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## Letter from the Editor

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## **Letter from the Editor**

We find ourselves in turbulent times with a deeply divided society, public discourse that can often seem to be irretrievably broken, and fundamental failures to connect with the basic humanity of people on opposite sides of ideology from ourselves. In a time of “fake news,” “alternative facts,” and social media giants as a primary “news” source, it sometimes feels like critical thinking is an endangered species. Undergraduate philosophy brings me hope for our future.

EMU’s Undergraduate Conference in Philosophy brings together diverse students from around the globe to spend a weekend sharing their ideas and thoughts about the issues we collectively face, and these students do so through sincere, engaged dialogue. Questions and critiques are brought forward in the spirit of collegiality, discussions are thoughtful and nuanced, and even when students find themselves on opposite sides of a significant social divide, they strive together to reach understanding. I have seen this spirit of collegiality at a number of conferences around the country. And so, it is with great fondness and enduring hope that I present this seventh volume of *Acta Cogitata*, showcasing the best work submitted for our consideration by undergraduate philosophers.

On a personal note, this issue also brings the end of my tenure as student editor. I am proud and to have been part of this journal’s mission, in one way or another, for the last four years – two as author and two as editor. I hope that my successor finds as much joy in this work as I do. I would like to thank Dr. W. John Koolage, our Editor in Chief, for his work on this journal, for the example he sets, and the inspiration he provides to so many of his students. I am honored to have been one of them, and forever changed by the experience.

Finally, I thank our authors and artists for sharing their work, their professors and mentors for their efforts in support of their development, and their institutions for encouraging these students and so many others in their work. The creativity, clarity, and depth of thought developed in the work presented in this volume are exactly what we so desperately need to move toward a brighter future.

C. Áine Keefer

### **Editor in Chief**

Dr. W. John Koolage

### **Student Editor**

C. Áine Keefer