Introduction to Volume 10: Homeland Security Academics Adapt to COVID-19

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On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020). COVID-19 changed everything. Our lexicons were expanded to include terms such as *essential workers*, *Zoom*, *Zoombombing,* and *social distancing*. Essential workers including healthcare, first responder, and grocery workers continued to work on the frontlines while others pushed forward on virtual web conferencing and other platforms. Social distancing, perhaps a more appropriate term is *physical distancing,* refers to a set of non-pharmaceutical interventions or measures intended to prevent the spread of contagious diseases (Center for Disease Control, 2020). College professors, administrators, and staff generally fell into the nonessential workers category (Department of Homeland Security, 2020). So began higher education's journey into the rapidly evolving virtual world of the 21st century.

In this special volume, the *Journal of Security, Intelligence, and Resilience Education* (JSIRE) asked academics from homeland security and related fields to share how they and their institutions of higher education managed the COVID-19 crisis. *JSIRE* is pleased to present readers with 18 articles representing institutions of higher education from the U.S. as well as Australia, Canada, India, and Italy in fields as diverse as homeland security, engineering, emergency management, law, medicine, military affairs, and public health. Our diverse authors represent colleges and universities as well as a law school, a medical college, a historically Black university, a U.S. military institution, and FEMA's higher education program.

Individually and in the aggregate, the articles provide the reader with an insider view of higher education's adaptation to the pandemic. Some of the articles reflect colleges and universities' initial responses during the traditional Spring semester (January-May) and plans for the Summer and Fall 2020 semesters, while others reflect colleges' and universities' ongoing Fall 2020 operations and special needs, challenges, and concerns. The editors chose to leave all articles in their timeframes to provide readers with the authors' real-time lived experiences. This special edition was made possible by the leadership of Dr. John Comiskey (JSIRE Editor-in-Chief) and the hard work of three homeland security scholars: Dr.'s Cameron Carlson, James Ramsay, and Michael Larrañaga, who served as Guest Editors for this Volume.

How Homeland Security Academics Managed the COVID-19 Crisis (Issue No. 18) aggregated and coded the thoughts and reflections of the authors of this volume and identified three prominent themes: institutional concerns about the welfare of students; issues relating to online (OL) course delivery; and institutional care for and preservation of their respective communities. In addition, colleges and universities with homeland security and related disciplines leveraged existing OL and social media platforms, information management, and early warning systems, and conducted just-in-time training to prepare faculty and students to transition from traditional

face-to-face (F2F) classes to OL platforms. Challenges included operating in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment and concerns relating to students' physiological and psychological needs; public health law and policy and contact and tracing methods; OL pedagogy and andragogy; labs, practicums, and internships; personnel issues such as childcare and contractual constraints; access to technology and technological literacy; travel limitations; financial hardships; privacy issues; and bureaucratic mandates such as residency requirements for funding. At the same time, the colleges and universities realized that the crisis provided them with an opportunity to immerse some of their students into unique internships and special topics classes that provided them with front row seats to real-world crisis management, interagency collaboration, implementation of executive and emergency orders, supply-chain management, and public health policy. Moreover, homeland security and emergency management academic professional organizations leveraged remote teleconferencing platforms to deliver much needed academic conferences and symposiums which continued the professional development of academics, policy makers, and practitioners.

As of December 14, there were over 72 million reported COVID-19 cases globally, of which 1.6 million cases were fatal (John Hopkins University of Medicine, 2020). In December 2020, government officials approved several COVID-19 vaccines that would be available in the forthcoming months (Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, 2020; U.S. Food & Drug Administration, 2020). With all eyes on the forthcoming COVID-19 vaccine, higher education and the world continue to march on.

We hope that you enjoy Volume 10, "Homeland Security Academics Adapt to COVID-19."

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