EDITOR’S NOTE

I’m tempted to say, “The sixth volume of the Indiana Undergraduate Journal of Cognitive Science is hot off the presses!” Of course, it wouldn’t be very accurate. Since its inception, IUJCS has been an online publication. There are many reasons for this, but we are propelled by one in particular: accessibility.

In any field or discipline, undergraduate students rarely have full access to the power and resources necessary to effectively conduct and publish independent research and writing. Nonetheless, in the field of cognitive science, scores of bright undergraduates are working on brilliant, innovative research every day. Many students are the principal investigators behind this research. We believe that they deserve due recognition for their work. The Indiana Undergraduate Journal of Cognitive Science is one way of empowering, motivating, and recognizing these students.

Cognitive science draws from many schools and disciplines, and students from a range of variegated programs, departments, and universities around the globe can contribute to our understanding of the mind. For these reasons, this journal is open to submissions from any undergraduate in any university in the world. It has no limit to the number of submissions it will accept, nor to the length or scope of those submissions. The fact that it is an online publication helps facilitate these principles.

Our only qualifications are that submissions are of sufficient quality, accuracy, originality, and scientific soundness. I’m confident that you’ll find these attributes in the five articles included in this volume.

Saba Chowdhry, of Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, constructs a critique of Jean Mandler’s theory of perceptual analysis. She creatively argues that Mandler’s theory, which heavily favors visual input as a primary source of concept formation in cognitive development, overlooks the fact that blind individuals have comparable cognitive development to sighted individuals.

Alicia J. Johnson, Sook-Lei Liew, and Lisa Aziz-Zadeh, of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, California, offer a novel analysis of an underreported mental condition known as body integrity identity disorder. Individuals afflicted by this condition often desire paralysis or amputation of healthy limbs as a means of conforming their bodies to their mental understanding of themselves.

Scott Munro of York University in Toronto, Ontario, marries philosophical and neuroscientific theories of consciousness in his article in this volume. Munro argues that only an interdisciplinary approach to the problem of understanding consciousness can ever hope to be successful.

Leslie Rith-Najarian of Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, presents research assessing the ways in which performance success at a task affects the way individuals perceive the stress of the task post-performance, irrespective of how the stress of the task is appraised prior to performance.

Jessica Wise, along with her advisors Dr. Yuliya Yoncheva and Dr. Bruce D. McCandliss of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, investigated how individual differences in readers' preferences influence new learning. Their research shows that many readers have preferences for certain reading strategies, and differences in these preferences predict subsequent patterns of strengths and weaknesses as these readers attempt to learn to read a new writing system.

I trust you will enjoy the submissions to this volume of the journal as much as I have. Happy reading!

Ronak Shah
Executive Editor of the Indiana Undergraduate Journal of Cognitive Science