setting.
Kuwait	Engineering	How students worked in a bachelor project in mechanical engineering.

Table 2. The four cases

The four cases give a wide range of examples of how to apply the principles of PBL. The first three cases are focused on PBL at course level. Here, one case focuses on the design of a course, in which students identified a social problem with a culturally diverse, high-need community and subsequently designed a service-learning experience. Another case also focused at the level of a course, evaluated the quality of a course that has been taught numerous times and discussed how problems in both setting up and delivering the course impacted the quality of the course. A third case describes an example of how a Law School implemented problem-based learning into a course. The fourth case describes a bachelor project in a mechanical engineering program in the school of engineering where students needed to design, analyze, and optimize a solar car chassis. The main elements of the process are described in detail. Overall, we hope that these four cases will provide inspiration for educators throughout the world, in various disciplines.

As we close the book on 2020, an issue or a volume of our journal is probable not at the top of anyone's mind. This year has been far too exciting, frustrating, tragic and perhaps significant and a game-changer, for anyone to take much notice of this publication. But we, the new editor in chief and the editorial team, are proud of the achievement and glad for everyone's effort and commitment. We thank the authors for choosing us, and wish the readers an inspiring journey into our twelfth issue.

### **THANKS TO REVIEWERS**

Finally, we would also like to thank all the reviewers who have donated their time and wisdom to help to improve the papers and cases in this issue:

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