

NSCI 1000 Spring 2024 Editorial

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A life-changing experience! The University of Toledo undergraduate course The Neuropsychiatric Patient (NSC1000) is a one credit hour course open to all students and majors focused on being “in the room where it happens” with a patient and a clinician. Each week, for two hours on Wednesday evenings, a group of motivated students who are passionate about medicine join the course director Dr. Robert Smith and a patient to learn about disorders of the brain. Each class opens with a short didactic lecture, followed by a one hour patient interview (and physical exam as indicated) where the patient courageously shares their story. The last thirty minutes of class are for questions and answers between the patient and the students. While Dr. Smith is a psychiatrist, guest lecturers include neurologists and neurosurgeons. Taught in the fall of 2023, the students in the class completed four writing assignments. Selected students were invited to revise one of their essays for publication in a special issue of the biomedical research journal Translation. This editorial serves as an introduction to their work. Nine NSC1000 students volunteered to refine an essay of their choice from the class. Gabby Vento, a PhD candidate in the Biomedical Graduate Program

Bioinformatics Track, coordinated this project and led a team of graduate student mentors paired up with each of the NSC1000 students. We are very grateful for all the time and effort the student mentors put in to help move this project forward. These essays explore unique topics including meta-physical discussion on the concept of “normality,” the stigma of calling a person who has an alcohol use disorder an “alcoholic,” the very lasting debate of nature vs nurture, the connection between the mind and body with the self-healing, the ethical issues of clinicians being able to accept gifts, and the usage of words and labels in appropriate context. From the writing to the cover art, each student took inspiration from class discussions and incorporated them into their work. Each essay has been refined and edited over the course of the spring and summer of 2024. Every mentor, along with Gabby Vento, Dr. Margaret Hoogland, and Dr. Robert Smith, provided the undergraduate students with feedback. We are proud of the whole team in the work they put into these high-quality essays, especially of our undergraduate students who wrote these essays – since, for many of them, this will be their first time publishing. Tragically, during this project, we lost one of our graduate mentors,

Daniella Gamboa Pabon. Dani's guidance and support for her mentee and her commitment to this project exemplified her dedication to her work and her peers. In her memory, we dedicate this special edition to Dani, with her mentee's essay leading this collection. We hope this issue honors her legacy. Finally, this special issue was expertly copyedited and assembled by two of the students from NSC1000, Laya Gokula and Annie Lei. Please enjoy these NSC1000 student essays and cover art.