

an
**ACTIVE
STUDENT
PARTICIPATION**
companion

Sanna Barrineau, Alexis Engström
and Ulrike Schnaas



Active student participation imagines learning as a shared venture between educators and students. It invites students to support, empower, and challenge each other's learning, as well as helping them to be co-creators in planning, facilitating, and evaluating courses within higher education.

This companion aims to inspire those who want to approach new ways of learning in order to create a better course, as well as those who are out to challenge conventional forms of teaching and learning. It summarises a range of experiences in Swedish higher education and provides concrete examples of how students and educators can learn together. By reading this companion, you will meet a variety of voices and perspectives – from students and educators – both via text and through links to a rich collection of media.

Together, these voices tell us about a significant shift in roles within higher education that creates teaching and learning spaces with the opportunity to do things differently. In essence, active student participation is about transformative learning, succinctly exemplified by one of the student contributors to this companion: 'To experience any other form of education now would feel like nothing less than a fundamental step into the past.'

Sanna Barrineau, Alexis Engström, and Ulrike Schnaas work with active student participation in educational development as well as with student-led sustainability education at Uppsala University.

An **Active Student Participation** Companion

*Sanna Barrineau, Alexis Engström and
Ulrike Schnaas*

*Uppsala University
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Introduction

A big reason for putting together this companion on active student participation (ASP) came from our desire to share what we have learned through our work in a student-staff partnership project at Uppsala University and spread the creative ideas of our colleagues, faculty, and students. This unique partnership project was a two-year university-wide effort where, for the first time in a Swedish context, students and educational developers worked to develop and disseminate ASP practices. While we have reported the outcomes of our ASP work previously in Swedish, our hope is that this companion is a means to engage in a wider discussion, inviting both students and educators into a dialogue. While most examples come from Uppsala University, our intention has been to make this companion relevant for educators and students in other contexts, both nationally and internationally.

The ASP territory is inhabited by students, educators, activists, educational developers, doctoral students, researchers, concerned citizens, and more. You are all welcome to this book. As a field that is constantly in motion and expanding, this book is incomplete. It needs your voices, ideas, and creativity to expand. *Write, notate, draw a map, reflect, cross-out, add-on, scribble* in all the spaces left open! Build this into your own guide for the messy work we embark on in higher education.

During our work with ASP we, the authors, have come to strongly believe that:

- students in all stages of higher education can and should be granted a position from which they can take responsibility for their own learning;
- for the above to happen, faculty need to allocate time in supporting students in making sense of what that responsibility may entail;
- all students may not want to engage in ways prescribed by educators, but an ethos of inclusivity is essential;
- there is untapped pedagogical potential in the way that students spend their time going through courses;

- ASP has the potential to disrupt the status quo and to unhinge some of the normalities of higher education that cramp the potential for change and adaptation in a changing world.

Our premise for creating this companion is to inspire those who approach co-creative ways of learning out of the necessity of creating a well-functioning course, as well as those who are out to challenge conventional teaching and learning norms in higher education. This companion is meant, too, for the curious who want to engage in radical collegiality (Fielding, 1999) between students and educators, and make the university a space that invites learning which not only creates new knowledge, but contributes to personal development. We aim to provide practical examples (big and small) and a theoretical basis for how to approach teaching and learning from a more holistic perspective. Our goal is not to provide recipes for success, or 'right answers' but instead an 'ecology of perspectives' (Moravec, 2013) which we understand as perspectives that work together, in a symbiotic manner, and need each other in order to create a whole. Wright (2006) paints a picture of what this type of engagement might mean.

We leave the familiar world equipped with navigational devices that tell us the direction in which we are moving and how far from our point of departure we have travelled, but without a map laying out the entire route from origin to endpoint. This has perils, of course: we may encounter unforeseen obstacles which force us to move in a direction we had not planned...In the end, we may discover that there are absolute limits to how far we can go; but we can at least know if we are moving in the right direction. (Wright, 2006, p.105 as cited by Fielding and Moss, 2011, p.3)

In the chapters that follow, we explore how students and educators can learn together in recycled, new, and collaborative ways. Therefore, some chapters of this companion are devoted to the work on the ground, the nitty-gritty reality of everyday teaching and learning: 'Sure, student engagement is great! But my students aren't engaged' or 'It would be cool to be more engaged, but I don't know how!' Other chapters have a broader focus on the trajectory of higher education and its continuous improvement

for our common future. The focus of this particular companion is to have a constructive and developmental approach to ASP. In so saying, we acknowledge that ASP carries with it a whole host of challenges which we address in specific parts of this companion, but which are not this text's main concern.

'How do I use this companion?' To start, you can read each chapter individually, but you could also choose to read it as a messily flowing progression of text. Read this book to suit your needs! The 'Reader's Guide' should help you determine where to begin. The ever-evolving character of ASP reflects the disposition of this book: ASP is not a streamlined, fixed concept, but a process and a spectrum with different levels and spaces; it is versatile, and our text attempts to mirror some of the complexity of the field. Thus, you will find a conglomeration of the voices, perspectives, and materials which we have found instructional and inspirational in our work. We do not claim to have fully investigated the topic. We have, however, vast experience from working with ASP ourselves, and have had the pleasure of reading a substantial amount of literature. It is obvious to us that this is a topical field of major importance, and a field that is given attention on the agendas of many universities. Thus, this companion is timely and can hopefully provide input for the ongoing debate and discussion on ASP in higher education, and provide some concrete tips on how to make it happen. To that end, this is a starting point for discussion, and a source of inspiration, rather than a conclusive handbook.

We, the authors, are indebted to all the students and colleagues we have met throughout our work for their inspiration, ideas, and critiques that have helped this work emerge and develop. If you would like to share your ideas with us, please contact us at aktivstudentmedverkan@uadm.uu.se. We would be delighted to hear from you!

Acknowledgements

There are several people who must be named for their important contributions to our work and this publication, and to whom we are incredibly thankful! We appreciate the conversations and critical comments from our colleagues at the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning, for the ongoing support and encourage-

ment of this wonderful group of people, and, above all, for believing in us. A big thank you for the wise feedback from Henrik Viberg, Eva Forsberg, and Johan Wickström who had the patience and energy to read this companion cover to cover. Fredrik Härlin was an important part of our project, especially in its beginning phases, and we thank him for his energy and positive attitude during his time with the project. We thank our past and current colleagues at the Centre for Environment and Development Studies (CEMUS), whose radical, thought-provoking, and fun approaches to teaching and learning at university have shaped our trajectories and, therefore, the pages of this companion significantly. We owe our gratitude also to the work group that served as our sounding board and team of advice-givers throughout the project years: Margareta Erhardsson, Johan Gärdebo, Isak Stoddard, Malin Östman, Daniel Mossberg, Martin Wohlin, Maja Elmgren, and Jöran Rehn. Our thanks goes out, too, to the talented and creative artists of this book, Ingrid Moum Rieser and Morag Ramsey, whose imaginations have enriched this text. Ingrid was the master of collages and this book's layout, while Morag illustrated the characters that visit our pages. Special thanks to Caroline Bodin, Sachiko Ishihara, and Guy Finkill for their contributions and feedback, which enriched the student voices in this text. We are also grateful to Miriam Thegel, Jörgen Bengtsson, Charlotta Bengtson, and Marcus Lundberg for contributing their insightful stories. Finally, we express our gratitude to colleagues outside of Sweden who visited us, and taught us so much: Cherie Woolmer, Catherine Bovill, and Alison Cook-Sather.

The authors are themselves responsible for the content and views expressed in this companion, which do not necessarily represent the views of Uppsala University.

Author presentation

We, the authors of this companion, are a group comprised of two recent students and an educational developer who together embarked on a project (2014-2015) to develop active student participation (ASP) at Uppsala University. To the best of our knowledge, this author constellation is a unique aspect about this book. Ulrike Schnaas works as an educational developer at the

SI is a  complementary peer-led study session. Click here to read more on Lund University's webpage

Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning¹, and worked as the ASP project leader. Alexis Engström and Sanna Barrineau started their work with the ASP project as students and recent graduates working with ASP 'on the ground', so to speak. This work occurred in two long-standing initiatives at Uppsala University: the student-driven Centre for Environment and Development Studies (CEMUS) and Supplemental Instruction (SI), also called *mentorship* in some parts of the university.² While both still engaged at CEMUS, Alexis and Sanna started working on the university-level ASP project. In the capacity of project assistants and with the support of Ulrike, Alexis and Sanna and a third student colleague, Fredrik, met with and supported others also working within and starting ASP initiatives. The project work further entailed thinking strategically about how to support ASP at an institutional level. Throughout these experiences, we have developed the double perspectives of grassroots and institutional level work, while developing strong connections between the research being done in the field and the practical work at the university.

We started off with a fairly idealistic picture of how the project work would progress. Surely, students want to be more engaged in their education and would be glad for the opportunity to get some institutional support! That vision vanished rather quickly as we realised that, on the whole, the groups of students with which we were trying to engage were not about to line up outside of our office. Today, we have a more pragmatic view of our higher education context, and the realities that both educators and students face in making real changes to their teaching and learning roles. These are insights that we try to include throughout this companion.

We are also three people that come from different walks of life. Here we take a moment to present ourselves and our stories.

¹ This unit works with educational development to promote quality teaching and learning at all levels. Their work aligns with the teaching and learning needs expressed in the university operations and one of their main tasks is to give teacher training courses for teaching staff. Read more at: <https://mp.uu.se/en/web/info/vart-uu/orgstyr/uf/kvalped/pu>

² These examples will be described more fully in Chapters 2 and 4.



Sanna's story

It would probably make the reader more comfortable to assume that, since the beginning, I started out with a deep interest in learning and teaching in higher education. It's not true at all. In fact, I must admit that my path to this project and where I am today was unplanned and random. I never expected to work in education but was driven throughout my university career to work with the wicked sustainability problems facing us today. After doing a bachelor's degree in the US, and with a master's degree in Environment, Politics, and Globalisation from the UK, I moved to Uppsala and discovered the student-driven, interdisciplinary education centre, CEMUS. I soon began to study and work there, delighting in the challenge of planning and facilitating courses with different sustainability themes, and realising quickly how cheated I had felt throughout my own inactive and non-participatory studies at university. I still did not see myself as an educator or a leader; I was an older student passionate about my subject area and excited to be able to work with others from different subject areas who shared my passion. Three years at CEMUS deeply reshaped my view on education, and I developed a respect for and certainty that education driven by *genuine student questions* can lead to transformative learning and create spaces where faculty and students can learn together. My initial approach to the active student participation project was coloured by my role as a student leader at CEMUS, and by my frustration over the lack of opportunities to engage in meaningful ways in my university experience. I am driven to engage others in active student participation and invite them to discover ways it can make education meaningful and more complicated and contribute to a crucial and necessary development of higher education where the university takes seriously its role in society.

Alexis's story

The idea of ASP happened to me without warning, just about six years prior to the writing of this companion, as I was studying history and well on my way to becoming a high school teacher through the teacher



education programme at Uppsala University. At that particular time, a couple of my fellow students and I had an idea of mitigating the scarcity of lectures and seminars by introducing a student-driven social activity that would focus on developing knowledge through passion-driven discussions about historical topics. Looking for inspiration, we decided on the pedagogical model of Supplemental Instruction and somehow managed to convince the central educational development unit to pay for a pedagogue to introduce the concept to a few of us students. This experience pushed me down a slippery slope, into deep valleys of complimentary student-led discussion sessions and course coordinating at CEMUS and left me with a hard-to-cure curiosity about further possibilities for collaborations around the topic of learning. Could this way of approaching learning be available for more students? For all? And would this be a good thing? While most of the questions that led me to want to work with these issues on a university-wide basis have yet to be answered, the quality of the inquiry has, for me, constantly improved. I started this journey with a strong belief that university faculties must create specific spaces for students. Today I would suggest this to be combined with a more structural approach to support a mutual effort from both students and educators, aiming at approaching teaching and learning in higher education as a shared opportunity.

Ulrike's story

Starting my studies directly after school at an old university in Southern Germany was almost a shock. Facing the large classes of a typical mass university, I quickly changed from being an enthusiastic student in high school to a silent and uneasy student in higher education. However, after a rather shaky start, I found peers who shared my curiosity and interest for the subject. Our conversations in informal learning groups and a couple of self-organised study trips became crucial not only for my wellbeing and personal development, but also for continuous motivation to study. Furthermore, they enhanced a feeling of belonging despite of my unfamiliarity with academic hierarchies, rules, and habits.



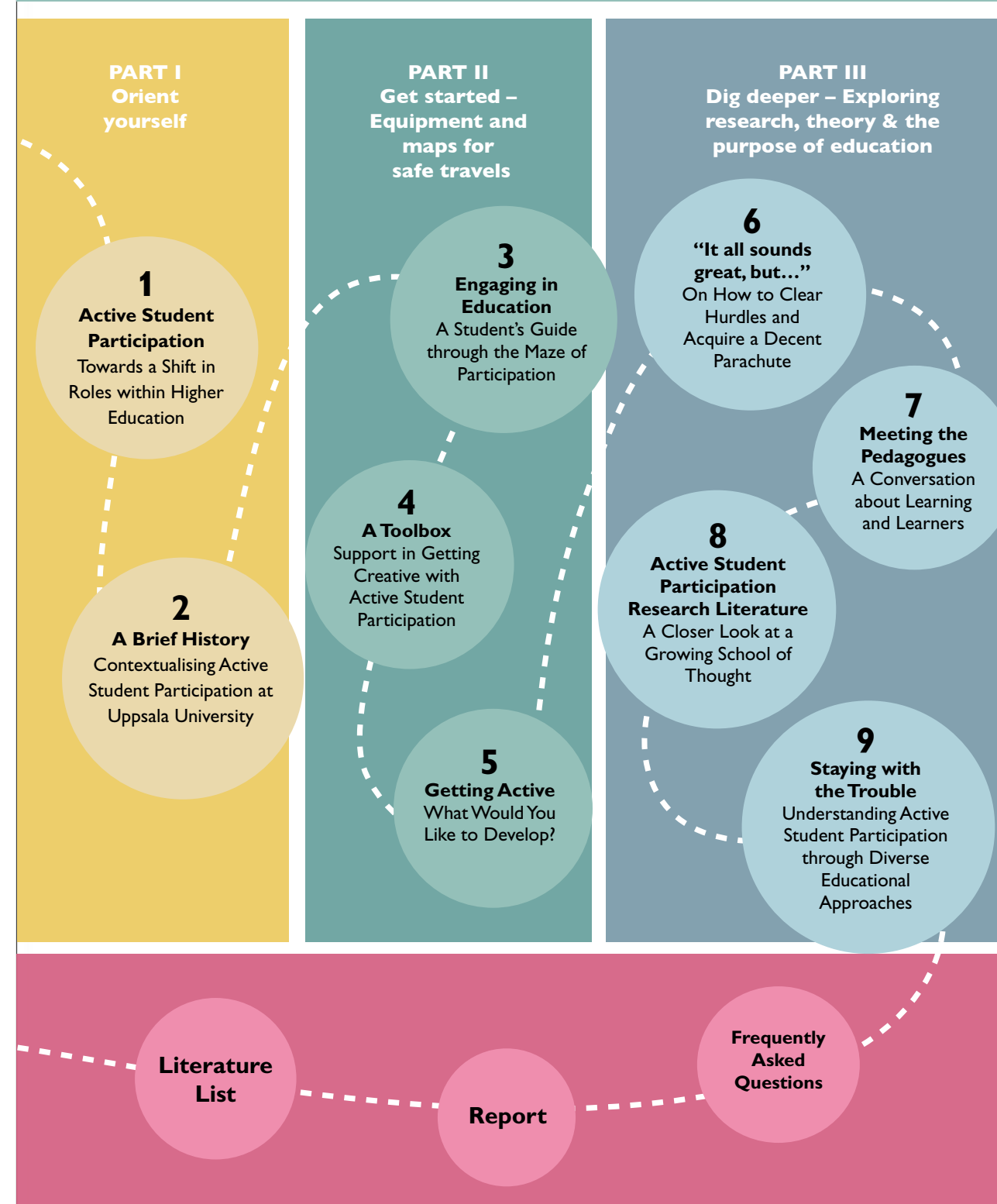
From my current point of view, I realise that much of this informal peer learning helped me to better adapt to the higher education environment. However, not knowing the rules can sometimes be liberating. For example, I travelled together with a friend all the way to Denmark in order to participate in a scientific conference without knowing anything about registration fees or other practicalities. Thanks to the surprised but helpful organisers, we were allowed to attend the conference - and to sleep in our tent behind the conference building – and inhabit a scientific arena that normally excluded students!

Many years later, experiences of inclusion and exclusion are still one of the most important incentives in my work as academic developer. Inclusive pedagogy and gender sensitive supervision, as well as a good introduction for new teaching staff, are some of my fields of special interest. Having been the project leader for the active student participation project has been one of the most important experiences in my professional life. As a true eye-opener, it has strengthened my conviction that trust in students' abilities and competences and a shared responsibility for learning are crucial for higher education and the democratic university. The ASP project was pioneering not only due to its mission, but also because it was formed and implemented by student project assistants. Working together in our project team has sometimes pushed me to the edge of my comfort zone, causing uncertainty and much reflection. However, it has always been inspiring, energising, and a rich source of challenging and joyful learning.

Reader's Guide

The breakdown of chapters in this companion will hopefully help you, the reader, find what you need. In Chapter 1, you will find an introduction to how we, the authors, understand ASP and why we consider it to be important. Chapter 2 along with the appendix can be helpful for stakeholders ready to take on an institution-level approach for developing ASP. The most hands-on material, interesting for educators who want to work practically and for students who want to engage differently, is taken up in Chapters 3 through 6. For students in particular, a guide on engaging in education provides reflections and support for making the best out of your higher education experience. In Chapter 7, we introduce some key concepts of learning and ASP in a more

Reader's Guide



accessible way by means of a fictitious dialogue between notable educational thinkers. Finally, readers ready to dive into the more theory-heavy content can attend Chapters 8 and 9. As we mentioned before, the main aim of this companion is to offer a variety of ASP examples and a constructive and development approach while steering away from a constant explicit focus on problems and challenges. The latter is addressed chiefly in Chapter 6.

Since we aim to create a kind of dialogue with you, the reader, and stimulate your own reflection, there are also many spaces for all of you to fill with your ideas. In the digital version of this material, we even include a number of films; ranging from an introductory film to ASP all the way to working with different challenges. Finally, the ASP web page (www.uu.se/asp) provides a quantity of supplementary material to which this companion occasionally will direct you. As you will notice, our motives as the authors colour the language of each chapter. For example, we have tried to write about models and tools in a more conversational tone, while the language of the more theoretical parts reflects the language seen in academic texts.

Chapter 1: Active Student Participation - Towards a Shift in Roles within Higher Education

This chapter gives an outline of our approach to active student participation and why we think that active student participation is a necessary and important direction for higher education. We also cover student engagement in higher education today, and student engagement and current trends and tensions in Swedish higher education.

Chapter 2: A Brief History - Contextualising Active Student Participation at Uppsala University

Here the history and mandate of our project are outlined, contextualising the Active Student Participation project within Uppsala University, which may even have implications for how this type of project could come to fruition in other universities.

Chapter 3: Engaging in Education - A Student's Guide through the Maze of Participation

Most of the literature exploring the roles of students in higher education is written by and for educators. In this chapter we have invited a broader group of students to share their tips, advice, and reflections on engagement and co-creation within higher education. This chapter addresses particularly students and includes: a) tips on change strategies, b) how to engage with your peers, c) how to initiate a student mentorship programme, d) how to influence the quality of your education, and e) personal reflections about student representation and the consequences of getting more involved in your education.

Chapter 4: A Toolbox - Support in Getting Creative with Active Student Participation

This chapter offers a variety of tools to engage students and educators in developing and thinking critically about active student participation initiatives. This consists of: a) models for getting started and context-based idea development, b) numerous examples of practice, c) developing active student participation in evaluation and quality enhancement, and d) working with active student participation in educational development. Different examples of active student participation initiatives at Uppsala University, which are chiefly authored by the educators and students participating in the different initiatives, are outlined in detail. While far from a complete encyclopedia of active student participation practices, it aims to offer a palate of examples that inspire and instruct.

Chapter 5: Getting Active - What Would You Like to Develop?

This is a space for you, whether student or educator, to develop your own ideas. Here you will find guiding questions to organise your thoughts, envision how success might look, foresee challenges, and think strategically. This worksheet could also be used in groups to develop ideas together. Both students and educators could benefit from outlining their ideas first before taking the next step to propose or test out something new.

Chapter 6: ‘It all sounds great, but...’ - On How to Clear Hurdles and Acquire a Descent Parachute

This chapter starts with a short text about the difficulties of finding a way to work with active student participation that invites without alienating and engages without excluding, which we call working between Scylla and Charybdis. We then invite you to engage with three ‘true stories’ from Uppsala University, illustrating what educators often perceive as a lack of student engagement and providing you, the reader, with some space to reflect on how you would have worked in each case. The chapter then moves on to ways in which we in the higher education teaching and learning community can approach and work with power. This is followed by reflections on a number of challenges posed by students and educators that we, the authors, have met. However, this chapter is incomplete and concludes with numerous ‘unsolved’ challenges which we hope you the readers can contribute with your experiences and insights.

Chapter 7: Meeting the Pedagogues - A Conversation about Learning and Learners

The focus of this chapter is to introduce readers who are not familiar with, but curious about, how different learning theories describe learning and how they might connect to active student participation. Here, you will meet some current and past thinkers and practitioners who have a lot of ideas about learning and education.

Chapter 8: Active Student Participation Research Literature - A Closer Look at a Growing School of Thought

Active student participation research is an emerging field. A chapter that aims to cover the most recent literature of a field is destined to be quickly outdated. Despite these odds, this chapter takes on this challenge and presents an overview of many arguments and ideas coming forward in the field. Here you can find a critical discussion on student engagement, some notes on peer-learning, and an outline of student-faculty partnership literature.

Chapter 9: Staying with the Trouble - Understanding Active Student Participation through Diverse Educational Approaches

This chapter is for readers interested in a deeper exploration of the meaning of higher education. There are a number of educational approaches in higher education which aim to prepare students to be active, responsible citizens of society. Some of these are student-faculty partnerships, education for sustainable development, anti-oppressive education, and critical global citizenship education. These approaches recognise the interconnectedness of the world, seeing the responsibility of the university in relation to the betterment of society, not just the individuals within its walls. In this chapter, we argue that active student participation is an integral part of all these approaches and we contend that active student participation is not an isolated pedagogical tool, but at the heart of learning that transforms and which we argue is necessary for a university ‘for-others’.

Appendixes

Frequently Asked Questions

This section addresses some of the most common and basic questions concerning ASP. So, if you only have a couple of minutes for this topic right now, you can start here in order to get a very quick overview.

Report: The Continuous Development of Active Student Participation at Uppsala University

The full project report from 2014-2015. This report includes insights and lessons from a two-year university-wide project, and may hold special relevance for stakeholders with an institutional perspective on ASP initiatives.

Navigating the terms: An overview of some key terms and how we use them

Educator: a person who has teaching responsibilities in a higher education institution.

Educational developer: educational developers work practically with university educators to develop their teaching methods and facilitate the exchange of ideas and practices, and also work to extend educational theory, with the aim of improving the quality of higher education. Also called pedagogical developer and academic developer.

Epistemology: the theory of knowledge; how do we know what we know? Where does this knowledge come from? What are its limitations?

Ethos: the characteristic spirit of a culture, era, or community as manifested in its attitudes and aspirations (Oxford English Dictionary).

Pedagogical/pedagogy: relating to teaching / the method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.

Swedish Higher Education Terminology: Students study a particular programme (for example, psychology, history, physical therapy, or chemistry) and the programme consists of a series of courses (also called modules in other higher education contexts). A programme consists of all the students from the various years studying in that particular programme. Psychology, history, and chemistry are also examples of subjects that students can study.

Navigating the interactive PDF

In order to make this document as useful as possible, we have included several interactive functions. First of all, hyperlinks in the text are indicated with a turquoise line - [like this](#). That means clicking on the word(s) will take you directly to the document or website in question.

In addition, we have included several 'margin objects' throughout the book. These provide information points or indicate where

you can learn more on the topic in question, either in this book or other resources. Here is a list of the symbols you will encounter:



Provides a definition of a concept.




Indicates where you can read further on this topic. Clicking on this symbol will take you to the resource.



Indicates where in the book you can learn more about this topic. Clicking on the symbol will take you directly to that section of the book.



Links to a website or online source where you can learn more. Clicking on the symbol will take you to the website.

A hand symbol (such as ) will appear when you hover your mouse over a clickable item or link. If you find that the links are not working, make you sure you are not in full-screen viewing mode, and that you are using Acrobat Reader or Apple Preview.

The reflection pages in the book are meant for you to add your own thoughts. Most PDF readers will have annotation functions so that you can easily add a text box to record your reflections.



Active Student Participation

*Towards a Shift in Roles
within Higher Education*



Active Student Participation

Towards a Shift in Roles within Higher Education

This chapter gives an outline of our approach to active student participation and why we think that active student participation is a necessary and important direction for higher education. We also cover student engagement in higher education today, and student engagement and current trends and tensions in Swedish higher education.



Lecture at Uppsala University 1844, attended by crown prince and archduke Gustav.

You see here a picture from an educational setting at Uppsala University in 1844¹. Since then, much has changed not only in the way people dress but also, and more importantly, in areas such as who is welcome in these spaces and what perspectives there are on the purpose of higher education. At the same time, many things are strikingly similar between how education happened

¹ Image retrieved from Alvin: platform for digital collections and digitized cultural heritage.

then and is happening today; some of it for good reasons, others, less so. The role of the educators has evolved from that of an expert to being an expert and a facilitator that puts students at the centre of learning. But what has happened to the role of students? This companion poses questions about the doings and thinkings of both educators and students in higher education today. How can we understand the different roles and how can these roles work together to make learning the best experience possible?

Active student participation (ASP) invites students and educators into new and sometimes radically different ways of learning and teaching. One of the aims of this companion is to provoke reflection on what ASP can be and what it means for higher education. So, to start, *How would you know that ASP was happening upon entering a classroom?* ASP is a particular approach to learning, reciprocal and collaborative, to which this companion is a guide. We do not imply that it is the only way to learn, and interpret it as a process-oriented rather than goal-oriented approach to education. We also think that participation is more of a process than a goal in itself, and that is what we aim to discuss throughout this companion. Engaging in the defining or narrowing down of 'active student participation' has proven tricky, however. In the first definition that we came across at Uppsala University, created by a group of students and educators writing up the proposal for the ASP project (2014-2015), ASP referred to *students as a resource in each other's learning (peer-to-peer learning) as well as students who are co-creators in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of education*. From there, we also tested what kinds of ideas about ASP would emerge if we asked ourselves:

- How can students' awareness of the pedagogical choices in teaching and awareness of their own learning process be increased? (How can students get tools to take responsibility for their own learning?)
- How can different ways in which students are active be a resource (challenging, empowering, etc.) for other students' learning?
- In which ways can students' knowledge about learning enhance the planning and evaluation of a course?

Since ASP is about a process, it can be difficult and unpredictable. We start our exploration by diving head-on into reflecting on reasons why we, the authors, consider ASP to be a fruitful and interesting approach to learning and why we in higher education teaching and learning communities should engage in ASP.

Why active student participation?

To provide an entry point into the ASP landscape, we begin with an illustrative story. In 2015, our project arranged a two-day conference, dubbed the ASP Days, where students and educators came together in order to explore what ASP can look like and what benefits engaging in ASP offers. Initial input was given by a keynote presentation on 'Students as co-creators', that dived into definitions of partnership, gave examples of students as co-creators in course design, and discussed advantages and challenges of co-creation. In the activities that followed, students and educators presented different ASP initiatives in which they were active. The rooms vibrated with the energy of student and faculty discussions, where certain themes emerged. We saw students as well as educators argue for students' active roles in education in order to a) increase motivation and engagement, b) benefit from each other's perspectives, and c) provide opportunities to incorporate students' specific knowledge on certain topics, such as sustainability issues or the use of digital resources. One of the most important elements during these two days were conversations in small, mixed groups between educators, students, and educational developers. Many participants appreciated the inspiring atmosphere during two intensive days that offered an opportunity to share ideas and experiences. You may get an impression of the event in this short video that also presents a range of reasons given by students and educators on why and how ASP enhances learning.

*Click to watch
the ASP Days
film
[3min32sec]*



Especially appreciated during the ASP Days was that it brought together educators and students, where though everyone came with different roles, expertise, and status, contributions were equally valued and all had the opportunity to contribute. For many of the participants this was a new experience. Here are a couple of participant reflections from the written evaluations of ASP Days:

'Events like ASP Days raise consciousness about the importance of the student role in shaping education. This kind of event is important to reflect on student involvement. It's about attitudes, to see students as co-creators instead of guests.'

'I liked the different view of involving students in their learning. As a teacher, it gives me and others the opportunity to think differently and abolish certain fixed mindsets sometimes we had and view learning as a collaborative task and obviously empower students to act and make decisions.'

Even if students and educators often spend a lot of time together during lectures, seminars, laboratories, and other teaching activities, they seldom reflect on pedagogical issues - how students perceive classes and what ideas they have about their learning. Amongst other things, the ASP Days demonstrated the need for gathering students and educators together in order to discuss innovative teaching examples, the roles of the educators and of the students, what motivates students to participate in a more active way, and many other things. This engaged conversation, that was enabled by the ASP Days, made teaching and learning into a shared effort which was experienced as fruitful and energising by students as well as educators, according to their written and oral feedback.



Research Literature:
Here is a list of some of the literature in this field which we have found useful and inspiring.

Apart from students' and educators' positive experiences with different kinds of ASP, what does research literature say? To start, research on peer learning and teaching, such as for example Supplemental Instruction, gives the following positive reasons for engaging in peer to peer learning constellations (see Topping, 1996 & 2005; Falchikov, 2001; Malm, Bryngfors, and Mörner, 2012):

Peer teaching and learning means - in many cases, for both the students who take a teaching role and for their peers - to

- support deep-oriented learning and promote understanding of the topic;
- promote active learning, participation, and immediate feedback in a safer peer-environment;
- provide an opportunity for problem-solving and application of knowledge;
- reduce social isolation;
- increase student motivation, attendance, retention, and attrition;
- contribute to an increased throughput in difficult courses and that students pass examinations with higher marks;
- enhance students' study skills, such as time management;
- improve interpersonal skills such as empathy and respect for peers;
- improve communication skills as well as leadership and teamwork;
- develop students' metacognitive skills, i.e. an understanding of their own and others' learning;
- empower and prepare students for active and responsible citizenship which has social and inclusivity dimensions and can be linked to the university's democratic mandate.

Moreover, there is a growing amount of literature which argues that a partnership approach counteracts the tendency of students to be seen or see themselves as customers. Hence a partnership approach is not only about employing certain pedagogical methods, but first and foremost about an ethos where teaching and learning are seen as a shared responsibility (Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014; Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014). Students are invited to participate and contribute their special skills and educators can interact with the students' perspectives and experiences in a more profound way than course evaluations can provide. Many educators suggest that students produce high-quality work, but that it is also important not to focus solely on a product without seeing a partnership approach as a process and an oppor-

tunity for mutual learning. The benefits seen in peer learning contexts are also common in partnership contexts, but some of the positive outcomes that may come from working in partnership more specifically may include (see Healey et al., 2014; Cook-Sather et al., 2014):

- both students and educators are learners, with opportunities to reflect on how they approach that role;
- both students and educators achieve a deeper understanding of teaching and learning;
- learning is seen as a common goal by students and educators, and therefore the approach to learning is collaborative and reciprocal;
- attitude shifts in both educators and students to understand learning as a shared responsibility, rather than areas of divided responsibilities;
- students take a more critical and active approach toward learning which continues even beyond partnership;
- students adopt deep learning strategies instead of just shallow and strategic approaches;
- students working in partnership are closer to the learning situation of their peers and can provide valuable insight into educators' thinking and planning, e.g. in assessment methods or how to achieve learning goals;
- students develop graduate skills and attributes;
- students and educators develop metacognitive awareness and enhanced motivation.

Furthermore, ASP might be seen as a part of the quality work and the improvement of education on an institutional level. In a summary of the characteristics of excellent learning environments, Laksov, Kettis, and Alexandersson (2014)² highlight that one overarching factor in these environments is the presence of students who are directly involved in decisions relating to educational development in terms of both implementation and evaluation.

² Available at www.swednet-work.se, direct link [here](#).

These approaches recognise the importance of including students beyond hearing their voices as representatives in governing bodies and course evaluations, and beyond activating learning methods within the classroom towards a deeper engagement and responsibility. Naturally, this type of engagement is challenging, despite being full of opportunities, and it includes for educators and students the need of developing new ways of learning together. It prompts the crucial question: *how can we build a higher education culture where learning is a shared responsibility and students are seen as partners in learning?* What may this mean for students' and educators' traditional roles?

Changing roles

In this companion, we use ASP as an umbrella term for many of these different concepts that we have come across. Among these you find: *Student-Faculty Partnership*, *Students as Change Agents*, *Students as Consultants*, *Students as Co-creators*, *Students as Producers*, *Contributing Student Pedagogy*, and many others. What unites all of these terms is their recognition of the students' active and crucial role in their own learning and the learning of others. In other words, these terms highlight the role(s) of the students and emphasise that students are not only learners in terms of being 'recipients' of knowledge, but also can take an active part in and responsibility for their education. Thus, they might cooperate with an educator in order to develop a course (in 'partnership' or as 'co-creators'), contribute with innovative pedagogical methods they have come across somewhere else ('change agents'), provide feedback to new educators over time by observing their classes ('consultants'), develop new teaching materials by using digital resources ('students as producers' or 'contributing student pedagogy'), or take turns in peer teaching during seminars or laboratories ('peer teaching'). In some cases, this plays out as a new relationship between students and educators. More recently developed concepts, such as student-faculty partnerships, start to disturb the power and responsibility distributions we see within higher education, marking a shift in both student and educator roles. These approaches and the literature argue for the same benefits as peer to peer learning constellations but go a step further in acknowledging that all involved are learners. This has implications for how we do education.

Partnership literature strongly emphasises the need to appreciate everyone's contribution, where roles, expertise, responsibilities, and status are different, but contributions are equally valued (Cook-Sather et al., 2014, p.7)



Click here to read the project anthology 'Students, the university's unspent resource'

David Orr, professor of environmental studies and politics, famously wrote an essay in 1991 in which he articulates that this world we live in, with all its shortcomings in relation to resource use, pollution, extinction of species etc., is not a result of the actions of uneducated people, but rather the effect of the actions and decisions of people with prestigious university degrees. He further argues that in the 1940s, one of the unique aspects of Germans was that, in most aspects, they were the best educated people on Earth, and asks: What was wrong with their education, and what do we do differently today? (Orr, 1991) A shift in roles within higher education, as elaborated on above, creates teaching and learning spaces with the opportunity to do things differently, acknowledging that we need everyone on board. This way of looking at the purpose of learning and education invites a different, but also empowering shift in how we view roles and responsibilities within education. So, what might these new roles be?

Making sense of active student participation

At Uppsala University, the term 'active student participation' was coined by Johan Gärdebo, who was involved as a student in a university-wide **educational development project** at that time, and colleagues in 2012. Based on students' positive experiences with supplementary peer teaching projects, the project group promoted Supplemental Instruction and similar forms of mentorship at Uppsala University by arranging seminars gathering both educators and students. This initiative evolved into our current understanding of ASP as *students that support, empower, and challenge each other's learning, as well as students as co-creators in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of higher education*. With this, we attempt to describe the actions and roles of students in different ASP learning and teaching contexts. It is an approach to ASP that has unfolded through the language of students and educators that we have met in describing how they themselves work with ASP. Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari (1994, p.5) who postulate that 'concepts are not waiting for us ready-made...they must be invented, fabricated, or rather created', we do not wish to define ASP, but describe it by talking about what people do, seeing it as a term in flux. Sometimes we get frustrated because there is no definite definition of ASP. Not only have educators and students expressed their wish to know exactly what ASP is and

how to ‘do’ it, there is also the risk that, without a locked definition, ASP is simply interpreted as ‘active learning methods’, unwittingly disregarding the vast pedagogical potential that we, the authors, see in it. However, we still find it more constructive to have an open dialogue about it.

We therefore try to illustrate our perception of this field and its diversity using this model of student engagement below (Figure 1). With it we illustrate that, on the one hand, student engagement plays out in classroom arenas with different *student activities* where educators use *activating learning methods*. In this sense, active learning means a wide range of learning activities, some examples of which are: interrupting a lecture and letting students discuss in pairs for a few minutes; using digital tools such as clickers, e.g. in order to make students decide amongst different options for a problem; applying formative evaluation techniques such as a ‘one-minute paper’ in order to learn what students found most difficult in a specific lecture; organising a debate where students need to argue for different standpoints; or using assessment methods such as project work that make students work collaboratively



[Click to watch an introduction to Active Student Participation](#)
[2min48sec]

in small groups (for more examples, see Elmgren and Henriksson, 2014, p.200-219). Another student engagement arena is *student representation*, also referred to as *student voice* in many contexts. In Sweden, this means that all student representation is formally organised through student unions and that every decision-making body in higher education institutions should include one or more student representatives. *active student participation*, on the other hand, focuses on the different *roles* that students can adopt in a pedagogical context, and plays out in different spaces, as represented by the circles. It entails the invitation of students to engage in reflecting on their learning and what they find meaningful in their education as well as involving students more deeply and giving them more responsibility for education. Despite distinguishing between these three broad arenas, they are not mutually exclusive, and there are overlaps.

When we have met students and educators in different courses, we have used this model as a way of starting conversations about what ASP could look like in their context.

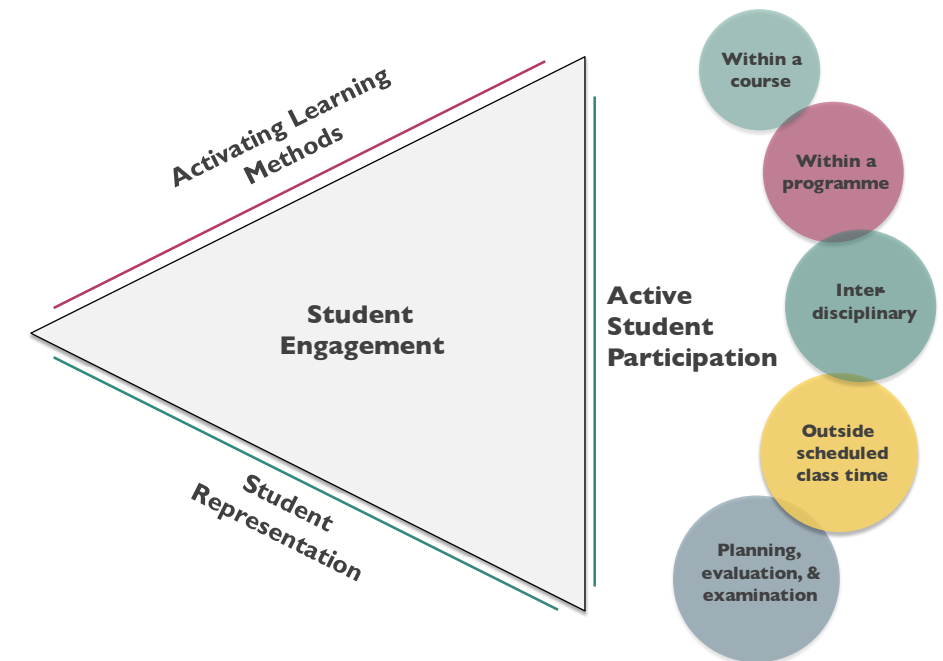


Figure 1: A student engagement model

YOUR REFLECTIONS

Here, we invite you to reflect on your own contexts. This is a space for you to reflect on different practices you have come across or ideas that you want to try out! Read more about ASP examples in Chapter 4.

- What are your personal experiences of ASP and what would be an example of ASP in your context today?

In relation to this model, it is possible to brainstorm some of the potential roles that students may take. For example, students and educators may collaborate on course design in the planning phase of a course, *acting as co-creators*. Students may also act as *mentors* or *role models* to newer or younger students outside scheduled class time. Students could take on the *role of evaluator* by interviewing their peers about how they experience the learning in their programme of study and working together with educators to incorporate the interview results in curriculum planning. *Teacher-for-a-day* is another potential role students could adopt within a course. We elaborate on many more roles in Chapter 4, where students and educators themselves write about different ASP initiatives they have developed in their teaching and learning contexts.

Theories of learning and active student participation

Most people would agree that students are at university in order to learn. But what does 'learning' mean and how have different learning traditions and theoretical perspectives influenced the development of ASP? How can theories of learning help us understand ASP?

In their handbook, *Academic Teaching* (2014, p.22 ff.), Elmgren and Henriksson point out different layers of how learning can be understood proceeding from more simple interpretations to more advanced ones. To begin with, learning might be understood mainly as an increase of knowledge and a collection of facts or, further on, as a process of memorisation and reproduction. What these approaches have in common is that knowledge is something that exists by itself and is to be consumed. Meanwhile, more complex approaches emphasise knowledge as something that the learner has to acquire and apply or as a kind of deep understanding that leads to new insights and new perspectives. Finally, a new way of seeing things might even have more profound consequences for the learner, meaning to change and develop as a person. To sum up, simple approaches to learning focus on consumption and reproduction of knowledge, while elaborate ones stress the search for meaning and the learner's active role, since knowledge cannot be transmitted from educators to students, but has to be explored and captured by the students themselves.

These more complex approaches to learning can be linked to so called **cognitivist** and constructivist learning theories, emphasising learning as an active process grounded in experience whereby knowledge is created (Kolb, 1984 and 2015).

This has led to important insights concerning how students' learning might be organised in order to lead to a deep and lasting understanding. In simple terms, it has implied a shift in focus from educators to learners highlighting how learning has to be organised in the best way in order to enhance students' learning (see, for example, Biggs and Tang, 2011). Thus, nowadays many educators think a lot not only about how to choose, structure, and present course content in a helpful and motivating way, but also about what pre-knowledge their students might have and what they might find difficult, how to activate students, how to connect students' activities inside and outside the classroom to course goals, and how to provide stimulating assessment. Many strands of ASP fit well with insights enhanced by these approaches, such as its focus on the learner's construction of meaning and on learning as an active process. One example to help illustrate this is the concept of peer teaching: by explaining learning content to their peers, students have to put course content into their own words and make it understandable for others. This can only happen if students have grasped it themselves and gained a deep understanding of it.

However, cognitivist and constructivist traditions have been criticised for having an excessive focus on the individual and what is going on in the learner's mind while neglecting the fact that people always are part of certain contexts and often interact with each other. Particularly the *sociocultural tradition* (see Säljö, 2000) allows for more ways to think about *participation* in learning contexts. A sociocultural tradition acknowledges, among other things, the subjectivity of learners, that learners bring with them different perspectives which affect their constructions of knowledge, and that knowledge is situated within a context (O'Loughlin, 1992). Emphasising learning as a social phenomenon contributes to its framing as a collaborative effort, one that happens within a context where people have divided, yet shared, responsibilities for the learning. Besides that, sociocultural approaches also highlight the importance of physical learning spaces - what kind of learning is made possible or impossible in certain rooms - as well

Cognition (cognitivist):
the mental
action or process
of acquiring
knowledge and
understanding
through thought,
experience,
and the senses.
The work of
developmental
psychologist
Jean Piaget was
foundational
in developing
this theory of
learning.



as learning as a kind of identity development: If you study history, you become a historian, which might mean to raise certain types of questions, to use a specific language, and to interpret things in a typical historian way; in short, to think as a historian (see Elmgren and Henriksson, p.24-25).

For ASP, the sociocultural tradition plays an important role. For example, in the book *Peer Learning in Higher Education* (2001), Boud, Cohen, and Sampson link peer learning to cooperative and collaborative learning. These approaches build on the idea of students working together in small groups in order to discuss, explore ideas and solve problems together and, at the same time, develop skills such as taking a role in a group and managing to work with others. Therefore, the concept of peer learning is based on the sociocultural insight that learning often means interaction with others. Thus, in different ASP contexts such as in mentorship or Supplemental Instruction groups, students get the opportunity to connect to their peers and participate in a more informal context, to construct meaning together by asking relevant questions and exploring different perspectives, to practise academic language and subject-specific terms, and to act out their emerging academic identities within their disciplinary contexts.

Finally, the more complex understanding of learning as personal development as described above, connects well to theories of transformational and emancipatory learning. While not questioning that learning is an active process, this tradition focuses on personal development, inclusivity, and the democratic role of higher education. Mezirow and colleagues define transformative learning as such:

Transformative learning refers to the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action. Transformative learning involves participation in constructive discourse to use the experience of others to assess reasons justifying these assumptions, and making an action decision based on the resulting insight (Mezirow, 2000, p.7-8).

According to this, the concept of transformative learning is highly relevant for ASP. Students and educators and students and students engaging in teaching and learning together can, for example, challenge traditional hierarchies in higher education by allowing students to take on new roles, which lead to new relationships formed within ASP learning contexts. By changing the usual relationships of power in giving space to other voices and participants, ASP has a transformative potential.

Bearing in mind the roots of ASP in these learning theories, we elaborate further on learning related to ASP in Chapter 7 and 8. Next, we set the wider stage for the context of higher education teaching and learning. This we do by exploring the concept *student engagement* and the various trends and tensions that we see in higher education in Sweden, which are arguably relevant internationally also.

Student engagement in higher education today

Student engagement is a massive field, full of different ideas and interpretations of how students are (dis)engaged in education. Active student participation falls under this umbrella term, as are the terms mentioned in relation to the model of student engagement (Figure 1).


Generally, student engagement is seen as a positive thing, leading to higher academic achievement, but how do those working within higher education interpret student engagement? In his book *Understanding and Developing Student Engagement* (2014), Colin Bryson eloquently summarises several essential points about this vast field as well as important critiques to approaches that aim to increase student engagement, towards what many have seen as moving towards a more student-centred teaching.

Particularly in the US and Australia, student engagement is seen as students' *involvement* in activities that are linked with high-quality learning. Here agency and high expectations are placed on the student and it is the educator's responsibility to create a good framework for the student. Faculty in Bryson's studies see a correlation between certain student attributes or characteristics, i.e.

'virtuous behaviours', for example, dedication to their studies, that students ought to possess in order to realise high student engagement.

Student voices in Bryson's work map out a slightly different terrain for student engagement, one where each student's experience is individual, unique, and context dependent. Important influences to student engagement as identified by students are, for example, 'trust relationships between the student and staff, and student and peers', 'communication and discourse between students and others', 'A sense of belonging and community', and 'Opportunities for, and participation in, activities and roles which empowered the student and gave them a sense of ownership, self-assurance and self-efficacy' (Bryson, 2014, p.8). Students highlighted 'feeling engaged' as important, in contrast to faculty's emphasis on virtuous behaviours. What students therefore stress is the importance of a good learning environment which enhances their engagement. Many pivotal players in student engagement research further emphasise the importance of learning communities for engagement (Bryson, 2014, p.12).

Importantly, Bryson also summarises critiques to the student engagement discourse, further arguing that it is impossible and even simplistic to try capture the scope of engagement through quantitative surveys, which has been the main tool of measurement internationally. These critiques include:



A deficit discourse is a common discourse in education that 'constitutes youth as a problem to be solved' and that highlights deficiencies in students as being the cause of disengagement (Zyngier, 2008, p. 1767-68)

- general ideas about student engagement do not take into account local contexts;
- if students are not engaged, educators see it as something wrong with the student (a deficit discourse); ways of measuring student engagement are inadequate and rob the students of their voice;
- ways of engaging students can be seen as an attempt to make students conform;
- the culture of the higher education institution may be alienating and uninviting for some students;
- engagement is not necessarily correlated with high academic achievement, which means that some students who achieve high marks are not necessarily 'engaged'.

Further critique on student engagement discourses maintains that we who are teaching and working in higher education also need to retain a critical outlook on engagement, and ask the questions: ‘engagement for whom, engagement in what and engagement for what purpose and to what end?’ (Zyngier, 2008, p.1767). Zyngier critically examines whether student engagement is linked to academic achievement and how engagement plays a central role for empowering pedagogies. He critiques the widely accepted perception of student engagement where ‘if a student is engaged then the teacher is responsible, but if the student is disengaged then the problem is with the student’, a view that further perpetuates the causality between participation and achievement (Ibid, p.1771). This is too simplistic, and Zyngier argues for an approach to student engagement that connects to the students’ cultural knowledge, that allows students to see themselves in the work that they do, that responds to student experience, and that empowers students to discover and to voice their lives.

Zyngier’s questions about engagement allude to a crucial reflection and discussion about power in teaching and learning relationships. Mann (2001) and Allin (2014) both point out in their work with collaborative partnerships that collaboration is rarely without its challenges due to the hierarchies within higher education. While students can gain power and power can change, Mann points out that power is always present, and Fielding (2001) and Allin (2014) further note that educators wanting to collaborate with students likely have good intentions but can be ‘unwittingly manipulative’ (Fielding 2011, p.123). Seale and colleagues (2015) also suggest that the original intentions behind student-centred education have been distorted by government and subsequent institutional policies touting ‘student voice’ practices that are determined by everyone except students. This may impact perceived ownership of student engagement projects and therefore the distribution of power.

Finally, Taylor and Robinson (2014) remind us that ethics are deeply embedded within student engagement practice and theory. Ethical issues can arise from ‘the entangled nature of the staff/student power dynamics, authority and ownership’ (Taylor and Robinson, 2014, p.161) and processes to work through these issues can never be applied as a ‘one size fits all’ (Taylor and Robinson, 2014, p.175).

Bryson further brings in ideas about how to engage all students, which involves a culturally aware pedagogy where student perspectives and individual backgrounds are given space within the classroom. Ultimately, he paints a picture of student engagement as a complex arena that is difficult to ‘measure’.

Student engagement at Uppsala University

While we, the authors, speak from an Uppsala University context, arguably the patterns of student engagement that we bring up below are similar and relevant for other Swedish universities. Before delving into the topic of student engagement, however, it is important to outline a few key characteristics of the Swedish higher education system. In particular, it is essential to note that its institutions are granted authority by the State which also builds the framework for how ASP plays out in education. The majority of universities and university colleges are public authorities, subject to the same legislation and regulations as other public authorities in Sweden, as well as the particular statutes, ordinances, and regulations relevant to the higher education sector. As independent public authorities, the institutions determine which courses and programmes they wish to offer and how they should be organised.

The Swedish Government is, amongst other things, responsible for funding higher education courses and study programmes as well as funding a high proportion of research. Moreover, it appoints vice-chancellors of higher education institutions and regulates the agencies involved in the higher education sector. Thus, operations at Swedish higher education institutions are funded largely by public resources as determined by the Parliament (Riksdagen) in the form of a funding cap. The compensation from the funding cap depends on the number of registered students and how many credits they manage to earn. The amount of compensation varies among the different disciplinary domains.³ Which courses and programmes the higher education institutions offer and how many students they accept is something they decide for themselves to a large extent.

³ The humanities, social sciences, theological, and legal fields have the lowest compensation, while the artistic, medical, technical, and scientific fields have the highest compensation.

There is also a government agency for quality assurance, the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ), which is responsible for quality assurance of higher education and research, appraisal of the degree-awarding powers of public-sector higher education institutions, and monitoring efficiency as well as follow-up.

Through the 2007 degree reform, Swedish higher education adapted to the European standard, known as the Bologna Process, a reform that aimed to create comparability among different countries' educational programmes. Due to the Bologna reform, course outcomes have to be expressed as 'intended learning outcomes'. These are seen as the results of study, being statements which together describe what a student is expected to know, understand, and/or be able to do at the end of a module or course at a specified level. Learning outcomes, as well as course content, literature, and examination are described in syllabi which are legally binding documents.

In short, it is important to bear in mind that each university is a public authority that decides which students are admitted and what the courses and programmes are about. Moreover, teachers are bound to course syllabi while, at the same time, there is a strong requirement for throughput and efficiency. It is thus within this framework that ASP and student engagement are enabled.

So, what does the field of student engagement in Swedish higher education look like? Bergmark and Westman (2016, p.29-30) maintain that historically, the tradition to use education in order to 'promote civic responsibility and uphold democratic values of a society' has been especially prominent in Sweden. Based on this, they argue that democratic education must be characterised by an openness to diverse perspectives and must enhance the ability to express one's own views but also understand others' views in an ongoing reflective process.

Certainly, in Sweden this tradition has meant that students are engaged to a relatively high degree. Student engagement is even protected by law, where The Swedish Higher Education Act⁴ states that:

⁴ Available at: <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/Laws-and-regulations/The-Swedish-Higher-Education-Act/>

Quality assurance and quality enhancement are the shared concern of staff and students...Higher education institutions shall endeavor to enable students to play an active role in the continued development of courses and study programmes.

Other government ordinances go further to state the legal rights of students to be represented in all decision-making bodies and to express their views through course evaluations, which the universities are obliged to report and act upon.⁵ Beyond student representation, the term 'student engagement' is little used, and instead, the terms 'active learning' and 'student-centred learning' are prominent.⁶ Peer learning and peer teaching are also regularly used. Student-centred learning and teaching is a further area of focus laid out by the European Higher Education Area of which Sweden is a member. The European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance⁷ emphasises that:

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process and the assessment of students reflect this approach (ESG 1.3).

The idea of active and student-centred learning and teaching has become central for institutional policies, for example, for Uppsala University's Teaching and Learning Programme,⁸ a document meant to guide educational activities at the university. Furthermore, it is a central component in Academic Teaching Training courses that are obligatory for educators in most Swedish higher

⁵ See the Higher Education Ordinance Acts. Available at: <https://www.uhr.se/en/start/laws-and-regulations/laws-and-regulations/the-higher-education-ordinance/>

⁶ For example, The Teaching and Learning Programme for Uppsala University, which contains visions for the University's educational activities and their further development states: 'All syllabi and teaching must be designed with the aim of facilitating the students' independent, *active learning* and their development as responsible students.' (emphasis added) and 'Professional development for teachers should *integrate the perspective of students* and support and encourage *student-centred learning* and *active student participation*.'

⁷ Available at www.enqa.eu, direct link [here](https://www.enqa.eu/en/start/laws-and-regulations/laws-and-regulations/the-higher-education-ordinance/).

⁸ Available at: <https://mp.uu.se/en/web/info/undervisa/pedagogisk-utveckling/pedagogiska-programmet>

education institutions in order to be tenured.⁹ Thus, many educators in Swedish higher education are familiar with student-centredness and active learning and make an effort to design teaching and learning activities with these concepts in mind.

At the same time, despite or even because of this strong institutional support, we suggest that educators' and students' perception of 'student engagement' is also influenced by a broader, ongoing discussion about education and learning in general, often focusing on the educational systems' faults and shortcomings. These concerns exist primarily at the school-level but are reflected in the way teaching challenges permeate through to the university-level. They are further associated with a multitude of current developments in society which are mirrored in higher education. Below we elaborate on a few of these trends and discourses that we, in one way or another, have crossed working with ASP, and which reflect some of the current tensions that might affect how ASP is interpreted and valued.

Six discourses of student engagement in Sweden

1 Since institutional financing is tied to student throughput, there is critique that this has led to too much student influence and a subsequent decrease in quality.¹⁰ This critique is based, among other things, on the following concern: When institutions are primarily paid for students that pass their courses, institutions have a strong incentive to listen to student opinions concerning how to design courses in a way that would have more students pass. This is potentially a positive thing - but could also be hazardous when considering the possibility that not all students have learning as their goal with education, but rather a more instrumental view of grades and future possibilities of employment. Students who share this instrumental view might use their increased influence to avoid tasks that seems arduous or difficult to complete - even if they might be conducive to learning. As such, student influence is partly linked to the way that education

⁹ See e.g. Karlsson et.al. (2017) *Högskolepedagogisk utbildning och pedagogisk meritering som grund för det akademiska lärarskapet*, SUHF.

¹⁰ Read more in *Den högre utbildningen: ett fält av marknad och politik* (Daniel Ankarloo and Torbjörn Friberg, eds., 2012), p. 80-100.

is financed, which might support the idea of the 'student as the sovereign consumer', as Carol Taylor puts it (Taylor, 2017, p.420). Even though Swedes do not pay tuition fees, students do not escape the consumer label, and consumer jargon is widely used in higher education as in the wider society. In other words, the current discourses about marketisation in higher education have not eluded Sweden, and there is a risk that 'teaching and learning are becoming increasingly commoditised along input-output line akin to industrialised processes' (Taylor, 2017, p.420).

2 Another debate emerges from the perception of threats to the educator's professional role from New Public Management,¹¹ bureaucratisation, and political control in higher education. Amongst other things, educators are required to use learning goals, to take academic teacher training courses, incorporate sustainable development, gender, and other perspectives into their teaching, etc. Even if these requirements are perceived as relevant and well-intentioned, educators might feel as though they are losing their autonomy and that trust in their ability to teach has eroded.¹² From this perspective, ASP and high levels of student involvement might be rejected as another way of limiting educators' professionalism and be considered a threat to the freedom that they should have over deciding what and how to teach.

3 During the last decades, higher education in Sweden has a growing number of students coming from non-academic backgrounds, students with Swedish as a second language, students that have grown up in other cultural contexts, and students with physical and psychological disabilities.¹³ This has also led to a heightened awareness of the varying conditions and capacities among students, and the question of how to widen participation and create an inclusive learning environment. One con-

¹¹ New Public Management is an approach to running public institutions that appeared in the 1980s and is characterised by an audit system that employs quantitative measuring instruments in order to make quality measurement standardised and efficient. NPM is a product of a neoliberalist value system, which understands quality based on how well institutions perform from a market-based cost efficiency perspective (Shore, 2008).

¹² See, for example, *Den högre utbildningen: ett fält av marknad och politik* (Daniel Ankarloo and Torbjörn Friberg, eds. 2012), p. 51-79.

¹³ See e.g.: *Universitet och högskolor Svensk och utländsk bakgrund för studenter och doktorander 2014/15 UF 19 SM 1601*, published by UKÄ, and *Antagning till högre utbildning höstterminen 2018. Statistik i samband med sista anmälningssdag ht 2018*, published by UHR.

clusion has been that this pluralistic gathering of students needs increased structure and transparency and more guidance from the educators. On the one hand, ASP might offer helpful approaches. For example, using peer teaching in the form of **Supplemental Instruction** or mentorship where students work together in small groups might help students to practise generic academic skills and language, be socialised into their learning community, and develop an academic identity within their subject field. On the other hand, increased student responsibility requiring a complex combination of motivation and competences might favour students that are familiar to academic expectations from the beginning and come to the university with well-developed study skills. Thus, it remains important to consider which students benefit and which are disadvantaged by different ASP approaches and what kind of support is needed in order to create equal opportunities in learning.

4 Another trend in higher education is a growing focus on quality measurement and quality assurance. In Sweden, this has been strongly criticised by, for example, Sven-Eric Liedman¹⁴, a Professor Emeritus of History of Ideas, who argues that it leads to an instrumentalisation of higher education and obstructs students from seeking knowledge freely (2011). A strong emphasis on measuring results may also be problematic for ASP since ASP may not be perceived as an effective way of teaching and learning because of its corresponding focus on processes. For example, even if research has shown that Supplemental Instruction has a positive impact on student grades and throughput, many ASP approaches focus to a great extent on process-oriented outcomes that are not easily measured such as the ability to collaborate and be creative, to carefully listen to other perspectives, to ask relevant questions, or to solve problems together. Researcher Cherie Woolmer (2015) addressed this topic in a **keynote lecture at Uppsala University**, where she highlighted the challenge of working within student-faculty partnerships in a higher education culture of quality measurement. At the same time, because of the way that law dictates that students must be involved in peer review and different parts of quality assurance processes within higher education, quality assurance also offers an opportunity for students to exert influence in a number of



Read more on
Supplemental
Instruction in
Chapter 4



Click to watch
Cherie Wool-
mer's lecture
[1hr4min]

14 Read more in *Hets! En bok om Skolan* by Sven-Eric Liedman (2011, p. 130-170).

high-impact areas, for example in the evaluation of entire educational programmes and higher education institutions.

5 Similarly, the past years have witnessed a growing call for evidence-based teaching and learning. This notion is often based on a perceived lack of quantitatively proven and replicable studies within the field of pedagogy, contrasted by neuroscience or cognitive psychology which, some say, have a more scientific approach to prove patterns and provide evidence on how learning happens. Thus, endeavours of finding evidence-supported strategies that help to 'maximise teaching effectiveness and student learning' (Schwartz and Gurung, 2012, p.5) have increasingly come into focus. On the one hand, some would argue that since pedagogues may not be confident enough to decide what is best for learning, educators should definitely not ask students. Moreover, process-orientation and student voice might have little value in terms of learning effectiveness. Furthermore, the idea of pedagogical decisions based on evidence may hinder educators from exploring hitherto untested methods of teaching since outcomes are uncertain. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that evidence-based research supports the idea of active and student-centred learning as well as peer teaching and learning and student-faculty partnerships. For example, John Hattie, a well-known representative of an evidence-based approach, argues for a student-centred teaching approach and the value of peer-to-peer teaching based on his meta-analysis of what best facilitates learning (Hattie, 2009). Furthermore, peer teaching has been recognised as an approach that 'may have additional benefits, such as enhancing knowledge of pedagogy and promoting group facilitation, leadership, and public-speaking skills' (Vespia, Wilson-Doenges, Martin, and Radosevich, 2012, p.83) and evidence-based approaches have identified best-practice strategies in order to supporting peer teaching. Lastly, an expanding field of research also demonstrates the pedagogical benefits of student-faculty partnerships, with similar advantageous outcomes for both students and educators (Healey et al., 2014).

6 Finally, the idea of *Bildung* has been a recurring theme in the debate about the value and purpose of higher education, often used as a counterpart to employability and a more instrumental perspective (Bohlin, 2011). With its origins in 19th century Germany, this tradition emphasises students'

personal growth and development as well as the importance of emotional and empathetic values in terms of being able to change perspectives and develop a deeper understanding for others. In that sense, ASP is related to *bildung* due to its process-orientation and focus on transferable and interpersonal skills, its shifting of roles, and its transformative potential (see Chapter 9). Amongst others, Liedman has argued that *bildung* is threatened by the ongoing economisation of higher education in the neoliberal society and that demands of being profitable are not consistent with academic freedom and the learner's self-directed search of knowledge (Liedman, 2011, p.166).

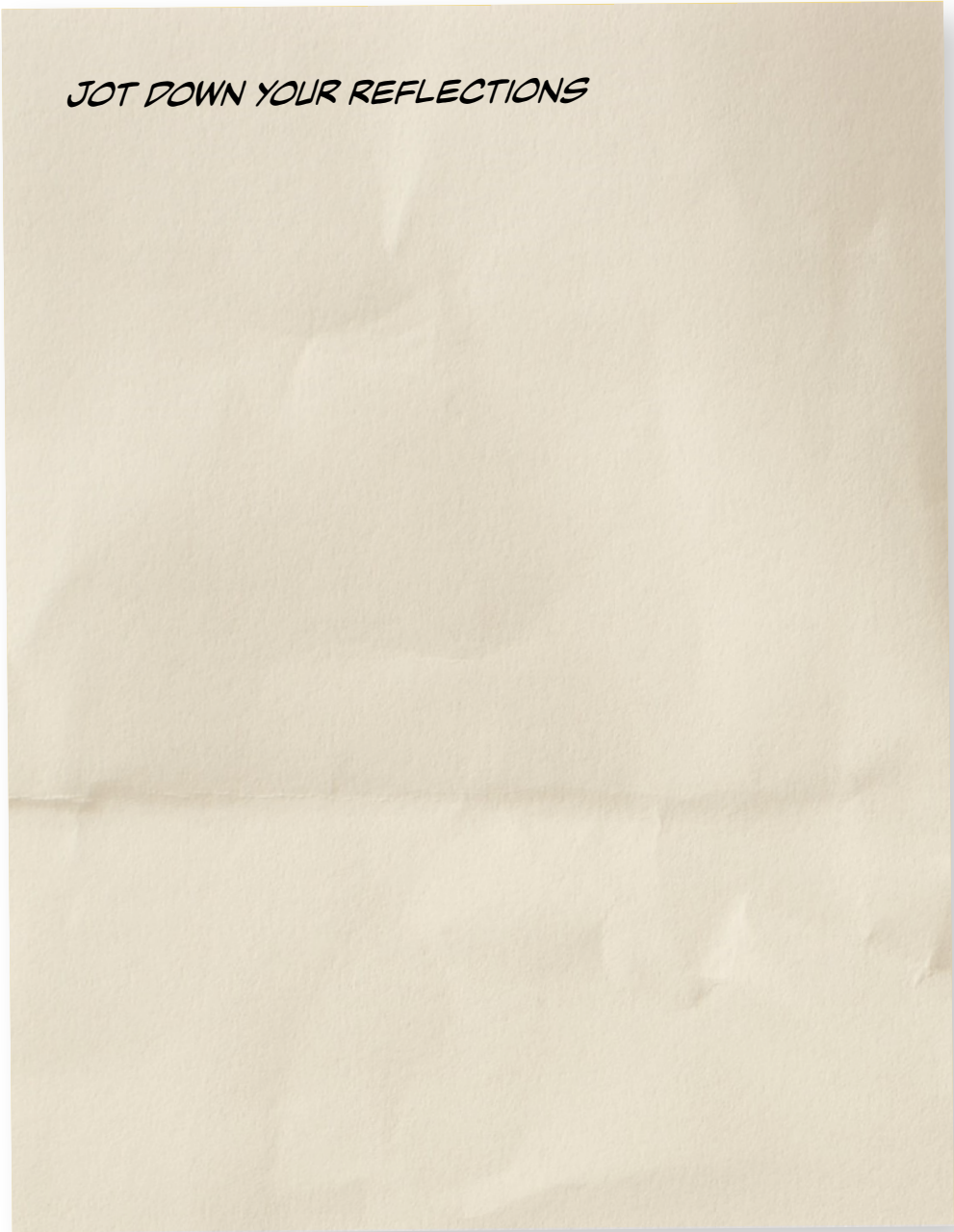
These different trends and discourses encompass many of the challenges with which educators, but also students, grapple. They exist simultaneously with conflicting demands and implications, often being irreconcilable. Many of the students and educators that we have met have shared several of the perceived apprehensions and hopes reflected in the above discourses and, correspondingly, argue for their actions and decisions using this logic.

As a member of the higher education learning and teaching community, many of these arguments for or against ASP are likely familiar to you. With this reflection on context, and how different people might frame and interpret ASP, we invite you to reflect on:

- How do you in your context work or relate to other relevant discourses?
- Where do you stand in this field of different tensions and how do you navigate these issues?

These discourses are the backdrop of this companion because they serve as the context within which ASP in higher education, in Sweden but also internationally, takes place. Their presence throughout this companion is therefore ubiquitous, though we do not spend much time referring to them explicitly. In so saying, context is important, and in the next chapter we take a deeper look at the specific context in which our work has played out during the last couple of years.

JOT DOWN YOUR REFLECTIONS





A Brief History

*Contextualising
Active Student Participation
at Uppsala University*

A Brief History

Contextualising Active Student Participation at Uppsala University

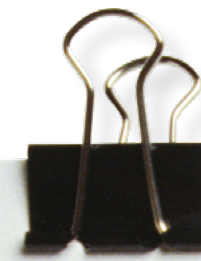
Here the history and mandate of the project are outlined, contextualising the Active Student Participation project work within Uppsala University, which may even have implications for how this type of project could come to fruition in other universities.

The history of a university-wide active student participation project

Uppsala University has a long tradition of student participation in different arenas. Student engagement has perhaps the longest history within student nations, where students organise cultural and extracurricular events for the entire student body. Student societies and the student unions are also important arenas of engagement, focusing on political but also pedagogical aspects of the university. Other arenas of student engagement have included the aforementioned CEMUS and Supplemental Instruction (SI). CEMUS grew out of the collaborative efforts of students, who saw a gap in their education when it came to global challenges of sustainable development, and a few supportive professors. Today it is an educational centre driven by students. SI started in the science and technology as well as medical disciplines at Uppsala University, where it is still well-established. However, students in the humanities started to build initiatives more recently in their departments as well, calling it ‘mentorship’.

The origins of the ASP project have roots in yet another university-wide development project. In 2010, the Vice Chancellor made the decision to implement the *Creative Educational Development at Uppsala University 2010–2012 Project* (CrED 10-12)¹ with the purpose to ‘stimulate educational development, enhance exchange and the dissemination of good ideas among colleagues, and generally to spotlight the educational mission of the University’. An international panel evaluated Uppsala University and outlined five of the areas for development which they characterised as ‘wake-up calls’. This did not mean that initiatives were lacking in these areas, but that they required greater awareness and more systematic approaches for advances to be more dynamic. *Student participation in teaching* was seen as one of these areas, and the specific recommendation that was given read:

¹ Available at: <https://mp.uu.se/en/web/info/undervisa/pedagogisk-utveckling/utvecklingsprojekt/kruut>



Uppsala University in brief

Figures for 2016²:

- First university in Sweden – founded in 1477
- Ranking: placed among the 100 best universities in the world in the three largest international rankings
- Three disciplinary domains: Humanities and Social Sciences, Medicine and Pharmacy, and Science and Technology
- Nine faculties
- Number of employees: 6,857 (5,944 full-time equivalents)
- Academic staff: 4,718
- Administrative staff: 2,347
- 70 Bachelor’s programme
- 70 Master’s programmes
- Approx. 2,000 freestanding courses
- 43,591 registered students (23,734 full-time equivalents)
- 12,622 students at Master’s level (5,551 full-time equivalents)
- 34,846 students at Bachelor’s level (18,183 full-time equivalents)
- Doctoral students: 2,289

To sum up, Uppsala University is one of the traditional and research-intensive universities of Sweden including all scientific faculties. All in all, it has 11 main campus areas, mostly spread across the city of Uppsala, while one campus is placed in Visby on the island of Gotland. The University is governed by the University Board; the Vice-Chancellor is the head of the University as a public authority. Decision-making processes are decentralised to a high extent since there are boards within the disciplinary domains as well as on the faculty and department level. Students have the right to be represented in the University’s decision-making and investigative bodies.

² Source: www.uu.se

Have students and teachers working with student participation in various parts of the University work together to craft an Uppsala model for sustainable, integrated student participation in instruction. This work should be done within a prescribed period of time and receive central assistance.

The CrED project financed the first student-driven project to develop ASP broadly, and resulted in a seminar series and an anthology called *'Students, the university's unspent resources: Revolutionising higher education through active student participation'* (Gärdebo and Wiggberg, 2012). One of the outcomes that emerged was the insight that there was a lot of ASP initiatives around the university, but little to no collaboration between them. Thus, with the CrED panel's recommendation and the momentum of this seminar series and anthology, a student movement emerged that evolved into a collaborative effort between students, educators, and educational developers. What emerged from this effort was the project proposal for the *Continuous Development of Active Student Participation at Uppsala University*. The collaborative origins of the project made the inclusion of students in running it an expected progression of events, and resulted in a new constellation of people working together at Uppsala University, and a new space to include students in developing higher education.

Our project group thus formed as a small group of students and an educational developer to develop ASP on a university-wide basis. Today, we continue our work trying to develop and support ASP in Uppsala University's Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning.³

Characterising the active student participation project work

At the beginning, we understood ASP chiefly based on the longest standing initiatives: CEMUS and SI/mentorship. From here, as connections between different ASP initiatives over the univer-

³ This is where the educational developers of the university are based: <https://mp.uu.se/en/web/info/vart-uu/orgstyr/uf/kvalped/pu>

sity unfolded, how we talked about ASP and shared ideas with others evolved.

Our work at the university has been ongoing in several different arenas. With educators from the different faculties of the university, we have explored the myriad roles of the educator, alternative ways of engaging with students and the various levels on which students can choose to engage, how to work with the challenges that may arise from engaging with students in new ways, and the pedagogical benefits of working with ASP.



For more
information
about working
with challenges
see Chapter 6

On the other hand, engaging with students has been one of our greatest challenges as a project, despite being a group composed by a majority of students. Our work with students has involved engaging students together with educators in seminars and workshops exploring ASP (these are exemplified in Chapter 4 as well as the full ASP project report in the appendix), creating spaces for students to develop and share their ideas about how to make education more meaningful, and giving short courses in pedagogics and leadership for student mentors.

For us members of the project group, this work involved navigating the unexplored territory of a partnership process. For the student project assistants, it has involved traversing the unfamiliar space of educational development, an arena within which students do not typically work or have access to and from this position, meeting educators and students. For the educational developer project leader, the project work has encompassed partnering with students for the first time. Reflection on the different strategies we were testing and the nature of engaging in partnership through our project work came progressively as the project ran its course.⁴

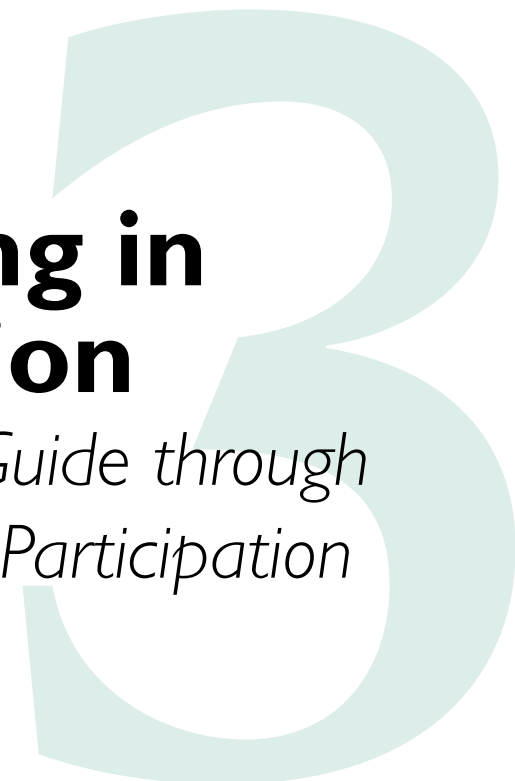
The particular goals, strategies, outcomes, and recommendations for future development of the project may be of particular interest to others who would like to work with ASP from an institutional level. We have therefore included our project report in the Appendix of this companion.

⁴ See : Barrineau, Susanna, et al. 'Breaking ground and building bridges: a critical reflection on student-faculty partnerships in academic development,' *International Journal for Academic Development* 21.1 (2016): 79-83.



Engaging in Education

A Student's Guide through the Maze of Participation



Engaging in Education

A Student's Guide through the Maze of Participation

Most of the literature exploring the roles of students in higher education is written by and for educators. In this chapter, we have invited a broader group of students to share their tips, advice, and reflections on engagement and co-creation within higher education. It includes tips on a) change strategies, b) how to engage with your peers, c) how to initiate a student mentorship programme, d) how to influence the quality of your education, and e) personal reflections about student representation and the consequences of getting more involved in your education.

The danger with this type of chapter, and even with this entire ASP companion, is that it writes to the general body of students, and does not attend to the inherent diversity within this group. As such, these stories can never be a complete representation of what students as a group want or need. They are, however, a few examples of things that you will hear when space is provided for students to speak up. This being said, it is not always easy to find a suitable opening as a student who wants to engage more in the shapings and doings of higher education. Our current education culture, with its prescribed roles of student and educator, poses further obstacles which may make high student engagement or new student-educator collaborations fit awkwardly. However, based on our own experiences and those of the students that share their stories in this chapter, we can safely say that it is a path well worth walking. As you go through this chapter, we therefore encourage you to reflect on:

- What is your role as a student within higher education?
- How do your actions affect the quality of learning and how can you work with others - educators and students - to make learning the best experience possible?

Students may be highly engaged in teaching and learning in a lot of ways, and we have heard students' stories from a variety of these contexts. Peer-teaching is one example where students, who have already passed a particular course, lead study groups for

their peers who currently attend the course. One of these students is Caroline Bodin, a student in political science at Uppsala University, who tells us why she became a mentor, leading study groups for her peers, and why these groups are appreciated by the students who attend them.

[Click to watch
Caroline
talking about
mentorship
\[4min53sec\]](#)



Caroline describes how, in her programme, many students feel that what they lack in their education is more time to reflect on and discuss the course material, and that these study group sessions give them a chance to do so. What is valuable and unique about these sessions compared to working with an educator in the classroom, she says, is that the mentor is not there as an extra teacher that has all the right answers. The mentor's role is to organise discussions and push the students to think for themselves and to take more responsibility for finding answers. In these groups, there are no shortcuts because the educator is not there to provide the answers, so the students quickly learn to work together. She also says that as a mentor, you may start to understand learning in a deeper way, both from the training the mentor receives in pedagogy and leading groups, and from actually leading the discussion groups.

In the video, Caroline stresses the important role of students as part of the university and that, if given the chance, students' creativity and expertise are there, simply waiting to emerge and flourish. However, what are these arenas where students feel encouraged and able to flourish? As a student, it can be difficult to feel welcome or 'good enough' when considering participating to a higher degree in learning and teaching activities. Students are often not experts in course planning and designing learning activities, so why should students play a more active role in their own and their peers' learning? What reasons are there as a student to be more engaged? There is not one single answer to these questions, but below are a few examples shared by students whom we've met during our work:

- It is fun to get engaged and meet other students!;
- When explaining something to peers, students learn better since 'teaching is learning twice';
- Making decisions in courses makes visible to students how they can contribute to the learning - students enjoy this freedom as well as the responsibility that follows;

- Students feel that they learn in a deeper way the more engaged they are in a subject - not only learning in order to pass an exam;
- Sharing questions with peers gives students more self-confidence since they realise that they are not the only ones struggling with certain things;
- Discussing with peers and exploring answers to difficult problems is fun since students come up with more perspectives and ideas together!;
- Students' different backgrounds and perspectives can help educators understand student learning and how students experience the teaching;
- In working collaboratively with educators, students find it easier to understand educators' pedagogical choices - the reasons for designing the course or programme in a certain way;
- For students working with co-creative ASP activities, it can be an 'eye-opening' experience and affect how students experience education in a way that means there is no 'going back'.

But what does *being engaged* or *participating* entail? The most common interpretation is probably to do what seems expected from you as a student - to come prepared, to be attentive, and to ask questions. However, it is not always self-evident what the expectations of being a student in higher education are, especially in settings where students do have a high degree of influence. Yet an excellent foundation for effective engagement may include a conscious and continuous reflection on one's own learning, including a constructive inquiry into the reasons for doing different teaching and learning activities. These things improve your agency and autonomy as a student in affecting the quality and outcome of your studies, as well as your capacity to partake in development of higher education. Below, we have tried to visualise one way of approaching such a conscious and continuous reflection on learning through a self-reflection worksheet.

Here we address a few questions posed by students, in the hopes that you as students can find the support you need to take action.

SELF-REFLECTION WORKSHEET

- ✓ How do different learning activities (group work, seminars, lectures, labs, written assignments, reading articles, watching talks, creating idea maps, listening, etc.) affect your learning?
- ✓ Which one of these different learning activities would you say has the greatest effect on your learning in relation to different forms of learning content (e.g. information, connections, extensions) and forms of examination?
- ✓ How does your interaction and participation affect other students' learning?
- ✓ Think about your education in general, or a current course. What do you and your peers struggle with? Is it the same things or are there things that you could learn from or perhaps share with each other?
- ✓ If you have already studied for a few semesters, try to remember how it was when you first started - what have you learned since then? How have your expectations changed? What have you learnt about navigating the education system?
- ✓ What makes your current subjects worthwhile studying? Does this connect to your personal reasons for attending higher education? If not - can you find reasons relevant for you?
- ✓ What have you learnt beyond the specific course content? And do your current studies perhaps allow for the development of any general competences? It is well worth finding ways to articulate skills you have learnt beyond the core curriculum.

A short reflection from Guy Finkill, CEMUS student course coordinator

From a conventional education background in the UK, where I felt like I was nothing more than a consumer of education on a seemingly endless production line that did little to prepare me for the big bad world in an academic, social and professional context, it has been an eye-opening experience to get involved in a department such as CEMUS [the Centre for Environment and Development Studies] and to experience first-hand the ASP techniques that are already commonplace at CEMUS. The way that I now tackle problems and challenges has been heavily influenced by the style of education on show at CEMUS; through student-led education that incorporates many aspects of peer learning, I have seen the importance of interdisciplinary approaches. To experience any other form of education now would feel like nothing less than a fundamental step into the past, the ASP methods of teaching that I have had the pleasure to experience, both as a student and now as a course coordinator, have given me a valuable insight into how education can evolve from its currently stagnating form.



What are other ways for us as students to collaborate more?

In this companion, there are quite a few examples of students collaborating to improve their learning conditions. There are groups of students arranging evening lectures with researchers covering topics they feel are missing in their education, students organising supplementary study groups, students co-creating study materials and sharing notes and tips, and students inviting professionals to share their experience and perspectives on relevant topics specifically connected to future occupations. A few concrete examples follow: At Uppsala University, students of history felt a lack of opportunities to engage with and discuss history based on their passion and interest in the topic and so arranged self-organised discussion groups once a week. Similarly, a group of students from biology, describing themselves as super nerdy, managed to get some funding from faculty to borrow a lab once a week and to

organise experiments for each other, supervised by a supportive faculty member.

In one course at Uppsala University, the semester finishes with an unconventional collaborative workshop. Students must collaborate and organise ahead of time as well as on the spot in order to together answer a series of questions related to the course material (the group is usually around 40-60 students). That might sound like a nightmare, but the purpose of this is to create a culture of collaboration throughout the year - in order to succeed at this activity everyone needs to be involved and included. Incentives are based on sharing instead of competition and keeping your own ideas secret in the hopes of provide unique answers on tests. Another example from Uppsala is a weekly pub-gathering called language pubs where international students meet up with students studying different languages. The evening is divided in two parts: during the first part, conversations are held in the native languages of the international students, giving students of Chinese, Russian, Spanish, etc. an opportunity to practise their speaking skills. During the second part, conversations are held in Swedish, inviting everyone into a shared conversation.

Where can we as students find support to make changes in our education?

One important step to take is to contact your student union representative or locate members of student associations, etc. Maybe there are already students working with the topics that you are interested in and getting your questions integrated in formalised decision-making greatly increases the chances of meaningful impact. Student unions may also know the history of the topics you are interested in; is this something students have been engaged with before? The unions might also know which educators or faculty members to contact.

On a related note, one of the greatest strengths of being in a higher education environment is that you are surrounded by your peers. Your peers can be your greatest resource; there is huge potential in student collaborations to bring new perspectives and voices into higher education as we have seen from our work at CEMUS, Uppsala University, and internationally. Also, if you want your collaborations and peer networks to live beyond your



*Click to watch
the short film
'How to get
started with
ASP'
[4min25sec]*

own engagement (that is, after you leave university), it is important to find some connection with faculty who can help with the continuity of projects, networks, and collaborations.

Finally, if you have trouble finding faculty, or if you are uncertain about how to come into contact with educators who are interested in working more closely with students, you can try contacting your university's educational development unit. Colleagues at these units come into contact with educators from all over the university on a daily basis and can have a good overview of different educators' teaching activities or those who would be especially open to these types of collaborations.

The Spectrum of Allies

One group of students that we met during the writing of this companion strongly advocated the use of what they call *the spectrum of allies*, as seen on the next page. It was adopted from the grass-roots organisation 350.org as a tool to create an effective change strategy by identifying allies and potential opposition in their work, and figuring out tactics to move actors to the left-most wedge. The model (Figure 2) shows a half-circle with five sections, ranging from *active* and *passive allies*, via *neutral*, and ending with *passive* and *active opposition*. In using the model, the group of students pointed out similar lessons to that which 350.org also highlight, including:

- It is a success if you can get a group that was in opposition to move into neutrality;
- It is a success if you can get passive allies to move into engagement (become active allies);
- It is usually not necessary to move those in opposing groups a step toward you in order to succeed, although it can help you succeed more quickly;
- Using this tool can help you identify areas of research and inquiry by showing where you may lack knowledge;
- The model can help in mapping out a range of people

with different roles: those who are directly impacted by the situation, people who believe in the change you are trying to make and think of themselves as your allies, and people who are 'powerholders' (department heads, programme directors, student union leaders, etc.). These actors may be spread out across the spectrum, but most of them will be either passive ally, neutral or passive opponent. So, it is important to take note of their potential influence and try to identify which actors may help you focus your efforts and support different aspects of your organising.

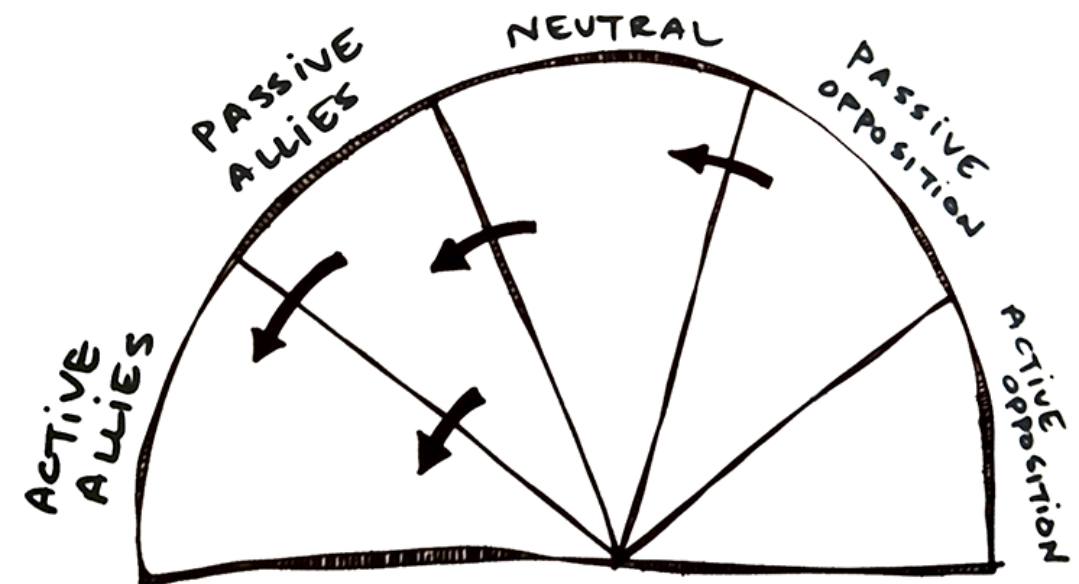


Figure 2: The Spectrum of Allies (from 350.org)



Tips for those who want to start a mentoring project

from Caroline Bodin, student at the department of Peace and Conflict Studies at Uppsala University and initiator of their student mentorship programme.

✓ **The Active Student Participation Project**

Contact the project for active student participation. If you're not in Uppsala, search for student engagement or student-faculty partnership on the Uppsala University webpage. The ASP project can pass on experience, offer training for new mentors, tips on similar activities to collaborate with or gain inspiration from, and can help navigate the university's bureaucratic spider web.

✓ **Contact your association or your council**

Are you in a student / programme association or study council? It is usually easier to start up activities if there is a framework that can provide context, resources and that has a network of contacts in the target group to which your idea/project is intended. If you are not in a union, you can ask the study counsellor at your campus or student union to help you get in touch with the right student group.

✓ **Contact your institution**

Talk to your department's director about your idea and see if they can assist you and how you can cooperate. Perhaps you can learn from previous projects or initiatives. In any case, the institution can help a lot, such as with booking halls, disseminating information to students to whom the project is addressed, and possibly financing other costs connected to your project (like coffee).

It is also very helpful to keep up the contact with the institution when you and the mentors have your activities up

and running. When mentors are to start up their groups, it helps to first meet up with the course / programme manager to get the opportunity to go through the course's content and focus. This helps you as a mentor to know how to better guide participating students in your group with their studies and moderate the discussions so that they maintain the right focus and can work effectively.

✓ **Find mentors**

How do you find people who are willing to engage as mentors? Ask around in student councils, associations, and among your fellow students! Help the groups you contact to spread information and create commitment to the issue. When new mentors are sought, it is good to have a clear description of what the task is about, the amount of time and workload that is expected and what the mentor herself learns from being a mentor. Here it is good to try to formulate what makes it worthwhile to engage. For example, a merit on the CV or any small stipend may be incentives but there is also value in improving the education for their fellow students, gaining a chance to practice skills, and develop a deeper understanding of higher education and learning. In addition, one can develop their leadership skills, as well as get to know new people and create relationships across student cohorts!

✓ **Engage students to participate in a mentoring group**

How do you then get the students to attend mentoring meetings and join a mentor group? Again, it is important to emphasise the value of learning together and from each other and of having a social and informal forum that does not judge or examine one's knowledge. Highlight the positives of having an organised study group that can support each other and which can provide

a framework to help others structure their studies and to learn effectively and in different ways. If it is possible to get help, why not take the chance?

✓ ***To build a project that lives on***

It is always a challenge to keep projects independent of those who drive it. As a student, you will not be able to run the project yourself forever. It may therefore be beneficial to find a forum to anchor your project in such as a community or study council to provide a safe foundation to grow. The aim of making yourself 'superfluous' is a motto that can be used both as a mentor and as a coordinator of the project, as well as to provide support and tools for others.

Good luck!

What can we as students do if we think that things are missing in our education?

Think about what arguments or reasons you have for your proposed changes. Is the course content (literature, lectures, etc.) dominated by a particular perspective, for example? Send suggestions for alternatives to the faculty member that is responsible for the course. Continue to send constructive suggestions in a polite manner. For example, at the school of architecture at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden, students sent a yearly Christmas card, thanking faculty for an exciting year and showcasing data detailing that a vast majority of visiting guest lecturers are male, while also including a list of possible female alternatives. After a couple of years of sending these letters, a few members of faculty who shared the concern of the students used the long-term engagement from the students as a support in initiating a process of reworking the list of guest lecturers. Importantly, faculty made sure that the students were thoroughly involved in this process.

How can we as students contribute to the quality of our education?

First, make sure to fill out those course evaluations and do take your time to do it in a way that is constructive. What would you want to know if you were to plan the course the next time it runs? Also, be adamant about getting feedback on your comments. Ideally, course development should be a dialogue involving several exchanges and a strong intent of understanding the other perspective. Course evaluations are also an excellent opportunity for self-reflection; what has been your role throughout the course? Another thing to do is to see if your university has some kind of shared framework for learning and teaching. If so, what does it say about educator and student roles and responsibilities, and does it support you taking an active role in influencing your education?

It can be frustrating if you feel like you know the material already or feel far behind, or if your peers are not as engaged as you had hoped, or if you feel like the educator is not facilitating the course in a good way. Try talking about these things with your peers and/or educators. All of these things can be challenging to address, but in our experience, it is beneficial to make the time you spend on your education worthwhile instead of opting out of possible improvements.

Importantly, there are some aspects of quality education that are less explicit in classrooms. Kevin Kumashiro (see Chapter 9), for example, has written about the challenges that accompany inclusivity in education. This includes thinking about who is in the classroom and what experiences and perspectives each person brings with them. How can we as students be aware of and work with differences and help educators do the same?

As students, you have a lot to juggle while navigating studies at university. We hope that the students voices above have offered some guidance for you to succeed in your endeavours. The toolbox in Chapter 4 will give you further opportunities to reflect on the roles of students and educators, and introduce you to a variety of examples of how ASP can be realised in different contexts. However, we conclude this chapter with one more student story; a personal narrative from a student at Uppsala University who shares her experience of representing the needs of a multi-faceted student group in a large master's programme:

The challenge and benefits of representing diverse students

Sachiko Ishihara

In my master's programme, we were asked to select two student representatives, and I was lucky to be one of them. Here I'd like to share some of my reflections from my experience, finishing with some tips for fellow students and teachers.

Our master's programme in Sustainable Development consisted of a diverse set of students - we had 65 students that came from more than 20 countries, with very different disciplinary backgrounds. Naturally, we brought different skills, knowledge, and experience to the mix, as well as expectations and study cultures.

A few weeks into the programme, I was struggling since I was not quite satisfied with the programme so far. It was hard to get an overview of what we were going to study through the different courses composing the programme, and we were going through a module that was Environmental Science based, which is what I studied during my undergraduate studies, and frankly, I wasn't learning anything new.

For me, the stakes were extremely high. Different from my Swedish and European classmates who took this education for free and also took that for granted, coming from outside of the EU, I was paying 67,500 SEK per semester for tuition. This was not coming out of my pocket, for good or for worse. I was on a very privileged scholarship - where only 13 out of more than 250 candidates were funded to study a master's abroad, and this was one of the only scholarships you could get in Japan to do a master's. I always thought about the other candidates who didn't get this opportunity - I would feel the drive to get something out that I can also give back to society. I was far from home where I had my parents and friends. I also selected this programme out of many other options - and I had my very fulfilling educational experience during my exchange studies in the United States to compare to. I felt that I wasn't challenged enough here, and my expectations were not being met at the time.

I knew at least a few others who were complaining as well. As the opportunity for selecting student representatives came up, I quickly



Photo: Violet Ray

ran as a candidate, and got selected.

After becoming a representative, I quickly noticed how challenging this role was. While I thought a lot of my peers were feeling the same frustrations, it was actually only a few surrounding me, and the experience was greatly varied, to say the least. As some students like me, who had natural science background and were bored of the natural science module, the majority of the class had no background in the field, and were appreciating the course that gave an overview of it. During the next module, the opposite happened - it was an introduction to some fields from the social sciences, which were fresh and cherished by natural science background students, and almost too easy for those who had bachelor's degrees in those fields.

Attempting to gather feedback and issues to raise to the programme council, I noticed that this was very, very demanding. Usually, there will always be opinions from opposite ends - some will be loving a course, and others will be complaining. For some they felt they weren't challenged enough, while others were feeling that it was extremely hard.

Navigating through these opinions was much more challenging for me than I thought it would be. Talking with my fellow representative team helped a lot - we needed to believe in our own instincts to some extent, on what was important to raise, and also judge and filter 'complaints' that were just complaints for the sake of it. Some were complaining about everything - that seemed to be how they talked about things.

What I learned through being in the programme council meetings was that the issues raised had to be concrete. We needed to have concrete examples or suggestions in order for them to do anything with that information. This is because they were already operating within a tight situation - the challenge to coordinate an interdisciplinary programme with so many different lectures and departments involved. They were struggling to have everyone in the same room. Programme directors were also only working on this within limited hours.

With that said, at least as representatives, we had an extremely empowering experience. The programme council really listened to us. They were genuinely interested to hear our opinions, and discussions were usually very engaging. We felt that we had space to bring up

issues. And even though at times it was frustrating that things were so slow to change, now I meet current students and notice how many things have changed after just two years. So there were definitely things that we contributed for the future generations of our programme, and not just for ourselves.

I would like to finish this short reflection with a note from my experience to both teachers and students.

Note to students:

Find someone amongst the teachers, student counsellors, student representatives, or a student union that you can talk to if you feel like it. If you feel like the education you are taking is not fitting you, you should talk about it with people. Thinking back, I had many occasions like that. Sometimes it just feels that something is not right, or that something doesn't feel good. It might be that the content or programme is not fitting you, and maybe you want to do something else. It could also be how the programme/course is being run, such as the pedagogy, the teacher's attitude, or how they manage the classroom, etc. I think it is important that you don't dismiss that gut-feeling in yourself. If it is the case that you think the programme/course could be improved/changed to better fit your needs, don't be like that customer making a claim on the customer service line. Education is not a commodity and you are not a customer. Think concretely of what you would suggest – imagine you are running that course, what would you change and how would you do it? Teachers are also people that are maybe just figuring things out, having their lives, and getting critical feedback is not easy for anyone. Think about how you could communicate things in a supportive and constructive way. Even if that didn't change anything, at least you would have trained yourself through that process – just like I did when I grew a lot through being a student representative.

Note to teachers:

When someone comes up to you to give critical feedback, please don't say 'write it in the course evaluations'. The fact that I will only get to share my feedback in order to be read for developing next year's course, and not the course I was taking now, triggered me emotionally. At that point, I wanted to make the current coursework for me, and that comment made me feel dismissed. People are sometimes putting a lot at stake to take your course. Please don't disregard feedback quickly. Even though feedback may seem confrontational or aggres-

sive, it might be out of desperation or an SOS. Even if you actually can't change things largely, sometimes as a student, it is just necessary to have that feeling that you are listened to. And showing that you, the teacher, are trying to adapt can change a lot for the subjective experience. Explaining why you decided to do things as you did is absolutely key in this regard. Especially at master's level, students are trained in critical thinking. Just being able to give references or theory behind activities that you run in the course will help legitimize your position. It takes confidence and courage, but opening up the activity itself to critical reflection will really contribute to your own growth as an educator as well. My suggestion is to gather short written comments regularly, for example after each class, in the format of 'One star and One wish', which means to share one thing you take away, liked, or learned from the class, and one thing you give as critical feedback and suggestions for improvement. This gives a much deeper insight and allows diverse voices to reach you than just opening up for class discussion. Also, in case you get unexpected feedback or negative voices are strong, you have time to digest and don't have to react right away.

YOUR REFLECTIONS

What do you bring with you from reading this chapter?



A Toolbox

*Support in Getting Creative
with Active Student
Participation*



A Toolbox

Support in Getting Creative with Active Student Participation

This chapter offers a variety of tools to engage students and educators in developing and thinking critically about active student participation initiatives. This includes: a) models for getting started and context-based idea development, b) numerous examples of practice, c) developing active student participation in evaluation and quality enhancement, and d) working with active student participation in educational development. Different examples of active student participation initiatives at Uppsala University, which are chiefly authored by the educators and students participating in the different initiatives, are outlined in detail. While far from a complete encyclopedia of active student participation practices, it aims to offer a palate of examples that inspire and instruct.

A. Getting started

Students roles within higher education are complex - it is a multifarious arena and no two students are alike, as are no two educators. Many of our attempts to define ASP have failed to include students and educators doing inspiring and well-grounded work with student participation, but who understand their work in different terms. This is partly the reason why we have relied on the communicative capacities of models, of which you will find several in this companion. Models visualise hard-to-define concepts in ways that can allow for critical discussion and idea development. In our experience, using models while talking with diverse groups enables the creation of a shared understanding of ASP together with the participants and in relation to their specific contexts. In other words, models have allowed us to have open conversations about ASP and meet less resistance.

This section presents a selection of different models that have been developed during our work with ASP. Most of these have been used as presentation material for sessions with students and educators and visualise different ways of relating to and creatively developing ASP. When participants themselves define what they do and discuss the models using their own terms, the making

sense of ASP tends to become less normative and more open and constructive. Hopefully the models in this chapter will do the same for you.

Conversation Starters

Where would you place yourself on this scale and why is that? How would you describe the different areas of responsibility and the ways they are dependent on or independent from each other?

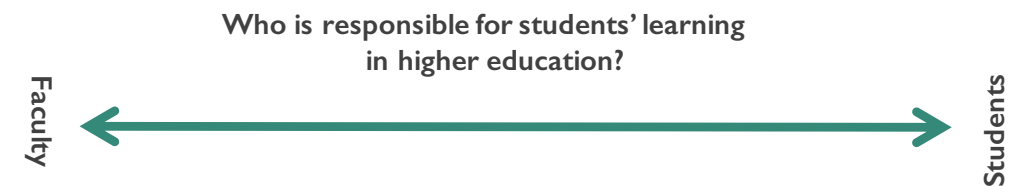


Figure 3: Responsibility for students' learning

This scale can be used as a way to start conversations when working with groups of educators and/or students, and for this purpose the oversimplified way of posing this question works well - even if most people in a Swedish educational setting tend to gravitate towards the middle. While many agree that learning is a shared responsibility, variations of what this responsibility entails tend to emerge when participants are asked to be more specific. Conversations have focused on questions like: 'What is learning?' and 'What do you mean with responsibility?' These questions are helpful in fleshing out some key concepts before starting to think and work with educators' and students' different roles in higher education - and whether and why we should change the nature of these roles. Another reaction that tends to come up is the idea that there are too few lines or scales; the responsibilities for faculty and students are not the same and as such, there should be at least two different scales on which to think about responsibility for learning. This is a great reflection to build on when going into a discussion about different roles and potentials for partnership in higher education.

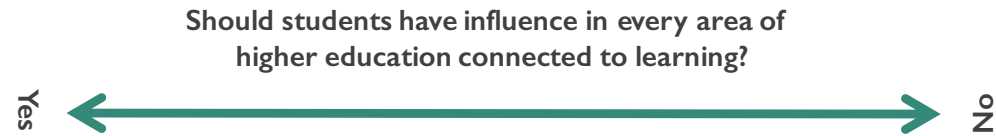


Figure 4: Areas of influence

This question follows up on the previous one about responsibility for learning. If learning and responsibility, in their broad meaning for teaching and learning in the classroom, tend to be met with general agreement in a Swedish context, this next question seldom fails to create polarisation within groups. This is partly due to educators having different understandings of how learning

happens and partly because the question is complex to interpret: What does influence mean? Which areas of higher education are we talking about here? Are we talking about all students or any student? These queries are all part of what we see as valuable aspects of this question as they bring to light important issues inherent in many approaches to ASP. They also bring forth key challenges, some of which we try to answer in Chapter 6. Our experience using these questions is that it leads to constructive discussions, even if participants focus on nothing else except for the meaning of influence. If this question makes the participants too frustrated to do anything else, you can still ask them how they interpret influence based on their current position on the scale, how their interpretation differs from those presented by their peers and colleagues, how the question itself should be framed to make it possible to answer, etc.



A value exercise in action



Figure 5: ASP's influence on the way that higher education operates

This question can be an interesting one in mixed groups (students and educators, people from different universities and different countries) and leads into a discussion about what kind of changes new forms of collaboration between educators and students might occur in the way that higher education institutions operate. It is worth noting that these changes might be intentional or unintentional, desired or feared. Universities are often some of the oldest institutions in societies and it is worth carefully considering how ASP might change higher education landscapes or how universities adapt their operations in light of ASP initiatives.

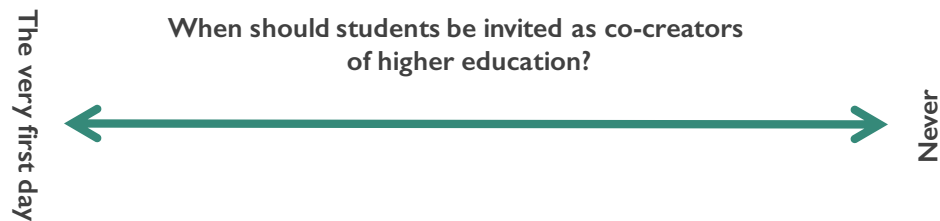


Figure 6: When should students be invited as co-creators?

Finally, this question is also one that can lead to discussion on a host of other key issues: When do educators perceive students to have learned 'enough' to contribute on a deeper level? When do students and educators feel prepared to collaborate? Why is there an underlying perception that, before they are able to collaborate with educators, students must amass a certain amount of knowledge? What could students potentially contribute already on the very first day?

REFLECTION

Okay, so now you have read about these different value exercises; what are your thoughts? Can you think of a space where they might be useful for you, for example together with student peers or, if you are an educator, in a course for which you are responsible?

How would you like to modify the questions? What is it that you would hope to achieve?

And, if you have already tested some of the value exercises: Did the conversations change something within the group? How could you or did you change the value questions to create new discussions?

Roles and responsibilities

These models (Figures 7 and 8) are meant as a segue into a more concrete discussion concerning educators’ and students’ roles in higher education, and as a support in building a more developed understanding about the different areas in which students can be invited as co-creators.

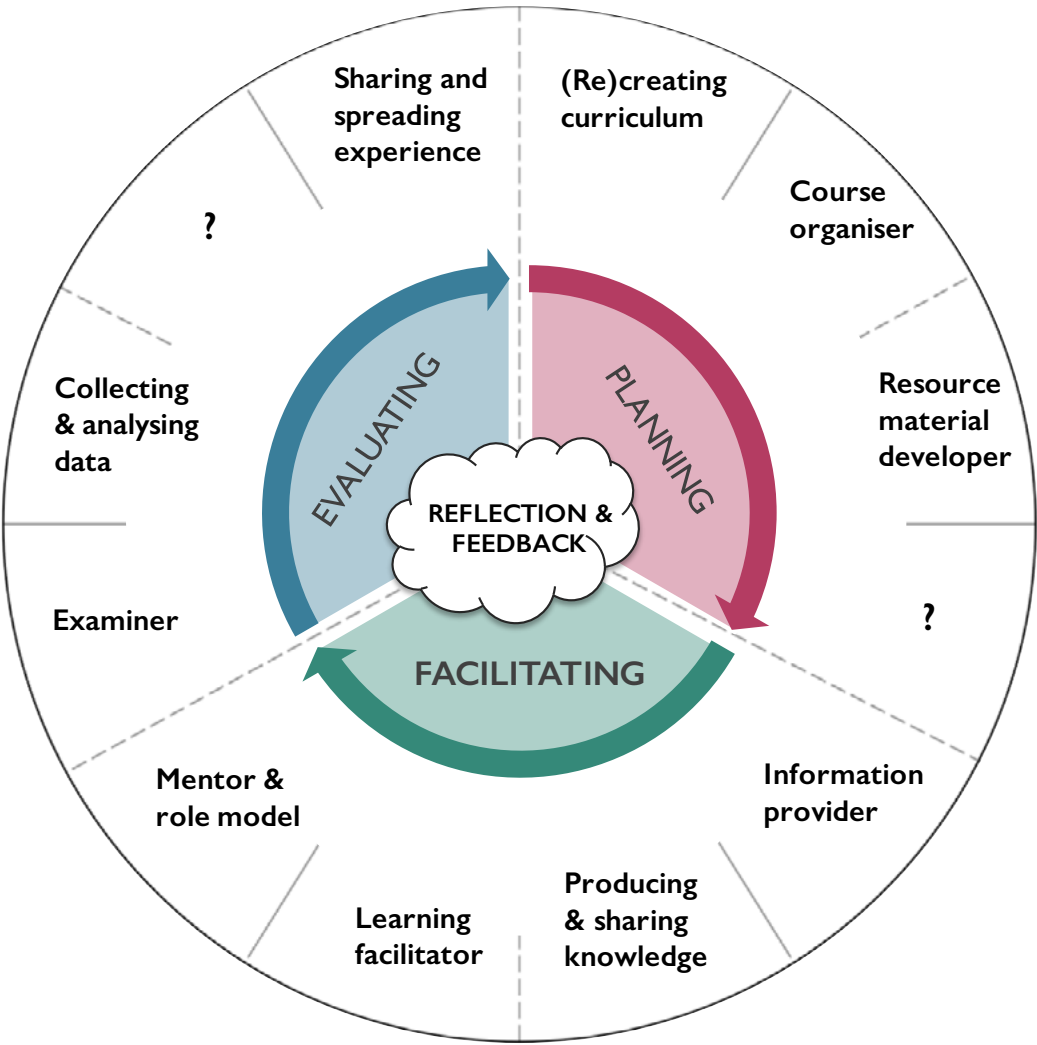


Figure 7: Roles and responsibilities in higher education

In using the term ‘facilitating’ we indicate the implementation of teaching and learning processes, typically taking place in the classroom.

Figure 7 outlines a variety of roles in education in relation to a temporal process of planning, facilitating, and evaluating, while Figure 8, on the next page visualises different degrees of student participation. The circle and scale are presented here together as we have found it useful to discuss them in combination, but they can also be used in isolation.

The roles that make up the outer circle are an adapted version of Harden and Crosby’s model from ‘v (2000)’. Harden and Crosby’s model of teacher roles emerged from their investigation of how educators perceived their roles within medical education, resulting in an overview of their many different views of the functions fulfilled by an educator. The adaptation above is an attempt at translating the roles from the context of medical education into a more general perception of higher education, and we have reduced the roles of Harden and Crosby from 12 to 10, while including blank places to invite readers to fill in roles they find missing. These are generalised examples of what roles and responsibilities students and faculty could take on based on discussions and dialogues that we have had at Uppsala University, but is certainly not a comprehensive list. For example, missing from these roles and responsibilities are ‘inciting engagement and excitement’ and ‘email administration’.

Identifying roles serves as a tool to break down the different parts of teaching in order to clarify responsibility and expectations in terms of partnership and co-creation; what is possible to negotiate within a learning and teaching context but also what is non-negotiable. In other words, in which areas can students take on more responsibility in relationship to the educator and which areas are predetermined, so to speak, by educators and therefore less flexible to student influence? Furthermore, why are certain roles and responsibilities delegated in a particular way and what pedagogical benefits could come with higher degrees of co-creation? Inviting students to take increased responsibility can, for example, involve students working as mentors, creating study material, leading seminars, evaluating courses through study journals or interviews. The roles can also be a way of talking with students about learning and responsibility as well as a tool to use alongside formative exercises. The bubble for ‘reflection and feed-

back' is in the middle to indicate its central importance in all parts of the teaching and learning process.

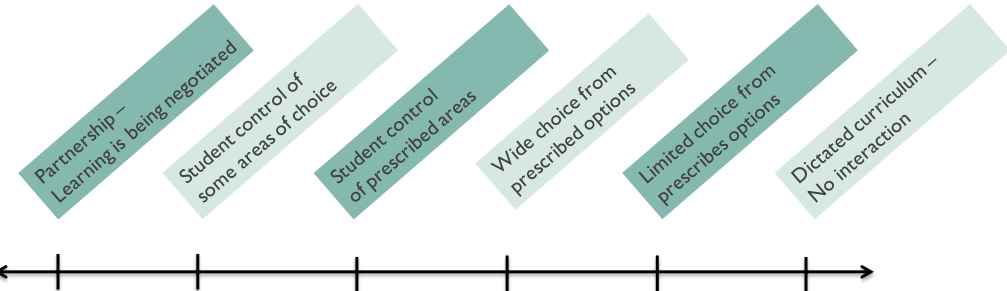


Figure 8: Ladder of student participation (adapted from Bovill and Bulley, 2011).

The ladder or spectrum is based on Bovill and Bulley’s ladder of student participation in curriculum design (2011)¹, and provides one perspective on the different levels of responsibility that students may have in planning and implementing a course. It can be a tool to structurally reflect on the scope that current course design gives for self-determination, for example, when educators think about where and when students could take a different role in the course before, during, and after the course. It also serves as a point of reflection on what the pedagogical consequences would be with a step towards increased or reduced student influence.

In relation to the roles in Figure 7, the spectrum helps you consider the amount of control students exercise. For example, if students take a role within evaluating a course/programme: a) do

¹ Bovill and Bulley’s ladder is, in turn, based on Sherry R. Arnstein’s (1969) ‘Ladder of Citizen Participation’. This ladder illustrates eight ‘rungs’ which correspond to the amount of citizen power and participation in decision-making processes.

they get to choose the questions used to evaluate a course?; b) are they given a set of questions which to answer?; or c) do they lead the process by interviewing their peers about the course?

In sum, these models can be used, together or individually, to describe a current situation and context, e.g. in a particular course, and to reflect how, where, and why changes could allow for more student participation.



Teachers asking students for feedback on a new pedagogical development idea

TRY THIS!

Use the empty models on these pages to reflect on your own roles, or use as material together with your peers and colleagues to discuss your various roles and responsibilities and what they mean for the type of education you want to do. Though the models have 12 sections, that does not mean that you must identify 12 roles! Fill in roles that are relevant to your teaching and learning context; it could be 4 or it could be 30!

Are there conflicting roles? Are there roles that are over-represented in a group or roles that are missing? If you are a student, you could reflect on which parts of your education you are active in, and in which parts you could become active. What responsibilities do you have in your own and your peers' learning? If you are an educator, you could reflect on where you could involve students to a higher degree and the types of responsibilities involved.

What roles does the educator have in my learning and teaching context?

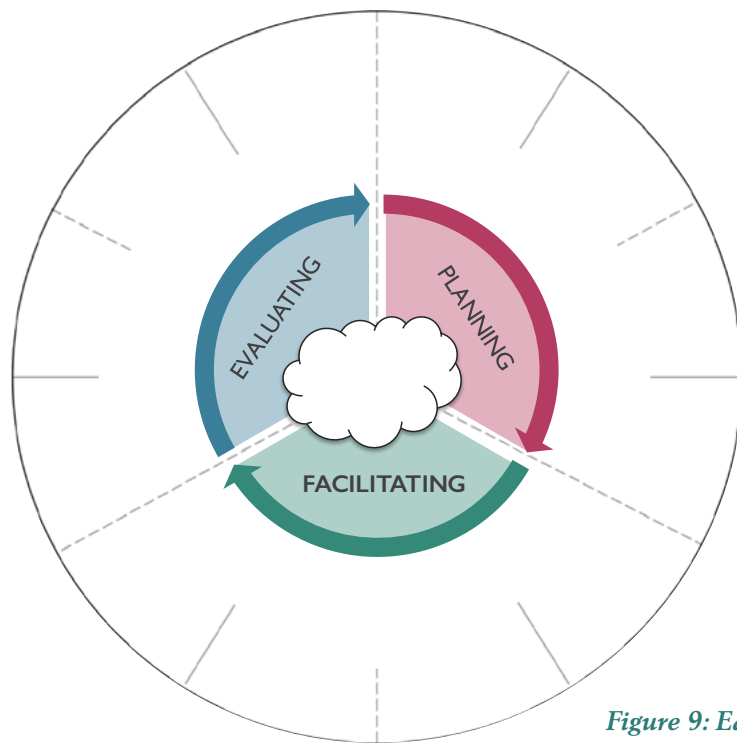


Figure 9: Educator roles

What roles do students have in my learning and teaching context?

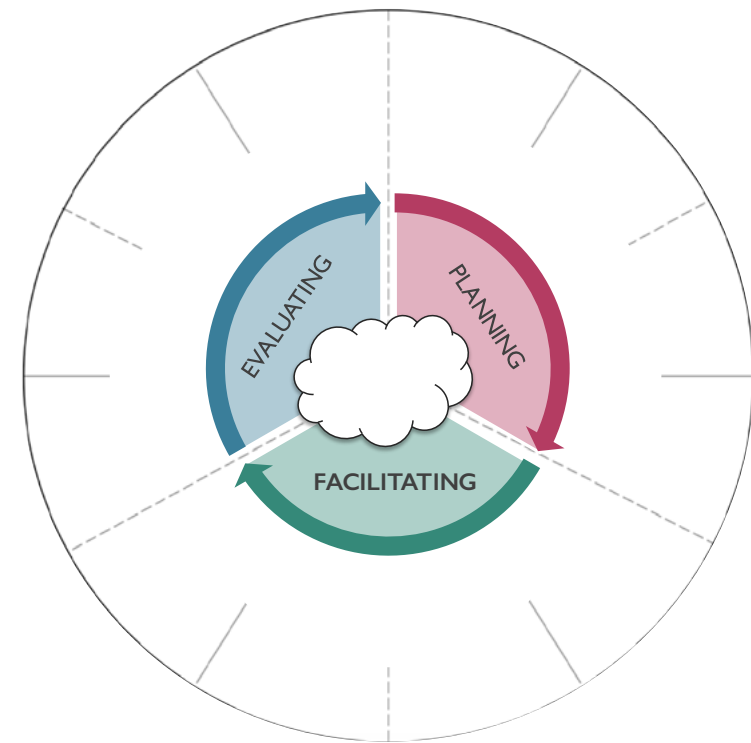


Figure 10: Student roles

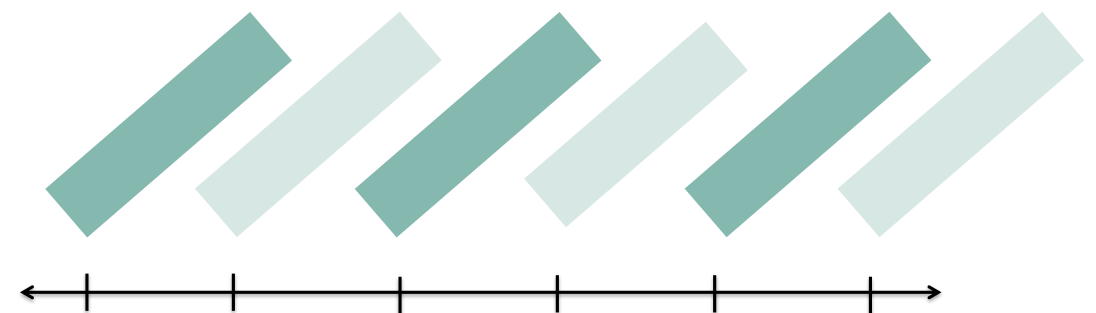


Figure 11: Spectrum of student participation and level of influence

Concrete idea development

Use the exercise below in a group workshop activity to develop ideas and arguments for ASP in your teaching and learning context. The exercise is divided into 3 scenarios. You can either go through all of them in order but also use the questions posed in each scenario in other critical reflection exercises. The purpose is to catalyse critical reflection in developing a concrete and implementable ASP initiative. Feel free to change the names of the characters so they feel alive to you.

- Estimated time: 2-3 hours
- Suggested space and materials:
 - a classroom with the capacity for group work;
 - Chapter 5 worksheet for concrete idea development;
 - moveable whiteboards or large paper for each group to write on (that they are large enough for everyone in the group to share is important for transparency and plenary sharing)

PART 1

You are employed as an educator at the distinguished University of the Past and Future. The General Director at the Higher Education Authority, Director New-speak, has just been on a meeting on the new European Standard Guidelines and reached the conclusion that student-centred learning and teaching is key to excellence in education. She decides that University of the Past and Future shall be known for its excellent student-centred learning and teaching approach and that this approach will permeate all teaching at the university. It is your mission to lead this development.

FIRST:

Work individually and choose a part of your teaching/planning where you could invite students to take greater responsibility. Jot down your ideas on the worksheet.

NEXT:

Share your ideas in groups. Within your group, choose one example which is most interesting/relevant for your entire group and write it down on the whiteboard. Use the outline provided in the worksheet to organise your ideas.

PART 2

You are contacted by the President of the Student Union. She has heard about your work and likes what she sees – the Student Union stands staunchly behind more activating teaching methods. However, several of their members express concern about what these changes will mean for the students' workload, if the quality of education will be as high when the educator does not present everything, and further wonder why their education is suddenly looking different in comparison to last year.

You are student associates of the president and have a lot of questions.

YOUR TASK:

Go to another group's white board and read their proposal. How do you see this proposal? What risks or challenges do you see? Write your critical feedback and questions directly on the whiteboard using a different colour pen. When you are finished writing feedback, hand the whiteboard back to the original group. Once every group has their original whiteboard back with feedback, make improvements to your suggestion based on the feedback of the 'student' group.

PART 3

Principal Wiseman, Vice Chancellor at University of the Past and Future, has seen your suggestions and is impressed - but also worried about what they mean for the role of educator, the time, and the possible resistance that may come from other educators. He therefore asks you to clearly explain what changes your proposal entails for the role of educator, as well as which challenges and benefits these changes entail. Please use the roles and responsibilities model (Figure 6) - Principal Wiseman likes it!

**This text can be presented together with Figure 7: Figure 7 is an adapted version of Harden and Crosby's (2000) model of educator roles, and a way to break down the different parts of teaching to clarify what is possible to negotiate at a given time and also what is non-negotiable. Inviting students to take increased responsibility can, for example, involve students working as mentors, creating study material, evaluating courses by keeping study journals or interviewing peers, etc. The roles within the model can also be a way of talking with students about learning and responsibility, e.g. in formative exercises.*

B. Examples of active student participation at Uppsala University

This section gathers examples of a variety of ways of engaging in active student participation. These are mostly contributions written by students and educators from various faculties at Uppsala University. They are meant to be both inspirational and a complementary way of exploring the nature of ASP.

Looking at these different examples it is, as always, important to bear in mind the specific settings that make a pedagogical practice work or not. While the specific ways in each example play out is always context dependent, they still serve the function of providing ideas for how you could work in your institutional context.

There are countless ways to categorise examples of ASP, which we have been wrestling with since we started with this work. One could talk about examples based on levels (within a course,

within a programme, across disciplines, etc.), or if it is student-driven, educator-driven, or co-created in partnership; one could talk about the roles that educators and students occupy in different learning settings or the level of influence attributed to different roles; one could also talk about the amount of time that is involved in the work or what subject or discipline a certain example came from. One could further ask certain questions, such as ‘what can I do if I teach a large group of students?’

The examples in this section are sorted based on levels, but one of these categorisations alone, or even two combined, often fail to capture the complexity of the various examples. As a reminder of this, the chapter includes an ASP control board, seen on the previous page (Figure 12). The dials on the control board show some of the key characteristics of ASP initiatives, and serves as a reminder that adjusting these dials yields a plethora of possibilities and pedagogical opportunities. We suggest considering the possibilities of each example using the various dials. How could the different example be tweaked to your context?

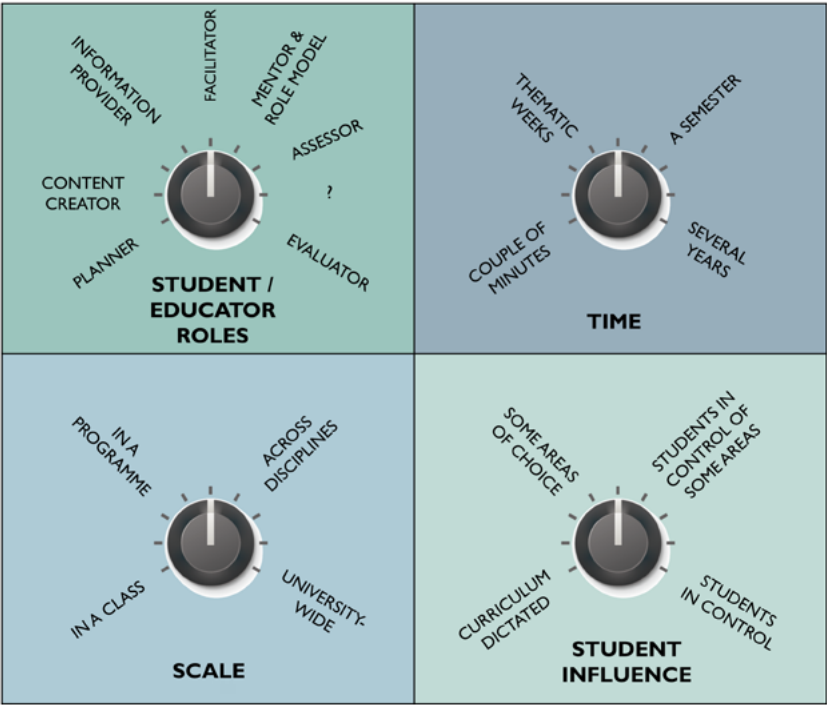


Figure 12: Active student participation control board

TRY THIS!

Gather colleagues (students and/or faculty) and form small groups around 5-8 members. Distribute a sample of the different example texts among the members of the group and then let each individual read through them, looking for bits and pieces that they find inspiring or thought provoking.

Then take turns presenting what in the examples that you looked at you found interesting - maybe it was something about the way that collaboration was framed, the way that students organised to support other students learning, ways for educators to invite students to co-create a small part of a course, and so on.

The examples in this chapter are organised after the model below, but remember to use the control board and think about how you can adapt them to your context! *Approach these texts in whatever way you want - borrow, get inspired, or give constructive critique.*

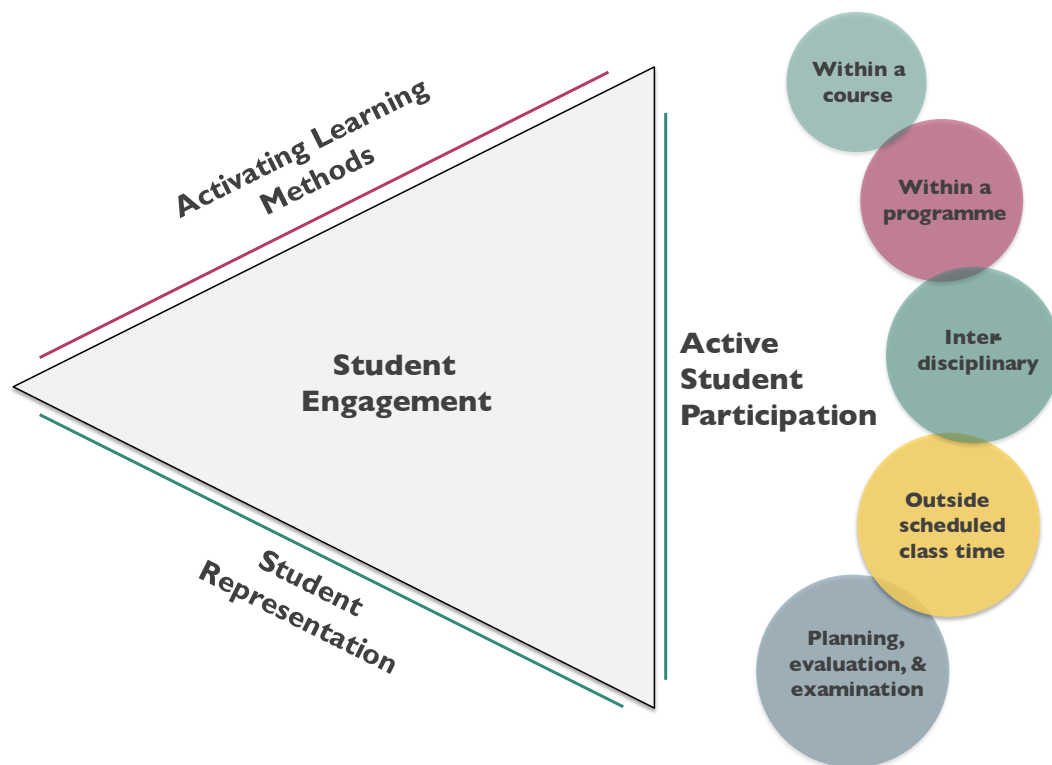


Figure 13: A student engagement model

How can we understand the difference between activating learning methods and active student participation? It is confusing because sometimes it can be both. Let's look at two well-known examples of activating learning methods to highlight what we see as some important distinctions. Problem-based learning (PBL) and case methodology are well-founded and well-practiced teaching and learning activities which have the potential of including a high degree of active student participation. For example, these activities may be characterised by students creating course content, peer learning, shifting roles (both educators and students), meta-reflection, and dialogue between educators and students,

and between students and students. These characteristics are also present in the examples of ASP which you can find below. What we might call activating learning methods may be ASP, but not necessarily so. It is possible to implement activating learning methods without these characteristics of ASP.

Active Student Participation...

Below you will find a quick overview of this chapter's examples from Uppsala University. If you want to go straight for the longer read, skip a couple pages ahead.

...within a course

Examples of how students can support learning for their fellow students in the same course. For example, students identify content that they deem to be relevant for a course or that the differences within the student group are used as a pedagogical resource.

- **Note-taking relay** - A simple tool with the purpose of activating students during lecture time.
- **Tentarium** - Combines the motivational incentives of an exam and the learning opportunities of a seminar.
- **The Missing Perspective** - Students are given a space in the course schedule, which they fill with something they feel is missing in the course.
- **Student-designed learning workshops** - Students get the opportunity to lead their peers in seminars.
- **Leadership Labs** - Students in small groups prepare a session for their peers, based on a course's learning outcomes.
- **The Collective Challenge** - A collective challenge in the form of a workshop where the purpose is to create a culture of collaboration throughout the year.
- **30-day Challenge** - Students engage their peers in semester-long projects.

...within a programme

Senior students take responsibility for newer students' learning. For example, senior students take responsibility for the learning of newer students by leading complimentary discussion groups.

- **Supplemental Instruction** - A question-based approach to learning where student leaders facilitate group discussions for other students, similar to the below-mentioned mentoring.
- **Mentoring** - Student-led study sessions, where more experienced students lead study sessions for other students. Read examples nine and ten.
- **Active student participation activities in the Medicine programme** - Different ways the medicine programme involves students, for example, by having students lead problem-based learning groups.

...across disciplines

Students from various disciplines work together for increased learning. For example, students' academic competences are made visible in transdisciplinary learning contexts.

- **CEMUS** - The Centre for Environment and Development Studies (CEMUS) runs interdisciplinary, student-led courses in sustainable development. Here are several examples of different student-driven activities that CEMUS courses have tested, including student-led seminars, collaborative workshops, and interview-based lectures.

...in planning and evaluation

Collaboration between educators and students in planning, evaluation, and examination. For example, students and teachers working together to decide course literature or replan a course that is working poorly.

- **Co-creating Physics for Chemists** - A course that was recreated with student and staff collaboration.

- **Collaboration in the Physical Therapy programme** - Students in collaboration with faculty plan to create a better forum for dialogue on proposed changes in course structure and content.

...outside scheduled class time

Students collaborate for increased learning opportunities for peers and secondary school students. For example, students organising labs or lectures that are open to other students.

- **The Reflective Engineer** - An association started by students, who organise seminars on issues that engineering students lack in their regular courses, namely, ethics and sustainable development.
- **The Biomedical Sciences Association (BVF)** - An association started by students who organise laboratory sessions for their peers on topics for which they have a special interest.
- **Ekolibria** - An organisation started by students in the master's programme for Sustainable Development. They work with secondary school students around issues of sustainable development.

No. 1 **Note-taking relay**
by Alexis Engström

What A quick and easy lecture activity inviting students to share knowledge with their peers.

How The note-taking relay is a simple tool with the purpose of activating students during lecture time. The idea is that the lecturer takes a break at an opportune moment, every 20 minutes or so, to ask the students to write down on a piece of paper what they think were the most important aspects that came up during those 20 minutes. The students only have a couple of minutes to do this and when they have finished, they pass their note to the person sitting next to them. After another 20 minutes, there is another break and the process is repeated. After the lecture, the students can keep the last note they worked with, or the lecturer can gather all the notes as a documentation of how the students understood the lecture.

Why The purpose of the note-taking relay is a twofold approach to activating students: 1) the act of reflecting and writing down important aspects, and 2) the peer-assisted learning aspect in both seeing what other students have heard and how their peers reflect on content, as well as through the peer-pressure of having students read each other's reflections.

Pros The note-taking relay is easy to implement to any existing lecture material. It is also possible to apply even if you are not involved in the course planning process, but just engaged for the odd lecture. It is a broad enabler, ensuring that all students take some kind of notes and supports students in keeping focus.

Cons The note-taking relay takes time from the lecture and will be a challenge to accommodate for teachers that already struggle with fitting all the important information into a single lecture. It might be a difficult choice between allowing the students to keep the notes or gathering them at the end as the information is very useful in developing the lecture material for next year as well as knowing how to follow up the session.

Within a course

Within a programme

Across disciplines

In planning and evaluation

Outside scheduled time

No. 2 Tentarium
by Sanna Gunnarsson

What A hybrid examination combining in-class written exams and seminars.

How Tentarium is a whole-day exam where a written exam and a seminar, two well-established examination forms at the university, are combined. The Tentarium takes place towards the end of the first period of the course *Sustainable Development - World Views, Values, and Visions*. Students are instructed to prepare themselves for a traditional exam, by reviewing the course material, reviewing their notes, etc. No other information is given about the examination in advance. The exam begins with a written exam, where the students individually answer questions relating to the course content. The seminar element then follows the written examination. During the seminar, the students sit in smaller groups together with a seminar leader and have the opportunity to choose any question from the exam they want to discuss. In the session's conclusion, students revisit the individual written exam and, with the help of the seminar discussion, can revise their answers. This final part is submitted for assessment. This final hand-in can either be reviewed through peer to peer feedback or by the teacher.

Why The purpose of the Tentarium is to utilise the strengths of both exam types (in class tests and seminars) and combine them to increase both the students' learning and their participation and activity in the course's examination. It is also an excellent way of working with contested and threshold concepts.

Pros Experience from the course shows that the written examination element contributes to the preparation of students within the course material, at the same time as the seminar element leads to increased cooperation and shared learning. Both students and seminar leaders testify that the discussions in the Tentarium are more anchored in the course material than discussions in the course's traditional seminars, and that the students are more active both in their own and the other students' learning. A further positive, yet unplanned, aspect is the format's contribution to the students' reflections about their own learning, something they often return to at a later stage of the course.

Cons Challenges with the course's Tentarium have been that some students experience unnecessary stress based on uncertainty about the format of the exam. Students have testified about an ambiguity concerning expectations and criteria prior to the examination, with which the course management has worked and attempted to balance through clear instructions and preparations, without revealing the format and thereby losing the positive aspects of pressure and stress with which the format contributes.

Within a course

Within a programme

Across disciplines

In planning and evaluation

Outside scheduled time

No. 3 **The Missing Perspective**
by Alexis Engström

What A student-led session where students get to identify and facilitate something they perceive as missing in the current course content.

How In a 7.5 credit course in *Global Environmental History*, the teachers have introduced a concept called ‘the missing perspective’. The course is at a pace of 50% and usually attracts around 50 students from a wide variety of scientific backgrounds. ‘The missing perspective’ is based on the teacher leaving a scheduled session towards the end of the course unplanned. It is then the students’ task to fill this session with a perspective they think has been missing in the course. It can be a topic as well as a learning activity, so students are not limited to finding information on topics that they feel were missing or lacking, but can also choose to engage with information they have already encountered, but in a new way. A space for a formative evaluation of the course so far, combined with a structured space for students to discuss the missing perspective, is scheduled half way through the course.

Why Most attempt at creating a course includes a complex process of selecting and discarding topics and perspectives. In history this process is of extra importance and the act of expressing that something is missing helps students become aware of this process. The concept also entails an extra dimension to formative course evaluations, where teachers can provide a concrete and direct opportunity for students to influence the course while they are still part of it. The students also point out that, in the process of selecting content and methods, they end up going through large amounts of the course material in order to get a sense of what could be included in the subject - what are their options? Going through this process also improves the way that students respond in the course evaluations, where they have been found to write more informed feedback to the various didactic choices regarding both the content and methods of the course.

Pros The missing perspective creates opportunities and incentives for students to increase their meta-awareness about the course; about possible questions and perspectives related to the course themes as well as the learning methods included in the schedule. One of the most positive outcomes has been that students have a heightened awareness of the direction of the course and are better able to connect to prior understanding of a topic prior to lectures. The missing perspective also creates a space for a constructive dialogue between teachers and students, making it possible to integrate suggestions arising during e.g. formative evaluations.

Cons For the process to work time needs to be allocated for students to meet and discuss. It can be hard for students and teachers to realize some suggestions that might involve specific lecturers or voices. While quite easily manageable in smaller groups, it can sometimes be challenging to facilitate the process in bigger class but we’ve had some success through using padlet or similar digital tools.



In ‘The Missing Perspective’ students facilitate a session on a topic they think is missing from the course

No. 4 Student-designed learning workshops
by Sachiko Ishihara & Alejandro Marcos Vals

What Student-led sessions where students in groups design and facilitate a way for their peers to reflect on and apply lecture material.

How Prior to every one-hour lecture by the guest lecturer, a different group of students (maximum 4 students per group) organises an interactive discussion activity based on the topic of the day. The discussion activity is asked to engage all students, relate with the literature, and encouraged to use diverse participatory pedagogical methods.

Assignment instructions are available at: <http://www.web.cemus.se/gcsf/>

Why What would education look like if students designed it? General CEMUS courses show one answer, where students and recent graduates are hired to coordinate courses. We decided to open this up further, by giving the students who are taking the course the opportunity to co-create it. We were curious to see what students would come up with, and we trusted that if we gave them more responsibility, they would deliver. Moreover, we believed that it would be an inclusive way to give students that are not as outspoken the opportunity to lead discussions in class, and overall be an empowering learning experience.

Pros

- Students have organised creative activities, bringing in prior experience or trying out new things: e.g. discussion in small groups on hypothetical or real cases, debate on ethical issues, stakeholder role-play debate.
- Students generally enjoy these discussions, seen in written feedback given to organising groups, and it helps to build a positive and friendly class atmosphere. It definitely gives opportunities for different students to lead and frame the discussions and contribute in diverse ways.
- ‘Missing’ topics have been brought up in the sessions: e.g. future technology and ethics, using a real case of a head transplant.

Cons

Since the focus tends to be on facilitating interactive activities, it departs from traditional literature seminars, and is challenging to have students integrate the literature more into their discussions and workshop design.

No. 5 Leadership Labs
by Friederike May & Jesse Schrage

What Student-led seminars / workshops where students design activities connected to the learning outcomes.

How Three days in the schedule of the course *Climate Change Leadership* are devoted to this student-led activity. Students in small groups of 4-5 people co-create and lead a 'Leadership Lab' for their peers. Each group is given one of the learning outcomes, of which there are eight in this course and which is the focus of the lab, and is responsible for 1 hour of class time during the semester. The group work involves planning and then facilitating the lab. The form is totally free, and the students are encouraged to use alternative formats to lecture. In the past, students have used serious games, art workshops, and leadership exercises in small teams. While the groups are not assessed for the outcome of their session, each individual is required to write a reflection on their group work in relation to the course goals. This written reflection is then marked.

Why Due to a great diversity of knowledge and interests among students, who come from many different scientific backgrounds, it is difficult to accommodate everyone's needs throughout the course. This exercise draws attention to the course goals, and also gives students the opportunity to explore topics and concepts that are not necessarily part of the regular schedule. Moreover, the students get to practise facilitation and leadership skills, which are more difficult to fit into a more traditional lecture series, yet which the students are meant to practise as part of the learning outcomes for the course.

- Pros**

 - Course learning outcomes have a more explicit presence and students become more aware of the learning processes around each goal
 - Students practise group work
 - Students practise facilitation and therefore get a better understanding of the challenges of teaching or communicating information to a large group
 - Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their peers
 - Includes students in the course creation process and therefore perspectives that would normally not have been included in the course content are given space
- Cons**

 - Students sometimes find it challenging to find enough time to meet outside class time and successfully organise their activity, usually due to the ambitious nature of students' ideas
 - Communicating enough of a framework that the students feel they have something concrete that they are working towards is challenging (it can be difficult for students who have only ever experienced lectures in their education to come up with different ways of working with new information)

Within a course

Within a programme

Across disciplines

In planning and evaluation

Outside scheduled time

No. 6 **The Collective Challenge**
by Timothée Parrique

What A collective challenge in the form of a workshop where the purpose of this is to create a culture of collaboration throughout the year - in order to succeed at this activity everyone needs to be involved and included.

How With the use of a PowerPoint device and clickers, a large group of students is presented with a set of multiple choice questions each limited in time. To successfully complete the challenge, the class as a whole must reach a certain percentage of correct answers – a collective answer being considered as correct if more than 75% of individual answers are correct. Any type of cooperation both before and during the exercise (including discussion) is permitted while the use of notes, books, and digital devices is prohibited. The questions are specifically designed to test students' ability to cooperate. All questions are in general more difficult than for an individual test and require higher-order thinking. Some questions come with specific instructions (e.g. not being able to speak or move) while others are partly translated in several languages only spoken by a minority of the class. If the group fails to collectively answer more than 75% of the questions correctly, there is a group reflection on the process.



Photo: Anne Marte Johnsen

The Collective Challenge is a workshop in which the students must practice their cooperation skills in order to pass.

Why This activity is beneficial on at least three levels. First, giving responsibility to students for collectively organising for the activity creates engagement, decreases test anxiety, and reinforces classroom cohesion. Second, it puts the emphasis on cooperation instead of competition. Because the group can only pass or fail together, students must learn how to collaborate while balancing goals of efficiency and fairness. And finally, it makes students reflect about learning itself. It decolonises the imaginary of 'examination' in showing that testing can be done in various ways, some more meaningful than others.

- Pros**
- Students often find it fun
 - Does not require much time to design and grade
 - Can be a complement to a traditional individual test
 - Good opportunity to discuss democracy, expertise, and education

- Cons**
- Limited to multiple-choice types of questions
 - May lead to free riding if not properly managed
 - Can create discord if class fails

No. 7 **The 30-Day Challenge**
by Sachiko Ishihara & Alejandro Marcos Vals

What Students engage their peers in semester-long projects.

How ‘The 30-Day Challenge’ in the course *Global Challenges and Sustainable Futures* is an assignment where each student chooses something to change in his or her everyday life to live a more sustainable lifestyle, and tries it for 30 days. (Examples include, becoming vegetarian, avoiding plastic, and zero waste lifestyle). At the end, they are asked to share their experiences in a creative way (e.g. video, poster, booklet, sculpture, etc.). Some of their work was presented at the Uppsala Sustainability Festival (www.sustainabilityfestival.se). Assignment Instructions are available at: <http://www.web.cemus.se/gcsf/>.

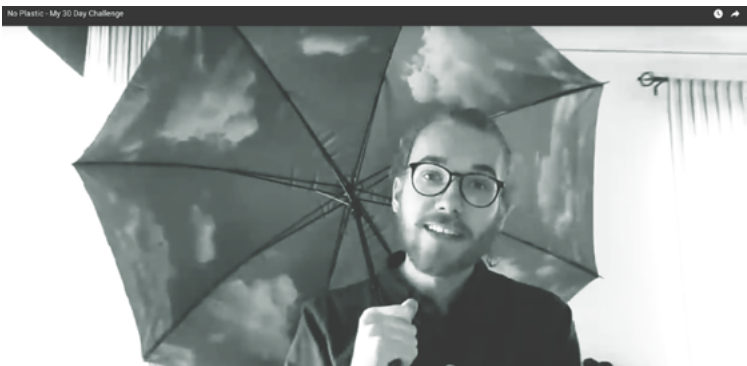
Why The activity was inspired by a TED talk: ‘Try something new for 30 days - Matt Cutts’. This assignment is aimed to have a fun and engaging activity where you connect yourself to larger sustainability issues we discuss in class and put into practice, and reflect about: 1) your personal daily habits and what constitutes sustainable or unsustainable lifestyles; 2) your role as an individual in the challenges and solutions in sustainability; and 3) the individual and structural aspects of lifestyles.

Pros

- Students engage, and explore their own role both in causes and in solutions for sustainability issues, relating to them at a personal level. Many reflect on this experience as eye-opening to try out things they wouldn’t have otherwise. Some say, ‘being vegan was super easy! I’m going to continue!’
- Encouraging examples: e.g. produced only a jar of waste during 3 weeks (!), almost completely off-setted their carbon footprint from their flight by changing their lifestyle...
- Transformative and personal development: e.g. a student felt better about herself by changing from a shopaholic.

Cons

It is a bit tricky when approving the challenge proposals, to decide what challenges are meeting the assignment aim and which challenge ideas need to be changed, since sustainability is a wide topic.



‘The 30-Day Challenge’ is an assignment where students try out a sustainability lifestyle change for 30 days and share it with their peers. One student (in photo) tried living without plastic for a month, and shared the results via [Youtube](#)

No. 8 Supplemental Instruction (SI)
by Maria Hahlin

What Student-led complimentary discussions and study groups in physics.

How Several senior students (who have completed a course) lead discussion / study groups for students currently enrolled in the course. This is done with a clear educational orientation that SI leaders learn in an SI-leadership training provided annually. The SI programme is an internationally well-proven methodology based on collaborative learning. This methodology has been shown to improve students' study results. Student participation in the SI study groups is voluntary and usually the groups are between 8-12 students.

SI was founded by Dr. Deanna Martin 1973 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and since then has been successfully used worldwide, see, for example, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supplemental_instruction

Why Almost 20 years ago, undergraduate students at Uppsala University had attended SI at the mathematics institution and expressed the wish that SI would also be introduced to what are now the master's programme courses. SI has since been successfully used in courses in physics.

- Pros**
- Increased deep learning of SI participants as well as SI leaders
 - Increased throughput on the courses
 - In-depth contact between the teachers at the institution and the SI leaders

- Cons** Challenges we face are how to:
- Ensure continuation of new SI leaders
 - Find 'available' opportunities when both SI leaders and SI participants can meet during daytime, i.e. common 'white space' in the schedule

Within a course

Within a programme

Across disciplines

In planning and evaluation

Outside scheduled time

No. 9 **Student mentorship in Peace and Development Studies**
by Caroline Bodin

What Student-led complimentary discussions and study groups in Peace and Development studies.

How Uppsala Peace and Development Studies Student Association (UPaD) offers the possibility to meet with mentors for the two introductory courses in the Peace and Development Studies programme. Our mentors are students who have previously taken the course they are mentoring and who meet weekly with a smaller group of new students to go through course material together.

The mentor’s task is to organise the meetings and moderate the discussions, while the students themselves set the agenda for what they want and need to address. By taking advantage of each other’s knowledge, students learn to collaborate and take responsibility for their own and others’ learning. Instead of teaching, the mentor works as a sounding board for students and helps them to deepen independent learning, understand the course’s layout, and figure out how to study effectively at the university-level. For this reason, the mentors undergo training in pedagogy and leadership and have continuous meetings with each other and relevant teachers at the respective institution during the semester.



Watch a student mentor discuss her experiences and tips for students [4min53sec]

Why In social science subjects, much is about understanding theories, comparing them, and applying them to reality. Central to this is that there are often no or few ‘correct’ answers. Critical thinking and broader understanding of different perspectives are a fundamental element in these subjects. In addition to active students, deeper learning requires time for discussion and reflection - and then again discussion and reflection. In the compulsory education, this space is often lacking and the focus is more on performance. We saw a need among students to be able to talk about what they learn and what they find difficult in less formal forums without assessments or performance requirements. We also saw students who had a willingness to help others and who saw the importance of cooperation when it comes to learning processes, both between the students themselves, but also with teachers and those responsible for the education who are the experts in the subject matter.

- Pros**
- Showing that there are students who are interested and engaged in their education.
 - We have had good cooperation and valuable dialogue with the institutions about the importance of student participation.
 - Engaging in the mentorship programme has helped students in their studies and made some want to engage more.

- Cons** Challenges include:
- Getting students to engage for an extended period of time, both as mentors and as participants in the groups.
 - Knowing how to best support our activities to become a natural and obvious part of our education.
 - How we best prepare and educate our mentors in the skills they may need.

No. 10 **Student mentorship at Modern Languages**
by Miriam Thegel

What Student-led complimentary discussions and study groups in the Modern Languages programme.

How Each language has about 3-4 active student mentors, who facilitate supplemental discussions in which students can develop their understanding on the subject matter. The mentors either lead the meetings together (usually two and two) or divide the meetings between themselves. In the recruitment process for mentors, the responsible teacher or mentor supervisor has contacted students at advanced levels to disseminate information about the opportunity to become a mentor.

The mentors facilitate the meeting and help the students if they are stuck in the discussion by asking questions that stimulate further thinking. However, participating students are encouraged to choose what they want to address; the content is adjusted based on what they want to review. The mentors work based on an SI-inspired method, which means that they always strive to bounce student questions back to the group as much as possible. Mentors attend a preparatory leadership course prior to starting and attend follow-up meetings with the other mentors and with the mentors' supervisors at the department during the semester.



Click to watch a presentation held by a student and educator from the language department in which they talk about mentorship at their department [21min]

Why The programme aims at supporting students who are starting their studies in French, German, and Spanish. The groups at these introductory levels tend to be heterogeneous in terms of experience in the target language. The mentor programme intends to take advantage of this heterogeneity by gathering students in smaller groups every other week, where they can discuss things they find challenging, focusing on grammar and writing proficiency because of high number of students that fail their exams in these areas. An important purpose of the mentor programme is that more students should achieve the course objectives for the introductory courses and improve their study skills. Another important purpose is to strengthen the community between the students in the introductory courses and students at later stages.

- Pros**
- The students who have attended regular meetings have appreciated it.
 - A tendency for students to achieve the learning outcomes to a higher degree.
 - The mentors are positive about the experience they have gained and state that they will use the SI method in their future career role. They value the experience of having led groups and have learned from it.
 - Student cohesion seems to have been strengthened.

- Cons** Some challenges we face:
- To reach out to all entry-level students and help them realise the importance of attending the meetings.
 - Finding appropriate times on the schedule where mentor meetings can be planned; for example, to avoid too late afternoons or early mornings.
 - To have good cooperation with the teachers from the relevant courses and to communicate the purpose of the mentorship programme to them.

No. 11 **ASP activities in the Medicine programme**
by Lisa Persson

What Student involvement in the continuous development of group work in the Medicine programme.

- How**
- Students have participated in the production of a video that demonstrates Problem-Based Learning (PBL) group work for new students in Term 1, which is a central method of learning in this programme. A couple of experienced students also participate at the introduction of the Term 1 students.
 - Participation in teacher meetings of different kinds.
 - Students are resource persons for teachers who want to follow up or develop their courses or course activities.

Why There is a long tradition of student participation in monitoring and developing the education within the Medical programme. While introducing a new curriculum in 2006, there was a 'Student Reform Group'. When implementation of the new programme was completed, a group was created to focus on follow-up and developing PBL group work, as it was a new way of working for many. There



Hear about how ASP works in the Medicine programme and what benefits they experience. Click to watch the film. [3min53sec]

is, for example, problem-based learning with students as group facilitators. From 2017, there is a general 'Student Resource Group' that works together with the Educational Unit for the Medical programme, giving support to educational development within the programme.

- Pros**
- To collaborate with students to actively bring their perspectives and experiences into education and teaching development. They experience the current education situation and climate and they are also representatives of younger generations, which is very valuable to combine with the experiences and insights that teachers have.
 - We need both written course evaluations and oral follow-ups (e.g. focus groups) in different phases in connection with education activities (during, close after, and longer after) and concrete collaboration with students in the interpretation and development of the education in order to get their perspective in a more in-depth manner.
 - In the Medical programme, students participate in many ways, and in principle all work groups (in addition to formal representation in committees, etc.) have student representatives.

Cons Time limits for all involved and, above all, the challenge of engaging students in ASP activities during daytime activities. Work tasks that are scheduled during evenings are usually the ones that work best, together with those where students can work independently or in smaller groups.

No. 12 CEMUS
by Daniel Mossberg & Isak Stoddard

What Student-led education where students plan, facilitate, and evaluate interdisciplinary courses.

- How**
- CEMUS employs students as *course coordinators* to coordinate and lead interdisciplinary education on sustainability issues. Course coordinators work in pairs and are responsible for planning, facilitating, and evaluating a university course.
 - Teaching is conducted by invited guest lecturers and partly by participative seminars and workshops facilitated by the course coordinators.
 - A work group consisting of researchers, teachers, and practitioners linked to each course supports the course coordinator pair in the course planning phase. The work group has both a creative role in the planning process and contributes to securing the academic quality of the courses.
 - The learning processes of the courses are designed to create a high level of active participation from the students who attend the course. Since many of the issues addressed in the courses have no definitive established answers, the students are also involved in producing new knowledge (supported by literature and guest lecturers). The education also strives to combine theoretical and practical perspectives, and the students often work with applied projects as part of the education.

Why There are many reasons why the CEMUS student-led education model was established:

- A lack of interdisciplinary education at Uppsala's two universities created a gap that led two students to design a new course proposal that they were then given the mandate to lead.

- Uppsala's long tradition of active students, through nation life, student unions, student associations, etc.
- An effort to make students a more active part in the creation of university education, inspired by the Bologna University in the 13th century.
- A high demand from students for activating and interdisciplinary education.
- Strong support from the management level.

Pros

- An educational environment where students really contribute to learning and take great responsibility for their own and others' learning process.
- A clear multi- / interdisciplinary education facilitated by interdisciplinary work groups and guest lecturers being invited from many different fields of science.
- A learning process for the course coordinators who develop skills within project management, budget work, communication, etc.
- An opportunity to ask and explore questions that do not 'fit' within any individual institution or faculty.
- Opportunity for today's students to influence their own education.

Cons

- Some challenges are:
- To ensure continuity for the student-driven education model.
 - To maintain a creative and dynamic environment and avoid stagnation.

A few cases from CEMUS collaborative model of education
by Isak Stoddard

This is a collection of short examples gathered specifically from courses at CEMUS, examples developed by students and that also involves many levels of participation with students taking the courses. Some of these examples have been mentioned previously, but we think there is value in presenting them in the context of CEMUS, to show the diversity of student-led initiatives.

Students hired to coordinate inter- and transdisciplinary higher education

Undergraduate and graduate students are hired on a project basis for 6-12 months to work together with another student-colleague, planning, running, and evaluating an inter-/transdisciplinary university course. The students act as coordinators for the whole process and, in the planning phase, take on the main responsibility of improving and renewing the course based on evaluations from students, a report by previous course coordinators, their own experiences (they have often taken the course themselves), and the latest developments in connection to the field of inquiry of the course. Throughout the process they are embedded at the academic teaching and learning environment at CEMUS and they convene a work group consisting of researchers, teachers, practitioners, and previous students that give feedback and support their work. The role of a course coordinator is multifaceted and is interpreted in a variety of ways by the students that are employed. The course coordinators usually work between 1 and 4 years with 1 or more courses at CEMUS, before moving on to further studies or work.

Course and curriculum development through open forums

Once a year, students, CEMUS staff, faculty from Uppsala's two universities and others with an interest in CEMUS education are invited to an open forum to evaluate and discuss the current set of course-offerings by the Centre and to identify new ideas for courses, modules, or programmes (both content-wise and form). The ideas are further developed by a smaller team at CEMUS and another forum usually takes place to discuss

the suggested changes to the curriculum and courses. Due to budget constraints and other reasons, many of the courses and suggestions that are developed in these forums have not been realised, but the process of re-evaluation is still seen as important and a valid reason to organise the forums.

Students involved in setting grading criteria

In 2010, grading criteria for the final paper in the full-time undergraduate course *Sustainable Development B* needed to be developed. The coordinators of the course created a draft for a suggested assessment matrix that then was shared with the students during a workshop that explored the role of assessment in higher education. The students were asked to use the grading criteria and assess papers from previous year's students and were then asked to provide feedback on the criteria suggestions for changes.

The Collective Challenge – Students setting questions based on course material and discussing purpose of assessment

In the half-time course, *The Global Economy – Environment, Development and Globalisation*, a collective 'exam' exercise has been developed as a complement to a series of individual assessment tasks. Based on questions and reflections on the expectations that students had on the course and their own learning, collected on the first day of class, a multiple-choice exam is constructed. While the activity is framed as a type of exam, students are not assessed based on the collective outcome and their grade are not dependent on whether they pass or fail this activity. The exam scenario is used as an exercise for reviewing what has been studied in the course but also for reflecting on the meaning of learning and collaborative learning in relation to the more traditional competitive higher education model. A few weeks before the activity is to take place, the students are told that they will be assessed collectively - i.e. they all pass, or they all fail. They also know that the exam would be run with individual 'clickers' and that they will have a limited time to answer

Within a course

Within a programme

Across disciplines

In planning and evaluation

Outside scheduled time

each of the questions (30 seconds to 3 minutes). In order to get a question right, more than 75% of the clicker-answers need to be correct and to pass the exam 75% of the questions need to be correct. Furthermore, the students are told:

Since you are being evaluated as a collective mind, you can engage in cooperative strategies both in preparation for the examination (learning teams, literature division, etc.) and during the exam (discussing, talking, electing a conductor, etc.). The day of the exam, you will also be free to organise tables in the room as you wish.

The cooperative strategies developed by the students have differed over the years, but the process of discussing the best strategies has raised important questions about the purpose and role of assessment in higher education as well as the purpose of higher education itself. For example, when a student one year suggested that the strategy that each student specialises on one particular part of the course and becomes an expert, other students responded and said that that might work, but aren't we here for other reasons than to pass the class, e.g. to learn.



Click to watch a film about CEMUS and its student-driven model. How does CEMUS work practically? What are the benefits of this model? [5min18sec]

The student-led make up task

Students that had missed a mandatory seminar or workshop in an undergraduate course on *Sustainable Development* were given the outline and programme of the seminar/workshop (including preparatory tasks for the students) and the learning outcomes that were being addressed/assessed. The smaller group of stu-

dents that needed to do a make-up task then discussed how to run this seminar/workshop on their own and what they needed to do in preparation. The students were then assessed on both the produced material before and during the workshop/seminar as well as a critical reflection that they wrote individually after the seminar, where they also were asked to reflect on the learning process.

Students identifying missing perspectives and designing a module of the course

In courses such as *Global Environmental History* and *Sustainable Development: Worldviews, Values and Visions*, students are given the opportunity to design a session of the course based on what they think has been missing in the course so far (in both content and form) in relation to the focus and learning outcomes of the course. The activity could be seen as an extension of formative assessment where the students are not only asked to evaluate the course continuously and suggest changes, but also given the opportunity to actually implement some of the suggested changes. Their work with designing and reflecting on the outcome is part of their assessed and examined tasks in the course.

Student-led Leadership Labs

Groups of 4-5 students in the course *Climate Change Leadership – Power, Politics and Culture*, choose a topic they are interested in and co-create and lead a 'Leadership Lab' for their peers. Each group is responsible for 1 hour of class time during the semester. This involves planning and then facilitating the leadership lab. The content and activity is totally free, and the students are encouraged to use alternative formats to lecture. Due to a great diversity of knowledge and interests among students it is hard to accommodate everyone's needs throughout the course. These occasions give students the opportunity to explore topics and concepts that are not part of the regular schedule, though still within the course framework and goals, and introduce them to their peers. Moreover, they get to practise facilitation and leadership skills, which are more difficult to fit into a more traditional lecture series, yet which the students are meant to practise as part of the learning outcomes for the course.

Students organising field trips

In a number of CEMUS courses, students are asked to organise their own field trips in relation to an assessed task, e.g. a group project dealing with local or regional challenges involving different members and actors in the community. The outcome and insights gained from the field trips are then shared with peers in various formats (examples have included video-documentary, art installations, performances, role-plays, posters etc.).

Interview-lectures and students as moderators

In the course *Actors and Strategies for Change – Towards Global Sustainabilities*, a number of guest lecturers (from academia, civil society, business, government, etc.) are invited to the course. Each invited guest lecturer is hosted by a smaller group of students from the course who interview the invited lecturer, based on the theme and learning outcomes of the course, their research on the specific guest lecturer’s work, and what the student group agrees may be most meaningful for the class as a whole. This could be seen as flipped classroom exercise but requires even more from the lecturers, as they need to sometimes be able to improvise when questions come up that they perhaps hadn’t thought of beforehand.

Students as educational developers for continuous development of active student participation

CEMUS in collaboration with Uppsala University’s Division for Quality Enhancement initiated a project 2014-2016 with the aim to provide sustainable structures and support for the continuous development of active student participation in higher education across the university. The project was supported by the vice chancellor’s fund and CEMUS was made responsible to hire 3 students to work in the project on 20-50% basis for 2 years with a project leader recruited from the staff of the Division for Quality Enhancement. The students hired for the project grew quickly into the role of educational developers and a form of student-consultants, especially in connection to student-faculty partnerships across the university. The project

is now in a stage of transition, where a more long-term arrangement is being developed.

Student-led and collaborative activities as a force for renewal in higher education

The contributions and support from senior academics (researchers and faculty) have always been a crucial part of the CEMUS educational model. But one could also turn that around and say that the CEMUS educational environment has been a crucial part of the researcher and faculty-member’s academic life. The engagement by more senior academics in CEMUS has inspired the development of new educational initiatives in other parts of the university (including new master programmes), the development of new research fields, as well as innovations and projects that stretch well outside the university. The involvement has been described by one of the professors that was part of establishing CEMUS in the early 1990’s as, ‘the most remarkable and unexpected experience that he has been a part of in his academic life’.

Read more from these sources:

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Stoddard, I., Rieser, I., Andersson, S., Friman, E. (2012). *Igniting a Learning Revolution: Student-Run Higher Education for Sustainable Development*. *The Solutions Journal*, 3(5), 34-39.

Barrineau, S., & Anderson, L. (2018). Learning’ betwixt and between’: Opportunities and challenges for student-driven partnership. *International Journal for Students As Partners*, 2(1), 16-32.

No. 13 **Co-created course in Physics for Chemists**
by Marcus Lundberg & Charlotta Bengtson

What A course was recreated with student and staff collaboration.

How We explored different levels of student participation in the development of a course in physics. The first step was to interview students in different stages of education to understand what they need to learn. In the second step, we formed a course development team, consisting of six students, who represented different phases of the education programme, and two teachers, to work on the new course.

Why We wanted to create a positive attitude towards the course right from the start by signaling that we were deeply committed to improving the course. Students have the best knowledge about how important different concepts are for the rest of the programme courses and were integral to making this possible. We also got direct knowledge from the students of the best teaching methods being used by the other teachers in the programme.

- Pros**
- Much more concrete suggestions for improvements than we received from just interviews and evaluations.
 - Clear focus on improving the parts that were difficult for the students.
 - Got new material beyond what the teachers had previously used and were familiar with.

- Cons** Some challenges are:
- Finding the right balance between being clear with the goals of the project and giving the students the freedom to change things.
 - Obtaining a representative selection of students, for example, those who have been ignored and / or dislike the course.
 - Getting resources to run the project and pay students.

Read more about the process in this peer-reviewed journal article:

Bengtson, C., Ahlkvist, M., Ekeröth, W., Nilsen-Moe, A., Proos Vedin, N., Rodiuchkina, K., Ye, S., and Lundberg, M. (2017). Working as Partners: Course Development by a Student-Teacher Team. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 11(2), Article 6.

Within a course

Within a programme

Across disciplines

In planning and evaluation

Outside scheduled time



Examples of Active Student Participation

No. 14 **Student - Teacher collaboration in the Physical Therapy programme** by Henrik Johansson

What Students in collaboration with faculty plan to create a better forum for dialogue on proposed changes in course structure and content.

How The students (in cooperation with teachers on education) plan to create a better forum for dialogue regarding proposals for changes in the layout and content of a course. During the course, representatives from students who attend the course, students who have passed the previous semester, and students who will attend the course next semester, meet together with the course coordinator and teacher from undergraduate education. Dialogue should occur if proposed changes in previous course evaluations have been taken, if current students who have passed the course have suggestions for 'acute' or upcoming changes (something that representatives from students who will attend the course may experience), if the course supervisor has wishes, etc.

Why Students were dissatisfied with course content and wanted to experience changes beyond filling out course evaluations.

Pros Hopefully improved dialogue between course managers and students which can ultimately lead to an improved course.

Cons It remains to be seen!

No. 15 **The Reflective Engineer**
by Anna Bergentz & Theodoros Voulgaridis

- What**
- Students bring up missing perspectives through the student-initiated and led organisation *The Reflective Engineer* (DRI).
- How**
- As the name suggests, we want engineering students to reflect on topics that we find missing in our education. These themes include the three parts within the concept of sustainability: environment, economy, and social values, but also ethics and other topics that our peers want to highlight, thus enabling engineering students to realise that not only hard facts are essential to engineers in their working lives. To achieve this, we conduct interesting lectures, seminars, and other events that we consider to benefit our goals. We are also working with faculty members to ensure that these issues reach as many as possible.
- Why**
- Our world is facing major challenges today. Many people have chosen to engage in various organisations to contribute to a world that we can proudly hand over to subsequent generations. However, among the founders of DRI, there was a frustration that, in spite of a broad knowledge base, engineers generally do not act as change agents. We felt that our education did not raise ‘softer’



Click to watch two students reflect on the importance of this initiative [3min50sec]

issues but focused only on specific technical science. Our goal was therefore to raise the students’ interest in these topics so that they, through active student influence, can set their own requirements for university. In addition to teaching engineers to do math, education also needs to teach them to reflect.

- Pros**
- The importance of these subjects being highlighted
 - The positive feedback that participants of our events expressed
 - The rewarding work this has meant for our members
- Cons**
- The challenge to have enough time and to recruit members who are prepared to volunteer their time in order to maintain DRI’s continuity.
 - The challenge to reach out to all different engineering courses.
 - The challenge to receive contributions that cover the expenses of our events and still be independent.
 - The challenge of keeping a red thread through our work while providing a varied range of topics that attracts many students.

Within a course

Within a programme

Across disciplines

In planning and evaluation

Outside scheduled time

No. 16 The Biomedical Sciences Association (BVF)
by Adam Engberg & Olle Eriksson

- What** Students organise extracurricular lab sessions for their peers.
- How** The Biomedical Sciences Association (BVF) is an initiative based on the desire to create a forum for committed students to express their fascination with science and be inspired by like-minded people in a safe environment. BVF is a student-driven association that organises laboratory work in the evenings, but also acts as a discussion forum for interested students in the biomedicine programme. This, we believe, has led to increased knowledge and fascination as well as increased cooperation between different cohorts of students.
- Why** This is a platform that offers the opportunity to explore topics / areas not included in the normal education programme.

No. 17 Ekolibria
by Sachiko Ishihara

- What** A student-led organisation engaged in providing education for sustainable development to local schools. Website: <http://ekolibria.wixsite.com/home>.
- How** Ekolibria gathers students who have an interest in planning and facilitating learning activities for young people in upper-secondary and high school. In collaboration with teachers at local schools, members of Ekolibria plan and facilitate lectures and full-day workshops with the purpose of providing young people with relevant skills to actively take part in the transformation towards a sustainable society. The sessions and activities are planned utilising the different expert fields of the heterogenous group of students engaged at Ekolibria and the focus lies on experimental and innovative learning activities.
- Why** The organisation's purpose is to engage high school students with knowledge about sustainable development while at the same time enabling university students to develop their pedagogical skills. With an approach embedded in the practice of education for sustainable development (ESD), there is a strong focus on experimental forms of teaching.



Click here or visit the ASP website to watch Ekolibria's presentation at the ASP Days [23min50sec]

C. Active student participation in evaluation and quality enhancement

In Sweden, higher education institutions and the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) have a shared responsibility for quality assurance in higher education and research. Students are by law ensured the possibility of being involved in quality reviews. Moreover, quality reviews need to include both student and doctoral student perspectives in terms of how student influence works in practice. Are students given opportunities and incentives to participate in the higher education institution’s quality assurance processes and the development of courses and programmes?

Quality assurance is a major part of the work that higher education institutions undertake. Some of the most common ways that students are involved in quality enhancement work are through the evaluation of courses. Yet there are a rich variety of ways to include students in these quality processes. The model above (Figure 14) is intended to help those involved in the quality assurance process to map out the different stages in the process in which students are or are not involved, as well as make clear the roles in terms of students’ involvement - the students’ roles in quality development. Using a recent pilot for a new quality system at Uppsala University, the different activities and roles could be exemplified as shown in Figure 15.

D. Active student participation in educational development

In this last section, we address particularly educational developers who want to enhance ASP in their own learning environments. During the last few years, a growing number of books and articles, conferences as well as educational projects indicate that ASP is becoming increasingly important in the field of educational development. Since ASP often contains new and even provoking ideas for educators as well as for students, educational developers should carefully reflect on how you could introduce ASP in a fruitful way. At the same time, co-creation projects between educational developers and students such as the ASP project at Uppsala University, are still a fairly unexplored territory. Therefore, we offer some examples from our work as well as concrete tips for how to integrate an ASP perspective in educational development.

Student participation in evaluation and quality development

Evaluation activity ➡	Gathering information	Assessment / Interpretation	Acting on outcomes – development and improvements	Sharing information / Implementation
⬇ Student roles				
None	Not involved			
Responding/ Participating	Responding to course evaluations & teachers questions			
Defining/ Creating	Formulating questions, leading interviews, making observations			

Figure 14: Student participation in evaluation and quality development

Evaluation activity ➡	Gathering information	Assessment / Interpretation	Acting on outcomes – development and improvements	Sharing information / Implementation
⬇ Student roles				
None	-	-	-	-
Responding/ Participating	All the involved units used course evaluations and a student barometer as material in writing their self-evaluation	The Department of Linguistics and Philology involved a group of students who were tasked with independently reading the department’s self-evaluation and writing a summary indicating key areas for development		Students from most units participated in panels in a university-wide conference summerising the results of the evaluations
Defining/ Creating	The physiotherapy programme involved a group of students to construct their own set of questions and conducted interviews in campus areas like the student cafeteria	The group of students wrote a report with interpretations of their findings...	... and met up with involved educators, compared their findings, and co-developed measures	?

Figure 15: Student participation in evaluation and quality development – an example

Educational developers have a key role in enhancing teaching and learning in higher education. In courses, seminars, and workshops, they often bring together educators from different academic fields and from diverse cultures. In introducing ASP, educational developers can raise questions about the overall purpose of higher education, present ASP as an overall ethos, and give concrete examples of how students might be involved. They can support educators and students who want to test new approaches, critically evaluate partnership and co-creation projects, and share evaluation results across the university. Moreover, they can make use of your former contacts and networks and build up a group of co-agents for ASP that can spread ideas and experiences among their own colleagues. Beyond that, ASP may also be practised in educational development work itself: there are several opportunities of involving students in educational work; you will find a few examples from our own practice at Uppsala University below.



Teachers presenting and discussing the winning student suggestions on how to improve their education

In their article about the role of educational developers for co-creation approaches in education, Bovill, Cook-Sather, and Felten (2011) point out the need for strategies that help developers meet educators' reflections, questions, and eventual doubts and distrust in a professional and constructive way. Developers can take an intermediary role and bring together educators and students outside their habitual structures and hierarchies. Meeting in a 'third space' can prevent educators and students from perceiving each other as antagonists and facilitate dialogue and


collaboration on a more equal basis. However, since in their usual work developers mostly target educators, they have to explore new ways to come in contact with students, for example by supervising or coaching ASP projects at various departments. Based on the authors' own experiences and on previous literature, the article includes recommendations for educational developers such as: a) to help educators to identify context-appropriate and small-scale initiatives to start with; b) to create 'liminal spaces' for educators and students to meet; c) to encourage faculty to value the process instead of having a solely focus on the 'product', and; d) to evaluate co-creation initiatives in order to build up a stronger basis of evidence.

Our own experiences confirm these recommendations. Moreover, we would like to add the following:

- Since ASP is not only a simple teaching approach, but a 'threshold concept' - 'troublesome, transformative, irreversible and integrative' (Cook-Sather, 2014), there is a need to discuss, explore, and experience ASP even within the field of educational development itself. In promoting ASP, it is key to provide frequent opportunities for your colleagues in educational development to explore the field - eventually together with students - in order to broaden preconceptions, examine expectations, and obviate misconceptions.
- When providing 'third space'-opportunities for educators and students to meet, think carefully about the design of the learning activity you plan in order to enhance participation on equal terms and a non-threatening atmosphere. How is the activity framed and introduced in order to clarify its purpose and participants' roles and expectations? Do you expect initial barriers that could eventually be overcome, e.g. by a mingle activity in the beginning? Does the physical environment facilitate group discussion? How might group work be designed to ensure that students are not a minority among educators? How can you tackle the risk that students are treated not as individuals, but as representative for all students (and might be blamed for all kind of things)? What topics and questions promote true dialogue rather than polarisation?

- As an educational developer who wants to involve students in educational development projects, you might consider the following:
 - Think about how students are chosen: try to find students who are interested in the project.
 - For a vast majority of students, educational development is an unfamiliar domain. Therefore, set aside plenty of time to get to know each other, introduce the project, discuss roles and expectations, etc.
 - Make sure that there is enough freedom in order to formulate project goals and courses of action together.
 - Clarify why student perspectives are valued and help students to explore and verbalise their expertise and skills; they might not be conscious about what they are able to contribute with and why their knowledge and ideas are valued.

The following sections present examples of students who were involved in educational development activities at Uppsala University. *Before reading these, you might reflect on how you could get started with ASP in your own work (see next page):*



REFLECTION

An educational project where I might involve students:

How do I invite and find / select students?

Why is student participation valuable for the project?

What are incentives for students to participate?

Organising a student competition

In March 2015, the ASP project organised a two-day mini-conference dubbed **Active Student Participation Days** at Uppsala University, with lectures, presentations, mingles, workshops, and a conference dinner. The goal was to invite interested students and educators to come together in order to exchange and develop ideas on how to realise ASP in their own teaching and learning contexts.

In conjunction with the ASP Days and in collaboration with the student unions, we arranged a competition in order to engage students from the entire university by inviting them to share their best ideas for how to make their education better. To begin with, the project group visited various campus areas in order to reach as many students as possible and to engage them in thinking of constructive ways to improve their education. We set up a small table with handouts and free coffee and cookies (this tends to attract both students and faculty). Visiting the campuses was time-consuming, but having a personal contact with students was a huge advantage; many short conversations with students connected us better with their personal experiences within their own learning contexts.

The prompt for the competition asked for one A4 page explaining and arguing for students' ideas on how to improve their education. Students were encouraged to participate individually or to write in small groups, with the following questions given as guidelines:

- If you became responsible for developing a new component of your course, what would you do?
- How can education better take advantage of your experiences, skills, and abilities?
- Do you have the world's best idea for how to make group work meaningful for all participants?
- How would you design an exam that would maximise your chances to show everything you learned?
- Do you have the best solution to make education at Uppsala University more equal and interactive?



Click to get a glimpse of what it looked like in this short film from the ASP Days
[3min32sec]

In the meantime, we put together a jury consisting of three students from various student unions and three educators that were selected due to their special interest in ASP. During the first meeting, we spent time for co-creating competition criteria, while the second meeting was determined to choose the competition winners. For this, the group developed a systematic voting scheme with a short motivation that supported the final selection of winners, that were even announced during the ASP Days. During this, the five winning contributors had also the opportunity to present their idea on the spot with the group at large, and answer questions from the audience.



Figure 16: Student competition flyer and advertisement

A great deal of ideas presented in the competition contributions were about how to get peers to be more engaged in the subjects. A psychology student referred, for example, to many of her peers as students who have mastered 'strategic learning', which means that they know exactly what is expected of them, and manage their time as effectively as possible, but have lost their genuine curiosity and engagement. The antidote to these *study zombies*, as she calls them, is to set aside one day midway through the course to stimulate student reflection on: What makes this subject

worthwhile engaging with? What are the most exciting things about it for you? Later on, after having reflected on their genuine inner motivation, students can present what they have come up with, hopefully inspiring each other. Other contributions dealt with student contributions outside the traditional classroom. So, one proposal named *UpLearn* suggested that students, supported by technical staff, can co-create study material in the form of videos around topics they find most interesting in their current studies. Students can hone content knowledge as well as their communicative skills, at the same time as the university gets a student-created knowledge base, since all videos are accessible online. Yet another category gave suggestions on how students could be a more positive force in the local community. For example, one project that was already put in practice by students studying to become teachers, helped school pupils lacking support from home to do their homework. Furthermore, there were numerous suggestions concerning inclusive pedagogy, for example gender awareness in physics and law or pedagogical support for students with dyslexia. Additional ideas were about flipping the classroom in order to increase student-educator interaction or inspiring peers to arrange a student-led conference where students share their knowledge by **pecha kucha**.



***Pecha Kucha** is a presentation format that consists of a powerpoint presentation with 20 slides, and each slide is shown for 20 seconds. The entire presentation is therefore 6 minutes*

Even if the competition was a success in terms of inspiring students to think about pedagogical improvements and to share their ideas², there are several areas for improvements. As a means to increase the number of contributions, there could be workshops for students in order to get support and to inspire each other. Another area for improvement is to actually help students to put their ideas into effect, for example by arranging a meeting with key persons at the department level in order to introduce student ideas and take steps to realise them.

Supporting student participation at pedagogical conferences

In conjunction with the student competition, participants were invited to present their ideas at the biannual Conference for Pedagogical Development at Uppsala University. The conference is an arena typically inhabited by educators and utilised as an oppor-

² Read the competition submissions on the ASP website - direct link [here](#). Most of the texts are in Swedish, but feel free to contact us to get a better picture.

tunity to share teaching experiences. Since we recognised that there are many spaces where educators can discuss students and how to better work with/engage students, but rarely any spaces where educators can ask *students* about this (see for example Allin, 2014), we intended to create an opportunity for students and educators to reflect on teaching and learning together, outside the normal classroom atmosphere.

Though it was a challenge to engage students, often due to a lack of time, in the end several students participated with presentations. Some wondered if their ideas for improvements would be taken seriously by the conference audience; however, students' contributions were received positively. Nevertheless, it remains a challenge to involve students in future conferences since this is not a 'natural' arena for student engagement and there is no routine to invite students as conference contributors on a more regular basis.



Students from across the university submitted pedagogical ideas to the ASP competition

Integrating ASP into Academic Teacher Training Courses

According to the 'Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University. Visions for Educational Activity and Development' (2018),³ professors, senior lecturers, and lecturers must have ten weeks

³ Available from the Uppsala University website - direct link [here](#).

training in academic teaching and learning. This is based on the Association of Swedish Higher Education’s recommendations on goals for professional training in academic teaching and learning or equivalent acquired and documented knowledge. Furthermore, it is stated that PhD students and post-doctoral researchers with teaching duties will have five weeks basic training in academic teaching and learning. Based on this, the Academic Teacher Training Course offers five weeks of basic training including twelve course-days on campus. Thus, this basic course offers a good opportunity to introduce ASP for a wide range of staff with teaching duties.

The model below (Figure 17) shows some of the opportunities for integrating ASP into academic teacher training courses. It

ASP in Academic Teacher Training Courses

Level of integration	Suggested activity	Ethos
Information and examples about ASP / students as co-creators	1. Examples of ASP (digital resources, articles etc.)	Students as consumers or producers / democratic education
	2. Inviting actual students to share their experience as peer-teachers, co-creators etc.	
	3. Educator or participant initiated recurring discussions and reflections about educator/student roles, peer-feedback, heterogeneous group work, peer-learning, etc.	
Course participants are working with their own teaching practice and ways to invite students as co-creators	Participants working at developing their own suggestions concerning how their students can assume a higher degree of responsibility and influence over their learning	Including educators and students in planning, facilitating, and evaluating teacher training courses together with educational developers
	Giving space for the experience and perceptions of the participants to be assets for learning	
Course participants are co-creating parts of the course	1. Participant-driven sessions	
	2. Participants gathering examples that they believe would be possible to apply in their context	
	3. Participants developing their own suggestions regarding how they themselves can be part of co-creating courses	

Figure 17: Integrating ASP in Academic Teacher Training Courses

emphasises the variety of ways in which integration can be done and aims at providing support and inspiration when designing courses for educators. The left-hand column shows the level of integration of ASP in the course and subsequently, the multiple roles learners (in this case, the course participants) can take in relation to ASP. These roles in combination with working with ASP as content, method, or ethos offer a variety of entry points to ASP in teacher training courses, depending on the framework and goals of the course.

Involving students in strategic educational development

The following examples illustrate different ways of making ASP a part of strategic educational development at Uppsala University. Some examples are about creating arenas for students and educators to come together and discuss teaching and learning in depth. Other examples are about involving students in order to improve the quality of educational development efforts, namely creating teaching material that recognises students’ perspectives and values their expertises. Finally, there are examples for how to make ASP visible across the university by integrating student engagement in the university’s guidelines for teaching and learning and by rewarding outstanding efforts and projects linked to ASP.

Pedagogical seminars for educators and students

Every semester, the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University arranges a seminar on course evaluations for educators. In recent times, there has been a special endeavour to invite students to participate in the seminar. Feedback from educators has been positive since they can learn from students how to overcome typical challenges such as how to motivate students to fill in course evaluations and give feedback to students afterwards.

Conference on ASP

In March 2015, our project arranged a two-day conference for students and educators from the whole university with presentations, seminars, and workshops on different aspects of ASP; (read more about these ASP Days in Chapter 1). In their feedback, many students and educators expressed that the invitation to come together on equal terms, where participant’s contributions

are appreciated equally, in order to discuss pedagogical issues was an enriching and energising experience. *A physics student reflected afterwards in a blog post as follows*⁴:

'Last Thursday to Friday, me and two classmates attended the 'ASP Days', a kind of conference focused on active student participation. It consisted of lectures, workshops, group discussions and lunch and coffee with researchers in the subject. It was absolutely incredible and inspiring! [--] I think it would have benefited us students if we had more influence on the structure of our education, in a variety of ways discussed during the days.

We also discussed various reasons why there is often such a reluctance to allow students to have a greater influence on their education. I would think that it is often linked to the view of education as pure knowledge acquisition, and that the university is not responsible for students' personal development (which is definitely promoted if students are allowed to participate in the design of their curricula). And, as lecturer Cherie Woolmer pointed out, students are not seen as competent colleagues, that only may have a slightly different perspective that can contribute to improvements. Overall, the conference gave a lot of energy and a desire to improve education on these points.'

⁴ Authors' own translation from Swedish. Blog post retrieved from: <http://kandfyuppsala.blogspot.se/>

Creating teaching material in collaboration with students

The Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University recently developed several films on how to support students with dyslexia. The films were made in cooperation with the association for 'Students with dyslexia'; students participated in screenwriting and were also interviewed in the films. Moreover, all films were directed by a former student with special expertise as a filmmaker.⁵

Integrating an ASP perspective in educational policies

Already in the first edition of 'Guidelines for Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University' (2008), it was made clear that teaching and learning is a shared responsibility of teachers and students. Even the second edition, 'Teaching and Learning at Uppsala University' (2018), emphasises learning and teaching as a shared endeavour and highlights educators' as well as students' roles and responsibilities.

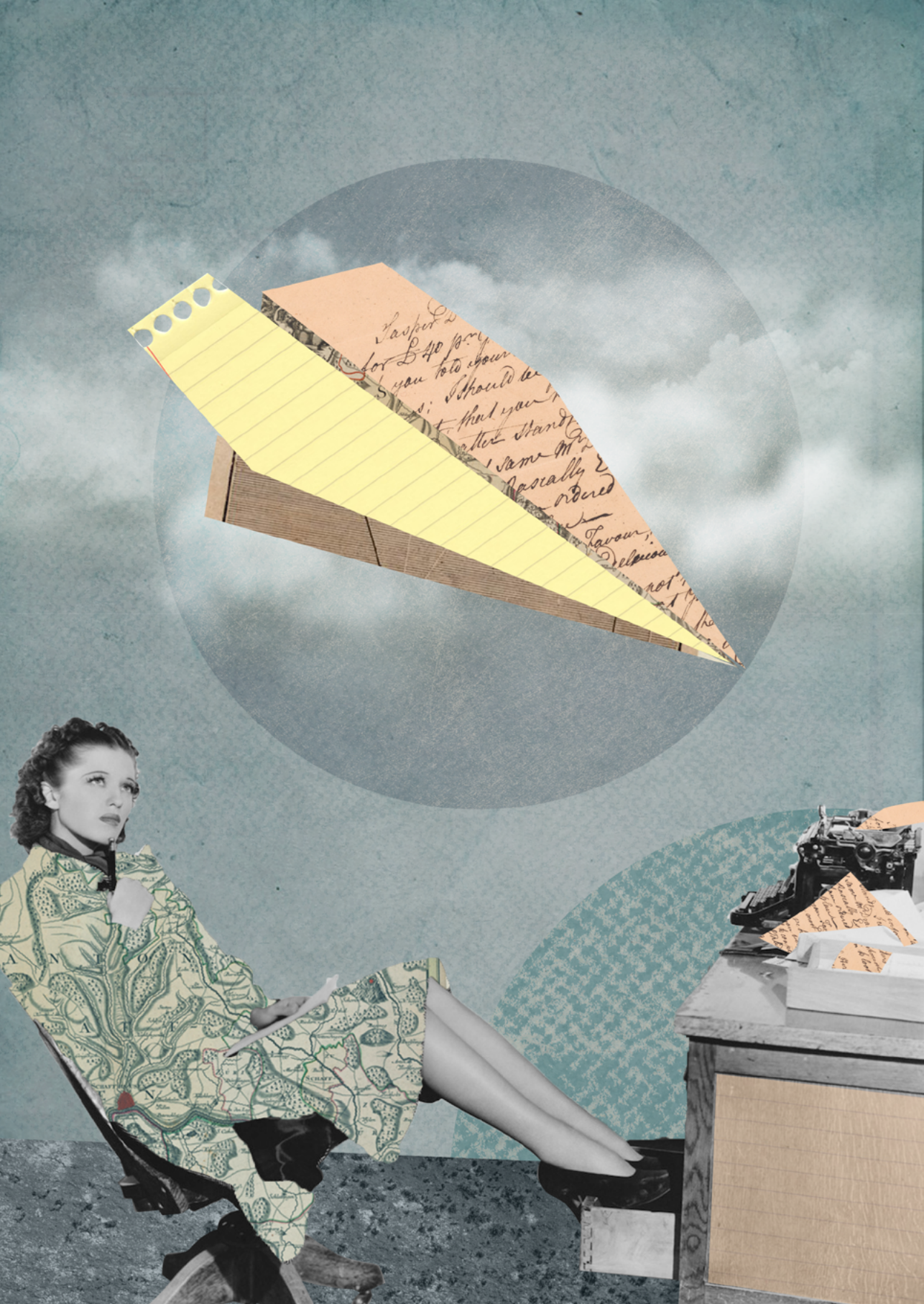
Teaching Award for ASP

Uppsala University annually awards five pedagogical prizes of SEK 20,000 each for outstanding contributions within education. Four prizes are allocated for educators in various scientific domains, while the fifth prize is awarded to pedagogical contributions within a particularly prioritised field chosen and announced annually. In 2013, this prize was allocated to Malin Östman at CEMUS for her outstanding work with ASP.

Special Funding for ASP projects

For the purpose of supporting educational development at Uppsala University, there are project grants funding available each year with a total amount of SEK 1,000,000. Funding is awarded to several projects, with a maximum of SEK 100,000 to each of these. Since 2018, SEK 250,000 have been dedicated for ASP projects. According to the funding criteria, funding for ASP is intended for student's participation in all different parts of the teaching and learning – development and planning, implementation, examination and assessment. There is also a requirement that students need to be directly involved in the projects.

⁵ See films [here](#).



Getting Active

*What would you
like to develop?*

Getting Active

What Would You Like to Develop?

This is a space for you, whether student or educator, to develop your own ideas. Here you will find guiding questions to organise your thoughts, envision how success might look, foresee challenges, and think strategically. This worksheet could also be used in groups to develop ideas together. Both students and educators could benefit from outlining their ideas first before taking the next step to propose or test out something new.

This worksheet is inspired by Alison Cook-Sather, Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges, US.

Developing active student participation approaches where you teach and learn

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO?

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT OR RESOURCES DO YOU NEED?

TIMELINE?

OBSTACLES OR CHALLENGES?

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

*WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP YOU NEED TO TAKE IN
ORDER TO IMPLEMENT YOUR IDEA?*



**“It all sounds
great, but...”**

*On How to Clear Hurdles
and Acquire a Decent
Parachute*

“It all sounds great, but...” On How to Clear Hurdles and Acquire a Decent Parachute

This chapter starts with a short text about the difficulties of finding a way to work with ASP that invites without alienating and engages without excluding, which we call working between Scylla and Charybdis. We then invite you to engage with three ‘true stories’ from Uppsala University, illustrating what educators often perceive as a lack of student engagement and providing you, the reader, with some space to reflect on how you would have worked in each case. The chapter then moves on to ways in which we in the higher education teaching and learning community can approach and work with power. This is followed by reflections on a number of challenges posed by students and educators that we, the authors, have met. However, this chapter is incomplete and concludes with numerous ‘unsolved’ challenges to which we hope you the readers can contribute with your experiences and insights.

Acknowledging the many challenges that could come up when inhabiting the field of collaboration may be paralysing. However, we believe that these challenges are an inherent part of true engagement with other people, and not working with them does not mean that they disappear. We therefore argue that an important aspect of realising these challenges is still to try and continuously think about, a) what it is that you do and b) why you do it. Our approaches to these challenges and complexities are by and large inspired by how others have worked with them. To make your own summary reflecting on this chapter, you can also go back to the worksheet presented in Chapter 5 and add additional points concerning ‘Obstacles and challenges’.

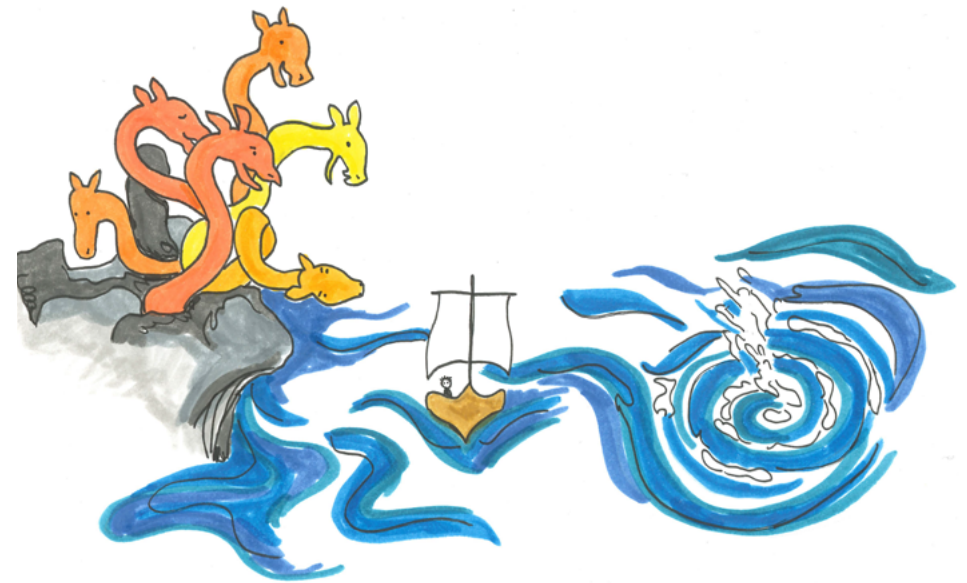
For ideas and advice for starting initiatives as a student, check out Chapter 3



*Start with a short film on Challenges and Opportunities of Working with ASP
[3min51sec]*



Between Scylla and Charybdis: Navigating student engagement polarities



Working with ASP can be part of solving many challenges that students and educators face today in higher education, yet it can also inadvertently make passive or alienate students. In other words, when students and educators work in new (ASP) ways but fail to critically look at each step along the way, their actions may have the opposite of their intended effects. It may well be that not everyone experiences the process as positive. Perhaps an apt metaphor of these challenges could be Odysseus sailing his ship through the perilous strait cornered by the sea-monsters Scylla and Charybdis in Homer’s epic, where the challenge lies in the need to avoid each one without drifting too close to the other.

In this picture and story, you can see many risks or challenges. The narrow space between the two ‘monsters’ represents a pathway through, where the sailors are likely to sail too closely to one or the other monster, but where the monsters’ wrath is eased by continuous balanced and thoughtful approaches. We have used this model to engage others in critical conversations about challenges in working with ASP, but more importantly, about the

pathway(s) through them and what those might look like. For example, we could engage with the different tensions in higher education (see Chapter 1), critically reflecting on the consumer model of education ‘monster’ where, on one side, students are customers in the higher education market and exercise their consumer choice, learning what they want, whereas on the other side, homogenic groups of educators fail to include the voices and perspectives from an increasingly diverse student body, thereby depriving higher education of a wealth of knowledge and ideas by pushing students through a factory-line education. These are, of course, extremes meant to illustrate major tensions within higher education and to be used as a point of discussion. As such, students and educators may experience these tensions to varying degrees depending on their own contexts.



Photo: Anne Marte Johnsen

Students and teachers discussing the reasons and incentives of engaging in ASP

In the table to the right are other themes or challenges related to these tensions, but also more specifically about power balances and inclusion. Simply read, you could say that on the left side you find different representations of handing over responsibility and influence to students in ways that does not put their learning in the centre, while on the other side you find representations of what might be called too little critical attention to student participation. The space in between these two columns represents the narrow path one might sail to avoid falling strictly into either column.

Student engagement challenges: Taking a balanced approach

Students feel they have the right to choose what quality education is; they are able to opt out and censure things that go against their convictions.

Higher education fails to relate to a changing society and new groups of students. It is therefore deprived of important perspectives from the variety of different cultures and life experiences of students and risks alienating members (students and educators) of its academic community.

Educators and students both see students as customers, with the result that there is an increased instrumental and individualistic view on education.

Students cannot see their own responsibility for the quality of their education and become or remain passive.

Students are utilised as cheap and under-qualified substitutes for educators.

Economic issues, throughput, and competition between different universities means that there is a focus on outputs and not processes.

Planning education based on the idea that engagement equals quality might cater for very specific groups of students who are adapted to that kind of learning dynamics.

Higher education institutions focus too much on providing society with work skills and fails with the overarching commitment of educating citizens.

Three stories about engaging students

So what does this mean for practice? The next part provides some space to reflect in relation to three authentic stories about ASP from different departments at Uppsala University. All include typical problems that may occur when educators start using ASP approaches. In Part I, you can read about the different initiatives and what happened when educators invited students to get more engaged. All stories have an open end and it is obvious that something has to be done in order to handle the situation. But what? In Part II, we ask you to reflect on just that by sorting out what happened, what problem(s) occurred, and how these might be tackled. Since all stories are about critical incidents that can be handled in lots of different ways, there is not only one possible solution. However, we invite you to decide on what you actually would do if you were in the main characters' situations. Inspired by case-pedagogy, we use a matrix that hopefully helps you with this.¹ Finally, in Part III, you can read more about how educators and students actually acted upon the challenges they faced, and make your own summary by comparing with your own reflections.

Part I - Meet Jörgen, Miriam, Marcus and Charlotta

Peer-to-peer course introduction challenge

Jörgen is responsible for a course in the middle of a programme with a large number of students from non-academic backgrounds. Previously, the course has suffered from a high percentage of failing students. Thinking that this is partly because of the lack of experience among the students on how to approach and/or plan studies within higher education, Jörgen gets the idea to invite students from later stages of the programme to the course introduction, to share their best study tips. He decides to make this peer-supported session a compulsory part of the first day of the course. He thinks that it is best to schedule this session at the end of the day - giving students a chance to gather all their questions and hopefully get answers to all of them from their peer-student.

¹ See: <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/learning/learning-activities/case-method-teaching>

Jörgen also decides that he will not join the session, since his presence may hinder students from asking some of the questions they think about. After a few weeks, Jörgen is pleasantly surprised to find it easy to engage a couple of senior students willing to share their experiences.

The course introduction starts off well, with a lot of new students attending. As the day comes to an end and the senior students arrive to share their experiences, Jörgen leaves the class with a positive feeling, planning on continuing with similar sessions in the future. This feeling quickly changes though when Jörgen comes back and learns that only one fifth of the students had stayed in order to meet their peers. Jörgen feels embarrassed for the sake of the fellow students and frustrated over the disrespect shown by those who opted out of the session. On the way back to his office, he thinks: ‘Things did not go as I expected. I really have to handle this.’

Student mentorship obstacles

Miriam is a PhD-student at the Department of Modern Languages. During an academic teacher training course, she learns of the peer-supported learning format called Supplemental Instruction. She is inspired by what she hears, and is keen to suggest that some of the introductory courses at her institution should try out supplementary study groups led by senior students, based on Supplemental Instruction pedagogy. Miriam hopes that, among other things, this might help new students to adopt to the demands of a higher education environment more easily and support a smoother transition as well as enhancing the community in a very diverse student group. In addition to a positive response from the faculty, Miriam also receives pedagogical development funding, allowing her to allocate more time in planning the initiative. Realising that the university also offers a short course for student mentors, Miriam goes ahead and starts engaging students, quickly finding several that are interested from each of the languages that are taught at her department.

As the new semester starts, the new student mentors have taken a short course in leadership and pedagogy, study rooms have been booked, and time has been allocated in student schedules. At the first mentor session, Miriam decides to take audit rounds to be able to give her student mentors support if needed. While visiting



the first group, much to her dismay, she sees that only two out of the thirty or so students in class are attending the session whilst three mentors are present. Lots of thoughts come up in Miriam's head all at once - what should she do?

Course co-creation hiccups

Marcus teaches chemistry and has recently become responsible for a course that suffers from a bad reputation, with declining numbers of students applying and recurring negative course evaluations. After having taught the course for one semester with minor changes, Marcus and Charlotta, a PhD-student with great interest in new learning and teaching approaches, decide that they want to do a complete renewal in cooperation with students. The project is encouraged by colleagues that have already tried similar co-creative processes together with students. Marcus and Charlotta find it important to engage more than one student, optimally a group of five or six, and that this group should include students who have previously passed the course as well as students who are soon to take the course. They also decide to pay the students who work with re-designing the course. Furthermore, they agree to strive for democratic decision-making procedures, implying that they as educators will not own the right to make final decisions.

In good spirits, Marcus and Charlotta start recruiting students; they present their idea for co-creation to students they know from previous courses, for students in classes they are currently teaching and students in other classes, and for the student unions. After two weeks, Marcus and Charlotta meet again. Much to their distress, they realise that only one single student has expressed any form of interest. Something has to be done. How should they go on?

Part II - What would you do?

The following matrix is often used in case-pedagogy in order to help people to analyse what might be the problem(s) in a certain case and to come up with a solution. How would you handle the different situations if *you* were Jörgen, Miriam, Marcus, and Charlotta? Use the matrix in order to reflect on your own before proceeding to Part III. You can reflect on one of the cases at a time, or all of them simultaneously.

<div><i>Facts</i></div> <div>What do we know?</div>	<div><i>Problem</i></div> <div>What is the problem?</div>	<div><i>Reason</i></div> <div>What causes the problem?</div>	<div><i>What if?</i></div> <div>What happens if nothing is done?</div>	<div><i>Solution</i></div> <div>How would you solve the problem?</div>	<div><i>Consequences</i></div> <div>What consequences do you expect if the problem is solved in this way?</div>

Part III - What happened then?

Peer-to-peer course introduction challenge

After a good night of sleep, Jörgen decides that he somehow wants to remind the absentees of the importance of collaboration and respect for their peers. Therefore, he informs all the students that had been absent that they have to write a make-up assignment. In this, they should reflect on why they did not participate and what effect this may have had on the students who were present as well as for their senior student peers. This creates quite a workload for Jörgen, but also results in some interesting reflections from the students. For example, some write that they did not participate because they assumed that they would not get anything out of listening to the other students. Others say that reflecting on this made them more aware of the joined processes that go on in learning, including that their absence also might affect the learning of their peers. It further prompts reflections that show remorse for not taking the time of their peers seriously.

For Jörgen, the experience makes visible some important challenges concerning the way that educators engage students. One is the potential problem of not all students attending this kind of session - might it be that those who attended were those that most needed the advice? Another reflection is that placing the session as the last point of information and the fact that the course instructor did not stick around for the session, both might have contributed to students not interpreting the session as important as other parts of the introduction.

Student mentorship obstacles

After a few moments of uncertainty, pondering if she should comment on the low number of participating students and/or suggest that the session should be postponed, Miriam decides to let the student mentors handle the situation by themselves. Since the student mentors had learned during their own training that it is important to appreciate those that are present instead of focusing on the absentees, the mentors try to make the most out of the situation for their peers and go on with the session.

For the rest of the semester, the number of participants stay around 2-4 students, but those who attend are positive and also

apply to become student mentors themselves. Other subjects at the department that are taking part in the pilot have slightly better attendance, with groups of around 5-6 students. Thus, it is decided to continue with the mentorship groups for a few more semesters. With careful scheduling, revamped information about the meetings during the start of the semester, continuous information from educators about the meetings, and more experienced student mentors, participant numbers have been slowly increasing each semester. Getting students to participate does, however, still constitute the biggest challenge even a couple of years into the programme.

Course co-creation hiccups

After an initial meeting with the only student that expressed interest, the group decides that it might be worth another shot at engaging more students, but this time from a student perspective. As it turns out, the interested student had another way of explaining what the co-creative work is about, and why it is something worthwhile engaging with, and in a few days the group has grown with another five interested students. Together, Marcus, Charlotta, and the students build a framework for collaboration, including which times to meet, goals and a timeframe, as well as a basis for decision-making. For this project, they agree to make decisions based on voting, leaving the students with a possible majority. The course redesign project turns out to be a success, both in terms of process and in the way that the new syllabus turns out, shifting the course's bad reputation into a positive one with strong evaluations throughout. Finally, Charlotta and Marcus reflect on the project in an article they write together with the students, that is published in a peer-reviewed educational journal. To learn more about the process and outcomes of this collaborative effort, we encourage you to read their article, Bengtson, C., et al. "[Working as Partners: Course Development by a Student-Teacher Team.](#)" (2017).

In working with ASP educators have to be prepared for different scenarios and initial problems - just as with most innovative teaching and learning approaches. A recurring theme in all the cases above is a lack of student engagement that causes educators frustration and disappointment. Of course, there may be many reasons why students do not respond to ASP initiatives in

REFLECTIONS:

So, now you have learned how Jörgen, Miriam, Marcus and Charlotta addressed the problems they faced.

Did they act in a similar way as you would have acted? Which solution do you consider being most constructive - in the short term as well as in the long run? And finally: what did you learn from the cases presented as well as from using case-pedagogy?

Here is some space to jot down your thoughts:

a positive way: some may not feel certain about what is expected from them, some may wonder what they actually gain from being engaged, some may doubt what students are able to contribute with, while others maybe are not comfortable with straying from their habitual roles. Some students may suspect that they are stuck in a subordinate position despite of what is said, and others may not feel included. Many students experience a lack of time, while others think that their courses and programmes are just fine as there are. Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten point out that there are strong teaching and learning paradigms in higher education that do not harmonise with ASP in the first place, namely ‘the consumer model of learning and the transmission model of teaching, both of which most students have come to expect through many years of schooling...’ (Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014, p.17). However, the authors consider that most of the students will find a co-creation and partnership approach a meaningful and empowering experience, once they have overcome initial uncertainty, doubt or distrust. Since many students have to adapt to new concepts of teaching and learning gradually, educators may start with small initiatives and put effort in to be explicit and transparent in their invitations and explanations.

Relating to power

Engagement is inherently related to power relations, conveyed responsibilities, and experiencing a relation between giving input and seeing its effects. But how to work with this? Besides challenging the consumer model of learning and the transmission model of teaching, ASP also interferes with habitual concepts of power that establish a clear hierarchy between educator and students. In traditional education, students have, to some extent, an influence on course design and teaching practices, mainly through course evaluations. However, many students and educators would agree that vital decisions on course content, goals, and structure as well as on assignments, assessment, and grading, are the educators’ responsibility and a part of their professional role. What happens when these norms are blurred by partnership approaches? To begin with, let’s zoom in to Marcus and Charlotta’s partnership project at Uppsala University (as seen above in the cases), where students reflected upon their collaboration with educators in a course development process. Here are a few student reflections:

[It] felt good that we as students could come in and directly develop the aspects of the course we did not like without any middle-men [...] because for once our voices really mattered, it felt like our opinions really counted even though we are just students (Bengtson et al., 2017, p.5);

We worked as colleagues where everyone's voice had equal weight and we discussed things together and made decisions together (Bengtson et al., 2017, p.5).

Also, compared to collegiality between educators and students, where students' opinions 'really matter', course evaluations are a weaker instrument of student influence, since 'writing a course evaluation only becomes a one-way conversation, primarily because you never get the teacher's comment on the criticism' (Bengtson et al., 2017, p.5).

Comments like these are representative of ASP literature, illustrating the benefits of co-creation and cooperation, when students feel that their input and feedback really counts. At the same time, the question of power dynamics is complicated - in what ways are we actually paying attention to or ignoring power when we work together in education? And to whose detriment or benefit does this happen?

Researchers and educators from numerous disciplines address issues of power, for example within sociology, anthropology, pedagogy, etc. Additionally, outside of an explicit educational focus, there are attempts within civic organisations to invite citizens into dialogues and decision-making processes within, for example, city planning. These perspectives can arguably provide ideas for working with power from an ASP perspective. John Friedmann, professor in urban planning, notes that ‘perhaps the biggest problem we face in theorizing planning is our ambivalence about power’ (2011, p.137). Friedmann suggests that in some cases collaborative processes are less democratic because they lack ‘checks and balances’. In the hope of making power less of an issue, asymmetrical power relations remain unspoken; what we think are equal opportunities of influence, in the sense that people are present in a room, hides the fact that the capacity for participation and

decision-making might differ a lot between participants. On a related note, Uma Kothari, professor of migration and postcolonial studies, maintains that participatory methods which aim to empower those with traditionally less power may inadvertently reassert power and social control. This, she claims, occurs when we simplify the nature of power in participatory methods and may even blind us to the power dynamics within less privileged groups (Kothari, 2001, p. 142-143). Additionally, Mark Haugaard, professor in sociology, notes that the task of understanding power dynamics is ‘a more complex one of deciding when the very same processes of power is desirable and when it constitutes domination’ (2015, p.147). While some power dynamics are legitimate, e.g. when no actor is used as a means to fulfill another actor’s agenda, some lead to an exertion of domination.

So, how can we make explicit the power integrated in roles and expectations, as well as rules and regulations, and consciously strive to make those processes of power transparent in a way that empowers the ability to act in all partners? Below we have gathered key areas that are important to think about in terms of power, inclusivity, and collaborative processes. These areas are brought in from research about participatory methods in citizen dialogue (as seen above), but are nevertheless useful for processes within academia. When planning a collaborative process, a could be a good start to consider the following aspects:

Transparency

It is important to remember that power dimensions play out on several different levels: power *over* the collaborative process (the design), power *within* the collaborative process, and power *of* the collaborative process (the result / product). You should aspire for transparency concerning how the power dynamics play out in all of these levels. This can be done by asking questions like: Who will make the choices? Who will participate? What will be possible to influence? How will the process be facilitated?

Localisation

Who are the people usually present at the space in question? Are there existing power relations embedded already? How would you reach people that are alien to this space? How can you support them in feeling at home and empowered to participate?

Integration

It is common that collaborative sessions are placed in the periphery or at the end of a process, or under the responsibility of someone lacking influence over final decision-making. Carefully consider when and how collaborative sessions could best be integrated to strengthen the impact of the joint outcome. If educators and students are continuously invited to processes that have no effect on the larger outcome, engagement is sure to diminish quickly.

Communication and understanding

Make sure to leave room for creating a common language, where students and educators can reach a point where they understand each other's starting points. In terms of pedagogy, even commonly used everyday words such as ‘understanding’, ‘challenges’ or ‘success’ might mean different things to educators and students, as they are loaded with prior and shifting values. Reaching a common conception of the problems and the words being used to describe the problems will greatly ease the flow of the process. So, for example, using pictures to discuss global challenges of sustainable development, and using that conversation as a baseline for building a common language to talk about sustainable development in future meetings can be a communication tool that aids understanding.

Furthermore, literature on co-creation and partnership addresses power imbalances and offers ideas about how to work with them. In their handbook *Engaging Students as Partners in Learning and Teaching* for faculty within higher education, Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten accentuate ‘*respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility*’ (emphasis added, p.1) as fundamental for successful partnership work. Firstly, respect is a prerequisite for good communication in terms of being open for new and different perspectives, which also requires the willingness to allocate enough time in order to build trust for each other. Secondly, reciprocity means that both parts are ready to listen to and learn from each other, which leads to a better understanding of each other's experiences and standpoints. Finally, shared responsibility is seen as both a prerequisite and an outcome of partnership processes. Partnership work is based on the assumption that learning and teaching should be seen as a shared effort. At the same time, co-creation processes deepen students' and educators' understanding that both parts have valuable insights and ideas.



Critical pedagogy is ‘centred on hope, liberation, and equality’ and believes that students should play a meaningful role in their own learning (Luke, 1992, p.26 and Cook-Sather et al., 2014). Read more in Chapter 7 and 9

In addition to these keystone ideas for partnership work, Healey, Flint, and Harrington (2014) make several crucial points. The authors state that expectations on partnership as having equal power is not realistic: there are few relationships that are, in fact, equal. Moreover, the distribution of power varies over the course of the relationship. Crucially, ‘even the term “students as partners” implies a certain power dynamic: that staff have the balance of power and are in a position to invite students to become partners’ (Healey et al., 2014, p.32). Even so, Healey and colleagues argue that empowerment is a key value in partnership. This implicates that all parties involved are encouraged to be critical about the distribution of power and constructively challenge ways of working that uphold existing inequalities. Through acknowledging differences in power and valuing individual contributions, partnership therefore works against the view that educators should ‘take on the role of enablers of disempowered students’ (Healey et al., 2014, p.15). Thinking about ‘power with’ instead of ‘power over’ (Taylor and Robinson, 2009, as cited in Healey et al. 2014) can begin to deconstruct the ways which we work in higher education, in particular, by challenging tacit power dynamics in teaching and learning contexts. ‘Power with’ invites a form of ‘shared authority’ where educators and students have mutual authority (Cook-Sather et al., 2014, p.163).

A note on ‘empowerment’

Elizabeth Ellsworth (1992) asks the crucial question, ‘Why doesn’t this feel empowering?’ in her critique of **critical pedagogy** and educators working with democratic and participatory frameworks. A line of argument which Taylor and Robinson (2009) continue is that, despite the good intentions of educators to raise the voices of students in their classrooms and empower them, the purposes for doing this work are still done in an ahistorical and depoliticised manner. One of the reasons that this is significant is that power does not pre-exist in spaces, ready to be ‘given away’ by those with more of it (Taylor and Robinson, 2009), but is created in the intersectional meetings of educators and students in an educational context with certain norms. In other words, we are all implicated in our own race, class, sex, ethnicity, gender, ideologies, and other subject positions which encounter the multiple positions of others. If we approach the mission of empowerment without recognising and taking care of these positions,

then we may engage with a shallow form of empowerment which simply ‘treats the symptoms but leaves the disease unnamed and untouched’ (Ellsworth, 1992, p.98). This may lead to the view of differences among students as merely ‘variations or additions to the mythical norm (a person who implicitly is a white, middle-class male subject in possession of rational thought and articulate debating skills)’ (Taylor and Robinson, 2009, p.167). As such, we must be careful about using sweeping narratives of empowerment and acknowledge that working with active student participation ‘is always a process of constant revision and re-making’ (Taylor and Robinson, 2009, p.170); it is context-dependant, historically and politically bound.

Educators bring with them privileges and interests and an ‘institutional role as professor’ that will always weigh their ‘statements differently from those of students’ (Ellsworth, 1992, p.100). It is therefore important as an educator to also examine her/his voice(s) and roles. However, in seeking to shift roles and the boundaries between the roles of student and educator, Taylor and Robinson suggest that we already start to use a language that helps to highlight the various positions and intrinsic power relations that emerge in educational settings. This may further help us to see things ‘in the middle, rather than from the outside’ position of the educator ‘above’ or the student ‘below’ (Taylor and Robinson, 2009, p. 172).

Finally, Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten (2014) provide the following advice for educators in working with power:

- Choose language carefully;
- Avoid treating students as a homogenous group;
- When students and educators have different opinions, try to find compromise;
- Give students chances to set the agenda together with educators;
- Analyse your context: what kinds of students do you have?;
- Think carefully about whom to involve in partnership. Work together to create a purpose and project that represents those in the partnership;
- Reflect on your own attitudes before you begin, so that

you can anticipate challenges that may arise in identifying areas in which you are more and less open to working with students, and so that you can clearly communicate your reasons for integrating some of their ideas, but not others, to students;

- Collaboratively set ground rules for negotiation and agree on how decisions will be made;
- Be transparent where power imbalances persist.

Working with power is complex and uncomfortable. In this section, we have tried to raise different issues concerning power in order to increase awareness and inspire reflection. Even though there are no clear-cut answers and even fewer concrete ‘recipes’, what this has meant for us, the authors, in our work is the recurring evaluation of our activities from a power perspective and aspiring to create the best possible conditions for participation.

Ideas for managing the stickiest and most common challenges

During our work at Uppsala University, we have met many educators and students raising recurring questions that highlight different aspects of ASP that may be challenging. Here we address how to invite students into collaborations, meet resistance, motivate others, as well as include more students than the ones who already are known for being engaged. Many of these challenges have been addressed by others in various publications; in addition, we also offer ideas based on our own experiences. Some of these challenges remain ‘in the works’, some questions unanswered. However, we hope that they incite critical reflection and room for creative solutions from you - ultimately, they remind us working with ASP that we are not alone, since we are facing similar challenges, whether we are students or educators.

1. Under what conditions are students likely to want to participate?

As mirrored in the ‘Three stories about engaging students’ above, many educators express frustration since they would like to involve students, but fail to find any that would like to be more engaged. Others state that students are often reluctant to pedagogical changes, promoting lectures and a strong emphasis on

educator-controlled learning activities. Many students, for their part, often doubt if and how they could contribute or wonder if the quality of the learning will suffer when sessions are not led by an expert. Other students question whether their participation will have any real impact at all. And last but not least, even students, who want to get their peers more engaged, may feel disappointed when they do not get any response from their fellow students or from their educators.

Find good reasons for participation

As an educator, it is vital to think through carefully about your reasons for student engagement and how the ‘why’ of participation is communicated to students. When reasons are unclear or when student involvement is implemented mainly due to formal reasons, there is a risk that students leave with a sense that their perspectives are not really valued. For example, in Sweden, faculty are required by law to involve students in decision-making. Even if this strengthens students influence in general, it can lead to that student participation is not always based on a conscious decision concerning why and how students are involved. Sometimes, a single student representative is put in a room full of experienced and powerful professors, discussing topics with whose history and implications the student, based on her/his relative inexperience, cannot be familiar. When resources, time, and awareness are lacking in order to provide sufficient support, students often do not feel empowered since they are not able to participate with their perspectives and expertise in a fruitful way. In contrast, we have met students involved in co-creation and partnership projects that were surprised that educators and faculty actually cared about their opinions, that they were listened to and given space. It is important to note that the students who have this experience are also the ones that have kept being engaged, and who care enough to want to contribute to this companion, for example. Thus, students need to feel that their participation matters.

Aim for a narrative of learning, not of satisfaction

Another important aspect, if we want students to think about and talk about their learning, is to give them opportunities and frameworks to do so. In Sweden, students are used to course evaluations, which more often than not ask them to articulate whether

or not they are satisfied with a course². If we really want to know what students think about their learning, we ought to pose questions that open up for meta-reflection; questions that give students opportunities to ponder things like ‘when do I learn best, in a way that allows me to really understand a topic?’ ‘What can I do to make conditions for learning as good as possible?’ or ‘What could the benefit be of different forms of collaboration with my peers?’ etc. *Below are a few examples of questions, the kind that you could find in either a summative or a formative evaluation context, that exemplify different kinds of discussions about learning.*

Q1A - Do you prefer lectures, seminars, or group work?

Q1B - What do you think about the lectures? What do you think about the seminars? What do you think about the group work?

Q1C - How would you describe the difference between how and what you learn through lectures, seminars, and group work? Do you have suggestions on how any of these could be improved? Which of these learning methods would best facilitate your learning [when it comes to learning theories, discussing literature, understanding the results of an experiment, etc.]?

Q2A - What did you think about (how would you rate) lecture X and/or Y?

Q2B - Are there any lectures that stood out positively? Which one(s) and in what way(s)? Are there any that stood out in a negative sense? Which one(s) and in what way(s)?

Q2C - Were there any topics that stood out for you as more relevant than others in the course? Which one(s) and in what way(s)? Were there any ways of presenting the topics that you feel were more suited to your way of learning? Which one(s) and in what way(s)?

² Filling out course evaluations has even been described as using an “autopsy approach to education” i.e. seeing what went wrong after the event’ (Bols and Freeman, 2011, p. 7).

Think carefully about how to invite students

From research (Felder and Brent, 1996; Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014) we learn that the outcomes of ASP are heavily influenced by the ways that students and educators are invited into the process. In an interview about the pedagogical project ‘Students as Learners and Teachers’, which invites students to be pedagogical observers and conversation partners to new educators, Alison Cook-Sather presses the importance of how to invite students, and how to frame the conversation:

I think one of the most important things is to name the existing reality; to say we’re used to working in these separate and clearly prescribed roles and what we’re trying to do with this project is to blur those boundaries a little bit, to complicate those roles a little bit. So, I think naming that and then intentionally inviting students into a different kind of dialogue helps make it clear to students why this might be different, and then even going beyond that to say, ‘I value your perspectives on what learning is like in my classroom, I can’t know that, I can only know what it’s like to teach in this classroom but only you know what it’s like to learn in this classroom. So you have a perspective that I don’t have and that I would benefit from hearing so that I can make sure that the learning is the best experience that it can be for you.’ And again it isn’t about what students like - it’s is about what best facilitates their learning, and that distinction, I think, is really key. Because the what students like and don’t like plays into the consumer model of education, right, but analysing what makes for good learning, that’s a very different conversation and that’s what this conversation is about. (Alison Cook-Sather, Interview, October 2015, Uppsala)



[Click to watch the whole interview with Alison Cook-Sather \[3min41sec\]](#)

Below we have gathered some of the best tips and advice from students and educators how to invite to and start up a collaboration:

- Start small – Make things manageable for everyone involved by starting in a small section of your course or programme, for example, with the co-creation of an assignment.

- Use authentic problems – If students sense that the educator already has the answer or solution to the problem they might question the purpose of engaging on a deeper level.
- Be clear about your expectations – It is easy to get caught up in the act of inviting and forget to communicate the reason for co-creation. What kind of outcome do you expect, and is the focus on results or process? Set aside time, especially in the beginning of a project, in order to build trust and negotiate about expectations and outcomes.
- Think about who should present or deliver the invitation – Students with previous experience of something similar are often the best advocates for engaging their peers.
- Include students in recruitment processes.
- Find allies – Think about who can support you and your idea (peers, student unions, colleagues, educational developers, etc.).
- Think about when to present or deliver the invitation – The end of a long day of course introductions might not be the best time. Try waiting a week or two and start the discussion as a formative evaluation. There is much to be gained in terms of engagement as well as shared responsibility if collaboration can emerge out of suggestions from the student group.
- Plan ahead and show respect for the students’ time – Plan meetings carefully and try to schedule during times that the students are already present at campus in between or during scheduled activities.
- Is the intended task integrated with the rest of the course material? – Co-creation and participation should preferably be integrated early in the design of the course, including in the way that the course is being examined.
- Find incentives – Educators are usually paid for their work. Is it possible to create extra incentives for students to participate?
- Consider training – Are there any skills or areas of understanding that participants require prior to partaking?

Offering training in general skills such as leadership, group processes, and pedagogics can be a strong incentive for participation.

- Be clear about the impact of the students’ participation – Who has power in the process and what will happen with the things you create?
- Be open to students’ ideas and suggestions, even if you sometimes have to leave your comfort zone.
- Compromise – If possible, give enough room to strike a balance between the areas that you believe to be significant and areas that are important to the students.
- Address power issues – What is shared responsibility? What is the student’s responsibility? What is the educator’s responsibility? What is not negotiable?

2. Many students expect and request educator-led sessions – what are different ways of approaching such expectations?

Think about the different spaces that are being used. On one hand, different spaces create or incite different forms of expectations; students expect certain things to happen in a lecture hall, other things in a library or in a room for active learning or on an excursion to a museum or a forest. Lecturing in a room designed for active learning can be challenging in a similar way as working with active learning in a lecture hall. Expectations are created already in the way that sessions are titled and presented in the schedule, and careful planning can support moving into more collaborative approaches to learning. Research on active learning classrooms also show among other things that they create new roles and relations between educators and students and disseminates engagement, from being concentrated to a small group to being present in a much broader and more diverse body of students.

3. How can we go beyond reaching students who are already self-sufficient in their learning?

High-achieving students are, in our experience, by and large, the most likely candidates to respond to invitations to participate or co-create. Changing this dynamic requires conscious action and

might present new and different challenges. In many cases, finding even one student to work with may be challenging enough for most educators, and participation can feel challenging even for experienced, high-performing students who are well-versed in academic routines. It is furthermore important to remember that the students who are easier to reach and to work with might not be representative of the understandings, feelings, and challenges experienced by a majority of the student group. So, how can a more diverse body of students be included in collaborative and co-creative learning and teaching? We would argue that a focus on results often benefit strong students, whereas approaches that focus more on the process allows space for a more diverse group of students to engage. A focus on either the results or the process affects, consciously or unconsciously, the selection of who is invited to participate. Thus, actively reflecting on how the relation between outcomes and processes affects the selection of participants is important in aiming for an inclusive approach when inviting students to participate.

4. How we can constructively meet resistance and increase motivation for engagement?

The model on the next page (Figure 19) depicts four scenarios of engagement, where students and educators are (dis)engaged for different reasons, which are unknown in this model. Perhaps educators would rather be researching or teaching a subject closer to their interests, and perhaps students would rather already be employed and actively working. However, we would like to highlight the improbability of ASP in any of the scenarios expect scenario one. ASP raises the demand on both students and educators to choose to actively take part, and this is key.

Engaging with ASP rarely comes without resistance from students, colleagues, and even the institution. From our interactions with students plus our own experiences as students and educators, we have come to the conclusion that one reason for this reaction is the vagueness of the notion of ‘engagement’. What engagement entails when it comes to what educators expect from students, and how that intertwines with what students expect from educators can be unclear. Furthermore, in higher education we contend with ‘the fact that student expertise as an idea does not yet exist in academic vernacular’ outside many of the practices named in this companion, such as partnership, and hence there is an ‘under-

valuing of the student role’ in the context of teaching and learning (Burke, 2013, p.2). Why should students want to participate when their expertise has historically been subordinated?

	Educator is engaged	Educator would rather do other things
Student is engaged	(1)	(2)
Student would rather do other things	(3)	(4)

Figure 19: Four scenarios of educator and student engagement (from Scherp and Uhnnoo, 2018, p.23)

Additionally, when changing the way that a course or programme is taught, educators may take time for considering the pedagogical and research-supported reasons for making the changes. However, when educators then introduce changes in learning and teaching practices, students rarely get the same opportunity to understand and discuss the motives for these changes. What is important to remember here is that not everyone is alike; in a group of students we would likely find both students who immediately can identify the value of working with a new educational practice as well as students who prefer an approach that they know and which feels safe.

Finally, educational practices different from those that students have previously experienced have the disadvantage of not being embedded within a prior understanding about how they as students are expected to behave. Students who have not been involved in a process of understanding why things are different in this course can experience shock or discomfort at the changes

in the course. This was noticed already in the 1990s in a study by Felder and Brent about student reactions to student-centred, cooperative learning. In their article, ‘Navigating the Bumpy Road to Student-Centered Instruction’ (1996), they describe how some students, when asked to take more responsibility for their learning, expressed emotions resembling the different stages connected to trauma and grief. Felder and Brent emphasise that educators, especially those who engage with educational approaches based on a democratic ethos, need to prepare for resistance and be ready to provide additional support.

In summary, without explaining the pedagogical changes and the reasoning behind these changes to the students, educators are likely to encounter opposition from students who may feel that a stable support has been taken from them. Suddenly, the student’s pathway through higher education seems more risky and the outcome less certain. Explaining and engaging the students in dialogue about these changes can ease discomfort and help the students take responsibility for their learning. This includes actively listening, responding to students’ concerns, and to being transparent about the notions of failure and success related to course outcomes.³

A never-ending story - the need for further investigation

We finish this chapter not with answers, but even more questions. This section is comprised of questions that have come up and are written verbatim from educators and students who have participated in some of our larger activities. How would you deal with these challenges?

3 For more about working with these challenges, see also:
Bovill, C., Cook-Sather, A., Felten, P., Millard, L., and Moore-cherry, N. (2016). Addressing potential challenges in co-creating learning and teaching: Overcoming resistance, navigating institutional norms and ensuring inclusivity in student-staff partnerships. *Higher Education*, 71(2), 195-208.
And
Seale, J., Gibson, S., Haynes, J., and Potter, A. (2015). Power and resistance: Reflections on the rhetoric and reality of using participatory methods to promote student voice and engagement in higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 39(4), 534-552.
And
Shaw, N., Rueckert, C., Smith, J., Tredinnick, J., and Lee, M. (2017). Students as Partners in the Real World: A Whole-Institution Approach. *International Journal for Students as Partners*, 1(1).

The pick-n-solve-a-sticky-challenge opportunity box

- ☐ How do we involve shy students in our new interactive pedagogy? How can we activate passive students?
- ☐ What processes would lead to a common understanding of learning outcomes between students and educators?
- ☐ How do we measure/observe what we do?
- ☐ How can we ensure succession? (i.e. if engaged student leaves, who will replace him/her?)
- ☐ How important is the actual physical space/learning environment for active student participation?
- ☐ What is the most radical aspect/idea/practical application of ASP you have come across in other countries?
- ☐ How to create an educational environment and culture where both students and educators work together?
- ☐ Please mention your top three best tips to start the process of implementing ASP in a university (the institutional model).
- ☐ How can we solve the problem of time-consuming? Is there any way to get around it if there is a lack of economic resources?
- ☐ Can a whole university implement ASP? If yes, how? If no, why?

- ☐ How to find the balance between professional/personal relationship with an educator? Obviously, personal problems affect your education; how accommodating can you expect educators to be?
- ☐ Do you have any ideas on how to include discussions on student health issues such as stress which function as a hindrance to learning in the interaction between faculty and students?
- ☐ How can one cope with underlying expectancy of brilliance/intelligence which makes students hesitate to ask questions or talk about what they feel can be improved because they are afraid to be seen as stupid?
- ☐ How familiar can/should the relationship between students and educators be? Can you talk to educators about stress or other physical health issues that might affect your studies?
- ☐ How to make students engage in their career choices during their studies? We organise a lot of activities but do not always attract the number of students we wish.
- ☐ How can alumni add to our curricula?
- ☐ How can we use written exams in teaching? Often a written exam is the last time in a course and the corrected test is delivered without comments. How should we change?



Meeting the Pedagogues

*A Conversation about
Learning and Learners*

Meeting the Pedagogues

A Conversation about Learning and Learners

The focus of this chapter is to introduce readers who are not familiar with, but curious about, how different learning theories describe learning and how they might connect to active student participation. Here, you will meet some current and past thinkers and practitioners who have a lot of ideas about learning and education.

When, where, and how does learning happen? Most people have implicit learning theories, or ideas about what it means to learn something. For example, one of the students who participated in a student competition arranged by the ASP project (see Chapter 4), expressed her idea about learning in higher education as follows:

'Creative learning environments form a basis for independent learning. [...] Lifelong learning is about an education where we not only teach students the facts, but also prepare them with tools that help them to manage and evaluate the facts they will encounter in the future. I think that students can get these tools by being more involved in their education, not just being passive listeners.'

Since ancient times, philosophers and others have pondered about the nature of learning and the purpose of education. What would some of the more current educational thinkers say about learning in general and active student participation in particular? While writing this chapter, we were inspired by Angelo and Cross's *Classroom Assessment Techniques* (1993). Their handbook offers a wide range of assessment techniques in order to enhance students' academic and intellectual development and their skills

in critical thinking, analysis and synthesis, problem solving, creativity, and meta-reflection, among others things. One of these methods is the 'Invented Dialogue', which means that students, based on quotes from different theorists, create fictitious dialogues between these theorists in order to describe some of their main thoughts and concepts. Thus, writing invented dialogues help students to develop a deep understanding of various theories, be able to express theoretical concepts in their own words, and relate different ideas to each other.

Based on Angelo and Cross, we decided to create an invented dialogue between five theorists who have inspired us in our work. By using this student-activating method in practise, we intend to introduce some significant concepts of learning in a more playful way. The primary aim is to introduce a few basic ideas about learning that have become important for current perceptions of teaching and learning in higher education. However, reflecting on key concepts on learning might also be a prerequisite for approaching ASP, since educators' as well as students' implicit understanding of learning influence not only how educators design learning activities and how students approach their studies, but also how students and educators define their roles and relationship. Therefore, we hope that you, the reader, get inspiration for reflecting about issues such as: 'What do I find important or convincing in this exchange about learning?', 'Who am I agreeing with and why?', 'In what ways am I critical to these concepts?', and finally: 'Whom would I like to invite to this conversation?'

So, may we introduce (in order of appearance in the conversation):





JEAN PIAGET
1896 - 1980

NATIONALITY: SWISS
MAJOR WORK: THE ORIGINS OF
INTELLIGENCE IN CHILDREN, 1952



DAVID KOLB
1939 -

NATIONALITY: AMERICAN
MAJOR WORK: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:
EXPERIENCE AS THE SOURCE OF
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT, 1984 &
2015



PAULO FREIRE
1921-1997

NATIONALITY: BRAZILIAN
MAJOR WORK: THE PEDAGOGY
OF THE OPPRESSED, 1968



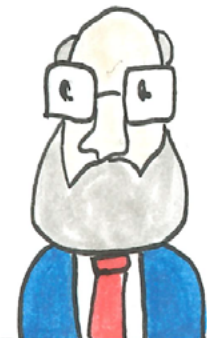
LEV VYGOTSKY
1896-1934

NATIONALITY: RUSSIAN
MAJOR WORK: EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, 1926
AND MIND IN SOCIETY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF
HIGHER PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES, 1978
(POSTHUMOUSLY)

Imagine that these theorists of learning walk into a bar and read this quote:

There is a subtle, but extremely important, difference between an institution that 'listens' to students and responds accordingly, and an institution that gives students the opportunity to explore areas that they believe to be significant, to recommend solutions and to bring about the required changes. The concept of 'listening to the student voice' – implicitly if not deliberately – supports the perspective of student as 'consumer', whereas 'students as change agents' explicitly supports a view of the student as 'active collaborator' and 'co-producer', with the potential for transformation. (Dunne and Zandstra, 2011, p.4)

There is a subtle, but extremely important, difference between an institution that 'listens' to students and responds accordingly and an institution that



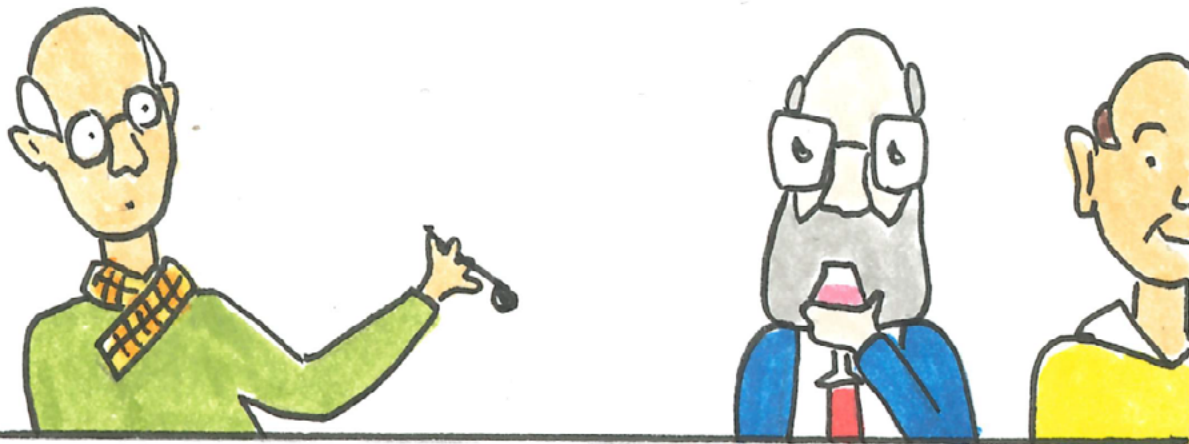
So, let us use these thinkers' theoretical perspectives to try to imagine how they might understand the roles of student as active collaborator and co-producer.¹ First, it is helpful to start with their complementing descriptions of learning in general:

PIAGET:

SOMETIMES I IMAGINE LEARNING AS A BINDER FULL OF ORGANISED PAPERS; FROM TIME TO TIME, WE INSERT NEW PIECES OF PAPER INTO THE BINDER WITHOUT ANY FURTHER REORGANISATION. I THINK OF THIS AS ASSIMILATION; NEW INFORMATION IS INSERTED INTO THE ALREADY EXISTING COGNITIVE STRUCTURE.

HOWEVER, THE ADDING OF PAPER MIGHT REQUIRE THAT WE ALSO REMOVE AND REORGANISE SECTIONS OF THE BINDER UPON ACQUIRING NEW PIECES OF PAPER. THIS THEN COULD BE THOUGHT OF AS ACCOMMODATION, WHICH REQUIRES THE REORGANISATION OF COGNITIVE STRUCTURES TO INCORPORATE NEW INFORMATION. IN ORDER TO LEARN, AN INDIVIDUAL MUST EXPERIENCE BOTH THESE PROCESSES.

SO, THE BINDER OF KNOWLEDGE WE BUILD IS A RESULT OF THE ADDING OF NEW PAPERS, BUT ALSO THE REMOVAL AND REORGANISATION OF THE PAPERS. THIS METAPHOR ILLUSTRATES THE DIVERSITY OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES THAT THE INDIVIDUAL NEEDS TO EXPERIENCE IN ORDER TO LEARN. INDIVIDUAL'S OWN EXPERIENCES ARE ESSENTIAL TO LEARNING.



¹ Obviously, the dialogue expresses the authors' way of understanding and expressing the theories, and their application on the ASP phenomenon. The theorists may, or may not, have agreed if they would have been in the position to comment on them.

FREIRE:

I AGREE WITH YOU, PIAGET, IN THAT LEARNING IS A PROCESS OF INTEGRATING NEW EXPERIENCES INTO ALREADY EXISTING ONES. BUT I WOULD GO EVEN FURTHER AND SAY THAT KNOWLEDGE IS CREATED CONSTANTLY IN THE MEETINGS AND INTERACTIONS OF PEOPLE, IT IS NOT ABOUT SIMPLY DEPOSITING INFORMATION INTO OTHERS! AS SUCH, I SEE TWO CRUCIAL ELEMENTS IN LEARNING.

FIRST IS DIALOGUE, WHICH IS A COOPERATIVE ACTIVITY THAT REQUIRES THAT THOSE WHO TAKE PART TO RESPECT EACH OTHER. THE SECOND ELEMENT IS ENCOUNTER, FURTHER EMPHASISING THAT 'KNOWING IS A PROCESS AND NOT A PRODUCT'. IN BOTH THESE ELEMENTS, THE PERSONS INVOLVED MUST BE ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS.

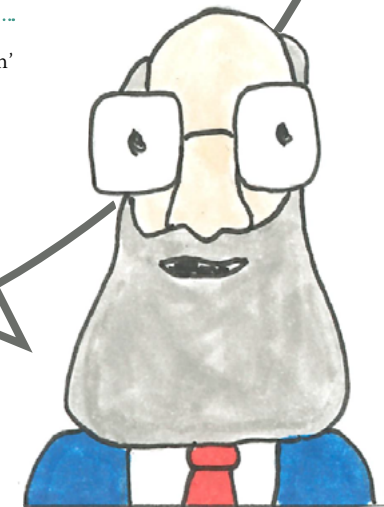
ONLY AS A SUBJECT CAN A PERSON REALLY KNOW, SINCE KNOWLEDGE IS NOT STATIC, BUT COMES THROUGH EXPERIENCE, THROUGH INTERACTION AND CONFRONTATION WITH THE WORLD. WHERE THERE IS NO RESPONSIBILITY GIVEN OR TAKEN, WHERE THERE ARE NO OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE DECISIONS, I HIGHLY QUESTION THE IDEA THAT THERE IS ANY LEARNING GOING ON AT ALL. AS I USUALLY SAY: 'MEN² ARE NOT BUILT IN SILENCE, BUT IN WORD, IN WORK, IN ACTION-REFLECTION.'

I ALSO THINK THAT IT IS OBSOLETE TO DIFFER BETWEEN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS; THIS IS CONTRADICTIONARY TO A LIBERATED SOCIETY AND LIBERATION EDUCATION! EDUCATION MUST RECONCILE THE TEACHER-STUDENT DICHOTOMY, EVERYBODY IS A LEARNER, OR, AS I ALSO HAVE PUT IT, 'BOTH ARE SIMULTANEOUSLY TEACHERS AND STUDENTS'.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT EDUCATION THAT WANTS TO BE TRULY DEMOCRATIC AND EMANCIPATING CANNOT BE BUILT ON THAT 'THE TEACHER CHOOSES AND ENFORCES HIS CHOICE, AND THE STUDENTS COMPLY'? FAR TOO OFTEN, THE TEACHER CHOOSES THE CONTENT AND THE STUDENTS HAVE TO ADAPT TO IT, SINCE THEY HAVE NO POWER TO INFLUENCE THIS PROCESS AND HAVE NOT BEEN CONSULTED. I HAVE COME TO THE CONVICTION THAT PUTTING PEOPLE INTO FIXED ROLES OF "TEACHER" AND "STUDENT" MAKES THE TEACHER THE SUBJECT OF LEARNING, WHILE STUDENTS ARE MERE OBJECTS'.³

² Back in the day, even folks like Freire only referred to 'men' when they really meant 'people'.

³ Citations from Freire, 1974, p.75-76 and Freire, 1970, p.69.



KOLB:

AS YOU MUST BE AWARE, I AM A HUGE FAN OF BOTH YOUR WORKS, SO YOU MAY FIND MY IDEAS A FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THAT WHICH YOU BOTH HAVE BROUGHT UP. I TRY TO ILLUSTRATE MY IDEAS WITH A LEARNING CYCLE, WHICH I WILL DRAW HERE ON THIS SERVIETTE (FIGURE 20). FOR ME, IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO TALK ABOUT LEARNING AS EXPERIENTIAL. LEARNING IS THE PROCESS THAT OCCURS IN A SPIRAL OF TRANSACTION BETWEEN HUMANS AND OUR ENVIRONMENTS, AS YOU TWO HAVE BOTH POINTED OUT.

I DEFINE LEARNING AS 'THE PROCESS WHEREBY KNOWLEDGE IS CREATED THROUGH THE TRANSFORMATION OF EXPERIENCE'. NOT ONLY DOES LEARNING INVOLVE MORE ABSTRACT THINKING AND REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION, BUT ALSO ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION AND CONCRETE EXPERIENCE. THESE ARE THE FOUR ELEMENTS OF THE LEARNING CYCLE WITHIN WHICH THE LEARNER MUST FIND A BALANCE. A LEARNER THUS MUST EXPERIENCE, REFLECT, THINK, AND ACT.⁴

⁴ Citations from Kolb, 2015, p.49.

As you see, Piaget, Freire, and Kolb overlap mildly in their reflections about learning, while Freire most radically questions the fixed roles of teachers and students. What remarks might they make about their views in relation to the quotation they spot in the bar? What are their thoughts about 'listening to the student voice' versus 'the student as an active collaborator and co-producer'? Of course, at the time most of these thinkers were writing, these terms were not used, but we speculate on what they might discuss and how they might relate to them.

PIAGET:

DESPITE THE RECENT SHIFT TOWARDS STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING, HOW MUCH DOES HIGHER EDUCATION PEDAGOGY FOCUS ON LEARNING IN TERMS OF ACCOMMODATION, WHICH MEANS LEARNING THAT REALLY LEADS TO A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE OF STUDENTS' PREVIOUS UNDERSTANDINGS? THERE COULD BE MORE OF THIS! WHICH METHODS OR TOOLS COULD LEAD TO THIS DEEPER LEARNING EXPERIENCE?

I CAN SEE STUDENTS ACTING AS CHANGE AGENTS AND CO-PRODUCERS OFFERING A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN ACCOMMODATION AND ASSIMILATION, BETWEEN SO-CALLED OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCES. LEARNERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE DEEPER LEARNING WHEN ACTIVELY COLLABORATING TO RECOMMEND AND BRING ABOUT THE REQUIRED CHANGES.

KOLB:

EXACTLY, PIAGET! BUT, AS I SAID BEFORE, A LEARNER MUST HAVE A BALANCE BETWEEN EXPERIENCING, REFLECTING, THINKING, AND ACTING. EVEN THOUGH THE IDEA OF STUDENTS AS CO-PRODUCERS IS NEW TO ME, IT SEEMS THAT BEING AN ACTIVE COLLABORATOR IN EDUCATION ENABLES SUCH CONDITIONS.

IN MY VIEW, HIGHER EDUCATION OFTEN HAS A TOO STRONG FOCUS ON THEORETICAL THINKING, MEANWHILE NEGLECTING THE OTHER PARTS OF THE LEARNING CYCLE. AS CO-PRODUCERS, STUDENTS MIGHT CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTING ABSTRACT COURSE CONTENT WITH CONCRETE EXPERIENCES AND EVEN SHARE THEIR REFLECTIONS ABOUT THAT.

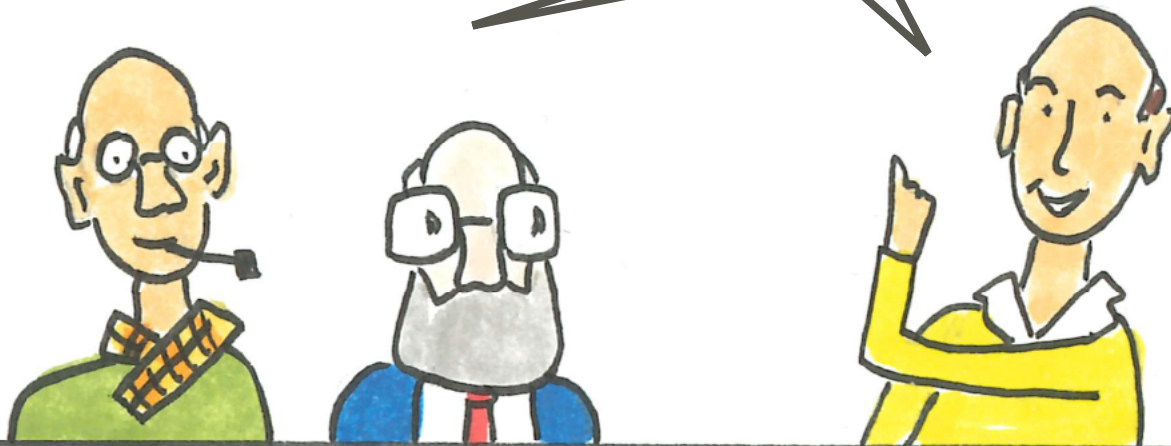


Figure 20: Kolb's Learning Circle

DAVID
The Granddaddy of Learning Styles

KOLB'S LEARNING STYLES¹

1984

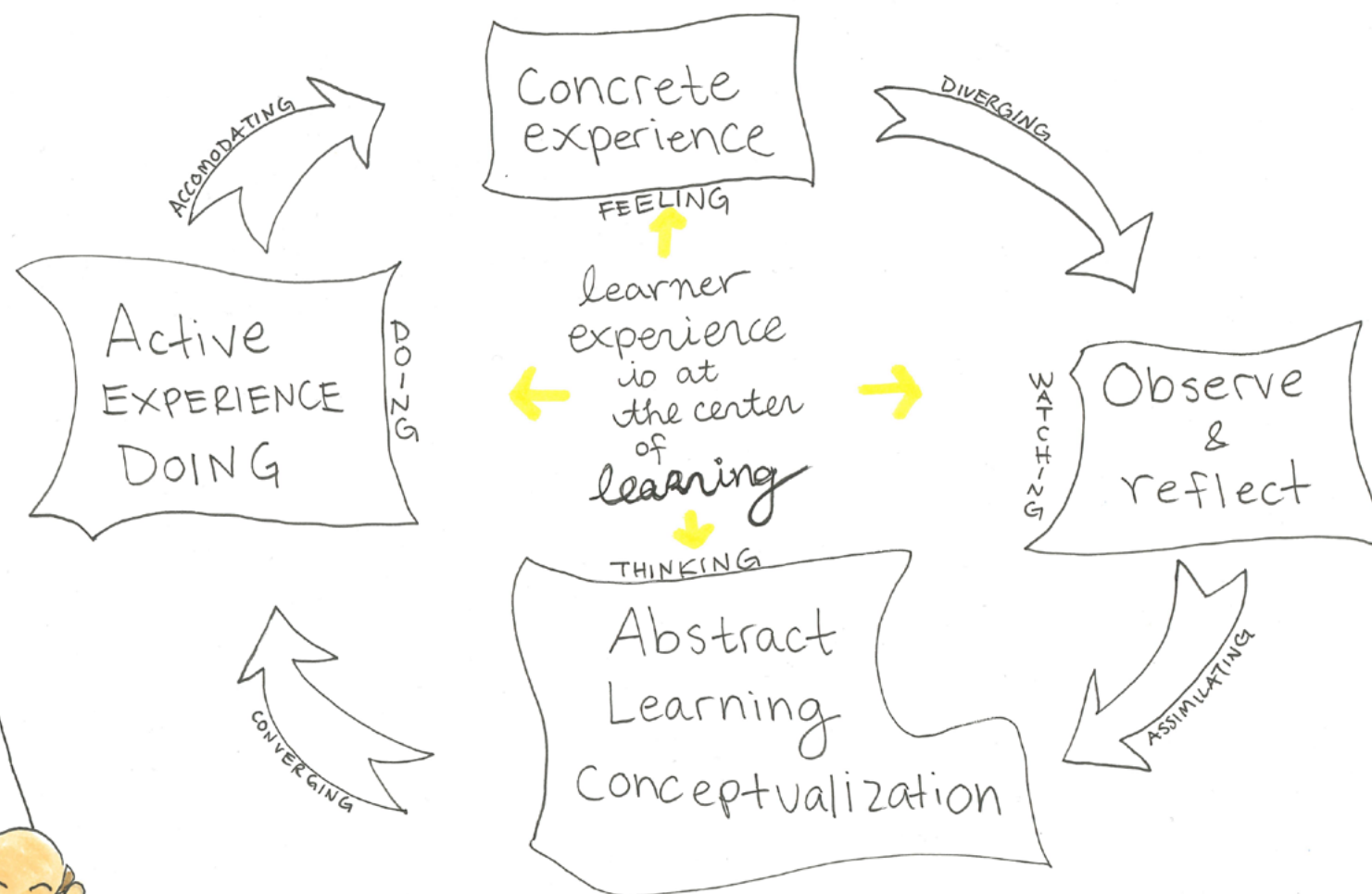
Experience

ELT
experimental
learning
theory



Here is my cycle!
As individuals we tend to enter
the cycle at a preferred point.
But we learn best when we shift
and move thru the cycle!
So at the very least, tell me
you won't stay stuck in
your preferred mode.

I would add that we learn
differently. Everyone learns from
his/her experience. And learning
is dynamic!



1. Influenced by ROGERS, JUNG, PIAGET, DEWEY, JAMES.

At this point, Lev Vygotsky, who has been sitting in the corner, rises from his chair and joins the conversation at the bar.

VYGOTSKY:

WELL, I HOPE THAT YOU DON'T FIND ME RUDE, BUT I FEEL THAT I WANT TO JOIN THIS EXCITING CONVERSATION! I REALLY AGREE WITH YOU THAT LEARNING IS AN ACTIVE PROCESS THAT IMPLIES A CONCEPTUAL CHANGE IN UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD. AS FREIRE SUGGESTS, IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT LEARNING IS NOT MERELY AN INDIVIDUAL, BUT A COLLECTIVE ACTIVITY. AS A LEARNER IN HIGHER EDUCATION, YOU ARE IN CONTINUOUS DIALOGUE WITH YOUR PEERS AND TEACHERS - AND KNOWLEDGE IS DEVELOPED TOGETHER. THIS IS MOST IMPORTANT FOR BECOMING AN INDEPENDENT INDIVIDUAL, BECAUSE IN PRACTICING TO SPEAK WITH OTHERS, STUDENTS DEVELOP SKILLS FOR THINKING ON THEIR OWN.⁵

I ALSO THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THAT LEARNING IS ALWAYS SITUATED; FOR ME, LEARNING ALWAYS HAPPENS IN A CERTAIN CULTURAL CONTEXT AND IN SOCIAL INTERACTION. MOREOVER, I CONSIDER LEARNING TO BE MEDIATED, WHICH MEANS THAT LEARNING IS CONNECTED TO CERTAIN 'ARTEFACTS', FIRST OF ALL LANGUAGE, BUT ALSO OTHER ONES THAT HAVE CHANGED LEARNING OVER TIME SUCH AS BOOKS, PENS, CALCULATORS, COMPUTERS AND SO ON. THE IDEA OF STUDENTS AS ACTIVE COLLABORATORS SEEMS APPEALING TO ME, SINCE I CONCEPTUALISE LEARNING VERY MUCH AS ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN A CERTAIN CONTEXT. AS CO-CREATORS AND CO-PRODUCERS, STUDENTS MIGHT HAVE A BIGGER CHANCE TO GO INTO A DIALOGUE WITH THEIR PEERS, THEIR EDUCATORS, AND THEIR LEARNING CONTEXT.

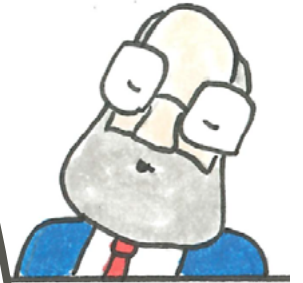
⁵ Sources: Vygotsky, 1978; Calkins, 2001.



FREIRE:

IT'S NICE THAT YOU HAVE JOINED OUR CONVERSATION, VYGOTSKY, I REALLY LIKE YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE COLLECTIVE CHARACTER OF LEARNING. BUT REMEMBER, WE MUST BE SUBJECTS IF WE ARE TO LEARN! IF KNOWING IS A PROCESS AND LEARNING HAPPENS IN OUR INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS AND WITH THE WORLD, THEN THE STUDENT IS BY DEFAULT A CHANGE AGENT WHEN LEARNING HAPPENS.

I THINK 'LISTENING TO THE STUDENT VOICE' FALLS INTO TRADITIONAL DICHOTOMIES WHERE THE TEACHER HAS CONTROL AND THE STUDENT IS TREATED AS A CONSUMER OF EDUCATION. BUT, THROUGH THE ACT OF CO-PRODUCING EDUCATION, STUDENTS TAKE AN ACTIVE RESPONSIBILITY IN THEIR LEARNING AND BECOME SUBJECTS.



Let us take a step back from the conversation for a moment. First off, in introducing these thinkers and their ideas, we want to connect to different traditions within pedagogy, emphasising that many strands of ASP connect to previous ideas of how we learn with each other. What key points can we take so far from this hypothetical conversation about learning that are relevant for ASP?

- Learning is an active process where the learner connects to previous experiences, but also reorganises previous knowledge in a fundamentally different way since building new knowledge is neither about merely transmitting facts nor simply adding new information to already existing one.

- Learning has to involve the whole person and requires action, thinking, experience, and reflection.
- Learning is transactional, or happening through an exchange between people and people and environments. Emphasising learning as a social phenomenon contributes to its framing as a collaborative effort, one that happens within a context where people have shared responsibility for the learning;
- Learning means continuously becoming a subject as opposed to be treated as an object. That means taking a role where the learner actively makes choices, because only as a subject can a learner take responsibility.

But wait...

Carmen Luke has overheard this conversation at the bar and decides to gatecrash the all-male conversation.



CARMEN LUKE
1946-

NATIONALITY: AUSTRALIAN
MAJOR WORK: *FEMINISMS AND
CRITICAL PEDAGOGY*, 1992

LUKE:

NO DOUBT, YOU ALL HAVE CONTRIBUTED SOME FOUNDATIONAL IDEAS TO THE FIELD OF PEDAGOGY. FREIRE, YOU MAKE A RADICAL CASE FOR ANTI-OPPRESSIVE AND LIBERATORY EDUCATION, WHICH I SUPPORT. BUT AREN'T YOU MISSING SOMETHING? THESE WAYS THAT YOU TALK ABOUT EDUCATION ARE BOTH GENDER- AND COLOUR-BLIND AND IGNORE THE FACT THAT PARTICIPATION IS NOT CREATED EQUAL. LET ME BREAK IT DOWN FOR YOU:

PARTICULARLY YOU, VYGOTSKY, ALREADY POINT OUT THAT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT CONTEXT, FOR EXAMPLE, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OR WHERE PEOPLE COME FROM AND WHERE THEY ARE TODAY, IS CRUCIAL. SO, WHEN WE LOOK AT YOUR HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION, WE SEE THAT THE MASCULINE SUBJECT IS FOUNDATIONAL TO ALL KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH. ALL TALK ON PEDAGOGY, INCLUDING CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES, IS BASED ON CONCEPTIONS OF EQUALITY AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY WHICH ARE LOCATED IN MALE INDIVIDUALISM.

WHAT KIND OF CONTEXT DOES THIS CREATE THEN FOR EQUAL PARTICIPATION? LET'S ACKNOWLEDGE THE EXISTENCE OF A PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERE, THE LATTER BEING THE DOMESTIC SPACE WHICH IS TRADITIONALLY RUN BY WOMEN. WESTERN CULTURE EQUATES WOMEN AND DOMESTIC LABOUR WITH NATURE AND FEMININITY, EFFECTIVELY EXCLUDING WOMEN FROM THE PUBLIC SPHERE. SURE, TODAY WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE GRANTED VOICE IN THE 'PUBLIC SPHERE OF THE DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM,' BUT THIS IS AN 'ADD-ON TACTIC OF INCORPORATION' WHICH DOES NOT ADDRESS THE UNDERLYING GENDERED POWER STRUCTURES.



By this time, Piaget is eager to re-enter the conversation, but Luke stops him.

LUKE:

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU WANT TO RESPOND TO THAT, BUT, WAIT A MINUTE! I REALLY WANT TO FINISH MY ARGUMENT WITHOUT BEING INTERRUPTED AND I THINK IT IS GOOD FOR YOU TO PRACTISE SOME LISTENING RATHER THAN TALKING YOURSELF...SO, BACK TO THE GENDERED POWER STRUCTURES: IN THIS SENSE, IDEALS OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY, WHERE EQUALITY IS A CENTRAL PILLAR, ARE FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED.

WHEN WE SPEAK ABOUT EQUAL PARTICIPATION AND EQUAL VOICE IN THE CLASSROOM, WHOSE VOICES ARE WE SPEAKING ABOUT? WHERE IS THE CRITICAL DISCUSSION IN EDUCATION ABOUT THE ASSUMPTIONS THAT COME WITH WHO HAS 'THE AUTHORITY TO SPEAK, TO CRITIQUE, AND TO JUDGE WHAT IS WORTHWHILE (STUDENT) SPEECH AND CRITIQUE'?

LET'S ASSUME THAT WE TAKE ON THIS CRITICAL TASK; WHAT DOES THAT MEAN IN PRACTICE? CRUCIALLY, IT MEANS THAT 'WE CANNOT CLAIM ONE METHOD, ONE APPROACH, OR ONE PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY FOR STUDENT EMPOWERMENT'. WE AS EDUCATORS ARE NOT JUSTIFIED TO ASSUME WE HAVE THE POWER TO EMPOWER AND DEEM WHEN STUDENTS ARE LIBERATED. AS EDUCATORS, WE CAN ONLY PRACTISE EMANCIPATORY EDUCATION BY FOCUSING ON LEARNERS' IDENTITIES AND CONTEXTS, OR WHAT IS LOCAL FOR THEM, WHICH IS IRREVOCABLY TIED TO ALSO ENGAGING WITH THE POLITICS OF GLOBAL STRUCTURES AND NARRATIVES OF OPPRESSION.

IN 'LISTENING TO THE STUDENT VOICE' WE DELOCALISE, DISEM-BODY, AND PUT A VALUE ON CERTAIN VOICES; EQUALLY, IN ENGAGING STUDENTS AS CO-CREATORS WE NEED TO EXERCISE CAUTION AND RECOGNISE THE VALUE WE PLACE ON CERTAIN TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT AND ASK OURSELVES, WHICH STUDENTS ARE INVITED INTO THIS CO-CREATIVE SPACE?⁶

⁶ Citations from Luke, 1992, p. 29, p.32 and p. 48



Luke gives us more food for thought when we consider what it means to 'do' ASP well. Whose voices and engagement count and why? This is an important reminder that working with ASP means that we are also engaging with a number of different **power dynamics**.



You can read more about working critically with power in Ch. 6

The door to the bar opens once again, and in walks Kevin Kumashiro, well-known for his influential ideas on anti-oppressive education. He joins to the group and the conversation continues...

We need to leave the bar now, but continue with a closer look on literature on ASP in Chapter 9. The conversation above, while an experiment in relating different ideas about learning to ASP, hopefully provides an entry point or an opportunity for reflection on the nature of learning and reasons for ASP. If you wish, you can also make your own summary and perhaps some critical notes in the box below:

REFLECTION

Which ideas from these different theories of learning do you find relevant?

Perhaps you would have imagined a different kind of conversation that would take place in a different book, in a different bar, with different participants. What would that conversation be about? Illustrate or jot down your ideas here.



Active Student Participation Research Literature

*A Closer Look at a
Growing School of Thought*

Active Student Participation Research Literature

A Closer Look at a Growing School of Thought

Active student participation research is an emerging field and a chapter that aims to cover the most recent literature is destined to be quickly outdated. Despite these odds, this chapter takes on this challenge and presents an overview of many arguments and ideas coming forward in the field. We start with two models that illustrate different positions within the educational field to which ASP relates, followed by a closer look at peer-learning and an outline of student-faculty partnership literature.

As we have learned from the bar conversation in the previous chapter, educational theorists have been busy exploring the nature of learning and the very purpose of (higher) education. More recently, Lotz-Sisitka (2013) relates three discourses on educational quality to how educators teach in higher education and bridges the above discussions about learning. These discourses on educational quality relate to different ideas about the purpose of higher education, and include: 1) the idea that education is meant to produce the necessary skills for the labour market (an economic or efficiency discourse), 2) the emphasis in education on meaning-making processes at the interface of existing experience and abstract scientific knowledge, and 3) the idea that quality education is linked to inclusivity and learner participation. Connecting these discourses with different strands of learning theory, Lotz-Sisitka argues that they are more meaningful when approached holistically, that is to say, ‘conceptually but also practically and pedagogically’ (Lotz-Sisitka, 2013, p. 32). Figure 21 illustrates these connections, making a case for the further development of educational approaches which sees the relationship between the diverse purposes of education and learning theories. We find this figure helpful as it attempts to highlight the value of different learning discourses while at the same time acknowledging the tensions and polarisations within them (as we have seen in Chapter 1).

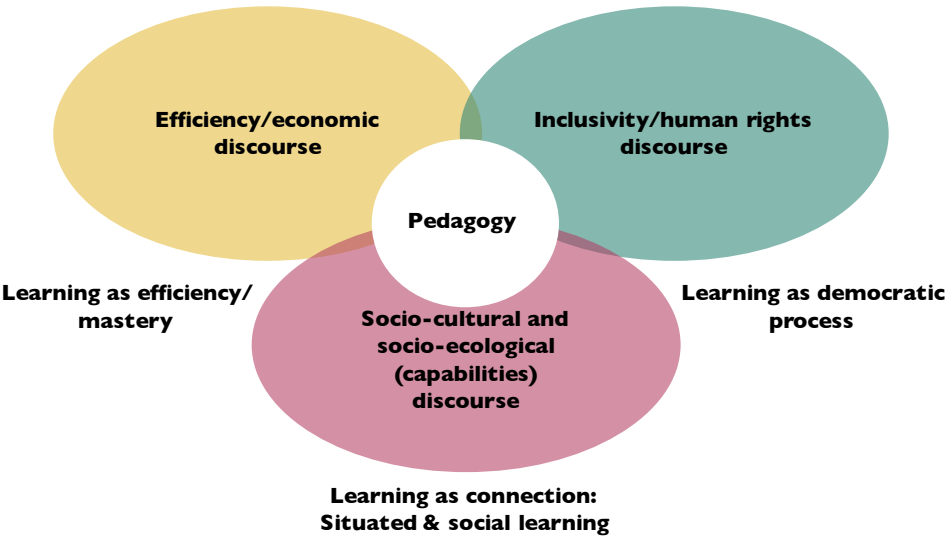


Figure 21: Three intersecting discourses on reframing educational quality (Lotz-Sisitka, 2013, p.32)

These ideas about learning and quality education create strong foundations for ASP in higher education, since they signalise that different discourses are not mutually exclusive and that educators may benefit from taking into account all discourses so as to be able to approach them and their own teaching methods reflexively (Lotz-Sisitka, 2013). Therefore, as we try to point out in this companion, good reasons for ASP can be found in each of these discourses, corresponding to a more holistic approach to teaching and learning.

Another attempt at summarising different thoughts about education in a contemporary setting is Jickling and Wals’s (2008) model below (Figure 22). Originally developed in the context of environmental education (EE) and education for sustainable development (ESD), the model illustrates a continuum of ideas about education positioned alongside the role of the learner in the educational context. However, this heuristic model also offers a way to reflect upon our own educational contexts, and the benefits and challenges of being positioned within its different quadrants.

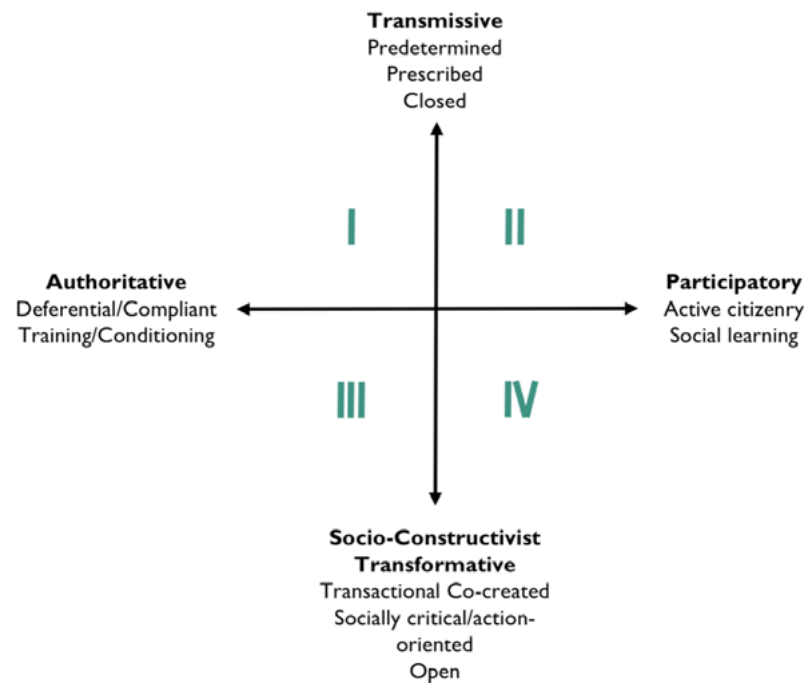


Figure 22: Positioning of ideas about 'education' alongside the social role of the 'educated person' (Jickling and Wals, 2008, p.9)

At one end of the education spectrum is transmissive education, which we can relate to what Freire has criticised as the 'banking concept', in which students are vessels to be filled with facts, skills, and values which are predetermined by educators. Under this view, students have little room to manoeuvre since the destination of learning is already dictated. On the other side of the spectrum, we find socio-constructivist and transformative education. Learning is perceived as a co-constructed endeavour that happens within a social context. Therefore, previous knowledge, skills, and values shape learning and the learner transforms through these new constructions of knowledge. Learners on this end of the spectrum maintain a large degree of autonomy and self-determination, in contrast to the transmissive end of the spectrum.

The idea of active student participation is mirrored somewhat in the horizontal axis, where we see a spectrum of the roles of the

'Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués, and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorise and repeat.'
(Freire, 1970)

learner. On the one end, the authoritative position, learners are deferential and obedient, willing to accept their position and do what they are told. On the other hand, there is the participatory end of the spectrum, where learners are active citizens, actively participating in decision-making.

Using this model, we can ask where we find ourselves in practice and what the implications of our positions are for learning. Keeping this model in mind can further be useful when considering the various roles that educators and students can play in ASP initiatives, and, again, what the subsequent implications are for learning. It is also possible to connect the participatory end of the spectrum with critical pedagogy, something that we are discovering increasingly as we work with ASP, but also something that has been less explicitly recognised. The connection between engagement, learning, democratic practice, and social justice are more explicitly developed by critical and feminist pedagogues, as Freire and Luke establish in the previous chapter, though explicit reference to 'student engagement' as a term is as recent as the 1990s (Zyngier, 2008).

Zooming in: From peer learning to students as partners

As described in Chapter 1, we view student engagement as an umbrella under which active student participation falls. Bryson (2014) shows the diversity of student motives for engagement and how, often, these can be quite different from how faculty perceive student engagement (see Chapter 1). Student engagement is 'premised on the goal of higher education being about enabling the individual to learn and develop in powerful and transformative ways' where the student is positioned as an active learner (Bryson, 2014, p.1). As we have seen already throughout this companion, there are numerous ways learners can be active and which fall into the socio-constructivist and participatory quadrants of Jickling and Wals model. Below we highlight some of the research literature which explores different areas of ASP, starting with peer-to-peer learning, and moving onto partnership and more radical ways of teaching, learning, and researching in higher education. As noted previously, we do not take on a complete overview of a burgeoning field of research and practice, but aim to provide a brief lay of the land.

Peer learning and peer teaching

Peer learning and teaching, sometimes even called peer tutoring, has a long history and is well-researched. Topping defines peer tutoring as, ‘people from similar social groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other to learn and learning themselves by teaching’ (1996, p.322) and explains that it is characterised by role taking. Covering many of the pedagogical advantages of peer tutoring shown in the literature, Topping draws on that the management of learning is delegated to the students in a democratic way: Peer tutoring ‘seeks to empower students rather than de-skill them by dependency on imitation of a master culture, and might reduce dissatisfaction and unrest’ (1996, p. 325). Topping presents a broad range of peer tutoring, noting that the form can vary depending on context and purpose.

Role taking is also a central theme in Falchikov’s book *Learning Together: Peer Tutoring in Higher Education* (2001). Falchikov provides extensive examples on how to work with peer tutoring and its various benefits, in the form of academic outcomes, meta-cognitive outcomes, study-skills outcomes, and non-academic outcomes such as motivation and attendance. Working in peer-to-peer situations, students must be ready for a role change, but there are certain things that academic staff can do to help the transition, for example, tutor training. Falchikov argues ‘that universities will never be able to define and assess a set of key skills acceptable to industry and that an emphasis on key skills threatens the intellectual development of students’ (2001, p.84-85). Peer tutoring therefore plays a crucial role in higher education as it trains competences that prepare students for life after university.

Finally, Supplemental Instruction (SI) is one of the most well-researched arenas of peer learning in higher education. SI usually takes place in the form of complementary study groups led by students, who undergo a short pedagogical and leadership training. Historically, SI has been used with diverse groups of students in ‘hard to pass’ courses, and the benefits of SI reach both the students in the study group as well as the SI leader. For students who are trained as SI leaders, the themes of improvement are, for example, improved communication, improved interpersonal skills, improved leadership skills, improved self-confidence, and deeper understanding of the course content (Malm, Bryngfors, and Mörner, 2012).

Students as Partners

Students as ‘partners’, ‘co-creators’, ‘producers’, and ‘change agents’ are terms that are increasingly prevalent in academic discussions and practice, revealing the inadequacy of treating higher education as a consumer product (Dunne and Zandstra, 2011; Gärdebo and Wiggberg, 2012; The Swedish National Union of Students, 2013; Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014; Bryson, 2014; Iversen, Pedersen, Krogh, and Aarup Jensen, 2015; National Union of Students, 2015). While these approaches to education are surely not totally new, their emergence over the last few years has carved out a growing space for ASP within the field of teaching and learning in higher education. Thus, ASP has also become a research interest and its own area within teaching and learning in higher education.

Engaging students as partners, Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten (2014) maintain, is more of an orientation and ethos than a new teaching technique. The fundamental goal of this approach is to kindle student engagement and passion, involving and giving responsibility to the entire higher education community to make learning spaces more dynamic. Partnership work is rooted in certain principles that are distinct and different from traditional practices in higher education. These include the belief that *a) students have perspectives that can improve learning and teaching; b) faculty can bring student insights into play by collaboratively designing learning and teaching; and c) working in partnership can alter the way we see roles within higher education making everyone involved better learners and educators.*

As Cook-Sather and colleagues point out, within partnership, roles, expertise, responsibilities, and status are different, but contributions are equally valued and respected and all have an equal opportunity to contribute (Cook-Sather et al., 2014, p.7). As such, partnership means a mutual agreement to listen to and learn from each other, acknowledging each other’s different roles, where students are enabled to contribute particularly with their expertise and insights as learners within their subject fields. Partnership is typically characterised as an approach to teaching and learning in which faculty and students step outside of their standard roles. This may lead to new types of relationships and processes that can fundamentally change teaching and learning environments.

In their ‘ladder of student participation’, Bovill and Bulley (2011) focus on curriculum design. While educators normally are the gatekeepers of curricula creation with a typically high degree of control over learning and teaching processes (Bovill, 2013, p.24), the ladder illustrates an increasing opportunity for students to be an active part of curriculum design. Thus, ASP in curriculum design is not an issue of either having no influence at all or deciding on the entire curriculum, but a spectrum of possibilities of how students may get more involved and gain more and more choice and control.

In their report for the UK Higher Education Academy *Engagement Through Partnership*, Healey and colleagues (2014) show the viability of treating students as partners in higher education. They make the case that partnership is not only something universities should try, but is something they should embrace as it is central to the needs and questions of contemporary higher education. This means also that partnership redefines roles in the university and in approaches to pedagogics and research by placing ‘reciprocal learning at the heart of the relationship’ (Healey et al., 2014, p.7). The report provides an extensive collection of cases of student-faculty partnerships, mostly from the UK and US. Where partnership has gone beyond discrete projects, Healey and colleagues show the development of ‘partnership learning communities’. In these, partnership becomes embedded in the culture and ethos of an institution, or part of it. These communities

invite critical reflection on existing relationships, identities, processes and structures, and can potentially lead to the transformation of learning experiences. Given that partnership is both a working and learning relationship, these new communities should acknowledge the dual role of staff and students as both scholars and colleagues engaged in a process of learning and inquiry (Healey et al., 2014, p. 8).

In order to ‘map the territory’ of partnership in higher education, Healey and colleagues develop a conceptual framework of four areas in which student-faculty partnership happens:

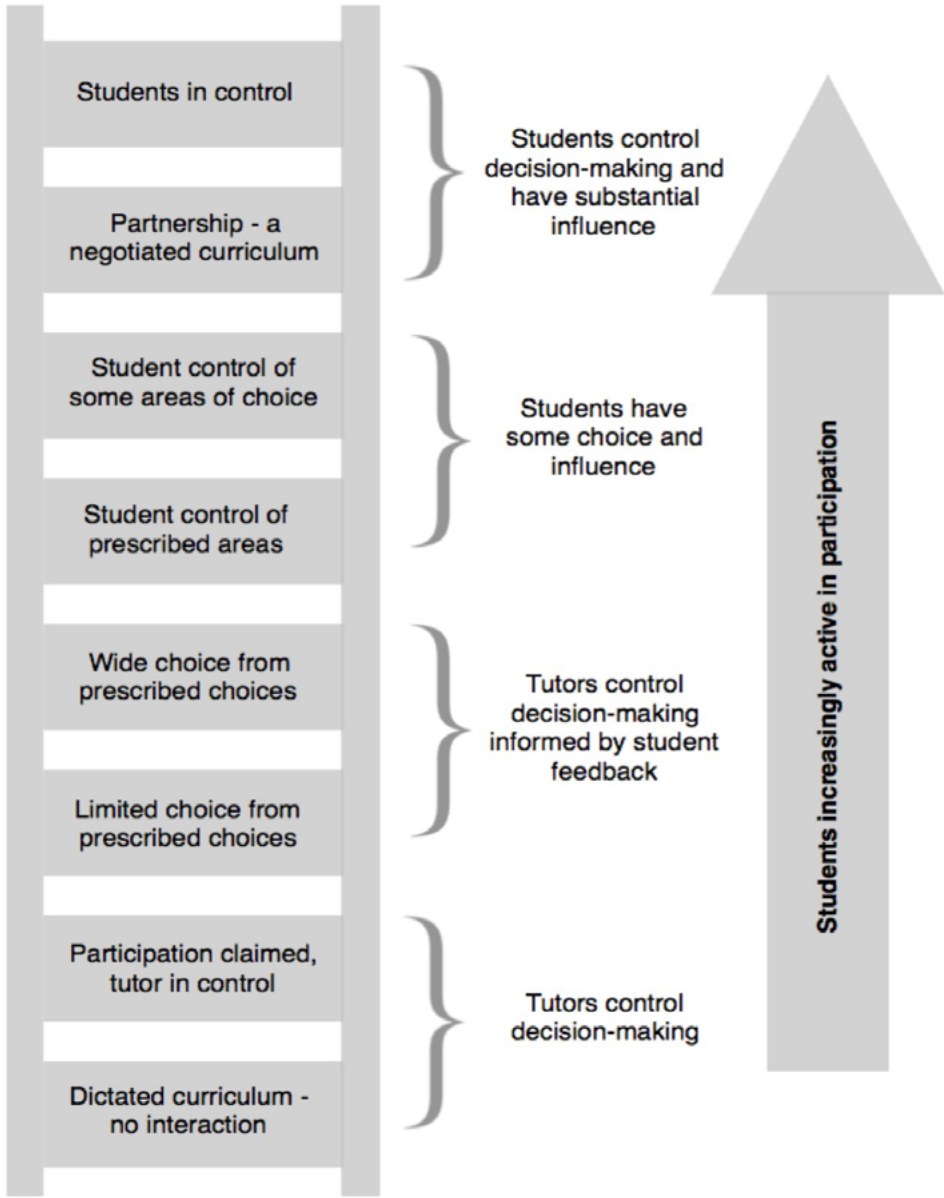


Figure 23: Ladder of student participation in curriculum design (Bovill and Bulley, 2011, p.181)

- Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Students are active participants in their own learning and students are engaged as educators and assessors in the learning process.
- Subject-Based Research and Inquiry: Students work with faculty on research, or students engage in inquiry-based learning within a course.
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Students, together with faculty, research the teaching and learning they experience with the intention of enhancing the quality of student learning.
- Curriculum Design and Pedagogic Consultancy: Going beyond student involvement in course evaluations to engaging students in designing the curriculum and giving pedagogic advice and consultancy.

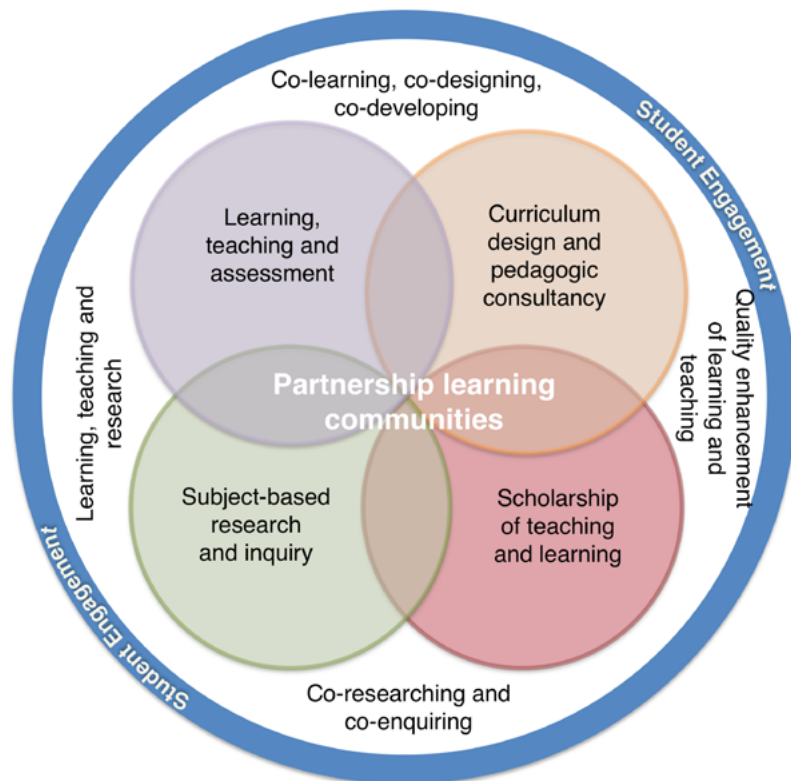
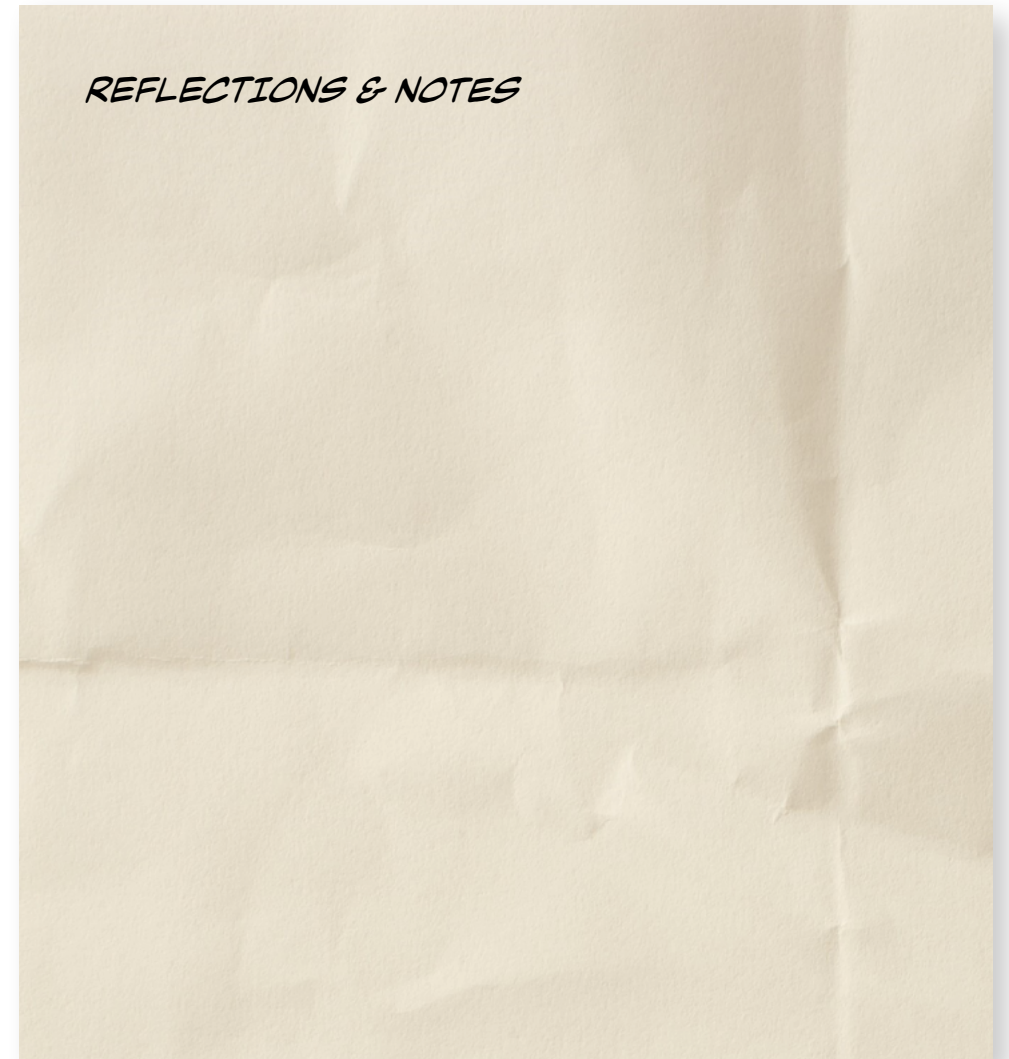
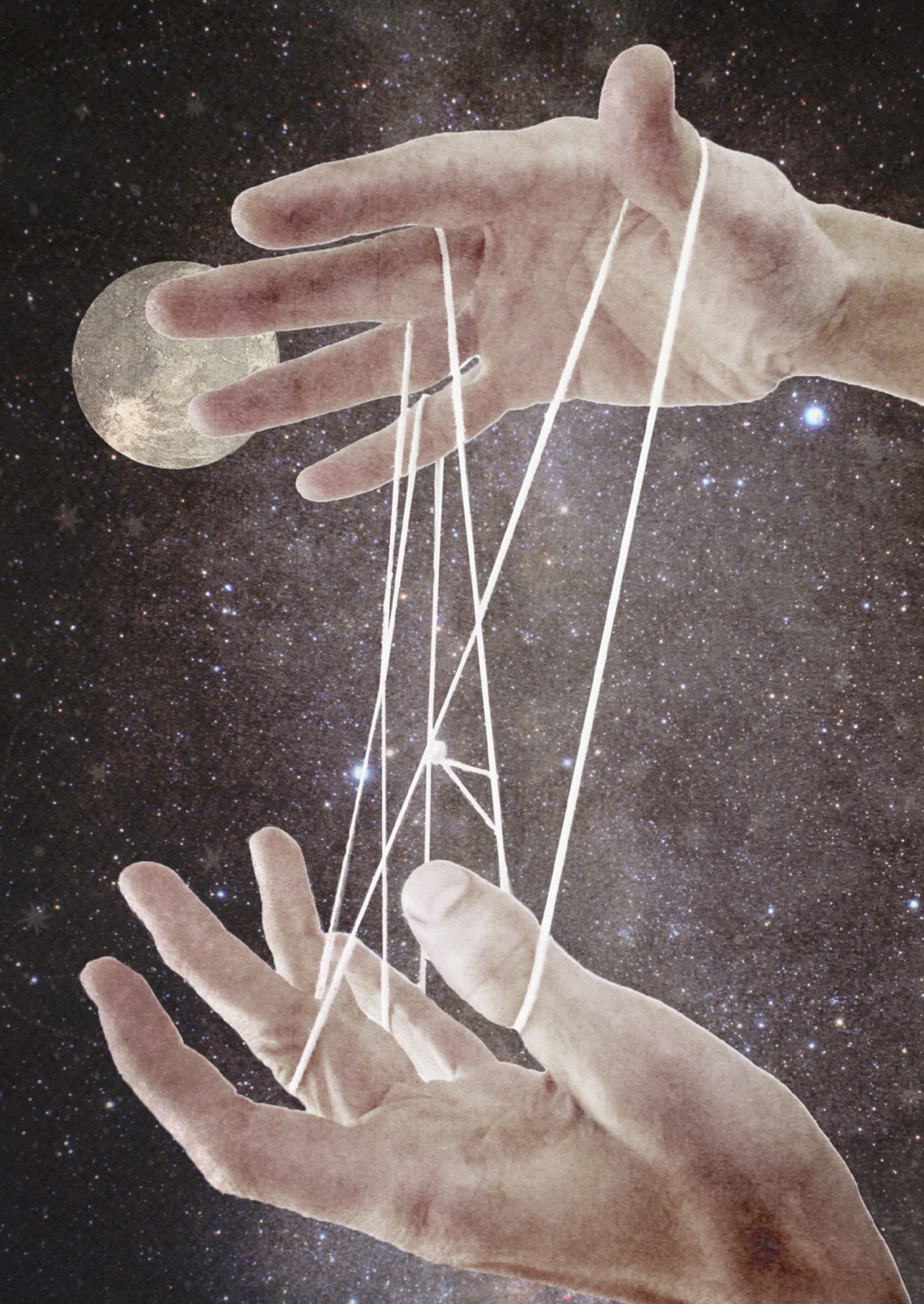


Figure 24: Students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education (Healey et al., 2014, p.25).

This companion has mostly focused on the top two circles, as it is within these spheres we have seen the most activity and initiatives. The bottom two circles of research and co-inquiry indicate a field that is newer to us, but an important part of ASP. Some educators are collaborating with students in research, not only research into their subject fields, but also engaging students in SoTL, as co-inquirers of the teaching and learning process. To further explore this field, we recommend visiting Fielding (1999), Healey and colleagues (2014), and Bengtson and colleagues (2017).

REFLECTIONS & NOTES





Staying with the Trouble

*Understanding Active Student
Participation through Diverse
Educational Approaches*

Staying with the Trouble: Understanding Active Student Participation through Diverse Educational Approaches

This chapter is for readers interested in a deeper exploration of the meaning of higher education. There are a number of educational approaches in higher education which aim to prepare students to be active, responsible citizens of society. Some of these are student-faculty partnerships, education for sustainable development, anti-oppressive education, and critical global citizenship education. These approaches recognise the interconnectedness of the world, seeing the responsibility of the university in relation to the betterment of society, not just the individuals within its walls. In this chapter, we argue that active student participation is an integral part of all these approaches and we contend that active student participation is not an isolated pedagogical tool, but at the heart of learning that transforms and which we argue is necessary for a university 'for-others'.

'Universities in particular have a role in developing in their students so-called dynamic qualities (Posch, 1991) that allow them to critique, construct and act with a high degree of autonomy and self-determination, if not in their personal lives then at least in their professional lives. At the same time, universities should develop in their students the competencies which will enable them to cope with uncertainty, poorly defined situations and conflicting or at least diverging norms, values, interests and reality constructions.' (Wals and Jickling, 2002, p.224).

Perhaps the entire premise of this chapter originates in how one would answer the question, 'What is the purpose of higher education?' Some would stress that higher education prepares students for working life, in many cases with a career in mind. As such, employability or a more market-oriented approach is in focus. One example of this is the Teaching Excellence Framework

in the UK's 2016 Higher Education and Research Paper,¹ which is intended to measure and improve teaching quality, and will use graduate employability data to quality check. Still others might stress 'bildung'² and critical consciousness, seeing higher education as a space for the development of the whole person. This perspective is prominent in the international movement in higher education which aims to debunk the construction of students as consumers.

Regardless of how you would answer the question posed above, we agree with Iversen, Pedersen, Krogh, and Aarup Jensen (2015, p.1) in arguing that, 'The role of education is among other things to prepare students for an unknown future.' This includes educating 'people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world' (Nussbaum, 1997, p.8 in Cook-Sather, 2010, p.10) and, further, a corresponding responsibility of universities to create learning opportunities that facilitate students' personal learning and development.

In this chapter, we intend to explore a range of educational approaches which share this imagination of the university. In this exploration, Barnett's (2011) concept of the *ecological university* is a welcome one. His vision is of 'a university that takes seriously both the world's interconnectedness and the university's interconnectedness with the world' (Barnett, 2011, p.451). According to Barnett, this means that students have to develop an outlook of care and self-consciousness: 'As global citizens, students come to have a care or concern for the world and to understand their own possibilities in the world and towards the world' (Barnett, 2011, p.451). As such, learning in higher education is about taking a *responsibility*. The approach to this fundamental question of higher education's purpose that we have taken in this companion resounds with Barnett's conception of an ecological university, stressing the democratic mission of universities, pluralism, stu-

¹ Available at <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/higher-education-white-paper-success-knowledge-economy>

² This is a European concept which 'generally refers to developing, shaping, self-formation and inner cultivation, and speaks to the "holistic development of the individual, as well as about broader hopes for a better society" (Horlacher, 2004, p.409)' (Taylor, 2017, p.421). It is 'figured as both an intellectual and moral endeavour; it is about more than knowledge, and it about sensibility and character; [...] it is also about how individual cultivation is articulated to a vision of a better society' (Taylor, 2017, p.422).

dent-centredness, the non-normative, the non-prescriptive, and the development of the whole person.

The purposes of engaging with active student participation are also manifold. Not only can these processes be wielded to the more instrumental requirements of universities who seek higher retention and enhanced learning, an ASP orientation also supports those who aim for inclusivity or norm-criticality and to negate the consumerist trends in higher education. During our four years of working with ASP, we have come in contact with a number of educational approaches that share the ethos, in terms of a ‘characteristic spirit of a culture, era, or community as manifested in its attitudes and aspirations’ (Oxford English Dictionary), of the ecological university by inviting what is sometimes called unlearning and transformation (defined further along in this text). In this chapter we address four approaches that we have come across more in detail: *student-faculty partnerships* (Healey, Flint, and Harrington, 2014; Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014), *critical global citizenship education* (Andreotti, 2006), *education for sustainable development* (ESD) (Wals and Jickling, 2002), and *anti-oppressive education* (Kumashiro, 2000).

These diverse educational approaches face up to different global challenges that higher education cannot ignore. While perhaps not an observation that is new, the complex challenges these educational approaches confront warrant a focus on teaching and learning in higher education as a transformative tool for citizenship in a constantly changing society characterised by stark contradictions. In linking these approaches, we use the lens of transformative learning where learning ‘demands that we be aware of how we come to our knowledge and as aware as we can be about the values that lead us to our perspectives’ (Mezirow, 2000, p.8). We present the above-mentioned approaches, however note that there are likely others that have not caught our attention yet, but that may complement this discussion. Furthermore, we intend not to offer critiques on these approaches in this chapter, but instead focus on the intended impacts on learners, as critical deconstructions of these approaches are offered elsewhere. In explicitly connecting student-faculty partnerships, critical global citizenship education, education for sustainable development, and anti-oppressive education, we claim that ASP is not an isolated pedagogical tool, but at the heart of learning that transforms

and which we argue is necessary for a university ‘for-others’ (Barnett, 2011).

Transformative learning, unlearning, and the pedagogical potential of crisis

As we have explored in this companion, active student participation requires, in varying degrees, educators and students to change roles and take on new responsibilities. Working with ASP can thus be a process of changing expectations and, as such, a process with unclear conditions that may cause challenges, frustration, and even resistance from both educators and students. There is therefore the risk or potential to reach a stage of ‘pedagogical crisis’, which is, as Rebecca Houwer puts it, a state where the situation challenges our normal frames of reference or our ways of knowing (Houwer, 2011); it is uncomfortable (Barrineau, Schnaas, Engström, and Härlin, 2016). Houwer describes this disruption of the norm as being pedagogical in two ways: either the crisis teaches us that we are subjects or it teaches us that we are objects. Crisis presents a choice of direction to take. One can become a subject or an active agent by ‘staying with the trouble’, to use Donna Haraway’s (2014, 2016) phrase, by continuing to challenge normal roles and responsibilities in higher education through co-creation and reciprocity. On the other hand, Houwer argues, crisis may objectify, deny agency, and allow for business-as-usual to continue. In an ASP context, this can be seen as a return to what Piaget (see Smith, 1996) would call assimilative teaching and what Jickling and Wals (2008) would call transmissive teaching.³

Pedagogical crisis, thus, invites the possibility of transformation and of *unlearning* (Houwer, 2011). In this context, unlearning refers not simply to learning new behaviours and stopping old habits (*what* we know), but changing the *way* of knowing. As such, it relates to transformative learning in which acquiring knowledge means to be critically aware of our own assumptions and expectations, as well as those of others, and making interpretations with and through that awareness (Mezirow et al., 2000). This way of interpreting unlearning is also at the core of how we

³ See Chapter 7 for an explanation of assimilative teaching and Chapter 8 for Jickling and Wals’s model of positioning ideas about education.


understand the *transformative* aspect of transformative learning. Transformational education is a “‘leading out’ from an established habit of mind’ (Kegan, 1994, p.232 as cited by Mezirow et al., 2000, p.30) and, learners often undergo intense emotional experiences as awareness of their own assumptions grows and the realisation to the need to change becomes real (Mezirow et al., 2000). Unlearning is a conscious collaborative effort between educator and learner.

A brief overview of the different educational approaches

Student-faculty partnership, education for sustainable development, anti-oppressive education, and critical global citizenship education all implicitly, if not explicitly, call for pedagogical practices that put learners at the centre. Some of these approaches are related by their common vision to confront ‘issues which are producing insecure and uncertain futures for young people’ and which demand ‘new ways of theorising and practicing agency for more just and sustainable futures’ (Lotz-Sisitka, Wals, Kronlid, and McGarry, 2015, p.77), while others focus on the pedagogical benefit of getting that other perspective. In linking these fields, we mean not to diminish the crucial purpose of each one, but see them as taking a more holistic and transformative approach to learning. In their recognition of the inequalities in the world, their appreciation of the complex interconnectedness of people with each other and their environments, and in working towards ways of learning that are relational, these approaches pursue a common vision.

Student-Faculty Partnerships

Partnership as a process of engagement uniquely foregrounds qualities that put reciprocal learning at the heart of the relationship, such as trust, risk, inter-dependence and agency [...] partnership raises awareness of implicit assumptions, encourages critical reflection and opens up new ways of thinking, learning and working in contemporary higher education. Partnership is essentially a process of engagement, not a product. It is a way of doing things, rather than an outcome in itself. (Healey et al., 2014, p.7)



The authors below have all worked extensively within partnership and student engagement.

Mick Healey, Abbi Flint, and Kathy Harrington published a report on *Engagement through Partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education* (2014). Healey is a HE Consultant and Researcher and Emeritus Professor at the University of Gloucestershire, UK. Flint works as a consultant in academic practice at the Higher Education Academy, UK. Harrington is the Academic Leader for Students as Partners at the Higher Education Academy and Senior Lecturer in Educational Development in the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching at London Metropolitan University.

Alison Cook-Sather, Catherine Bovill, and Peter Felten co-authored a book called *Engaging students as partners in teaching and learning: A guide for faculty* (2014). Cook-Sather is a professor of education and director of the Peace, Conflict, and Social Justice programme at Bryn Mawr College, US. Bovill is a senior lecturer in student engagement at Edinburgh University, UK. Felten is the director of the Center for Engaged Learning at Elon University, US.

Partnership, as characterised above, is an approach that invites students into continuous dialogue with faculty and must be based on mutual respect, responsibility, and reciprocity (Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014). These are the foundations of a partnership, the goal of which is to achieve a deeper understanding of teaching and learning, which is understood as a shared responsibility of students and educators. Often, working in partnership involves discomfort and even pedagogical crisis when traditional roles and responsibilities are challenged, inviting students in particular to become *subjects* within higher education. Working in partnership therefore has great transformative potential for all involved since it invites educators and students to unlearn how education is usually done, for example, by treating each other as colleagues and understanding learning as more about a transac-

tion and less about transmission (Cook-Sather and Luz, 2014). In accordance with this, Iversen and colleagues state that *learner-led* approaches, replacing the term *student* with the term *learner*, signalise ‘a shift in focus from formal positions within an educational system (students and teachers) and to the processes that take place in the shared space of learning’ (2015, p.3).

Vanessa Andreotti has published on the political economy of global citizenship education and post-colonial theory in education, among other things.

Her research examines historical and systemic patterns of reproduction of inequalities and how these limit or enable possibilities for collective existence and global change.

Critical Global Citizenship Education

In her article ‘Soft versus critical global citizenship’, Andreotti questions the concept of ‘global citizenship’ - the idea of a global community - as being shallow, since it ignores underlying conflicts. Instead, she argues for a more critical approach stating that the goal of global citizenship education should be to

[...] empower individuals to reflect critically on the legacies and processes of their cultures, to imagine different futures and to take responsibility for decisions and actions (Andreotti, 2006, p.48).

Noting that a precise definition of what it means to be a ‘global citizen’ varies greatly, Andreotti at least argues that it involves an ‘unlearning’ (p.45), and therefore a critical look inward at the origins of assumptions regarding the notions of power, voice, and difference. It is an approach where learners reflect on these assumptions in relation to others’, thereby involving active analysis and critique ‘by the learners’ (Andreotti, 2006, p.49). She refers to this as the development of critical literacy, or understanding that all knowledge is partial and constructed by our experiences, cultures, and contexts. In developing this critical lit-

eracy, learners are invited to transform the way they view themselves, their identities, and their relationships, which contains the benefit of ‘more informed, responsible and ethical action’ (Andreotti, 2006, p.48). The potential for a high degree of learner agency fosters a conducive environment for transformative learning.

Bob Jickling is a professor of education at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.

His research interests include philosophical inquiry into environmental education, environmental ethics, and relationships between environmental ethics, education, and teaching.

Arjen Wals is a professor of Transformative Learning for Socio-Ecological Sustainability at Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

A central question in his work is: how to create conditions that support new forms of learning which take full advantage of the diversity, creativity, and resourcefulness that is around us, but so far remain largely untapped in our search for a world that is more sustainable than the one currently in prospect?

Education for Sustainable Development

Similar to Andreotti’s critique of global citizenship, Jickling and Wals call for a more radical approach to education for sustainable development, maintaining that

[...] education, including environmental education, is not just about social reproduction, but also, and perhaps foremost, about creating the ability to critique and transcend social norms, patterns of behaviour, and lifestyles without authoritatively prescribing alternative norms, behaviours, and lifestyles (Jickling and Wals, 2008, p.7).

The authors are critical towards ESD in a globalised world, where instrumental tendencies and pre-determined, top-down policy hinder a truly democratic approach to sustainability education. Instead, they argue for a reconsideration of didactic arrangements, and a large degree of unlearning and re-learning, prompting opportunity for transformative learning by involving students: 'If environmental thought and ethics are evolving processes, then one task of higher education is to engage students in this process' (Wals and Jickling, 2002, p.222). Integrating aspects of sustainability cannot be realised without thinking critically about the restructuring of didactical arrangements; students have to be given the opportunity to re-learn the way of teaching and learning and to re-think and to re-shape their mutual relationship (Wals and Jickling, 2002, p.228). Universities play an important role in developing students' agency and critical consciousness for both their personal and professional lives. As in partnership, a radical understanding of ESD involves reassessing roles in teaching and learning, and similar to critical global citizenship education, it requires critical scrutiny of how we act as humans in this world.

Kevin Kumashiro wrote the book *Troubling Education* (2002) and is the founder of the Center for Anti-Oppressive Education. He is also the former Dean of the School of Education at the University of San Francisco, U.S. (2013-2017).

In his current role as a consultant, he is interested in building movements for equity and justice in education.

Anti-Oppressive Education

[...] changing oppression requires disruptive knowledge, not simply more knowledge. Students need to learn that what is being learned can never tell the whole story, that there is always more to be sought out, and in particular, that there is always diversity in a group, and that one story, lesson, or voice can never be representative of all...teachers need to get students to always ask, what

has not been said (by the student, by the teacher, by the text, by society)?[...] Disruptive knowledge, in other words, is not an end in itself, but a means toward the always-shifting end/goal of learning more. (Kumashiro, 2000, p.34)

Kumashiro analyses the way that education can work against various forms of oppression, and in doing so, argues for approaches that continuously search for practices and educational theories on the margins. He recommends using a combination of different approaches to anti-oppressive education, including: Education for the Other, Education about the Other, Education that is Critical of Privileging and Othering, and Education that Changes Students and Society; 'other' in these situations referring to 'those groups that are traditionally marginalised in society, i.e. that are *other than the norm*' (Kumashiro, 2000, p.26). These approaches elicit examination of who and what ideas are privileged in the curriculum and in the classroom, thereby inviting unlearning. Tackling oppression in classroom settings can lead to discomforting feelings in learners. As with the above-named approaches, anti-oppressive education cannot be transmissive, but evokes the active participation of educators and students to engage with their privilege and their norms. He argues that

the path to developing a critical consciousness involves not only learning about the processes of privileging/normalizing and marginalizing Othering, but also unlearning what one had previously learned is "normal" and normative...Thus, teachers should engage in a "pedagogy of positionality" that engages both students and teacher in recognizing and critiquing how one is positioned and how one positions others in social structures (Kumashiro, 2002, p.37).

Potential Outcomes for Educators and Students

What do these different pedagogical approaches mean for educators? First, these approaches imply strong need to create conditions that enhance the possibility for co-created or norm-critical framings. This involves having an ethos that allows for difference to emerge, placing the educators in a vulnerable position where

they let go of control, make space for the unexpected, and disperse power. As normal roles are interrupted, it is important for educators to be transparent and honest about these conditions. This means also a responsibility to ensure a balance between insecurity and comfort by working as a collective and taking the individual out of the spotlight (Iversen et al., 2015). Building in plenty of opportunity for meta-reflection for everyone involved is also a key task for educators.

Thus, these approaches demand a preparedness for leaving the habitual comfort-zone. As Cook-Sather and Alter (2011) develop in their article on what happens to students that take the role as pedagogical consultants for educators, revising the habitual educator-student relationship leads to a state of liminality. This means a fluid and unstable position 'betwixt and between', implicating uncertainty about roles and expectations as well as increased vulnerability. Meanwhile, it also contains the opportunity for fundamental change (Cook-Sather and Alter, 2011). Referring to the first phase of our ASP project, we have described our own project at Uppsala University, involving students in educational development, in a similar way: we all were cast into a state of liminality and uncertainty, that needed to be expressed and targeted in our group in order to become productive (Barrineau, Schnaas, Engström, and Härlin, 2016). Additionally, we believe that educational approaches that challenge habitual practices, habits, and norms, as described above, lead to uncertainty not only for students, but also for educators. Using control and authority in an alternative way may be a threatening experience for educators, but might also become a constructive experience of liminality, that is shared with the students and that might be a chance for a reconception of each other's roles, both sides being learners. From this point of view, the implicit unlearning of all these approaches means also a 'threshold concept' in terms of experiencing and understanding a new concept or relationship both cognitively and emotionally, which means an essential change, that cannot be reversed.

What can these practices mean for students? In our view, they have crucial points in common, since they call for

- questioning what is valued and seen as normal, and realising this might not be the norm for many others;

- learners taking collective responsibility for learning, not simply being a recipient of knowledge, and involving the learner searching for information as well as being actively involved in finding answers; and
- making connections between different perspectives of peers and working with these differences.

ASP bridging diverse educational purposes

Do certain problems require specific pedagogies? Returning to the imagination of an ecological university, this is a university which has wider concerns than simply the learning within its own walls but has the hope of 'giving life to "the learning society"' (Barnett, 2011, p.452) and thereby performing a responsibility to society not out of self-interest but in the interests of the world. If we believe in this, then the university has a duty to provide opportunities for students to take responsibility and choose to be subjects.

In our readings of and experiences with the four educational approaches outlined above, we find that they share crucial elements, including certain pedagogical consequences:

- Unlearning, critical consciousness, uncertainty;
- Social learning and collaborative learning (learning with and from others), serious didactical reorientation, more democratic learning spaces, shared responsibility;
- Non-transmissive, process-oriented;
- Pluralistic, appreciation of differences, norm-critical;
- Ethical incentives to change teaching and learning to more 'active';
- Learner-centred in terms of a need for being context-sensitive, since there is not a strategy that works in all contexts, with all educators and with all students;
- The recognition that knowledge is situated and partial, thus created relationally.

Even if these approaches vary in their prioritisation of these common characteristics, they still place learners in the forefront,

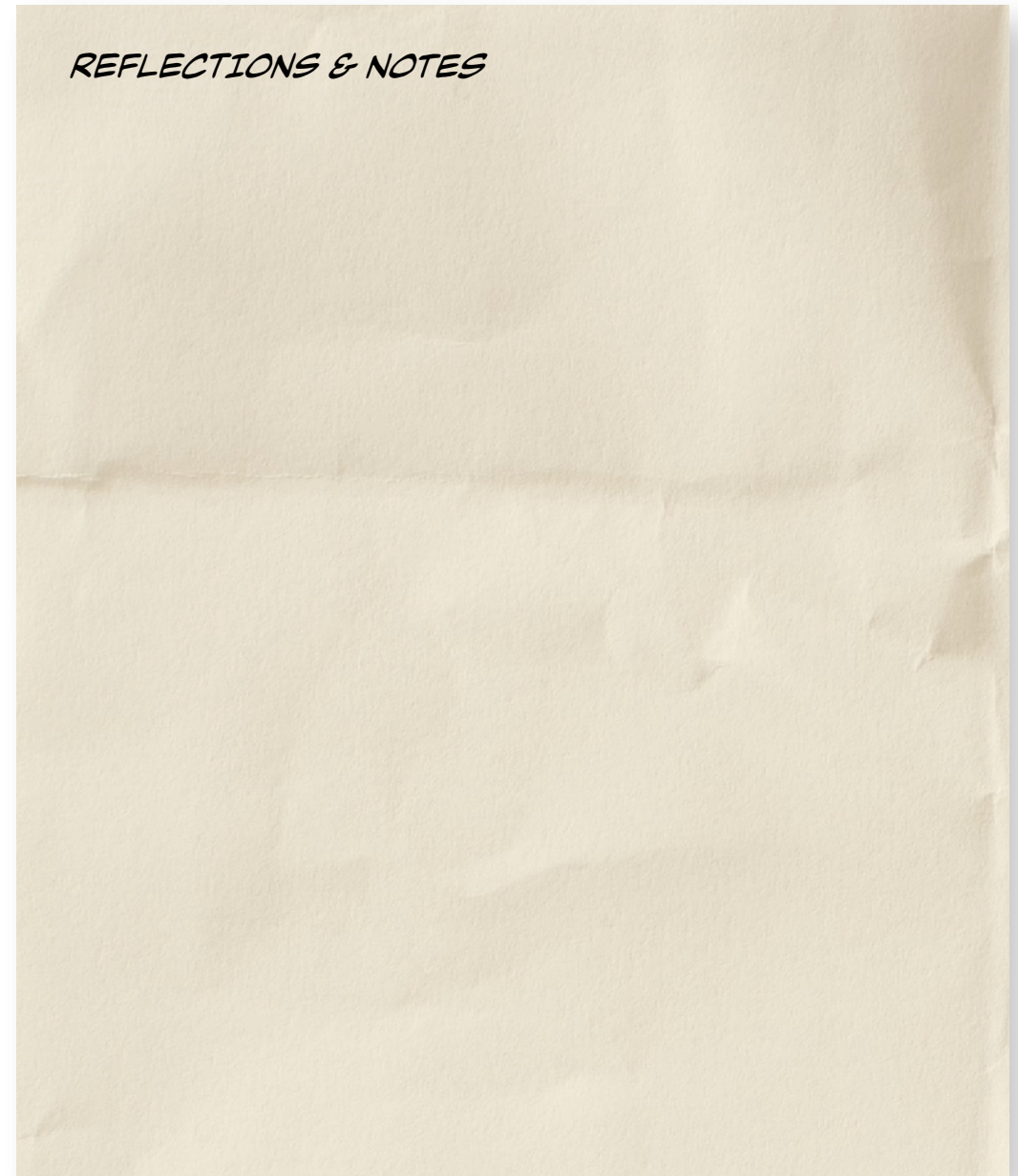
having a focus on the collective instead of the individual, which makes learning more social, collaborative, and context-specific (Iversen et al., 2015). Students have opportunities to develop a metacognitive awareness of their learning, and in so doing, reconstruct themselves (Cook-Sather, 2010, p.8). So not only what the learner knows changes, but who the learner is also changes in these ways of practising education. It invites transformation.

Based on this, we believe that ASP is an inherent part of all these approaches, since it plays a vital role in creating the conditions for learning to happen under these circumstances and with these pedagogical goals. It entails the significant process of ‘unlearning’, which is not only valid for course content - the subject matter that the course addresses - but perhaps more importantly for a distinguishing feature of the method, or didactic reorientation. Likewise, ASP changes the habitual roles of student and educators and interrupts the customary distribution of power. This goes hand in hand with educational approaches that review dichotomies such as first world versus third world or we versus the other, invite to critical self-reflection and argue for a power shift in favour of those with traditionally less power. As an essential part of this, ASP ‘enables students to be ready and willing to embrace new ways of seeing themselves, others and world, and to aspire to self-authorship’ (Baxter Magolda, 2007 as cited by Bryson and Hamshire, 2016, p.3). Furthermore, ASP supports a stronger recognition of students’ experiences, perspectives, and identities in the classroom context, where differences are seen as a pedagogical resource and should be allowed room to come forth and thrive (Ellsworth, 1989 as cited by Houwer, 2011).

Pedagogies that focus on the development of citizenship skills and democratic capacities of students have to include students in decision-making processes, as Cook-Sather and colleagues point out: ‘Partnership work gives students an opportunity to engage in democratic practices as well as democratic ways of being’ (2014, p.128). In his famous *Pedagogy for the Oppressed* (1974), Brazilian pedagogue Paulo Freire argued that democratic learning is only possible through praxis, requiring both reflection and action. Therefore, students as objects is not a valid option. By offering an ethos of collegiality and shared responsibility in practice, we think that ASP is a fundamental prerequisite for these transformative educational approaches. Dealing with uncertainty and staying with the trouble is a part of this, as educators and

learners can experience resistance and discomfort when working in processes where crisis is central. However, it involves not returning to assimilative teaching or searching for certainty or control (Mezirow et al., 2000), but continuously questioning why renewal and transformation are desirable. ‘What matters in the end is to act well’, as Taylor and Robinson put it (2014, p.161) - therefore, we believe it is of fundamental importance to give learners the choice of agency.

REFLECTIONS & NOTES



Afterword

We hope that you, dear reader, have found both nuggets of inspiration and use for this companion. It has been a great privilege and joy to put this work together. Good luck in whatever journey awaits you!

Sanna, Alexis, and Ulrike
Uppsala, 2019

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Appendix 1

Frequently Asked Questions

This section addresses some of the most common and basic questions concerning ASP. So, if you only have a couple of minutes for this topic right now, you can start here in order to get a very quick overview.

Why Active Student Participation?

There is a growing amount of literature which argues that a partnership approach in higher education counteracts the tendency of students to be seen or see themselves as customers in higher education. Hence a partnership approach is not only about employing certain pedagogical methods, but first and foremost about an ethos where teaching is seen as a shared responsibility. Students are invited to participate and contribute their special skills and educators can interact with the students' perspectives and experiences in a more profound way than course evaluations can provide. Many educators suggest that students produce high quality work, but that it is also important not to focus solely on a product without seeing a partnership approach as a process and an opportunity for mutual learning.

Literature on peer learning, peer teaching, and student-faculty partnerships highlight many positive characteristics of these approaches and maintains that these processes and relationships

- increase student motivation, attendance, retention, and attrition,
- support deep-oriented learning and promote understanding of the topic,
- promote active learning, participation, and immediate feedback in a safer peer-environment,
- provide an opportunity for problem-solving and application of knowledge,
- reduce social isolation,
- enhance students' study skills, such as time management,
- improve interpersonal skills such as empathy and respect for peers,

- improve communication skills as well as leadership and teamwork,
- contribute to an increased throughput in difficult courses and that students pass the examination with higher marks,
- develop students' metacognitive skills, i.e. an understanding of their own and others' learning, and
- have a social and inclusivity dimension which can be linked to the university's democratic mandate by preparing students for active and responsible citizenship (see, for example, Topping, 1996; Falchikov, 2001; Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014).

Furthermore, in a summary of the characteristics of excellent learning environments, Laksov, Kettis, and Alexandersson (2014) emphasise that one overarching factor in these environments is the presence of students who are directly involved in decisions relating to educational development in terms of both implementation and evaluation.

How can we as students, who are neither experts on the course content nor pedagogics, help to create and further develop learning and teaching?

Students' expertise lies in being a student and learning specific course content, a perspective that most educators no longer have. Students' different backgrounds and perspectives can help educators understand student learning and how they experience the teaching. A dialogue with students can provide an opportunity for educators to critically reflect on their teaching methods, while students will find it easier to understand educators' pedagogical choices.

Researcher Cherie Woolmer, currently at McMaster University, articulates her thoughts on the matter:

[S]taff are feeling really energised in their own teaching practice[...]staff comments from my own interviews like I know it's quite difficult, it's been a long time since I've been a student, it's really difficult for me to understand what it's like to be in the student perspective, to learn this material again or engage with this theory. Staff are gaining a new insight into the learning process, from

a different perspective obviously, but again I think the benefits of staff and students working together are not suggesting that in the partnership that staff and students bring the same thing. Actually, the richness of that partnership is that they bring different things, they bring different perspectives. (Interview, March 2015)

See also an interview with [Alison Cook-Sather](#) and [Cherie Woolmer's keynote presentation](#) from ASP Days 2015.

Don't students lack the disciplinary knowledge and experience to lead study sessions for their peers, for example, within the framework of Supplemental Instruction?

As in the previous point, the students' contribution is not necessarily content-oriented but more about their insights on learning. Supplemental Instruction is based on students guiding other students by asking questions and problematising their reasoning. Students who have recently taken a course can easily remember what it was like to not understand and therefore can more easily understand the various steps needed to learn the material. Furthermore, students have strong legitimacy concerning study strategies. For example, it usually weighs heavier for students when another student explains how important it is to buy the course literature and to start early in familiarising yourself with the course material.

I am an educator and interested in working with students as partners but do not have much time. What can I do?

Start small and simple! Do not start with substantial changes in a programme, but start, for example, collaborating with students concerning a specific assignment or planning a certain session together. Many testify that, as educators, you do not necessarily save time by working with students, but that you have a richer dialogue with the students who volunteer their efforts and a mutual understanding of each other's perspectives. Finding interested colleagues or students can be a good support.

Check out the [resource page](#), but also examples in Chapter 4, where you can find concrete ideas on how to start.



[Click here to go to the resource page](#)

Can I work with ASP even though I teach a large course?

There are many ways to approach teaching large groups. One can, for example, invite students who have already completed the course and, in collaboration, further develop specific parts of the course. On the [resource page](#), you can find concrete examples of ways to work.

From *Engaging Students as Partners in Learning and Teaching* (Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014), there are a number of examples. For example, the authors mention that you might invite students who have previously taken your course to interview current students of the course on what they find particularly challenging with the curriculum. Experienced students could further work together with educators to redesign course material. Another way is to invite all students in the course to come to a consensus about what they need to do to achieve the learning outcomes with good marks. Finally, you could use examples of student work as the basis for class discussion and curricular content.

If students have a bigger influence on course content, how can we ensure the quality?

Course objectives that describe what students should know after the course should be a natural starting point for a conversation with students about working towards common goals. As Cook-Sather et al. maintain

Knowing the aims and outcomes of a course and contributing to ways of meeting those can facilitate students' developing greater metacognitive awareness. Such metacognitive awareness - understanding why we learn the way we do and making choices to learn more effectively - can, in turn, contribute to students' capacity to meet course goals (Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten, 2014, p.21).

Further examples of what are called 'learner-led' approaches (see Iversen et al., 2015) give further insight into what may be gained with more collaborative approaches to education.

It is already a challenge to get students to fill out course evaluations, how can I help my students take a bigger responsibility for their own learning as well as start discussing ASP with my students?

The first step is to start with the question 'why?' - explaining the reasoning behind your didactic choices strengthens students' ability to give constructive and valuable feedback. Students are often strategic in their learning and educators cannot take for granted that students will automatically embrace the changes that create uncertainty for both practice and what can be expected from a course or programme. Just as educators need to be informed about the positive aspects of student-centred learning, active student participation, and other elevated forms of student engagement, students must be given time to understand and reflect on the consequences and the positive aspects of this change in practice.

It is important to think carefully and to be clear with the goals and rules in order to reduce misunderstanding and even resistance to different approaches; be transparent. You can start by

- establishing a common understanding,
- discussing the purpose of why students should work in this particular way, and
- putting time into clarifying the roles that students and educators will have.

As for the longer and more in-depth collaboration between educators and students, it may help to start by talking about the ideas and interests of each person in the cooperation, which can help to make visible what the expectations are and the responsibility that each person has. Felder and Brent (1996) give helpful advice about working through potential resistance to ASP in their article '[Navigating the Bumpy Road to Student-Centered Instruction](#)'.

Does ASP mean that students take over the educator's role?

Pedagogical literature emphasises that active student participation is not about replacing educators, but supplementing the regular curriculum by giving students the opportunity to deepen their knowledge, to train general skills such as oral presentation or leading groups, and to raise awareness about their own and

other's learning. The literature about partnership work between educators and students ('students as partners') emphasises that the educator has the ultimate responsibility for teaching and that students' knowledge and skills are not the same as the educator's. Students have a particular expertise in learning their subject and a partnership approach is intended to change the roles of student and educator and to learn from and with each other, taking joint responsibility for education.

Appendix 2

Continuous Development of Active Student Participation at Uppsala University - a summary of a strategic two-year project

While our work draws inspiration from international down to local sources, context matters and here we describe and analyse the two-year project which catalysed the writing of this companion. Here we include our project's concluding report, originally written in Swedish, where we outline in-full the history, goals, strategies, outcomes, and future potential of the project the 'Continuous Development of Active Student Participation at Uppsala University' (2014-2015).

The Project's Mission and Activities

The project 'Continuous Development of Active Student Participation at Uppsala University' (2014-2015) aimed, through systematic development, to secure conditions and support for ASP to be standard part of educational activities - an 'Uppsala model' for ASP. According to the Vice Chancellor's project mandate, by its conclusion, the project will have fulfilled the following goals:

- existing initiatives within student participation will have been developed and their experiences will have been disseminated within the University,
- new initiatives will have been tested in environments that have not previously had active student participation, and
- forms of concrete support for students, teachers, and education professionals who want to establish or further develop student participation will exist.

The project was primarily driven by three students, with a wide range of ASP experiences, who were employed as project assistants at CEMUS, as well as a project leader employed as an educational developer at the Unit for Quality Enhancement, Academic Teaching and Learning (UP). After an initial **university-wide questionnaire** to all directors of study and the student

unions, which took inventory of the different forms of ASP at Uppsala University, the project organised recurring **inspirational seminars** to spread experiences, where both educators and students presented different forms of ASP.

An important support for both existing and new initiatives, has been **two-day training courses for student mentors** as well as follow-up in-depth workshops, where students lead learning activities for their peers. These basic trainings, which up to March 2016 had been given to around 140 students, have been a foundational condition for carrying out mentorship programmes, particularly for students in the social sciences and humanities. Furthermore, the project organised a **short course for educators who are mentor supervisors** at their departments.

With the support of 100,000SEK earmarked funding for educational development within ASP, a new mentor programme kicked off in the Department for Modern Languages, with continuous guidance and support from the ASP project. A growing number of educators from all academic disciplines have requested and received consultative support in the form of participation in staff planning days and individual guidance, where the project has, among other things, contributed by presenting various forms of ASP and discussing students' involvement in teaching from a student perspective. Furthermore, the project has provided **guidance to students** on how a student can get involved - both in the context of one-on-one conversations and through presentations to various student associations.

In order to spread experiences over disciplinary boundaries and create arenas where students and educators can meet around educational issues, the project organised a **two-day conference** in March 2015 ('ASP Days') where invited international scholars, and educators and students from Uppsala University as well as a number of other Swedish universities participated¹. To reach out to a wider group of students with no previous experience of ASP, the project also **visited six different campuses** and initiated a **student competition**. The competition invited students to come up

¹ Get a glimpse of what it looked like in [this short film](#).

with proposals to improve their education.² These were judged by a reference group of educators and student representatives from the different faculties. A number of contributions from the student competition were presented at the **Conference for University Pedagogical Development**³ in 2015, which had a special conference track for ASP. For the first time, the conference also included contributions from students, which enabled them to spread and discuss their ideas with educators and other students.

In order to integrate ASP as a perspective in the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning's courses, the student project assistants have facilitated sessions in the Academic Teacher Training courses as well as the course for Activating Teaching Methods, where the student perspective on teaching and learning has been in focus. In order to meet the objective pertaining to continuous support, the project has created a **web resource** (www.uu.se/asp) with nine films, which provides an introduction to ASP, discusses challenges, and presents various forms of ASP. This online resource also contains an idea bank with various examples of ASP at Uppsala, an introduction to current research, as well as support material for educators and students. Additionally, the project has actively participated in a more strategic form of **spreading information to 'pedagogical stakeholders'** (directors of study, pedagogical mentors, etc.) through seminars and discussion-based meetings. Finally, the project experience has spread to a number of local, national, and international conferences, where the project has been recognised as innovative, not least because it has involved students, educators, and educational developers. International experts, who on several occasions have visited Uppsala University as critical friends, for example on ASP Days and the university pedagogical conference, not only provided feedback on the project's work, but also stressed Uppsala University as a pioneer and interesting partner.

² Read more in Chapter 4 under 'ASP in educational development' about the practicalities of the competition. You can also read the competition submissions [here](#). Most of the texts are in Swedish, but feel free to contact us to get a better idea! Some great ideas include how to awaken 'Study Zombies', how to make better group work, and how to include gender perspectives in education.

³ Click [here](#) to watch an interview with keynote speaker Alison Cook-Sather who discusses working in partnership from her perspective as a professor of education.

Reflections: A Summary

By and large, the project group's work with ASP received a positive response both within and outside Uppsala University. This work has also pioneered new ground; partly because ASP is a largely new area, partly because the work was done by students along with educational developers, but also because it was directed at both students and educators. At the same time, the project also experienced challenges in the form of:

- misconceptions about what active student participation means in relation to the educators' and students' roles,
- formulating an invitation that can motivate and involve different groups of students to work with active student participation,
- being sufficiently concrete in the description of active student participation for students and educators to understand what it could mean for their teaching and learning activities, without excluding existing initiatives and activities which use a different language to describe the corresponding work, and
- finding examples of students' work with active student participation within assessment and examination.

The project was successfully able to use the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning's activities in order to reach educators - through courses, seminars, networking, etc. - and established partnerships with actors such as TUR (Science and Technology Faculty University Pedagogic Council), PR&M (Pedagogic Council at the Disciplinary Domain of Medicine and Pharmacy) and CEMUS (Centre for Environment and Development Studies). As there is not an equally well-developed and transparent infrastructure for the student body however, it was a challenge to reach out broadly to students and encourage active student participation in their programmes and disciplines. Another challenge was to systematically integrate Campus Gotland in our mission, mainly because of the geographical distance.⁴

⁴ Gotland is an island on the south-eastern coast of Sweden. On 1 July, 2013 Uppsala University merged with Gotland University to form Uppsala University - Campus Gotland.

During the two years in which the project was active, many conversations with educators and students focused on determining what ASP could be and discussing both different conceptions of ASP as well as concerns and challenges. A recurring feedback from the various activities that the project organised was that many people got ideas and felt inspired to begin working with ASP. What many still call for, however, is a continued need of support in terms of concrete policies, such as for how to move forward and find partners to work with among students and educators.

The project even developed a webpage with a wide array of films, presentations, and literature references as an aid for educators, students, and education professionals. The material targets individual educators and students, but can advantageously also be used in groups and at presentations and workshops. Experience suggests, however, that support for ASP at Uppsala University needs to combine these web-based resources with the opportunity for dialogue and discussion in the form of training courses, seminars, workshops, etc. The dialogue is an important part in discussing the opportunities and challenges of student participation and to promote an educational culture where ASP is a regular feature of the activities at Uppsala University. The need for a continued ongoing support is also justified by the influx of new students and educators who need introduction to the area.

Recommendations for the University's Continued Work with Active Student Participation

After the project, we came up with some recommendations. At the time of this companion's publication, the first two recommendations have, to a large extent, been achieved. While the central coordinating function has been established, the employment of part-time students has proven challenging, though the recruitment process is starting in the spring semester of 2018. Spring 2018 has also included the launch of earmarked educational development funds for ASP. Further successes include the integration of ASP perspectives in the Academic Teacher Training courses given at the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning, in both Swedish and English. The ASP coordinators continue to consult with different teacher groups on campus as well as other universities in Sweden. On the other fronts, the work continues!

1. Central coordination

In order to continue with the university-wide dissemination of experience and to provide ongoing support for both educators and students, we propose a coordination function for active student participation established by the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning. This coordination function could tentatively be called the Collaboratory for Active Student Participation to signal the diversity of activity, which it is based on cooperation and an exploratory approach into a dynamic field. The Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning's existing infrastructure and networks have been an effective platform for ASP project work, and therefore an organisational unit that resides within it ensures that ASP will continue to be an integral part of the University's teaching activities and its strategic development. The Collaboratory's mission should be continued support for students and educators through training, seminars, and consultations. Furthermore, the project group suggests that ASP Days, with activities that give students the opportunity to participate in educational development (such as a student competition), be an annual feature at Uppsala University. Positive responses to the project's work highlight that the project has inspired both educators and students, and initiated a conversation about students' roles in their education. Continual inspiration and dissemination of experience is necessary, but needs to be complemented with a more consistent monitoring and support scheme that was not possible during the short duration of the project. The Collaboratory will build on the experiences gained in the project and strategies for further development. One of these strategies could be to coordinate a network of dedicated educators who want to work with ASP.

In order not to lose the continuity and the expertise that has been built through the project, the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning has extended two project assistant positions at 50% each. The project proposes that the Unit extends their remit to also be responsible for the Collaboratory. The Collaboratory should be made up of: 1) two permanent employments at 50% each, 2) a supportive working group with staff from CEMUS and the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning, and 3) a smaller number of semester, part-time students. The reasons for this solution are:

- a) so as to build on the expertise that has been developed within the project,
- b) to continue to integrate a strong student perspective that creates credibility and legitimacy,
- c) to be able to take advantage of students' skills and expertise in smaller projects such as the development of an online education for student mentors,
- d) so that the coordination function can continue to be an asset in the Unit's regular activities, and
- e) to strengthen cooperation with the interdisciplinary, student-driven activities at CEMUS while ensuring a regeneration of students who can be involved more long-term.

The work group will monitor and support the work of the Collaboratory, be responsible for continuity, and assist in research connections and networking. Even a reference group made up of students, teachers, and educational leaders from all the different faculties will be connected to the Collaboratory.

2. Specific educational development funding

In order to assist and support educators and students with innovative ideas, the project proposes that specific funds are earmarked within the current PUMA-funding model (university-wide educational development project funding). This funding could support pilot projects involving students in educational development, such as course development with elements of e-learning, or students supporting new teachers by sitting in on their teaching sessions and providing feedback ('students as consultants'), or even course or programme evaluations. The project proposes that funds should be advertised at 125,000 SEK every six months, and that the focus should be on smaller pots of funding to support a wide variety of initiatives. The call for applications should be ongoing and the process should be expedited, taking into account the short contact periods of educators and students and thus enabling applicants to have the opportunity to execute their idea while contact between interested students and educators is still ongoing. By providing consultative support, documentation, and monitoring, the Collaboratory would be able to monitor and evaluate the projects and promote them as examples of good practice.

3. Strong support within the faculties

Active student participation is based on the existence of dedicated students and faculty within the University's different disciplines. An important task is to support the many dedicated educators who work for student participation and activating teaching methods. This may initially be promoted with the establishment of an educator network, but in order to further promote and reward good examples from different university disciplines, the project proposes opportunities to earn pedagogical merits of excellence for educators who work with active student participation within each faculty.

An important lesson learned during the project was that the project would have needed the support of several students from the various disciplines in order to have a wider impact and become more deeply-rooted in the different subjects. Uppsala University has 40,000 students and twelve different campuses, which is both a challenge and an opportunity in itself. Therefore, the project proposes to, in consultation with the student unions, set up a number of project positions (part-time) for so-called ASP developers (see Figure 1). They should be active students at Uppsala University. The selection process is based on project proposals for educational development that the applicants themselves draft.⁵ These ASP developers would work together with the coordination function to ensure a continuous exchange of experiences and knowledge. The positions can advantageously also be associated with the faculties' own fora for educational development such as TUR, PRÅM, and the student unions. ASP developers may also have a general responsibility to promote active student participation in their subject areas through information dissemination and implementation of development projects. The scope of their assignments will likely need to be adapted to the different scientific areas conditions and may therefore vary.

Another lesson learned during the project was the importance of offering both educators and students good examples and experiences that have a clear didactic relation to their subject. Identify-

⁵ Inspiration can be taken from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology's model for student collaboration called AltUnd (Alternative Education). To work at AltUnd, students formulate a project proposal on an educational development project they want to implement in their subject area. They are hired at 20% to work on this project.

ing and disclosing such good example is another important task for the ASP developers.

4. Collaboration with student associations and the student unions

The student associations and student unions at Uppsala University have broad expertise working with student involvement and education quality. Furthermore, there are well-established channels to reach students and a long tradition of managing the transfer of knowledge between student generations. During a conversation in the context of 'kårsamverkan' (student union cooperation group) the four student unions were in favor of the project group's proposals; in particular, the Student Union expressed a desire to take greater responsibility to support the University's work with active student participation. The project team therefore suggests that the Collaboratory promotes increased cooperation with the unions and, in dialogue with the unions, agrees on relevant and effective forms of cooperation. It would be desirable if, for example, the unions jointly appoint a special contact person who works with student ombudsmen and other relevant persons who have direct contact with student associations and other types of student initiatives.

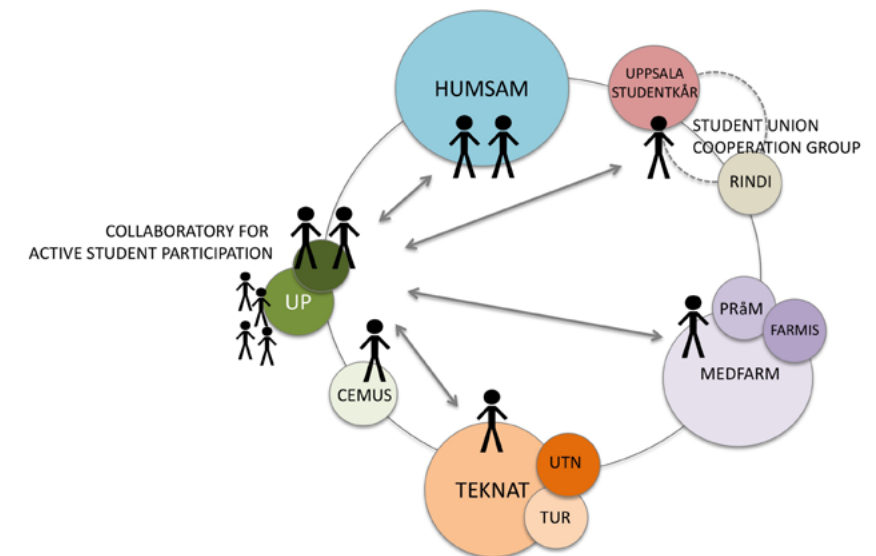


Figure 1: Uppsala Model for Active Student Participation.

The stick figures above represent ASP developers and the Collaboratory coordinators. The smaller figures represent students who are tied to the Collaboratory for smaller, university-wide projects. The ring indicates the mutual exchange between all stakeholders. The double-headed arrows indicate the particular responsibility of the Collaboratory to network, support, and spread awareness and knowledge about the individual initiatives. Kårsamverkan is a coordinating body for all of Uppsala University's student unions. Rindi is the Student Union on campus Gotland. PR&M is the Pedagogic Council at the Disciplinary Domain of Medicine and Pharmacy. Farmis is the student union at Medfarm. UTN is the Uppsala Union of Engineering and Science Students. TUR is the Science and Technology Faculty University Pedagogic Council. CEMUS is the Centre for Environment and Development Studies. UP is the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning.

The Uppsala Model for ASP that the project proposes builds on the synergies created when all of the above proposals are realised. Only through a joint venture can physical meeting places, a broad commitment among students and educators, a clear structure that connects different initiatives and experiences, as well as a continuous and sustainable support for existing and new projects be enabled.

Development Potential

In future work with active student participation, there is great potential to involve more actors. The leadership of both the Uppsala University libraries and the Student Affairs and Academic Registry Division have expressed strong support for the continued work and can help with both the physical venues and information dissemination. For the libraries, it is also possible to provide educational support for students who work with active student participation.

Active student participation is a dynamic field that covers several areas of higher education learning and teaching. In a recent report from the UK, the authors highlight that the concept 'active student participation' has been coined at Uppsala University and mention, in particular, initiatives such as mentoring / Supplemental Instruction and the student-driven education at CEMUS (Healey, Flint, and Harrington 2014, p.39-40). The authors also identify four different areas, made visible in Figure 2 below (2014,

p.25). Of the active student participation examples that the project team has come across at Uppsala University, the majority take place in the top two fields: Learning, teaching and assessment and Curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy. There are areas of student participation where Uppsala University has a long tradition, a wide range of competences, and both established and new and innovative initiatives. One of these is Uppsala University's model of education evaluations, which is currently being piloted. The model gives students the opportunity to actively contribute to the planning, implementation, and monitoring of education evaluations. It may involve a significant strengthening of the students' contributions to quality enhancement in accordance with Healey et al.'s model, but for that to happen, it requires the development of effective forms of this engagement. The Collaboratory could assist in this method development work.

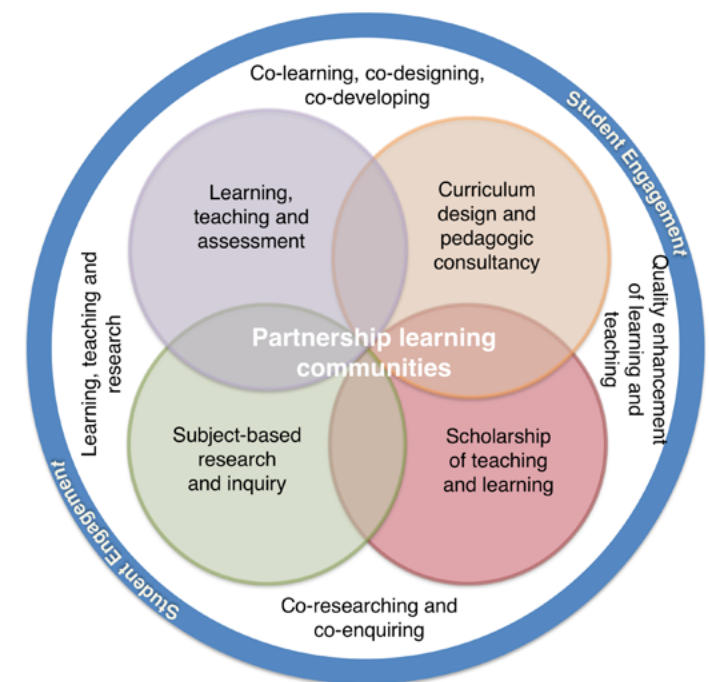


Figure 2: Students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education (Healey et al., 2014, p.25).

The two lower fields, students' involvement in Subject-based research and inquiry and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), are fast-growing areas internationally. In the Uppsala University context, they are still relatively unexplored as an arena for ASP. A recurring perspective brought up by practitioners and international researchers that the project has been in contact with is the need to build on existing initiatives in these areas, and that Uppsala University already has a major asset in the form of CEMUS. Students and educators at CEMUS have been working together in an interdisciplinary learning and teaching environment for 25 years. Moreover, CEMUS is a dynamic and changing educational environment that has the ability to quickly embrace, develop, and put into operation new teaching methods. Experts in the field are demanding large-scale, cross-disciplinary quantitative and qualitative studies on partnership collaborations between students and educators, in order to increase awareness of these new approaches and to better support their further development.⁶ CEMUS is an excellent environment for such studies.

There are a number of areas in higher education with students that have a strong commitment and in which there are great opportunities for collaborations or partnerships. These areas include socialisation and inclusion of new students and student groups, sustainable development, international contacts and exchange of knowledge, as well as employability and entrepreneurship. Two examples of this, where work is already underway, are Uppsala University's Sustainability Hub and the Matariki Network's Workshop on Global Citizenship.⁷ These examples do not represent just two innovative trans-national initiatives, but

⁶ See Catherine Bovill and Peter Felten in their introduction, 'Cultivating student-staff partnerships through research and practice' in the special edition, 'Engaging students as partners in learning and teaching' of *International Journal for Academic Development* 21(1).

⁷ Sustainability Hub is an idea that comes from Maastricht University and is based on the students, with support from teachers, implementing projects to increase sustainability on campus. The model could work well together with Uppsala University's new action plan for sustainable development. The Matariki Network's workshop for Global Citizenship is based on students and teachers from the various universities in the network gathered in Uppsala to work together to devise ways through which universities can enable their students to become Global Citizens. The workshop in Uppsala is planned and facilitated by two students and this format can hopefully inspire future work.

also opportunities to further explore partnership collaborations between students and educators.

As the four fields in Figure 2 show, active student participation mean that students engage in teaching and course planning, and that they are actively involved in research or in contributing to an academic approach in higher education, i.e. the 'Scholarship of Teaching and Learning'. To take advantage of the full potential of active student participation through continued support and ambitious development can be an important part of the university's ambition to create a unique educational environment and work for a better world.

Project Outcomes and Future

Finally, in May 2016 the final report was sent to all deans, heads of department, and directors of study in the three scientific domains. It was accompanied by a personal letter from the Vice Chancellor in which she emphasised the potential of ASP and its importance for a high-quality teaching and learning environment. Moreover, she encouraged stakeholders to take part of the project's experiences, examples, and recommendations and to strengthen ASP within their contexts. The project group's recommendations for the continuous development of ASP were summed up as follows:

- A coordinating function for active student participation be established in the Unit for Academic Teaching and Learning (UP). This coordinating function's mission should be continued support to students and educators through trainings, seminars, and consultations, and further dissemination of experience complemented by clearer follow-up routines and continuous support. The coordination function should tentatively include two permanent employees at 50% each, a team with experienced personnel from CEMUS and UP, as well as a smaller number of semester, part-time students;
- Special funds are allocated in order to support educators and students with innovative ideas to carry out educational development projects. These funds should be coordinated within the framework of the current PUMA

funds, provided that the call for applicants can be made more frequently than once per annum;

- The different disciplines, in consultation with the student unions, set up a number of project positions (part-time) for ASP developers (see Figure 1). These should be active students at Uppsala University. The selection process is based on project proposals for educational development that the applicants themselves draft. These ASP developers work together with the coordination function;
- That opportunities for pedagogical merits for educators who work with active student participation should be investigated within each faculty; for example, that by doing work with active student participation merits an application to be an excellent teacher;
- The coordination function operates for an enlarged partnership with several actors, such as student unions and libraries, and, in dialogue with them, devise suitable forms of cooperation such as jointly appointed contact persons.

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