

Introduction

This special edition of the Journal of Contemplative Inquiry is based on a conference that Arthur Zajonc and I organized at Amherst College entitled, “Across the Disciplines: Contemplative Pedagogy in Higher Education.” The papers represent the work of scholars and teachers from diverse subjects—chemistry, law, music, religion, economics, education, information science, and environmental policy—and explain and demonstrate the use of contemplative approaches in their diverse courses. They provide rich examples of the many backgrounds and contexts from which the practices and approaches are drawn and illustrate broad intentions and methods of their teaching.

So that you can get a clear idea of how they are using these methods, most papers contain specific examples of the exercises and practices used in the many courses reviewed. We hope that these examples will lead to new variations within your own teaching. Though they sometimes sound straightforward, the use of these practices can pose their own difficulties. To address this, each author reflects on the challenges and potential pitfalls of their approaches.

I hope that this group of papers provides both the inspiration and information to foster the use of contemplative inquiry in your own courses and research, leading to new and innovative frontiers within your own teaching and learning.

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