CULTIVATING AGENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ICED26 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Cultivating Agency in Higher Education brings together contributions presented at the *ICED26 International Conference on Academic Development*, offering perspectives on agency, academic development, and the changing landscape of higher education.

The volume reflects the diversity of conversations, practices, and scholarship shared across the international ICED community, exploring how academic developers, educators, students, leaders, and institutions can exercise and foster agency in response to contemporary challenges in higher education.

These proceedings document the work presented at ICED26 and provide a resource for continuing the conversations, collaborations, and learning that emerged from the conference.

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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

ICED26 Conference - Agency and Academic Development

Dates	24-26 June 2026
Pre-conference	23 June 2026
Host institutions	REDU (Red de Docencia Universitaria) and the University of Salamanca

CONFERENCE THEME AND SUB-THEMES

Agency and Academic Development

Academic development, often referred to as educational development in some regions, is a field committed to bridge scholarship, practice, and policy to drive meaningful transformation in universities. At the core of this process lies the concept of agency, understood as the capacity to exert control over the actions, influence the environment and bring about change in our reality (Albert Bandura, 2001). In the context of academic development, agency is reflected in our role as change agents, influencing learning, teaching, and institutional strategies at multiple levels. Exercising agency involves challenging limitations, reconciling conflicting demands, and aligning individual and collective aspirations with broader goals. Through this engagement, we inspire teachers, students, and institutional leaders to explore new approaches that redefine the purpose and impact of higher education.

Building a strong professional identity is key to exercising agency. This includes balancing research and practice, responding to the evolving expectations of campus leaders, researchers, teachers, and students, and building credibility in diverse institutional settings. As both creators and facilitators of knowledge, academic developers assist study programme managers, teachers and students in enhancing learning experiences and fostering innovative practices that are based in evidence. *(Agency and Knowledge)*

Academic development centres must navigate the strategic landscape of higher education, ensuring the work aligns with institutional priorities while responding to societal and systemic changes. This often places academic developers in dual roles: connecting senior leadership and teachers while balancing accountability and the freedom of intellectual exploration. These complexities call for strong communities of practice, interdisciplinary collaboration, and alliances within and beyond our institutions. *(Agency and Strategy)*

Finally, we play a crucial role in helping university teachers to empower students as active participants in their education. *Student agency* is understood as the capacity of students to influence their own lives and their environment through responsible decision-making and reflective action (OECD, 2024). Engaging students as partners in curriculum co-creation and learning innovation leads to more inclusive, relevant, and future-ready educational experiences. By fostering student agency, designing curricula that address real-world challenges, and adapting to emerging disruptions like artificial intelligence, we help shape a more dynamic and equitable higher education system. *(Agency and Students)*

The ICED 2026 Conference on “AGENCY AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT” invites us to explore this concept in depth to better understand the role of academic development centres and its academic and professional staff in transforming academic development and higher education.

AGENCY AND KNOWLEDGE

Advancing Epistemologies, Innovation and Scholarship

This track examines how academic developers construct, share, and apply knowledge in interdisciplinary and collaborative contexts. It highlights the scholarly foundations of academic development and explores how reflection and innovation drive advancements in teaching, learning, and institutional practices. The track also addresses the importance of digital transformation, sustainability, and inclusivity in higher education, emphasizing how these factors shape knowledge development and professional practice.
Topics include:

- The Scholarship of Academic Development as a recognised field of research.
- Innovative formats to generate, organise, and share knowledge.
- Interdisciplinary communities of practice, partnerships, and networks to promote epistemic agency.
- Frameworks and reflective practices to shape professional identities and foster epistemological growth.
- Critical examination on disruptions, such as artificial intelligence, and their impact on knowledge creation, curriculum development and student learning, from a sustainable and inclusive perspective.

AGENCY AND STRATEGY

Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Organisational Transformation

This track explores the intentional, strategic actions of academic developers as change agents and leaders in teaching, learning, and curriculum enhancement across institutional and systemic levels. It examines their role in shaping teaching cultures, contributing to policy making, fostering alignment between curricula and institutional goals, and advancing organizational learning practices. The track also highlights strategies for building agile and responsive academic development units that can adapt to evolving educational needs and systemic challenges.
Topics include:

- Strategic initiatives to shape policies and programs for teaching, learning and curriculum enhancement, and especially the initial training for novice teachers.
- Effective strategies for collaboration across centres, faculties, and departments.
- Alignment of academic development initiatives with institutional policies and systemic priorities.
- Feedback, evaluation, and continuous improvement practices to foster sustainable organisational learning.
- Resilient academic development units to navigate systemic disruptions and societal shifts.

AGENCY AND STUDENTS

Empowering Learners and Transforming Curriculum

This track examines the role of academic developers and teachers in fostering learner agency and engagement in undergraduate, postgraduate, and continuing education programmes to drive curriculum innovation and transformation. It explores how participatory approaches to curriculum design are promoted, as well as programmes fostering inclusivity and sustainability. It also reflects on the active role of students as co-creators of curricula and learning experiences.
Topics include:

- Student agency to enhance motivation, self-regulation, and engagement in learning.
- Support to academic staff and teachers to promote student agency.
- Partnerships between students and teachers to co-create meaningful and transformative learning experiences.
- Institutional collaboration between students, teachers, and academic leaders to enrich curriculum design.
- Design of competence-oriented, inclusive and sustainable curricula and university programmes that address societal and workforce needs.

FULL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Pre-Conference

Time	TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2026
ALL DAY, FROM 8:00	*Welcome & Registration*
08:30 – 09:00	*Welcome and brief Pre-Conference Instructions*
09:00 – 12:00	**Parallel Workshops A** **Workshop 1:** - A great Teachers Retreat: A Model for Instructor Agency and Development. ▾ Janel Seeley and Ashli Tomisich **Workshop 2:** - Applying a Research-based Model to (re)Design High-impact Course Design Institutes. ▾ Carol Hurney, Jordan Troisi, Mary Wright and Eszter Kalman **Workshop 3:** - Life-History Mandala Workshop: Understanding Educational Beliefs Through Life Histories. ▾ Mami Mitachi and Kimikazu Sugimori **Workshop 4:** - An Organizing Framework to develop Holistic Academic Development Programs. ▾ Michele di Pietro
12:00 – 13:15	*Lunch*
13:15 – 16:15	**Parallel Workshops B** **Workshop 5:** - Inclusive Online Course Design and Teaching Best Practices: Fostering Instructor and Student Agency in the Digital Age ▾ Karen Skibba **Workshop 6:** - Internationalisation for Good: How to Sustainably Foster Global Perspectives as Academic Developers. ▾ Angelika Thielsch, Lucie Weissowa and Gabriela Pleschova **Workshop 7:** - Implementing Trust-building Strategies in Academic Development Contexts. ▾ Kathryn Sutherland, Rachel Forsyth and Peter Felten **Workshop 8:** - Integrating Ethical Decision-Making as a Teachable Skill in Academic Development: A Dilemma-Based Approach. ▾ Björn Kiehne
16:30 – 19:30	**Parallel Workshops C** **Workshop 9:**

Time	TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2026
	- Building Relationships and Promoting Agency Through Reflective Dialogue. Janel Seeley **Workshop 10:** - From Tools to Agency: Building AI Literacy for Academic Practice. Bernhard Lange **Workshop 11:** - From Participation to Strategic Impact—Multi-Level Evaluation for Centers for Teaching & Learning. Sheena Brown **Workshop 12:** - Structural Agency in Academic Writing. Helen Sword

Conference

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
ALL DAY, FROM 8:00	*Welcome & Registration*
09:00–09:30	*Opening Ceremony*
09:30–10:30	**Keynote: Agency, responsibility, and values-driven educational development** **David A. Green**
10:30 – 11:00	*Coffee break*
11:00 – 12:30	**Parallel Sessions A** **Symposiums 1:** - Agency and strategy to build trustful spaces ▾ Rachel Forsyth · Claire Hamshire, Peter Felten, Jessica Riddell, Anna Santucci, Alison Cook-Sather, Kathryn Sutherland **Symposiums 2:** - How can the developer develop? ▾ Jan Folkert Deinum · Irene Douwes-van Ark, Rick Huizinga, Angelika Thielsch, Karolina Duschinska, Bartłomiej Wróblewski, Michal Urban, Radka High, Manuela Milani, Sarah Leupen, Iwona Maciejowska, Anna Sajdak-Burska, Simon Ngigi, Winfred Kithinji, Edward Ombajo, William Muriithi **Papers 1:** - Human Literacy: Reclaiming Agency in the Age of AI Readiness for Faculty and Staff ▸ Carl Moore - Future Skills Literacy as a Driver of Academic Agency and Curricular Innovation? A Programmatic Approach to Transforming Undergraduate Education ▸ Henrik Dindas - Character Education in Higher Education: A Global Cross-Case Synthesis of Approaches ▸ Thomas Colclough · Duncan Pritchard - Student-Centred Learning as a Quality Framework in Higher Education: Empowering Learners and Transforming Curriculum ▸ Marina García-Herrero · María-José Rodríguez-Conde, Susana Olmos-Migueláñez, Juan-Pablo Hernández-Ramos, Alberto Ortiz-López, Sandra Marcos-Ortega - When Competencies Multiply: Reorienting competency-based Education Toward Meaning ▸ Hussein Zeidan **Papers 2:** - Beyond Status and Compensation: Motivational Landscapes in Teaching Reward Systems ▸ Klara Bolander Laksov · Maria Larsson, Katarina Mårtensson - (Re)Thinking Pedagogical Merit: Excellent Teachers' Experiences of Teaching Excellence Frameworks in Swedish Higher Education ▸ Jeanette Sjöberg - Building Sustainable Career Pathways Through Data-Driven Continuous Professional Learning for Academic Staff ▸ Esmarie Strydom · Marieta Jansen van Vuuren - Teaching in Higher Education: A historical view of a Career Path for Teachers in Norwegian Higher Education ▸ Yngve Nordkvelle

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
	- Deciphering Practice: Repositioning Fellowship Processes in UK Higher Education ▸ Sabrina Poma · Kristyna Campbell **Papers 3:** - Factors for Development of Trust: Building Collegial Relationships within Teaching and Learning Programs ▸ Abdulgni Muthannaha, Fredrik Olsson · Håkon Naasen Tandberg - Reclaiming the Ethos of Academic Development: Building Trust through Care, Collegiality, and Community ▸ Adrian Lee · Kiruthika Ragupathi - What can the Third Space learn from a Collaborative Autoethnographic Study on educational change in Higher Education? ▸ Daniela Castro de Jong · Rita Prestigiacomo, Benjamin Phipps, Sharon Aris - From Burnout to Breakthrough: Reclaiming Agency for University-Wide Well-Being in Teaching-Focused Institutions ▸ Liza Choi - Zooming into Active-Learning: A Matrix to Analyse Student-Centred Curriculum Design ▸ Francisca Miranda · Diana Mesquita, Maitê Gil **Papers 4:** - Responsible AI Integration in Higher Education: Policy and Curriculum Interventions ▸ Thomas Lodewyckx · Jan Verbakel - Teaching AI with AI: Leveraging Critical Digital Pedagogy and Student Partnerships to Transform AI Curriculum ▸ Wei Yan · Ajay Dhruv, Vijal Jain - Collaborative and Proactive Solutions–addressing students' challenging behaviours in school ▸ Victoria Stenbäck, Gunvor Torstensdotter · Henrik Lindqvist - Equipping Engineering Curricula with Digital Simulation Skills: Embedding ANSYS in Curricula ▸ Ma Moghimi · Masum Billah, S Islam, D Roberts, Md Asaduzzaman, S Marimuthu, M Fahad, S Shiryghidary, A Cash, S Vatannia **Papers 5:** - Enhancing Teaching Through Collaboration – A Regional Approach ▸ Laura Costelloe · Mary Fitzpatrick, Nuala Harding, Catherine Ann O'Connell, Katherine Whitehurst, Michael Wride - What, Where, How Long and With Whom – A Study of University Teachers Tasks ▸ Marie Leijon · David Rosenlund - Research-Based Teaching Strategies in Higher Education in an Internationalised Environment ▸ Yite Wang - From Isolation to Collaboration: Lesson Study for Strengthening Lecturer Resilience ▸ Lindiwe Mokotjo **Papers 6:** - Stepping into the Crosshairs: Faculty Developers' Role in Times of Educational Crisis ▸ Milagros Castillo-Montoya · Jillian Ives - Educational developers' roles in curriculum review: developing, devolving and diminishing agency ▸ Claire Gordon · Lee-Ann Sequeira - More Than a Room: Educational Developers' Roles in Leveraging Active Learning Classrooms for Pedagogical and Institutional Change ▸ Luciano da Rosa dos Santos · John Cheeseman - Strategic Roles of Centers for Teaching and Learning in Shaping AI Integration in Hungarian Higher Education ▸ Lilla Anna Sebestyén · Ida Dringo-Horvath, Zsófia Drjenovszky, Judit T. Nagy - AD Leadership in Norwegian HE Mergers: Challenges and Opportunities ▸ Katja Hakel **Papers 7:**

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
	- Program Innovation as Holistic Educational Development: A Case Study ▸ Jaclyn Carter · Kimberley Grant, Patti Dyjur - FPD-Include: Designing Faculty Development for Inclusive Teaching in Pharmacy Education ▸ Mirey Alfarah · Marie van der Kloet - Educational Development through Course Design, Community of Practice and Mentoring: The EDUflow Program ▸ Krisztina Lénárt · Helga Dorner - Beyond Academic Silos: A Podcast-Based "Gentle FD" Initiative in a Research-Intensive University ▸ Wonhwa Park · Hiro Sato - Empowering faculty agency through microcredentials ▸ Consuelo García Tamarit **Papers 8:** - Shaping Academic Development for AI: Practices, Policies, and Futures in European Higher Education ▸ Miriam Hansen · Sabine Fabriz, Helga Ballardini, Elena Benini, Velibor Mladenovici, Anna Serbati, Ligia Tomazin - Academic Development as Ethical Infrastructure in Institutional Responses to Generative AI ▸ Dayna Henry · Breana Bayraktar, Jessica Taggart - Reimagining Agency: Students, Faculty, and AI in Higher Education ▸ Izumi Sekizawa - Future-Proofing Higher Education with AI, DEI and Relationship-Rich Education ▸ Anja Pawelleck · Svenja Kaduk - Reimagining academic development: using over two decades of lived experience to navigate the future in times of crisis. ▸ Alison Farrell · O'Sullivan Íde, Claire McAvinia **Papers 9:** - Building trust and accountability through policy and process review: A Collaborative Model from the University of Salford ▸ Neil Barrett · Claire Hamshire, Rosie Bryce - Academic development agency awareness – why and how to be responsive to the host organization ▸ Roy Andersson · Torgny Roxå, Kristofer Modig - Building resilient academic development alliances ▸ Claudia Bade - Enhancing academic development agency through understanding staff perceptions of teaching and learning units ▸ Bopelo Boitshwarelo **Papers 10:** - Collective Agency: African Feminist and Decolonial possibilities for Academic Development ▸ Corinne Knowles - Towards an anti-racist and decolonial praxis framework in education ▸ Aisha Haque - Developing academic readiness and learner agency through curriculum co-design and communities of practice: a case study. ▸ Stergiani Kostopoulou · Deirdre Raftery, Marie Clarke, Ruth Ferris - Intercultural Collaboration in University Classrooms: An Overview and Case Study ▸ Jun Iio · Shigenori Wakabayashi **Papers 11:** - Academic Development for Inclusive Internationalization: A COIL Technopreneurship Quadruple Project ▸ Anisa Vahed · Mustafa Ozguven

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
	- From Anxiety to Agency: Giving Students Power through Global Citizenship and Social-Emotional Learning in COILSLIDES ▸ Bhawana Shrestha · Ana Sofia Oliveira Magano, Anisa Vahed - Critical Agency as Academic Development in COIL Partnerships ▸ Anisa Vahed · Rieta Ganas - Fostering global teaching competence in Japan: Insights from an EMI preparing future faculty program ▸ Airi Kawakami · Gabriel Hervas Nicolas, Kayoko Kurita - Building Agency North–South Cooperation: Meaningful Interaction and Academic Development ▸ Robert Gray · Paul Muyinda, Nicholas Ssempijja, Kjersti Lea, Steinar Sætre **Posters 1:** - Mapping the Scholarship of Academic Development in Germany: A National Snapshot ▸ Angela Weißköppel · Anita Sekyra, Claudia Bade - lehrblick.de - a blog to support the professional development of academic developers ▸ Regine Bachmaier · Birgit Hawelka - Professionalising University Teaching in the European Higher Education Area: A Mixed-Methods European Research ▸ Serena Rivetta · María-José Rodríguez-Conde, Susana Olmos-Migueláñez - Enacting the Hub Function of a Teaching and Learning Center: An Insider Action Research on Faculty Learning CommunitiesSLIDES ▸ Kimikazu Sugimori · Mami Kawachi - Impact of research in university teaching: Evidence from the REDICE call ▸ Lissette Fernandez-Nuñez · Ernest Pons-Fanals - Data-Driven Agency in Educational Development: Ten Years of CTL at H UniversitySLIDES ▸ Rei Kataoka · Kenichi Yamamoto, Yu Tachibana - Beyond Faculty Development: The Expanding Roles and Responsibilities of Faculty Development Units in Japanese Universities ▸ Yoshikazu Takenaka - An Extended Model of Educational Development, Teaching, and Learning that Includes Sessionals ▸ Brandon Sabourin - Transformative Learning in Maltese Further and Higher Education: A grounded Theory Study ▸ David Kenely
12:45 – 13:45	**Parallel Sessions B (60')** **Workshops 1:** - How Educational Developers Can Use Community Power to Scale Universal Design Practices ▸ Thomas Tobin · Maureen Haran, Niamh Plunkett, Lisa Padden **Workshops 2:** - Generative Artificial Intelligence for Research ▾ Diana Mireya Cuéllar Sánchez · Diana Marcela Cabrera Navarrete **Workshops 3:** - Teaching portfolios in the age of AI: time to rethink the assessment of teaching competencies? ▾ Anita Iversen · Kristine Ludvigsen, Iris Borch, Marko Lukic, Ragnhild Sandvoll, Katarina Winka **Workshops 4:**

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
	- Creating Safe Spaces for Critical Generative AI Literacy: Supporting Faculty Across the Adoption–Resistance Spectrum ▾ Lydia Watson **Workshops 5:** - Harnessing Emotion for Learning: empowering educators and students through research-informed practice ▾ Varia Christie · Nuria Lopez **Workshops 6:** - Enhancing Assessment Literacy with the Time and Effort on Task Toolkit ▾ Christina Magkoufopoulou **Workshops 7:** - Promoting Institutional Strategy by Building High-Impact Relationships ▾ Kate Williams · Laura Carruth, Rebecca Watts Hull **Workshops 8:** - Embodied Learning: Developing Human Capacities for Agency in Educational Development Practice ▾ Carl Moore **Workshops 9:** - (Re)Orienting Academic Development through Agency and Alignment ▾ Nancy Chick, Peter Felten, Katarina Mårtensson **Iced Talk 1:** - Strengthening Teachers and Teaching Communities: Experiences with Collective Academic Supervision ▸ Simone Brendstrup · Iris Maria Pedersen - Pathfinding a Culture of Collaborative Learning: Building Momentum for a National TBL Hub in Irish Higher Education ▸ Anne O'Brien · Nuala Harding, Gina Noonan - Publishing in Partnership: Ethical and Equitable Co-Authorship in Faculty-Developer Collaborations ▸ Jessica Taggart · Breana Bayraktar, Dayna Henry **Collaborative Space 1:** - Global Perspectives on Peer Observation: Practices, Tools, and Culture in Higher Education ▾ Lauren Barbeau · Claudia Cornejo Happel **Collaborative Space 2:** - Sharing Academic Agency: A Collaborative Model for a Virtual Global Professional Development Framework ▾ Olivia Fleming · Karen Skibba **Collaborative Space 3:** - Educational Development Through an Organizational Lens ▾ Alexandra Mihai · Mary Wright, Laura Cruz **Collaborative Space 4:** - Beyond Mandatory: Enhancing Student Attendance and Agency in Active Learning Environments ▾ Malin Östman
13:45 – 15:00	*Lunch break*
15:00 – 16:00	**International Panel (Moderated by Kasturi Behari-Leak, ZA)** **Academic Development and Agency: Global South Perspectives in Dialogue**
16:15 – 17:15	**Parallel Sessions C (60')**

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
	Workshops 10: - Create your own blueprint for institutional change: ambition to action @ KU Leuven ▾ Mara Zutterman · Elke Van Ael, Valérie Van Hees **Workshops 11:** - Developing agency in academic development through intentional strategic approaches ▾ Catherine Bovill, Katarina Maartensson **Workshops 12:** - Perspective Taking Outside the Box: Experiential Learning for Inter-professional Collaboration ▾ Nanda Bognar Dimitrov **Workshops 13:** - Every future begins with conversation - Asset-based feedback and student agency ▾ Bryan Dewsbury · Sarah Cavanagh, Michele Lemons, Lindsay Wheeler **Workshops 14:** - Empowering Learners: Building a Universal Design Lens for Motivation, Engagement, and Accessibility ▾ Claudine Warburton · Michele Bridge **Workshops 15:** - Pedagogical networks and peer learning at the centre of developing teacher expertise ▾ Erika Myllyniemi · Jenni Koponen, Kirsti Keltikangas **Workshops 16:** - Centers for Teaching and Learning as Catalysts for Education Innovation and Development ▾ Ellen Bastiaens · Dorothy Duchatelet **Workshops 17:** - Making student learning visible: critical thinking in a world of invisible AI ▾ Robert Eaton · Abby Osborne, Richard Mason, Sonja Strydom, Hanelie Adendorff **Iced Talk 2 :** - Fostering Student Agency Through Transformative Core Competencies Education ▸ Reya Saliba - Walking Besides, Not Ahead: A Mentoring Story of Shared Power ▸ Vanessa Drew - Stimulating agency through co-creation using the 'Enabling Students as Partners Framework'Pre-recorded videoSLIDES ▸ Nurun Nahar · Nykia Chance, Power Bright Williems - Creating cultures of student-staff partnership to reimagine student education ▸ James Forde · Lucy Mason, Laura Conroy, Libby Johnstone, Jenna Isherwood, Nely Konstantinova **Collaborative Space 5:** - The Future of Open-Access Publishing in SOED and SOTL ▾ Eileen Grodziak · Ted Murcray, Michelle Yeo, Laura Cruz, Daniella Gachago **Collaborative Spaces 6:** - Designing a Toolkit for Agile Backward Design in Curriculum Development ▾ Birgit Hawelka · Regine Bachmaier **Collaborative Spaces 7:** - How to stimulate professional agency of educators in innovative education in higher education? ▾ Wâtte Zijlstra · Janine Haenen, Max Kusters **Collaborative Spaces 8:** - Co-Lab for Curriculum Change: Building Reflective and Distributed Leadership ▾ Linde Moriau · Céline Cocquyt, Silke Vanslambrouck

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
	Collaborative Space 10: - Coordination: the scaffolding required for effective collaboration and integrated university education ▾ Lourdes Orejana · María Iserte, María José Sánchez de Miguel **Posters 2:** - Building Early-Career Instructor Agency through GTA and New Faculty Learning Communities ▸ Ashli Tomisich · Janel Seeley - Preparing Teachers of General Subjects for Vocational Education: Relevance, Practice, and Reflection ▸ Siw-Aina Holck - Role Of Agency in Teaching Identity Development in Graduate Student Teaching Assistant ▸ Sreyasi Biswas · Ehsan Ur Rahman Mohammed - From Obligation to Choice: How Autonomy Becomes a Driving Force for Transformative Change ▸ Iwona Maciejowska · Anna Sajdak-Burska - Embedding Agency within Professional Development in Teaching: A Case Study ▸ Pia Scherrer · Stefan Walter, Karin Brown, Samira El Boudamoussi, Florian Rittiner - Building Agency and Sustainable Writing Habits with Writing Accountability Groups ▸ Debby Pfeifer · Nicole Frank - Redesigning the Academic Portfolio Chart: Enhancing Reflection for Faculty and Future Faculty ▸ Kayoko Kurita - Quality and Impact of Peer Mentoring for Educational Development ▸ Anna Serbati · Marco Turrini, Michela Vignoli, Ettore Felisatti - Faculty-Enabled Student Agency: A Scalable Model for International Student Support ▸ Liza Choi
17:30 – 18:30	**Parallel Sessions D (60')** **Collaborative Spaces 9:** - Empowering academic developers with agency through articulation of expertise, knowledge and practice ▾ Kerry Dobbins · Helen King **Collaborative Spaces 11 :** - Painting a Family Portrait: Academic Development, Teacher Education, and SoTL ▾ Kimberley Grant · Michelle Yeo, Odd Rune Stalheim **Collaborative Spaces 12:** - Enhancing Accessible Learning Through a Lead Teaching Assistant Program ▾ Brennen Siemens · Gregg French **Collaborative Spaces 13:** - A Framework for Building and Assessing Equity-Centered Peer Mentoring Programs ▾ Olivia Choplin · Krista Craven, Margarita Safronova, Gabriel Kwek Wu-Xin, Diana Gregory **Collaborative Spaces 14:** - Empowering Learners Through Reflective Assessment ▾ Andrea Aebersold · Jenna Jones, Erica Shea **Collaborative Spaces 15:** - Compassionate Instructional Design in South African Higher Education ▾ Heinrich Prinsloo

Time	WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026
	Collaborative Spaces 16: - Mapping Curriculum Development Across Three Levels: A Collaborative Exploration ▾ Lisa David · Rüdiger Rhein **Collaborative Spaces 17:** - Bridging the Gap: Transfer from Theory of Research-Based Learning into Teaching Practice ▾ Patrizia Köhler · Franziska Nickolaus **Collaborative Spaces 18:** - From Theory to Practice: Operationalising FCCS as a Friction Analysis Tool ▾ Lars Klingenberg · Lotte Ebsen Sjøstedt **Collaborative Spaces 19:** - Who's in the Room?: Towards an Ecological Framework of Scholarly Domains in Teaching and Learning ▾ Laura Cruz · Anna Santucci, Johan Geertsema, Rik Vangangelt **Collaborative Spaces 20:** - What makes academic developers thrive? An exploratory collaborative space ▾ Björn Kjellgren · Lars Larsson, Åse Nygren
18:30–20:00	*Opening Reception*

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
ALL DAY, FROM 8:00	*Welcome & Registration*
08:00–08:45	Mindfulness (in Spanish)
09:00–10:30	**Parallel Sessions E (90')** **Papers 12:** - If Grades Undermine Learning, Why Do We Still Use Them? Navigating the Pedagogical and Institutional Conditions for Change ▸ Varia Christie · Camilla Falk Rønne Nissen - Enhancing student feedback literacy development through online interactive peer assessment ▸ Ying Zhan · Zhi Hong Wan - Student Perspectives on Assessment Reform: Towards Inclusive and Responsive Practices ▸ Dr. Karla Lopez-Murillo · Pamela Thomas, Hayley Pazmino Guevara - Reconceptualizing assessment workshops for staff development in an era of Generative AI ▸ Kershree Padayachee · Greig Krull, Laura Dison - Cultivating Teacher Agency: An Examination of Capstone Projects in a Master of Education Programme ▸ Bronwyn Harris · Nermin Vehabovic, Heidi Hollingsworth, Melaine Rickard **Papers 13:** - Beyond belonging: Dynamic, self-regulated agentic connecting for STEMM students ▸ Martyn Kingsbury · Julianne Viola, Luke McCrone - Fostering Self-Regulation and Agency in First-Year Engineering Students ▸ Maria José Canet Subiela · Ana Díaz Rubio - Understanding Expert-Novice Mental Models in Biochemistry: A Preliminary Exploration of Systems Thinking ▸ Elisa Fernandez · Begoña Ballester-Lurbe, Ignacio Pérez-Roger, Noemi Valtueña-Gimeno, Elisa Lledó-Feijoó, Enric Poch-Jiménez - Integrating self-awareness and critical thinking into higher education ▸ Elisabeth Moyano · María Paula Paragis, Marc Talló - Bridging the Gap: Alternative Conceptions in Chemical Equilibrium Among Pre-service Teachers ▸ Maria José Canet Subiela · Lorena Atarés Huerta, Marta Ribes Català **Papers 14:** - Supervising the journey to doctorateness: A conceptual framework ▸ Flip Schutte · Emetia De Beer - STEM PhD students doing and writing SoTL: what matters for academic development? ▸ Jennifer Lofgreen · Lene Nordrum - Practices to foster PhD student agency during their milestone ▸ Ghada Challah - Agency in compilation theses – the kappa as a vessel for independent, critical thinking ▸ Lene Nordrum · Michael Cimbritz, Öivind Andersson - Artificial Intelligence and Scientific Writing in a Health Sciences Program: A Mixed-Methods Study ▸ Giovanna Valentino · Carolina Aguirre, Isidora López, Javier Oyarzún, Daniela Avello, Alejandra Parada **Papers 15:**

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- Illumination or Illusion: The Role of Self-Reflection on Student Wellbeing and Lifelong Learning ▸ Juley Xiao · Pamsy Hui - The Missing Ingredient: Using Art Therapy in Academic Development and Practice to Enhance Wellbeing ▸ Conor West - Undoing Performativity. A Critical Praxis of Care, Compassion, Community and Inclusion in a UK Academic Development Programme ▸ Vanessa Mar-Molinero · Erika Corradini - The Hidden Curriculum of Care: Modeling "High-Touch" Facilitation to Foster Belonging and Academic Success ▸ Karen Skibba - From Exposure to Commitment: Building Trust for Lasting Teaching Change ▸ Jillian Ives · Xinnian Chen, Milagros Castillo-Montoya, Amit Savkar **Papers 16:** - Evaluating effectiveness and impacts of Faculty Development for junior faculties: a case study ▸ Arianna Marci - Long-term impacts of Academic Development in Australian Higher Education: a narrative approach ▸ Melinda J Lewis, Elizabeth Seeley-Wait · Rosanne Quinnell - Towards a multi-level model for impact evaluation in Teaching and Learning Centres ▸ Giorgia Pasquali · Giovanna Del Gobbo, Kiruthika Ragupathi - Bridging the Transfer Gap: How Faculty Developers Foster Agency and Application in Diverse Teaching Communities ▸ Karin Brown · Sara Petchey - Shifting Conceptions and Stretching Practice: The Impact of the Facilitator Development Workshop (FDW)Pre-recorded video ▸ Monica Vesely · Hannah Celinski **Papers 17:** - Audio Diaries as a Tool for Early Career Academics' Reflective Teacher Identity Work ▸ Emil Ammitzbøll Weissmann · Mette Krogh Christensen - Reimagining Teaching Portfolios Through Personal Knowledge Management with Digital Tools for Thought ▸ Stefan T. Siegel · David Lohner, Maik Arnold - Enhancing Instructor Agency With Reflective Portfolio Practices in Academic Development ▸ Svenja Kaduk · Anja Pawelleck - Pedagogic Portfolios: Reflections on the Transatlantic Transplant of an Educational Innovation ▸ Robert Fleisig · Katarina Winka - Quality of metacognition in the reflective writing of early-career academics ▸ Kirsten From · Elizabeth Rees Chin **Papers 18:** - Putting theory into practice – designing a justice-oriented engaged learning module to foster global citizenship skills among students ▸ Amber Mers · Manon Gerber, Sarju Sing Rai - Transformative Academic Development through Student–Staff Partnerships: Designing for Social Justice Across Institutional Contexts in South Africa ▸ Daniela Gachago · Xena Cupido, Subethra Pather - EXPAND: A multiple-entry curriculum development model for expansive educational change ▸ Linde Moriau · Bojana Cumul, Maroun Tabbal - Assessing the impact of a student-faculty pedagogical partnership to infuse equity and agency at a minority serving institution ▸ Adriana Signorini

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- A networked approach in educational development as a catalyst for sustainable policy implementation ▸ Ine Rens · Lien Castelein, Annelies Gilis, Hanne Tollenaere, Karen Van Eylen, Ana Paklons **Papers 19:** - Educational leadership in educational development: evidence from a scoping review ▸ Elena Benini · Klara Bolander Laksov, Anna Serbati - Change leadership as structural-agentic processes ▸ Oddfrid Førland · Torgny Roxå, Lene Nordrum - Becoming strategic: Informing Academic Developers' Identity, Agency and Practice for transformation ▸ Heather Goode · Rejoice Nsibande - The holistic approach to Faculty Development to face the age complexity: an operational model ▸ Roberta Silva · Alessia Bevilacqua - From individuals to institutions: operationalizing the holistic faculty development approach ▸ Alessia Bevilacqua · Roberta Silva **Papers 20:** - Towards an inclusive academic induction: Reflections from an online PG Dip: HE ▸ Benita Bobo · Pinkie Ntola, Xolile Xaba - Building Agency via a Train-the-Trainer Model for Student Assistants in First-Year Engineering ▸ Joelyn de Lima · Siara Isaac, Simone Deparis - "I used to think…, now I think…": Capturing conceptual change in novice university teachers' beliefs ▸ Sara Petchey - Rethinking support for novice academics: Evidence-informed principles for lasting change ▸ Aitor Mendia-Urrutia · Nekane Beloki, Cristina Arriaga, Karmele Arteaga - Department-Driven Educational Development: Insights from Campus Listening Tours ▸ Matthew Mahavongtrakul **Papers 21:** - Evidence-informed pedagogical decision-making and epistemic agency in higher education. ▸ Ángela Marcela Ríos Delgado - Integrating to transform: University professors perceptions of teaching and research ▸ Alejandro Almonacid-Fierro · Mirko Aguilar-Valdés - Where Design-Based Research fosters Experience-Based Learning: rethinking learner agency in the AI era ▸ Rana Challah · Aurélie Leborgne, Antoine Vacavant - University Teachers' Perceptions of Scholarly Teaching: Challenges and Enablers ▸ - René Glastra van Loon · Quincy Elvira, Daphne van Weijen - Current developments in university teaching research in Chile: achievements and challenges ▸ Robert Pardo · José Sepúlveda, Chantal Jouannet, Ana Borrero, Rocío Vélez, Gonzalo Zapata, Violeta Fernández, Pablo Álvarez, Macarena Alegría, Georgina Durán, Diana Muñoz, Thery-Ann Maxwell Cid **Posters 3:** - How to enhance sense of belonging in undergraduate STEM students: A scoping review ▸ Zeljana Pavlovic · Anja Møgelvang Jacobsen, Monica Jordheim - Develop university teaching for student engagement ▸ Irene Douwes-van Ark · Marjon Fokkens-Bruinsma, Jan Folkert Deinum, Hanke Korpershoek

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- Deconstructing the Research Paper: Fostering Student Agency and Engagement in an Introduction to Literature Classroom ▸ Marcia Nichols · Jennifer Wacek - Cinemeducation and case studies: enhancing critical thinking and socio-emotional competence ▸ María Paula Paragis · Elisabeth Moyano - In Rhythm and in Relation: Positioning Lecturers as Academic Advisors through Pedagogy of Mattering ▸ Anthea H M Jacobs - Rewarding reflection: a scheme to transform STEMM+B students' perception of holistic self-awareness. ▸ Paulina Kristiansson · Louise Hanger, Martyn Kingsbury - A Qualitative Inquiry into Graduation Research: Findings from a Focus Group of Graduates ▸ Takero Nishino - Building Leadership Capacity through Distributed Leadership in Faculties of Education ▸ Share Aiyed M. Aldosari **Symposium 3:** - Problems, Provocations, and Possibilities in Educational Development ▾ Celia Popovic · Mary Wilson, Donna Ellis, Åse Nygren, Anna Santucci, Jeanette Sjöberg **Symposium 4:** - Building Knowledge Together: fueling Student and Teacher Agency development with Epistemic Agency ▾ Renée Hendriks · Belinda Ommering, Janine Haenen, Max Kusters, Jacob Nouta **Symposium 5:** - Enriching Pedagogical Training Across Borders: A Comparative Analysis within the EUGLOH Alliance ▾ Maria Larsson · Réka Ökördi, Ashley Haberman-Lawson, Sara Andersson, Gunda Mohr, Nadia Blüthmann, Andrea Watkins Perez, Isabel Martins, Pedro Graça, Sira Danfakha **Doctoral Colloquium 1:** - Enhancing agency and enabling empowerment of first-year students at a rural university ▸ Vanessa Rademeyer - Navigating Accommodation Dilemmas: HE faculty experiences ▸ Hanne Bjertnes - Exploring Holistic Academic Development for Professors of Practice in Japanese Higher Education ▸ Hayato Sezaki
10:30–11:30	*Coffee break*
11:00 – 12:00	**Keynote: Rewarding university teaching in academic careers** **Ruth Graham**
12:15–13:45	**Parallel Sessions F (90')** **Symposium 6:** - Educational leadership of, for, with and through academic development ▾ Cormac McGrath · Klara Bolander Laksov, Anna Serbati **Papers 22:**

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- Students as 'Stormers': Taking action on the climate crisis during undergraduate studies ▸ Jenny Scoles · Mark Huxham, Eilidh Robb, James Fawkes, Rory Sutherland, Bailea Will, Kira Pearson, Srinivasan Shanmugam - Trusting the process: Students as co-researchers in interdisciplinary learning and teaching ▸ Jenny Scoles · Clare Cullen, Sora Choo, Sara Albakri, Polly Dipper - When The Tables Are Turned: Utilizing Students as Partners in the Creation and Teaching of Faculty Development ▸ Heather Rissler · Amanda Gray - Students as Change Agents in addressing Complex Societal Issues? Exploring how universities shape and respond to diverse forms of student engagement ▸ Laura de Groot · Frederique Demeijer, Eduardo Urias, Marjolein Zweekhorst - Agency makes a peer: student-faculty partnerships in the pursuit of authentic curricula ▸ Iro Ntonia **Papers 23:** - Pandemic Preparedness Capabilities: Emergency Response Capabilities and Sustainability of Universities in Kenya ▸ Kellen Kiambati - Matching Higher Education Curricula with Labor Market Needs: The Case of Georgia ▸ Dimitri Japaridze · Shorena Maglakelidze, Davit Tutberidze, Ekaterine Shaverdashvili - Crisis Agency in Higher Education: How Uzbek Institutions Acted, Decided, and Transformed ▸ Elena Khanzadyan - Agency and Strategy Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Organizational TransformationPre-recorded video ▸ Nizar Bitar · Nitza Davidovich - Reimagining Professional Learning Communities for Equity and Sustainability in South African Higher Education ▸ Anthea H M Jacobs · Rosaline Govender, Nereshnee Govender, Siyanda Ntlabathi **Papers 24:** - Educating for Agency: AI and the Values of the Liberal Arts ▸ Joseph Lampert - Fostering "Agency" through Data and Dialogue: A Sustainable FD Model Linking Non-Cognitive Outcomes with Faculty Networks ▸ Kunihiko Takamatsu · Yasuo Nakata, Kenya Bannaka, Kenichiro Mitsunari - Motivation, Identity, and Professional Development: Insights from a Study of University Teachers ▸ Asta B. Schram · Abigail G. Snook - Leading Academic development–navigating between service and academic pursuits ▸ Linda Barman · Åse Nygren, Ulrike Schnaas - How policy shapes agency in academic development. A reflection based on a case analysis from Germany ▸ Antonia Scholkmann · Angelika Thielsch **Papers 25:** - Updated Systematic Review on Lecturing in Contemporary University Teaching ▸ Héctor Tronchoni · Conrad Izquierdo - From Local Practices to European Impact: Mapping and Scaling Challenge-Based Learning in Universities ▸ Silvia Perzolli · Dorothea Ellinger, Alessandra Scroccaro, Asta Daunorienė, Siska Simon, Anna Serbati - Investigating hybrid teaching for inclusion, flexibility and internationalization across Europe ▸ Karen Louise Møller · Michael Detyna

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- Time for a High-Impact-Practices (HIP) Realignment? Iterating Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) to Meet Evolving Student, Community, and University Needs ▸ Elizabeth Dunens · Teresa Henderson Vazquez - Where Action Research promotes Researcher Agency via Work-Based Learning. ▸ Rana Challah **Papers 26:** - Professional Growth Through the Change Lab: An Ecological View of Faculty Agency ▸ Serhat Başar · Indira Day, Roeland van der Rijst - Fostering academic developers' agency through the change laboratory methodology. ▸ James Garraway · Najwe Norodien-Fataar, Lauren Davids - Empowering Educators: PG Certs as Strategic Levers for Equity-Driven Transformation in Higher Education ▸ Hardeep Basra · Dionne Barton - GEN-CREA. A case of co-creation of pedagogical tools for gender mainstreaming in higher education. ▸ Gio Gonzales-Asunción · Toni Pérez-Portabella, Iolanda Tortajada, Cilia Willem - Calm in the Information Storm: Mindfulness and Student Engagement ▸ Hannah Celinski **Papers 27:** - Storytelling as Boundary Practice: Cross-Cultural Conceptions of Academic Development Work ▸ Yan Gao · Rebecca Wakelin - Storytelling and narrative research: Holistic research methodologies to boost faculty agency in holistic academic development ▸ Michele Di Pietro - Guiding Faculty Communities of Practice Centered on Anti-Racist Writing Pedagogy ▸ Haivan Hoang - Granting Agency: A Writerly Approach to Educational Development ▸ Robert Gray · Laura Cruz - Towards a Translanguaging Matrix framework for translanguaging pedagogies in an institution of higher education in South Africa ▸ Tarisai Mpofu **Papers 28:** - From Assessment to Longitudinal Insights: Building a Data-Driven Learning Ecosystem for Competency-Based Education ▸ Mario Valdebenito Rodas · Karie Niedzielski, Kolton Collins, Benjamin Dyer - Revealing Knowledge Practices in UK Educational Development with Legitimation Code Theory ▸ Jo Kukuczka - Producing and using powerful knowledge in the field of Educational Development ▸ Chrissie Boughey - Exploring trends in research methods for Academic Development research: signature methodologies? ▸ Elena Benini · Henk Huijser, Anna Serbati - University Capacity Development Grants and Their Enactment on the Ground: An Ethnographic Account of a University of Technology ▸ Cephas Makwara · Violet Makwara **Papers 29:** - Mapping Student Agency in STEM Higher Education: A Systematic Review to Guide Educational Design ▸ Iris Capdevila · Joelyn de Lima, Anja Kranjc Horvat, Mahmoud Al-Subaihi - Validation and development of learning agency in an interdisciplinary programme in Spain ▸ Joana Jaureguizar · Weiwei Li, Igone Arostegui, Eneritz Jimenez, Alaitz Aizpurua, Nagore Guerra, Iratxe Redondo - Becoming a Critical Educational Developer: A Framework to Poise Educational Developers as Change Agents By Leveraging the Tenets of Critical Pedagogy ▸ Sharon Ultsch · Stefanie Baier, Adriana Signorini

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- Agency: lessons from a relational, trust-building approach to academic development ▸ Lisa McDonagh · Emma Sanders - Supporting students and teachers to manage emotional challenges – a key issue for academic development? ▸ Maria Weurlander **Papers 30:** - Unpacking student agency in peer feedback: Insights for university teachers and academic developers ▸ Tatiana Ershova - Fostering agency through coherent feedback between universities and schools ▸ Moeniera Moosa - From feedback to co-creation: Rethinking peer observation among experienced teachers ▸ Marcus Schmitt-Egenolf · Oskar Gedda - Student Feedback as a Mechanism for Strategic Alignment and Reflection in a Mandatory First-Year Experience Programme ▸ Sharmla Rama · Ruth Hoskins - Holding Space for Agency. Inclusive Academic Development and the Emotional Architecture of Feedback ▸ Vanessa Mar-Molinero · Erika Corradini **Papers 31:** - Rethinking Inclusive Higher Education: Epistemic Violence and Muslim Women's Agency ▸ Fahimeh Darchinian - From Adversity to Agency: Understanding Roma Students' Pathways to Educational Success ▸ Icy Fresno Anabo · Rocío García-Carrión, Andrea Khalfaoui Larrañaga - Universal Design for Learning in Field Based Teaching: Addressing barriers and developing disciplinary skills ▸ Ellen Lien · Marie van der Kloet - Rethinking Student Agency Through Mobility: How first-generation commuter students navigate space, time and higher education ▸ Lauren Olivia Davids - Field Testing the CLEAR Reflection Process: Establishing a Reflective WIL Practice to Support Lifelong Learning ▸ Monica Vesely **Symposium 7:** - Disciplinary research to promote deep learning and self-regulation ▾ Macarena Trujillo Guillen · Amparo Fernández March, María Pino Sancho Fernández, Lorena Atarés Huerta, María José Canet Subiela, María Asunción Pérez Pascual, María Ángeles Carabal Montagud, Paulo Sarriugarte Onandia, Kristina Zuza Elosegi **Poster 4:** - No need to reinvent the wheel. How to "transfer" good practices in Higher Education ▸ Hovy Katrin · Ivo van den Berk - Rating What Instructors Do: How Framing Impacts Bias in Student Feedback on Teaching ▸ Claudia Cornejo Happel · Lauren Barbeau, Chad Rohrbacher - From compliance to organisational learning: How KU Leuven built a living quality culture ▸ Niki Verschueren - From Strategy to Agency. Reimagining assessment and feedback for students learning ▸ Marilisa Birello · Georgeta Ion - Confronting the Long Shadow of Ableism: A Comparative Education and Higher Education Policy Analysis of Norway and Spain ▸ Gagan Chhabra

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- Faculty Members and Conspiracy Theories: Responsibilities, Risks, and Strategies in Higher Education ▸ Stefan T. Siegel · Eliane Troxler, Martin H. Daumiller - Universitas: achieving a sustainable curricular transformation through collaborative reflection.SLIDES ▸ María Iserte · Lourdes Orejana, Guadalupe Pérez - Building SoTL Agency in Norway Through a New National Journal: The Launch of NorSoTL and Its Format-Diverse Model ▸ Mirey Alfarah · Anja Møgelvang Jacobsen, Camilla Bjelland, Robert Kordts, Kristine Ludvigsen - Strategies for Integrating Mediation Instruction into Czech Law Faculties ▸ Kateřina Macigová · Lenka Holá **Doctoral Colloquium 2:** - Leadership of Boundary-Crossing Roles in Teacher Education ▸ Ann-Therese Nomerstad - Surviving and Thriving in Academic Development Work an exploratory study from Scotland ▸ Susan Greig - Advancing academic development for teaching courses in English as and to non-native speakers ▸ Alexandra Bergedick
13:45 – 15:00	*Lunch break*
15:00 – 16:00	**Keynote: Resourceful perspectives: Academic development for student and teacher agency** **Franziska Zellweger**
16:15 – 17:15	**Parallel Sessions G (60')** **Workshop 19:** - A Service Model in Higher Education? Reclaiming a Business Concept. ▾ Anneleen Claassen · Nicole Totté, Elke Van der Stappen **Workshop 20:** - Photo~currere~voice: visualising academic developers' strategic agency in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous times in higher education ▾ Amrita Narang **Workshop 21:** - The future of Academic Development: A speculative fiction workshop ▸ Cormac McGrath · Elisa Bone **Workshop 22:** - Beyond Written Work: Designing Interactive Oral Assessment ▾ Eszter Kalman · Samantha Clarke, Cassie Violet Lowe **Workshop 23:** - Addressing Courses Bottlenecks Across the Curriculum with Art-and Museum-infused Faculty Development ▸ Anna Flaming · Kimberly Datchuk **Workshop 24:** - Collaborative hospitality in academic development ▾ Molly Sutphen · Ragnhild Sandvoll, Tone Dyrdal Solbrekke, Velda McCune, Lina Markauskaite **Workshop 25:** - Measuring What Matters: Evaluating Teaching Development Programs ▾ Anna Rowe · Kristin Turnbull, Chien Gooi, Marina Harvey **Workshop 26:**

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- Fostering Student Agency through a Challenge-Based Education Sprint ▾ Lobke Van Damme · Mansi Sharma **Workshop 27:** - Building Collaborative Agency through Case Based Peer Dialogue, known as Collegial Intervision ▾ Dagmar Engfer · Sidsel Winther **Collaborative Space 21:** - Empowering Academic Developers: Decoding and Reimagining the Discipline ▾ Kerry Dobbins · Kiruthika Ragupathi **Collaborative Space 22:** - International Perspectives on the Equity- Excellence Imperative ▸ Mary Wright · Christina Hancock, Karen McCrindle, Susan Lewis **Collaborative Space 23:** - Learning together: equipping academic developers, teaching staff, and students to enhance agency in learning ▾ Robert Eaton · Abby Osborne **Posters 5:** - GENIAL: Cultivating Agency through a Transnational Academic Development Network ▸ Mascha Gemein · Antonia Levy, Beate Brunow, Martina Rosenberg - Transnational Communities Supporting Academic Development: The Case of the Eurolecturer Academy ▸ Iwona Maciejowska · Nataša Brouwer - Advancing Recognition Collectively: Interinstitutional Development of the EPIC Teaching Framework ▸ Manuel João Costa · Cíntia Costa, Rúben Alves, Rogério Costa, Agostinha Gomes, Ricardo Lima, Isabel Neto, Diana Oliveira, Ana Rodrigues, Helena Sofia Rodrigues, Cristiana Silva, Helena Alves - Building a Faculty Learning Community in a new interdisciplinary MSc-programme in Biosolutions ▸ Lotte Ebsen Sjoestedt · Dorte Elmeskov, Kirsten Joergensen Joergensen - From Individual to Institutional: Catalyzing Undergraduate Research Through Strategic Partnership ▸ Sreyasi Biswas · Maria Victoria Guglietti - Reconceptualising Academic Development's strategic role and (re)direction in the postgraduate space ▸ Catherine Hutchings **Iced Talks 3:** - Communities of Practice as a Balancing Act ▸ Jillian Ives - The Emotional Academic Developer ▸ Roland Tormey - Academic selves in dialogue: Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Organizational Transformation ▸ Markus Weil · Fernando Marhuenda Fluixá - From Liminality to Belonging: Rethinking the Role of the Academic Developer ▸ Katja Hakel
17:30 – 18:30	**Parallel Sessions H (60')** **Workshop 28:**

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	- How can Academic Developers strengthen educational leaders´ agency in the face of AI? ▸ Ester Fremstad · Anja Møgelvang Jacobsen, Anna Therese Steen-Utheim, Camilla Bjelland **Workshop 29:** - Curriculum Mapping for Quality Assurance and Program Design: An Interactive Workshop ▾ Jaclyn Carter · Kimberley Grant, Patti Dyjur **Workshop 30:** - Transforming Feedback Practice: A Scalable Model for Academic Development Workshops ▾ Breana Bayraktar · Kiruthika Ragupathi, Katherine Troyer **Workshop 31:** - Beyond books - a game of life for first year students' academic, social, and emotional development ▾ Margret S Sigurdardottir · Jill Marie McSweeney, Saffie Cate Hollingsworth, Berglind Eva Benediktsdóttir **Workshop 32:** - Re-imagining Roles: Students as Teaching and Learning Partners ▸ Lydia Watson · Bettina Boyle **Workshop 33:** - Micro-experiential approach for teaching professional skills in higher education (STEM focus) ▾ Joelyn de Lima · Siara Isaac **Workshop 34:** - How, where & when? – University pedagogical training for faculty: Implementation strategies and future directions ▾ Jenni Koponen · Jukka Välimäki **Workshop 35:** - Teaching Students to Teach Themselves: Designing Curriculum That Sparks Self-Regulated Learning ▾ Katrien De Bruyn · Sabine Lamote **Workshop 36:** - Stellar Rescue: Experiential Problem-Based Learning to Build Instructor Agency in Active Learning Classrooms ▾ Luciano da Rosa dos Santos · John Cheeseman **Collaborative Space 24:** - Expanding Our Understanding of Student Trust Perceptions: A Trust Collaborative Project ▾ Kathryn Sutherland · Ted Murcray, Jill McSweeney, Peter Felten, Rachel Forsyth, Debra Grantham, Laurel Schut, Nancy Chick, Kate Thompson, Saffie Hollingsworth, Neal Blank, Subin Kim **Collaborative Space 25:** - Designing AI Literacy as a Transversal Competence: A Collaborative Approach Across European Universities ▾ Gregor Ross Dørum Maxwell · Sara Håkansson, Rachel Forsyth, Marko Lukic, Kine Maridatter Dørum Maxwell **Collaborative Space 26:** - Scaling SoTL Culture: Collaborative, Sustainable and Inclusive Approaches to Building Institutional Capability ▾ Anna Rowe · Karin Watson

Time	THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2026
	Collaborative Space 27: - Africa International Teaching Weeks: Collaborative Strategy to Foster Teaching Excellence, Internationalisation, and Organisational Transformation in African Higher Education ▾ Marieta Jansen van Vuuren · Esmarie Strydom, Ntsoake Malebo, Anita Maurtin, Anne-Mart Olsen **Iced Talks 4:** - An Academic Integrity Rescue Mission in the AI Era: Designing an AI-Enhanced Scenario-Based Gamified Course ▸ Yiqun Sun · Yexiang Wu, Yezi Yang, Rebecca Wakelin - The Space Between the Notes: Designing Intentional Pauses for Reflective, Connected Learning ▸ Ron Washburn · Constanza Bartholomae - "All that You Change Changes You": Student Artwork as Dialogue with the Institution ▸ Ijeoma Njaka
20:00–23:00	*Gala Dinner*

Time	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2026
ALL DAY, **FROM 8:00**	*Welcome & Registration*
08:15 – 09:15	**Parallel Sessions I (60')** **Collaborative Space 28:** - Reframing Sustainability in Engineering Education: Epistemological Foundations & Pedagogical Methods ▾ Valentina Rossi · Fabrizio Butera, Roland Tormey **Collaborative Space 29:** - Critical Educational Development: Exploring Critical Approaches to Dismantle Inequities within Post-Secondary Education ▾ Fouzia Usman **Collaborative Space 30:** - When AI Becomes a Colleague: Academic Developer Agency in AI Governance ▾ Jannette Flores **Collaborative Space 31:** - Collective Approaches in Faculty Development: Emerging Strategies to Foster Teacher Cultures ▸ Iris Maria Pedersen · Simone Brendstrup, Anne Line Wittek, Mette Krogh Christensen **Workshop 37:** - Culture as Strategy: Leading from the Third-Space for Agency, Innovation, and Workforce Alignment ▾ Dean Goon · Angela Atwell **Workshop 38:** - Centering Participant Agency in Academic Development Events: Prioritizing Presence Over Preparation ▾ Andrea Verdan · Katherine Raichle **Workshop 39:** - Peer Observation in Practice: Helping Observers Recognize and Instructors Reflect on Good Teaching ▾ Lauren Barbeau · Claudia Cornejo Happel **Workshop 40:** - Making pedagogical content knowledge visible: Enhancing course design for university teaching ▸ Rene Glastra van Loon · Quincy Elvira **Workshop 41:** - Reflecting on impact: A guided walk-through ▾ Clare Gormley · Martina Crehan, Rob Lowney, Anna Serbati, Asta Daunorienė **Workshop 42:**

Time	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2026
	- Agency in Academic Development: Comparing Structures, Roles, and Strategic Positioning ▾ Sabrina Gallner **Workshop 43:** - AI as a Mediator for Emotionally Intelligent Feedback ▾ Kate Ippolito · Monika Pazio Rossiter **Workshop 44:** - Decolonial speculations: Storying our preferred educational futures in a Gen AI era ▾ Aisha Haque **Workshop 45:** - Bridging Borders: Supporting international students in higher education ▸ Karen Crouch · Rachana Bhave
09:30–10:30	**Parallel Sessions J (60')** **Collaborative Space 32:** - Leveraging Agency in the Borderlands: Fostering Critical Consciousness for Organizational Change ▾ Mascha Gemein · Jessica Zeitler, Kristin Winet **Collaborative Space 33:** - Teaching Large Isn't Small Work: Advocating for What Large-Class Instructors Need ▾ Mayuko Nakamura **Collaborative Space 34:** - Inclusive Teaching Exchange – A Collaborative Space for Sustainable Pedagogy ▾ Malin Östman **Collaborative Space 35:** - Tapping on Identity and Competencies: Researchers' Assets for Navigating the Transdisciplinary Journey ▾ Hussein Zeidan · Laura de Groot, Amber Mers **Workshop 46:** - Integration of Generative AI in University Teaching: Strategies to Lead Educational Transformation. ▾ Asun Perez Pascual · M. Jose Canet Subiela, Andreu Blesa Pérez, Esther Rodríguez Gallego, Albert Fonts Ribas, Inés Escario Jover, María Ripollés Meliá **Workshop 47:** - Fostering sense of belonging in and through educational development ▾ Peter Felten · Gabriela Pleschova **Workshop 48:** - Collaborative agentic practice through a playshop: Towards productively disrupting academic norms ▸ Rieta Ganas · Greig Krull, Rosaline Govender, Adriano Giovanelli, Balitiye Monareng, Subethra Pather **Workshop 49:**

Time	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2026
	- Agency in Practice: Designing (Supportive) Project-Based Learning for Mid-Career Academics ▾ Rick Huizinga **Workshop 50:** - Mapping What We Value: Applying the Institutional Teaching Culture Framework to Strengthen Teaching Cultures ▾ Lori Goff · Erika Kustra, Donna Ellis, Lindsay Shaw, Hannah MacDougall, Madelyn Law, Lynn Taylor **Workshop 51:** - Ethical agency: A values-first approach to academic development ▾ Deandra Little · David Green **Workshop 52:** - Scholar. Author. Writer: Exploring Academic Writing Identity in Academic Development ▾ Laura Cruz · Derisa Grant, Anna Flaming **Workshop 53:** - Collaborative Program Development: Using Figma to Foster Agency and Alignment in Curriculum Design ▾ Darinka Aguirre Amador · Claudine Warburton, Terri Carde **Workshop 54:** - Prioritising with Purpose: An Agile Framework for Strategic Resource Decisions in Teaching and Learning Centres ▾ Kata Dosa · Réka Futász **Iced Talks 5:** - The Traveling Workshop: Virtual Roadshows as Innovative Practices of Academic Development ▸ Eva Erber · Laina Lockett - Strategic Agency in Academic Development: How Teaching Excellence & Innovation Center (TEIC) Shapes Teaching Policy and Institutional Transformation at Nova School of Business & Economics ▸ Jessica Carvalho · Patrícia Xufre - From Beginner to Advance: Accelerating Faculty AI Literacy through a Situated Mentorship Framework ▸ Yiqun Sun · Rebecca Wakelin, Nuria Benavent-Esteve **Special Poster Session**: Meet the Journals from IDEC Networks
10:30–11:30	*Coffee break*
11:00 – 12:30	**Parallel Sessions K (60')** Symposium 9 (cancelled): - Nothing about us without us: Mapping neurodivergent student perspectives on good teaching onto the Universal Design for Learning ▾ Mayuko Nakamura · Lori Henehan **Symposium 10:**

Time	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2026
	- Becoming agents for curriculum internationalisation. Research insights from four European countries ▸ Pouneh Eftekhari · Angelika Thielsch, Becky Bergman, Eveke de Louw, Lucie Weissowa, Torgny Roxå **Symposium 11:** - Advancing Student Agency through Technology-Enhanced Learning Environments: The Taiwan Experience ▾ Sung-Hui Tseng · Wei Shun Chang, Chi-Jung Huang, Ju-Ying Chang, Tsung-Ren Huang, Ling-Chieh Kung **Symposium 12:** - Ventures Near and Far: Place-based Knowledge and Transformational Learning in Study Abroad Courses ▾ Ben Pack · Amanda Bloom, Brent Chappelow, Sean Cosgrove **Papers 32:** - Development and Implementation of the Thailand Professional Standards Framework (THPSF) to Enhance Teaching Quality ▸ Arnuparp Lekhakula · Chanen Munkong, Benjamas Wongsatayanon - A National Board for TLC: a collaborative educational research process in the Italian university system ▸ Luisa Amenta · Barbara Bruschi, Giovanna Del Gobbo, Antonella Lotti, Anna Serbati, Ida Verna - Shared Perspectives on Teaching Development Units: Reflections from the Red AVANZA Network (REDU_Spain) ▸ Amparo Fernández March · Elena Quevedo Torrientes, Antoni Pérez-Portabella López - Shifting Grounds: How Global and National Actors Re-Define Quality in Digital Higher Education ▸ Sabrina Gallner **Papers 33:** - Sustaining Growth in Teaching: Mapping Development Approaches for Mid-Career Faculty ▸ Gergana Vasileva · Roeland van der Rijst - Beyond Voluntariness: Mandatory Reciprocal Peer Observation for Tenured Faculty ▸ Rikke von Müllen - What Do Educators Value in Graduate Certificates? Evidence from 30 Years of Practice ▸ Eszter Kalman · Jessica Frawley, Barbie Panther, Shane McIver, Rachel Finneran - CPD Trajectories of University Professors: An Institutional Case Study ▸ Patricia Maria Escobar Cáceres **Papers 34:** - Developing Emotional and Reflective Agency in Teacher Education: A Pedagogical Model for Sustainable Professional Learning ▸ Paolo Arru · Veronica Simona Benhamza - Re-thinking Teacher Education: Cultivating Pre-service Teacher Agency through Dialogue ▸ Lisa Tafuro · Rocío García Carrión - Engagement with research as a catalyst for in-service teachers' epistemic agency ▸ Daniel Espinosa · Georgeta Ion - Enhancing English-Speaking Skills through Mobile Applications: A Case Study at a Public University in Southern Ecuador ▸ Karina Celi · Adriana Cango - Advancing academic development for teaching courses in English as and to non-native speakers ▸ Alexandra Bergedick

Time	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2026
	Papers 35: - From Credential-Chasing to Capacity-Building: Six Ways Sessionals Approach Educational Development ▸ Brandon Sabourin - AI as Dialogic Catalyst: Archetypal Roles and Epistemic Agency in Interthinking ▸ Sharon Bratt - Done by, done to, done through and done with: Academic Developers delivering strategic projects ▸ Laura Milne · Jackie Potter, Claire Stocks - Nothing about us without us: Mapping neurodivergent actives on good teaching onto the Universal Design for Learning ▸ Mayuko Nakamura, Lori Henehan **Papers 36:** - Pedagogical consultancies with Academic Developers: experiences from the University of Trento ▸ Elena Benini · Helga Ballardini, Paola Venuti, Anna Serbati - Academic Professional Development: A Reflexive Account of Informal Mentorship in a Transformative Context. ▸ Shanya Reuben · Shaida Bobat, Vukani Luvuyo Makhaba - Preparing for professional learning through practicing peer-mentoring ▸ Katrine Nesje · Eli Tronsmo, Ester Fremstad - Enhancing Teaching Agency via Observation-Based Consultation: Implementing BOPPPS with New Faculty ▸ I-Fan Chang · Meilun Shih **Papers 37:** - Agency in Action: Graduate Student Partnership Planning in Academic Development ▸ Kimberley Grant · Jaclyn Carter, Sreyasi Biswas, Patti Dyjur, Erika Smith - Graduate Teaching Preparation: Partnering with Graduate Students to Design for Transformation ▸ Stefanie T Baier - Designing for change: Educational developers and deparment-level capacity building ▸ Oskar Gedda - Agency as a Driver for Transformative Academic Development in Extended Curriculum Programmes ▸ Tshegofatso Setilo - From Strategy Overload to Strategic Coherence: Rethinking Curriculum Enhancement Through an Ecosystem Lens ▸ Aranee Manoharan **Papers 38:** - Using AI-Supported Fictional Scenarios in Academic Development Courses ▸ Karolina Duschinska · Radka High, Lucie Černá, Karolina Šlehobr Kubíčková - Between Anxiety and Agency. Educator Perceptions of Generative AI in a UK University ▸ Vanessa Mar-Molinero · Erika Corradini - Teaching in the AI Era: Faculty Perspectives and Institutional Implications. Findings from University-Wide Survey. ▸ Asta Bryndis Schram · Sigurbjoerg Johannesdottir - Critical thinking, critical citizenship and GenAI: the case of (mathematics) education ▸ Shipra Sachdeva - Aladdin Genie Lamp: Grant three Educational Development wishes to AI ▸ Alev Elçi **Papers 39:**

Time	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2026
	- Direction and Co-construction: time, social space and agency in large scale educational reform ▸ Roland Tormey · Iris Capdevila - Building Capacity Through Shared Leadership: Establishing a Resilient Professional Learning Community for Sustainable Organizational Learning ▸ Marysol Thayre · Megan McCrary - Institutional Collaboration for Improving the Educational Model at ETSII ▸ María Sancho · Enrique Cabrera Rochera, Ángel Ortiz Bas - Implicit policy, explicit uncertainty: Teacher agency and the double-didactic mandate in the era of AI ▸ Peter Vinnervik - From Training to Teaching Practice: Implementing Action Methods in Classroom ▸ Mari Karm · Airi Niilo **Papers 40:** - Perceptual Convergences and Divergences on Active-Learning after Faculty Development ▸ Gabriel Hervas · José Luis Medina, Patricia Silva, Isaac Calduch - Agency in Higher Education Strategy: Applying Improvisation in Academic Development ▸ Benjamin Phipps - Towards a collaborative digital environment, facilitated by artificial intelligence, for the analysis, visualization and educational application of musical repertoires from the oral tradition ▸ Javier F. Merchán Sánchez-Jara, Enrique González-Gutiérrez · Javier F. Merchán Sánchez-Jara, Sara González-Gutiérrez, Enrique González-Gutiérrez - Scale Down in Order to Scale Up – experiences and results from a hybrid learning lab. ▸ Marie Leijon · Åse Tieva - Enhancing student autonomy and accountability in technical engineering work through digital Kanban ▸ Juan-Manuel Alvarez-Espada · María-Teresa Aguilar-Planet, Estela Peralta **Posters 6:** - From threshold concepts to expert reasoning in Cultural Heritage Conservation Education ▸ María-Ángeles Carabal-Montagud · Amparo Fernández March, Javier Paricio Royo - Enhancing Instructor Knowledge of Generative AI in Higher Education through Educational Development: A Scholarship of Academic Development Project ▸ Robert Kordts · Belinda Muñoz Solheim - Academic development approaches for Blended Learning at University of Trento ▸ Helga Ballardini · Daniele Agostini, Giorgia Dossi, Ligia Tomazin Fernandes Mendonca, Anna Serbati, Chiara Eberle, Maria Valeria Ceraolo, Sara Sighel, Paola Venuti - IDEO as a Catalyst for Teaching Innovation and Internationalization at UAH ▸ Alberto Lastra Sedano · Isabel Cano Ruiz, Héctor del Castillo Fernández, Sara Cortés Gómez, Juan Jesús García Domínguez, Irene Heredero Bermejo, Susana Núñez Nagy, Germán Ros Magán, Marta Rubio López - Designing Aspirational Oaths: an Ethics of Care Framework ▸ Valentina Rossi · Ab Hausel - Underlying Approaches to Assessment in AI Policies in Higher Education. From Control to Agency ▸ Mònica Feixas · Liana Pirovino, Georgeta Ion
12:45 – 13:45	**REDU & ICED Presidents Talks**

Time	FRIDAY, 26 JUNE 2026
13:45 – 14:15	*Closing Remarks*

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AND INTERNATIONAL PANEL

Profiles and presentation abstracts supplied for ICED26

David A. Green



KEYNOTE

Director, Center for Faculty Development & Clinical Professor, International Studies

Seattle University

Agency, responsibility, and values-driven educational development

Biography

David A Green directs the Center for Faculty Development at Seattle University (Seattle, Washington, USA) and is Clinical Professor of International Studies, where he continues to teach undergraduates on topics including culture, identity, nonviolent communication, and the Eurovision Song Contest.

David holds a PhD in German Studies from the University of Birmingham in his native UK, where he explored connections between positionality and political responsibility in contemporary German and Indian literature. He also has an MA in Education and Professional Development from Birmingham City University (BCU). Prior to becoming an educational developer, David was chair of Languages and International Business at BCU.

David's research since moving into educational development has primarily focused on factors that facilitate or inhibit acting inclusively and with integrity, whether those individuals are students, academics, or educational developers. With Deandra Little, he has published and presented on educational developers' identities, positionality, credibility, and values; together they also co-chaired the committee to revise the POD Network's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Developers. With Celia Popovic, David co-authored Understanding Undergraduates: Challenging Our Preconceptions of Student Success (2012). From 2011–14, David was co-author of ICED's journal, the International Journal for Academic Development, subsequently acting as liaison between the journal and the ICED Board from 2015–19 and again from 2024 to the present.

And so that he doesn't forget how it feels to be a learner, he takes Swedish classes and is trying to pick up some Spanish.

Agency, responsibility, and values-driven educational development

David A. Green

Our current context can be captured by the acronym VUCA: Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous. We see it globally, nationally, in higher education in general, and in educational development itself. While the Scholarship of Educational Development has referenced all four elements of VUCA over the years, the particular constellation of issues we're facing now may feel especially overwhelming.

This keynote is an opportunity to acknowledge that sense of overwhelm and to reframe the context. We'll consider what options lie before us in addressing the challenges of the VUCA environment and what our responsibility could be, as educational developers, to play an active role in that endeavour. Together we'll reflect on the frictions we can remove to create opportunity, the values that can guide our decision-making in our various contexts around the world, and the structures that can strengthen our resolve – individually and collectively – to assert our agency and provide constructive and hope-filled paths forward.

Ruth Graham



KEYNOTE

Higher Education Consultant

United Kingdom

Rewarding university teaching in academic careers

Biography

Dr Graham has worked as an independent consultant since 2008. Her work is focused on fostering change in higher education and improving teaching and learning worldwide. Current and recent clients include Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (PUC), Royal Academy of Engineering, Stanford University, Tec de Monterrey, University College London (UCL), University of British Columbia (UBC), University of New South Wales (UNSW), and Utrecht University.

Her recent projects have included:

- a cross-institutional and multi-year survey to capture and track how university teaching is rewarded in academic careers, in which 28 universities from 13 countries have participated to date (www.teachingcultures.com);
- a global initiative to improve the reward and recognition of teaching in academic careers that is now supporting reform to academic career pathways at over 50 universities worldwide (www.advancingteaching.com);
- a global study on the lessons learnt from the period of 'emergency teaching' during the COVID-19 pandemic (www.ceeda.org);
- a review of the global state of the art in engineering education, commissioned by MIT.

In 2018, Dr Graham received an honorary doctorate from Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden, for distinguished efforts in developing university teaching and learning. In 2020, she was awarded the Leonardo da Vinci Medal by the European Society for Engineering Education for outstanding contributions to engineering education.

Originally trained as a Mechanical Engineer, Ruth specialised in aeronautical fatigue, conducting applied research in collaboration with the aerospace industry. In 2002, she joined Imperial College London, where she later led the EnVision project to transform undergraduate education across the Faculty of Engineering. This experience laid the foundation for her subsequent international work to reform university teaching and learning.

Further information on Ruth's work is available here: www.rhgraham.org

Rewarding university teaching in academic careers

Ruth Graham

Recent decades have seen growing calls for root-and-branch reform of the systems that underpin academic career advancement in universities worldwide. A long-standing concern has been the marginalisation of academics' impact in teaching and learning during appointment and promotion processes. However, a remarkable shift is underway, as universities worldwide rethink how they reward and recognise academics' contribution to teaching and learning. The keynote will chart the focus and progress of this global movement.

Drawing on evidence from the recent Rewarding Teaching in Academic Careers: Mapping the Global Movement for Change study, the session will highlight universities identified by the global community as exemplars in how university teaching is supported, valued and rewarded. It will explore how these institutions are addressing some of the most pressing barriers to change, such as how to define and evaluate achievement in university teaching in ways that are robust and transparent, and how to develop career pathways that recognise diverse academic profiles and progression routes.

As the exemplars will make clear, success is not rooted in policy change alone: it rests on reshaping institutional practices, values and cultures in ways that ensure the academic community trusts the new institutional systems and the leaders who deliver them. The Teaching Cultures Survey is capturing and tracking these cultural changes by gathering the views and experiences of academics at universities worldwide that are reforming their academic reward systems. The keynote will discuss what the survey reveals about the factors most closely associated with positive change.

The 2025 Teaching Cultures Survey findings will be released on the project website in January 2026. Further resources from the wider Advancing Teaching initiative, including the Global Mapping study, are available at www.advancingteaching.com.

Franziska Zellweger



KEYNOTE

Professor of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Zurich University of Teacher Education

Resourceful perspectives: Academic Development for Student and Teacher Agency

Biography

Franziska Zellweger is Professor of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education at Zurich University of Teacher Education, specializing in academic development with a focus on organisational development. She began her academic career during the Bologna reform at a Swiss business school, where she gained early experience in academic development. Her doctoral research explored strategic faculty support for the adoption of e-learning, including extensive fieldwork across the US higher education system.

At Zurich University of Teacher Education, she played a key role in establishing a new academic development center to support faculty within the emerging Swiss system of universities of applied sciences and teacher education. She launched a pioneering program for study programme coordinators. She broadened her leadership experience as the head of the center for five years, during which she strategically developed and expanded its services.

Today, she is co-leading the research group in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Her current research focuses on curriculum development, the complex transition of first-year students, team learning, and lateral leadership. Her expertise reflects a unique combination of long-standing practical experience in academic development, deep engagement with the pedagogical discourse of a University of Teacher Education, and systematic research at the interface of organizational development and teaching and learning in higher education.

As a mother of two teenagers, she accompanies her sons through Switzerland's strong vocational education system and observes how young people master challenges and grow, in their apprenticeships as well as in their dedication to sailing.

Resourceful perspectives: Academic Development for Student and Teacher Agency

Franziska Zellweger

This keynote takes the perspective of strengthening students' agency throughout their journey through the curriculum. What supports students in developing the capacity to act intentionally and shape their own learning in ways that transform how they make sense of their discipline, develop their emerging professional identity, and understand themselves as active participants in their sphere of influence? Drawing on data from Swiss students in Teacher Education and Physiotherapy—comprising over 150 collected and analysed metaphors—I explore what they experience when they enter the unfamiliar terrain of the university. How does agency become visible in the metaphors on first-semester experiences, and how does working with these metaphors support students in articulating and strengthening their emerging sense of agency? As students' progress through the curriculum, however, the development of student agency is challenged by the capacity of generative AI, raising important questions about how epistemic agency can be actively supported under these evolving conditions.

These challenges cannot be addressed through student-focused measures alone. How can academic development foster teacher agency in view of the fundamental task of nurturing epistemic agency within a higher education system under scrutiny? I will share insights on how we as academic developers cultivate team learning and co-constructive practices among faculty, building on bottom-up ideas and connecting them with broader strategic discourses to support organizational development. The careful use of language—particularly through metaphors—can help strengthen both personal and organisational resources within academic networks.

Kasturi Behari-Leak



INTERNATIONAL PANEL CHAIR

Dean, Centre for Higher Education Development

University of Cape Town

Academic Development and Agency: Global South Perspectives in Dialogue

Biography

Kasturi Behari-Leak is a professor in Higher Education Studies and Dean of the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Her scholarship and leadership focus on curriculum transformation, academic staff development, doctoral education, and decolonial pedagogies in Global South contexts.

She is a Past President of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED), having served as President from 2021-2023, She was also President of HELTASA (2017-2021), foregrounding inclusive, decolonial, and transformative approaches to academic development internationally.

Her scholarship explores questions of academic agency, identity, positionality, intersectionality, and institutional change, with particular attention to how historical, social, and material conditions shape teaching and learning. She advances participatory and anticipatory pedagogies as modes of cultivating collective agency to expand our imaginary towards a pluriversity. She continues to contribute to global debates on rethinking academic development beyond dominant paradigms, curriculum change and unsettling knowledges.

Academic Development and Agency: Global South Perspectives in Dialogue

Kasturi Behari-Leak

Across diverse higher education contexts, academic development is increasingly tasked with advancing student success, strengthening teaching quality, enabling research productivity, and supporting institutional transformation. Yet the question of agency, namely who can exercise it, how it is exercised, and under what conditions, remains contextually contingent. This panel brings together scholars and AD practitioners from Global South contexts to examine how they understand academic development agency within their respective institutional and national landscapes.

Moving beyond descriptive accounts and drawing on examples including anticipatory and participatory pedagogies, the panel will consider how support for academics and students is prioritised within their contexts; how institutional cultures, material conditions, resource disparities, and historical legacies influence development work; and where tensions, limits, and emergent possibilities for agency surface in practice. The deeper question is whether our collective global responsibility can adequately challenge universalising assumptions in the field to rethink academic development globally or is this the work mainly for contexts facing constraints. By placing diverse contexts in conversation, the panel aims to foreground the importance of situated and contextualised knowledges and to reimagine agency as both contested and generative.

Panelists and moderator

- Megan Khairallah (Director of Academic Affairs, PreUniversity Education, Qatar Foundation, from Lebanon)
- Lauren Davids (Curriculum Development Lecturer, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa)
- Robert Pardo (Teaching Innovation specialist, Universidad del Desarrollo, Chile)
- Jacob Johnson (Director of the Center for Design & Innovation for Public Purpose at the American School of Dubai (ASD), United Arab Emirates)
- Kasturi Behari-Leak (Dean: Centre for Higher Education Development, University of Cape Town, South Africa)

Purpose and guiding questions

This panel seeks to explore how academic agency is understood, enacted, constrained, and reimagined within diverse Global South contexts. Rather than presenting country case studies, we aim to place different experiences and perspectives into dialogue in order to examine what they reveal about the evolving purpose and mandate of academic development in contemporary higher education.

The discussion is framed by the proposition that academic development may be experiencing a significant shift, what I am describing as an Academic Development Turn, in response to growing uncertainty, inequality, mobility, technological disruption, and changing understandings of knowledge, identity, and belonging. The panel aims to open up a global conversation and debate about what academic development does, for whom, and under what conditions.

Guiding questions

- How is academic agency understood and enacted within your context?
- What forms of support for academics and students are prioritised, and why?
- How do historical, political, and material conditions shape academic development work?
- Where do tensions, limits, and possibilities for agency emerge?
- What might Global South perspectives offer to rethinking academic development globally?

PROCEEDINGS

Pre-Conference

Tuesday 23 June 2026

PRE Parallel Workshops A - Workshop 1

A Great Teachers Retreat: A Model for Instructor Agency and Development

Janel Seeley, Ashli Tomisich

Abstract

This pre-conference workshop will simulate our successful retreat model, which leverages storytelling and collective reflection through an intentionally designed retreat space that promotes agency and fosters professional growth. By sharing their teaching stories, educators reclaim their professional voices, affirm their expertise, and see themselves as knowledge creators. Listening to colleagues' narratives provides fresh perspectives and serves as a mirror for reflection, prompting educators to examine their own practices, beliefs, and challenges through new lenses. The model incorporates time for rest and reflection alongside dialogue and collaboration, acknowledging that deep learning requires spaciousness and allowing instructors to return with renewed energy and clarity. Participants in the pre-conference workshop will experience a condensed version of this model, reflect on its effectiveness and create a preliminary plan for how a similar retreat could be offered in their own institution.

Keywords: Instructor Agency, Professional Development, Reflective Practice, Storytelling, Collaborative Learning

Extended Summary

Through The Great Teachers Movement (NGTM.net) space is created where stories are shared and professional growth emerges through collective reflection. At its heart, this model recognizes that listening to the experiences of fellow educators does more than build community, it promotes agency and enhances practice.

When instructors share their teaching stories in supportive, collaborative settings, they reclaim their professional voices and affirm their expertise. The act of being heard validates their experiences and empowers them to see themselves as knowledge creators rather than passive recipients of top-down professional development. This sharing becomes an act of agency itself, as instructors take ownership of their narratives and contribute meaningfully to the collective wisdom of the teaching community.

Equally powerful is what happens when instructors listen to their colleagues' stories. These narratives serve as mirrors for reflection, prompting educators to examine their own practices, beliefs, and challenges through new lenses. As they hear how others navigate similar struggles or celebrate unexpected successes, instructors gain fresh perspectives on their own teaching journeys. This reflective process transforms professional development from a external delivery into an internal discovery, fostering growth and insight that emerges from within.

Central to the Great Teachers Movement is the intentional design of retreat spaces that honor the human needs of educators. By building in time for rest and reflection alongside dialogue and collaboration, the model acknowledges that deep learning requires spaciousness. These pauses allow instructors to process what they've heard, integrate new insights with existing practice, and return to their teaching contexts with renewed energy and clarity.

Through this combination of storytelling, reflective listening, collaborative learning, and restorative rest, the Great Teachers Movement offers a powerful alternative to traditional professional development—one that places instructor agency, authentic experience, and collective wisdom at the center of educational transformation.

This pre-conference workshop will introduce our successful model for a Great Teachers Retreat, which our institution has effectively run for five years. Participants will experience a condensed version of this model, designed around small group settings for sharing successes and challenges in teaching, interspersed with short "retreat" breaks for reflection. This workshop will achieve the following outcomes:

1. Reflect and discuss this model to evaluate its effectiveness.

2. Create a preliminary plan for how they could create a similar retreat in their own institution as a means for promoting agency among educators in an educational development context.

References:

Core Variable, LLC. (2023). White paper: The national great teachers seminar - A strategic investment that benefits both faculty and students. Retrieved from https://ngtm.net/

PRE Parallel Workshops A - Workshop 2

Applying a Research-based Model to (re)Design High-impact Course Design Institutes

Carol Hurney, Jordan Troisi, Mary Wright, Eszter Kalman

Abstract

Effective course design is known to improve student learning, engagement, and educational equity. Course Design Institutes (CDIs) are an emergent academic development tactic. This session supports the field of academic and educational development by encouraging the use of evidence-based practices for developing and implementing course design experiences. Crucially, this session highlights the evolution of educational/academic development by providing new ways to measure programming impact on instructors, students, and institutions. It also enables developers at all career levels and institution types to design context-sensitive, high-impact course design programming. During this pre-conference session, participants will use a data-informed CDI model (2025) to design or redesign a CDI for their context. Presenters will facilitate the session using the model's elements through short presentations, individual work, and small group interactions. Participants will apply change principles from the CDI model, identify meaningful outcomes and impacts, and develop a day-to-day CDI structure for their context with a focus on CDI content and engagement strategies. Participants will leave the session with concrete and valuable ideas on not just the "what" of CDIs, but the "how" and "why" of a CDI.

Keywords: Course Design, Unit of Study Design, Change Principles, Program Evaluation, Evidence-Based Teaching Practices

Extended Summary

Effective course design is known to improve, among other things, student learning, engagement, and educational equity (source blinded, 2025). Course Design Institutes (CDIs) are an emergent academic development tactic, with strong promise for supporting instructors in this complex activity. However, CDIs are still a relatively infrequent occurrence (Beach et al., 2016; Wright, 2023). Studies show that CDIs are capable of changing instructors' beliefs about teaching, increasing their confidence in the classroom, improving the quality of their teaching materials, increasing their use of evidence-based teaching practices, or decreasing equity gaps for underserved or minoritized student populations (e.g., Cardamone & Dwyer, 2023; Levesque-Bristol, 2021; Meixner et al., 2021). These findings have emboldened academic developers to launch large-scale course redesign initiatives focused on, for example, large-enrollment STEM courses and general education curricula.

During this pre-conference session, participants will work to develop or refine their CDI in their context using a data-informed CDI model (source blinded, 2025). The session facilitators will guide participants through activities to develop the content, structure, and staffing of a CDI using the change principles known to enhance CDI impact. The change principles that underpin high-impact CDIs were identified through surveys and in-depth interviews of CDI leaders. These change principles challenge academic developers keep the following in mind when engaging instructors in academic development experiences — (1) higher education instructors are adult learners with unique learning needs, (2) improvement of teaching is best facilitated through a learning-apprenticeship model to facilitate paradigm shifts, (3) sensemaking is an important and necessary activity for affecting teaching beliefs and practices, and (4) anticipate that risk-taking and vulnerability are necessary conditions to support participant learning (source blinded, 2025). Through individual work and small group interactions, participants will make progress toward

- applying change principles from the CDI model to CDI case studies;
- identifying meaningful outcomes and impacts for their CDI with consideration of an aligned evaluation plan;
- developing an overall CDI day-to-day structure, with consideration of CDI content and engagement strategies.

The session will be highly interactive and designed to engage participants as they make progress toward designing (or redesigning) a high-impact course design institute using backward, integrated design and change principles. The additional time afforded during a pre-conference workshop will be used to guide participants through the hands-on, time-consuming task of considering the many questions and considerations for structuring their CDI. Just as instructors need lots of time to design a course, educational developers need lots of time to design a CDI. Prior to the pre-conference, participants will complete a short pre-session reading to prepare them for the session. During the pre-conference, we anticipate participants engaging in the following activities using a digital workbook to help organize, track, and retain their evolving ideas.

Activities and Time Allotment:

- 10 minutes: Introductions, ice-breakers, and discuss invitations for engagement;

- 30 minutes: Building on a brief pre-session reading, participants will examine CDI case studies from the lens of the change principles from the CDI model that will inform the design of a CDI for their institutional contexts;
- 15 minutes: Large group discussion of case studies
- 10 minutes: BREAK
- 30 minutes: Through individual reflections and peer conversations, participants will identify their CDI outcomes and opportunities for evaluating impact
- 15 minutes: Large group discussion of CDI outcomes and impacts
- 10 minutes: BREAK
- 45 minutes: Work on individual designs of their CDI. During this portion of the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to have individual consultation with facilitators.
- 15 minutes: Large group discussion of CDI designs, next steps and wrap-up.

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PRE Parallel Workshops A - Workshop 3

Life-History Mandala Workshop: Understanding Educational Beliefs Through Life Histories

Mami Mitachi, Kimikazu Sugimori

Abstract

When teachers design and implement lessons, whether consciously or unconsciously, their own beliefs on teaching and learning, based on their own beliefs on education, contribute in some way to the classroom environment (Weimer, 2013). Sometimes, without recognizing that these differences in educational beliefs lead to distinct ways teachers manage their lessons, discussions tend to focus only on superficial teaching strategies. Knowledge regarding these beliefs on education, teaching, and learning has been accumulated in primary and secondary education rather than higher education (Yamada & Sekita, 2022). Behavior analysis reveals that not only educational beliefs but also the various values we unconsciously acquire since birth are the result of interactions with various human and material environments (Mitachi, 2019). This Life-History Mandala workshop aims to support teachers in reflecting on their life histories to understand the formation of their educational beliefs. By mindfully listening to others' narratives, participants deepen their understanding of differing beliefs through the lens of lived experience.

Keywords: Educational Beliefs, Life-History Mandala, Faculty Development, Mindful Listening

Extended Summary

This workshop was originally designed and implemented by Narita and Mitachi in 2010 as a teacher training program for school administrators (Narita & Mitachi, 2010). The Life-History Mandala used in the workshop (Figure 1) was adapted from the program design mandala proposed by Nakano (2003). Since its initial implementation, the workshop has been conducted with a wide range of participants, including school teachers, university students, members of the general public, and welfare professionals (Mitachi, 2019).

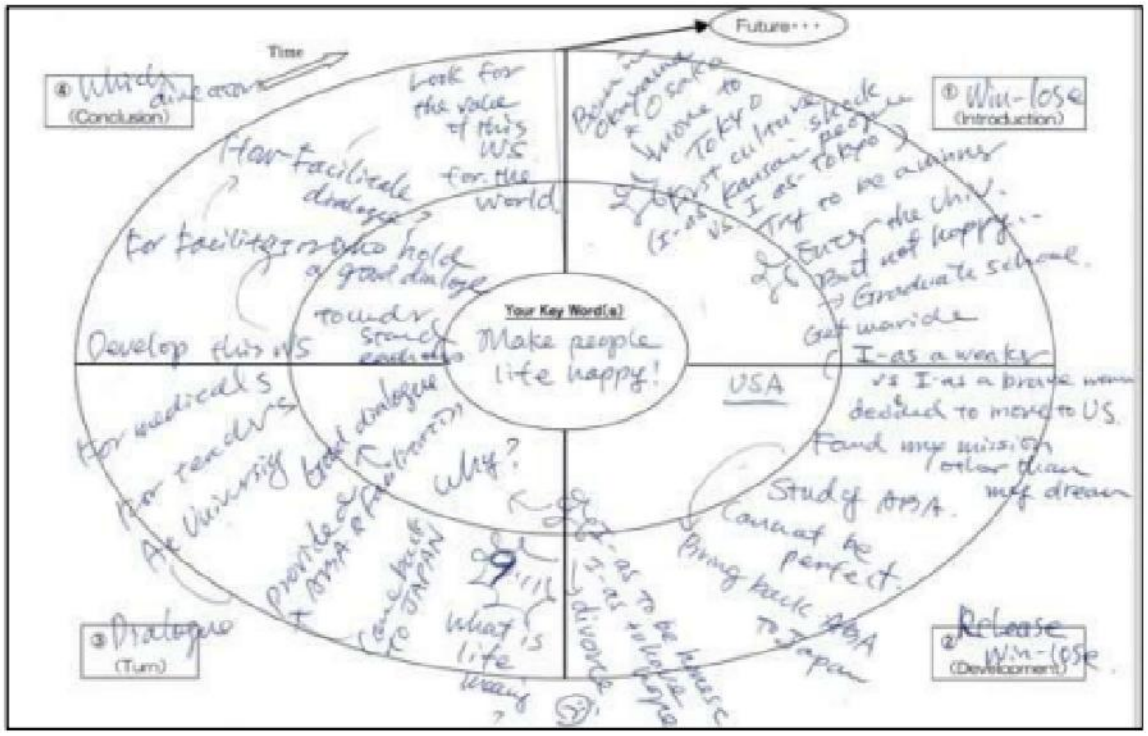


Fig. 1. Life-History Mandala (Example)

The central question guiding the workshop is: "*Do you truly understand the person in front of you right now?"* From the perspective of behavior analysis, this question can be reframed as: "*Can you understand why people behave as they do based on their life histories?"* Behavior analysis, a branch of psychology, has demonstrated that human behavior is shaped and maintained through continuous interactions with the environment (Skinner, 1974). From this viewpoint, understanding a person requires attention not only to observable behavior but also to the historical contexts in which that behavior has been formed. In this workshop, the focus is narrowed to two guiding questions: "How have your own educational beliefs been developed?" and "How have the educational beliefs of others been developed?" The aim is to

explore differences in educational beliefs through reflection on one's own history and attentive listening to the histories of others. By sharing and listening to these narratives, participants are encouraged to gain new insights into educational beliefs that differ from their own, grounding such differences in lived experience rather than abstract theory.

In recent years, Japan has promoted a major shift in educational practice, particularly in primary and secondary education, from teacher-centered approaches toward student-centered learning (Central Council for Education, No. 240). This shift has also prompted a re-examination of the underlying assumptions and perspectives that inform teacher training and professional development. As conceptions of learning change, so too must the ways in which educators are prepared to reflect on and adapt their own beliefs about teaching and learning. Despite its potential relevance, the workshop has been implemented only rarely in higher education settings, with Nakano and Mitachi (2016) representing one of the few documented cases. As a result, the significance and applicability of this approach within higher education remain underexplored, particularly in relation to how academic developers can support educators in critically examining the biographical roots of their teaching beliefs. By offering this workshop at ICED, the authors aim to provide higher education professionals from diverse international contexts with an opportunity to experience the workshop firsthand and to consider its transferability to their own countries and institutions.

2. Learning Goals for Participants

- Critically reflect on the biographical origins of their beliefs about teaching and learning.

- Recognize how differences in life histories shape divergent educational beliefs among educators.

- Practice mindful listening as a professional competence for academic development work.

- Identify transferable design principles for implementing the Life-History Mandala workshop in their own institutional contexts.

3. A Description of Interactive Methods or Activities with Approximate Timings

The overall structure of the workshop consists of four sequential sections:

1) [Ki / Introduction] Orientation (30 minutes): The goals and schedule of the workshop are introduced, facilitators and staff are presented, and participants engage in brief self-introductions.

2) [Sho / Development] Individual Work (30 minutes): Participants individually recall and document their life histories using the Life-History Mandala form, completing the chart based on key experiences related to education and learning.

3) [Ten / Turn] Small Group Session (60 minutes): Participants share their life histories within small groups, taking turns to speak and to listen attentively to one another.

4) [Ketsu / Conclusion] Closing Session (60 minutes): Participants reconvene as a whole group to share reflections, impressions, and insights gained during the small group discussions. (Mitachi, 2019).

There is no single, universally accepted philosophy of education or teaching, and numerous attempts have been made to conceptualize and categorize educational beliefs (Yamada & Sekita, 2022). While quantitative and statistical approaches targeting groups can reveal broad trends (Sidman, 1960), they are often insufficient for capturing the individual processes through which an educator's beliefs are formed and sustained. By systematically reflecting on their own life histories—referred to in behavior analysis as behavioral histories—educators can identify the sources of values and assumptions that may previously have remained implicit. This reflective process is particularly important in periods of educational change, as it enables educators to critically compare existing beliefs with new values underlying emerging pedagogical approaches. perspectives into practice.

Intended Audience: Higher education professionals engaged in faculty development, educational development, and leadership roles related to teaching and learning.

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PRE Parallel Workshops A - Workshop 4

An organizing framework to develop holistic academic development programs

Michele Di Pietro

Abstract

How do you make decisions about the programs you offer in your center? Do you fall back on conventional topics (something on course design, something on technology, diversity and inclusion, assessment and evaluation, Artificial intelligence)? Do you follow institutional priorities? While it makes good sense to align our work with current trends and institutional priorities, this approach does not necessarily nurture our faculty as full persons. In this workshop, you will learn about a holistic theoretical framework from yoga philosophy, the chakra system, and explore its seven elements. Armed with this understanding, you will take inventory of your offerings and determine areas of strengths and growth for your programs. Participants will leave with resources to embed this framework in their planning process. This workshop has several opportunities for interactions planned, so come ready to engage!

Keywords: holistic academic development; the chakra system; mindfulness

Extended Summary

At many institutions, the scope of academic development goes beyond teaching and learning and it encompasses career development, particularly strategies for tenure and promotion. Generally, the strategies shared in those workshops revolve around understanding the institutional policies, mission, and strategic plan and tailoring one's academic activity to those expectations. But if the only arrow we academic developers have in their quiver is to advise faculty to jump through the hoops the institution places in front of them, we miss a great opportunity for holistic development. This would be particularly ironic as we also advocate that professors treat students as whole human beings with histories, goals, feelings, and a life outside of the university. This workshop introduces a holistic framework for academic development that can be used as a planning tool to organize and share knowledge in our programmatic offerings, as the conference subtheme 1 suggests. The framework this workshop introduces is borrowed from yoga philosophy, a discipline that famously concerns itself with holistic development of the practitioner. We are talking about the chakra system, an ancient philosophy that arrived to the West through a process of integration with contemporary psychology theories and models (Judith 1996; Erikson 1994; Jung 1999).

The chakra framework contains seven elements, which translate to seven objectives academic developers should attend to as they work with educators:

1. Finding one's Ground and Building a solid Foundation; (especially for early-career faculty)

2. Nurturing professional Desires and Overcoming professional guilt, especially in terms of saying No.

3. Claiming one's Power and Agency; cultivating confidence in an environment predicated on academic critique (especially relevant to the conference theme)

4. Connecting from the Heart/Love; building meaningful professional relationships; finding Balance (as the middle chakra), especially between giving and receiving, not depleting oneself.

5. Finding one's Voice, especially as less protected categories (pre-tenure and contingent faculty, women and faculty of color); speaking one's Truth and developing a narrative about one's own accomplishments; also finding their voice in new academic genres, such as the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

6. Generating a fulfilling Vision for oneself as an academic; Avoid stagnation (especially for mid-career faculty).

7. Contemplating Transcendence how our work makes us feel part of something greater; expanding one's consciousness; Leaving a Legacy behind (especially for late-career faculty)

The inclusion of yoga philosophy in academic development is an emerging trend (Norell 2024), but this model has been applied in the United States with success (DiPietro 2018) and is in line with current directions in the psychology of self-actualization (Kaufman 2020) the "Heart of Higher Education" movement spearheaded by Parker Palmer (Palmer & Zajonc 2010).

The workshop will be structured around the following intended outcomes:

I. Describe the chakra system, its seven elements and the characteristics associated with them (including developmental rights and "demons")
II. Map the programming offered by participants for alignment with this framework
III. Develop an action plan to make participant's offerings more holistic

Accordingly, the workshop will deploy as follows:

- Introductions, context for the workshop, and participant's motivation for attending (10 mins).
- A 20min module for each chakra element. These modules will include a short presentation on the theory and philosophy, examples from the presenter's work about incorporating the specific chakra in academic development work, an opportunity for reflection and a short activity for engagement (small group discussion, large group sharing, a somatic exercise, and so on, depending on the chakra). The presentations will focus on the role of each chakra in academic identity construction, the developmental rights associated with each chakra, and the "demons" (or tricksters) associated with each chakra, the forces that hold educators back from realizing their full potential (20 x 7 = 140 mins)
- A diagnostic and mapping exercise to visualize points of strengths and areas for development in each participants/center programming, and a planning exercise to incorporate the chakra framework in planning future offerings (10 minutes).
- Large group discussion (and possible critique) of the elements of the framework (15 mins).
- Conclusion and further resources (5 minutes).

This workshop is suitable for all developers and center leaders who develop and administer programs. Though not the purpose of the workshop, other audiences might benefit from learning the framework as well and from applying to their own personal development or the development of their students (educators) as well as to the development of their organization or university (other university leadership). Participants will leave with an annotated bibliography to delve deeper into chakra theory, handouts and diagnostic resources to map their practices, tools for future planning, and the creation of a long-term online group to continue building community and support for those wishing to engage in this work further.

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PRE Parallel Workshops B - Workshop 5

Inclusive Online Course Design and Teaching Best Practices: Fostering Instructor and Student Agency in the Digital Age

Karen Skibba

Abstract

Transform your course design and teaching by participating in this immersive session designed to empower academic developers and instructors with actionable strategies for inclusive online and blended learning. Moving beyond theory, participants will actively construct a personalized course design and teaching action plan by integrating research-based best practices with the strategic application of Generative AI. This highly participant-centered workshop grounds itself in Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and the Community of Inquiry to help you create flexible, inclusive environments. Guided by a comprehensive working guide, attendees will master five core strategies: sharing a compelling vision, creating the experience through aligned activities, facilitating substantive interaction, establishing a supportive environment for belonging, and presenting your vision through intuitive and welcoming navigation. Join us to translate inclusive design theory into practical application, leaving with a plan to design and teach an inclusive online or blended course.

Keywords: Inclusive Online Course Design and Teaching, Online and Blended Courses, Generative AI

Extended Summary

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): UDL provides the primary lens, emphasizing the proactive design of flexible learning environments to meet diverse needs. Utilizing the three UDL principles (Multiple Means of Representation, Action & Expression, and Engagement (CAST, 2018) ensures equitable access by building choice and accessibility into every component.

Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in Online Environments: CRT principles are vital for creating belonging online. The session focuses on concrete strategies for diversifying materials, validating non-dominant perspectives, and creating a safe, connected virtual community where students feel valued (Gay, 2018 & Kim 2024).

Online Interaction and Presence (Community of Inquiry - CoI): The CoI framework (Garrison et al., 2000) highlights three overlapping elements: Social, Teaching, and Cognitive Presence. The session emphasizes best practices to foster substantive, frequent interaction among students, the instructor, and content, mitigating isolation and driving deep, reflective learning.

Connection to the Conference Theme: Agency and Academic Development This workshop directly addresses the conference theme by providing a strategic, evidence-based roadmap for academic developers to fulfill their role as change agents. The entire three-hour structure is built around five core strategies academic developers can adopt and implement institution-wide, demonstrating their agency. The structured, hands-on approach models how developers can confidently consult with teachers, particularly when integrating new tools like Generative AI strategically into the inclusive design process.

Learning Goals and Outcomes Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Synthesize UDL and Culturally Responsive Teaching principles to identify specific design and teaching practices that create equitable and engaging online learning experiences. 2. Utilize the provided Working Guide and Generative AI prompts to start a course design action plan. 3. Apply specific strategies to establish a supportive environment and strong instructor presence, actively fostering a sense of psychological safety and belonging in the virtual classroom.

Pre-Conference Workshop Topics and Activities

This highly participant-centered workshop is designed around a guided application model, dedicating extended time to working through a Working Guide and engaging in collaborative activities, sequenced according to five core strategies:

- Introduction and Framing (20 min): Welcomes, goals, review of UDL, CRT, and CoI frameworks.

Participants select a course for application.

- 1. SHARE YOUR VISION (30 min):
  - Focus: Communicate a compelling, consistent vision/purpose that inspires students and connects them to learning. Make the vision visible in syllabi, modules, and announcements.
  - Application: Participants draft their course's overarching purpose and explicit vision for inclusion using the Working Guide. Use peer review/Generative AI prompts to refine the statement for clarity and tone.
- 2. CREATE THE EXPERIENCE (30 min):

    - Focus: Align objectives, activities, and assessments. Gain strategies for diversifying assignments and instructional materials (UDL Action & Expression/Representation) to minimize barriers.
    - Application: Use AI to refine objectives. For one objective, participants complete a course map to align materials/assessments. They share one objective and assessment with a colleague to brainstorm inclusive alternatives.
- 3. FACILITATE INTERACTION (25 min):
    - Focus: Foster meaningful, substantive interaction. Learn approaches for designing interactive activities, using technology, and providing regular, substantive feedback.
    - Application: Partner for a rapid activity challenge to brainstorm interactive activities that promote critical thinking. Participants document activity plans and feedback strategies in the Working Guide.
    - Mid-Workshop Break (15 min)
- 4. ESTABLISH A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT (25 min)

Intended Audience: This workshop is intentionally broad, targeting professionals who advise or directly teach in online/blended environments, including:

- Academic and Educational Developers
- Learning Designers
- Teaching and Learning Centre Staff
- Teachers/Programme Leaders

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PRE Parallel Workshops B - Workshop 6

Internationalisation for Good: How to Sustainably Foster Global Perspectives as Academic Developers

Angelika Thielsch, Lucie Weissowa, Gabriela Pleschova

Abstract

Academic developers (ADs) face a paradoxical task: they seek to promote student learning while working primarily with faculty members rather than directly with students. This distance between ADs' professional discourse and students' lived learning experiences is reflected in the often-overlooked role of academic development in institutional internationalisation strategies. Approaches such as the internationalisation of the curriculum at home (IoCaH) aim to transform the student experience, for example through virtual mobility or virtual exchange. However, sustainable internationalisation requires attention to the interplay between studying, teaching, and academic development. Academic developers play an essential role in this process, yet there remains a need for comprehensive institutional approaches that recognise professional learning as a continuous, active, social, and practice-based endeavour. ADs therefore need to be aware of their own roles and agency in internationalisation efforts, as do their partners across the institution. This pre-conference workshop aims to foster such awareness and to highlight the importance of ADs' involvement in internationalisation processes that align with institutional commitments to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Keywords: Internationalization, agency, policy, sustainability

Extended Summary

Academic developers (ADs) have long sought to promote student learning primarily through their work with faculty members rather than through direct engagement with students (cf. Harland & Staniforth, 2008). This distance between the professional discourse of academic development and the learning realities of students is mirrored in the fact that ADs are often not recognised as central actors in institutional internationalisation strategies (Dafouz et al., 2020).

While internationalisation approaches—particularly those related to the internationalisation of the curriculum at home (IoCaH; Eftekhari et al., 2025)—aim to transform the student experience in holistic ways, institutional efforts frequently concentrate on specific activities such as virtual mobility or virtual exchange. At the same time, questions remain about the additional demands that global and intercultural perspectives place on students within degree programmes. These questions extend beyond students to higher education institutions as a whole, particularly in relation to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) policies.

What is often overlooked is that effective internationalisation depends on the expertise and engagement of academic developers. Thus, sustainable internationalisation processes require attention to the interplay between studying, teaching, and academic development, rather than focusing solely on the students' learning environment. Consequently, institutions need approaches that conceptualise professional learning as a continuing, active, social, and practice-related process (Leask, 2025), supported by academic developers who recognise and enact their agency within internationalisation efforts.

This pre-conference workshop responds to this gap by supporting academic developers in articulating and strengthening their roles in sustainable internationalisation. Through a structured sequence of reflective and collaborative activities, participants will be guided to identify how international perspectives already appear in their professional practice, analyse how institutional and policy contexts shape their engagement with IoCaH, and consider how their own agency can contribute to internationalisation processes within their institutions. A particular focus will be placed on identifying opportunities for collaboration with other stakeholders across the institution.

1.1 Intended learning outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of the workshop are designed to strengthen academic developers' perceived agency as key stakeholders in the internationalisation of higher education. Through participation in the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to:

- reflect on how international perspectives inform their professional practice
- identify often-hidden or implicit aspects of internationalisation within their institutions
- analyse how national and/or institutional policies shape their engagement with internationalisation approaches
- develop approaches connected to their perceived agency in addressing IoCaH in their future work as ADs
- identify potential allies across the institution and consider how to work collaboratively with them

During the workshop, a range of interactive engagement methods will be combined with short inputs. This design aims to ensure that participants can learn from the diverse perspectives present in the room, including those of fellow participants and workshop facilitators.

1.2 Workshop agenda

0–15 min: Getting started Introduction to the workshop theme, structure, learning outcomes, and facilitators.

15–30 min: Getting to know the group Participants share one recent development in internationalisation at their institution they perceive as positive and one they find challenging.

30–50 min: Activating prior knowledge Drawing on Appreciative Inquiry, participants surface what already works well in their contexts and build on strengths identified in each other's experiences.

50–70 min: Offering information Research findings and key terminology related to sustainable internationalisation are introduced from an academic development perspective.

70–90 min: Break Informal networking and refreshment.

90–120 min: Working phase Participants select one core challenge related to IoCaH and discuss in small groups a) how it relates to the spectrum of academic development practices, and b) how academic development as a profession can meaningfully contribute to addressing this challenge.

120–135 min: Sharing group insights Each group presents ideas on how ADs can engage meaningfully in internationalisation.

135–150 min: Application to individual contexts Participants develop context-specific guidelines or approaches to address IoCaH or position themselves in relation to institutional internationalisation policies. Each participant then shares one guideline and related next steps anonymously via an online tool (e.g. Poll Everywhere, Padlet).

150–170 min: Wrap-up In pairs or groups of three, participants discuss the collected guidelines, select one or two as individual takeaways, and formulate realistic next steps for implementation.

170–180 min: Closing Facilitators conclude with reflections on future directions for thinking and practice.

1.3 Relevance of the topic for academic developers

This workshop encourages collective reflection on how academic developers can meaningfully contribute to—and help shape—internationalisation in higher education. It aims to increase awareness of the roles ADs can play in internationalisation and the value they both bring to and gain from such engagement. Insights generated during the workshop may also support the dissemination of good practice in the form of academic papers. As co-editors of a recently published special issue of Policy Futures in Education (Sage) on sustainable internationalisation, we will also inform participants about relevant publication opportunities.

1.4 Intended audience

The pre-conference workshop primarily targets academic developers but explicitly welcomes participants from a range of roles, backgrounds, and levels of experience. This diversity of perspectives is expected to enrich the workshop outcomes by reflecting the varied institutional contexts in which ADs work. Accordingly, the workshop invites participation from teaching faculty, students, academic support staff (including colleagues from international offices and exchange programme units), managers, and researchers.

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PRE Parallel Workshops B - Workshop 7

Implementing trust-building strategies in academic development contexts

Kathryn Sutherland, Rachel Forsyth, Peter Felten

Abstract

When we ask people about trust, there is universal agreement that it is important in teaching and learning, yet trust-building strategies seem rarely to be made explicit in educational development contexts. The recent IJAD special issue on Trust in and Through Academic Development showed the appetite among academic developers for talking about this topic and considering its variations in different disciplinary, institutional, and cultural settings. In this workshop, we will explore practical applications for building trust in higher education teaching, as well as ideas for implementing trust-building moves in our own practices. The workshop is based on our research with university teachers and students on three continents about how they build and demonstrate trust in higher education classrooms. We will provide multiple opportunities to engage with the research and to consider how trust is expressed in different cultural and academic contexts. You will leave the session with practical ideas for your own work, and with a community of colleagues thinking, talking, and inquiring into trust together.

Keywords: Trust-building, Academic Development

Extended Summary

Trust is important in the higher education classroom and in educational development, but a commonly referenced definition is not apparent in the literature. For instance, Chew and Cerbin (2021) describe it as "students' willingness to take risks based on their judgment that the teacher is committed to student success."

Cavanagh et al (2018) define student trust as "the perception that the instructor understands the challenges facing students as they progress through the course, accepts students for who they are, and cares about the educational welfare of students." Sometimes, students define trust by describing how it feels when trust is absent (Glessmer et al, 2025). And a recent special issue of IJAD stressed the importance of "trust-building" rather than trust per se in educational development (Pleschová et al., 2025).

These varied definitions speak to the relational and contextual nature of trust: it is not a static attribute but a dynamic process shaped by interactions, institutional cultures, and power structures. Felten et al (2023) identified four dimensions that teachers display when they are trust-building (cognition, affect, values, and identify). Teachers may emphasise and express different aspects of these depending on the context (Sutherland et al., 2024).

Educational developers work in a liminal space in universities, providing a service to teachers but also to other professional teams and to administrative leaders by interpreting what we know about teaching, course design, and assessment. Trust is inherent to these practices and it is important to reflect on how we build trust in all the interactions which are part of an educational developer's job (Wilson and Popovic, 2025, Lohman, 2025, Lee and Ragupathi, 2025, Hektoen, 2025).

In the workshop, we will consider how educational developers might make trust-building strategies more explicit and effective in academic development programmes, showing that trust can be built and maintained intentionally. We also will guide participants in thinking – alone and with others in the workshop – about how they manage trust-building in a variety of aspects of their practice such as consulting on curriculum design or policy development, and to create a 'trust map' for their own contexts.

In the workshop, participants will:

- Discuss recent research on how trust is built and maintained in the higher education classrooms and educational development, with special emphasis on contextual factors
- Develop a plan for implementing trust-building moves in their own practices and strategies
- Build a trusting community with other educational developers

Workshop plan: The session will be active, with discussion of trust leading to practical ideas for activities and strategies participants can take back to their own contexts.

10:00 20 Introductions, framing the workshop, and brief description of "trust moves" – introductory activity will be determined by the size of the group (e.g., individual introductions or table talk or polling)

Presentation/discussion

10:20 5 Write/post a six word story about trust moves in the HE classroom or educational development

Writing

10:25 10 Collaboratively read and sort the stories (posted on wall) to surface themes and tensions

Moving around room

10:35 10 Discuss insights from the stories Discussion

10:45 15 How do we express and demonstrate trust in our practice as educational developers? Prompts based on the literature.

Table discussion

11:00 10 Debrief table discussion Discussion

11:10 15 Planning: Think of a course you teach or a programme you facilitate. How would you research on trust-building?

Individual writing

11:25 15 Break

11:40 15 Trio discussion about draft plans. Write down your favourites on post-its and put on the wall

Trio discussions

11:55 15 Synthesis and discussion Whole group discussion

12:10 15 Trust-first strategic educational development: How do we build trust in our meso- and macro-level work?

Table discussion

12:25 20 Drafting a trust map for your work/context - based on framework and today's workshop

Individual planning then small/large group discussion

12:45 15 Closing thoughts and takeaways Reflection and discussion

The recent IJAD special issue suggests that many educational developers are interested in trust. This workshop provides practical ideas for applying recent research in educational development contexts and will allow participants to use ideas immediately in their own practice, as well as inspiring further engagement with research and community.

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PRE Parallel Workshops B - Workshop 8

Integrating Ethical Decision-Making as a Teachable Skill in Academic Development: A Dilemma-Based Approach

Björn Kiehne

Abstract

This workshop introduces a participant-centered approach for integrating ethical decision-making into academic development. As geopolitical tensions, technological disruptions, and shifting institutional priorities shape higher education, educators increasingly face ethically ambiguous situations that require clarity, justified judgment, and professional agency. Drawing on Kohlberg's stages of moral development and Bandura's social cognitive theory of agency, the workshop offers practical methods to strengthen educators' ethical reasoning and their capacity to act responsibly in complex environments.

Participants work with three authentic cases from Technische Universität Berlin that highlight conflicting values and different levels of ethical judgment. TU Berlin's historical trajectory—from a major site of weapons research to an institution guided by a Zivilklausel while navigating Germany's Zeitenwende—provides a rich context for examining dual-use research, security considerations, institutional responsibility, and ethical challenges in engineering and technology education.

Keywords: ethical decision-making, academic development, dilemma-based learning, professional ethics, higher education

Extended Summary

Through structured dilemma discussions, guided reflection, and peer dialogue, participants experience ethical decision-making as a teachable and transferable skill. The workshop introduces a reusable dilemma-discussion template and facilitation strategies that can be applied across disciplinary and institutional contexts.

The contribution aligns with the ICED26 theme "Agency and Academic Development" by supporting academic developers and teaching staff in navigating institutional constraints, articulating ethical positions, and fostering student and teacher agency. Emphasizing reflective judgment and responsible action, the workshop equips participants with concrete tools for embedding ethical reasoning into teaching qualifications, leadership programs, and professional development initiatives. Participants leave prepared to support institutional cultures in which ethical clarity, value-based dialogue, and principled decision-making are integral to academic practice and educational development.

This workshop addresses the growing need to integrate ethical decision-making as a core competence in academic development. Higher education institutions are increasingly embedded in multi-crisis environments shaped by rapid technological change, geopolitical tensions, social polarization, and shifting expectations regarding academic responsibility. As a result, educators face ethically ambiguous situations that exceed technical or disciplinary expertise. Academic developers are uniquely positioned to support this emerging need by equipping teachers with structured methods for ethical reasoning and professional judgment.

Theoretical Framework

The conceptual foundation of the workshop combines two influential perspectives. First, Kohlberg's (1981, 1984) theory of moral development provides a developmental understanding of how individuals reason about ethical dilemmas, from rule-oriented approaches to more reflective, principled forms of judgment. Second, Bandura's (2001) social cognitive theory conceptualizes agency as the capacity to intentionally influence one's circumstances through forethought, self-reflection, and socially mediated interactions. This combination provides a powerful lens for strengthening ethical decision-making in higher education, where agency is often constrained by institutional norms, governance structures, and professional hierarchies.

Research in educational ethics and professional responsibility (e.g., Macfarlane, 2010; Maxwell & Schwimmer, 2016) underscores the need for structured dialogue formats that help educators articulate values, navigate tensions, and justify decisions. Dilemma-based approaches have been particularly effective in teacher education, fostering deeper reflection and moral sensitivity (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Wark & Krebs, 2000).

Contextual Foundation: TU Berlin

Technische Universität Berlin provides a compelling case context. Historically a major site of weapons research, TU Berlin now operates under a Zivilklausel, committing the institution to peaceful purposes. In the current German Zeitenwende, universities again confront debates over dual-use research, security policy, and responsible innovation. These real-world tensions create authentic case scenarios that resonate across disciplines—especially engineering, computer science, and technology studies.

Examples of workshop dilemmas include:

- engineering decisions with potential military applications,
- accepting or rejecting research funding tied to national or corporate security interests,
- ethically navigating international collaborations in politically sensitive contexts,
- balancing research openness with safety considerations.

Workshop Design and Activities

This 3-hour workshop is fully participant-centered and grounded in evidence-based methods from moral education and professional ethics. It includes:

1. Conceptual framing (20 min):

Introduction to moral development theory, agency, and the role of ethical reasoning in academic development.

2. Dilemma cycles (3 × 30 min):

Each cycle uses an authentic TU Berlin case. Activities include:

- surfacing values,
- stakeholder mapping,
- identifying reasoning levels,
- exploring alternative decisions,
- structured reflection.

3. Synthesis and application (25 min):

Participants compare patterns across dilemmas and articulate principles for responsible decision-making.

4. Integration planning (15 min):

Participants map where and how ethical reasoning can enter their own academic development programs.

The workshop equips participants with:

- a reusable dilemma-discussion template,
- facilitation guidelines based on moral reasoning research,
- strategies for integrating ethical reasoning into teaching qualifications, academic leadership programs, and curriculum development.

Relevance to Academic Development

Academic developers increasingly support educators navigating institutional constraints, controversial topics, AI adoption, decolonization initiatives, and complex global partnerships. Ethical decision-making is essential in these contexts yet rarely addressed systematically in teaching development programs.

This workshop contributes to the ICED26 theme “Agency and Academic Development” by:

- strengthening educators’ capacity to make responsible, justified decisions,
- supporting academic developers in building reflective, ethically aware teaching cultures,
- enhancing institutional capacity for responsible research and innovation (Stilgoe et al., 2013),
- aligning with OECD (2024) frameworks on agency in learning environments.

Intended Audience

The workshop is designed for academic developers, teaching faculty, program directors, and educational leaders interested in enhancing ethical reasoning within their institutions. Its tools are adaptable across disciplinary and cultural contexts.

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PRE Parallel Workshops C - Workshop 9

Building Relationships and Promoting Agency Through Reflective Dialogue

Janel Seeley

Extended Summary

Navigating and engaging with the various landscapes of higher education involves communication skills. Of course, we all know how to communicate, but are we doing it effectively? Meaning, do we ask questions that dig deeply into our own and others' understanding? Do we really listen with an intention to understand fully and openly? Do we pay attention to the loudest or most powerful voices while ignoring or excluding others? Do we think about our own or others' assumptions when sharing thoughts or reflecting on experiences? Do we create an inviting climate for dialogue?

Whether sharing thoughts on teaching and learning with instructors, engaging in classroom discussions, leading or attending administrative meetings, how we communicate is just as important, if not more, than what we communicate. Reflective Dialogue (RD), formerly known as Collaborative Communication, is an intentional framework for thinking about one's own experiences, through dialogue with others (Seeley, 2023). Becoming more aware and skillful in meaningful dialogue can be beneficial in promoting agency and collaboration.

Building stronger relationships with both students and colleagues and engaging in a more humanistic pedagogy is key to the success of higher education (Felten & Lambert, 2020) in these challenging times. RD can be especially helpful when reflecting on and examining ways in which we interact with one another that supports the health and resilience of higher education.

In this workshop participants will learn about key aspects and foundations of RD and consider how they might use them to engage in effective dialogue as way to promote agency within and among learners and leaders alike. This will include creating an environment to facilitate trust and inclusivity, asking questions that create opportunities for critical thinking, listening with an intention to understand or even be influenced, and thinking together in order to reflect and/or potentially solve problems.

Agenda:

Introductions 20 min

Foundations of RD 20

Small group practice activities on listening 10

Large group debrief and discussion 10

Small group practice activities on questioning and listening 10

Break 15

Large group debrief and discussion 15

Small group practice on facilitating dialogue 30

Large group debrief 10

Wrap up 10

Effective communication is foundational to navigating higher education, yet knowing how to communicate and communicating effectively are not the same. Do we ask questions that probe deeply into understanding? Do we listen with genuine openness? Do we attend to marginalized voices or only the loudest? Do we examine underlying assumptions? Do we create welcoming climates for meaningful exchange?

This interactive workshop introduces Reflective Dialogue (RD), an intentional framework for thinking about one's own experiences through dialogue with others. Whether facilitating classroom discussions, collaborating with instructors on teaching and learning, or participating in administrative meetings, how we communicate is as important as what we communicate. In these challenging times, building stronger relationships with students and colleagues through humanistic pedagogy is essential to the success and resilience of higher education.

Participants will explore the key foundations of Reflective Dialogue and consider practical applications across their professional contexts. Through collaborative activities, attendees will develop skills in:

Creating environments that facilitate trust and inclusivity

Asking questions that invite critical thinking

Listening with an intention to understand and be influenced

Thinking together to reflect on challenges and co-create solutions

Participants will leave with concrete strategies for engaging in more effective dialogue that promotes agency among learners and leaders alike. RD offers a practical approach to strengthening communication, fostering collaboration, and supporting the health of our educational communities.

PRE Parallel Workshops C - Workshop 10

From Tools to Agency: Building AI Literacy for Academic Practice

Bernhard Lange

Abstract

In the face of rapid technological advances, academic professionals must develop not only technical familiarity with AI tools, but also the reflective capacity to integrate them meaningfully into their scholarly and educational practices. This hands-on workshop empowers participants to build and expand their AI literacy as a foundation for academic agency. Participants will engage with a structured four-step workflow designed to support the critical exploration and integration of generative AI into everyday academic routines. The workflow fosters a reflective approach that allows individual creativity and professional judgment to remain central. Rather than replacing human input, the structured use of AI becomes a way to maintain quality, personal voice, and academic integrity in AI-supported work. Instead of focusing on specific tools, the workshop emphasizes transferable principles and adaptable workflows suited for evolving AI ecosystems. Participants will have ample opportunity to work on their own academic tasks and to experiment with tool combinations that reflect their contexts and priorities. Collaborative peer exchange will further deepen insights into sustainable and responsible AI use. This workshop is open to academic staff, developers, and educational leaders seeking to strengthen their professional practice in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

Keywords: AI Literacy, Generative AI in Higher Education, Reflective Practice, Practice Transfer

Extended Summary

The increasing presence of generative AI in higher education is reshaping how academic work is conducted, from writing and researching to planning courses and collaborating across institutional contexts (1). While in 2025, tools such as OpenAI's ChatGPT (2), Anthropic's Claude (3), or Google's Gemini, NotebookLM, and LearnLM (4) provide powerful affordances for summarization, reasoning, rewriting, and integration of learning content, in mid-2026 we might already rely on more advanced ecosystems, including agent-based applications and learning-specific models. In addition, teachers' roles and tasks might change significantly over the course of the next few years (5). This dynamic makes it essential for academic professionals to go beyond surface-level tool familiarity and build the capacity to critically, reflectively, and creatively integrate AI into their work – in ways that preserve quality, professionalism, and authorship. This workshop draws on the facilitator's experience with generative AI in academic contexts, as well as numerous workshops and teaching formats where both enthusiasm and critical concern about AI emerge. One recurring concern is the potential outsourcing of thinking and learning processes to automated systems, a challenge that calls for structured strategies to maintain one's own agency, voice, and responsibility. As a response, the workshop introduces a four-step workflow developed through practice.

This model enables participants to maintain control, assert their own creativity and professionalism, and ensure that AI tools support, rather than obscure, their academic thinking and output. Structured in three phases, this workshop offers participants a structured yet flexible format to experiment, reflect, and create. In the first phase (60 minutes), participants are introduced to the concepts of AI literacy and to the four-step workflow. This is done through brief input, followed by interactive engagement: participants create sample outputs using AI tools and reflect on the experience in small groups. The focus is not on predefined examples, but on participants' own material and ideas.

The second phase (30 minutes) introduces tool ecosystems such as Gemini → NotebookLM → ChatGPT → Claude. Each of these tools represents distinct strengths in academic workflows: extraction, contextualization, generation, and revision. However, participants are reminded that the specific tools may change significantly by June 2026. Rather than teaching current software, the session invites participants to understand how different functions can be combined meaningfully and critically. The focus remains on principles, not platforms. In the third and longest phase (90 minutes), participants work on a concrete project of their own choosing like a syllabus draft, a research outline, a feedback letter, or any teaching activity, using the four-step workflow as their guide. Tool experimentation is guided but open-ended, and participants receive structured prompts for peer exchange and self-reflection.

The session concludes with a brief "gallery walk" in which small groups share insights, strategies, and surprises. Participants are encouraged to bring a laptop and be open to registering for free trial access to selected tools, where needed. Data privacy concerns are addressed explicitly, but not prescriptively; participants are invited to align their tool use with their institutional and personal standards. By the end of the session, participants will have gained a clearer understanding of what AI tools can and cannot accomplish in academic work. They will have developed strategies for incorporating AI meaningfully into their own practice without outsourcing intellectual responsibility. These outcomes may enhance the development of reflective and resilient professional practices that are both responsive to technological change and grounded in human judgment. The relevance of this workshop to academic development lies in its dual emphasis on innovation and integrity. Rather than offering yet another tool demo or efficiency promise, the

workshop invites critical engagement with emerging systems and the cultivation of academic craftsmanship in AI-supported environments.

As higher education institutions move towards large-scale implementation of generative AI in teaching and learning, often driven by external platforms and commercial interests, academic institutions must provide spaces where professionals can make informed, ethical, and purposeful decisions about their own use. The workshop offers one such space: rooted in evidence, shaped by practice, and committed to sustaining professionalism amid disruption. This workshop is open to academic staff, developers, and educational leaders from diverse institutional backgrounds. It is particularly suitable for those who are actively exploring AI in their academic practice, as well as for those seeking orientation and conceptual clarity in a rapidly shifting field. While no specific prior knowledge is required, a willingness to reflect, share, and experiment is expected.

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PRE Parallel Workshops C - Workshop 11

From Participation to Strategic Impact—Multi-Level Evaluation for Centers for Teaching & Learning

Sheena Brown

Abstract

Academic development units face pressure to demonstrate value to institutional leaders, accreditation bodies, and stakeholders. Many Centers for Teaching and Learning rely primarily on participation metrics—attendance rates—as impact proxies, obscuring contributions to teaching culture, curriculum enhancement, and systemic change. This workshop introduces a holistic, multi-level evaluation model combining the 4M Framework and Kirkpatrick Model, supporting academic developers in articulating strategic, organizational, and policy-relevant work. Attendees will explore practical methods for capturing and communicating impact evidence and receive a replicable, multi-level assessment plan and strategies for communicating value to leadership, informing policy, shaping teaching cultures, and strengthening evidence-based practices.

Extended Summary

From Participation to Strategic Impact—Multi-Level Evaluation for Centers for Teaching & Learning Key Takeaway: This session equips academic developers and CTL leaders with a replicable, evidence-based model for evaluating and communicating the systemic impact of their work—moving far beyond participation metrics to demonstrate true institutional and societal value. Context and Rationale In today's rapidly evolving higher education landscape, CTLs are called upon to drive transformation, foster equity and inclusion, and build institutional resilience. Yet, traditional evaluation methods—such as counting workshop attendees or consultations—do not reflect the full scope of CTL contributions to organizational capacity, policy alignment, and sustainable learning cultures.

Theoretical and Research-Based Foundation:

This session introduces a comprehensive, multi-dimensional assessment approach that combines two established and complementary frameworks for evaluating academic development initiatives. (1) The 4M Framework provides a systems-based lens for evaluating impact across organizational levels, helping CTLs map the reach and influence of initiatives across the institution and beyond.

- Micro: individual faculty learning, teaching practice, mindset shifts
- Meso: departmental culture, program-level curriculum alignment, chair/faculty governance engagement
- Macro: institutional strategic priorities, policies, accreditation, student success agendas
- Mega: societal imperatives, community engagement, workforce readiness, equity commitments (2) The Kirkpatrick Model, which is globally recognized, provides a four-level evaluation hierarchy: evaluates training and professional learning through four levels:

1. Reaction – participant satisfaction and relevance

2. Learning – new knowledge, skills, attitudes

3. Behavior – changes in practice or implementation

4. Results – organizational or systemic outcomes Integrating Kirkpatrick with 4M enables academic developers to connect pedagogical learning with broader organizational outcomes, such as improved student success, alignment with accreditation standards, or increased cross-unit collaboration.

Academic Development as Organizational Learning

Research emphasizes academic developers as catalysts for institutional learning (Land & Felten, 2023; Wright et al., 2020). Effective CTL assessment should therefore document:

- cultural shifts in teaching and learning
- increased capacity for innovation
- strengthened relationships across units
- policies or processes influenced by CTL initiatives
- resilience and adaptability during systemic disruption

Our integrated assessment model collectively provide the foundation for the workshop's practical tools and activities. By integrating these frameworks, participants will gain a robust method for capturing both the structural and process dimensions of academic development, enabling them to demonstrate alignment with institutional priorities such as student success, accreditation, digital transformation, and workforce readiness.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

• Apply the integrated 4M + Kirkpatrick model to evaluate CTL initiatives at multiple organizational levels.

• Design and implement assessment strategies that capture evidence of curriculum innovation, instructional culture, and systemic responsiveness.

• Frame and communicate assessment insights for diverse stakeholders, including senior leadership, faculty governance, accrediting bodies, and external funders.

• Anticipate and address common challenges in multi-level assessment, including data collection, stakeholder engagement, and reporting.

Case Study and Assessment Strategies:

Participants will engage with a real-world case study illustrating how academic developers can use holistic assessment to:

- Inform strategic decision-making and resource allocation
- Support alignment with institutional and accreditation goals
- Strengthen cross-unit and cross-functional collaboration
- Document contributions to policy formation and organizational learning
- Build the case for an agile, resilient, and responsive CTL

Engagement and Takeaways: Participants will take part in guided reflection and mapping activities to adapt the assessment model to their own institutional contexts. They will leave with practical tools, sample instruments, and a replicable framework to strengthen CTL capacity for strategic communication, continuous improvement, and long-term sustainability.

Description of Interactive Methods and Activities (with Timings):
This participant-centered workshop employs active learning, collaborative analysis, and guided planning.

0–10 min | Welcome, Context, and Positionality
- Presenter introduces positionality & purpose
- Group agreements established (inclusion, participation norms)

10–60 min | Introducing the Frameworks (4M + Kirkpatrick) Activity: “Match-the-Level Sorting”
- Participants receive cards with sample CTL outcomes
- Small groups categorize each into both frameworks
- Purpose: Build familiarity with systems-level and outcomes-based thinking

60–120 min | Case Study Analysis: Holistic CTL Assessment Participants review a real or anonymized case study illustrating four assessment strategies:

1. Stakeholder Mapping

2. Faculty Surveys

3. Focus Groups

4. Strategic Alignment Analysis

Activity: Guided small-group analysis + Padlet insight capture

Prompt: “How might this apply in your context?”

120–130 min | Break

130–155 min | Institutional Impact Mapping Activity: Participants identify a CTL initiative at their institution and map potential metrics across:

- Micro / Meso / Macro / Mega
- Reaction / Learning / Behavior / Results

Deliverable: An initial multi-level evaluation plan

155-170 min | Designing a Replicable Assessment Plan Activity: Guided logic model creation.
- Participants outline at least one outcome with metrics, data sources, and alignment with institutional priorities.

170–180 min | Wrap-Up & Call to Action

- Exit Ticket: “What one change will you make to your evaluation strategy?”
- Resources: Takeaway sheet with templates and sample metrics

Higher education institutions are increasingly focused on demonstrating the value of teaching and learning enhancement. CTLs must now function as:

- strategic partners in institutional initiatives
- contributors to policy and accreditation
- facilitators of culture change
- hubs of organizational learning
- agile units responding to systemic disruptions (e.g., AI, enrollment shifts, equity demands)

This workshop directly supports academic developers in meeting these evolving expectations. By equipping participants with frameworks and tools for multi-level evaluation, the session strengthens the capacity of CTLs to demonstrate strategic impact, advocate for resources, and ensure long-term relevance within complex educational ecosystems.

This workshop is designed for:

- Academic developers
- CTL directors and staff
- Institutional researchers involved in teaching & learning
- Department chairs and program leaders engaged in curriculum improvement
- Faculty interested in evidence-based professional learning assessment These tools are adaptable to institutions of all sizes, including research universities, liberal arts colleges, community colleges, and international contexts.

Practical Takeaways Participants will leave with:

- Sample multi-level evaluation plans
- A logic model for a CTL program or initiative
- A replicable framework for demonstrating strategic alignment
- Templates for surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder mapping
- Tools to communicate CTL value to leadership and faculty
- Strategies to build resilient, responsive academic development units

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PRE Parallel Workshops C - Workshop 12

Structural Agency in Academic Writing

Helen Sword

Abstract

Structure is everywhere around us, shaping our experience of the world: in the soaring arches of a cathedral, the whirling waves of a symphony, the gossamer strands of a spider's web. It's everywhere in our writing, too, from the syntax of our sentences to the arc of our arguments. Yet many academic writers — from undergraduate students to distinguished faculty — have never learned to speak the intricate language of structural design. Constrained by disciplinary conventions, they remain passive inhabitants of received forms rather than confident agents of change. This 3-hour pre-conference workshop, led by international writing expert Helen Sword, invites educational developers to rethink structure both in their own practice and in their work with faculty and students. Through a series of playful "Structure Studio" exercises, participants will explore eight dimensions of structural design in academic writing — from foundational principles to generative processes to published products to future possibilities — and experiment with a variety of structural paradigms and forms. By the end of the session, you will have developed a rich new vocabulary of structural design and a practical toolbox of strategies applicable to any task that requires wrangling multiple parts into a coherent whole: writing a book or article, planning a seminar or syllabus, leading a collaborative research project, balancing a complex workload, or empowering your colleagues and students to do any of the above.

Extended Summary

Structure is everywhere around us, shaping our experience of the world: in the soaring arches of a cathedral, the whirling waves of a symphony, the gossamer strands of a spider's web. It's everywhere in our writing, too, from the syntax of our sentences to the arc of our arguments. Yet many academic writers — from undergraduate students to distinguished faculty — have never learned to speak the language of structural design. Constrained by disciplinary conventions and cowed by conservative peer reviewers, they regard structure as a utilitarian scaffold at best and at worst as a narrow straitjacket. (IMRAD, anyone?)

This 3-hour workshop invites educational developers to rethink structure, both in their own academic writing and in their work with faculty and students. Following a structure-themed icebreaker, you'll be guided through four 30-minute "Structure Studio" exercises based on material from the facilitator Helen Sword's book-inprogress, The Structure Book. Each exercise draws on practical and theoretical perspectives from an eclectic range of fields — among them architecture (Alexander et al., A Pattern Language), classical rhetoric (Schuyler, How to Write Stunning Sentences), creative nonfiction (McPhee, Draft No. 4), developmental editing (Portwood-Stacer, The Book Proposal Book), fiction writing (Alison, Meander, Spiral, Explode), neuropsychology (Pinker, The Sense of Style), and the history of science (Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions) — to equip you with the vocabulary, confidence, and skills you'll need to become a confident agent of structural change. By the end of the workshop, you will have developed a rich new vocabulary of structural design and a practical toolbox of strategies that you can apply to any task that requires wrangling multiple parts into a coherent whole: writing a book or article, planning a seminar or syllabus, leading a collaborative research project, or empowering your colleagues and students to do any of the above.

Facilitation Plan

• Introduction and Icebreaker (20 min)

• Structure Studio 1 – Principles: Foundations & Frameworks (30 min)

This scene-setting exercise will introduce you to eight foundational principles for structuring complex texts and eight paradigmatic frameworks for guiding sophisticated design choices. From each list of eight, you'll be invited to choose two or three items to test against a book or article of your own choosing: published or in progress, someone else's or your own.

• Structure Studio 2 – Processes: Methods & Metaphors (30 min)

Moving from principles to processes, you'll be presented with eight generative methods for structuring your ideas and eight metaphors for thinking more originally and creatively about the structural design of your article or book. Choosing one method and one metaphor to play with, you'll experiment with innovative ways of transforming a messy cluster of ideas into a useful metaphorical model.

• Bio-break (10 min)

• Structure Studio 3 – Products: Texts & Paratexts (30 min)

Eight textual structures, from sentences to signposting, and eight paratextual structures, from typeface to white space, provide the framing for this productfocused exercise. Using your laptop, tablet, or phone, you'll be invited to find an example of a book you admire, then to analyse one textual feature and one paratextual feature that you had not consciously noticed before.

• Structure Studio 4 – Possibilities: Conventions & Inventions (30 min)

Following a brief reflection on the pros and cons of a conventional structure that you're familiar with — the IMRAD article, the conference abstract, the academic monograph — you'll collaborate with fellow participants to produce a creative, deliberately unconventional structural design for a text in any academic genre, drawing on all the principles, processes, products, and possibilities that you've encountered during the workshop.

Closing Plenary (30 min)

Before we all head off for a well-deserved dinner, we'll applaud each other's structural innovations, reflect on lessons learned, and create our own back-of-anapkin sketch (literally!) of a structural design that we can carry home from the conference to try out in our own writing practice.

Total: 180 minutes

About the Facilitator: Helen Sword is the author of four books on academic writing and the founder of the WriteSPACE, an international writing community with members in 30+ countries. For links to her books, workshops, courses, retreats, and other resources for writers, see her website at www.helensword.com.

Wednesday 24 June 2026

Symposium 1

Agency and strategy to build trustful spaces

Rachel Forsyth, Claire Hamshire, Peter Felten, Jessica Riddell, Anna Santucci, Alison Cook-Sather, Kathryn Sutherland

Abstract

The aim of this symposium is to bring together an international collaboration of colleagues exploring trust within and for academic development. Trust-building is an inherent aspect of academic developers' practice and may be an anchor in uncertain times (Pleschova et al. 2025). Trust-building is a process of continuous attention to fostering relationships, and trust is fundamentally reciprocal. In that reciprocity, we imagine an environment where trust is manifested as a key value for both academic developers and teachers and how we can demonstrate and cultivate scalable approaches which bridge scholarship, practice, and policy to foster trust-building in our own work and across educational communities. Although trust is generally under-researched within both teaching and academic development in higher education (Pleschova et al. 2025; Sutherland et al. 2024), recent research has explored how academic developers can act as brokers for trust (Lohman 2024) and analysed strategies for building trust (Cook-Sather et al., 2021; Lee and Ragupathi 2024). But questions remain: how can trust develop and flourish in our current turbulent times? How does hope and mattering converge in trust? How is trust established and cultivated within relationships? How do we build and foster trust within our higher education systems and processes? And perhaps most pressing, how do we support teachers to develop agency for their own trust-building? We advocate for trustful spaces to foster creativity, freeing us up to do imaginative work, to be vulnerable, to imagine something different is possible and to share our hope with colleagues.

Keywords: Trust, Hope, Teaching relationships, Mattering

Presentation 1: Agency is built on foundations of trust

Agency and autonomy are vital to drive meaningful transformation in universities and ultimately enable student success. For academic developers working as change agents across complex institutional eco-systems, agency is built on foundations of trust that are cultivated through collaborative relationships. Trust is therefore a vital enabler for working within higher education where academic developers need to develop a matrix of trusting relationships when there may be long standing inequalities.

Whilst it is acknowledged that positive affective encounters of and within a space generate a sense of trust and mattering for students and colleagues trust-building is as yet underexplored (Sutherland et al. 2024) and further exploration of the role of trust in facilitating student success is required (Hamshire, Benjamin and Soong 2025). Drawing on data from focus groups with both colleagues (Hamshire and Forsyth 2024) and focus groups, interviews and surveys with students (Hamshire, Benjamin and Soong 2025, Glessmer et al 2025) this paper will critically explore the concept of trust and considered how academic developers can develop trustful relationships. Using narrative excerpts from the data we will discuss how trust may be explored across institutional settings and consider how a shift towards a consideration of what it means to trust in higher education requires us to create spaces where mattering equally and feeling valued are available to all.

Presentation 2: Hope and trust

In a time of seismic change across higher education sectors, we need tools to metabolize this moment of deep disruption to build robust, hopeful mindsets and lead social movements that advocate for flourishing in all its forms – human and ecological (Riddell 2024). Hope Circuits Institute is a participatory action research project involving over 4,000 participants across universities and colleges in Canada and the US. This initiative seeks to rewire higher education by centering human and ecological flourishing as core institutional and sector-wide values. Rooted in the belief that academic developers are uniquely positioned to lead transformative change (Mori, 2025), this session offers a conceptual framework built on ten practical, strategic tools designed to empower academic developers and educators as architects of creative futures.

The session explores how academic developers can adopt intentional, strategic approaches to reimagine teaching, learning, and organizational transformation (Lee and Ragupathi, 2024). These tools support collaboration across departments and faculties, and align with broader institutional priorities such as equity, justice, sustainability, and reconciliation. Drawing from rich, participatory data and critical reflection, the research highlights how academic development units can act as incubators of systemic change—agile, responsive, and rooted in hope.

Framed through an ethos of collective agency, Hope Circuits invites academic developers to view themselves not just as supporters of teaching excellence, but as key policy influencers and trusted change leaders across institutions, uniquely positioned as advocates to lead organizational renewal that is bold, hopeful, and future-facing.

Presentation 3: Mattering towards Cultural Change Agency

Academic developers can act intentionally and strategically within their institutions as cultural architects of trust: playing key systemic change roles towards realizing holistic flourishing for all higher education stakeholders by cultivating cultures of significance (Mercurio, 2025) valuing relationality (Geertsema et al., 2024), reciprocity (Dean & Timmermans, 2022), and "engagement over prestige" (Felten & Lambert, 2020) as fundamental components in "continuous pursuit of the existential project to help 'humans get better at being human' (Bass, 2018 p. 34)" (Bass, 2020).

Student-staff partnership work is a form of academic development that embodies a culture of relational engagement, intertwining trust and mattering as both experiences and outcomes. This is a unique form of relationship that is built through and builds trust (Brunson, 2018; Cook-Sather et al., 2021). Both empirical research and reflective writing have revealed how it can foster a sense of mattering for students (Cook-Sather et al., 2024) and teachers through attending to truth telling (Cook-Sather & Marcovici, 2024) and to equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice (Cook-Sather et al., forthcoming; de Bie et al., 2021; Mullinix et al., 2024).

We will explore how partnership engagements in two very different contexts—a bi-college consortium of small liberal arts colleges in the United States and a national research university in Ireland—prompt experiences of trust and mattering. A partnership mindset helps cultivate academic development practices that stimulate participatory contribution and emergent envisioning of possibilities, thus building capacity for agentic empowerment grounded in trust and mattering that provides fertile soil for systemic change agency.

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Symposium 2

How can the developer develop?

Jan Folkert Deinum, Irene Douwes-van Ark, Rick Huizinga, Angelika Thielsch, Karolina Duschinska, Bartłomiej Wróblewski, Michal Urban, Radka High, Manuela Milani, Sarah Leupen, Iwona Maciejowska, Anna Sajdak-Burska, Simon Ngigi, Winfred Kithinji, Edward Ombajo, William Muriithi

Abstract

To our knowledge there is not yet a commonly internationally recognized program for developing ourselves as educational developers. However, in the recent past, examples of such programs emerged in various national contexts. In this symposium we will address this topic from four different angles. The presenters in this symposium come from different cultural backgrounds and work in different higher education systems. However, they are all confronted with the question of how to develop the developers. They will demonstrate their challenges within their context and share their solutions, future plans and issues that they still face.

We will discuss with the audience what lessons we can learn from these different perspectives and approaches and what are general recommendations for programs to support the professional development of educational developers and how this might influence their agency. We are especially interested in the question if cultural and contextual differences have an effect on this development and if there is a possibility of organizing an internationally shared program for educational developers.

Keywords

Developing the Developer; Professional Development; Train the Trainer

Presentation 1: Kenya: Building the Capacity of Academic Developers and Rethinking Agency in Kenyan Universities

As academic developers working in three Kenyan universities, we have spent years at the frontline of efforts to strengthen teaching and learning. We design and facilitate programmes on learner-centred course design, assessment, facilitation, competency-based education, evidence-based practice, and, more recently, artificial intelligence. Yet in our ongoing conversations, one question keeps surfacing: while we support faculty growth, how are we ourselves being developed? Across our institutions, we encounter similar realities. We negotiate credibility in spaces where disciplinary expertise often overshadows pedagogical competence. We are asked to drive innovation, even as institutional culture, policy, and resource constraints slow progress (World Bank, 2019). We shoulder the emotional labour of championing best practices while struggling to secure recognition and time for our own scholarly growth. We recall moments of frustration, a workshop with low attendance, a promising initiative stalled by bureaucracy, a department resistant to change. But we also recognise the agency we continue to build: forging alliances with leadership, nurturing communities of practice, and witnessing subtle yet meaningful shifts in teaching cultures. Guided by Bandura's notion of agency and the lens of epistemic growth, we reflect on how these lived experiences shape our identity as academic developers (Bandura, A., 2001). Together, we aim to propose a contextually grounded model for developing academic developers in African universities, one that values reflection, scholarship, collaboration, and resilience, and ensures that those who lead transformation are themselves supported to grow.

Presentation 2: Czech Republic: Designing and Refining a Course Leading to a Microcredential for Educational Developers

Educational developers are essential for improving teaching and learning in higher education, yet structured programs to prepare them remain rare. To address this gap, an international team from the Czech Republic, Italy, and the United States spent a year collaboratively designing a course leading to a microcredential (4 ECTS, one semester), informed by research and best practices. The curriculum focuses on core roles of educational developers: training academics in pedagogical skills (Van Dijk et al., 2020), advising on curriculum and course design, and supporting the development of teaching and learning centers.

The course combines synchronous and asynchronous online learning with in-person seminars and portfolio-based assessment with personalized feedback. Thirteen modules guide participants in designing faculty development programs, conducting classroom observations, supporting new faculty, integrating educational technology, promoting cultural competence, and using educational research to address teaching challenges. Active learning is central, with hands-on activities, role-playing, case studies drawn from participants' contexts, and multicultural perspectives shaping the experience. Long-term tasks include interviewing a newly appointed teacher and conducting peer observation with

debriefing, initially modelled through video analysis. Participants also plan strategies for fostering a student-centred teaching culture within their institutions.

Using a Design-Based Research (DBR) framework (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012) we implemented three cycles, collecting data from portfolios, feedback surveys, and instructor reflections. Iterative refinements improved clarity, role focus, and sequencing. Grounded in the principles of congruent teaching (Swennen et al., 2008), the course models the very strategies it teaches. Through meta-commentary, the instructors make their teaching decisions explicit, analyse them with participants, and connect practice to theory. This presentation will share the design process, guiding principles, and evaluation insights, offering a replicable model for professional development programs for educational developers.

Presentation 3: Poland: From Disciplinary Experts to Educational Developers: Building Capacity in a Non-Systemic Context

In Poland there are no formal degree programmes preparing educational developers.,although doctoral candidates and lecturers can attend workshops on course design or syllabus development.

As Su and Wang (2022) note, strong teaching skills alone are not sufficient to serve effectively as an educational advisor or mentor. Additional research, reflective, design, and contextual competencies are essential.

When the Ars Docendi Centre for Teaching Excellence at Jagiellonian University in Krakow entrusted the role of educational developers to lecturers from various faculties, it became necessary to prepare them for this function. Our team was diverse: some members were reflective practitioners who needed a stronger theoretical foundation, others were specialists in PCK who needed to understand the broader institutional context.

We began by developing a shared vision, mission, and goals for the Centre (re-established in 2024). We then built developmental resources, including a library of key publications, a curated MOOC list, participated in teaching-and-learning conferences, and workshop programmes. Joint initiatives – such as the 'Introduction to higher education' course based on job shadowing – enabled less experienced developers to learn from more experienced colleagues. In a previous institutional project, our team gained experience in academic mentoring. Before the next mentoring cycle, we designed supervisory-support training to strengthen mentors' competencies.

As an interdisciplinary team, we value diverse perspectives and apply humanistic models of both group and individual development (Knowles, 2005), consistently building a learning community. In the presentation, we will share our challenges, effective solutions, and lessons learned while developing educational developers without formal preparation programmes.

Presentation 4: The Netherlands: An international approach to develop the educational developer

Several years ago we were asked to provide a ''Train the Trainer'' programme for educational developers. We took the job thinking we were experienced and that it would be easy. However, when designing the program we became aware that we were, perhaps,not as competent as we thought. From this experience we started to think about how we could design the program in a more systemic way in order to support all educational developers, at varying experience levels, in developing their skills. We organized two (one-week) summer schools starting with 5 main topics:

1. theoretical knowledge about university teacher development (e.g., Akerlind, 2003; Van Dijk et al., 2020)
2. needs analysis
3. designing skills (ADDIE model)
4. training skills and adult learning theory (Knowles, 1984)
5. evaluation of training programs

In this presentation we will show shortly our approach. We will also discuss, with the audience and other presenters, our struggles and what approaches are useful for educational developers' learning as we seek to develop ourselves 'from and with each other'

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Papers 1

Human Literacy: Reclaiming Agency in the Age of AI Readiness for Faculty and Staff

Carl Moore

Abstract

Higher education institutions worldwide are investing heavily in AI literacy and digital adoption strategies for faculty and staff. Yet emerging evidence suggests that these initiatives frequently stall, not because of technological barriers, but because of unaddressed human capacities: self-awareness, emotional regulation, reflective decision-making, and relational intelligence. This paper introduces Human Literacy as a foundational capacity framework that positions these human dimensions as the necessary precondition for authentic agency in AI-mediated educational environments. Drawing on Bandura's agentic theory, polyvagal theory (Porges), cognitive load theory, self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan), and Kahneman's dual-process model, the paper argues that current AI readiness efforts operate primarily at the outer, behavioral layer of competence while neglecting the inner architecture of perception, regulation, and meaning-making that determines whether educators can exercise genuine agency in their professional practice. The proposed framework organizes human capacities across three interdependent domains: Inner Capacity (self-awareness, emotional regulation, interoception), Outer Capacity (relational intelligence, communication, collaborative action), and Unlimited Capacity (purpose alignment, integrative meaning-making, adaptive resilience). A complementary four-step reflective method, organized around the sequence Recognize, Examine, Align, and Decide, provides educational developers with a practical protocol for cultivating these capacities in faculty development programming. The paper positions Human Literacy as the foundational center of a concentric model, with AI Literacy, Digital Literacy, and Digital Adoption as successive outer layers that depend on the inner core for sustainable integration. Implications for educational development strategy, institutional policy, and the scholarship of academic development are discussed.

Keywords: Human Literacy, AI readiness, agency, educational development

Extended Summary

Introduction and Aim

The rapid integration of generative artificial intelligence into higher education has created an urgent institutional imperative: prepare faculty and staff for AI-mediated teaching, research, and service. Globally, universities are deploying AI literacy curricula, digital adoption workshops, and technology integration frameworks at unprecedented scale (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2024; Luckin et al., 2026). Yet a growing body of evidence reveals persistent barriers that are not technological but deeply human. Faculty resistance, emotional overwhelm, ethical anxiety, and a pervasive sense of lost professional agency consistently emerge as primary obstacles to meaningful AI integration (Thompson & Ramirez, 2026; Al-Mahmood & Al-Shammari, 2023). These findings suggest that AI readiness efforts are building on an incomplete foundation, one that prioritizes technical skill acquisition while neglecting the human capacities that enable educators to make sense of, critically evaluate, and exercise genuine choice in their engagement with emerging technologies.

This paper introduces Human Literacy as a capacity-based framework designed to address this foundational gap. Situated within the ICED26 conference theme of agency and academic development, the paper argues that authentic professional agency in AI-mediated educational environments requires the cultivation of capacities that no technology can provide: the ability to recognize one's internal states, examine assumptions and cognitive patterns, align actions with deeply held values, and decide with reflective intentionality rather than reactive automaticity.

Theoretical Framework

Human Literacy integrates five established theoretical traditions into a unified framework for educational development. From polyvagal theory (Porges, 2011), the framework draws the insight that an educator's capacity to learn, collaborate, and make sound professional decisions is fundamentally mediated by their autonomic nervous system state, meaning that felt safety is a prerequisite for cognitive engagement, not a luxury (Moore, forthcoming 2026). Cognitive load theory provides the basis for understanding how technological complexity, when introduced without adequate human scaffolding, overwhelms the cognitive architecture necessary for reflective practice rather than enhancing it. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2017) illuminates why faculty engagement with AI tools depends on whether implementation contexts support or undermine autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Kahneman's (2011) dual-process theory explains the tendency for educators facing AI disruption to default to fast, reactive System 1 responses rather than engaging the deliberate, values-aligned System 2 reasoning that authentic agency requires. Finally, Bandura's (2001) concept of human agency as the capacity to intentionally influence one's functioning and life

circumstances provides the overarching theoretical anchor for the framework's central claim: that human capacities are not supplementary to AI readiness but constitutive of it.

The Human Literacy Framework

The framework organizes human capacities across three interdependent domains. Inner Capacity encompasses self-awareness, emotional regulation, interoceptive sensitivity, and nervous system literacy, the foundational capacities that enable an educator to recognize what is happening within before responding to what is happening around them. Outer Capacity addresses relational intelligence, communication, collaborative action, and the ability to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics in institutional settings. Unlimited Capacity involves purpose alignment, integrative meaning-making, and adaptive resilience, the capacities that sustain engagement and prevent burnout in rapidly changing professional environments.

These three domains are operationalized through a four-step reflective method: Recognize (attending to bodily signals and emotional states, grounded in polyvagal theory and somatic psychology), Examine (analyzing assumptions and cognitive patterns through the lens of cognitive load theory and cyberpsychology), Align (connecting decisions to core

values and professional purpose, drawing on values congruence research and self-determination theory), and Decide (engaging deliberate, integrative decision-making informed by Kahneman's dual-process theory and behavioral economics). Together, these four steps offer educational developers a practical protocol for embedding human capacity development into existing faculty development programming.

Structural Implications

The paper proposes a concentric model for institutional AI strategy in which Human Literacy occupies the foundational center, surrounded by successive layers of AI Literacy, Digital Literacy, and Digital Adoption. This architectural claim challenges the prevailing approach of treating AI literacy as a standalone competency and instead positions it as dependent on the human capacities that enable critical engagement, ethical reasoning, and adaptive decision-making. Dual-framework approaches to AI readiness (Rawat & Kaur, 2025) and comparative curriculum analyses (Khan & Vasilakos, 2025) are beginning to acknowledge the need for cognitive-attitudinal dimensions alongside technical competencies, but no existing framework explicitly positions human capacity development as the foundational layer upon which all subsequent digital and AI literacies depend.

Significance for Academic Development

This framework carries direct implications for how educational development centers conceptualize their role in institutional AI strategy. Rather than functioning primarily as technology training units, academic development centers can position themselves as architects of human capacity, the very capacities that determine whether technology integration achieves its intended educational outcomes (Moore, forthcoming 2027). For individual academic developers, the framework offers a scholarly foundation for practices they may already intuit: that effective faculty development begins with the person, not the platform. For institutional leaders, it provides an evidence-based rationale for investing in human development infrastructure alongside technology infrastructure. The paper contributes to the scholarship of academic development by offering a theoretically grounded, practically applicable framework that connects the field's longstanding commitment to reflective practice with the urgent contemporary challenge of AI integration.

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Future Skills Literacy as a Driver of Academic Agency and Curricular Innovation? A Programmatic Approach to Transforming Undergraduate Education

Henrik Dindas

Abstract

This paper introduces the GROW curriculum model, a didactically grounded and institutionally embedded framework developed at a University of Applied Sciences in Germany. In response to global transformations, the model systematically integrates Future Skills Literacy into all undergraduate programs, fostering student agency through competence-based, project-oriented learning. A distinctive feature is the mandatory implementation of collaborative, real-world projects each semester, guided by academic mentors who support reflection and the transfer of knowledge into practical settings. The GROW model transforms passive learning into participatory, interdisciplinary, and purpose-driven experiences. It enables learners to make informed decisions, solve authentic problems, and engage in critical reflection—empowering them as active agents of change within and beyond the university context. Conceptually rooted in academic development and operationalized through strategic curriculum design, the model also supports educator agency and institutional transformation. Empirical findings from over 30 programs show significant student gains in self-efficacy, collaborative problem-solving, and learning engagement. The presentation critically reflects on both the potential and limitations of skills-based education, emphasizing the need for a balanced integration of labour market demands and academic values. The GROW model thus offers a comprehensive approach to embedding agency in higher education and contributes to the scholarly discourse on Future Skills, curriculum innovation, and sustainable academic development.

Keywords

Future Skills Literacy, Curriculum Innovation, Student Agency, Programme Design

Extended Summary

The increasing complexity of global transformations – including rapid technological change, ecological crises, and socio-economic volatility – calls for a profound rethinking of how universities design study programmes that empower students as active agents of their own learning (Ionica et al., 2024; Wissenschaftsrat, 2022; UNESCO, 2023). Higher education institutions are thus challenged to move beyond traditional knowledge transmission and to adopt learning architectures that foster adaptive, transferable, and future-oriented competencies (Ashwin, 2020). In this context, "Future Skills" have gained significant traction as a conceptual bridge between individual learner development and societal transformation (Ehlers & Eigbrecht, 2024; Global University Leaders Council Hamburg, 2023).

This presentation introduces the didactically grounded and institutionally embedded curriculum framework "GROW" (Dindas, 2025b) developed at a University of Applied Sciences in Germany that systematically integrates "Future Skills Literacy" (Dindas, 2025a) into all undergraduate programs. Rooted in a strategic model of academic development, the framework reflects a paradigm shift: from content delivery to competence-based, project-oriented learning architectures that promote agency, adaptability, and reflexivity (Klemenčič, 2023; Torres Castro & Pineda-Báez, 2023).

The proposed model GROW offers a cross-semester, interdisciplinary structure that embeds Future Skills – such as self-directed learning, critical thinking, digital collaboration, and transfer competence (Ehlers & Eigbrecht, 2024) – into all undergraduate curricula. A distinctive feature of the model is its systematic integration of collaborative, real-world project work in every semester, ensuring that students continuously apply their academic knowledge in authentic, practice-oriented contexts. Each student team is accompanied by a faculty member who serves as an "academic mentor" (Wissenschaftsrat, 2022), providing guidance, facilitating reflection, and supporting the transfer of theoretical insights into practical solutions.

Drawing on established didactic principles such as inquiry-based learning, and transfer-oriented instructional design (Wildt, 2021; Dindas, 2021), the model addresses the necessity of transforming passive learning environments into participatory, purpose-driven experiences (Hurth & Stewart, 2022). It thus directly engages with the concept of agency, understood as the capacity to exert control over one's actions, influence the environment, and bring about change in one's own reality (Bandura, 2001). By embedding structured opportunities for decision-making, collaboration, and contextualized problem-solving into the core of the curriculum, the GROW model cultivates a learning culture where both students and educators act as agents of transformation within and beyond the academic setting (Reinius et al., 2022).

By operationalizing agency through curriculum architecture (Brod et al., 2023), the GROW model provides a structured yet flexible framework for academic developers and educators to support both teacher and student agency. It institutionalizes formats that require learners to make meaningful decisions, reflect critically on their learning pathways, and apply knowledge in authentic, interdisciplinary projects – thereby cultivating the confidence and competence needed to shape their own educational trajectories and contribute to wider societal transformation (OECD, 2024).

Importantly, the model was not only conceptually designed but also comprehensively implemented and evaluated across more than 30 undergraduate programmes. Empirical findings reveal measurable student gains in perceived self-efficacy, collaborative problem-solving, and reflective learning engagement. Students particularly highlighted the relevance of long-term, mentored project formats that spanned multiple semesters and embedded real-world challenges. These results underscore the transformative potential of curriculum designs that systematically embed agency as a guiding principle (OECD, 2020), demonstrating how Future Skills Literacy can serve as a catalyst for academic development and institutional innovation, while respecting critical perspectives on the limits of a purely skills-based paradigm.

However, the Future Skills discourse is not without its critics. Scholars like Kalz and Reinmann (2024) warn against an overemphasis on employability and market-driven outcomes, cautioning that such approaches may neglect the academic mission of fostering critical thinking and epistemic diversity. They call for a more balanced approach that upholds the intrinsic value of higher education while responding to societal change (Kalz, 2023). Accordingly, this contribution also critically reflects on the implications of integrating Future Skills into curricula, highlighting the potential and the limits of framing academic development through the lens of skills-based education. It argues that the institutional implementation of Future Skills Literacy must be accompanied by a nuanced understanding of learning cultures, disciplinary identities, and the role of universities as both agents of innovation and custodians of critical inquiry (Dindas, 2025a). Hence, the paper critically engages with current Future Skills discourse (Kalz & Reinmann, 2024), arguing for a balanced integration of labour market expectations with academic values (Pais et al., 2022). Rather than simply reacting to external demands, the GROW approach empowers academic developers to strategically shape curricula that are sustainable, inclusive, and reflexively designed.

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Character Education in Higher Education: A Global Cross-Case Synthesis of Approaches

Thomas Colclough, Duncan Pritchard

Abstract

We present a global comparative synthesis of 11 character education initiatives in higher education, examining how contemporary programs draw on philosophical, psychological, and pedagogical frameworks to support formation. Character education has experienced a significant resurgence in recent decades, reflecting renewed interest in the formative aims of higher education and the integration of virtue-ethical, empirical, and relational approaches. Triangulating data from interviews, field engagements, institutional materials, and a systematic review of 213 publications, we chart the theoretical foundations, institutional models, strengths, and challenges that shape current practice.

Keywords

Character Education; Virtue Ethics; Higher Education; Synthesis

Extended Summary

Over the past few decades, character education (CE) has undergone a notable resurgence, reflected in expanding scholarship and institutional investment. In higher education, this renewed interest reflects recognition that universities are responsible for both transmitting knowledge and for shaping habits, dispositions and values which enable graduates to live well and responsibly (Brant et al., 2022). Approaches based in virtue ethics have gained particular traction (Arthur, 2024; Fernández Espinosa & Domingo, 2025; Lamb & Townsend, 2024; Vanney et al., 2025), drawing on Aristotelian philosophy (Aristotle, 1984) and emphasizing the cultivation of character in ways aligned with institutional aims and broader accounts of human flourishing (Kristjánsson, 2015). Our aim in this paper is to provide a synthesis of how this work is unfolding globally so that scholars, educators, and newcomers to the field can situate themselves within the current landscape and understand the range of existing models.

We employed a qualitative, multi-method comparative case design (Yin, 2018) to analyze theoretical foundations, strengths, and challenges of 11 CE initiatives in higher education. Using purposive sampling, we identified information-rich initiatives representing diverse theoretical orientations, institutional models, and cultural settings. Data included interviews with program leaders and faculty, field engagements through workshops and site visits, institutional web materials, and a systematic review of 213 scholarly publications. We coded and compared cases using a hybrid deductive-inductive thematic analysis, and we triangulated across data sources to develop a synthesized account of how contemporary CE takes shape across contexts.

Five major theoretical foundations are present. First, Aristotelian and neo-Aristotelian frameworks ground programs in concepts such as flourishing, practical wisdom, intellectual, moral, and civic virtues, and leadership. These frameworks link character to personal, civic, and professional formation. Second, psychological perspectives (including educational, positive, social, developmental, and personality psychology) inform how formation is understood and assessed. Third, conceptions of the aims of higher education influence program purposes, with non-instrumental formative aims most common, complemented by civic and social purposes and selective individual-instrumental aims. Fourth, theological inflections appear in some contexts, where character is understood through Christian or Thomistic traditions. Fifth, relationality is central: several initiatives foreground community, mentorship, and trust as conditions supporting formation.

We identified four primary strengths. First, institutional purpose and alignment enhance coherence and legitimacy, whether through institution-wide commitments or dedicated centers. Second, faculty learning communities facilitate engagement, offering spaces for interdisciplinary reflection and professional identity formation. Third, disciplinary integration allows CE work to resonate by connecting virtues to disciplinary practices. Fourth, pedagogical innovations (e.g., experiential programs and scalable technology) translate character frameworks into classroom and co-curricular practices.

We also identified four primary challenges. First, assessment remains difficult, with ongoing debates about what counts as meaningful evidence of virtue development. Second, structural workload constraints limit faculty capacity, and questions about sustainability arise from fluctuating funding and staffing limitations. Third, sustaining momentum and scaling work across institutions remains difficult. Fourth, cultural and contextual factors shape how CE is received, including tensions around political neutrality, disciplinary perceptions, and the predominance of Western conceptual frameworks. These issues bear directly on the ability of CE initiatives to generate, share, and sustain knowledge across contexts.

The patterns emerging from our synthesis speak directly to the goals of sub-theme 1. By mapping how CE operates across diverse contexts, we aim to share knowledge that can support educators, researchers, and institutional leaders in navigating a rapidly growing and interdisciplinary field. Many CE approaches provide frameworks which shape

professional identity, faculty culture, and educational purpose, contributing indirectly to epistemological growth. Intellectual virtue frameworks, for example, explicitly engage questions of epistemic autonomy and judgment. Relational structures, such as faculty learning communities, support reflective inquiry and help faculty understand disciplinary commitments in new ways. These dynamics suggest CE contributes to academic development through communities of practice, shared language, and alignment with institutional aims.

Insights from our broader discussion reinforce this contribution. CE sits at the intersection of philosophy, education, and psychology, thriving when these disciplines function as partners in a single formative enterprise. Cultural variation in CE approaches reflects institutional histories and priorities, underscoring the importance of sharing models that help newcomers understand how different traditions and contexts influence practice. CE also navigates ideological challenges linked to public mission and trust in higher education, highlighting the need for transparent formative aims. Finally, CE work traverses institutional boundaries: educational development units and centers for teaching and learning are positioned to facilitate communities of practice, support pedagogical integration, and connect local efforts to wider institutional systems.

Overall, this synthesis highlights the conceptual richness, collaborative ethos, and interdisciplinary character of contemporary CE work. By providing a structured overview of global initiatives, we aim to support both established practitioners and newcomers in locating their work within the broader landscape and to strengthen the scholarly foundations of CE in higher education.

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Student-Centred Learning as a Quality Framework in Higher Education: Empowering Learners and Transforming Curriculum

María-José Rodríguez-Conde, Susana Olmos-Migueláñez, Juan-Pablo Hernández-Ramos, Alberto Ortiz-López, Marina García-Herrero, Sandra Marcos-Ortega

Abstract

This paper examines how Student-Centred Learning (SCL) can be operationalised and evaluated as a quality framework that fosters student agency and curriculum transformation in higher education. Although SCL is strongly endorsed in European policy and quality assurance discourse, empirical approaches to assessing its institutional implementation remain limited. Using a mixed-methods evaluative design, the study integrates administrative student data, documentary analysis, and qualitative evidence from institutional actors. The paper proposes a set of indicators to analyse student-centred learning across teaching, assessment, and student support practices. Findings show substantial variability between academic units in the degree to which student agency is supported, particularly in formative assessment, feedback, and curricular coherence. The study offers a transferable framework for academic developers and quality agencies seeking to align student-centred learning with curriculum design, quality enhancement, and institutional decision-making.

Keywords

Student-centred learning, Student agency, Curriculum transformation, Quality assurance

Extended Summary

Student-centred learning (SCL) has become a central principle in higher education reform across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), strongly associated with student agency, empowerment, and curriculum transformation. European policy documents and quality assurance frameworks consistently emphasise the active role of students as co-creators of learning processes, capable of influencing teaching, assessment, and institutional decision-making (European Commission, 2022; Bologna Follow-Up Group, 2024). However, despite this strong normative endorsement, empirical and evaluative approaches capable of capturing how student-centred learning and agency are implemented at institutional level remain limited and fragmented.

The aim of this paper is to present and conceptually frame a research project currently under development, which seeks to operationalise student-centred learning as an institutional quality framework and to design evaluative indicators that make student agency visible across curricula, teaching practices, assessment systems, and student support structures. Rather than reporting final results, the paper outlines the theoretical foundations, methodological design, and expected contributions of the project, responding directly to Track 3.3 by addressing how learners can be genuinely empowered and how curricula can be transformed through evidence-informed institutional practices.

The project is grounded in an integrated theoretical framework that brings together three complementary perspectives. First, student-centred learning is conceptualised as a pedagogical and institutional paradigm that foregrounds learner agency, autonomy, self-regulation, and meaningful engagement in learning processes (Bremner, 2021; Morris et al., 2025). From this perspective, agency is not an individual trait but an outcome of curricular design, assessment practices, and learning environments that enable students to make informed choices and reflect on their learning (Hoidn, 2017).

Second, curriculum transformation is understood as a systemic process rather than a collection of isolated teaching innovations. Transforming curricula requires coherence between intended learning outcomes, teaching strategies, assessment practices, and support mechanisms, as well as the active involvement of students in curriculum development and evaluation (Barnett & Coate, 2005; Hoidn, 2020). This aligns with scholarship highlighting the role of assessment for learning and formative feedback as key levers for student agency and deep learning (Ibarra-Sáiz & Rodríguez-Gómez 2016; Olmos-Migueláñez & Rodríguez-Conde, 2011; Nicol, 2010).

Third, the project draws on enhancement-oriented approaches to quality assurance, particularly the European Standards and Guidelines (ENQA, 2015), which position quality as a shared responsibility between institutions, staff, and students. When quality assurance processes incorporate student voice, participatory evaluation, and learning-oriented indicators, they can act as enablers rather than constraints for student-centred learning and empowerment (Harvey & Williams, 2010; Kleijnen et al., 2014).

Methodologically, the project adopts a mixed-methods evaluative design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), suitable for exploring both structural patterns and lived experiences of student-centred learning. Quantitative data will be drawn from institutional administrative systems to analyse student profiles, progression, and outcomes, with particular attention to equity-related variables such as socioeconomic background and gender. These data will provide contextual evidence on how institutional conditions may support or constrain student agency (European Commission, 2022).

Qualitative data will include documentary analysis of curricula, programme specifications, and quality assurance reports, as well as focus groups and semi-structured interviews with institutional leaders, programme coordinators,

academic staff, and students. This qualitative strand is designed to capture how student-centred learning is interpreted and enacted in practice, and how students perceive their opportunities to influence learning processes and curricular decisions (Manzano-Soto & Figuera Gazo, 2024). Case studies of academic units with contrasting profiles will allow the project to explore how institutional cultures and governance arrangements shape student agency in different contexts.

Although empirical data collection is ongoing, the project is expected to generate several key outcomes. First, it will produce a set of qualitative and mixed indicators capable of capturing student-centred learning and agency at institutional level. These indicators will address: (a) student participation in curriculum design and review; (b) the use of authentic and formative assessment practices; (c) feedback processes that support self-regulated learning; and (d) the alignment between curricula and student support and guidance services (Allen et al., 2008; Beach et al., 2016).

Second, the project aims to identify patterns of variability between academic units, highlighting how institutional arrangements and professional practices either enable or limit student empowerment. Previous research suggests that without explicit alignment between quality assurance, faculty development, and curricular design, student-centred learning risks remaining rhetorical rather than transformative (Dennin et al., 2017; Zabalza Beraza, 2013).

The central claim of this paper for reviewers is that student agency can be systematically evaluated and enhanced when student-centred learning is approached as an institutional ecosystem rather than as isolated pedagogical practice. By integrating administrative data, qualitative evidence, and enhancement-oriented quality indicators, the proposed project seeks to bridge the gap between policy aspirations and everyday educational practices. This contribution is particularly relevant for academic developers, quality agencies, and institutional leaders aiming to support curriculum transformation grounded in student empowerment.

From a theoretical and educational perspective, the project contributes to the literature by connecting student-centred learning, agency, and quality assurance within a single evaluative framework. In practical terms, it is expected to inform faculty development initiatives, curriculum review processes, and student support strategies, offering tools for reflective institutional learning. At policy level, the project aligns with European priorities for inclusive, student-centred higher education and provides a model that can be adapted and tested in other institutional and national contexts (Bologna Follow-Up Group, 2024).

In conclusion, this paper outlines a research project in development that positions student-centred learning as a driver of student agency and curriculum transformation. By focusing on evaluation and institutional coherence, the project seeks to move beyond normative discourse and contribute actionable knowledge to the field of academic development and higher education quality enhancement.

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When Competencies Multiply: Reorienting competency-based Education Toward Meaning

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Abstract

There is a growing academic discourse on how to prepare individuals to exercise their agency and navigate contemporary complexity through transdisciplinary and transformative collaboration. Much of this work highlights competencies linked to particular contexts, roles, and methodologies. Yet the literature has become saturated with extensive and fragmented lists of skills, raising concerns about their coherence, feasibility, and the trade-offs involved in attempting to master them all. This study challenges the uncritical expansion of such lists by revisiting two central questions: what are we preparing individuals for, and how should higher education foster these capacities? Crucially, these are framed by a more fundamental why. Drawing on conceptual debates, reflections from practitioners navigating shifting roles and positionalities in transdisciplinary projects, and interviews with a diverse cohort engaged in addressing complex societal issues, this study argues for moving beyond a narrow competency discourse. It proposes that transformational readiness should not be reduced to a checklist of skills, but instead be grounded in the development of self-directed, reflexive individuals equipped with both capabilities and purpose to meaningfully navigate and shape complex societal change. Thus, it emphasises the cultivation of a sense of purpose as a guiding compass, one that provides learners with ownership, direction, and resilience in transformative contexts, while fostering a mindset of lifelong learning.

Keywords: Sense of Purpose, Identity, Competencies, Transdisciplinarity

Extended Summary

There is a growing body of scholarship concerned with how to prepare individuals to exercise agency and navigate contemporary complexity through transdisciplinary and transformative collaboration. Yet the discourse on transdisciplinary education remains both conceptually fragile and educationally inconsistent. At the heart of this fragility lie two interrelated issues. First, educational practices often mirror transdisciplinary research, typically through problem-based or experiential learning, without providing the structured conceptual and methodological grounding required to truly educate for transdisciplinarity. This tendency has contributed to the proliferation of competency frameworks that are poorly defined, inconsistently applied, and difficult to assess (Anonymised, forthcoming).

Second, students are frequently treated as passive recipients expected to acquire an ever-expanding list of competencies (Anonymised, forthcoming). While such lists are often presented as comprehensive, they rarely include precise definitions, robust assessment strategies, or attention to the learner's positionality. As a result, the lived realities of students, their identities, values, and contexts, are overlooked, and the pedagogical challenges of cultivating complex competencies in practice remain unaddressed (Zeidan et al., 2024).

The consequence is a form of competency overload: learners are expected to acquire an exhaustive list of skills, attitudes, and values (Redman & Wiek, 2021), yet there is little clarity made on how these competencies interrelate, how they can realistically be developed, or how mastery should be evaluated (Lozano et al., 2012). Assessment methods, dominated by self-reporting, lack methodological rigour and fail to capture the complexity of learning trajectories (Porter, 2012). This results in a misalignment between objectives, activities, and outcomes, producing what can be described as a "blackboxing effect": learning occurs in minimally guided environments, but the processes and influences shaping competency development remain opaque (Anonymised, forthcoming).

Research Approach:

To address these challenges, this work triangulates insights from three complementary strands of inquiry:

1. Revisiting theoretical debates: By engaging with the historical, philosophical, and epistemological roots of transdisciplinarity on one side and engaging with reviewing the literature on designing and implementing transdisciplinary education.

2. Understanding what people value as competencies: Drawing on empirical study and reflective accounts, we explore how practitioners articulate the competencies they rely on in transformative collaborations. This perspective highlights the gap between abstract lists of competencies and the situated practices through which individuals actually exercise agency.

3. Examining the classroom as a site of practice: Drawing on an empirical study, we explore the reality of implementing transdisciplinary education, what is really being taught, what the learning activities are in practice and what their outcomes are and what we can assess out of it.

By weaving these strands together, the paper advances a critical yet constructive argument: instead of multiplying fragmented competency lists, transdisciplinary education should focus on cultivating a sense of purpose and ensuring clear alignment in course design. An alignment that not only integrates knowledge, skills, and attitudes but also actively nurtures students' capacity to develop and sustain their own sense of purpose.

Theoretically, this work contributes to refining the discourse of transdisciplinarity by moving beyond rhetorical celebration and conceptual vagueness. It situates transdisciplinarity within its historical and epistemological context, while also offering constructive tools for its educational implementation. The triangulated analysis yields three central arguments.

- From Competency Lists to Purpose: Competency frameworks, while useful in principle, have become overextended and fragmented. They risk reducing education to a checklist of skills while neglecting the normative and motivational dimensions of learning. We argue that cultivating a sense of purpose is more foundational than enumerating competencies. Purpose functions as a compass, enabling learners to navigate shifting roles, reconcile competing demands, and sustain engagement in transformative processes.

- The 3Cs Alignment in Curriculum Design: To counter the blackboxing effect, we propose the heuristic of Conceptualisation, Configuration, and Competency Assessment (3Cs). This alignment requires educators to:

- Clarify course objectives and the specific understanding of transdisciplinarity being adopted (e.g., transcendence, transgression, or problem-solving).
- Configure learning activities that are intentionally linked to these objectives, balancing experiential learning with structured scaffolding.
- Employ assessment methods that move beyond self-reporting to include longitudinal, authentic, and mixed-method approaches capable of capturing complex learning trajectories.

Educationally, the argument shifts the focus from competency accumulation to purposeful alignment. By emphasising purpose, alignment, and reparative engagement, the work provides a framework for designing courses that are coherent, rigorous, and transformative. This approach challenges the assumption that experiential learning alone is sufficient, instead advocating for structured scaffolding that equips learners with both conceptual grounding and practical agency.

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Papers 2

Beyond Status and Compensation: Motivational Landscapes in Teaching Reward Systems

Klara Bolander Laksov, Maria Larsson, Katarina Mårtensson

Abstract

This paper examines systems for recognizing and rewarding teaching excellence in higher education. While previous research has highlighted the potential of teaching recognition as an institutional tool, recent developments indicate a shift in reward structures driven by changing priorities and policies. Our study investigates merit systems at three research-intensive Swedish universities, analysing how motivational factors influence educators' engagement. Using a framework of six incentives—status, recognition, power and influence, financial compensation, autonomy, and personal development—we explore both institutional and individual motivations. Findings from document analysis reveal an emphasis on external motivators such as status and financial rewards, while interview data suggest that autonomy and personal development are increasingly valued. By mapping these dynamics, the paper contributes to ongoing discussions about aligning institutional strategies with educators' intrinsic motivations. This alignment is crucial for creating sustainable reward systems that not only acknowledge teaching excellence but also foster meaningful engagement and agency in academic development.

Keywords

Teaching Excellence, Motivation, Reward Systems, Academic Development

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper:

This paper investigates the function and outcomes of systems for recognizing and rewarding teaching excellence in higher education by exploring the views of academic teachers who have applied, and educational leaders with a role in implementing or administering the award system. While teaching recognition has long been acknowledged as a potential driver for academic development, Fanghanel et al. (2016) argued that its institutional potential remained underutilized. More recently, Graham (2025) documented a global transformation in university reward systems, shaped by shifting priorities and policy changes. Against this backdrop, our study examines three research-intensive Swedish universities that have implemented merit systems to reward teaching excellence. We aim to understand how these systems operate, what motivational factors influence educators' participation, and how these incentives are justified from institutional and individual perspectives.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach:

Our analysis draws on two theoretical lenses. First, we use a motivational framework proposed by Bolander Laksov et al. (2025), which categorizes six incentives: status, recognition, power and influence, financial compensation, autonomy, and personal development. This framework allows us to explore both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in relation to teaching awards. Second, we employ the theory of Practice Architectures (Mahon, Kemmis et al., 2016), which conceptualizes practices as shaped by cultural-discursive, material-economic, and social-political arrangements. This perspective helps us understand how institutional structures enable or constrain the development of teaching recognition systems and their transformational potential. Methodologically, the study is conducted in two phases. The first phase involved a document analysis of contextual institutional policies and guidelines to map the structure and purpose of the selected merit systems. The second phase, consisted of semi-structured interviews with educators and university leaders engaged in these systems. To date, we have collected narratives that reveal both convergences and tensions between these two groups' perspectives.

Key Findings and Arguments:

Our preliminary findings indicate that Swedish universities primarily emphasize external motivational factors, such as status and financial compensation, in their formal documentation. These incentives are positioned as institutional tools to attract participation and highlight the value of teaching excellence.

However, interviews with educators reveal a more nuanced motivational landscape. Internal motivators—such as personal development, autonomy, and meaningfulness—emerge as particularly salient. Educators describe the application process as energizing, offering opportunities to learn, gain new perspectives, and reflect on their professional growth. Acknowledgement from colleagues and institutional recognition also play a significant role. While financial compensation is generally perceived as less important, it is considered a welcome benefit. Some educators also highlight new opportunities linked to awards, such as access to funding for pedagogical development projects.

In contrast, university leaders tend to emphasize external motivators more strongly. Economic compensation and status are frequently mentioned as key drivers, alongside the symbolic value of institutional encouragement. Leaders also

underscore the strategic role of these systems in signalling institutional priorities and fostering a culture that values teaching.

An additional finding concerns the process of developing award systems. Leaders report encountering resistance during implementation, often related to concerns about fairness and workload. Enablers include strong leadership support, clear criteria, and alignment with broader institutional strategies.

Theoretical and Educational Significance

Our study contributes to the ongoing international conversation about how universities can meaningfully recognize teaching excellence. By juxtaposing educator and leader perspectives, we identify both complementarities and tensions. In some contexts, these perspectives align, reinforcing the legitimacy of merit systems. In others, discrepancies reveal underlying challenges—such as mismatched expectations regarding what constitutes meaningful recognition.

Using the lens of Practice Architectures, we argue that these tensions are not incidental but integral to the institutional arrangements shaping teaching recognition. Cultural-discursive arrangements (e.g., language of excellence and merit), material-economic arrangements (e.g., funding, workload), and social-political arrangements (e.g., power relations, governance structures) collectively influence the possibilities for action within these systems.

Understanding these architectures is crucial for designing reward systems that are not only operationally effective but also transformative.

From an educational development perspective, our findings underscore the importance of aligning institutional incentives with educators' intrinsic motivations. Systems that overemphasize external rewards risk undermining the very engagement they seek to promote. Conversely, systems that recognize autonomy, professional growth, and meaningfulness can foster deeper commitment to and agency towards teaching excellence..

Implications for Practice, Policy, and Future Research

For practice, our analysis suggests that universities should:

- Integrate intrinsic motivators into the design of merit systems, emphasizing opportunities for professional development and autonomy.
- Ensure transparent processes and criteria to build trust and legitimacy.
- Provide follow-up support for awardees, such as access to development funds or leadership roles.

For policy, the findings highlight the need for national and institutional frameworks that balance recognition with sustainability, avoiding tokenistic approaches.

Future research should explore:

- Longitudinal impacts of merit systems on teaching culture and career trajectories.
- Comparative studies across different national contexts to identify transferable principles.
- The role of practice architectures in enabling systemic change toward valuing teaching.

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(Re)Thinking Pedagogical Merit: Excellent Teachers' Experiences of Teaching Excellence Frameworks in Swedish Higher Education

Jeanette Sjöberg

Abstract

Pedagogical merit systems have become an increasingly common strategy for recognising and rewarding teaching excellence in higher education. In Sweden, such systems have been established at many universities as alternative or complementary career pathways to research-based advancement. This paper explores how teachers who have been formally recognised as excellent perceive the pedagogical merit process and its consequences for their professional identity, teaching practice and institutional engagement. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with sixteen excellent teachers at a Swedish university, the study examines motivations for applying, experiences of the assessment process and perceived outcomes following recognition. The findings reveal a complex picture: while pedagogical merit is widely experienced as affirming professional identity and enhancing confidence and status, its impact on teaching practice, collaboration and career development varies considerably. In particular, the study highlights tensions between individual recognition and organisational utilisation of pedagogical expertise. The paper contributes to academic development by foregrounding excellent teachers' perspectives and by discussing how pedagogical merit systems can be more strategically aligned with institutional structures, cultures and educational development goals.

Keywords

Academic identity, educational leadership, pedagogical merit, teaching excellence

Extended Summary

The aim of this paper is to examine pedagogical merit systems in higher education as identity-shaping and leadership-dependent infrastructures, rather than solely as mechanisms for assessing individual teaching excellence. Using the experiences of teachers who have been formally recognised as excellent, the paper explores how pedagogical merit operates at the intersection of individual recognition and organisational practice. More specifically, the study investigates how excellence is translated (or not) into sustained educational development, collegial collaboration and institutional roles. By shifting the analytical focus from teachers' experiences alone to the organisational conditions surrounding recognised excellence, the paper develops a new angle that foregrounds academic identity formation, educational leadership and academic development practice.

Theoretical framework and methodological approach

The paper is theoretically grounded in three intersecting bodies of literature: the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), academic identity formation and educational leadership and governance in higher education. Together, these perspectives enable an analysis of pedagogical merit not only as an assessment mechanism but as a cultural and organisational practice that shapes how teaching excellence is understood, enacted and sustained. Within SoTL, teaching excellence is commonly framed as scholarly, inquiry-informed and oriented towards student learning rather than individual performance alone [e.g. 1; 2; 3].

From this perspective, pedagogical merit systems can be seen as attempts to legitimise teaching as a scholarly endeavour and to make pedagogical knowledge visible and shareable within academic communities. However, SoTL research has also highlighted tensions between individual recognition and collective knowledge-building, particularly when excellence schemes emphasise documentation and assessment over dialogue and developmental processes.

The study also draws on research on academic identity, which conceptualises identity as relational, negotiated and shaped by institutional discourses and reward structures [4; 5; 6]. Recognition as an excellent teacher can function as a powerful identity marker, influencing how academics see themselves and how they are positioned by colleagues, students and management. At the same time, identity research cautions that formal titles may create ambiguity or misalignment if organisational expectations and roles remain unclear. Finally, the analysis is informed by literature on educational leadership and academic governance, particularly studies of reward and recognition systems as instruments of strategic steering [7; 8; 9].

From this perspective, pedagogical merit systems are not neutral but reflect institutional priorities and leadership choices regarding the value of teaching. How excellent teachers are supported, mobilised or left unsupported after recognition becomes a key leadership issue with implications for educational quality and organisational learning. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative approach based on semi-structured interviews. Sixteen teachers who had been awarded the title of excellent teacher at the same Swedish university participated in the study. The participants represented a wide range of disciplines and academic positions, including lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors and professors, and had between ten and thirty years of teaching experience. The interviews focused on participants' motivations for applying for pedagogical merit, their experiences of the assessment process and their reflections on the consequences of recognition over time. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and

analysed using thematic analysis. The analysis followed a systematic, multi-step process inspired by Braun and Clarke [10], combining inductive coding with theoretically informed interpretation.

Key findings and arguments

Rather than presenting the results as discrete empirical themes, the findings are organised around four interrelated analytical tensions that illuminate how pedagogical merit functions within institutional contexts. Recognition versus transformation. Recognition as an excellent teacher was widely experienced as affirming and identity-strengthening. The portfolio process supported reflection on teaching philosophies and practices. However, recognition rarely marked a clear turning point in teaching practice, as many participants already viewed themselves as reflective and pedagogically engaged prior to the award. Individual excellence versus collective capacity. While some participants described increased pedagogical dialogue and new collaborations, others experienced little change in collegial interaction. Opportunities to translate individual excellence into collective pedagogical capacity were uneven and highly dependent on local organisational contexts. Status versus career progression. Many participants perceived increased symbolic status and pedagogical credibility following recognition. In some cases, this led to new responsibilities, but experiences varied considerably. Several participants questioned whether pedagogical merit constitutes a genuine career pathway or primarily a symbolic distinction without clear long-term progression. Support during assessment versus silence after recognition. The application phase was generally experienced as well supported, often through academic development units. In contrast, post-award structures were frequently described as unclear or absent, with limited guidance on expectations, roles, or continued engagement. Together, these tensions suggest that pedagogical merit systems function more consistently as recognition mechanisms than as infrastructures for sustained educational development.

Theoretical and educational significance

By reframing pedagogical merit as an organisational and leadership concern rather than solely an individual achievement, this study contributes to SoTL by extending discussions of teaching excellence beyond documentation and assessment towards questions of identity, culture, and institutional learning. The findings illustrate how recognition can strengthen academic identity while simultaneously revealing the limits of individualised excellence in producing collective educational change. For academic development, the study underscores the importance of post-award structures that support continued engagement, such as communities of practice, clearly defined pedagogical leadership roles, or strategic assignments aligned with institutional priorities. Without such structures, pedagogical excellence risks remaining symbolic rather than transformative. From an educational leadership perspective, the paper highlights pedagogical merit systems as instruments of strategic governance. Leaders play a critical role in determining whether excellence schemes contribute to sustainable educational quality or remain isolated recognition practices. Aligning pedagogical merit with workload models, career frameworks, and institutional strategies emerges as a key leadership challenge. Future research could explore comparative studies across institutions or longitudinal perspectives on how excellent teachers' roles evolve over time. In doing so, pedagogical merit systems may move beyond symbolic recognition towards becoming a sustained driver of educational quality in higher education.

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Building Sustainable Career Pathways Through Data-Driven Continuous Professional Learning for Academic Staff

Esmarie Strydom, Marieta Jansen van Vuuren

Abstract

The professional growth of academic staff is central to fostering teaching excellence, curriculum innovation, and student success. In many higher education institutions, staff development opportunities exist in silos, limiting their collective impact. At the particular institution, the Centre for Teaching and Learning offers a range of initiatives — including Continuous Professional Learning programmes, Teaching Awards, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) projects, and International Teaching Mobility opportunities. While participation in CPL has tripled between the 2021–2025 only 35% of staff engage in more than one intervention, signaling fragmented growth pathways and missed opportunities for systemic transformation. Using an exploratory mixed method research methodology, this study integrated multiple datasets into a unified analytics dashboard, enabling comparative and disaggregated analysis across faculties, campuses, career stages, gender. Quantitative data were analysed using SAS and Excel PivotTables, complemented by stakeholder validation sessions that provided qualitative insights into gaps and patterns of engagement while qualitative data was analysed using NVIVO. Findings reveal strong uptake among junior lecturers, but minimal participation from senior academics. Moreover, a lack of structured progression between induction, Continuous Professional Learning (CPL), Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), International Teaching Mobility, and recognition initiatives prevents the creation of coherent career pathways. The study concludes with a Sustainable Career Path Development Framework that breaks down silos and links interventions into an agile, equitable ecosystem. This research contributes to academic development by demonstrating how evidence-based planning and continuous evaluation can create future-ready professional learning systems, advancing both individual careers and institutional excellence.

Keywords: Continuous Professional Learning (CPL); sustainable career path; Equity and Transformation; Professional Learning Ecosystem

Extended Summary

Aim of the paper

The professional growth of academic staff is a cornerstone of institutional excellence, curriculum innovation, and student success. However, in many higher education institutions, staff development initiatives are often fragmented, existing in silos without meaningful integration or progression. This fragmentation limits their collective impact, particularly on long-term career trajectories and institutional transformation.

This paper aims to explore how data-driven insights can be harnessed to break down these silos and design a sustainable, agile, and equitable professional learning ecosystem. By focusing on specific interventions offered by the Institution's Centre for Teaching and Learning, (CTL) such as Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) programmes, Teaching Awards, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) projects, and International Teaching Mobility opportunities, the study examines patterns of participation and progression across different career stages, across faculties, and demographic groups.

The goal is to create a Sustainable Career Path Development Framework that aligns individual growth with institutional and national priorities. This framework provides an intentional, structured pathway for academic staff to progress from induction through ongoing development, scholarship, mobility, and recognition, thereby enhancing both personal career advancement and systemic transformation.

The methodological approach

The study is grounded in the theoretical lens of academic development as a systemic change process, where professional learning is not an isolated activity but part of a broader ecosystem.

Drawing on theories of organizational learning and equity-oriented staff development, it views academic developers as change agents who must design integrated interventions that align with institutional goals and policies.

The concept of a professional learning ecosystem emphasizes interconnectedness, feedback loops, and sustainability, ensuring that interventions are adaptive to evolving challenges such as digital transformation, equity imperatives, and emerging pedagogical trends. This aligns closely with the priorities of the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and its University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG) programme, which funds many of the interventions under study.

Research design

The study follows a sequential exploratory mixed methodology that employs quantitative research methods to generalise the findings from the university population, followed by using qualitative research methods to explain and gain a detailed understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark 2018).

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed. This design aims to provide an explanation and contextualisation of the quantitative results in relation to the qualitative data. On that account, this study could be described as pragmatic by using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Creswell and Creswell (2018:247) explains the single-stage sampling procedure as one where the researcher has access to the names of the population and can sample them directly. Each activity in this research study makes use of attendance registers and feedback forms that captured information according to the need of the activity. After completion of selected CPL Calendar opportunities, academics and professional support staff were asked to complete a feedback form to explain how they perceived the training sessions and to have the opportunity to explain further training needs for the CPL workgroup to consider. Participation in CPL opportunities as well as the completion of the feedback form after attendance were both voluntary. Although the Induction Programme is a compulsory programme of the institution, participation in completing the feedback form is voluntary. Academics are asked to provide feedback on the Induction Programme after completion of the separate sessions as well as after completion of the whole programme. Academics who chose not to complete the feedback and reflection form are not affected negatively in any way. All participants who participate in the CTL Mentorship Programme are included in the data collection through the completion of selected reflective activities during the CTL Mentorship Programme.

Data Analysis: Quantitative

Descriptive statistics are used for quantitative data analysis through summarising and identifying trends in the data using measures such as mean, median, mode, range, standard deviation, and percentages. Coupled with that, inferential statistics using t-tests, ANOVA, regression analysis, or chi-square tests are conducted to establish generalisations about the population and relationships.

Data Analysis: Qualitative

Open ended questions are coded descriptively and analysed thematically using NVivo 14, a qualitative software. This specifically involved assigning codes descriptively to categories of data with similar meaning. Afterwards, categories of data with the same or related codes were merged into subthemes, and the subthemes are subsequently combined to form themes.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes

The analysis produced several important insights into staff development dynamics at the institution and, by implication, higher education institutions with similar challenges. Insights included the following:

• Growth in CPL participation that tripled from 2021 up to 2026, reflecting the demand for professional learning and successful awareness, marketing, and outreach efforts from the CTL.

• The findings clearly indicate a fragmentation across interventions as only 35% of staff participated in more than one CPL event.

• A third insight revealed some growth in equity and transformation progress with more than 50% African staff, participating in various CPL opportunities; however, there were concerns about the underrepresentation of certain equity groups. This trend can be linked to equity policies of the institution.

• An insight of concern was the relatively low participation rate of senior academics, suggesting that current offerings were not perceived as relevant or beneficial to later career stages.

• Recognition and career progression – The link between participation and recognition through Teaching Awards was explored and indicated that staff involved in multiple interventions were more likely to receive awards, suggesting that integrated participation correlated with career advancement. However, this relationship is complex and might have been influenced by additional factors such as qualifications or research outputs.

The theoretical and educational significance of the work, including implications for practice, policy, or future research

The study provided significant insight into the field of academic development and career stage development for academics across career stages, offering both conceptual and practical advancements.

The following four areas will be discussed during the paper presentation:

• Breaking down of silos: The research provided a new conceptual model for understanding professional learning as an ecosystem rather than a collection of standalone activities. The Sustainable Career Path Development Framework (see Figure 1) visually maps out how staff could progress through interconnected stages: Induction → Continuous Professional Learning → Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) → International Mobility → Recognition. This cyclical process fosters continuous growth, adaptability, and resilience.

• Aligning of institutional policies that has a direct implications for Continuous Professional Learning.

- Embedding CPL pathways into promotion and performance management systems
- Aligning interventions with national priorities for transformation and capacity building.
- Strengthening data collection and analytics to provide real-time feedback for decision-making.

Practical Implications for Academic Developers

Academic developers are positioned as strategic leaders and change agents who can:

- Use analytics to target interventions and address gaps.
- Design tailored opportunities for diverse career stages and demographic groups.
- Facilitate cross-pollination between interventions to encourage integrated participation.

Future Research Directions

This study lays the groundwork for further exploration:

- Longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of integrated career pathways on staff retention, promotion, and teaching quality.
- Comparative research across institutions to identify best practices and scalability.
- Investigation into the role of digital learning technologies and AI in supporting personalized professional development.

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Teaching in Higher Education: A historical view of a Career Path for Teachers in Norwegian Higher Education

Yngve Nordkvelle

Abstract

The philosopher Immanuel Kant was early to see the possible conflicts of "thinkers" and the "transmitters of knowledge" (Gottlieb & Keith, 1997). Max Weber's reminder about research becoming a profession was a signal of the increasing dominance research would have over teaching. In Norway the two orientations towards teaching – and doing research as primary orientation has been formalized as two distinct career paths since the rapid expansion of HE institutions began in the 1960-ies. Academic developers are working in a field with little focus on historical and political contexts of their efforts. While pedagogical skills are deemed necessary for succeeding as a faculty member, skills and merits in doing research have overshadowed the pedagogical tasks of "transmitting knowledge". Even if many proponents of the philosophy of higher education praise the unity of the two, there are a number of structural factors that maintain this imbalance. This paper describes how teaching has been assessed and used for the academic staff choosing to follow a career path as university teacher in Norwegian higher education.

Extended Summary

In a famous lecture, Max Weber gave in 1917 reminded us of the dual task of researching and teaching, and that excellence in one area did not necessarily translate into the other. While competence in research early on became a formalized exercise in the form of earning a doctorate, excellence in becoming a teacher in higher education received little attention. In Norway, the "university lecturer" were employed from the 1930-ies on and were recruited from prestigious secondary schools where they had earned a reputation for being excellent teachers. They were primarily hired in Arts and humanities, as well as in science, and served by teaching elementary subjects for beginning students. During the 1960-ies, when the rise in numbers of university students was substantial, they became an important category of university teaching staff handling large classes. Their contribution was awarded by a category for promotion to "senior lecturer", a title adopted by legislation in 1970, and made available to the higher education sector in general from 1973. The description of how to professionalize the role of teacher in higher education received its first, but flimsy and ambiguous interpretations. Their role in the universities was to prepare language, history and science students to become teachers in upper secondary schools. When teacher education, engineering and nursing education, along with a number of new budding professional types of education expanded from early 1960-ies on, outside of the universities, experienced professionals were recruited to teach their professional skills. In recent decades, the entire higher education sector has been cast in the mold of the universities, and with their set of norms and priorities. When legislation became formalized and explicated for the "senior lecturers" in 1995, the reference to "being equal to the Ph.d." remained. Professional education has therefore been academized, to the detriment of professional knowledge and immediate relevance for the labour market. The question of relevance of the training received in higher education became first and last an issue dealt with by professional schools. Although, in the universities the position of being a senior lecturer was hardly recognized (Blichfeldt, 2010). They received no career advice, supervision or any training for their excellence in teaching. They did not figure by their title in the annual list of promoted persons, nor in employment statistics. The status of senior lecturers in the universities vanished, and by 1995 only two -2- were left. The position of senior lecturer largely became a career path for employees at university colleges and professional schools. When some universities merged with professional schools in the last decade the position was reactualized with the increased emphasis on professional education and relevance to working life. This article shows some examples of how the dynamics between the two career paths have developed and differs from similar developments in the anglo-american contexts (Brew et al. 2018). In the latest amendment to the regulations from 2024, the link to the PhD degree as a norm has been removed. Hopefully this will increase the relevance of training for professions, while the duel with academization will find new expressions in the academic life (Macfarlane, 2007).

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Deciphering Practice: Repositioning Fellowship Processes in UK Higher Education

Sabrina Poma, Kristyna Campbell

Abstract

Academics in UK Higher Education often have limited time and space to develop as professional educators, a situation shaped by discipline-driven teaching cultures, heavy workloads, and longstanding assumptions about academic identity. Within our research-intensive institution, the requirement for new staff to achieve AdvanceHE Fellowship offers a structured mechanism for evidencing teaching practice and contributes to institutional priorities around teaching excellence, including probation and promotion. Although frequently perceived as a performative exercise, many applicants report that the fellowship process enables a deeper articulation of their teaching with reflection on their influence on the student learning experience as well as acknowledgement for further development, recognition of their accomplishments, and increased confidence as educators.

Our ongoing empirical work examines these developmental experiences through systematic evaluation of over three hundred annual applications, post-submission surveys, and follow-up interviews. The rationale for this study stems from early anecdotal findings which suggest that the process of writing a fellowship claim prompts academics to surface tacit dimensions of their practice, articulate professional values, and develop a clearer sense of agency.

We argue that academic development practices centred on deciphering practice can strengthen professional identity, legitimise educators' knowledge, and foster cultures of inquiry. Reframing fellowship recognition as an empowering rather than purely regulatory process has the potential to support more meaningful and sustainable educator development across the sector.

Keywords: Deciphering practice, Empowerment, Agency, Fellowships

Extended Summary

Academics in UK Higher Education (HE) have limited time, space, and opportunity to develop as professional educators (Cathcart et al., 2023). This constraint is shaped by discipline-driven models of teaching rooted in knowledge transmission, increasing workload demands, and the historical trajectory of teaching professionalisation in England (Clegg, 2003). These conditions have influenced how academics construct their identities as educators (Skelton, 2012). Within our research-intensive Russell Group institution, academics are predominantly recruited for research excellence and are required, as part of probation, to achieve AdvanceHE Fellowship through evidence of meeting the Professional Standards Framework (PSF) (fig. 1). Our institution is one of the largest accreditors of fellowships in the UK with just over three hundred applications a year, across the four categories (fig.2) with a 77% award rate of first submission. The great majority of our submissions are for D2 Fellow, a category aimed at early career lecturers, followed by D1 Associate Fellow, which is represented by our Graduate Teaching Assistant cohort. The number of submissions is of particular relevance as it supports our institutional Teaching Excellence Framework claim, and, internally, our ability to evaluate effective teaching and learning practices across the various levels of practice.

Although the PSF has become embedded in national quality assurance mechanisms and critiqued as performative, reductive, or tautological (van der Sluis, 2021; Goodall & Rich, 2023; Beighton, 2025), our institutional experience suggests that the process can be unexpectedly transformative. Indeed, despite initial reluctance from some applicants to engage with the fellowships due to unfamiliarity of the process and concerns about its overall usefulness for their development, a common point of contention raised in conversations with applicants and confirmed by van der Sluis (2021) and Cathcart (2023), our applicants frequently describe the actual fellowship writing as a catalyst for articulating their teaching practice, recognising achievements, and developing professional confidence.

Our argument is that such impact arises when fellowship processes support academics in deciphering their practice. Professional knowledge in HE teaching is often tacit or invisible (Polanyi, 1967; Eraut, 1994), which poses challenges for claiming effective practice (van Dijk et al., 2023). Engaging in activities that make tacit knowledge explicit strengthens professional identity (Sachs, 2003), empowers educators (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Schön, 1991), and enhances agency within performative systems (Ball, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). We propose that the fellowship application, when framed and scaffolded appropriately, becomes a site where this deciphering occurs.

The collective narrative of our institution, concerning fellowship, will be illustrated through a mix of qualitative and quantitative data gathered through remote surveys and individual interviews between staff and the Professional Recognition team. A non-random, convenience sample of staff having successfully completed fellowship at our institution will be accessed, with the potential for around a hundred responses. The anonymous data will be extracted from Microsoft Forms, where participants may express their interest in a follow-up interview. The interview will then be recorded and transcribed verbatim, with participants adopting pseudonyms to protect their identity. Questions to participants will be centred on their experiences with undertaking fellowship and their reflections on the dimensions of practice, including areas of activity, core knowledge, and professional values. While the data is expected to offer some subjective insight about professional growth, the overarching narrative will be presented thematically using Braun

and Clarke's (2019) reflexive thematic analysis. This approach was deemed most suitable owing to the researchers' closeness to participant experiences with fellowships, often providing support with applications, as facilitators or mentors.

We argue that academic development practices centred on helping educators articulate their practice can: (1) build agency in navigating performativity; (2) generate a growing knowledge base of teaching through narratives and artefacts; (3) value and legitimise educators' professional knowledge; (4) cultivate ownership and belonging; (5) develop cultures of inquiry; and (6) contribute to shared repertoires of effective pedagogical practice. This shifts academic development from processes of transmission to forms of empowerment.

We recommend repositioning fellowship processes "beyond the performative" by openly acknowledging limitations of the PSF (Beighton, 2025), providing supportive communities of practice (Cathcart et al., 2023), and creating safe, critical spaces for uncovering and discussing teaching practice. Integrating the PSF within broader academic development in ways that connect deciphering to interpretation in practice can foster deeper professional learning, enhanced agency, and more sustainable educator development across the sector.

Figure 1: PSF 2023 Dimensions of the Framework

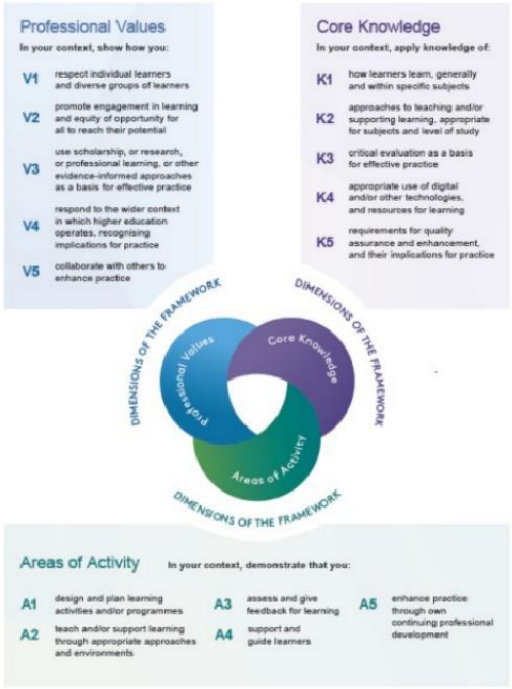
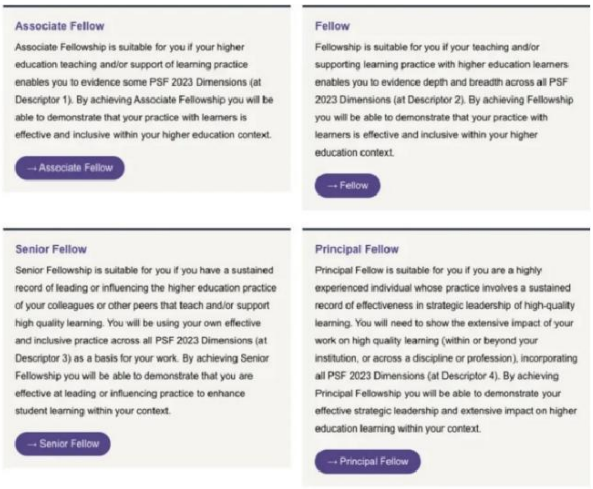


Figure 2: The Four categories of Advance HE Fellowships



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Papers 3

Factors for Development of Trust: Building Collegial Relationships within Teaching and Learning Programs

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Abstract

At the *Research on Higher Education Conference* in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 2025, we shared our self-reflections and analysis of relevant studies on the establishment of 'trust' among educational developers and university teachers from different disciplines participating in the program of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. In this conference, we aim to discuss how trust can be fostered and developed among the participants, as well as between facilitators and participants, and the possible factors for the lack of trust or distrust. Given this, our participation, founded on data collected through a questionnaire, provides insightful responses to these research inquiries: 1) What are the factors for the development of trust among participants and between participants and facilitators? 2) What are the possible factors for the lack of trust, or even distrust, among participants and between participants and facilitators?

Keywords: Trust, collegial collaboration, university pedagogy, interdisciplinarity

Extended Summary

'Trust' is defined as an individual's willingness to be vulnerable to another; this vulnerability is, based on willingness, considered as a trusting intention and trustworthiness as a trusting belief (Alarcon et al., 2018; Schuster et al., 2025). The theory of trust assumes that when one trusts another, they start to activate standing dispositions toward responding to each other. The continuity of such standing dispositions depends on the context, the individual characteristics of the person along with the use of one's moral values (McGeer & Philip, 2017). Intentional practices involving an awareness of perceptions related to hierarchy, vulnerability, and reciprocity (e.g., McDonagh & Sanders, 2025) and the presence of a robust knowledge (research in particular) base (Mori, 2024) are factors for building a culture of trust among colleagues. On the other hand, the establishment and development of trust can be challenged by lack of institutional familiarity, interpersonal dynamics, and perceptions of expertise (Sutherland-Harris, Ali & Elkhoury, 2025). The complex interplay of such dynamics along with the presence of unequal expertise, the use of power, or the pre-conceived self-attitudes, might engender the possible occurrence of vulnerability that could also be a hinderance to building and continuing trust.

Our participation is based on an ongoing research project on how trust can be fostered and developed among an interdisciplinary group of university teachers on the basic qualification program in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (TLHE) (10 ECTS credits, 1 year) at a small, regional university of applied sciences in Norway. It is a requirement for new faculty to take the program within two years after appointment, if they have not already acquired a similar qualification from another university. More experienced university teachers may also join the program upon request. Further, the program is based on the principle of collegial learning among the participants, which includes, among other things, active engagement, collaborative activities and critical reflection. The program recruits university teachers from a wide range of disciplines and with different qualifications, expertise and teaching experience, as well as age. It focuses on covering topics related to pedagogical and didactic perspectives, theories and models of teaching and student learning; critical reflection on one's own teaching roles, learning and knowledge; course design and teaching plan development; teaching methods and strategies; research and development based teaching; forms of assessment and feedback; supervision in higher education, including peer guidance; artificial intelligence in teaching, assessment and learning; and learning environment, inclusive teaching and student participation (Universities Norway (UHR), 2023).

In our participation at the *Research on Higher Education Conference* held in Gothenburg, Sweden, in May 2025, we centred our focus on the complex and multifaceted conceptualization of the construct 'trust'. In that presentation, we shared our self-reflections along with an analysis of relevant studies (e.g. Pleschová et al., 2025), pertaining to the establishment of trust among educational developers and an interdisciplinary group of university teachers participating in the TLHE program.

In our current presentation, we aim to discuss how trust can be fostered and evolved through the participants' critical reflections, collaborative activities and active engagement in the TLHE program. Further, we are interested in how trust can be strengthened between participants and educational developers. We are also interested in exploring the factors for the lack of trust among the participants, as well as between participants and educational developers.

Our academic investigation, founded on data collected through a questionnaire administered to previous cohorts of participants in the TLHE program, provides insightful responses to three research inquiries: 1) What are the factors for the development of trust among participants and between participants and facilitators? 2) What are the possible factors for the lack of trust, or even distrust, among participants and between participants and facilitators?

These inquiries aim to illuminate the foundational elements of trust and the possible factors for the lack of trust among diverse groups of colleagues. This endeavour aims to enhance collaborative interactions and fostering a conducive environment for pedagogical advancement, based on a long-term trust in higher education.

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Reclaiming the Ethos of Academic Development: Building Trust through Care, Collegiality, and Community

Adrian Lee, Kiruthika Ragupathi

Abstract

This paper reframes academic development as a relational practice grounded in trust, collegiality, and care. Drawing on a redesigned foundational programme for early-career faculty, we present a trust framework built on credibility, identity, and value, and explore how these elements foster a compassionate, collegial community. Through thematic analysis of participant interviews and reflective dialogue, we show how modelling trust in academic development can counter deficit narratives, strengthen faculty identity, and build institutional belonging. This modelling helps faculty translate these values into their teaching. In doing so, academic development becomes a catalyst for cultural change—empowering faculty to resist instrumental discourses and reimagine higher education as a space of kindness, connection, and shared purpose. We argue that designing deliberately for trust enables academic developers to shape more inclusive and intellectually generative educational environments. We end by highlighting how this framework formed the foundation for the (re-)design of existing and new programmes.

Keywords: Trust, credibility, identity, value, agency

Extended Summary

Aims

As higher education becomes increasingly defined by managerialism and metrics, we reclaim academic development as a space grounded in trust, collegiality, and compassion. Drawing on a redesigned programme for early-career faculty, we propose a trust framework centred on credibility, identity, and value. We argue that this ethos of care, mutual respect, and community must be deliberately cultivated to resist deficit framings and instrumental logics.

Theoretical framework

Academic development is often framed through a deficit, compliance lens (Boud & Brew, 2013; Authors, 2022); early-career faculty frequently consider development as remedial or an imposition. This framing fosters distrust, positioning faculty as deficient and in need of correction. Such deficit narratives erode credibility, constrain agency, and inhibit collegial cultures necessary for meaningful transformation.

Our work responds directly to the conference's call to foreground the intentional and strategic actions of academic developers as change agents who shape teaching cultures and institutional learning. We ask: how do we, as academic developers, disrupt the deficit discourses that undermine our commitments to teaching, collegiality, and growth, and instead position ourselves as catalysts for strategic, values-aligned change?

Our response is both conceptual and practical. Building the ethos necessary for a productive faculty–developer relationship depends on establishing trust (Felten et al., 2023). Jones (1996, p. 4) frames trust as optimism in another's goodwill and competence. Conceptually, we reframe academic development as relational, partnership-driven work that foregrounds educator agency rather than compliance. We propose a trust framework (see Fig. 1) that foregrounds credibility (developer expertise and trustworthiness), identity (faculty's evolving academic self), and value (the relevance and applicability of development experiences) (Authors, 2025). Practically, we show how this framework shaped the redesign of a year-long programme for early-career academics. Through sustained dialogue, peer observation, reflection, and mentorship, the programme shifted from a fragmented, transactional model to a relational, developmental one.

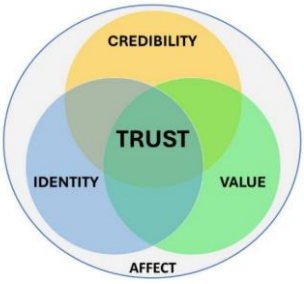


Fig. 1. A trust framework for academic development.

Crucially, affect—the ethos of care and compassion—is not a backdrop but a precondition for trust. Participants were often surprised to find not an evaluative or didactic environment, but a community where they could be vulnerable, candid, and supported. Informal spaces, such as tea breaks, feedback conversations and reflective writing, proved as

valuable as the formal curriculum, fostering what one participant called “a long-term camaraderie.” These affective dimensions enabled not only individual growth but a shared culture of care.

Key arguments and outcomes

Modelling trust in academic development helps early-career faculty build similarly meaningful relationships with their students. Experiencing support and respect equips them to recreate those dynamics in the classroom. The programme’s emphasis on affect, feedback, and peer learning fostered a repertoire of relational teaching practices. Academic development thus becomes not just a means of delivering techniques, but of shaping the emotional and ethical stance educators bring to their work. Trust begets trust: by modelling compassionate engagement, we invite faculty to create environments where students feel safe to speak, struggle, and grow. In a culture that routinely treats teaching as subordinate to research, we sought to reassert its centrality to academic identity and institutional life. One participant described the programme as “an exchange of ideas for the common interests we share”—not just a pedagogical exercise, but a vision of higher education grounded in collaboration and curiosity.

This reframing matters. Faculty often approach academic development with scepticism, shaped by past experiences of top-down training or bureaucratic processes. By designing a programme that modelled collegiality, trust, and compassion, we challenged those assumptions and offered a new way to engage with professional growth. Completion of the programme rose from 30% prior to the redesign to over 90% with many participants actively recommend it to peers. This shift testifies to the relational, affective labour at the heart of development work. This trust strengthens the academic development unit’s capacity to lead future institutional change. The trust capital that our unit accrues can be spent to persuade faculty to engage productively with such change requests.

Significance of the work

Higher education often invokes the idea of learning communities yet seldom creates the conditions for them to thrive. Our work shows these communities do not emerge spontaneously; they must be deliberately cultivated through trust, structure, and care. Academic development, grounded in these principles, can serve as a powerful counterforce affirming the relational fabric of the academy.

Resisting dehumanising metrics requires systems that celebrate people. Kindness and care must be centred; not only for students, but also for ourselves and our colleagues. Every aspect of academic life including development programmes should reflect the values we claim to uphold. By naming trust as foundational to academic development and offering a framework others can adapt, we propose a model for reimagining higher education from the inside out as a compassionate, collegial, and community-rich endeavour. Trust is not a soft supplement to academic development but a coordinating principle. It is one that enables long-term, productive faculty–developer relationships. Reclaiming this ethos means prioritising relationships over regulations; framing development as collaborative rather than corrective; recognising identity formation as integral, not incidental to academic growth; and designing for value as perceived by faculty, not just imposed by institutions. Our framework is both descriptive and restorative.: it seeks to restore dignity, mutuality, and intellectual agency to the work of academic development.

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What can the Third Space learn from a Collaborative Autoethnographic Study on educational change in Higher Education?

Daniela Castro de Jong, Rita Prestigiacomo, Benjamin Phipps, Sharon Aris

Abstract

With a mass market model increasingly dominating the university sector, education-focussed (EF) roles have emerged globally as a response to enhance teaching quality, foster educational innovation and improve student learning experience at scale. EFs must address these pressures while also navigating critical emerging issues, such as the use of artificial intelligence or new teaching models for subject delivery because of the recent pandemic. However, EFs' capacity to respond in an agile manner to such demands may be hindered by workload models and structural constraints within universities and an academic hierarchy that privileges research output over teaching, This leads to questioning how and what makes educational change sustainable and adaptable in the short, mid and long term. In this session, four academics with different disciplinary backgrounds (music, education, healthcare, and social sciences) reflect on an innovative EF program that was charged with creating educational change at a large Australian research-intensive university, as a case study. Drawing on collaborative autoethnography (CAE), they reflect on their experiences as change agents and explore how relationships, networking and capacity building (a not uncommon practice for the third space) across the broader academic community—including academic colleagues and academic developers—intersects and synergises with contextual enablers that support their work. These findings support the idea that achieving educational transformation at an institutional level is not only a complex task, but it also requires a multifaceted approach that integrates human and contextual dimensions.

Extended Summary

Four academics with different personal and disciplinary backgrounds (music, education, healthcare, and social sciences) reflect on their experiences as change agents in the implementation of a large educational innovation program called Nexus. The program was implemented across a metropolitan research-intensive university in Sydney, Australia, with over 82,000 students (48% international). The Nexus Program was launched in mid-2023, as a three-year change-making education initiative with a focus on enriched teaching practices and student experience. Across the university, the program comprises 44 Nexus Fellows (each located in a School), 30 educational developers across the different Faculties (Arts, Design & Architecture, Business, Engineering, Law & Justice, Medicine & Health, Science, and UNSW Canberra), and 6 staff members in the central team for management purposes. Staff joined the program either from external recruitment or deployment from academic and administrative roles within the university. While Fellows retain commitment to teaching excellence and scholarly engagement as well as implementation of educational initiatives and research at the school level, they are primarily tasked with translating high-level policy directions and central strategic priorities (top-down) into meaningful local practices, as well as fostering cross schools and cross Faculty collaborations, interdisciplinary engagement and institutional change.

The need for a program of this scale invites exploration both optimistic in its recognition of EF work but also questions as to why the university, with an already extensive and growing EF program, felt it necessary to add such a structural and cultural intervention. With over two years in the role, the academics posed the following question to themselves: How have we leveraged our Nexus role to facilitate educational change? Our preliminary findings show that our doing should be understood as a form of academic expanded practice, which is intersubjective by nature, with core relational and affective components. This way of working is shaped by ideas and values around mutual care trust, generosity, and empathy, which is expressed as reciprocity. Our doing is only possible by being present, both in physical and emotional terms, rather than policies and procedures. From our work as Fellows, we have actively sought to bond with the academics in our school, to be able to support them and amplify their work. Our doing as Nexus Fellows comes through what could be seen as a quiet action, with our empowerment coming through the success of others rather than through traditional indicators of academic performance and productivity. This dilemma informs and challenges our practice, opening the opportunity for continuous reflection.

The collaborative format of this session will allow:

1: the research team to outline how personal, professional, and administrative circumstances informed their shared practices to enable educational change.

2: the participants to replicate the reflective process adopted by the research and find areas of potential alignment within their own academic practices.

By the end of the session, the participants will be able to:

- Identify their own capabilities and/or strategies to act as a change agent, either as an EF academic or within the Third Space.

- Identify a key issue and explore considerations on the implementation of educational reforms within their contexts.

The session will consider three points:

- Introduction to the Nexus program, our shared relationship- and capacity-building practice for the implementation of educational change from the perspectives of having an expanded Third Space (15 minutes).

- Guided reflection: exploring (i) what being a change agent means, (ii) share practices, insights and considerations on the implementation of educational reforms at an institutional level within a network of stakeholders (35 minutes).

- Closing and final remarks (10 minutes)

Target Audience: Education focused academics, Educational Developers, Educational Change Managers, Academic Leaders would benefit from attending. Implementation of large educational innovations requires strong and synergetic collaborations between these multiple and diverse stakeholders.

From Burnout to Breakthrough: Reclaiming Agency for University-Wide Well-Being in Teaching-Focused Institutions

Liza Choi

Abstract

Burnout in higher education is often treated as an individual resilience issue, even when faculty and staff describe structural drivers such as workload intensity, hidden labour, coordination overload, and low psychological safety. This paper presents a practice-focused doctoral evidence synthesis that reframes burnout as a predictable organizational pattern shaped by workload architecture, role expectations, coordination norms, and institutional signals that privilege output over recovery. Anchored in ICED26's emphasis on agency, the paper positions academic developers as strategic change agents who can influence environments—not only individuals—through policy-aligned, evidence-informed interventions.

The synthesis is translated into a "Burnout-to-Breakthrough" change map integrating relational leadership, ADKAR change readiness, and nudge-informed design. To contextualize and validate local relevance, the synthesis is triangulated with non-identifying institutional indicators available in the author's setting: workload policy documents, HR aggregated leave statistics, EAP utilization trends, and faculty/staff turnover patterns. The paper offers diagnostic prompts and a practical intervention menu at micro (relational routines), meso (structures and coordination systems), and macro (policy signals and reinforcement) levels. Participants will leave with an implementation-ready approach for building cross-unit coalitions that shift institutions from chronic strain toward sustainable well-being.

Keywords: organizational burnout; academic development; relational leadership; change readiness (ADKAR)

Extended Summary

This paper aims to (1) synthesize evidence on organizational mechanisms that sustain burnout in teaching-focused higher education institutions, and (2) translate that evidence into an implementation-ready change map that academic developers can use to enhance agency and well-being at the institutional scale. This aligns with Agency and Strategy by emphasizing the intentional, strategic actions of academic developers as change agents who shape teaching cultures, contribute to policy alignment, and support sustainable organizational learning.

Theoretical framework and methodological approach:

Agency lens. Agency is treated as a practical capacity to influence actions and environments. In academic development, this includes the capacity to shape teaching and learning conditions, institutional routines, and strategic priorities—not only individual teaching skills.

Integrated change framework. The paper integrates three complementary lenses to support translation from evidence to action:

1. Relational leadership: leadership as a social process that shapes trust, meaning-making, psychological safety, and the conditions for collective action.

2. ADKAR change readiness (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement): a diagnostic tool to anticipate where change initiatives stall and what supports are needed to progress.

3. Nudge-informed design: small changes to decision environments that make sustainable behaviours easier (e.g., default meeting norms, friction reduction for "stop-doing" decisions, prompts that normalize capacity conversations).

Method: practice-focused evidence synthesis (secondary data). The doctoral work underpinning this paper uses secondary data via an evidence-synthesis approach. Rather than generating new primary interview or survey data, it draws on published empirical research (methods, findings, and reported interventions) to identify repeatable organizational drivers of burnout and evidence-informed intervention patterns relevant to teaching-focused institutions.

Contextual triangulation with non-identifying institutional indicators. To strengthen practical relevance and test contextual fit, the synthesis is triangulated with non-identifying, institution-level indicators available in the author's setting:

- workload policy documents (how work is defined, counted, and reviewed),
- HR aggregated leave statistics (pattern shifts over time),
- EAP utilization trends (help-seeking and strain signals), and
- turnover patterns (stability, succession pressure, and knowledge loss).These indicators function as "local validation cues" to refine recommendations without disclosing protected or individual-level information.

Analytic procedure. Evidence is (a) extracted for organizational mechanisms and intervention components, (b) thematically synthesized into a small set of recurring "system patterns," and (c) translated into multi-level leverage points (micro/meso/macro). Each leverage point is mapped to ADKAR to support implementable sequencing.

Key findings, arguments, and outcomes

The synthesis yielded five recurring organizational mechanisms that constrain agency and sustain burnout, especially in teaching-focused institutions:

1. Hidden labour and workload compression. High-impact work is routinely undercounted (student remediation, mentoring, coordination, emotional labour), forcing reliance on unpaid overtime to maintain quality.

2. Coordination overload and role ambiguity. Diffuse responsibilities, unclear decision rights, and "meeting creep" increase rework and conflict, shifting effort from innovation to maintenance.

3. Psychological safety erosion. Dismissal, incivility, or fear of negative consequences reduces voice and help-seeking, weakening collective problem-solving capacity.

4. Misaligned institutional signals. Recognition and metrics may reward throughput and "heroics" while weakly reinforcing sustainability, unintentionally normalizing overwork. 5. Turnover and succession vacuum. Turnover amplifies workload and coordination burdens while eroding institutional memory and onboarding capacity, increasing burnout risk among new cohorts.

Outcome: Burnout-to-Breakthrough change map. The central output is a practical change map that links these mechanisms to multi-level interventions and ADKAR readiness (Table 1). The map supports academic developers in choosing actions that align with local constraints and build capacity.

Table 1. Burnout-to-Breakthrough Change Map (Micro–Meso–Macro × ADKAR)

Mechanism	MICRO (relational routines)	MESO (structures/systems)	MACRO (policy/signals)	ADKAR focus
Hidden labour/workload compression	capacity check-ins; boundary scripts	hidden-labour inventory; role charters	workload policy refinement; review cycles	Awareness → Ability → Reinforcement
Coordination overload/role ambiguity	decision logs; meeting nudges	decision-rights map; standardized handoffs	stop-doing mechanism; governance clarity	Knowledge → Ability → Reinforcement
Psychological safety erosion	voice-protecting facilitation; repair routines	communities of practice/triads	accountability for respectful conduct	Desire → Ability → Reinforcement
Misaligned signals	normalize trade-offs; celebrate sustainable choices	improvement cycles with feedback loops	sustainability-weighted metrics/rewards	Awareness → Desire → Reinforcement
Turnover/succession vacuum	normalize help-seeking	onboarding + knowledge transfer	succession planning; recognize onboarding labour	Ability → Reinforcement

Theoretical and educational significance: implications for practice, policy, and future research

Significance for academic development practice: The paper shifts the locus of intervention from "fixing individuals" to redesigning conditions that enable agency. It reframes academic developers as strategic partners who can convene cross-unit coalitions, translate evidence into local routines, and align development work with policy and organizational learning.

Implications for practice:

- Use micro interventions to restore voice and capacity conversations quickly (meeting norms, boundary scripts, repair practices).
- Use meso interventions to reduce hidden labour and rework (inventories, decision-rights maps, onboarding routines, communities of practice).

- Use macro interventions to sustain gains (workload policy refinement, sustainability-weighted metrics, stop-doing mechanisms, reinforcement loops).

Implications for policy and organizational learning. Workload policies, leave/EAP trends, and turnover patterns should be used as ethical, non-identifying feedback loops for improvement, not surveillance, supporting continuous learning and resourcing decisions. This enables institutions to "budget capacity" when introducing new priorities and prevents reliance on heroic overwork.

Future research. The paper identifies a need for comparative studies of teaching-focused institutions implementing multi-level burnout interventions, including longitudinal evaluation of which combinations of micro/meso/macro changes most reliably improve psychological safety, retention, and sustainable teaching quality.

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Zooming into Active-Learning: A Matrix to Analyse Student-Centred Curriculum Design

Francisca Miranda, Diana Mesquita, Maitê Gil

Abstract

This study is part of a broader research project aimed at characterising the experiences of different actors in higher education (HE) (students, programme coordinators, and faculty members) from different programmes with active learning strategies and models. This paper reports on the first phase of this broader project, focusing on the development and validation of a matrix designed to analyse the envisioned integration of active learning strategies and models in undergraduate programmes. The design process followed a Design-Based Research approach, beginning with the conceptual clarification of active learning, which informed the structure and refinement of the matrix. The main contribution of this work is threefold: providing epistemological clarity on the concept of active learning, advancing its operationalisation for curriculum design and curriculum-level analysis, and offering a practical tool for academic developers and faculty to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of student-centred curriculum design in HE.

Keywords: Active Learning, Higher Education, Matrix, Design Based Research

Extended Summary

Pedagogical innovation in HE is a strategic requirement, driven by European policies, global agendas, and socio-technological pressures. It addresses contemporary challenges and seeks to improve the quality of education in a rapidly changing world (5). Transformations arise from social, cultural, and technological changes (4), evolving student profiles, and the need to prepare them for complex global realities. This underscores the importance of pedagogical innovation, particularly through student-centred approaches that foster engagement, critical thinking, and adaptability for future work and citizenship. HE institutions have been implementing diverse AL strategies and models to empower students as active learners (1).

In this scenario, this paper presents the development and validation of a matrix designed to analyse the envisioned integration of active learning (AL) strategies and models in undergraduate programmes. This study is part of a broader project aiming to characterise students, programme coordinators, and faculty experiences with AL strategies and models. Three programmes (hereafter referred to as contexts) were selected to identify emerging patterns and contextual variations in their implementation. This broader project comprises three phases: characterization of each context globally and locally; detailed observation and analysis of the contexts; cross-context analysis to achieve the projects' overall objectives.

In the first phase, the development of the matrix required beginning with a clear conceptual stance on AL, given its multiple interpretations (8), as the matrix was essential for conducting the curricular analysis that informs this phase. Thus, in this study, AL is understood as a set of approaches related to the ability to create meaningful learning experiences, in which active student involvement is expected, encouraging them to do something and reflect on what they do (2). This understanding emphasises learner centrality, social interaction, and experiential engagement as key to fostering meaningful learning (3,8), highlighting the influence of three complementary theoretical approaches: cognitive-constructivist (Piaget), socio-constructivist (Vygotsky), and experientialist (Dewey).

The Design Based Research approach guided the design and validation processes. By testing innovations in real contexts, it enables collaborative solutions to complex teaching and learning issues and informs institutional improvement (6,7).

The construction process followed Takeda et al.'s (1990) sub-processes (9):

- Awareness of the problem: given AL's varied meanings (8), the first step was clarifying its epistemological bases and defining the study's conceptualisation.
- Suggestion: after readings and discussions, the basis for constructing the matrix was identified - Piaget, Vygotsky, Dewey, and Lombardi et al.'s (2021) construction-of-understanding ecosystem framework.
- Development: criteria and indicators were prepared.
- Evaluation: expert reviews and a pilot study ensured validity.
- Conclusion: formalisation process and dissemination.

The developed matrix is organised around two dimensions: 'learning construction' and 'interactive learning'. The first includes criteria such as establishing diversified objectives, implementing student-centred practices, creating opportunities that promote student empowerment, providing for the use of diversified assessment strategies, and providing for curricular articulation. The second includes providing opportunities for interaction with peers, providing opportunities/conditions/mechanisms that enable student integration/dialogue/interaction in the institutional environment, proposing flexible learning environments, and providing opportunities for interaction with external agents.

The validation process of the matrix was conducted in two stages. First, a pilot analysis was carried out using the matrix to examine the guiding documents of a selected undergraduate programme, allowing for initial testing and refinement of its structure and categories. This stage tested the applicability of the matrix and informed adjustments to ensure clarity and usability. The second stage involved expert validation, in which experienced HE professionals would provide feedback on content and clarity through a structured questionnaire. This paper focuses exclusively on the first stage, presenting the pilot analysis and the insights gained from applying the matrix to a real programme context.

This matrix contributes to the operationalisation of the AL construct by providing a tool that enables the analysis and characterisation of undergraduate programmes regarding the envisioned integration of AL strategies and models. Beyond its analytical function, the matrix fosters pedagogical reflection and generates evidence to inform decision-making processes, including curriculum review – an essential step for aligning programmes with institutional goals and addressing contemporary challenge such as the diversification of student profiles, technological change, and the need to prepare the students for complex professional and social contexts.

By providing a structured framework to analyse and interpret the integration of AL strategies at the curriculum level, the matrix also supports academic developers in strengthening organisational learning, informing strategic curriculum planning, and enhancing student-centred teaching practices across HE programmes.

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Papers 4

Responsible AI Integration in Higher Education: Policy and Curriculum Interventions

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Abstract

The rapid and widespread use of artificial intelligence (AI) by students presents an urgent challenge for academic development, particularly where institutional regulations and pedagogical practices lag behind actual usage. We conducted a faculty-wide mixed-method survey to examine how students and educators utilise AI, how well they understand existing regulations, and what support they require to apply AI responsibly. Students report frequent AI use, mainly to deepen understanding, obtain explanations, improve writing, and support thesis-related tasks. Despite this high uptake, fewer than half know where to find the relevant regulations, and most do not apply the prescribed referencing conventions for AI-assisted work. Uncertainty surrounding assessment expectations leads to avoidance behaviour, especially among bachelor students. Demand for support is strong, with preference for clear rules, centralised communication, and curriculum-embedded guidance. These findings directly informed programme-level and institutional interventions, including centralised information access, revised academic integrity guidance, curriculum-integrated modules on responsible AI use, and professionalisation initiatives for teaching staff. The project demonstrates how systematic evidence-collection can drive coherent, sustainable and equitable academic development responses to AI-driven change.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence in education; Academic development; Institutional policy; Curriculum design.

Extended Summary

The rapid adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education has created both opportunities for enhanced learning and new challenges for assessment integrity, student guidance, and curriculum design. Rising uncertainty about appropriate AI use, increasing student reliance on AI tools, and persistent ambiguity in communication channels signaled the need for broader structural, pedagogical, and regulatory action. Against this backdrop, we initiated a comprehensive evidence-gathering process aimed at informing faculty-wide policy and identifying targeted development initiatives to support both students and educators.

The goal of this project was twofold:

(1) to investigate current practices, perceptions, and needs surrounding AI use among students and educators, and (2) to translate findings into actionable interventions supporting curriculum alignment, academic integrity, and professional development.

The initiative is embedded in a broader faculty strategy for AI integration, focusing on policy, curriculum alignment, professional development, communication, and student-centred support. The strategy prioritises (a) explicit and accessible regulations, (b) sustainable teacher support, (c) curricular embedding of AI-related competencies, and (d) transparent communication between stakeholders.

Two faculty-wide surveys were administered to students and educators. The student survey has been completed, while educator data collection is ongoing and will be analysed shortly. The student survey was sent to 10,207 enrolled students across bachelor's programmes, master's programmes, and preparatory programmes (achieved response rate: 12.2%). The instrument consisted of Likert-scale items, multiple-choice questions and open commentary prompts. Items measured knowledge of regulations, frequency and type of AI use, perceptions of risk, avoidance behaviour, openness toward disclosure, and preferred support modalities. Responses were analysed by educational level and programme. Educator recruitment followed the same logic, targeting 939 teaching staff. Given that educator data collection is ongoing, preliminary insights are supplemented by student comments and consultations with programme coordinators.

Several key findings from the student survey proved particularly informative for policy and strategic development:

1. AI use is high and structurally embedded in study routines Across programmes, the mean reported use level is 3.7 on a 6-point scale, indicating regular to frequent use. Students in preparatory programmes show the most intensive use (4.1/6), followed by bachelor and master students, whose overall frequency differs minimally.

2. Primary use cases focus on cognitive scaffolding rather than outsourcing work Across groups, the most frequently reported function is asking AI for explanations or conceptual clarifications (77–88%). Bachelor students often use AI for practice tasks such as exercises or quizzes, whereas master students more frequently apply AI to support advanced academic tasks, including formulating research questions, structuring literature reviews, or preparing thesis-related outputs. Students from preparatory programmes stand out for strong use of AI for academic writing support (70% vs. 29–56% in other groups), likely reflecting transitional learning challenges when switching disciplines or degrees.

3. Anxiety about AI is low, yet uncertainty is high Only 21% of students report being worried about AI. However, uncertainty regarding what is permitted is strikingly high: 72% report avoiding AI at least sometimes because of unclear rules. Avoidance is substantial across groups, particularly among bachelor students (76%). Importantly, concerns increase with academic responsibility: master students, often engaged in thesis trajectories, report the most worry (25.5%).

4. Disclosure is highly normalised among peers, but less toward evaluators Students consistently report very high openness about AI use toward peers (mean 5.5/6). Openness drops when disclosure involves teachers, course coordinators, or thesis supervisors (4.6–4.8), indicating that social transparency is contingent upon perceived evaluative risk. Although willingness to be transparent, in general, remains strikingly high across groups.

5. Awareness of regulations and referencing procedures is limited Only 45% of students indicate familiarity with existing guidelines. This trend is consistent across bachelor, master and preparatory programmes, pointing to a systemic rather than programme-specific challenge. The lack of awareness is most visible in referencing procedures: More than 80% either report not knowing or not correctly applying the faculty-specific referencing guidance for AI-supported work. This presents a structural integrity risk, especially in written assignments and thesis work.

6. Demand for support is predominantly practical, centralised, and integrated Across groups, 67% request additional support. Demand peaks among master students (76%) and preparatory programmes (72%), and is lowest at bachelor level (59%). The most requested forms are:

- clearly structured and centralised information on the student portal (≈58%),
- practical workshops or sessions (≈52%),
- explicit discussion of AI use within courses (≈40%).

Individual supervision scored low, indicating that students seek system-level clarity rather than personalised remediation.

Across programmes, three support elements are considered essential:

- clear overview of permitted vs. prohibited forms of AI use (≈92%),
- guidance on proper referencing of AI-supported work (≈80%),
- instructions on responsible integration of AI into assignments (≈80%).

Resulting interventions:

The survey informed a faculty-wide action plan focusing on structural clarity, curricular embedding, and professional support. Key measures implemented or currently underway include: 1. Centralisation and simplification of regulations

- Unified access point on the student portal
- Visual flowcharts outlining acceptable and unacceptable uses
- Dedicated reference formats for responsible AI-assisted writing

Curriculum-integrated scaffolding

- Modules introducing students to ethical and correct AI use
- Plagiarism training to reflect AI-supported processes
- Programme-specific competency articulation, aligned with professional needs in healthcare

Professionalisation of educational staff

- Workshops and faculty study days
- Practical assessment examples
- Guidance for supervising AI use in master thesis trajectories
- Structured exemplars and rubrics

Strategic communication improvements

- Coordinated messaging through programme committees and digital platforms
- Faculty-wide alignment of assignment-level expectations

Preliminary evidence suggests that interventions implemented during data collection were reflected in open comments. Students in programmes where local guidelines had recently been revised reported higher awareness and confidence.

Significance and expected contributions

This study illustrates a common institutional challenge: student adoption of AI is rapid, while policy frameworks and pedagogical guidance adapt more slowly. By linking behavioural data to policy development and programme-level interventions, the initiative demonstrates how academic development can foster system-level coherence, reduce uncertainty among educators, and support responsible AI integration. The approach is replicable across faculties and institutions, underscoring the value of systematic evidence-gathering to align policy with educational practice.

Teaching AI with AI: Leveraging Critical Digital Pedagogy and Student Partnerships to Transform AI Curriculum

Wei Yan, Ajay Dhruv, Vijal Jain

Abstract

This paper presents a curriculum redesign project that reimagines an undergraduate Artificial Intelligence (AI) course at a Canadian university through the combined lenses of Critical Digital Pedagogy (CDP) and Students-as-Partners (SaP). As generative AI (GenAI) tools such as GPT variants, DeepSeek, and Grok 3 increasingly shape how students learn and produce knowledge, higher education faces an urgent need to develop ethically grounded, participatory approaches to AI education. Traditional AI courses remain technocentric, emphasizing algorithms and coding while overlooking the sociotechnical and political dimensions of AI systems. At the same time, AI literacy research highlights the importance of reflective, ethical, and critical competencies, yet these are rarely implemented in undergraduate curricula. Grounded in CDP, the redesigned course treats AI tools not as neutral technologies but as political and value-laden systems requiring critical interrogation. Students investigate model behavior, bias, and data assumptions through hands-on experimentation, treating GenAI as both a tool and an object of inquiry. Using SaP as a methodological framework, students act as co-designers of ethical guidelines, learning activities, and case studies. This approach foregrounds agency, reciprocity, and shared responsibility in shaping the curriculum. Preliminary findings indicate that students develop heightened ethical awareness, deeper engagement, and an expanded understanding of AI as a sociotechnical system. The project demonstrates how combining CDP and SaP can meaningfully transform AI curriculum, empower learners as critical agents, and contribute to institutional conversations about responsible AI integration in higher education.

Keywords: curriculum reform, artificial intelligence, critical digital pedagogy, Students-as-Partners

Extended Summary

This project reconceptualizes an undergraduate Artificial Intelligence course at a Canadian university for delivery in Fall 2025. The redesigned course integrates generative AI (GenAI) tools such as GPT variants, DeepSeek, and Grok 3 in ways that centre student agency, critical inquiry, and ethical engagement. Rather than adopting AI tools simply to increase efficiency or automate learning tasks, the course positions students as partners who investigate model behaviour, examine algorithmic bias, and co-develop responsible-use guidelines. Through hands-on experimentation with GenAI, students build chatbots, analyze outputs, and reflect critically on AI systems. The redesign positions students not merely as users of AI but as co-designers of curriculum and ethical frameworks. Drawing on Critical Digital Pedagogy (CDP), the course aims to empower student agency and meaningfully transform AI learning in higher education. Research on AI literacy provides foundational definitions and competencies, yet it continues to emphasize technical skills over ethical or sociotechnical understanding (Long & Magerko, 2020; Ng et al., 2021). Heung et al. (2025) argue for emancipatory, reflective, and ethical AI literacy, emphasizing the need for learners to examine the broader implications of AI systems. Despite this, few undergraduate AI courses operationalize such frameworks. Meanwhile, scholarship documenting AI harms warns that algorithmic systems frequently reproduce racial, gendered, and socioeconomic inequities (Birhane, 2021; Crawford, 2021; O'Neil, 2016). These issues increasingly shape decision-making in education, employment, healthcare, and public life, yet AI courses typically frame technology as neutral and focus on computational methods. This leaves learners unprepared to recognize, critique, or mitigate algorithmic harm.

Critical Digital Pedagogy (CDP) provides a theoretical foundation for addressing these gaps. Morris and Stommel (2018) argue that technologies are never neutral; digital tools embed cultural, political, and ideological values that shape learning and power. Applied to AI education, CDP encourages students to interrogate the assumptions embedded in datasets, training processes, and model outputs, and to question how AI systems mediate knowledge and authority. CDP centres human judgment, relationality, and ethical reflection, even in technologically rich learning environments. In this redesigned course, GenAI becomes both a tool for learning and an object of critique, enabling students to identify bias, examine model limitations, and reflect on the sociotechnical nature of AI.

Students-as-Partners (SaP) serves as the methodological framework guiding the redesign. SaP emphasizes collaboration, reciprocity, and shared decision-making between students and instructors (Cook-Sather et al., 2014). Research demonstrates that co-creation enhances student motivation, engagement, and autonomy (Bovill, 2020). Yet SaP remains rare in computer science and AI education, where curriculum is often perceived as fixed and instructor driven. Mercer-Mapstone et al. (2017) found that SaP initiatives are heavily concentrated in the humanities and education, with significantly limited representation in STEM fields. By integrating SaP into an AI course, this project offers an innovative model that foregrounds student voice, critical inquiry, and shared responsibility for ethical AI use. In the redesigned course, students collaboratively construct learning activities, ethical scenarios, and responsible-use guidelines for GenAI. They analyze AI systems through hands-on experiments, reflect on their findings, and contribute to iterative refinements of course content. These practices encourage students to act as co-designer – examining AI behaviour, identifying bias, and articulating ethical concerns arising from direct interaction with AI tools. This participatory model fosters deeper engagement, enabling students to see themselves as active contributors to the

design, critique, and evolution of AI systems. Early implementation of the redesigned components suggests promising outcomes. Students reported increased agency as they experimented with AI systems, challenged outputs, and questioned underlying assumptions. Ethical awareness deepened as students encountered model hallucinations, inconsistencies, and instances of bias. Engagement grew when learners co-created prompts, datasets, and guidelines, and when they recognized their contributions had relevance beyond the classroom. Additionally, discussions became richer and more nuanced when students used GenAI to simulate diverse perspectives, explore edge cases, or test adversarial inputs. Overall, students began to view AI not as a neutral computational artifact but as a sociotechnical system entangled with values, histories, and power.

The significance of this work is both theoretical and educational. Theoretically, the project extends Critical Digital Pedagogy into the field of AI education, where CDP has been underutilized despite the increasing centrality of digital technologies. It demonstrates how participatory methodologies can reshape technical disciplines traditionally resistant to student partnership. Educationally, the redesign offers a scalable model for integrating GenAI ethically and critically into undergraduate curricula. Future research will explore long-term impacts on students' AI literacy, professional identity, and ethical reasoning, as well as opportunities to expand participatory AI curriculum across disciplines.

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Collaborative and Proactive Solutions –addressing students' challenging behaviours in school

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Abstract

In schools there are needs to enhance conflict solution and problem- solving techniques to facilitate a calmer school environment. Student teachers in Sweden commonly describe needing more tools and techniques in their teacher education to help solving problems in relation to students challenging behaviours in schools. To break negative cycles of challenging behaviours among children, there is need for specific and evaluable models. Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) (Greene, 2008) is based in systems theory and on holistic and democratic values. The core idea in CPS is that children have legitimate reasons behind challenging behaviours, although they may not be able to verbalise their reasons to adults. CPS offers a structure, and a conversation model to enable teachers and children to identify and verbalise these reasons in order to collaboratively solve problems. The present project incorporates student teachers practicing CPS in a simulated classroom environment using a semi- virtual simulation and conversing with a student in real time. The student teachers are active during two simulations: A simulated conversation with a student exhibiting challenging behaviours, no previous guidance in CPS prior to this simulation. A second simulation where student teachers first engage in a workshop with a certified CPS expert and have live supervision from the expert during the second simulation with a challenging student. Both simulations are video-recorded and analyzed using a protocol, to assess fidelity to CPS shown by the student teachers. After the simulations, semi-structured interviews are conducted to assess the experiences and perceived usability of CPS as a collaborative problem-solving technique for future teachers. Results from the simulations and interviews will be presented, as well as a discussion of using a Simulation Teaching Lab in the teacher training program.

Keywords: student teachers, simulations, teacher training programme, collaborative problem-solving

Extended Summary

The aim of the study is to determine whether the Collaborative and Proactive model can help student teachers in their future profession to conduct individual conversations with students, enabling them to collaboratively and proactively address difficulties encountered in different classroom situations.

The project will investigate two overarching questions:

- How can student teachers implement CPS as a method with the support of simulation?
- What experiences do student teachers report after training in simulation using CPS as a conversation method?

Schools are frequently described as struggling to establish order and maintain a calm working environment (see, for example, Svenskt Näringsliv, 2022). Reports consistently highlight students who challenge school norms by displaying behaviors that teachers and staff find difficult to address. Despite their best intentions, many educators in Swedish schools today are searching for effective tools to constructively respond to students in situations involving challenging, norm-breaking, and problematic behaviors. Swedish policy documents stress the importance of student participation and influence regarding their education, as well as the need for student health initiatives to be preventive and health-promoting. Therefore, it is crucial to identify methods that enable students and teachers to work together constructively to solve problems as they arise and to prevent these issues from recurring. A collaborative approach can help increase the time available for strengthening and developing students' learning.

Promoting practice-oriented, evaluable models, and rigorously testing them through various types of studies, is essential to help children who challenge the school environment break negative cycles. Models must be scrutinized in different ways to ensure that children encounter school staff who are well-informed, and to prevent potential negative consequences that may result when staff rely solely on intuition.

Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) is one such promising model. Developed by psychologist and researcher Ross Greene, who has lectured and trained in Sweden for many years, CPS is outlined in his books Lost at School (2008) and Raising Human Beings (2017), which have inspired many educators. The model is grounded in systems theory and reflects a humanistic and democratic worldview. This perspective holds that children and students have legitimate concerns underlying the problems that arise in school settings, even if they struggle to express these when adults ask "why?". School staff also have valid concerns, which may be hard to articulate and often relate to the impact of students' behavior on the classroom environment. CPS provides a structure and a range of conversation techniques to help students and staff identify and articulate these concerns and collaboratively solve problems.

Previous studies, such as Lugrin et al. (2016), have explored the use of virtual reality (VR) as a training tool for student teachers to manage challenging student behaviors in the classroom. By simulating various classroom scenarios, VR enables evaluation of factors such as controllability, replicability, credibility, comfort, acceptance, cost- effectiveness,

and mobility. Lugrin et al. (2016) concluded that VR training is a promising and useful tool for preparing student teachers to handle disruptive classroom behaviors.

Similarly, Alvarez et al. (2025) examined student teachers' conflict resolution skills in virtual classroom settings involving three types of disruptive situations: toward the teacher, another student, or during group work. The study found that student teachers frequently relied on either authoritarian methods with low willingness to cooperate or permissive methods with limited proactive approaches. The authors emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for student teachers to practice realistic, challenging classroom situations in a safe environment in order to develop proactive communication strategies for managing disruptive behaviors.

In our proposed project, we use simulation to train student teachers in the CPS model. By creating authentic classroom scenarios where student teachers encounter challenging behavior from student avatars, we can evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of the CPS model for future educators. A simulation expert enacts various scenarios by interacting with student teachers in real time, demonstrating disruptive and challenging behaviors. Student teachers will study the CPS model, its aims, and its steps, and receive guidance from a certified CPS expert. They then participate in simulated conversations with a specific student, where the simulation expert presents common challenges faced by students.

Methodologically, the project will utilize observations and follow-up interviews. Simulations will be video recorded and analyzed thematically using an observation protocol based on the steps of the CPS model and their application in the simulations. Following this, student teachers will participate in semi-structured interviews. Both observations and interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

The outcomes of this project could inform higher education programs about the benefits of simulations in teacher training, better preparing future teachers for the challenges commonly encountered by newly graduated educators.

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Equipping Engineering Curricula with Digital Simulation Skills: Embedding ANSYS in Curricula

Masum Billah, Ma Moghimi, S Islam, D Roberts, Md Asaduzzaman, S Marimuthu, M Fahad, S Shiryghidary, A Cash, S Vatannia

Abstract

This ICED Talk presents a transformative case study from the Department of Engineering at Uthe University of Staffordshire, where ANSYS engineering simulation tools were embedded across eight newly validated engineering and computing courses. The initiative directly addresses socio-economic inequity by offering students, from underrepresented backgrounds, in one of England's most deprived regions, access to industry-standard digital engineering platforms. Drawing from a cross-departmental collaboration funded by Ansys, part of Synopsys, the talk highlights the pedagogical innovations, staff development, and student outcomes linked to integrating tools, such as ANSYS Fluent, Granta, EduPack, and DesignXplorer, into undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. The central message emphasises how universities can rethink curriculum design to democratise access to advanced engineering tools, making digital literacy and employability accessible for all students. Attendees will take away strategies for aligning pedagogy with industry needs, fostering inclusive digital transformation, and scaling similar models across disciplines and institutions.

Keywords: Curriculum Transformation, Digital Tools, Engineering Education, Inclusive Pedagogy, Simulation

Extended Summary

Introduction and Rationale: Engineering employers increasingly demand graduates who can deploy simulation tools in design, testing and decision-making. Yet reports show persistent skill gaps in the UK workforce: 339,580 apprenticeship starts in 2023/24 included approximately 97,000 in engineering and technology (EngineeringUK, 2024), but younger participation has declined, and many graduates lack practical readiness (Royal Academy of Engineering, 2023). Degree apprenticeships are designed to bridge academic and industrial learning, but traditional lectures and laboratories often fall short (Eraut, 2004; Raelin, 2008). Simulation-Focused Problem-Based Learning (SF-PBL) offers a framework to combine authentic workplace tasks with simulation and problem solving, enhancing skill development, reflection and adaptability (Yu, 2023).

The University of Staffordshire serves one of England's most deprived regions, with a high proportion of students who are first in their family to enter higher education and from low-income or under-represented groups. Limited access to costly commercial software in schools and colleges can disadvantage these students compared to peers elsewhere. By embedding ANSYS Engineering Simulation Software across eight newly validated engineering and computing courses—at no cost to students—the university sought to democratise access to industry-standard platforms and to improve employability outcomes. The initiative was co-funded and supported by Ansys, part of Synopsys, enabling cross-departmental staff training and infrastructure upgrades. In this way the project addressed both digital skills development and socio-economic inequity.

Conceptual Framework: SF-PBL merges Problem-Based Learning, which engages learners in open-ended, real-world problems (Savery, 2006), with Simulation-Based Learning, which provides virtual environments for modelling and experimentation (Lateef, 2010). It is grounded in Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984), Sweller's cognitive load theory (1988) and adult learning principles (Knowles et al., 2015), providing scaffolding, reducing extraneous load and fostering higher-order thinking. Active learning meta-analyses confirm improved performance in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields (Freeman et al., 2014). This framework underpinned the redesign of modules and assessments.

Embedding ANSYS within SF-PBL

ANSYS Simulation tools—including Fluent, Granta EduPack and DesignXplorer—have been embedded across eight courses spanning mechanical, manufacturing, computing and mechatronics pathways. In the Computational Fluid Dynamics module, students design and analyse simulations using ANSYS Fluent, linking results to theory and workplace scenarios. In Structures & FEA, apprentices conduct finite element analyses of stress–strain systems, buckling and pressure vessels, presenting results via posters and reports. In their Individual Engineering Project students validate prototypes with ANSYS, integrating thermal, fluid and structural analyses into design decisions. Other modules introduce ANSYS Granta for sustainable materials selection and DesignXplorer for optimisation tasks. These activities align with the UK Engineering Council's AHEP 4 learning outcomes (Engineering Council, 2021) and mirror verified external cases such as the University of Bath's ANSYS integration project (University of Bath, 2024) and eCornell's certificate in Fluid Dynamics Simulations Using ANSYS (Cornell University, 2021).

Methods and Approach

The project followed a phased strategy of engaging employers and accrediting bodies to identify simulation competencies, mapping curricula so that simulation tasks were integrated into learning outcomes, providing staff

development in ANSYS and PBL facilitation, designing scaffolded learning paths from guided tasks to open-ended projects, and evaluating via mixed methods including pre- and post-implementation student surveys, focus groups, employer feedback and comparison with a baseline cohort.

Findings and Learner Feedback

Data from two SF-PBL cohorts in a year compared with a baseline group show self-reported ANSYS competence increasing markedly. Learners expressed greater ability to design and interpret their own simulations, and students from widening-participation backgrounds reported that free access to software increased their confidence applying for industrial placements. Staff reported improved confidence in designing and assessing simulation-based assessments. Employer partners noted stronger simulation literacy among graduates. Representative learner comments included, “Simulating fluid flow in ANSYS made the design decisions clearer” and “Using ANSYS in projects helped me align what I learn with what I do at work.”

Implementation Challenges

Challenges included obtaining sufficient software licences and computational resources (IMechE, 2020), supporting staff to develop both technical expertise and facilitation skills, aligning simulation tasks with learning outcomes to avoid overload and designing assessments that capture reasoning and reflection as well as technical output. Ensuring equitable access off-campus for students on placement also required the creation of a cloud-based virtual desktop environment.

Discussion

Embedding ANSYS via SF-PBL shifted learning from prescriptive laboratory exercises to authentic, industry-relevant tasks across multiple disciplines. Students gained agency by selecting parameters, interpreting results and aligning work with engineering constraints. Staff exercised agency in curriculum design, assessment innovation and cross-departmental collaboration. Benchmarking against verified external cases (Cornell University, 2021; University of Bath, 2024; ANSYS, n.d.; Maxworth, 2023) strengthens the credibility of this model. The evidence indicates that embedding ANSYS is not simply a technical addition but a strategic and inclusive educational change with measurable benefits over prior approaches.

Conclusion

Integrating ANSYS within a Simulation-Focused Problem-Based Learning framework across eight newly validated engineering and computing courses at the University of Staffordshire has enhanced both student learning and workforce readiness. Learners—particularly those from under-represented and economically disadvantaged backgrounds—developed stronger simulation skills, greater confidence and more autonomy; staff gained new capabilities in assessment and curriculum design; and employer feedback confirmed the relevance of the enhanced curriculum to workplace demands. Although challenges remain—particularly regarding resources, staff training and assessment design—these can be addressed through strategic planning, phased implementation and collaboration across academic and industry stakeholders. The initiative demonstrates how curriculum transformation can democratise access to advanced engineering tools, aligning pedagogy with industry needs while fostering inclusive digital transformation. This case offers a transferable model for institutions wishing to embed professional simulation tools equitably into their curricula and thus fits squarely with ICED’s themes of agency, strategy and inclusive practice.

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Papers 5

Enhancing Teaching Through Collaboration – A Regional Approach

Laura Costelloe, Mary Fitzpatrick, Nuala Harding, Catherine Ann O'Connell, Katherine Whitehurst, Michael Wride

Abstract

The Shannon Consortium, comprised of three higher education institutions, was established in 2007 to create a centre of pedagogical excellence in higher education across the mid-west region in Ireland. To this end, the three partners collaborated in the development of strategic initiatives to enhance teaching and learning, namely a regional award system, peer observation network and regional practice-sharing 'conversations'. Almost two decades later, this regional collaboration is an example of how collaboration across institutional boundaries can positively impact processes, cultures, teachers and students. This paper will share the key actions and learnings in progressing academic development as a collaborative effort resulting in sustainable approaches to the enhancement of learning and teaching. To illustrate this collaboration in practice, the Regional Teaching Excellence Award (RTEA) will be introduced, including sharing findings and insights from a recent review and revision of the process adopted.

Keywords: academic development, collaboration, teaching excellence awards, institutional partnerships

Extended Summary

Academic development units are critical actors in all higher education institutions, often working as a central team within a given institution. Given the similar nature of the strategic aims of these teams and the impact they have on the professional development of those who teach, we question why inter-institutional collaboration is not more prevalent across the sector? At a time when resources are constrained and the landscape of higher education is changing, the potential for impactful collaboration has never been greater. This paper explores the experience of three Irish HEIs, who have collaborated since 2007, with the single aim of enhancing pedagogic practices across the partner institutions in the Midwest of Ireland. As a collaboration, three distinct institutions – a University, a College of Education and the Liberal Arts and an Institute of Technology – came together to secure funding from the Irish Higher Education Authority with a clear vision to establish the mid-west region as a leader in teaching excellence. With one institution leading the project, each institution appointed a Teaching and Learning Advocate, who had a central role in facilitating this regional goal through a range of activities, not least the establishment of a regional teaching award system, and the initiation of a peer observation network to provide an interinstitutional avenue to share practice across disciplines. Despite the change in personnel over the years and more sectoral change in that one of the partner institutions has merged with another institution to establish a newly created Technological University for Midwest region – the portfolio of expertise has continued to evolve and develop, offering institutional and inter-institutional development workshops across the region, which facilitate collegial collaboration and the sharing of practice. Ultimately, this collaboration has been highly successful in terms of enhanced innovation and quality teaching among the partner institutions and establishing a shared culture of expertise across the partners. This is evidenced in practice with the Regional Teaching Excellence Award now in its 18th iteration. The Regional Teaching Excellence Award (RTEA) was established in the first year of this collaboration to promote and recognise outstanding learning and teaching practices across partner institutions. Each year, the award process begins with an inter-institutional call for nominations—either peer or self—issued in the early weeks of the Autumn semester. The selection process comprises two phases: initial shortlisting by international experts, followed by final decisions made by an international panel of adjudicators, including student representation. To date, the award has engaged approximately 200 nominees resulting in the selection of one recipient of the overall Regional Teaching Excellence Award each year.

While the award process is reviewed on an annual basis, in 2024 the regional partners considered it timely to engage in a comprehensive and rigorous review given the significant change in the Irish higher education landscape in the establishment of the Technological University sector. Using a combination of a team-based SWOT analysis, engagement with scholarly literature and semi-structured interviews with previous finalists, external assessors and members of the selection panel (20 participants in total), the review sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of the award on practice and/or progression of those who have been shortlisted and/or won the award? 2. What are staff motivations to apply, including perceptions of 'excellence' and applicability of the process to institutional contexts? 3. What are the perceptions of the criteria and decision-making process for shortlisting and award?

4. What are the potential options to reward innovative practice at different career stages aligned to recognised frameworks? Data was analysed thematically, guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis, and informed by Maguire and Delahunt's (2017) application of their framework to teaching and learning data analysis.

The research highlights significant insights into the impact of the RTEA on participants across the region, as well as emphasising the potential of teaching excellence awards more broadly as an important approach to recognise and reward those who are committed to enhancing their academic practice. Our findings point to the positive impact of participation, for nominees and those involved in assessing applications. A key outcome of this study was the development of the 'RTEA Indicators of Excellence', a framework adapted from Ka Yuk Chan and Chen (2024), which identifies the aspects of teaching which are most associated with higher education practice, and the dimensions which exemplify 'excellence' with regard to these domains (see Figure 1 and Table 1). Since the AY2025/26 iteration of the Award, the RTEA Indicators of Excellence provides guidance to candidates as to what can be constituted 'excellence' in the context of academic practice, a concept which has been recognised as difficult to describe or measure (Wood and Su, 2017).

Ultimately, our collaboration works well through the positive and collegiate interactions of the regional T&L Advocates on a regular basis. We adopt a collaborative approach to the enhancement of teaching and learning initiatives across the partner institutions – sharing expertise and resources in this regard. The collaborative drive to support and develop regional teaching enhancement initiatives, including supporting teaching portfolio development using evidence of teaching excellence such as student feedback, video/peer observation, focus groups etc continues to be impactful at many levels. This regional collaboration can boast of high performance and efficiency on an inter-intuitional basis in relation to the following:

- The collaborative planning, development and support of the RTEA, sharing resources and expertise across the three partner institutions.
- Inter-institutional peer observation offered in all three institutions with inter-institutional partnerships developed.
- Guidelines, documents and resources are collaboratively developed and shared across all partner institutions.
- Cross-institutional research partnerships established, incorporating colleagues from the three institutional teaching and learning centres.
- Advocate expertise and support shared throughout all partner institutions.

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What, Where, How Long and With Whom – A Study of University Teachers Tasks

Marie Leijon, David Rosenlund

Abstract

Teaching in higher education involves a wide range of complex tasks, many of which are perceived as stress-inducing. In Sweden, reduced resources for teaching have increased workload without additional time, creating further challenges for university teachers. This study aims to explore which tasks teachers engage in during their daily practice and how they reflect on these tasks. It forms part of a larger research project funded by the Swedish Research Council: "University Teachers' Profession in Post-Pandemic Hybrid Higher Education Teaching and Learning Environments."

The study adopts a practitioner inquiry approach, combining collaborative research design with diary-based data collection. Eleven teachers from five universities participated in nine digital meetings over three semesters to co-create the research process. 25 structured teacher diaries were collected, capturing activity type, time spent, context (digital or physical), and reflections. This method provides insights into both visible and less visible dimensions of academic work.

Preliminary findings reveal that university teaching is highly fragmented, involving frequent shifts between diverse tasks and learning environments – physical, digital, and hybrid. Boundaries between classrooms, offices, and home workspaces are increasingly blurred. Teachers report intensive workdays as common, with limited opportunities for reflection and quality development. The study highlights the growing complexity and quantity of tasks for a university teacher, contributing to ongoing scientific and societal discussions about sustainable working conditions in higher education.

Keywords: University teachers, Teacher tasks, Professional practice, Diary

Extended Summary

Teaching in higher education involves a wide range of complex tasks, many of which are perceived as stress-inducing (Ross et al., 2024; van Dijk et al., 2020). Many university educators work in a competitive research-oriented work environment, with comparatively limited recognition for teaching efforts (Robinson & Hilli, 2016). Educators devote substantial time and effort to their professional practice, and meet challenges in managing the complex, fragmented, and boundaryless nature of their work (Mountz, 2016). During the last years, several disruptions have made the professional teaching practice even more complicated, i.e the digitalisation during the pandemic and the AI-transformation (Author & Stigmar 2022; Ross, 2025). In Sweden, reduced resources for teaching have increased workload without additional time, creating further challenges for university teachers (Gustavsson, 2022). But what do a university teacher do during a typical workday? The aim with this study is to explore which tasks a group of Swedish university teachers engage in during their daily practice and how they reflect on these tasks. The study is a part of the larger research project "Teachers' Profession in Post-Pandemic Hybrid Higher Education Teaching and Learning Environments" funded by the Swedish Research Council.

Theoretical framework

Theoretically the study is framed by the model University Teacher Expertise (UNITE) – where different frameworks for university educators' teaching practice are synthesized into six different tasks: Teaching and supporting learning; Educational design; Assessment and feedback; Educational leadership and management; Educational scholarship and research and Professional development (van Dijk et al., 2020). UNITE provides us with an analytical lens help us to examine and understand how a complex teaching practice is portrayed in the diaries and how specific aspects may be highlighted or overlooked. The study is furthermore inspired by practitioner enquiry (Murray, 1992; Marsh & Deakon, 2024) and has been designed as a collaborative, structured, cyclical method. Eleven Swedish teachers from five universities systematically investigated their own practice over three semesters through nine digital meetings. Together, they formulated the research question, designed the method, and jointly analysed the collected material. Data collection was conducted using structured diaries, in which 25 teachers from four higher education institutions documented their tasks on specified days. Diary studies capture participants' experiences and reflections in real time through their own written records. This method encourages participants to share insights on aspects that are otherwise difficult to observe and closely connected to everyday teaching practice (cf. Olorunfemi, 2023). The diaries followed a template that included details about the type of activity, the people involved, time spent, and whether the activity occurred in a digital or physical environment. Reflective questions were also included to capture participants' thoughts about the tasks and their interrelationships. This approach enables a detailed mapping of work practices, offering insights into both visible and less visible dimensions of teachers' tasks.

Key findings

Preliminary results highlight how teaching in higher education is a complex task. University teachers teach in variety of learning environments during a typical day, from lecture halls, seminar rooms, flexible and innovative spaces, online

settings and hybrid environments. The physical spaces are entangled with the digital and the boundaries between office space, working from home and the traditional classrooms are blurred. During a day a university teacher shift back and forth between a lot of different tasks, creating a scattered workflow. A teacher has a lot of interactions with many individuals, and the results shows that the more intensive workdays are significantly more frequent than the calmer ones. However, there are examples of days that carries opportunities to focus on more specific task. Furthermore, teachers report a lack of time for reflection and quality development. The results confirm previous studies within the research project "University Teachers' Profession in Post-Pandemic Hybrid Higher Education Teaching and Learning Environments," (cf. Author & Stigmar, 2022; Author & Author, n.d) where the complexity of the teaching profession has been highlighted in various ways. During the pandemic, teachers were forced to focus primarily on the implementation of teaching, leaving less time for reflection and quality development. According to the findings of this study, there does not appear to be any reduction in workload in the post-pandemic context. Instead, teachers' tasks continue to increase both in quantity and in complexity.

Significance and implications

By making visible the content, degree, and complexity of university teachers' tasks, we argue that the study contributes to both the scientific and societal discussion about the situation for teachers in higher education. Teaching demands institutional support for workload management, reflective practice, and professional development. Without these, sustainability and quality in higher education may be compromised.

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Research-Based Teaching Strategies in Higher Education in an Internationalised Environment

Yite Wang

Abstract

Internationalisation has become a normalised feature of higher education, although research into teaching strategies remains fragmented and the reverent review predominantly focused on English-language contexts. This systematic literature review synthesises 66 empirical studies published between 2015 and 2024, aiming to draw insights into effective research- based teaching strategies within internationalised higher education. This review, guided by institutional theory, highlights that teaching strategies are shaped at micro (classroom) and meso (institutional) levels through the interaction between institutions and educators' agency. The analysis reveals three key themes on research strategies in international higher education: (1) implementation, (2) perceptions and experiences, and (3) implications. From an institutional theory perspective, this review discusses that these teaching strategies are shaped by contextual institutional norms, rely heavily on individual agency due to limited structural support, and are constrained by persistent resource gaps that contribute to deficit narratives about international students. Theoretically, institutional theory's application within internationalised teaching contexts is broadened. Practically, findings underscore the need to enhance all stakeholders' experiences through resource allocation aligned with admissions policies, systematic professional development, and fostering an inquiring stance among teaching staff.

Keywords: Teaching Strategies, Systematic Literature Review, International Higher Education, Intuitional Theory

Extended Summary

Internationalisation has become an established and largely normalised feature of higher education, particularly through international student mobility (Rizvi, 2011; de Wit & Altbach, 2020; Buckner et al., 2021). However, research into teaching strategies remains fragmented, and existing reviews are predominantly focused on English-language contexts (Ryan, 2011, Lomer &Mittelmeier, 2021; Agostinelli, 2021; Ma, 2022). Furthermore, existing reviews rely largely on cultural or classroom-focused frameworks (Ryan, 2011; Lomer & Mittelmeier, 2021; Ma, 2022). Internationalisation, however, functions within broader organisational processes and is an organisationally embedded and multi-layered environment (Van den Hende & Boonstra, 2025). This systematic literature review aims to address these gaps in scope and perspective by integrating empirical studies published between 2015 and 2024. The goal is to systematically map teaching strategies across diverse educational systems by the following research question: What insights do existing studies provide on effective research-based teaching strategies in internationalised higher education in the past 10 years?

This study adopts Institutional Theory (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991) as its guiding framework. This perspective provides a lens to understand how teaching strategies in an internationalised environment are shaped by institutional norms, rules, and structures. It allows for analysis of educators' agency (Greenwood et al., 2008; Malin et al., 2020) in adapting to challenges and uncertainties within their teaching environments. Through the lens of institutional theory, this review views research-based teaching strategies not merely as pedagogical choices, but as outcomes shaped by institutional pressures and educators' constrained agency in internationalised higher education. This framework is employed to realise the strengths of institutional theory in multi-level integrated analysis, specifically focusing on the micro (classroom) and meso (institutional) levels. Building on this theoretical framework, this review responds to Lomer and Mittelmeier's (2021) call for deeper contextual analysis and critical engagement with the impact of pedagogical contexts, contributing to a more comprehensive theoretical and empirical discourse on internationalised teaching strategies.

This research employs a Systematic Literature Review methodology, following the recommendations of the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). The search was conducted in the via snowballing and databases including Scopus and Web of Science, covering peer-reviewed journal articles from 2015 to 2024. The search string combined terms related to teaching strategy, international perspective, and higher education. Eligibility criteria required studies to present empirical data, focus on teaching strategies for fostering international perspective, intercultural competence or curriculum internationalisation, and involve international students in the research design. A total of 66 studies were included in the final dataset (see 错误!未找到引用源。). The data underwent thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

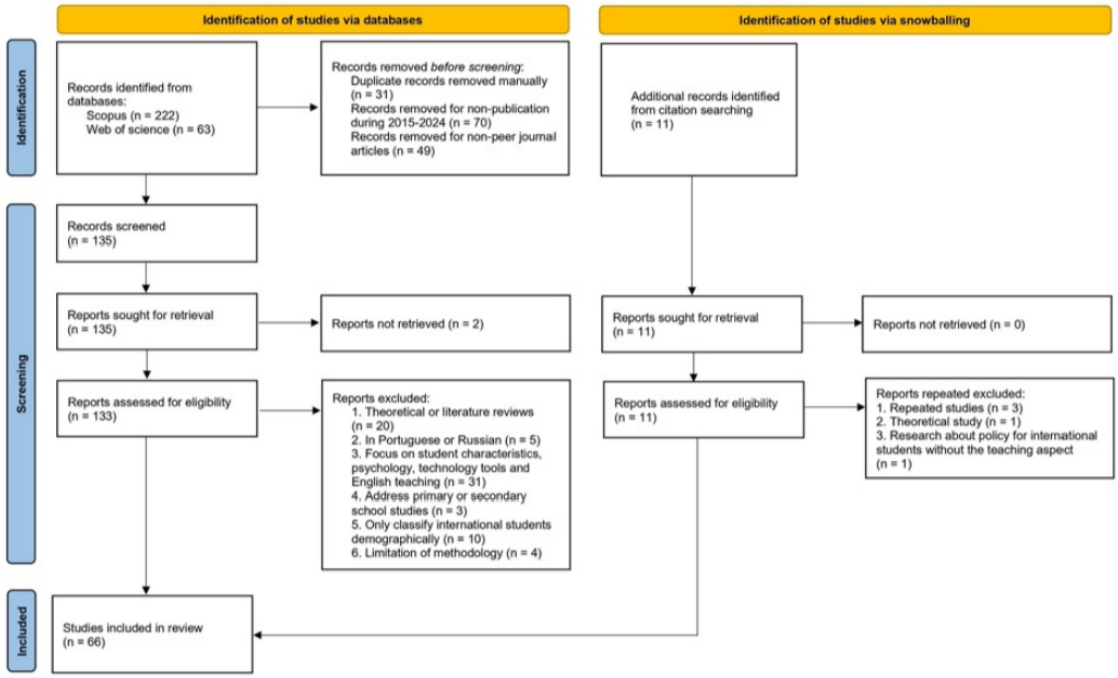


Fig. 1. Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) diagram of the selection process.

Findings and discussions

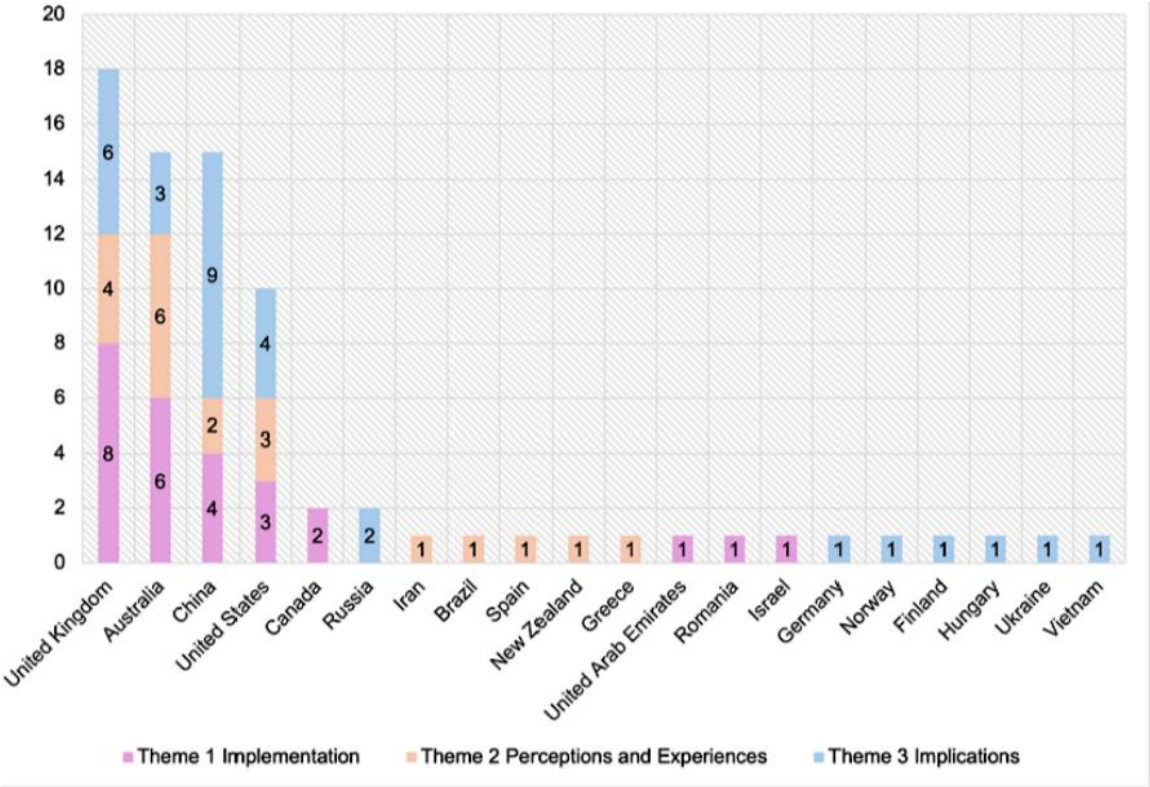


Fig. 2. Host Country of Institutions and Number of Papers

Note. Frequencies were calculated based on the number of times each country appeared in the reviewed studies. The analysis identified three key themes: (1) implementation, (2) perceptions and experiences, and (3) implications. The review results cover 20 host countries where the institutions are located (Fig.2). Despite representing only 25% (n = 5) of the host countries, English-speaking countries contribute 69.7% of the total research, highlighting their dominant

role in internationalised teaching studies. From the lens of institutional theory, the findings highlighted substantial contextual and implementation heterogeneity shaped by institutional and practical conditions, with strategies largely driven by individual teacher initiative and personal intercultural experience rather than systematic institutional support. At the micro level, approaches have gradually shifted from culturally sensitive teaching toward more collaborative, based on the reflection of power of all students involving international students. At the same time, persistent structural constraints, such as limited resources and insufficient professional development, continue to hinder implementation. Institutional priorities in international student recruitment remain misaligned with support for teaching, deficit narratives surrounding international students endure, and boundaries of responsibility between educators and institutions, particularly regarding language support, remain unclear.

This review contributes theoretically by demonstrating the value of Institutional Theory for analysing internationalised teaching at both micro and meso levels, and by proposing a multi-level framework that explains how individual agency interacts with institutional structures in shaping teaching practices.

Key implications for improving teaching of higher education in an internationalised environment include:

- Align resources with admissions of international students.
- Provide systematic professional development to educators.
- Promote teacher-as-researcher approaches, leveraging educators' research expertise to address internationalisation challenges, especially where resources are limited.

Future studies should examine varied teaching contexts including online environments and employ more quasi-experimental designs to strengthen methodological rigour and enable comparative evaluations of pedagogical strategies. Research should also explore the implications of generative AI as a teaching resource for international student learning.

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From Isolation to Collaboration: Lesson Study for Strengthening Lecturer Resilience

Lindiwe Mokotjo

Abstract

This chapter takes the form of a qualitative literature review and conceptual paper that synthesises existing empirical studies to build and refine a conceptualisation of Lesson Study as a cyclical, resilience-building process for lecturers in higher education. Universities increasingly require lecturers to navigate complex student needs, shifting curricula, and intensified performance pressures, thus demanding resilient academic staff who can sustain effective teaching under stress. Drawing on empirical work published between 2020 and 2024, this review conceptualises Lesson Study as a collaborative cycle of joint planning, observation, reflection, and re-teaching that centres student learning while providing structured psychosocial and professional support for lecturers. The chapter illustrates how Lesson Study cycles provide lecturers with opportunities for critical reflection on pedagogical practice, emotional processing, and collective problem-solving. These processes are shown to strengthen key dimensions of resilience, including professional agency, relational connectedness, and adaptive expertise—by positioning lecturers as co-researchers of their own practice. This study therefore positions Lesson Study cycle as a primary pedagogical and professional development mechanism through which lecturers build sustainable, context-responsive resilience. The review offers higher education leaders and academic development practitioners a practical, research-informed framework for designing continuing professional development that simultaneously enhances teaching quality and nurtures resilient lecturers in demanding institutional environments.

Keywords: Lesson Study, Lecturer resilience, Professional development, Higher Education

Papers 6

Stepping into the Crosshairs: Faculty Developers' Role in Times of Educational Crisis

Milagros Castillo-Montoya, Jillian Ives

Abstract

Across the globe, postsecondary students have experienced increasing disruptions to their educational trajectories for a variety of reasons including but not limited to COVID-19, wars, conflicts, and political agendas. Faculty are often on the frontlines of supporting students through these educational disruptions and may themselves experience disruptions to their careers. Based on a systemic literature review and data from faculty focus groups, we highlight four key recommendations for educational developers to support faculty in minimizing the negative impact of educational disruptions.

Keywords: education disruptions, faculty wellbeing, public policies, care

Extended Summary

Across the globe, postsecondary students have experienced increasing disruptions to their educational trajectories. For example, the global pandemic COVID-19, migration due to wars and conflicts, and political agendas that make students and those that serve them at risk of educational disruptions. Faculty are often on the frontlines of supporting students through these educational disruptions and may themselves experience disruptions to their careers. To fully support faculty, educational development cannot be void of the sociopolitical climate that faculty navigate to carry out their work and careers. Based on a review of literature and data from faculty focus groups, we offer four key recommendations for educational developers to support faculty in minimizing the negative impact of educational disruptions.

As part of a larger project on policies and practices that support students with precarious immigration statuses and the higher education institutional agents that support them, we conducted a systematic literature review and faculty focus groups to answer the question: Between 2020-(present), what faculty pedagogical practices and/or policies are being implemented or recommended to support students who encounter educational disruptions at U.S. higher education institutions? What support do faculty need? For the systematic literature review, we followed Hawker et al.'s (2002) method to review disparate data systematically, using inclusion and exclusion criteria to screen literature by abstract and full text. While we focused on the U.S., we also included literature from various countries that met our criteria. This allowed us to include literature relevant to our focus while drawing insights from literature outside of the U.S. This resulted in 445 sources included in the larger project review, of which 245 focused on faculty practices and policies. In addition, we conducted two focus groups with a total of 7 faculty to understand how recent U.S. federal policies and actions impacted them, what they did to support students, and the institutional support they seek to minimize educational and career disruptions. Taken together, our preliminary analysis of the literature and focus group data led us to identify four key recommendations for educational developers to support faculty in their work and careers. Recommendation 1: Advocate for flexible educational policies (e.g., Chan, 2023). Recommendation 2: Serve as resource hubs for faculty to increase their capacity to support students during times of educational disruptions (e.g., Liu et al., 2024). Recommendation 3: Incorporate trauma-informed teaching as a key element of instructional development (e.g., Gates, et al., 2022; Rink, 2025). Recommendation 4: Establish ongoing or "pop-up" communities of practice to prepare and support faculty during times of crisis (e.g., Koris & McKinnon, 2022). While we will expand upon these recommendations during our presentation by highlighting literature and data that inform the development of these recommendations as well as expand on what it would look like to enact these recommendations, here we offer a few insights from our data. Faculty in our focus groups have noted "the best way I can be ... advocate[s] is to be well informed" and that means being able to communicate to students, "remember a quiz on Thursday" but also be informed to also communicate "the food bank here on [location].... That's just the most minimal way in which I can see myself being more responsive to all the interruptions that our students are facing." It means adding a broad range of resources to syllabi well beyond the campus so students can find community resources. It also means creating practices of care and support networks with faculty and students. One faculty member shared: "Now on the 1st day of class, which, what used to just be like, here's the syllabus . . . now spend time educating students on what are our limited access spaces if ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement] were to come on campus and what are our protocols, and we work through those protocols together, just so we're prepared... what I think I'm hearing people say is, 'When we don't have trust in our institution, we have to build and develop trust in each other to keep each other safe.'"

Faculty are using their roles in faculty governance and unions to continue to advocate for their students, and they are attending workshops for additional training such as trauma-informed pedagogy. Much of this is happening by their volition. But faculty need support. Toward that aim, we draw the literature and our research data to offer recommendations for educational developers to support faculty with their work on-the-ground with students and their

efforts to continue to have careers in higher education. The reality is that what was “normal” work for educational developers is no longer the case as disruptions are likely to continue. It is imperative for educational development to switch from being reactive to proactive (Liu et al., 2024) and step into the crosshairs with faculty to offer pedagogical support, resources, and engage in advocacy so that when times of crisis happen, faculty are supported in their work as teachers, researchers, and community members.

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Educational developers' roles in curriculum review: developing, devolving and diminishing agency

Lee-Ann Sequeira, Claire Gordon

Abstract

This paper examines how an educational development centre (EDC) in a UK research-intensive university led a two-year institution-wide programme review (PR) pilot and its complex effects on agency among different actors. The analysis reveals a paradox: while the EDC successfully developed agency for itself and devolved it to programme directors, some educational developers experienced diminished agency despite functioning under the aegis of the EDC.

The study builds on the notion of structure and agency in educational development, a theme that is particularly relevant in the UK given the current UK higher education (HE) landscape where funding challenges and increasing regulation loom large. In tracing the structure and process of the PR pilot, we unpack the complex interplay of structural-agentic interactions contrasting how the same structures can create conditions that are favourable for the EDC to develop agency, but not always for educational developers. Due to a mix of factors - a neoliberal and managerial culture in UKHE, professional identity in a liminal third-space role, and differing educational development outlooks and approaches - there was variability in how educational developers exercised agency - enhanced for some and diminished for others. Uncertainty and change are inherent in the current HE climate and being comfortable in such liminal spaces confers agency. Moving beyond structural and institutional factors, this study contributes to our understanding of educational development practice by detailing how individual factors play a role in developing, devolving, and diminishing agency.

Keywords: Agency, Educational Development, Curriculum, Relational

Extended Summary

Aim: To examine the varying effects on agency among different educational development actors in the context of a two-year programme review (PR) pilot at a UK university.

Theoretical framework: Given the changing higher education (HE) landscape in the UK, we adopt a socio-critical lens that views structure and agency as inter-related factors that affect interactions and processes in HE (Ashwin, 2008) such as PR. This approach has been used to understand institutional policy enactment (McKay & Robson, 2023) and curriculum change (Annala et al., 2023). Our analysis foregrounds structural-agentic factors such as the disciplinary culture, institutional context, regulatory environment and the roles and identities of individual actors and entities.

Key findings: Our analysis is organised along the dynamics of agency and its variable effect on different actors.

Developing agency: In the current UK HE context characterised by significant funding challenges and an increasingly demanding regulator, EDCs have faced growing pressures to demonstrate their value in service of the strategic educational priorities of the HE institution (HEI) (Gordon & Smidt, 2025). The two-year PR pilot provided an opportunity for the EDC to lead and shape an institution-wide initiative and underline its service role to the institution. The EDC sought to align the PR process with educational development values: privileging a developmental, forward-looking, quality enhancement approach over a more directed, retrospective tick-box exercise. The approach was based on the principle of 'freedom within a framework.' HEI leadership set specific themes that all participating departments had to address, and the EDC convened a dialogic review panel as the culminating point. Beyond these mandatory elements, considerable agency was devolved to programme teams to customise their PRs by identifying the questions to focus on within the themes and shaping how they would proceed. However, leading an institution-wide strategic programme meant that the EDC was explicitly espousing a more top-down identity that was more closely aligned to HEI leadership. An unintended consequence of this approach was that some education developers (EDs) experienced a sense of challenge to their traditional identities and practice and a diminution of their agency.

Devolving agency: Running over two years with 11 participating programmes across the HEI, the EDC played a central role in the PR pilot with responsibility for design and delivery.

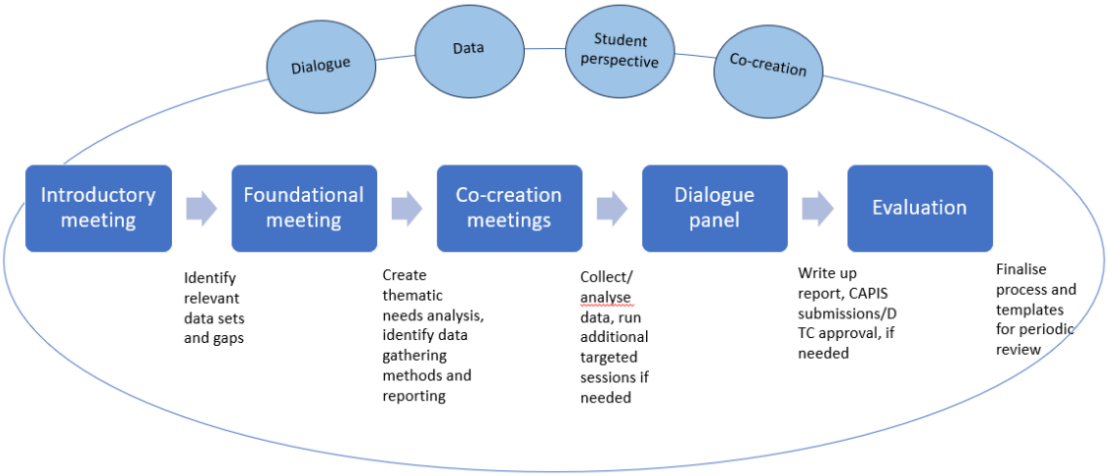


Fig. 1. Key stages of PR pilot underpinned by four guiding principles

The EDC pioneered a dialogic approach in the PR, which was most evident in the dialogue panel. The dialogue panel assembled key members of the programme team and central services, students, academics from other universities, employers, and alumni to identify and discuss key issues that surfaced during PR. The dialogue panel was framed as a staging post in ongoing review processes rather than an endpoint. Following the 'freedom within a framework' policy, the EDC structured choice and customisation into the PR process from the beginning. Structural factors of interest to the programme directors (PDs) such as student feedback, disciplinary norms, department cultures, and socio-economic trends were creatively aligned with strategic institutional goals. In this way, the EDC ensured that PDs were able to decide the goals of the review for their programmes and the means of exploring, articulating, and assessing them, instead of "only being given the space to choose the means to accomplish such goals" (Di Napoli, 2014). Feedback from PDs revealed that the PR bestowed on them a degree of legitimacy and power, which they did not always enjoy in their departments. Similar to Annala et al. (2023), we observed primarily progressive agency among PDs, but this could be as they had self-selected into the pilot.

Diminishing agency. The PR pilot offered EDs an opportunity to facilitate an important strategic initiative that afforded institution-wide visibility and impact. The EDs exercised bridge-building agency – connecting central units with PDs and translating metrics and data into relatable pedagogic and student learning experiences. But some EDs' agency was limited by external and structural factors. The prevailing regulatory environment (Gordon, 2019) has contributed to a culture of learnification (Biesta 2015) where the ability of EDs to exercise judgement has been diminished, turning them into "the soft arm of managerialism" (Di Napoli, 2014). EDs occupy a liminal space as third-space professionals (Whitchurch, 2012), whose credibility suffers as a result of their professional status in the hierarchy of elite, research-intensive HEIs, leading to them being characterised as 'second-class citizens' (Grant & Kennie, 2024).

The pilot highlighted contrasting educational development outlooks among the EDs. Some EDs were frustrated with the relatively open-ended nature of the programme review and the amorphous nature of their roles within it. The relational (Dean & Geertsema, 2023), dialogic approach of the EDC was at odds with a more directive, instrumental approach favoured by some EDs. Being a pilot, processes and structures were not always clear at the outset and required negotiation with a range of actors. Conversely, the pilot gave some EDs a seat at the table where programme design decisions were made. It should be emphasised that among the EDs, there was no homogenous position or preference, but a mixed, variable experience in contrast to the EDC's unequivocal success. Understanding these tensions and trade-offs as structural-agentic interactions moves the discussion of processes such as strategic curriculum reform into critical territory and EDs as education policy actors (Ball, 2015). The notion of structured agency where the ED is shaped by the pedagogy and curriculum policy they advocate provides insight into why different ED actors (EDs and the EDC) might experience different levels of agency – opportunity, subjugation, and threat (McKay & Robson, 2023). Compounded by the professional services staff status of EDs, this results in the under-development of skills and attitudes needed to operate in a liminal space marked by tensions and challenges.

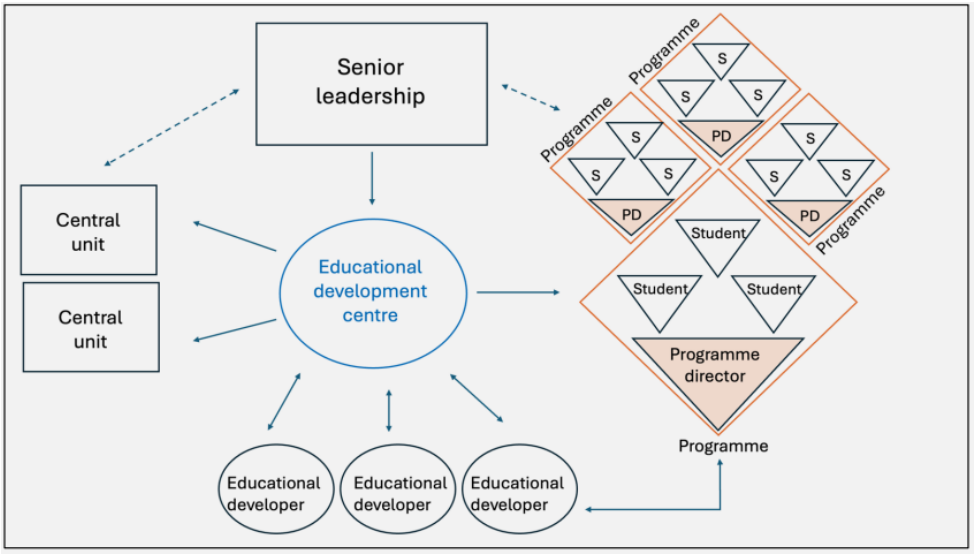


Fig. 2. PR as a set of structural-agentic processes: actors and interactions

Success at the strategic level and institutional impact and visibility accrues to the EDC but does not trickle down to the EDs to the same extent. EDCs and university management need to foster conditions for EDs to enhance their capital, develop their self-efficacy (Murray, 2022), and thereby exert meaningful agency.

Implications:

- Strategy: Playing a service role in institution-wide initiatives results in greater agency for EDCs.
- Policy: By prioritising the 'freedom within a framework' policy, EDCs can champion autonomy of departments and confer agency on PDs.
- Practice: While a relational approach is better suited to ED work in the current HE environment, EDCs and HEIs should actively remove structural barriers to EDs' agency.
- Educational significance: It is not just external and structural factors that influence the agency EDs exert, but also their individual education development outlook and approach to their practice.

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More Than a Room: Educational Developers' Roles in Leveraging Active Learning Classrooms for Pedagogical and Institutional Change

Luciano da Rosa dos Santos, John Cheeseman

Abstract

This paper reports findings from a multi-year evaluation of an institutional Active Learning Initiative (ALI) at a mid-sized undergraduate Canadian university. The initiative combined the creation of high- and low-tech active learning classrooms (ALCs) with structured faculty development and a systematic investigation of their use. Using a convergent mixed-methods design, data were collected from student and faculty surveys, open-ended responses, workshop field notes, and interviews with instructors across disciplines. Students consistently reported high engagement and valued the opportunities for discussion, collaboration, and instructor circulation afforded by ALCs, while also noting that unclear activity design or technology failures amplified confusion. Faculty described significant emotional and cognitive work in adapting to ALCs, with some experiencing identity-level shifts and others retreating to lecture when institutional supports were misaligned. The study argues that ALCs can function as pedagogical amplifiers, and that educational developers must engage learning spaces as part of a coordinated institutional ecosystem in their roles as change agents.

Keywords: Active Learning Classrooms, Mixed-methods evaluation, educational developers as change agents, transformative learning

Extended Summary

This paper presents findings from a multi-year evaluation of an institutional Active Learning Initiative (ALI) at a mid-sized, teaching-focused Canadian university. The ALI emerged at the convergence of two drivers: growing institutional investment in active learning classrooms (ALCs) and increasing expectations that educational development be evidence-informed, strategic, and capable of supporting large-scale pedagogical change. Rather than approaching ALCs as isolated architectural upgrades, the initiative positioned them as catalysts for rethinking instructional practice, educational development, and the institutional conditions that enable or constrain innovation. This study addresses three questions: 1) How do students experience learning in ALCs?; 2) How do instructors adapt their practice in these environments?; and 3) How do instructors and students perceive institutional factors in shaping their experiences in an ALC?

The ALI consisted of three interrelated strands. First, organizational development, where educational developers collaborated with the institution to create high-tech and low-tech ALCs: one with pod-level displays and integrated AV (adapted from SCALE-UP; Beichner et al., 2007), and three redesigned to support collaboration, movement, and writable surfaces without the AV technology. Although the affordances varied, we treated them as a unified intervention aimed at disrupting transmission-oriented teaching. Second, faculty development through classroom orientations, active learning workshops, a community of practice, and consultations. Third, a structured investigation to inform institutional decisions about learning spaces and support structures.

The study integrates two bodies of scholarship. Research on active learning and ALCs suggests that space and pedagogy are mutually constitutive, with classroom design functioning as a sociomaterial influence on practice (Ellis & Goodyear, 2016; McNeil & Borg, 2018). Prior work (Beichner, 2014; Leijon et al, 2022) indicates that ALCs can promote interaction and collaboration mainly when instructional methods align with spatial affordances. Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991) helps interpret instructors' adaptation to ALCs, where moving from lecture routines to interactive teaching produces "disorienting dilemmas" that prompt emotional and identity-level work. Together, these perspectives can support a conceptual understanding of ALCs as pedagogical amplifiers, magnifying both strong pedagogy and its absence.

Adopting a convergent mixed-methods design (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019), we collected data over five years to capture both the breadth of user perceptions and the depth of instructional practices. Quantitative data were drawn from student (n=229, ~20% response rate) and faculty (n=32, ~80% response rate) surveys adapted from Walker et al. (2015), utilizing Likert scales to measure engagement, collaboration, pedagogical practices and room affordances. Qualitative data included open-ended survey responses, field notes from development workshops, and in-depth interviews with seven instructors selected to represent a range of disciplines and active-learning experience. Analysis occurred in two phases. First, quantitative data were treated using descriptive statistics (frequencies and distributions) to identify engagement patterns, acknowledging the limitations of convenience sampling on broad generalizations. Second, qualitative data underwent thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Codes were generated inductively and triangulated against quantitative indicators. For example, contrasting high agreement scores on "interaction" with nuanced interview narratives regarding the labor required to sustain that interaction.

Findings

1. Student experiences: Students in our sample reported consistently high levels of engagement and learning in ALCs. More than 95% agreed that instructors promoted discussion, that it was easy to follow class activities, and that the

room helped them connect with peers. Features such as writable surfaces, collaborative layouts, and instructor circulation were frequently described as enabling deeper understanding; for example, seeing multiple solution paths or receiving timely clarification during group work. However, the same features became liabilities when activities lacked structure. Students noted that unclear expectations, poorly timed transitions, or malfunctioning technology amplified confusion. These results align with the interpretation of ALCs as pedagogical amplifiers: they enhance well-designed instruction and magnify the consequences of ambiguity or inadequate planning.

2. Faculty practice: Over 80% of surveyed instructors reported using collaborative tasks and room features regularly, and over 90% indicated high levels of interaction with students. Yet qualitative accounts revealed that this shift required substantial emotional and cognitive labor. Faculty described early ALC experiences as disorienting: familiar lecturing cues (front of room, visual control, pacing) were destabilized; monitoring multiple groups was overwhelming; and new technologies introduced cognitive load. From a Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991) lens, one possible interpretation suggests that these disruptions can be perceived as identity-level challenges. Many of the participating instructors reevaluated assumptions about preparation, coverage, and what it means to "be in control" of a class. For instructors who had access to ongoing support (e.g., consultations, peer dialogue, iterative task design), these dilemmas seemed to evolve into sustained critical reflection on their teaching practices and, in some cases, contributed to meaningful shifts in their teaching identity. For others, inconsistent support or scheduling in inappropriate rooms, among other possible reasons, led to a retreat toward lecturing despite spatial misalignment.

3. Institutional conditions: Across data sources, participants emphasized that the success of these ALCs depended on institutional structures, including scheduling processes, workload recognition, and technology support. For instance, several instructors emphasized the need for rapid-response technical support during class sessions. According to these participants, when these systems were misaligned with the pedagogical intentions of the ALCs or the preferred approaches of instructors, the affordances of the space were undercut. Conversely, coherent coordination between educational development, space planning, and academic units appeared to enable instructors to sustain new practices.

The findings highlight the need for educational developers of this institution to move "beyond the room" and engage learning spaces as part of a broader institutional ecosystem. Developers can position themselves to, among other things, 1) advocate for alignment between pedagogy and room assignment; 2) support faculty through identity-level transitions, not just technique adoption; 3) lead evidence-informed conversations about workload, recognition, and infrastructure; and 4) shape institutional strategy for innovation adoption. The study contributes to academic development literature and practice by illustrating how space, pedagogy, identity, and organizational structures can interact, and by offering a conceptual frame (ALCs as pedagogical amplifiers) that is potentially transferable across contexts.

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Strategic Roles of Centers for Teaching and Learning in Shaping AI Integration in Hungarian Higher Education

Ida Dringo-Horvath, Lilla Anna Sebestyén, Zsófia Drjenovszky, Judit T. Nagy

Abstract

This paper investigates the strategic role of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) in shaping institutional responses to the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in Hungarian higher education. Initially, the development of AI-related guidelines was slow and inconsistent following the release of ChatGPT in late 2022. A significant shift occurred after a government regulation, effective from December 2024, mandated all higher education institutions to update their internal policies on AI by September 2025. Consequently, by autumn 2025, nearly 60% of institutions had issued formal AI guidelines. The study draws on two empirical investigations. The first is a biennial survey of CTL leaders, conducted in 2022, 2024, and planned for 2026; the most recent wave, carried out in late 2024, gathered responses from CTL leaders across 62 institutions, with a 61% response rate. It explored AI-related educational development strategies, incorporating elements from a European staff development project. The second study, conducted in early 2025, analyzed 37 AI regulatory documents from 33 institutions to assess the scope and depth of institutional policies.

Findings reveal that these documents range from 1 to 52 pages, typically 3–7 pages, and have grown more complex over time. Most were issued through formal institutional mechanisms and often include practical examples to support implementation. The presence of CTLs correlates with more comprehensive and diverse AI policies, as well as broader training and support services. The research underscores the pivotal role of CTLs in aligning professional development with institutional strategies, thereby advancing digital transformation and innovation in higher education.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Academic Development, Higher Education, Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Extended Summary

This paper explores how Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) act as strategic agents in addressing emerging challenges and advancing institutional responses to the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning. In Hungarian higher education, the development and implementation of AI guidelines to support educators and students were initially slow and fragmented—particularly during the first two years following the release of ChatGPT on November 30, 2022. A major turning point came with the government regulation, which came into force on December 21, 2024. The law required all higher education institutions to review and update their internal regulations by September 1, 2025, to ensure the appropriate governance of AI usage. As a result, by autumn 2025, nearly 60% of institutions had published formal AI guidelines, and the regulatory process continues to evolve. Drawing on two empirical studies, this paper presents a comprehensive overview of current AI-related initiatives. The first study, conducted in late 2024, involved an online survey of CTL leaders, with 61% of Hungary's 62 higher education institutions providing detailed insights into their educational development activities. The survey included both original items and adapted questions from the European project Staff Development for Learning and Teaching at European Universities, focusing on AI-related CTL strategies.

The primary focus of the presentation is the second study, conducted in early 2025, which examined university regulatory papers to evaluate the visibility and substance of institutional AI policies implemented in education and research. Content analysis was used to identify recurring themes and gaps in these documents. Out of 62 Hungarian higher education institutions, 33 have issued a total of 37 AI-related regulatory documents. These guidelines vary in length from 1 to 52 pages, with the majority spanning 3 to 7 pages. Over time, the documents have become increasingly complex and multifaceted, often addressing both students and faculty, and frequently including appendices and practical examples. Most regulations were adopted through Senate resolutions, rectoral or dean-level decrees, or amendments to institutional policy-documents. Some were also informed by working group recommendations. The scope of these documents ranges from faculty- or unit-specific to institution-wide, occasionally supplemented by subject-specific guidance. Notably, 22 of the 37 documents include concrete examples or templates, offering practical support for educators and students in applying the regulations within teaching and learning contexts. Findings indicate that CTLs have had a clear impact on the institutional regulation of AI: where CTLs are present, AI policies tend to be more widespread and diverse. An examination of the range of services and training offered also reveals a strong correlation. The significance of the research lies in highlighting the importance of CTLs in the digitization of higher education by aligning professional development with institutional strategies and global trends in higher education innovation.

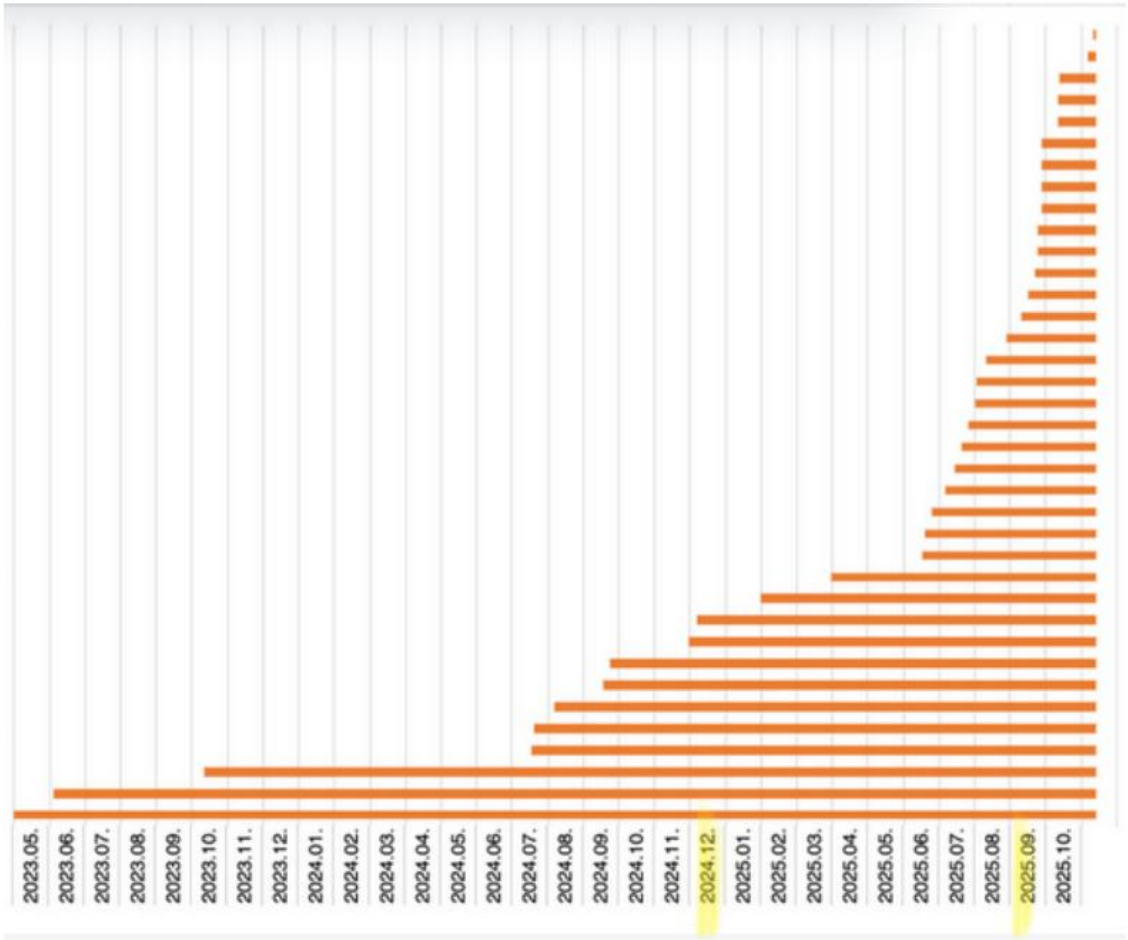


Fig. 1. The pace of introduction of artificial intelligence regulations in Hungarian higher education, by institution (N = 33).

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AD Leadership in Norwegian HE Mergers: Challenges and Opportunities

Katja Hakel

Abstract

This empirical study explores how academic development (AD) leadership was shaped and constrained during two major higher education mergers in Norway. While previous literature frames academic developers as potential bridge-builders in institutional change, this research reveals how AD leaders were sidelined during two merger processes where university colleges merged into larger universities. Drawing on 29 interviews with faculty, leaders, and ADs, the study uncovers how an emphasis on managerial integration, lack of strategic mandates, and inter-unit competition limited the role of academic development in supporting institutional transformation. The findings point to missed opportunities for leveraging AD leadership in negotiating organizational culture and identity, and they highlight the need for inclusive and strategic involvement of academic developers in future reforms. This paper offers critical insights into how the field of academic development can strengthen its agency and strategic position during times of systemic change.

Keywords: Higher education mergers, Academic development, Leadership, Organizational culture

Extended Summary

Aim

This study investigates the academic development (AD) challenges and opportunities arising from higher education (HE) mergers in Norway in 2016, involving two large universities and four remote university colleges. It examines the intersection of leadership, academic development, and institutional reorganization by addressing the central question: 'What were the consequences of the mergers for academic development and leadership needs at the merged university colleges?'. The study also explores how these mergers affected roles and responsibilities of faculty, leaders, and ADs, alongside other changes impacting academic development.

Methodology and theoretical framework

A case study methodology was used, based on semi-structured interviews conducted four years after the mergers with 29 informants: 8 faculty, 11 leaders (department to top level), and 10 academic developers (both central ADs and faculty with partial AD responsibilities). Data were analysed inductively using thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2022; Nowell et al., 2017). The theoretical framework draws on literature on HE mergers, organizational culture and identity negotiation (Cai et al., 2016; Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013), and the liminal nature of AD leadership (Kensington-Miller et al., 2015; Mori et al., 2022), emphasizing ADs as potential 'bridge-builders' or 'brokers' (Rathbun & Turner, 2012; Sugrue et al., 2018; Willis & Strivens, 2015).

Key findings

Three parallel processes emerged: organizational negotiation, identity negotiation, and cultural opportunity: 1. Organizational Negotiation ('The system governs'): The mergers were overwhelmingly driven by organizational considerations, prioritizing administrative system development over academic development. ADs were largely excluded from decision-making processes and lacked a clear mandate. While faculty participation in committees was high, it often resulted in feelings of being overwhelmed and isolated, particularly at satellite campuses where strong pre-merger collaborations were lost. 2. Identity Negotiation: The mergers significantly challenged he integration of institutional histories, cultures, and identities.

Loss of academic authority was a prominent theme, as faculty and leaders experienced limited involvement in decision-making. Local ADs were sidelined by central AD units, who viewed them as competitors, resulting in a power struggle that led many local ADs to abandon their roles.

Informants responded with strategies of lobbying (to assert influence and secure favorable outcomes) and 'going under the radar' (disregarding unclear directives to make academic development decisions based on local needs).

There was a significant loss of community and increased fragmentation, as pre-merger interdisciplinary structures and local networks were dismantled. Satellite campuses experienced a reduction in academic, social, and local meeting points.

Leaders and ADs also struggled with reclaiming identity within the new structures, facing expanded responsibilities, unclear mandates, and reduced influence within the larger university system. 3. The Merger as an Opportunity (Cultural Process): Despite challenges, the mergers presented benefits such as increased brand value, expanded collaborations, cross-campus AD opportunities, stronger research environments, and increased funding. Crucially, informants emphasized the importance of recognizing institutional diversity, describing the new organization as a 'conglomerate of many shops and many cultures'. This calls for culturally sensitive AD initiatives that 'meet participants where they are' to foster mutual trust.

Theoretical and educational significance

This study highlights several key lessons for AD leadership in merger contexts: It reveals a significant discrepancy between the literature's ideal of ADs as cultural brokers (Rathbun & Turner, 2012; Sugrue et al., 2018) and their marginalized roles in these cases, confirming the liminal status noted by Kensington-Miller et al. (2015) and Mori et al. (2022). The findings confirm a broader tendency in HE mergers to prioritize structural and managerial alignment over academic identity and cultural integration (Cai et al., 2016; Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013). Successful mergers depend on aligning nested institutional identities (Borlaug et al., 2023), a task well-suited to ADs who can facilitate dialogue and sense-making. Their role in navigating institutional change is vital, yet often underutilized.

Implications for practice and future research

For practice and policy, institutions should explicitly empower ADs as strategic cultural brokers, leveraging integrative capabilities. Future research should conduct longitudinal studies to explore how academic communities and identities evolve post-merger and examine how local leadership and targeted AD initiatives can support these complex transitions.

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Papers 7

Program Innovation as Holistic Educational Development: A Case Study

Jaclyn Carter, Kimberley Grant, Patti Dyjur

Abstract

This paper will explore effective ways that academic and non-academic staff—including those in formal and informal educational development roles—can collaborate to support meaningful and sustainable academic program design, development, and approval at institutional and government levels. Using our institution's Decision Support Team as a case study, this paper will discuss a) the function of the Decision Support Team as a collaborative, informal (but mandatory) first stop for all program proposals moving through our institutional governance process; b) the benefits of this holistic approach to educational development work; and c) the ways in which educational developers can collaborate with other academic and non-academic staff members to produce sustainable and impactful programs to the betterment of the student learning experience.

Keywords: holistic, collaborative, educational development, program development

Extended Summary

This paper will explore effective ways that academic and non-academic staff—including those in formal and informal educational development roles—can collaborate to support meaningful and sustainable academic program design, development, and approval at institutional and government levels. Using our institution's Decision Support Team (DST) as a case study, this paper will discuss a) the function of DST as an informal (but mandatory) first stop for all program proposals moving through our institutional governance process; b) the benefits of this collaborative approach to educational development work; and c) the ways in which educational developers (EDs) (categorized as academic staff at our institution) can collaborate with other academic and non-academic staff members to produce sustainable and impactful programs to the betterment of the student experience.

Definitions of educational development are nuanced, institutionally contextual, and ever evolving in the scholarly conversation. Mårtensson & Roxå (2021) refer to the variation among "lifeworld[s]" of EDs, suggesting that we "find [our]selves immersed in professional existences that are different, existences that due to their immediateness will colour [our] reflections and actions" (p. 405). Similarly, Mihai, Dailey-Hebert & Beausaert (2025) write that educational development takes on specific "institutional forms" that are "context-specific" and "hard to generalize" (n.p.). The complexity of this work is reflected in the roles we, the authors, have played on DST, and how we conceive of the collaborative nature of this work with other members of the team.

DST represents a first stop for proponents shepherding a program proposal through the formal approval process at our institution. All new programs in development, as well as existing programs undergoing significant curricular or structural changes, use a proposal template supplied by our government to ensure all critical aspects of a new or revised program have been considered and captured in proposal documents. These include appropriate institutional and industry contexts; ongoing quality assurance measures; a full program of study, including calendar entry, admission requirements and other applicable academic regulations, program learning outcomes, and proposed mode(s) of delivery; enrolment planning; labour market and learner demand; financial viability and sustainability; tuition and cost considerations; and institutional capacity and system impact.

Two EDs sit on DST in any given year, alongside members from the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Registrar, the Faculty of Graduate Studies, the University Secretariat, and University Finance. Broad membership on this team is intentional and meant to provide comprehensive and robust early support to those individuals developing programs and their associated proposals. The EDs bring scholarly educational development practice from our home in the teaching and learning centre (TLC) to bear on these program conversations, often focusing our attention on program learning outcomes, curriculum maps, and overall learning design and impact.

In the last five years, a dedicated educational developer was hired to work from within our program development unit in the Office of the Provost to provide directed teaching and learning support and consultation from program ideation onward, and to build or sustain bridges with other academic and non-academic units across campus in support of program innovation. Of the eight EDs employed as tenure-track or tenured academic staff in our TLC, this role is the only one whose office is physically located outside our TLC, and is reflective of the value our institution places on scholarly teaching and learning and its impact on our campus-wide program offerings.

Together, the two EDs and our colleagues around the table at DST reflect what Sutherland (2018) calls "holistic" educational development—an approach that "pay[s] attention to the whole of the academic role, the whole institution, and the whole person" (p. 270, author's emphasis). In particular, considerations of the whole institution ask educational developers to serve as "brokers between disciplines, departments, leaders and managers on the development of, and

strategic imperatives around, learning and teaching," and should "include the professional and support staff, and the students, who support the development of teaching, learning, and research, not just the academic staff" (p. 261). DST, comprised of representatives from the whole institution, takes up this holistic approach to program innovation as an inherently collaborative, feedback-oriented body comprised of diverse voices in both academic and non-academic staff positions. We read draft proposal documents in advance of each meeting (scheduled every 2-3 weeks during the academic year), and then discuss, in conversation with program proponents, areas of strength, opportunities for further development, and questions that proponents can anticipate as they enter the formal approvals process.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes: DST is not designed to replace the need for individual consultation with our EDs or other units on campus represented in the team's membership. It is a supportive first step in the formal program development process that aims to streamline proponents' experiences through governance. Our roles as EDs on this team, and the structure and function of the team itself, represent a unique and innovative approach to educational development work that blends the expertise of academic leadership, academic staff, and a wide range of non-academic roles. DST, by its very nature, functions as a holistic solution to many of the threats Sutherland (2018) identifies as currently central to our discipline—"the complexity of organisational structures, … disciplinary differences, … the side-lining of important community members, … a failure to recognise the tensions in academic work, and … a too-slow take-up of ideas from and collaboration with other development fields" (p. 270).

In sharing the history, function, priorities, and practice of our institution's Decision Support Team, and our contributions as educational developers to this team, the authors will provide a practical framework for holistic, collaborative educational development work centred around program design and innovation. Participants supporting program design will walk away with practical, evidence-based strategies for increasing institutional collaboration in this work; educational developers with more diverse areas of focus will come away with a concrete understanding of holistic educational development in practice and consider ways in which it might apply to other development contexts.

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FPD-Include: Designing Faculty Development for Inclusive Teaching in Pharmacy Education

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Abstract

This paper presents FPD-Include (Faculty Professional Development for Inclusion in Pharmacy Education), a European cooperation project that addresses inclusive teaching through faculty development. Although inclusion has been widely discussed in pharmacy education, educators often lack sustained, discipline-specific support to translate inclusive principles into everyday teaching practice. FPD-Include responds to this gap by supporting teaching reflection, faculty agency, and shared professional learning across four European universities. The project integrates an international needs assessment with a faculty-focused Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) course structured around five areas: collaboration in diverse student groups; intercultural competence and communication; inclusive assessment and feedback; inclusive teaching in STEM contexts; and building trust and repairing relationships in the classroom. The COIL engaged 48 educators from six institutions. Participants valued the opportunity to exchange experiences with peers in different countries and reported that recognising shared challenges strengthened their confidence and awareness, particularly in relation to inclusive teaching and supporting students with neurodivergence and disabilities. Educators also highlighted the importance of structured dialogue and masterclasses and noted the limitations of individual work given teaching workloads. The paper argues that faculty development for inclusion can have a meaningful impact on educators' awareness, language, and reflective practice, while also demonstrating that one-off interventions are insufficient for long-term change. The contribution offers transferable insights for academic developers designing inclusive faculty development programmes and points to the need for sustained structures that support implementation and retention of inclusive teaching practices.

Keywords: Faculty development; Inclusive teaching; Pharmacy Education; COIL; Faculty agency

Extended Summary

The aim of this paper is to present and analyse FPD-Include (Faculty Professional Development for Inclusion in Pharmacy Education), a European cooperation project designed to strengthen inclusive teaching through faculty development. While inclusion has long been addressed at the level of institutional strategy in pharmacy education (White et al., 2013), fewer initiatives have focused on sustained, discipline specific support that helps educators translate inclusion into everyday teaching practice. This paper examines how FPD-Include supported teaching reflection, faculty agency, and shared professional learning across four European universities.

FPD-Include is informed by scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) that frames teaching as an object of inquiry and emphasises reflection, shared language, and evidence-informed change in practice (Felten, 2013). The project is also grounded in work on integrating SoTL into instructional and institutional processes, which highlights the importance of collective engagement, dialogue, and alignment between faculty development and everyday teaching contexts (Goodburn & Savory, 2009). Methodologically, the project combined an international needs assessment with the design and implementation of a faculty-focused Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) course. Pharmacy educators and students contributed to the needs assessment, which explored experiences of inclusion, confidence in inclusive teaching, and areas where educators felt insufficiently supported. The findings informed the structure and content of the COIL, while collaboration between educational developers and pharmacy educators ensured that the course was grounded in both pedagogical principles and disciplinary realities.

The needs assessment revealed shared challenges related to fostering inclusive classrooms, supporting diverse learners, and feeling prepared to address complex teaching situations. These challenges were organised into five areas that structured the COIL: collaboration in diverse student groups; intercultural competence and communication; inclusive assessment and feedback; inclusive teaching in STEM contexts; and building trust and repairing relationships in the classroom. The COIL engaged 48 educators from six institutions across four countries. Participants consistently valued the opportunity to exchange experiences with international peers and reported discovering more commonality than expected, particularly regarding confidence, trust-building, and preparedness for inclusive teaching, including teaching students with neurodivergence and disabilities. The COIL format was generally perceived as effective for faculty development, though participants expressed a preference for more masterclasses and structured dialogue and less individual work, reflecting the constraints of busy teaching schedules.

The significance of FPD-Include lies in its impact on how educators began to think about, talk about, and reflect on their teaching. Participation in the project prompted shifts in awareness and encouraged the use of more inclusive language when discussing pedagogical challenges with colleagues. Rather than focusing solely on techniques, the project supported deeper reflection on responsibility, preparedness, and relational aspects of teaching. At the same time, the findings underline that a single faculty development course is not sufficient to sustain change. While participants reported meaningful learning, many expressed the need for continued opportunities to practise, refine, and embed inclusive approaches. This highlights the importance of designing faculty development as an ongoing process rather than a one-off intervention. Future research should explore how participation in the COIL influences teaching practice

over time, what enables or constrains educators in implementing what they have learned, and how institutional conditions shape sustainability. Further work may also examine whether continued engagement through follow-up activities or communities of practice supports retention of inclusive teaching practices and professional confidence.

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Educational Development through Course Design, Community of Practice and Mentoring: The EDUflow Program

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Abstract

This paper presents initial findings from the EDUflow program, a two-semester long initiative launched at Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary, aimed to enhance sustainable educational development in higher education. EDUflow supports university teachers to become skilled course designers and pedagogical change agents through a structured learning journey that combines facilitated self-paced courses, in-person trainings, and personalized mentoring. In the Hungarian higher education context, where formal pedagogical qualifications are not a prerequisite for academic teaching positions, EDUflow offers a novel approach by supporting continuous professional development embedded in institutional learning. Participant university teachers are also given dedicated timeframes to form communities of practice. The educational program integrates perspectives across institutional levels (micro, meso, macro) and is grounded in theoretical framework of ecosystem thinking and reflective practice. We conducted semi-structured interviews and used the DigCompEdu survey to collect data from volunteering participants (N=23). Initial results suggest self-perceived improvement in digital teaching competence and increased pedagogical agency. Further, initial program outcomes are a growing multidisciplinary network of course designer experts, reusable online self-paced courses and emerging interfaculty collaborations. The paper identifies some limitations – such as reliance on self-reported data and short-term evaluation windows and proposes further research directions as a longitudinal impact tracking and involving student learning analytics. We will also offer insights beyond the immediate context which may be of interest to others working in educational development.

Keywords: Higher Education, Pedagogical Transformation, Change Agent, Educational Development

Extended Summary

This paper presents initial findings on an integrated approach to educational development which aims to develop university teachers' course design skills through community building and mentored learning experiences so as to also drive individual as well as institutional learning in the area of higher education teaching and learning. The two-semester-long EDUFlow program fosters sustainable transformation in teaching by supporting university teachers with dedicated time allocation, online resources, in-person training, and mentorship to become skilled course designers and change agents within their contexts (Schroeder, 2011). Following the ecosystem's view (Roxå, 2014), the program integrates participants' perspectives from the micro, meso, and macro levels of the institution (cf. Dorner & Misic, 2024).

Theoretical Background

Studies typically examine educational development programs based on their effects on institutional and student performance, and their diverse impact on the participating university teachers (Fabriz et al., 2020). These studies found that longer programs had more positive behavioral outcomes than shorter ones (Burgess et al., 2019; Vilppu et al., 2019).

In Hungary, formal pedagogical qualifications are not a prerequisite for academic teaching positions. Most universities do not require certification of their academic staff's teaching competence; nevertheless, they do expect good teaching evidenced by teaching evaluations (Dósa et al., 2020). Centers for teaching and learning have gradually been focusing on supporting the development of pedagogical competence of academic staff.

Program Design and Implementation

To address these institutional and pedagogical challenges, the EDUFlow program was designed; and participants were selected through a competitive application and interview process. The selected university teachers received dedicated time for professional development. They participated in a structured learning journey combining in-person group trainings, self-paced online courses with facilitated scaffolding, and personalized mentoring; all built on the principles of communities of practice and reflective practice (cf. Misic, Rymarenko & Dorner, 2021). It aimed to empower academic teachers to experience meaningful, self-directed transformation in their teaching practice and form an interdisciplinary community across faculties. The program was also integrated in institutional HR systems. Participants engaged in reflective activities, such as online learning journals, collaborative design tasks, and portfolio-creation. The learning trajectory included 16 self-paced online courses, 11 in-person group trainings, and over 30 hours of mentorship to implement a holistic academic development approach (cf. Dorner & Mårtensson, 2021).

Methods and Initial Results

We conducted semi-structured interviews and used the DigCompEdu questionnaire (Redecker & Punie, 2017) adapted to the higher education environment to collect data from volunteering program participants (N=23). We explored the ecosystem (micro-, meso- and macro-level dynamics) of the EDUFlow program, in particular, how the program elements (self-paced courses, in-person training and mentoring) have contributed to participants development of teaching competence. At the individual participants' level, our initial findings indicate self-perceived development in teaching

awareness and in digital teaching competence measured by the DigCompEdu self-assessment criteria (Redecker & Punie, 2017). The participating university teachers also confirmed strengthened agency in supporting micro and meso level pedagogical transformation (Schroeder, 2011), which manifested in participation in disciplinary educational development initiatives.

The preliminary program-level outcomes are as follows:

• 10 to 12 university teachers are certified as course design experts annually.

• Emergence of a strong, multidisciplinary community of experts that extends beyond the program's duration.

• 16 reusable self-paced courses are now open to all university teachers in the institution.

• 10 to 12 online courses anchored in research-informed design practices created by participants.

• Conference presence and publications that document participants' self-development.

Limitations and Further Research

Our study has several limitations. Most evidence on the program's impact relies on self-reported data, such as DigCompEdu results and interviews, which may introduce bias or overstate actual competence development. The evaluation also focuses mainly on participant outcomes, so the program's direct effects on student learning have not yet been measured. Moreover, the assessment window is short, capturing only immediate and one-year post-program results, even though some outcomes may emerge later. Based on the above limitations and the early outcomes, future studies could examine how participants' teaching practices and leadership engagement evolve over time, sing mixed methods such as classroom observations, student interviews, and follow-up interviews. They may also investigate how courses redesigned during EDUFlow influence student motivation and engagement. In addition, further research could explore whether the communities of practice continue to play a meaningful role in academic development.

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Beyond Academic Silos: A Podcast-Based "Gentle FD" Initiative in a Research-Intensive University

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Abstract

Faculty development (FD) in research-intensive universities often struggles to reach faculty members due to entrenched academic silos, limited time, and a lack of shared understanding of FD as a collegial practice. In response to these challenges, this study explores an alternative, low-barrier format for FD that allows faculty to engage without formal commitment.

To this end, we designed and implemented a 12-episode podcast series titled "FD for UTokyo Faculty: 30-Minute Teaching Refreshers." Each episode features a casual yet informed dialogue among FD specialists on timely topics such as generative AI, active learning, course and syllabus design, inclusive teaching, and TA management. The series was designed for busy faculty members and emphasized reflective listening rather than active participation. As an exploratory case study, we analyzed listener feedback, download data, and informal post-listening interviews to examine patterns of engagement and initial responses.

Preliminary findings suggest three key outcomes. First, the initiative reframed FD as collegial and dialogical rather than evaluative. Second, the use of broad, cross-cutting themes supported horizontal engagement across disciplines. Third, the podcast enabled micro-engagements—brief, low-barrier interactions—that reached faculty members who had previously remained distant from formal FD activities. While initial responses indicated increased accessibility and interest, sustaining engagement over time remains an ongoing challenge.

Taken together, the findings suggest the potential of an audio-based, conversational approach to FD as a form of "gentle engagement," particularly in research-oriented institutions. The study highlights how such approaches may support voluntary faculty reflection and create entry points for cross-disciplinary learning.

Keywords: Podcast, Faculty Development, Research-Intensive University, Micro-Engagement

Extended Summary

Aim and Context

In research-intensive universities, faculty development (FD) initiatives have long struggled to engage academic staff. This challenge reflects severe time constraints, competing research priorities, entrenched academic silos, and the absence of a shared understanding of FD as a collegial and developmental practice. As a result, institution-wide FD programs are often perceived as external or evaluative interventions.

At the University of Tokyo, a national research university characterized by strong disciplinary autonomy, responsibility for FD has traditionally rested with individual departments and graduate schools. Efforts to promote institution-wide or cross-departmental FD activities—such as centralized workshops—have attracted limited interest from faculty members.

Against this background, this paper examines how an audio-based, conversational FD format may offer initial points of engagement and support cross-disciplinary reflection among faculty members in a research-intensive university. Focusing on a podcast series, FD for UTokyo Faculty: 30-Minute Teaching Refreshers, the study explores a form of "gentle engagement" that invites faculty to engage with teaching-related issues through reflective listening rather than formal participation.

Podcasting has been discussed as a form of informal professional development, particularly in language education contexts (Turner, Schaefer, & Lowe, 2021), and faculty-facing podcast initiatives such as Teaching in Higher Ed have also gained visibility in higher education. Existing research, however, has primarily examined podcasting in teacher education or pre-service contexts, focusing on student teachers' agency, reflection, or collaborative learning (Carson et al., 2021; Davids & Rinquest, 2024). Consequently, empirical research examining podcasts as an institutionally embedded FD strategy in research-intensive universities remains limited.

Analytical Approach and Design

This study adopts a practice-based research approach to examine the design and implementation of a faculty development initiative in a research-intensive university. Design Principles The initiative was guided by three core design principles: low burden, non-evaluative framing, and voluntary participation. Format and Structure The audio-only format was selected to enable participation through listening during everyday academic routines, minimizing the additional cognitive and temporal load typically associated with screen-based or fully synchronous FD activities.

The program consisted of 12 episodes, each approximately 30 minutes in length. Episodes were designed to be self-contained and theme-based, allowing faculty members to select topics according to their immediate interests rather than follow the series sequentially. Speakers and Conversational Design Each episode featured a dialogue among three speakers with different professional backgrounds: two faculty development specialists—one with long-standing

experience at the University of Tokyo and another who had joined from a different institution in the previous year—and one early-career faculty member whose primary expertise lay outside faculty development, particularly in multicultural education.

To ensure accessibility through audio alone, the use of technical terminology was deliberately limited, with optional explanatory notes and readings provided as on-demand materials. Delivery Strategy The delivery strategy combined real-time and on-demand elements. During the initial cycle, episodes were released as weekly, live lunchtime webinars between November and January.

Recordings were subsequently edited and prepared for on-demand distribution, with public release beginning in April. This temporal gap reflected a deliberate staging of the initiative, allowing the live series to function as a shared experience before transitioning the content into a more flexible, asynchronous format. Key Findings

This study employed an exploratory case study design to examine the potential impact of a podcast-based faculty development initiative. The analysis drew on multiple sources of data, including listener feedback, download data, and informal post-listening interviews with faculty members, in order to capture patterns of engagement and initial responses to the initiative.

First, the initiative reframed faculty development as collegial and dialogical rather than evaluative. Faculty described the podcast as distinct from institution-wide FD programs associated with assessment or obligation, approaching teaching-related topics as shared concerns rather than performance-oriented tasks.

Second, broad, cross-cutting themes facilitated engagement across disciplinary boundaries. Topics such as generative AI, course design, inclusive teaching, and the use of teaching assistants resonated with faculty members from diverse academic fields. Although the podcast did not include structured opportunities for dialogue among listeners, faculty members from different disciplinary backgrounds reported reflecting on similar pedagogical questions prompted by the episodes.

Third, the initiative generated micro-engagements that reached faculty members who had previously remained distant from formal FD activities. For these faculty members, the podcast format was perceived as less demanding and more approachable without the sense of obligation often associated with institution-wide FD programs.

At the same time, the findings also highlighted limitations in sustained engagement. Faculty members rarely engaged with the series in a linear or comprehensive manner. Instead, they listened to specific episodes—or portions of episodes—based on immediate interest or relevance to their teaching context. Moreover, the absence of interactive components constrained opportunities for deeper dialogue or collective sense-making. These outcomes indicate that while the initiative was effective in lowering entry barriers to FD, questions of continuity and depth remain unresolved.

Theoretical and Educational Significance

From a theoretical perspective, the findings highlight the relevance of micro-engagement in research-intensive university contexts. From an educational practice perspective, podcast-based initiatives can function as an entry point for faculty development in contexts characterized by strong disciplinary autonomy. Such formats align with the everyday rhythms of academic work and can complement existing FD provision.

Finally, the exploratory nature of this study points to directions for future research. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine whether repeated micro-engagements accumulate into more sustained forms of faculty learning, and comparative research could further clarify how different FD formats interact within broader institutional ecosystems.

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Empowering faculty agency through microcredentials

Consuelo García Tamarit

Abstract

Microcredentials (MC) are being adopted globally to update skills quickly, making them a powerful tool for academic development and innovation as well. The growth of online education has given rise to new types of credentials such as MCS, badges, and recognition of professional competencies. In higher education, this trend creates strategic opportunities to strengthen faculty agency, enabling teachers to take an active role in their own professional development. Teachers, including those that deliver their education virtually, often lack effective teaching skills due to insufficient preparation. Addressing this requires significant changes in higher education faculty training that fosters innovation in teaching and learning. The project presents a proposal for a 3-year training plan, based on stackable MCs, founded on a survey of training needs and evaluated by participating teachers. Results are positive and demonstrate that MCs are a valuable, innovative and strategic tool for the continuous training of university faculty, allowing them to remain competent, empowered and engaged in a constantly evolving educational environment.

Keywords: Microcredentials, Faculty, Agency, Skills

Extended Summary

Microcredentials (MCs) are rapidly gaining global attraction as flexible, targeted tools for updating professional skills in line with societal demands, supporting transitions from learning to employment (Ferguson & Whitelock, 2024). Their rise, fueled by the expansion of online education, has led to growing interest in alternative certifications (Berry et al., 2016), and educational leaders increasingly adopt them as innovative instruments for faculty professional development (Myroshnichenko, 2024). For educators, MCs offer accessible, relevant, and personalized learning opportunities that strengthen skills and directly impact teaching practices (Hunt et al., 2020). Many universities face faculty skill gaps due to limited formal preparation, with professional development often serving as emotional rather than pedagogical support (Rice, 2017). MCs provide flexibility, continuous development, portability, and immediate applicability, aligning with current trends and, as Crow (2017) notes, empowering educators to focus on discrete, context-specific skills that drive both individual agency and institutional innovation.

Valencia International University (VIU), a fully online university with nearly 28,000 students and 1,800 faculty members. Its model blends online classes, autonomous work, and digital resources, while faculty skills vary widely due to diverse backgrounds. Complying with Spanish regulations for tailored faculty training, VIU replaced its isolated training actions with a microcredential-based professional development model that offers personalized, modular pathways to meet varying expertise levels. This flexible, competency-based approach reflects current higher education trends, fostering continuous improvement and strengthening essential skills for a rapidly evolving learning environment.

A comprehensive training needs analysis was conducted to ensure the quality of online teaching and learning among university faculty. The study identified priority areas including technological innovations, the enhancement of faculty skills in utilizing these tools, and strengthening quality assurance capabilities. Using a detailed questionnaire, faculty needs were assessed in areas such as planning and organization, teaching processes and methodologies, digital skills, educational innovation, personal and research skills, and quality and sustainability. The survey, following institutional ethical standards, was sent to 947 faculty members, achieving a 46% response rate, and also gathered preferences on training schedules, duration, methodologies, and approaches. Results revealed high demand for practical, short-duration, and career-recognized training sessions, preferably held in the morning. Artificial Intelligence for educational purposes emerged as the top area of interest (70%), followed by class dynamization,

active methodologies (PBL, RBL, flipped classroom), and gamification. Significant interest was also shown in student motivation, effective communication, case studies, and entrepreneurship (60%), as well as in diverse and competency-based assessment methods, development of teaching materials, attention to diversity, and team management (50%). Overall, the findings highlight a strong preference for relevant, hands-on learning experiences aligned with faculty professional development goals.

This project presents a flexible, three-year faculty training plan based on short-duration, stackable microcredentials designed to address faculty needs. Educators can select MCs tailored to their individual goals and schedules, accumulating credits toward advanced qualifications such as Expert or Master's levels. Most courses carry 1-3 ECTS credits and feature a task-centred approach requiring practical application evidence. By enabling personalized, modular, and interdisciplinary learning pathways, the plan fosters faculty agency and continuous professional growth. The portability of earned credits and evidence supports recognition and career advancement aligned with evolving digital educational demands. Figure 1 shows the two axes and the nine areas of MCS.

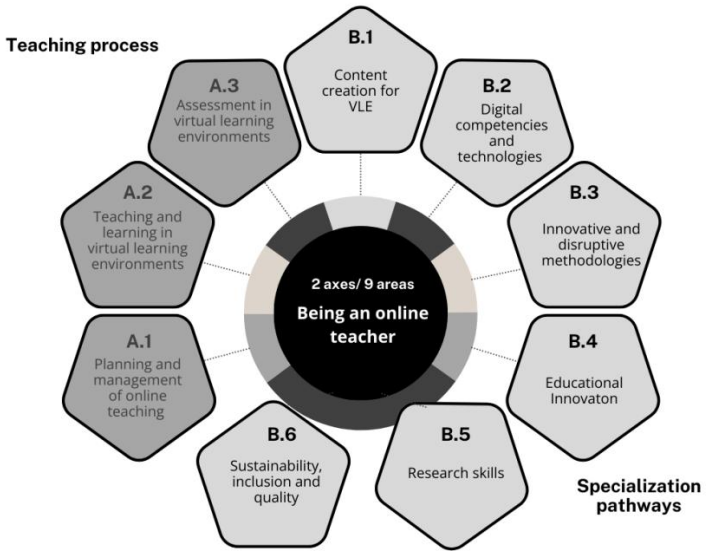


Fig. 1. Map of MCs content areas for faculty training. Source: Garcia (2024).

The MCs plan was implemented during the year 2024. It demonstrated its effectiveness in empowering faculty agency by offering a flexible, stackable learning framework that allows educators to choose pathways aligned with their professional needs. Survey results, with an average satisfaction score of 4/5, indicate that faculty value the autonomy to structure their own development, the quality of trainers, and the clarity of communication—key elements in fostering self-directed growth. While scheduling and assessment processes can be improved, the high overall ratings confirm that this strategic MC-based approach not only enhances specific teaching competencies but also strengthens educators' capacity to take ownership of their learning, aligning directly with the goal of empowering faculty agency.

Initial findings from the first year of the three-year microcredentials (MCs) training plan reveal a clear need for faculty skills updating to navigate technological innovations, research demands, teaching improvement, and quality standards. In response, a flexible and targeted training program based on stackable MCs was developed, aiming to equip faculty members with the specific competencies required for effective online teaching and academic service. This strategic approach empowers faculty agency by allowing educators to take ownership of their professional development through personalized, competency-based learning pathways aligned with their individual and institutional needs. MCs have proven to be an efficient and adaptable tool for continuous faculty development, helping educators keep pace with pedagogical innovations and best practices while enhancing teaching quality and student outcomes. This model fosters lifelong learning, professional growth, and faculty autonomy. Although results are preliminary, ongoing evaluation will measure their impact on student learning and satisfaction, reinforcing MCs as a promising strategy to empower faculty agency in evolving educational contexts (Varadarajan et al., 2023).

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Papers 8

Shaping Academic Development for AI: Practices, Policies, and Futures in European Higher Education

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Abstract

This study investigates current academic development (AD) practices, institutional strategies, and expert perspectives on the role of AD in supporting artificial intelligence (AI) in teaching and learning within higher education across Germany, Italy, and Romania. Although generative AI presents significant opportunities, previous research highlights uneven levels of awareness, confidence, and readiness among educators, indicating the need for comprehensive and culturally responsive AD. To explore this landscape, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 academic developers (six per country), examining existing institutional strategies, current AD practices, perceived needs, and future directions for AD in the age of AI. Interviews were conducted in participants' local languages, transcribed, and analysed inductively through qualitative content analysis. Findings show heterogeneous institutional strategies: policies are emerging but unevenly formalised, with Germany demonstrating the greatest coherence, Italy ranging from informal to formal approaches, and Romania displaying mixed levels of development. AD practices are widespread but largely reactive to rapid technological advances, particularly generative AI. Academic developers emphasised the need for discipline-sensitive guidance, especially for redesigning assessment with AI and ensuring academic integrity. Across all contexts, participants argued for incremental yet consistent AD evolution rather than radical change, highlighting priorities such as fostering AI literacy, peer- and expert-supported collaborative learning environments, and discipline-aware communities of practice. Overall, the study identifies both cross-national commonalities and contextual differences in AD responses to AI. It provides insights for designing culturally sensitive AD initiatives, informs alignment between policy and practice, and supports future European cooperation on AI-focused academic development.

Keywords: Academic Development, AI, Cross-Cultural, Interview

Extended Summary

We aim to explore current practices, institutional strategies, and expert perspectives on the role of academic development (AD) for artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education (HE) teaching and learning in three European countries.

HE teachers recognise several benefits of generative AI, including reduced administrative workload, assistance in developing teaching materials, and enhanced online learning and engagement (Noviandy et al., 2024) and recent reviews offer extensive evidence that could inform teaching practice (e.g., Castillo-Martínez et al., 2024). Yet this knowledge is not evenly accessed or translated into everyday pedagogical work. Faculty often experience AI as a disruptive force, with substantial variation in awareness, confidence, and perceived readiness (Mathew & Stefaniak, 2024). These tensions reflect a broader challenge: genAI introduces new professional literacies—such as understanding AI concepts, designing effective prompts, and critically evaluating AI-generated outputs—that extend beyond traditional teaching competencies. While strengthening core pedagogical skills remains essential, growing familiarity with AI may help alleviate anxiety when accompanied by realistic expectations and adequate support (Hill, 2023). This suggests that AI cannot be addressed through isolated training; instead, it requires a comprehensive, integrated approach to AD spanning teaching, leadership, research, career development, and organisational change (Steinert, 2025). This positions AD as a strategic lever at both institutional and individual levels, encompassing policy development, infrastructural investments, and cultural work that helps educators make sense of AI within their specific contexts. Clear policies, user-friendly tools, and alignment with pedagogical goals can help address educators' concerns and strengthen the conditions for meaningful AI adoption (Ofosu-Ampong, 2024).

Moreover, emerging studies highlight how cultural factors shape perceptions and uptake of AI in HE (Cao et al., 2025). This underscores the need for culturally responsive AD that recognises diverse expectations, levels of trust, and norms surrounding AI use. Collaborative European initiatives offer opportunities to learn across contexts, identify shared challenges, and understand how AD can best support educators in navigating AI-driven change.

Therefore, we pose the following research questions:

• RQ1: What institutional strategies, policies, or guidelines for the use of AI in teaching and learning currently exist across the three countries?

- RQ2: What AD activities are already in place to support HE teachers in engaging with AI?
- RQ3: What needs and gaps do HE teachers report regarding support for integrating AI into their teaching practice?
- RQ4: How should AD practices evolve over the coming years to effectively support teaching and learning in the age of AI?

We developed a semi-structured interview guideline to explore academic developers' perspectives on institutional strategies and AI-related AD practices in HE. The guideline was translated from English into the local languages (German, Italian, Romanian). It comprised four core questions with follow-up prompts aligned to the four research questions to elicit comparable information across national contexts while allowing participants to elaborate according to their institutional realities. We conducted interviews with 18 experts in AD (6 per country), recruited from the authors' regional AD networks. The 20-minute interviews were audio-recorded and conducted in one-to-one settings via Zoom. All audio data were transcribed and examined using an inductive strategy informed by qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2014). The coding framework was refined through an iterative process, during which categories were systematically reviewed, adjusted, and consolidated until no additional themes emerged and data saturation was reached. All authors participated in this process.

Summary of results:

- RQ1. Policies are emerging but uneven. Germany shows the highest level of formalization, Italy the widest dispersion from informal to formal, while in Romania, there is also significant heterogeneity (i.e., mixed stages for HE institutions). Most policies are initiated top-down, with collaborative/interdisciplinary development increasingly common across all three countries.
- RQ2. AD practices are prevalent, but predominantly reactive to technological advances, especially to genAI.
- RQ3. The discipline-specific guidance, especially for redesigning the assessment of learning with AI, and safeguards for academic integrity, are the most often emphasized needs.
- RQ4. Across contexts, most experts think that incremental, but consistent, AD evolution should be chosen over radical transformations. In this process, AD should focus on AI literacy, the creation of peer- and expert-driven collaborative learning contexts, and discipline-aware communities of practice.

The study highlights shared tendencies and national differences in the adoption of AI in HE teaching and AD. It offers a conceptual bridge between policy-level discourse and practitioner-level experiences. This also has relevance for future cross-national or European collaborations in AD and broader internationalization strategies within HE institutions. Educational significance. The results help pinpoint concrete gaps in current AD offerings related to AI, thereby providing a foundation for designing targeted interventions. They may also inform culturally sensitive approaches to implementing AD strategies within local institutional contexts. Implications for practice, policy, and future research. The findings invite greater awareness of the need to shift from reactive to more strategic and sustainable AD practices. Local AD units could reposition ad hoc offers within a structured annual training roadmap informed by a brief yearly needs assessment. Also, institutions could establish formal interdisciplinary working groups, bringing together AD professionals, IT and legal experts, data-protection officers, key faculty representatives, and students under the leadership of the vice-rector for teaching and studies, to produce regular institutional updates and recommendations.

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Academic Development as Ethical Infrastructure in Institutional Responses to Generative AI

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Abstract

As generative AI (GenAI) accelerates across higher education, instructors are being asked to make complex ethical and pedagogical decisions amid evolving and often ambiguous institutional guidance. This paper examines how academic developers can act as strategic change agents by providing the ethical infrastructure needed to support faculty sensemaking and decision-making in this context. Drawing on practitioner inquiry and informed by the COVER ethical decision-making model, the authors analyse a cross-institutional workshop—Communicating about Ethical AI Use with Students—designed to help instructors align GenAI course policies with their pedagogical values, disciplinary norms, and institutional priorities. Data from two workshop offerings (n ≈ 220) reveal that faculty entered with uneven knowledge and a narrow focus on academic integrity, but left with broadened ethical awareness, increased confidence, and actionable communication plans for students. Nearly half drafted or revised a course policy during the workshop, and confidence in addressing ethical concerns, developing policies, and communicating expectations increased by 20–30 percentage points. The study demonstrates how short, scalable academic development interventions can foster pedagogical agency, expand ethical reasoning, and support alignment between institutional priorities and course-level practice during periods of technological disruption. We argue that academic development units are uniquely positioned to function as ethical infrastructure, shaping institutional responses to GenAI by designing responsive, values-based professional learning that connects policy to practice.

Keywords: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; Generative artificial intelligence; Ethical decision-making; Practitioner inquiry; Institutional agency

Extended Summary

This paper examines how academic developers strategically leveraged a rapidly emerging challenge—generative AI (GenAI) in teaching—as an opportunity to exercise agency in shaping institutional culture, policy practice, and faculty decision-making (conference sub-theme 2). Rather than treating AI as a purely technical or compliance problem, the authors position academic development as ethical infrastructure: a mediating space that connects institutional expectations, disciplinary norms, and instructors' pedagogical values in concrete, course-level practices. The aim of this paper is to illustrate how academic developers can act as intentional change agents during periods of technological disruption by designing and studying faculty development interventions that foreground ethical deliberation, transparency, and pedagogical judgment.

The study is grounded in a cross-institutional initiative in which academic developers from five institutions designed and facilitated a workshop, Communicating about Ethical AI Use with Students. The workshop functioned as a strategic intervention: it provided faculty with structured space to examine AI-related ethical dilemmas, align course policies with pedagogical goals, and develop messaging strategies that foster transparency and trust with students. In doing so, it showcases how developers can act as intentional change agents, guiding institutional responses to GenAI in ways that prioritize human judgment and student learning.

Conceptually, the project draws on practitioner inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2015), framing academic developers not only as facilitators but as investigators of their own practice. Practitioner inquiry underscores academic developers' agency in designing, studying, and iteratively refining interventions that respond to local contexts while contributing to broader knowledge about academic development. The workshop design was also informed by Mitchell and Yordy's (2010) COVER model of ethical decision-making, which prompted faculty to consider Codes, Outcomes, Values, External perceptions, and Rules when crafting GenAI policies. This model provided a structured, portable heuristic that developers could use across institutional settings to scaffold values-based deliberation rather than rule-bound compliance.

Methodologically, the study analyzes data from two workshop offerings in Spring 2025: a three-hour pre-conference session (n = 19) and a 75-minute statewide webinar with roughly 200 attendees. Data sources include anonymous pre- and post-surveys, live polling, open-ended prompts, and participant-generated AI syllabus policies. The surveys captured instructors' prior experience with AI tools, self-rated understanding of AI's risks and benefits, ethical priorities when designing policies, and confidence in developing and communicating course-level GenAI expectations.

Analysis revealed four key findings that illustrate the strategic potential of academic development to influence both individual practice and institutional culture. First, academic developers supported a reframing of GenAI from a perceived threat to academic integrity into a context for ethical and pedagogical inquiry. Participants entered the workshops with uneven technical knowledge but high anxiety about misuse. Through facilitated reflection and dialogue, faculty reported clearer understanding of GenAI's affordances and limitations and articulated more nuanced views of AI as a tool that should support—rather than replace—student learning.

Second, the workshops expanded participants' ethical lenses. While academic integrity remained the dominant ethical concern before and after the intervention, attention to equity and accessibility increased. This shift, though modest, suggests that structured development can widen ethical considerations from individual misconduct to systemic issues such as bias, disability access, and unequal access to AI tools—dimensions often underdeveloped in institutional policy discourse.

Third, the intervention substantially increased faculty confidence and readiness to act. Confidence in addressing ethical concerns rose from 63% to 90%; confidence in developing a course-level GenAI policy increased from 65% to 94%; and confidence in communicating policies to students rose from 75% to 93%. Nearly half of participants reported drafting or revising a policy during or immediately after the workshop, and 73% developed a communication plan for discussing GenAI expectations with students. These shifts demonstrate the capacity of short-form academic development interventions to move faculty from uncertainty toward intentional, student-centred action.

Fourth, the workshop modeled alignment between institutional priorities and course-level practice. By curating sample policies, communication strategies, and reflection prompts, academic developers helped faculty interpret emerging institutional guidance rather than passively await formal policy statements. This positioning highlights academic development units' role as intermediaries that translate institutional values—such as academic integrity, equity, and data privacy—into actionable pedagogical practice.

Theoretically and practically, the paper contributes to the conference theme of agency and strategy by illustrating how academic developers can design nimble, scalable interventions in response to systemic disruptions like GenAI. The authors argue that academic development units can (1) act as strategic brokers between institutional policy formation and classroom realities, ensuring that high-level decisions are informed by pedagogical insight and ethical nuance; (2) employ practitioner inquiry to iteratively evaluate and adapt programming, thereby embedding feedback and ongoing learning into the work of the unit itself; and (3) create structured spaces for collaborative ethical deliberation that support pedagogical judgment during periods of uncertainty.

The study's limitations—anonymous data, lack of longitudinal tracking, and the constraints of one-off workshops—are also instructive from an organizational perspective. They highlight the need for academic development units to build more sustained structures (e.g., learning communities, cross-disciplinary cohorts, or multi-institutional networks) that can carry forward the work initiated in short-form interventions. Future research directions include tracking how GenAI policies evolve over time, examining the alignment between stated ethical concerns and enacted policies, and exploring how institutional context shapes the uptake of AI-related development.

Overall, this paper positions academic developers as key agents in shaping an institutional response to GenAI that is not purely regulatory but deeply pedagogical. By designing and studying faculty development that foregrounds ethical reflection, policy experimentation, and student-centred communication, academic developers can help institutions respond to technological disruption in ways that enhance teaching, strengthen cultures of academic integrity, and build more agile, responsive development units. In doing so, they enact agency not only at the level of individual workshops, but in the broader project of aligning institutional strategies, teaching cultures, and emerging technologies.

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Reimagining Agency: Students, Faculty, and AI in Higher Education

Izumi Sekizawa

Abstract

Somewhat paradoxically, Luciano Floridi, one of the most influential AI philosophers and policymakers, proposes not using the term "intelligence" to qualify AI: we do not fully understand what intelligence is, and AI does not replicate human intelligence itself but rather reproduces what human intelligence produces. In this sense, AI should be understood as agency. Only such reconsideration can preserve space for human autonomy and responsibility (Floridi 2023). This reframing has profound implications for higher education, where student agency is central to educational success (Klemenčič 2023). Faculty agency also plays a crucial role in enabling student agency, though it is sometimes conceptualized in narrowly instrumental terms (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson 2015). If AI now operates as a form of agency within educational spaces, how should we reconceptualize the agency of students and faculty? This paper examines this question by comparing AI policies across several countries, seeking to reimagine human agency in higher education for an age when multiple forms of agency coexist.

Keywords: Human Agency, Artificial Intelligence, AI Ethics, AI Policy

Extended Summary

Introduction

Somewhat paradoxically, Luciano Floridi, one of the most influential AI philosophers and policymakers, proposes not using the term "intelligence" to qualify AI: we do not fully understand what intelligence is, and AI does not replicate human intelligence itself but rather reproduces what human intelligence produces. In this sense, AI should be understood as agency. Only such reconsideration can preserve space for human autonomy and responsibility (Floridi 2023). This reframing has profound implications for higher education, where student agency is central to educational success (Klemenčič 2023). Faculty agency also plays a crucial role in enabling student agency, though it is sometimes conceptualized in narrowly instrumental terms (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson 2015). If AI now operates as a form of agency within educational spaces, how should we reconceptualize the agency of students and faculty?

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to reimagine human agency in higher education for an age when multiple forms of agency coexist. Specifically, we seek to: (1) examine how different national contexts are grappling with the emergence of AI agency in educational settings through their policy frameworks; (2) identify new conceptual models that can accommodate both human and artificial agency without diminishing human autonomy and responsibility; and (3) propose practical implications for coordinating student and faculty agency in alignment with evolving notions of academic integrity. Rather than treating AI as merely a technological tool or as a threat to traditional educational values, we explore how recognizing AI as agency can lead to more nuanced and productive reconceptualisations of human agency in higher education.

Method

We adopt a dual methodological approach combining literature survey and policy analysis. First, we conduct a literature review examining recent scholarship on student agency, faculty agency, and especially AI agency in relation to AI ethics. This review draws from education studies, philosophy of technology, and policy studies to establish a multidisciplinary theoretical foundation. Second, we analyse AI policies from several countries representing diverse framings and regulatory approaches. Our policy analysis focuses on national-level guidelines that affect institutional frameworks about AI use in higher education, examining how these policies implicitly or explicitly conceptualize the relationship between human and artificial agency. We pay particular attention to how policies address human autonomy. Through comparative analysis, we identify patterns, tensions, and innovative approaches across different policy contexts.

Key Findings: Distributed Morality as a New Model

Our analysis reveals that traditional models of academic integrity, which assume individual human actors as sole moral agents, are inadequate for contexts where AI operates as a form of agency. To avoid binary thinking—either prohibiting AI use to preserve "authentic" human work or permitting it without sufficient consideration of how it transforms the nature of academic work and responsibility, we propose adopting the concept of "distributed morality" as a new model for academic integrity in the age of AI. Distributed morality recognises that in contemporary educational environments, agency and responsibility are not located solely within individual human actors but are distributed across human-AI configurations. This framework, proposed by AI Ethics researchers, draws on insights from distributed cognition theory and actor-network theory, but extends them specifically to address moral and educational dimensions.

Under a distributed morality framework, academic integrity is not about preventing AI involvement but about fostering transparent, reflective, and ethically sound collaborations between students, faculty, and AI systems. This means: (1) students develop agency not as isolated individuals but as capable orchestrators of human-AI collaboration, maintaining

critical oversight and creative direction; (2) faculty exercise agency in designing learning environments that cultivate students' capacity for such orchestration, rather than simply gatekeeping knowledge or policing AI use; and (3) AI systems are recognized as contributing agencies whose capabilities and limitations must be understood and navigated responsibly. The integrity of academic work, in this model, lies not in its exclusively human origin but in the thoughtful, transparent, and educationally purposeful ways that human and artificial agencies are coordinated.

Implications: Coordinating Human Agency in the AI Age

The implications of this reconceptualisation are far-reaching. For students, developing agency in the AI age means cultivating new literacies: understanding how AI systems work, recognizing their affordances and constraints, making informed decisions about when and how to engage AI, and maintaining reflective awareness of how AI use shapes their own thinking and learning. Educational institutions must shift from surveillance-based approaches to academic integrity toward pedagogies that explicitly develop these capacities. For faculty, agency must be reimagined beyond traditional roles of knowledge transmission or assessment gatekeeping. Faculty agency in the AI age involves designing learning experiences that leverage AI's capabilities while deepening rather than diminishing student learning, modelling thoughtful human-AI collaboration, and participating actively in institutional governance around AI policy.

Institutionally, the distributed morality framework calls for policies that: (1) provide clear guidance on responsible AI use while avoiding blanket prohibitions or uncritical acceptance; (2) invest in faculty development to support pedagogical innovation in AI-rich environments; (3) create spaces for ongoing dialogue among students, faculty, and administrators about evolving practices; and (4) align assessment practices with the goal of developing student agency in human-AI collaboration rather than merely detecting AI use. By coordinating the development of student and faculty agency in alignment with new models of academic integrity, higher education can navigate the AI age in ways that enhance rather than diminish human autonomy, responsibility, and educational purpose.

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Future-Proofing Higher Education with AI, DEI and Relationship-Rich Education

Anja Pawelleck, Svenja Kaduk

Abstract

Responding to post-pandemic expectations for flexibility, digital transformation, and inclusivity, academic developers worldwide face the challenge of addressing emergent themes in their programs – such as digitalization, AI-supported teaching, diversity and inclusion, and relationship-rich education.

In this paper, we present a practical approach for how educational developers in higher education can integrate cross-cutting themes – e.g., Future Skills, Digitalization and AI, DEI, and Relationship-Rich Education – sustainably and resource-efficiently into existing development programs. We illustrate this through the design rationale and implementation strategies of a 15-ECTS Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Higher Education.

The CAS strengthens instructors' agency in shaping knowledge, pedagogy, and professional practice. Structured as a two-year blended program, it combines core modules on course design and complex teaching settings with elective pathways, teaching portfolios, collegial consulting, expert/peer observation, and a capstone project. This scaffold enables participants to embed emerging priorities into their own teaching while balancing individualized learning pathways with collaborative learning opportunities. Personalized pathways and projects are complemented by peer exchange, collegial consultation, and joint reflection to foster a community of practice.

A central design principle is the explicit enactment of emergent topics through a double-level approach:

- The program design itself serves as a role model.
- Participants deepen these themes in individual projects.

The CAS offers a scalable model for future-ready, evidence-based academic development, combining flexibility for individual learning paths with the benefits of relationship-rich, collaborative learning in a digitally transformed higher education landscape.

Keywords: AI, DEI, pedagogical agency, relationship-rich-education

Extended Summary

We outline a practical and sustainable approach for integrating cross-cutting, future-oriented themes – Future Skills, Digitalization and AI, DEI, and Relationship-Rich Education – into academic development programs. Rather than responding to emerging topics with ad hoc courses, we show how a stable program architecture can flexibly support evolving priorities. We illustrate this approach with a two-year, 15-ECTS Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in Higher Education at the University of xx, that responds to post-pandemic demands for flexibility, inclusivity, and digital transformation. (University of xx, 2025).

The CAS is a blended-learning program combining required modules with individualized learning (elective pathways, teaching portfolios, collegial consulting, teaching observations) and capstone teaching projects. The blended format supports equitable participation and mirrors the hybrid teaching landscape participants encounter. Asynchronous activities accommodate varied schedules; synchronous sessions foster community. A central design principle is the integration of emerging topics within existing pedagogical structures. Rather than adding new modules whenever priorities shift, the program uses durable pedagogical elements that allow participants to explore digitalization, AI-supported teaching, inclusive practice, and relational pedagogy in authentic contexts.

Three design principles are central:

- Embedding Emerging Topics: Cross-cutting themes are enacted through a double-level approach: While the program design models inclusive, relationship-rich, digitally informed pedagogy, participants apply these themes through redesigns, reflections, and projects.
- Situated Professional Learning: Learning is anchored in real teaching environments. Portfolios, observations, and collegial consulting create feedback loops that foster participants' evidence-based decision making, supporting transfer of AI, DEI, and collaboration into practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Saroyan, 2022).
- Balancing Individualization and Collaboration: Personalized pathways are balanced with collaborative structures such as peer observation and collegial consultation. This interplay supports individual agency and community building.

Theoretical Framework

The CAS draws on constructivist learning theory and competence-based education, emphasizing active, student-centred learning (Ertmer & Newby, 1993; Ramsden, 1992). Teaching is conceptualized as a complex practice requiring integrated competences including disciplinary knowledge, facilitation of learning processes, organization, and lifelong learning (Tigelaar et al., 2004). The program embodies the principles it promotes (Saroyan & Trigwell, 2015). Research

shows that situated, systemic learning supported by communities of practice is more impactful than isolated workshops (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Saroyan, 2022). This alignment ensures coherence across modules and tasks.

Integrating DEI, AI, and Relationship-Rich Education:

Inclusive pedagogy in the CAS draws on Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2024), culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2018), and relationship-rich education (Felten & Lambert, 2020). These principles are enacted through cooperative learning, mentoring, structured feedback, and reflective activities that foreground psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999). AI integration builds on frameworks for human-AI collaboration and critical digital pedagogy (Selwyn, 2019; Holmes et al., 2022). AI is framed as an opportunity for reflection, ethical reasoning, and inclusive design rather than an efficiency tool. By engaging instructors in conversations about their use of generative AI, we help ensure that teaching practices align with institutional integrity standards and support responsible AI use.

Key Findings from Program Delivery

Integration Outperforms Add-On Approaches: Embedding themes within core tasks leads to deeper engagement than treating them as isolated "special topics." For example, designing AI-supported and inclusive tasks and assessments encourage evidence-informed pedagogical decision-making.

Balancing Individualization and Collaboration Enhances Transfer: Portfolios and projects nurture agency, while collegial consulting and peer observation strengthen professional identity and shared responsibility for teaching quality. This balance supports sustainable learning and long-term change.

Experiencing Relationship-Rich Pedagogy Enables Transfer: Throughout the program, participants experience mentoring, peer support, and knowledge co-construction. These structures enhance motivation and perceptions of inclusivity, increasing participants' capacity to implement similar practices in their courses.

Practical Implications

The CAS offers a scalable model for future-ready academic development in a digitally transformed, diversity-conscious landscape. It shows how institutions can remain agile without compromising coherence or sustainability. For academic development units, strategic considerations include: Architect for integration: Encode emergent themes as transversal competences rather than through isolated modules. Structure for depth and sustainability: Use iterative cycles of reflection, feedback, practice, and identity development (Trautwein & Merkt, 2013). Model responsible AI use: Programs should demonstrate transparent and ethical human-AI collaboration. Cultivate relationship-rich learning environments: Structured peer exchange and mentoring deepen engagement and transfer.

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Reimagining academic development: using over two decades of lived experience to navigate the future in times of crisis.

Alison Farrell, O'Sullivan Íde, Claire McAvinia

Abstract

The mission of the Educational Developers in Ireland Network (EDIN), established over 20 years ago, is 'to support, enhance and influence the field of academic development and practice', through 'creative, critical, collaborative and professional approaches in supporting teaching and learning' (www.edin.ie). In 2024, EDIN leaders and members began an intentional reflection on the changing nature of the higher education landscape, and on (re)imagining the future of educational development. Initial discussions, sparked by 'provocations' including Bass (2020), Baume (2023) and McNaught (2020), surfaced key themes in our enactment of educational development (EDIN 2024) but also indicated disillusionment with the enterprise, its methods, effectiveness and impact. Further collaborative enquiry, which we report on here, asked what had changed in academic development since 2004, and what this could tell us about the future. To answer this question, we drew on three of Brookfield's (1995, 2017) four lenses: individual reflection through concept mapping (n=16) (Heron et al., 2018); reflection with peers in two EDIN member focus groups (n=15); and reflection through engagement with the literature including Trowler's work to scaffold the insights for future practice. Our findings, which benefit from well over 250 years of collective experience, are reflective of the concerns articulated in the initial provocations and more broadly in the field. Furthermore, they expand that thinking specifically suggesting insights associated with engaging process as a measure of success, exploiting the potential to influence policy, optimising collaboration, and re-visiting agency including what bolsters or undermines it.

Keywords: influencing policy, optimising collaboration, process as a measure of success and impact, collective agency

Extended summary

The aim of the paper This paper addresses a question about the nature of educational development that Educational Developers in Ireland Network (EDIN) leaders asked Network members in 2024, over two decades since the establishment of the network: 'What has changed since 2004 and what does that tell us about the future?' This overarching question had many subsidiary elements including: What changes have occurred in processes and priorities? Why have those changes occurred (considering particularly influencers)? What is the impact of the changes that have occurred? What are the implications for the future? As part of this work, we wanted to explore factors that have contributed to change in the past and to learn from these to inform future practice, particularly in times of crisis.

In 2024, EDIN leaders and members began an intentional reflection on the changing nature of the higher education landscape, and on (re)imagining the future of educational development. Initial discussions were sparked by 'provocations' including Bass (2020), Baume (2023) and McNaught (2020). These surfaced key themes in our enactment of educational development (EDIN 2024) which we captured in a short public statement entitled 'Rethinking educational development - an EDIN conversation'. This statement captured ideas about the enactment of our work, factors which impact on that enactment categorised under the headings of 'influencers, perception and intentions' and significant underpinning elements, namely context and people. While the initial conversations illuminated our activity and identified positives, it also indicated disillusionment with the enterprise, its methods, effectiveness and impact. The latter prompted further collaborative enquiry which we report on in this paper. In order to answer the question what had changed in academic development since 2004, and what this could tell us about the future, we drew on three of Brookfield's (1995, 2017) four lenses: individual reflection through concept mapping with EDIN members (n=16) (Heron et al., 2018); reflection with peers in two EDIN member focus groups (n=15); and reflection through engagement with the literature. Aside from comprehensive reading to learn from the longer term evolution of educational development in other settings, we used Trowler's work to scaffold the insights from the research to inform future practice. In this regard, we drew on the application of Trowler's 'elements of the degree of challenge any particular innovation presents in a specific context' to better understand the findings (pp. 121-122). Trowler highlights the elements of 'salience, congruence and profitability' and notes with them respective questions: 'does it matter to us/them? …. Does it fit with what we/they do, believe and feel? ….Why would we/they do it?'. Using Trowler's thinking helped us to remain focused on implications for the future which, while influenced by factors beyond our network, were most closely related to work that matters to us, that fits with what we currently do and that presents some gain for our Network.

Our research points to three key themes with some significant subsections, namely:

● Contextual factors: technology and written intentions (including legislation, policy and strategies, which in turn are often responding to and/or are greatly influenced by existing or emerging socioeconomic challenges, which might broadly be understood in contemporary discourse as the polycrisis).

●Factors associated with the enactment of educational development: changes in the ways that we go about our work; changes in the standing and reach of our work; and changes in how we, as a community of educational developers, work together to influence HE.

● Community: collaboration; partnership; Open Education Practices and Resources (OEP/OER) The simplicity of writing these themes as three bullet points belies their pithiness, entanglement, interdependence, vexed relationality and overall complexity.

In presenting them as findings in the paper we draw out their constituent parts and connections.

Our initial examination of the findings suggests the following four implications for the network.

1. Process as a measure of success. Our research suggests that the 'practice' of educational development has particular qualities, the enactment of which is equally as important as the themes or topics we might be exploring. Surfacing the qualities of this practice as a way of clarifying the similar and different ways in which we enact our work will help to contribute and change the context. This might involve identifying the qualities of engagement that matter most, valuing embodied presence, recognising our responsibility as cultural architects, and being explicit and intentional about our values.

2. Exploiting the potential to influence policy. EDIN as a network, and EDIN members individually or as representatives of their institutions or elements of the sector, contribute to discussions about national policy. There is potential to amplify and expand on this aspect of the Network's activity.

3. Optimising collaboration. While time and other pressure make collaboration difficult, rather than abandon collaboration, we suggest a reimagining of both informal and intentional collaboration which could help us all to complete the work we need to do, connect more and enjoy the work more. It is impossible for individuals and small units to maintain the level of expertise necessary across all areas in order to effect change from a robust, evidence-informed perspective. But equally, in a relatively small sector there is simply no need for everyone to be doing the same work in different settings. We can tap into each other's expertise as well as exploring how we connect and partner more with students.

4. Re-visiting agency including what bolsters or undermines it. Network members' work in research and development, tapping into existing scholarship and theory, amplifying our strengths particularly those around the relational, focusing on our expertise particularly around curriculum as a way of addressing the polycrisis, and being alert to what is on the horizon and prophet narratives about the future direction of higher education are key elements in revisiting our agency and spheres of influence.

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Papers 9

Building trust and accountability through policy and process review: A Collaborative Model from the University of Salford

Neil Barrett, Claire Hamshire, Rosie Bryce

Abstract

Enhancing students' learning experiences and supporting their success is a central concern in Higher Education (Bilham et al., 2019). Yet, within the Academic Development community, institutional priorities often focus efforts on short-term, context-specific quality enhancements (Hamshire et al., 2017; Harvey, 2022). While valuable, these localized solutions may lack scalability and fail to address broader systemic challenges. Considering the connections across quality enhancement and how the efforts of academic developers are shaped by factors at a systematic, institutional, pedagogical, and personal level across educational ecosystems is vital to enhance student success and develop inclusive learning communities (Hamshire et al. 2024). This presentation explores how academic developers can act as strategic change agents by bridging policy, pedagogy, and practice. At the University of Salford, we have developed models and frameworks that connect institutional policies, teaching practices, and student support systems through a longitudinal, wicked problem theory lens (Hamshire et al., 2019). This concatenated research approach (an iterative, multi-layered method for understanding and addressing complex challenges) was used to co-create actions, build trust in the changes needed for long-term improvements and ensure that we built inclusive learning communities. Participants will engage in small-group activities to explore how these models and frameworks can be adapted to their own institutional contexts. The session will support attendees in identifying strategic connections between teaching practices, student support, and quality enhancement, with the goal of fostering agile, responsive practice across the institution.

Keywords: Quality Enhancement, Models, Trust, Wicked Problem.

Extended Summary

Students in higher education represent an increasingly diverse cross-section of society, and while principles of diversity and inclusion are widely endorsed across the sector, their integration into academic practice is often inconsistent and implicit (Forsyth et al., 2021). Many students, and particularly those from historically minoritised backgrounds, report experiences that diverge significantly from those of the stereotypically 'traditional' student (Hamshire & Forsyth, 2024). These disparities are frequently shaped by hidden curricula and unspoken institutional expectations, which can create barriers to success. To address this, we must critically examine how institutional policies, processes, and cultures impact diverse student communities and proactively redesign our systems to deliver demonstrably better outcomes. This work builds on previous interventions to create inclusive learning communities (Hamshire et al. 2024) and explores how academic developers can lead on inclusive, data-informed transformations in educational policy and practice. Specifically, it investigates how institutional systems may unintentionally disadvantage certain student groups and how longitudinal, collaborative approaches that values all stakeholders can create an institutional ecosystem that enhances student success. This highlights the intentional, systemic actions that academic developers can achieve in shaping teaching cultures and advancing organisational learning. The theoretical framework underpinning this study draws on wicked problem theory (Hamshire et al., 2019), which conceptualises educational challenges as complex, evolving, and resistant to simple solutions. Addressing such problems requires iterative, inclusive approaches that engage multiple stakeholders and consider the interplay of pedagogical, institutional, and systemic factors. Methodologically, the study employs a cumulative grounded theory approach (Stebbins, 1992), linking a series of quantitative and qualitative investigations to build a layered understanding of student experiences and institutional dynamics over time. Conducted at the University of Salford, the research focused on students who accessed exceptional and special circumstance policies, such as deferred assessment submissions or reasonable adjustments to their learning environments. By analysing demographic and course characteristics, the study identified patterns in policy usage and explored the lived experiences of students and staff. A key finding, for example, was the consistent over-representation of students who declared a disability within these processes. This suggested that existing approaches may have inadvertently created barriers for specific groups, reinforcing the need for policies that are designed around the student. Building on these insights, we collaborated with students, the Students' Union, and colleagues across the institution to co-create an emergent framework comprising multiple, interrelated models. These models make conceptual connections across policies, processes, and systems, supporting a strategic response to the complex challenges identified. The framework is designed to facilitate cultural change, foster trust, and ensure that inclusivity is embedded in the development of teaching, learning, and administrative practices. This longitudinal approach enables academic developers to move beyond short-term, localised quality enhancements and instead lead systemic, sustainable change. By sequentially combining data and insights, we were able to direct subsequent investigations, refining our understanding, and suggesting actionable strategies that aligned with broader institutional goals. The framework also supports the development of agile academic development units capable of responding to evolving educational needs and systemic

challenges brought on by changes from government or competition. The educational significance of this work lies in its potential to reshape how institutions approach inclusivity and quality enhancement. It demonstrates the value of strategic academic development that is grounded in evidence, responsive to diverse student needs, and aligned with long-term organisational transformation. For practice, the framework offers a replicable model for other institutions seeking to embed inclusivity into their policies and processes. For policy, it highlights the importance of data-informed decision-making and stakeholder collaboration in driving equitable outcomes. And for future research, it opens avenues for exploring the impact of systemic interventions on student success and institutional culture. Within this session, we will present the framework and key findings and facilitate small-group discussions to support participants in adapting the approach to their own contexts. These activities will help attendees identify strategic connections between teaching practices, student support, and quality enhancement, and consider how academic developers can be trusted to co-create inclusive, transformative change within their institutions.

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Academic development agency awareness – why and how to be responsive to the host organization

Roy Andersson, Torgny Roxå, Kristofer Modig

Abstract

The literature foresees that services provided by academic development units (ADUs) will become more diversified in combination with higher demands on scholarliness in each action taken. ADUs are asked to engage in an increased variety of activities and content and the days when knowledge about classroom teaching or courses were enough are gone. However, the literature discusses less HOW ADUs should orient themselves in this turmoil of demands. In this paper we share experiences of such a reality; a reality that is largely driven by how the organization we serve evolves and thereby becomes more advanced in its educational considerations, but also because the society at large changes its expectations on academic organizations. For increased ADU agency and even survival we suggest an intensified critical reflection concerning the strategy for change chosen by each ADU. A more integrated understanding of the strategy's implications allows for a) a possibility to foresee future demands with positive effects on recruitment and internal training, and b) a prioritization among demands placed on the unit and an ability to explain better why the unit responds the way it does. We share our own experiences of such critical reflection and its implications, both strengths and weaknesses identified.

Keywords: Academic development, Agency, Institutional change, SoTL

Extended Summary

The idea that Academic developers (ADs) and units (ADUs) and their agency need to follow their organization is not new, for example they need to be attuned to the status of the organization (Nygren & Sjöberg, 2023) and being self-reflective about their relationship with the organization (Geertsema & van der Rijst, 2021). There is also literature that discusses the role of ADUs, for example that assignments are broadening and concern new issues such as merit, quality work, digitalization but also sustainability and belonging (Kraemer-McCaffery et al, 2024; Gibbs, 2013). That is, ADUs need to have a more flexible approach to their assignments (Wright, 2023). But the literature talks less about how ADUs can be prepared for these changes. Aligned with Wright (2023) and Geertsema & van der Rijst (2021), we explore implications from ADUs formulating a strategy (a theory of change) and then continuously and critically reflect on its ramifications. A more integrated understanding of the ADUs strategy's implications will allow a) a possibility to foresee future demands with positive effects on recruitment and internal training, and b) a prioritization among demands placed on the unit and an ability to explain better why the unit responds the way it does.

We use the case of a large faculty within a large research intensive university where a wide battery of development activities with Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) as a core was launched in the early 2000s, mainly initiated from the ADU. Now, 25 years later, evidence show that the whole organization has matured educationally and is transforming into a learning organization (Senge, 2006). Arguably this development is the result of AD agency, but also a growing self-governed agency exerted by the organization, making agency a relational phenomenon (Ashwin 2012). Theoretically and over time, this dynamic process runs from early AD agency, inducing a growth of organization agency, and resulting in a dynamic relation between the two. Considering this organizational transformation, we reflect on implications for the ADU and especially the value of an explicit strategy (theory of change).

The organization's development

Early AD interventions 25 years ago focused upon SoTL and intensified conversations about teaching and student learning on all levels (Mårtensson et al, 2011). AD interventions were pedagogical courses, a reward system for excellence in teaching (ETP), a research-based dual student evaluations system (formative and summative), a campus conference and a repository for local SoTL-papers. Aligned with the strategy chosen, all AD activities supported the evolution of a SoTL-informed culture in relation to education.

Today the Faculty has educationally matured from being teaching centered with few informed educational conversations towards a learning centered culture with frequent and qualified pedagogical conversations throughout the organization and where the pedagogical quality culture is well integrated into the line organization. Some examples of evidence are:

- A strong learning focused leading group for education, clear program management, and the assistant dean for education is an ETP rewarded teacher.
- A strong over representation of ETP teachers in all levels of line management (board and committees).
- ETP is fully integrated part of employment criteria.
- There is a 200 hours requirement of pedagogical training for employment.
- There is 400 hours requirement of pedagogical training for promotion.
- The requirement profile for the pair dean and deputy dean states:

  o The pair must have high scientific competence – at least one professor.

o The pair must have high pedagogical competence – at least one ETP.

- Pedagogical qualifications and educational development are parts of the management's yearly operational dialogue with the departments.
- The ADU takes active part in the writing of important regulatory documents, educational quality assessment and curricula development.
- The educational board and research board have equal influence on strategic decisions when recruiting new faculty staff.
- The educational board regularly funds teacher-driven educational development projects.

Internally, our course evaluation system displays a clear development in all scales indicating that teaching promotes a deep approach to learning among the students. There are also international reports that acknowledge the development, i.e. that the institution is one of the most influential universities globally in terms of pedagogical qualifications (Graham, 2025). The ETP model is the basis for most systems for teaching award throughout the Nordic region, but has also influenced globally – including Ruth Graham's Career Framework for University Teaching (Graham, 2025).

The entire organization has matured and is actually a main driving force in its own, with effects on the agentic relationship between organization and ADU.

Significance and implications for the ADUs agency and practice

A cultural approach, as used here, entails influencing daily interaction among colleagues, a process requiring time and patience (Centola, 2018). In short, the strategy is summarized as: More and better conversations about student learning lead to better teaching. Low level SoTL scaffold better conversations, and all professional development foster collegial interaction, especially in significant networks (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009). 25 years ago, structural changes initiated by ADs indicated very strong ADU agency and close to no organizational agency. Over time the organizational agency has intensified, and the ADU plays a more scaffolding role. This development produces more varied demands on AD, but also stronger need for an explicitly defined AD agency, suitable for avoiding being the 'fixer' for the organization. The strategy state that it is the organization that should evolve – it must learn and adapt to its own needs and directions chosen. On the other hand, in the process of carving out the new ADU scaffolding role, a clear and reflected strategy (theory of change) with a strong awareness of a changing AD agency attuned with an evolving organization has been essential. The long and consistent use of the strategy in design, change and description of activities, has solidified a reputation throughout the organization. The process has however by no means been without mistakes and misunderstandings – but awareness has been crucial for the AD agency to evolve.

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Building resilient academic development alliances

Claudia Bade

Abstract

This paper examines how an innovative governance model in Germany, has transformed academic development into a strategic, cross-university endeavour. Using a regional higher education alliance as a case study, it demonstrates how network governance and distributed leadership can empower academic developers to act as agents of change, align teaching initiatives with regional and institutional goals, and establish robust structures to promote teaching quality and innovation. Drawing on interviews and governance analyses, the study illustrates how transparency, trust and shared accountability can sustain collaborative enhancement of teaching, even in the face of funding pressures and societal shifts. The model provides valuable insights into designing agile frameworks that can support transformative teaching and learning while preserving institutional autonomy.

Keywords: Strategic Governance, Alliance, Academic Development, Agile Organizational Learning

Extended Summary

This paper aims to explore how a newly established governance model designed for cross-university collaboration has transformed the work of academic developers and strategically strengthened higher education teaching enhancement. It discusses how the Network for Academic Development, founded in 2009, evolved into a stable, but agile, strategically governed network that empowers academic developers as proactive change agents. The paper analyses how this new governance enables it members to collectively address pressing challenges while maintaining a strong focus on teaching quality, organizational learning, and educational transformation. The paper is based on a study that draws on four complementary strands of research:

1. Strategic governance and policy alignment in higher education (Alzahmi, 2025; Korn, 2022), focusing on how multi-actor steering shapes teaching quality and institutional transformation.

2. Network governance and distributed leadership (Kenis & Raab, 2008; Spillane, 2006), analysing how roles, power and trust are distributed in cross-university collaborations.

3. Academic development as organizational change work (Alzahmi, 2025; Reimann, 2021), positioning developers as key agents who bridge teaching practices, policy goals and institutional cultures.

4. Resilience and agile organizational learning (Pohlenz et al., 2024), exploring how alliances sustain innovation and responsiveness under systemic pressures (shrinking budgets, societal disruptions, technological shifts like AI). Methodologically, the paper combines thematic analysis of six qualitative interviews and document analysis of governance frameworks. This design allows tracing how formal structures and daily practices interact to build a robust development ecosystem. This study focuses on a cross-university alliance that aims to enhance teaching collectively across 17 institutions. In 2022, it implemented a new governance model combining:

- A joint board established to ensure a balanced representation of all stakeholders.
- a central head office coordinating decentralized network posts, contractually tied to the alliance but embedded locally for cultural fit,
- accompanied by the regions Rectors' Conference as a supervisory body,
- and an advisory council, with a balanced group of internal and external members connecting to broader higher education and academic development communities. This hybrid model of shared governance and distributed leadership enables local responsiveness while pooling resources and aligning with regional policy agendas. This leads us to the key insights from the experience, shedding light on how governance can empower academic developers as change agents and sustain collaborative teaching enhancement.

1. Empowering academic developers as strategic change agents. Instead of remaining confined to faculty training or compliance tasks, academic developers are embedded in strategic governance, shaping agendas on issues like Education for Sustainable Development, democracy education, and AI-readiness. This strengthens their agency and legitimacy as organizational change leaders, who are drivers of teaching culture and curriculum transformation.

2. Building resilient, learning organizations through trust and transparency. Interviews emphasized how open communication channels, shared data systems, and co-created strategic goals have built trust across diverse institutions. This network governance approach creates psychological safety to experiment, fail and iterate—an essential foundation for resilient teaching enhancement in times of uncertainty.

3. Navigating resource constraints and complex stakeholder landscapes. As budgets tighten and demands for transformative teaching and learning, digital skills and societal engagement grow, this governance ensures transparent allocation and shared prioritisation.

4. Aligning local innovation with regional and systemic agendas. By institutionalizing regular dialogues between university leaders, developers and policy actors, the alliance ties grassroots teaching innovations to broader educational policies. This enables agile responses to societal shifts—whether demographic, economic, or technological—while preserving institutional autonomy.

5. Lessons for building agile, multi-institutional teaching development structures. The case underscores that governance is not mere administration; it is strategic capacity-building. By carefully distributing roles, formalizing mutual expectations, and investing in continuous relational work, the alliance has built a platform that can absorb shocks and evolve with changing higher education landscapes. This study contributes to international debates on how academic development can transcend isolated faculty support and become an engine for systemic educational transformation. It illustrates that:

- network governance structures (Kenis & Raab, 2008) paired with distributed leadership (Spillane, 2006) allow academic developers to function as cross-institutional strategists,
- governance rooted in transparency, mutual trust and shared accountability fosters organizational learning cultures that are robust under societal and financial disruptions (Pohlenz et al., 2024)
- and aligning development work with both institutional and regional policy goals increases the legitimacy and impact of teaching enhancement efforts OECD, 2025).

The regional higher education alliance offers practical blueprints for designing governance agreements across universities that respect local cultures yet drive collective progress. It highlights the importance of formal contracts, balanced representation and mechanisms for regular mutual sense-making. It demonstrates how regional alliances can stabilize quality teaching initiatives, share risks and ensure alignment with systemic priorities—even as funding becomes more volatile. This paper argues that by embedding academic developers in shared governance structures grounded in trust and strategic alignment, cross-university alliances can not only sustain teaching quality under pressure but transform it into a collective, future-ready endeavour.

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Enhancing academic development agency through understanding staff perceptions of teaching and learning units

Bopelo Boitshwarelo

Abstract

This paper investigates academic staff perceptions of Teaching and Learning Units (TLUs) and their implications for enhancing academic development agency. Drawing on a mixed-format survey conducted at an Australian university, complemented by data from collaborating institutions, the study explores how staff understand, engage with, and experience TLUs. The findings indicate that while TLUs are broadly valued for professional learning and curriculum support, concerns persist around role clarity, access, and relevance. Staff favour practical, discipline-specific support and collaborative relationships. The findings suggest that enhancing agency requires clearer communication, embedded support, and context-sensitive services, implying that through strategically aligning TLU practices with academic realities, institutions can foster trust, responsiveness, and innovation in teaching.

Keywords: Academic development, agency, staff perceptions, teaching and learning units.

Extended Summary

This paper examines staff perceptions of teaching and learning units (TLUs) and explores their implications for enhancing academic development agency. Based on research conducted at one Australian university complemented by findings from four other collaborating universities, this paper seeks to answer two key questions:

1. What are the perceptions, experiences and expectations of academic staff of TLUs?

2. How can these perceptions, experiences and expectations shape academic development role towards enhanced agency. Conceptual and methodological approach TLUs play a pivotal role in supporting institutional strategies for teaching quality and student outcomes (Sugrue, 2018; Wright, 2023).

Despite their growing influence and multifunctionality, academic staff perceptions of TLUs remain underexplored and fragmented. Existing studies often focus narrowly on specific functions or events (e.g., Billot & King, 2017), leaving a gap in understanding how TLUs are holistically perceived and valued by teaching academics.

While conceptualisations of TLUs are well documented (Di Napoli et al., 2010; Fraser, 2001; Wright, 2023;), little is known about whether these align with the perceptions of the academics they serve. Critically examining staff perceptions, and understanding how these influence engagement, trust, and collaboration could contribute to the enhancement of academic development agency.

The study used a mixed-format survey combining closed-ended items and open-ended prompts to capture both quantitative patterns and qualitative insights, enabling a nuanced understanding of how academic staff experience relational and operational dynamics in academic development contexts.

Key findings:

1. Participants' awareness of the existence of their respective TLUs was required for eligibility. Fewer than 5% exited the study due to non-eligibility, suggesting high awareness rate.
2. Academic staff generally indicated that they understood the role of TLUs and perceived them as valuable for their professional development. However, this understanding was often superficial, with uncertainty around the scope and specificity of services offered especially in institutions where TLUs have a wide range of functions or where recent organisational restructures had occurred. Staff on regional campuses and in casual roles felt disconnected from available services due to limitations of their circumstances.
3. Most staff indicated that they primarily learned about the TLUs through personal contact, orientation/induction sessions, and collaborative projects, rather than the institutional website. Their experiences were mixed but generally positive. Many accessed TLU resources and interacted with its personnel, often finding the support useful in different areas of practice. One-on-one consultations and targeted curriculum workshops were especially valued. Staff appreciated the friendliness, responsiveness, and practical expertise of TLU personnel.
4. Staff expectations of TLUs were not always met. Concerns included generic advice, lack of discipline-specific expertise, limited access for casual and regional staff, and unclear service roles. Suggestions for improvement included clearer communication, embedded support within academic units, and more hands-on, tailored assistance. There was also a call for better support for innovative practices like AI integration.

Implications for enhancing academic development agency:

The findings outlined above reveal that while staff value and benefit from academic development support offered by TLUs, there are concerns that limit their impact. To enhance academic development agency, it is essential to build on the positive staff experiences while addressing the identified concerns through the following strategies:

- Service and Role Clarity: Clearly articulate the scope and focus of available services and roles within TLUs by developing accessible guides and communication channels that clarify responsibilities and support access. This ensures that academic staff know what support to expect and how to access it (Harland & Staniforth, 2008; Wright, 2023).
- Visibility and Proactive Engagement: TLUs should enhance visibility through onboarding, roadshows, workshops, and embedded faculty liaisons, not just websites. Proactive engagement ensures all staff, regardless of role or location, are aware of and can access services (Wright, 2023).
- Contextual and Practical Support: Tailor support to the realities of academic work. Staff indicated they value discipline-specific, hands-on assistance over generic or theoretical advice. Co-designing interventions with academics and responding to their immediate teaching challenges fosters trust and uptake (Boud & Brew, 2013).
- Collaborative Relationships: Position TLUs as partners rather than overseers by building sustained, collegial relationships that enable iterative teaching improvement and mutual learning. This relational approach enhances trust and influence of academic developers (Bayerlain & McGrath, 2018; Boud & Brew, 2013).
- Embed TLUs Across Institutional Layers: To improve institutional consistency and impact, TLUs should be structurally and culturally embedded across institutional layers (Gray & Radloff, 2006). While central coordination ensures consistency and alignment with priorities, deploying services within faculties enhances accessibility and responsiveness. This multiple positioning of TLUs' amplifies their agency and fosters deeper engagement with stakeholders across diverse contexts and levels of operation.

Conclusion

Staff perceptions indicate that academic development agency is strengthened when TLUs are visible, clearly defined, contextually relevant, responsive, collaborative, and embedded within teaching contexts.

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Papers 10

Collective Agency: African Feminist and Decolonial possibilities for Academic Development

Corinne Knowles

Abstract

In higher education, student agency is shaped by socio-political conditions and historical processes that define the role and purpose of the university in specific locations. This paper engages an African Feminist framework, in dialogue with decolonial theorists, to explore the politics and contestations around student agency as a pedagogical objective in South Africa. In a context marked by structural inequality, "under preparedness", and high graduate unemployment, universities often reinforce individualistic and competitive behaviours that promise advantage in environments of scarce opportunities. But alternative values, that run counter to the neoliberal ethos, imagine collective forms of agency that inspire transformational and sustainable change for both students and institutions. Such a reorientation situates the purposes of teaching, learning, and academic development, within broader struggles for social justice and decolonisation. Conscientisation and communal orientation are explored as onto-epistemic tools for critical thinking that extend agency beyond the confines of individualised meritocracy. They will be explained by drawing on experiences in academic development, teaching practice, and student reflections. The paper theorises collective agency as a transformative resource for restoring meaning among students repeatedly disillusioned by the empty promises of neoliberal meritocracy and reductive notions of agency as mere resilience. It opens the door to institutional collaborations based on developing collective agency in teaching practices and curriculum design.

Extended summary

The university operates in a neoliberal system that essentially seeks to equip students for employment (Moletsane, 2015). In South Africa, the majority of university students are state funded (Nzimande, 2024), and their burden is also to lift their families out of poverty. Tragically, in South Africa, youth and graduate unemployment is impossibly high – 46% youth unemployment and 24% graduate unemployment (Statistics South Africa 2025). The EU graduate unemployment average is 3.8%, with Spain third highest at 6,9% (Yanatma, 2025).

Against this backdrop, the idea of student agency runs the risk of feeding into the neoliberal, individualistic machinery of the university and society. Academic development, in this context, either reproduces or resists these tendencies in the kinds of engagements around teaching and learning that it advocates. Lee (2024) explains that for some, "the idea of student agency promotes a neoliberal perspective, where students are perceived as consumers in education" (Lee 2024:1333, my emphasis). The teaching and learning project is mired in complicity with a system that facilitates the idea of knowledge as a commodity and students as customers. Arguably, the idea of student agency as an individualised pedagogical aspiration, where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, self-regulate, and develop resilience, reproduces the neoliberal logics. This paper explores the idea that student agency must instead be understood as a collective form of transformational change within the university, and thus also an imperative of academic development as the institutional mentor of teaching and learning practices.

Africa's median age is 19 – rising to 28 in South Africa (Dizolele 2024). Dizolele claims that the collective agency of African young people has driven social transformation – including the South African #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall student movements that compelled an increase in funded access to poor young people and challenged colonial and apartheid legacies in university curricula and institutional cultures. These movements demonstrate that agency is not merely about individual self-improvement. Universities cannot ignore this collective dimension of agency if they are to be relevant to the aspirations of their students.

Decolonial approaches provide a pathway for reimagining student agency as collective transformation. Lee (2024: 1333) argues for student agency as "human freedom and subjectivity as fundamentally dependent upon relationships with others". He claims that decolonising the curriculum involves dismantling the hidden curriculum that normalises dominant discourses about the purpose of education and the nature of knowing. This requires rethinking subjectivity and learning as relational, oriented toward the existence of the other, rather than ownership of knowledge. In this view, what matters is not simply what is studied, but the shared response to knowledge that draws teachers and learners into a relationship of mutual transformation.

Tamale (2020) emphasises unlearning as a process of conscientisation. Students and lecturers, she argues, must interrogate colonial 'truths' in the curriculum, and in social and intellectual relations. She calls for engagements that reveal the intersectional matrices in the lingering colonisation of the mind, hidden in the curricula, values and ethos of the university as part of the modernity project of Eurocentric homogenisation. This collective process of unlearning positions agency not as individual resilience but as shared critical consciousness in a post-colonial, post-apartheid university.

Lee (2024) and Tamale (2020) provide the architecture for facilitating collective agency and relational learning, but these are not new ideas. Decades before, hooks (1994:21) explained that "[e]ngaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students" but that it involves academic lecturers "being vulnerable in the classroom, being wholly present in mind, body and spirit". Engaged, decolonial pedagogy is a political process of re-orientation. It decentres the lecturer as dominant (hooks 1994; Silva 2018). It insists on the analyses of mutually constituted constructions of race, class and gender et al, because they "show us how these social and historical positions are present in the classroom and need to be addressed in our relationships with our students" (Henry 2005:95).

In this paper, I draw on my own experiences in academic development work as part of this navigation towards collective agency. Part of the politics of relational knowledge-making is consciousness of my own positionality in relation to the university, other lecturers, and the students I teach. I draw on Natanel (2017:14) who argued that "in drawing attention to power, structure, agency and resistance in our classrooms, yet remaining entangled within their tensions, we effectively undertake a mode of bargaining that positions us both inside and outside the system – in this, we are poised to disrupt". Pedagogic tools of engagement that emphasize a communal orientation, critical thinking, and political conscientisation are explained, and student reflections provide insight into their effects. African feminist and decolonial theory, applied to pedagogy, show how this kind of relational agency and knowledge-making locates students and lecturers at a nexus of possibility, and offers a cartography of collective agency for academic developers everywhere.

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Towards an anti-racist and decolonial praxis framework in education

Aisha Haque

Abstract

This paper introduces a living framework for decolonizing teaching and learning practices in higher education. Drawing on my own lived experiences as well as the results of a diffractive conceptual analysis, I outline five core guiding principles as essential to decolonizing curricula and pedagogy: reflexivity, epistemic disobedience, epistemic uncertainty, relationality, and ethical solidarity. During the paper presentation, I will unpack these five terms and further outline how the framework is being used to guide curriculum decolonization efforts at my university at both the course and program levels.

Extended summary

Context

Higher education systems have long been identified as instruments of imperialism. Scholars have traced not only the imperial roots of the Westernized university (Grosfoguel, 2013; Smith, 2021; Stein, 2020) but also its continued perpetuation of harmful legacies through cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2013; Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022) where scientific rationalism is positioned as objective truth, silencing other ways of knowing. Within our current educational systems, the structure and organization of our disciplines is not neutral (Mignolo, 2009), but rather a reflection of whose knowledges have been legitimized and whose are structurally marginalized.

As universities grapple with their complicity in colonialism, educators have a critical role to play in dismantling colonial oppression and re-visioning disciplinary constructions of knowledge. To this end, instructors are being called upon to decolonize their curricula (Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022; Gaudry and Lorenze, 2018), include anti-racist perspectives in the curriculum (Wagner, 2020), and cultivate a learning environment which fosters student belonging and thriving across various dimensions of difference (Dimitrov and Haque, 2016). Ethically engaging in antiracist work in our classrooms requires that we understand and confront structural racism within the academy and within our own disciplines (Dei, 2016; McNair, 2020; Raffoul et al., 2022).

Across Canada, institutions began to include "Indigenization," "decolonization," and "equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)" as strategic goals (Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022). As an academic developer, I found myself flooded with questions from instructors on how to engage in this work. Often, I was asked for a checklist outlining a series of easily implementable steps. A checklist approach seemed to suggest a static, simplistic, and surface-level solution to a complex structural problem and did not reflect my own understanding of decolonization as a process. I wondered if I could draw on existing literature as well as my own experiences as a racialized academic developer who has been facilitating decolonizing the curriculum workshops for university instructors for the past decade to answer the following question: What praxes emerge at the intersection of anti-racist and decolonial pedagogies?

This paper presents a "living framework" for decolonizing teaching practices in higher education. By "living framework," I mean a praxis-oriented process that can evolve to account for contextual shifts, multiple ways of knowing, and feedback from educators, students, and community members as we continue to learn together.

Methodology

Drawing on critical interpretive synthesis (Durant et al., 2024) and reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019) empowered me to foreground my own lived experiences in the literature review process for the purpose of developing a conceptual framework. The use of critical interpretive synthesis allows for theory generation from the synthesis of literature because it allows for an interpretive analysis of the emerging themes rather than an aggregate review for the purpose of summarizing existing findings. Reflexive thematic analysis, by highlighting the researcher's subjectivity as a necessary resource in the research process, aligned with decolonial principles of researcher positionality which are critical to my analysis.

Findings

Five core guiding principles emerged as essential to decolonizing teaching and learning: reflexivity, epistemic disobedience, epistemic uncertainty, relationality, and ethical solidarity. More importantly, a relationship could be discerned between these principles, and it is the interplay between them (see Figure 1) which I believe can guide our work in teaching and learning.

At the heart of the framework lies **reflexivity**, an ongoing, relational practice that is in a state of iterative ebb and flow with the other four principles; in fact, it is only through reflexivity that the other four principles can be understood and practiced. Sometimes named positionality (Weuffen, 2024), reflexivity grounds instructors in relation to their students and to the curriculum, further enabling instructors to draw on pedagogies that support students in taking a reflexive approach to the curriculum and the discipline. This opens up possibilities for **epistemic disobedience** (Mignolo, 2009),

which refers to the interrogation and refusal of the colonial knowledge systems which marginalize diverse ways of knowing.

To sustain practices of epistemic disobedience in the classroom and curricula, it is critical to draw on epistemic uncertainty (Andreotti, 2019; Kempf, 2020), a practice which honours the cultivated openness to "not-knowing."

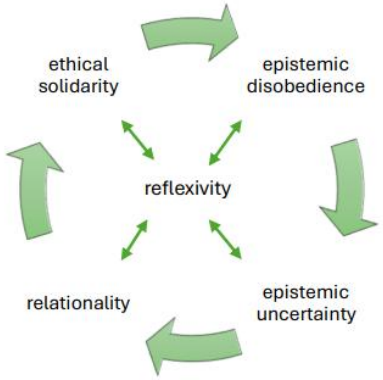


Figure 1: Towards an anti-racist and decolonial praxis framework

Epistemic uncertainty means we are able to hold multiple – sometimes contradictory – ways of knowing and being in tension with each other, denying our impulse for epistemic mastery and resisting premature closure.

Relationality (Battiste, 2013) is a way of being that foregrounds the co-constitution of subjects, knowledges, and land, emphasizing that neither knowledges nor beings emerge in isolation but always through relations that are historically and materially situated. Curricula and pedagogies that are relational are co-constructed with students and communities and allow for learning from the land.

Ethical solidarity marks the accountability generated through these relations and required for sustaining them: a commitment to act with and toward others in ways that acknowledge asymmetrical power, mutual implication, and shared vulnerability in teaching and learning environments.

Rather than branching from a foundational concept in a linear manner, these five principles co-emerge through reflexive practice, producing what I describe as onto-epistemological openings – moments in which the Eurocentric delineation between epistemology (ways of knowing) and ontology (ways of being) collapses. In these openings, dominant ways of being are unsettled and alternative possibilities become perceptible through the epistemic labour of disobedience and uncertainty and sustained through relational accountability.

Significance

The framework has been used by academic developers at XXXX University to guide curriculum conversations at both the course and program levels. At the course level, the framework has guided the development of a series of reflection questions and workshops for instructors to interrogate and transform their learning outcomes, reading lists, teaching approaches, and assessments. We are now piloting the approach at a program level with nurse educators.

Through feedback from colleagues at ICED 2026, I hope to continue to develop the framework and am interested in how the framework might apply at other institutions and in different contexts.

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Developing academic readiness and learner agency through curriculum co-design and communities of practice: a case study.

Deirdre Raftery, Stergiani Kostopoulou, Marie Clarke, Ruth Ferris

Conference theme:

Abstract

This qualitative case study investigates how academic readiness and learner agency among non-traditional international graduate students can be effectively fostered through collaborative curriculum co-design and Communities of Practice (CoPs). The focus is on the PINNACLE Project, a partnership between an Irish university and women educators in India and Pakistan, designed to meet the distinctive needs of highly experienced professional adult learners transitioning from established careers in the Global South to postgraduate study. The model moves beyond deficit-based approaches to readiness by strategically drawing upon students' prior professional agency as a foundation for developing robust academic agency. Using a staged transition model aligned with Bandura's (2001) principles of human agency, the study maps participatory curriculum design and CoP engagement to readiness and agency cultivation. The programme directly supports the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4, Target 4.9, aiming to substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries for enrolment in higher education. Longitudinal data from reflective essays, focus groups, and programme activities reveal increased agency, emerging identities of student-teachers as scholars, and leadership capacity.

The paper contributes to academic development literature by presenting an equity-oriented, scaffolded blueprint for designing inclusive, competence-driven curricula that empower learners to become co-creators and transformative agents. Implications for institutional practice, policy, and future research emphasize culturally responsive academic development capable of supporting sustainable social impact.

Keywords: Academic readiness; learner agency; curriculum co-design; communities of practice

Extended Summary

This paper explores the dual cultivation of academic readiness and learner agency among non-traditional international graduate students, via a case study of PINNACLE. PINNALCE is a project which developed a multi-stage, collaborative graduate degree programme, with a co-designed curriculum. Developed with professional adult women educators from India and Pakistan, the programme addresses challenges arising from their complex transition between professional identities and the postgraduate academic environment at an Irish university. This paper details how participatory curriculum design and Communities of Practice (CoPs) function as mechanisms to develop both academic readiness and agency, while also empowering learners as active partners throughout their academic journey.

The PINNACLE project serves a distinctive cohort: women teachers and principals (head teachers) employed in schools in India and Pakistan. They balance demanding personal and professional responsibilities. Unlike traditional students, their transition involves reconciling a strong professional identity with emerging academic roles. This necessitates a bespoke academic readiness model which does not perceive students as deficient but rather builds upon their existing competencies and experiences, fostering agency as a prerequisite for academic engagement.

The theoretical underpinning integrates Bandura's (2001) core features of human agency with the Communities of Practice framework developed in the work of by Wenger, and Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner (1998; 2015). The approach situates academic readiness and learner agency within socially and institutionally situated learning ecosystems. The staged transition model, visualized in the paper, aligns specific PINNACLE activities with Bandura's principles, illustrating the progressive development of agency through online preparation, induction with academic language and research skills development, collaborative CoP workshops, and sustained institutional co-creation.

The case study employs reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) of qualitative data—including reflective essays, focus group transcripts, and Communities of Practice (CoP) records—to identify and interpret patterns related to academic readiness enhancement and agency development, grounded in Bandura's (2001) dimensions of human agency (intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness). A hybrid coding method is used:

a) Deductive coding maps data directly onto Bandura's (2001) four core agency dimensions.

b) Inductive coding captures emergent, study-specific themes related to academic development, identity formation, student voice, and leadership.

This approach balances theoretical structure with openness to novel insights, consistent with Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis framework.

Key findings and arguments:

• The pre-arrival stage uses online modules and needs assessment to reduce transition anxiety and validate prior experience, fostering forethought and planning that prepare learners psychologically and academically.

• The on-arrival stage addresses performance accomplishments via structured induction and intensive academic language and skills readiness, supporting self-efficacy through early task success.

• The collaborative engagement stage leverages CoP workshops to translate professional competence into academic skills via vicarious experiences and guided action, reinforcing collaborative problem-solving and leadership.

• The sustained co-creation stage promotes self-reflectiveness and critical agency by empowering students to partake as partners influencing curriculum and academic support mechanisms.

• The student-as-partner philosophy underpins the model, ensuring curriculum co-creation values learner expertise, counteracting cultural marginalization, and fostering equity through partnership and shared decision-making.

• Data reveal staged readiness supports and CoP engagement significantly enhance learner confidence, academic identity, and leadership, with a ripple impact on student-teachers' network of 41 schools, 1,375 teachers, and nearly 40,000 students.

Educational and theoretical significance: The paper offers an innovative blueprint for academic developers seeking to scaffold readiness in non-traditional, culturally diverse cohorts while simultaneously fostering learner agency as a transformative educational goal. It challenges deficit perspectives on international student preparedness, reframing readiness as a dynamic process integrated with agency development via participatory pedagogy and community engagement.

This model contributes to discourses on equity, curriculum innovation, and sustainable higher education reform, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education.

Implications for practice, policy, and future research: Practitioners are provided a scaffolded, evidence-based model to design inclusive curricula that validate students' prior learning and promote lifelong critical engagement. Institutional leaders are offered policy insights on embedding learner partnership models and building CoPs for systemic change.

Future research directions include longitudinal evaluation of agency trajectories and adaptation in other cultural settings.

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Intercultural Collaboration in University Classrooms: An Overview and Case Study

Jun Iio, Shigenori Wakabayashi

Abstract

This paper reviews ongoing initiatives designed to promote international and intercultural communication education between Japanese institutions and partner schools overseas. It also presents a case study of classes at Japanese and Thai universities conducted in November 2025. Launched in 2020, the intercultural collaboration project has involved over 3,000 students thus far. Its purpose is not only to enhance students' communication skills but also to foster friendships and mutual understanding within a global society. Student engagement and outcomes have been measured through various methods, including participant interviews, surveys, and text-mining analyses of activity logs collected via a custom e-portfolio system. The survey results showed a net promoter score above 40%, indicating strong enthusiasm among participating students. The case study outlined in this paper demonstrates how the program functions in practice. It also highlights student feedback aimed at further improving the project. Their suggestions and insights provide valuable guidance for instructors interested in implementing similar educational initiatives.

Keywords: Intercultural Communication, International Collaboration, Student Engagement, Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Extended Summary

This paper provides an overview of our initiative to promote intercultural communication education and presents a case example from November 2025 between Japanese and Thai universities.

The aim of the paper: Since 2020, we have led initiatives that promote intercultural communication education by connecting schools in Japan with overseas schools through online conferencing systems. Although these efforts target a broad range of educational levels, from elementary schools to universities, this paper focuses on initiatives carried out at the university level.

At the university where the authors belong, intercultural exchange education has been promoted to develop a global mindset among students. This initiative operates separately from the formal curriculum and is carried out across faculties with the cooperation of faculty members who share the project's objectives. The university also recognizes the importance of this effort and has provided institutional support by designating it as an Educational Innovation Promotion Project for the 2024 and 2025 academic years.

This paper first outlines the initiative's overall framework and then presents a specific case study conducted in November 2025 involving a Japanese university and a university in Thailand. Additionally, it introduces proposals for improvement suggested by participating students, followed by a discussion of the challenges identified and potential enhancements.

By sharing our activities, we aim to offer a helpful resource for educators designing or carrying out similar initiatives.

Methodological approach: Tne well-known initiative similar to our activities is Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL; Rubin and Guth, 2015), which has gained international recognition. A key difference between COIL and our approach is that universities typically lead COIL in English-speaking countries. In contrast, our initiative focuses on intercultural exchange education among countries where English is used as a second language. When one group consists of native English speakers and the other of non-native speakers, communication asymmetries can occur. To prevent this, our initiative seeks to use English as a lingua franca and to promote communication on an equal basis.

Another distinctive feature of our approach is that, due to time zone considerations, participating institutions are limited to those in Japan and East and Southeast Asia. Because intercultural exchange is conducted via online conferencing systems, smaller time differences are preferable. In addition, constraints on class scheduling require limiting participation to regions within a two-hour time difference from Japan. For these reasons, the overseas institutions involved so far have mainly been located in Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, China, Korea, and Indonesia.

To support this initiative, we created a dedicated e-portfolio system for the project. This system allows for relatively straightforward learning analytics. This paper also presents examples of analysing learning outcomes, including analyses based on questionnaires and interviews, as well as analyses of logs recorded within the system.

Key findings and outcomes: The initiative has been assessed through student interviews, questionnaire surveys, and student activity logs recorded in the e-portfolio system. In this paper, we present the results of discourse analysis of group interactions, among other findings. As an illustrative example, we also include Net Promoter Score (NPS) values derived from the evaluation questionnaires currently in use.

Figure 1 shows part of the results from a questionnaire conducted for the 2025 academic year. Specifically, it presents responses to the question: "Do you recommend this program to your friends and/or colleagues?" (as of the time of

writing). The NPS derived from these results is 40.3, which is generally regarded as an excellent score. This suggests that a large portion of participants were satisfied with the initiative.

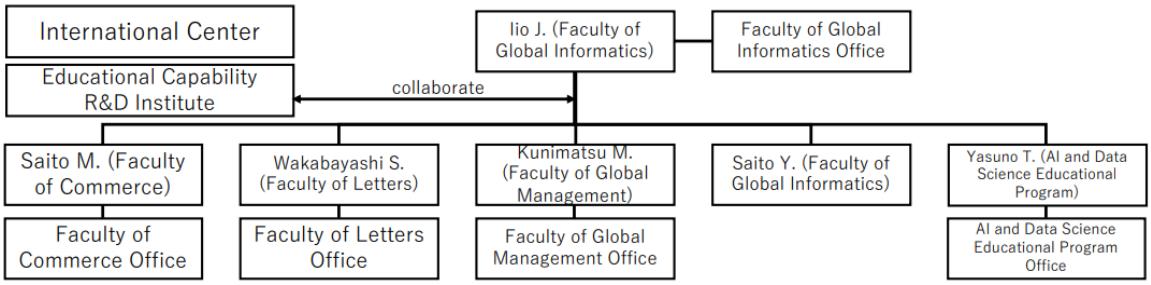


Fig. 1. The histogram of answers to the question asking Do you recommend this program to your friends and/or colleagues? (0: do not recommend, 10: willing to recommend)

Educational significance of the work and implications: Since its inception in the 2020 academic year, this intercultural exchange education initiative has involved more than 3,000 students. As noted by the NPS described above, the initiative has received high ratings from many participants. Unlike COIL, the educational value of this initiative lies in the fact that both parties engage in exchange proactively on an equal footing.

While this initiative encourages interaction between Japan and neighboring countries through English as a second language, we are also working to connect countries where Japanese is studied and to facilitate online exchanges in Japanese. Similarly, this initiative may serve as a reference for intercultural exchange education that uses a second language as a common language in Europe, Latin America, other parts of Asia, and Africa. In an increasingly global society, establishing a shared global language and using it to promote interaction and mutual understanding will become more important.

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Papers 11

Academic Development for Inclusive Internationalization: A COIL Technopreneurship Quadruple Project

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Abstract

This paper reports on a Quadruplet Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) partnership connecting universities in China, South Africa, Turkey, and Chile. Specifically, it focuses on Phase 1 of the collaboration between a Sino-British Transnational Higher Education (TNHE) university and a South African University of Technology. Based on intersectionality, cultural humility, and inclusive facilitation, the second author, who is an educational developer, assisted COIL teachers in designing and implementing an SDG-aligned project (SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production). The case study demonstrates how educational development fostered intercultural abilities, enhanced teamwork, and integrated curriculum design with equity-centered internationalization, all while drawing on qualitative student feedback from Padlet reflections and post-training evaluations. Findings highlight enablers such as mentoring, reflective practices, and intercultural scaffolding, alongside challenges including time zones, linguistic differences, and uneven participation. The study positions educational developers as change agents who mediate structural constraints and enable transformative, equity-centered internationalization in TNHE contexts.

Extended Summary

This research aims to examine the role of an educational developer in enabling COILers (teachers) to design and deliver an SDG-aligned COIL project. Reporting on Phase 1 of a quad-partnered COIL project, the paper focuses on the first part of the collaboration between a Sino-British TNHE university in China and a South African University of Technology. The educational development process aimed to advance transformative, equity-centered internationalization by integrating SDG 12 into a Technopreneurship-focused curriculum. This qualitative case study draws on three primary sources from the TNHE students (n = 38), namely, (1) their reflections posted on Padlet at the end of Phase 1, documenting their experiences of intercultural teamwork and learning; (2) post-training evaluations capturing perceptions of the project's structure and facilitation; and (3) project documentation, including shared task guidelines and assessment structures. A point worth mentioning is that Phase 1 of the quadruplet was conducted between 1 and 22 September 2025, with the TNHE students being the longest participants in this project (Phases 1 and 2), which is to conclude around mid-November 2025. The data were thematically analyzed (Braun & Clarke, 2021) to identify patterns across intercultural learning, equity, and facilitation. Ethical approval was obtained from the TNHE university's research ethics committee (ER-LRR-11000128420250518234656).

Theoretical Framework: Three intersecting frameworks shaped the design and facilitation: (1) cultural humility, which positions both teachers and students as reciprocal learners across cultural difference (Anderson & Or, 2024); (2) intersectionality, which highlights how overlapping identities, linguistic, national, disciplinary, influence collaborative dynamics (Borger, 2022); and (3) inclusive facilitation of structured activities designed to support equitable participation across constraints such as time zones or technology (Spieler et al., 2025; Hackett et al., 2024). Recent scholarship demonstrates that COIL faculty development initiatives, grounded in cultural humility and intersectional pedagogies, generate immediate impacts on teaching practices while also seeding longer-term institutional change. In these contexts, educational developers are consistently described as change agents who mediate constraints and enable inclusive, SDG-aligned internationalization (Mudiamu, 2020; Wimpenny et al., 2022; Hackett et al., 2024; Campoy-Cubillo & Jimenez-Estrada, 2025).

Discussion of the Findings: Students repeatedly emphasized how meaningful it was to communicate with peers from another continent. They described exchanges about languages, dialects, clothing, food, and music, noting that these experiences not only broadened their horizons but also deepened respect for cultural diversity. For many, SDG 12 moved from an abstract textbook concept to a tangible reality when South African peers described community clothing swaps or the challenges of recycling infrastructure. One student reflected: "I enjoyed learning about South African traditions; it made me think differently about sustainability in my own country."

Alongside these gains, students highlighted challenges in the collaboration. Time zone differences often limited synchronous participation, while unstable internet connections and accent barriers made conversations uneven. Some students felt that their groups progressed slowly, with long meetings yielding little clarity about next steps. Others noted that differences in professional terminology created misunderstandings. Yet, rather than diminishing the experience, these challenges often led to growth with students reflecting on the need for clearer agendas, more decisive leadership, and more precise communication strategies: "Sometimes our meetings were too long and confusing. I think we needed a leader to guide us more clearly."

Several students recommended more explicit task instructions and the provision of concrete examples. Others suggested bilingual glossaries for SDG-related technical terms, or additional workshops focused on cultural exchange

to balance the task-oriented nature of collaboration. These recommendations underscore the importance of scaffolding intercultural teamwork through academic development interventions. A visual analysis of student reflections reinforces these themes. The most frequently used terms relate to communication, culture, collaboration, teamwork, and sustainability, indicating how students framed their experiences. A further reflection captured the time zone issue: "The time difference was difficult, but it taught me how to be patient and listen carefully." The foregoing discussion has foregrounded how educational development can scaffold equity-centered COIL projects by mentoring COILers, better aligning tasks with SDGs, and embedding reflective and inclusive practices. The developer's role was pivotal in mediating structural barriers such as time differences and technological issues, while also ensuring that equity and cultural humility remained central to the project. This aligns with evidence from international studies that show how educational developers act as catalysts for embedding COIL within institutional strategies and professional development frameworks. Mudiamu (2020) emphasizes the importance of structured faculty networks, while Wimpenny et al. (2022) illustrate how digital inclusion and Ubuntu-informed practices create space for equitable collaboration. Similarly, Campoy-Cubillo and Jimenez-Estrada (2025) demonstrate how a critical, intersectional approach to SDGs through COIL can foster systemic change. Phase 1 of this project resonates strongly with these findings, positioning educational development as both a pedagogical and institutional lever for transformation.

Implications for Academic Development: The study highlights three key implications for academic development. Faculty development models must incorporate orientation and reflective practices rooted in cultural humility and intersectionality, equipping educators to facilitate inclusive and equitable COIL experiences. At the institutional level, effective integration in Transnational Higher Education contexts depends on aligning calendars, recognizing faculty workload, and providing the necessary resources to sustain collaboration. Ultimately, student feedback underscores the importance of scalability through intercultural scaffolding, which includes preparatory workshops, bilingual glossaries, and clear leadership roles. Together, these findings affirm the unique role of educational developers in mediating structural constraints while enabling both immediate pedagogical innovation and longer-term institutional change toward equity-centered internationalization.

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From Anxiety to Agency: Giving Students Power through Global Citizenship and Social-Emotional Learning in COIL

Bhawana Shrestha, Ana Sofia Oliveira Magano, Anisa Vahed

Abstract

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) enables students to exercise agency while interacting across cultural and institutional boundaries. This paper reports on a four-week COIL project that integrated social-emotional learning (SEL) with global citizenship education (GCE). Fourteen postgraduates from a Sino-British Transnational Higher Education (TNHE) university mentored twelve Portuguese secondary school students through activities centered on empathy, intercultural awareness, and collaborative problem-solving. Qualitative reflections revealed that multiple forms of anxiety, linguistic, technological, intercultural, evaluative, and teamwork-related, that shaped engagement. However, these anxieties often shifted into opportunities for growth. Findings indicate that SEL competencies, particularly empathy and patience, reduced anxiety, sustained social presence, and enabled learners to act as co-creators of global learning. The paper aligns with the sub-theme 'Agency and Students – Empowering Learners and Transforming Curriculum'.

Keywords: social-emotional learning, global citizenship education, COIL, student agency

Extended Summary

This research examines how Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) empowers students to take charge of their own learning by transforming the emotional challenges that arise when people from different cultures collaborate online into opportunities for social-emotional growth and learning about being a global citizen. The study investigates the intersection of anxiety, social presence, and social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies, analyzing how these factors interact to shape student experiences and outcomes in a COIL project.

Informed by the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison et al., 2000), particularly the concept of social presence, this research navigates the relational and emotional aspects of online learning. It also uses the CASEL (2020) framework for SEL, which emphasises self-awareness, empathy, and making informed decisions. Together, these frameworks provide insights into how students negotiate the relational, emotional, and intercultural aspects of online collaboration. The project methodologically engaged fourteen TNHE postgraduate students and twelve Portuguese secondary school students in a four-week COIL project. As outlined in Table 1, participants engaged in structured activities that taught them how to be empathetic, solve problems, and consider global issues such as climate change. Data were extracted from written reflections (n= 26) and were subsequently thematically analysed. Trustworthiness of the data was maintained through peer debriefing among the authors.

Key Findings

Students consistently described the project as emotionally challenging but also deeply rewarding. Language and communication anxieties emerged as Portuguese students grappled with the accents and the swift pace of speech, yet one reflected that this actually "helped me practice listening better". Technological anxieties also emerged, with a Chinese student recounting, "*A sudden power cut during one session and occasional network problems reminded me how dependent we are on technology*." The time zone differences and heavy workloads exacerbated these anxieties, as another student admitted, "*Balancing schoolwork and the time difference was hard. Meetings were either very early or late, and sometimes I felt too tired to give my best."*

Despite these pressures, anxieties shifted over time. Initial nervousness gave way to confidence as students grew accustomed to collaboration. A mentor wrote, "*Although we encountered many difficulties in the process, we eventually solved them. I have truly experienced the application of SEL and GCED in the educational process*." Similarly, a Portuguese student shared that "*explaining ideas, asking questions, and collaborating… gave me more confidence in expressing myself and improved my fluency."* Moments of misunderstanding were initially discouraging, but they often became opportunities for connection. As one student recalled, "*Sometimes we misunderstood small details, but each time we cleared it up, we understood each other better."*

Table 1. Overview of the 4-week COIL Project

Week	Online Sessions	Topic	Activity	Instruction to Tasks/Tools
1	1	Introduction to COIL project and SEL concepts	Icebreaker activity and introduction to SEL	Students introduce themselves and start reflecting on their SEL competencies using Padlet
	2	Global Citizenship and Intercultural Awareness	Small group discussion on global citizenship	Students reflect on their cultural backgrounds and values using Padlet
2	3	Developing Emotional Awareness & Empathy	Role-play on empathy and cultural sensitivity	Students role-play different SEL scenarios and share their experiences on Padlet.
	4	Social Skills & Communication in a Global Context	Case study analysis on communication styles	In small groups, students analyze cultural clashes and solutions using padlet
3	5	Building Relationships & Conflict Resolution	Collaborative Problem-solving in groups	Students collaborate on a group project to create a resolution plan for the themes they have decided.
	6	Mentorship: University Students Leading High School Students	Collaborative project work and mentorship sessions	University students guide high school students in finalizing their projects.
4	7	Final Project Presentations	Video/ Poster presentations on SEL and Global Citizenship	Students upload their final presentations to MS Teams and receive feedback.
	8	Final Reflective Presentation and Project Closing	Reflection on learning and project closure	Students submit reflective presentations and participate in a closing discussion and certification.

Across reflections, students frequently emphasized empathy and patience as transformative skills. *"Empathy is a skill everyone should have; we have to help and support everybody that need our help*," one wrote. Another added, *"We have to be patient with each other, we have to know how to listen and, most importantly, know how to work as a team*." These lessons became the means through which challenges were reframed as growth opportunities. Students also connected their learning to a broader global outlook. A Portuguese participant explained, "*Yes, I believe COIL has strong potential for the future… It creates an international classroom and helps prepare us for a globalized world*." An TNHE student similarly remarked, "*I have gained a deeper understanding of the value of international co-operation… multicultural integration can lead to more innovative ideas."*

Collectively, the findings show that empathy and patience functioned as mediating factors, enabling students to transform anxiety into agency. As one student summarized, "*Even with the challenges, I became more confident… Patience and empathy can overcome almost any barrier."*

Theoretical and Educational Significance

This research illustrates that the anxieties in COIL are not merely obstacles but can be reframed as opportunities for growth when mediated by SEL competencies and social presence. It builds upon prior research (Fondo & Jacobetty, 2020; Nissen et al., 2025) by showing how students actively exercised agency, transforming challenges into opportunities for intercultural and interpersonal growth. Theoretically, the study contributes to understanding the interplay between the emotional and social aspects of learning dimensions. Educationally, it emphasizes that curriculum design should aim to eliminate anxiety, but to scaffold and channel it productively.

For practice, this means that teachers should incorporate reflection points and SEL strategies into COIL courses to help students transform their worries into learning opportunities. For policy, COIL should be acknowledged as a modality of internationalization at home that democratizes access to global learning and empowers students to navigate complexity. Future research should pursue longitudinal and mixed-method studies to further examine SEL's role in mediating anxiety and promoting global citizenship. Overall, the prominent features of this research illustrate that when designed with intentionality, COIL can enable students to move from anxiety to agency, embodying the transformative aims of academic development.

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Critical Agency as Academic Development in COIL Partnerships

Anisa Vahed, Rieta Ganas

Abstract

This paper explores how critical agency manifests as academic development through Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) partnerships. Drawing on a quintuplet COIL project linking three South African universities, one Kenyan university, and a Sino-British transnational higher education (TNHE) university in China, the study applies Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to examine how educators' dispositions, professional experiences, and contextual conditions shape their agency across design, implementation, and reflection. Using a qualitative, interpretivist case study, data were generated from participants' narratives posted on Padlet (October 2025). Findings reveal that COILers' agency emerged as they navigated tensions across digital tools, institutional rules, and intercultural collaboration, tensions that became generative spaces for transformation. These contradictions catalyzed professional learning, pedagogical renewal, and collective ownership of knowledge. The paper argues that such disruptive enactments of agency constitute academic development itself, showing that when teachers co-create transnational learning ecologies, they transform themselves, their institutions, and the broader field of academic development.

Keywords: COIL, Academic Development, Faculty Agency, Cultural - Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), Intercultural Collaboration

Extended Summary

Background and Context

This study positions Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) as a fertile site for enacting academic development through critical agency. Rather than situating agency within academic development, the research conceptualizes agency as academic development itself. The quintuplet COIL project brought together COILers (teachers) from five universities namely, three South African, one Kenyan, and one Sino-British Transnational Higher Education (TNHE) university in China, to co-design and deliver a transnational virtual learning experience emphasizing intercultural collaboration and pedagogical innovation. Guided by Cultural -Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), the study illuminates how COILers' dispositions and professional experiences intersect with institutional rules, digital tools, and intercultural community dynamics to enable or constrain agency across contexts. This work aligns with the ICED 2026 theme "Interculturality, Sustainable Professional Identities & Digital Transformation in Academic Development." It demonstrates how academic development unfolds relationally through global learner-teacher partnerships that balance innovation, equity, and inclusion.

Methodology

A qualitative, interpretivist case study design guided the inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). The first author, serving as COIL project lead and educational developer, conceived the project in October 2024 and identified teachers from her professional network across the Global South to participate in a transnational COIL collaboration. To plan the initiative, she convened a series of virtual discussions with the team of educators from the five participating universities between November 2024 and August 2025. The first author also coordinated and led capacity-development workshops for university partners (faculty and students), centered on COIL pedagogy, intercultural engagement, and digital collaboration. The project unfolded in two phases: Phase 1 (July–August 2025) and Phase 2 (September–October 2025). Participant reflections, aligned with the project's objectives, were subsequently collected via Padlet in October 2025. Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2021) six-phase framework for thematic analysis. Emergent themes were mapped onto the CHAT nodes namely, subject, tools, rules, community, and division of labor, revealing contradictions that served as catalysts for expansive learning (Engeström, 2001, 2015; see Fig. 1). Ethical approval was obtained from the TNHE university's research ethics committee (ER-LRR-11000128420250518234656).

Findings and Discussion

Dispositions Shaping Agency (Subject Node)

COILers' curiosity, creativity, and resilience anchored their engagement. As one participant reflected, "This is something new…let's learn from it." Professional identity provided confidence to navigate uncertainty and cross-cultural difference. Dispositions such as empathy and openness transformed hesitation into experimentation, revealing how agency strengthens through reflective self-positioning within the activity system. CHAT interpretation: As reflective practitioners, COILers (subject) consciously mediate and transform their own dispositions through conscious expansive learning.

Contextual Conditions Enabling or Constraining Agency (Tools, Rules, Community, Division of Labor)

Digital tools (Padlet, Zoom) mediated collaboration while surfacing inequities in technological access. Institutional rule, such as misaligned academic calendars and bureaucratic procedures, limited fluid coordination, yet structured meetings reinstated momentum and clarity. Community dynamics fostered belonging: "Colleagues encouraged me instead of

looking for a perfect aspect." Redistributed facilitation roles strengthened equity and relational trust. CHAT interpretation: Tools and rules act as mediating artefacts that shape possibilities for engagement; contradictions among them can generate innovation. The evolving division of labor exemplified horizontal collaboration characteristic of third-generation CHAT.

Contradictions as Catalysts for Transformation (Contradictions → Outcomes)

COILers reframed breakdowns and tensions as productive learning moments. Miscommunication and time-zone stress fostered empathy and adaptability; digital failure prompted creative workaround strategies; and disciplinary dissonance sparked integrative thinking: "It wasn't clear how we could conjugate our different topics…then thanks to the partners I understood." Hierarchical boundaries softened as facilitators and postgraduate students became equal collaborators. Such moments of "productive friction" exemplify Engeström's (2015) notion of contradictions as developmental triggers for expansive learning. CHAT interpretation: Contradictions generate transformation when participants collectively reflect, negotiate, and redesign their practices, redefining academic development as an emergent, relational process rather than a top-down program.

Synthesizing Across CHAT Nodes

Across all nodes, agency evolved through iterative cycles of reflection → negotiation → transformation. Personal dispositions provided the spark for engagement; contextual conditions offered or restricted pathways; and contradictions fueled systemic innovation. Thus, critical agency is not an outcome of academic development but its very enactment, the lived process through which educators co-construct new professional identities and collaborative cultures.

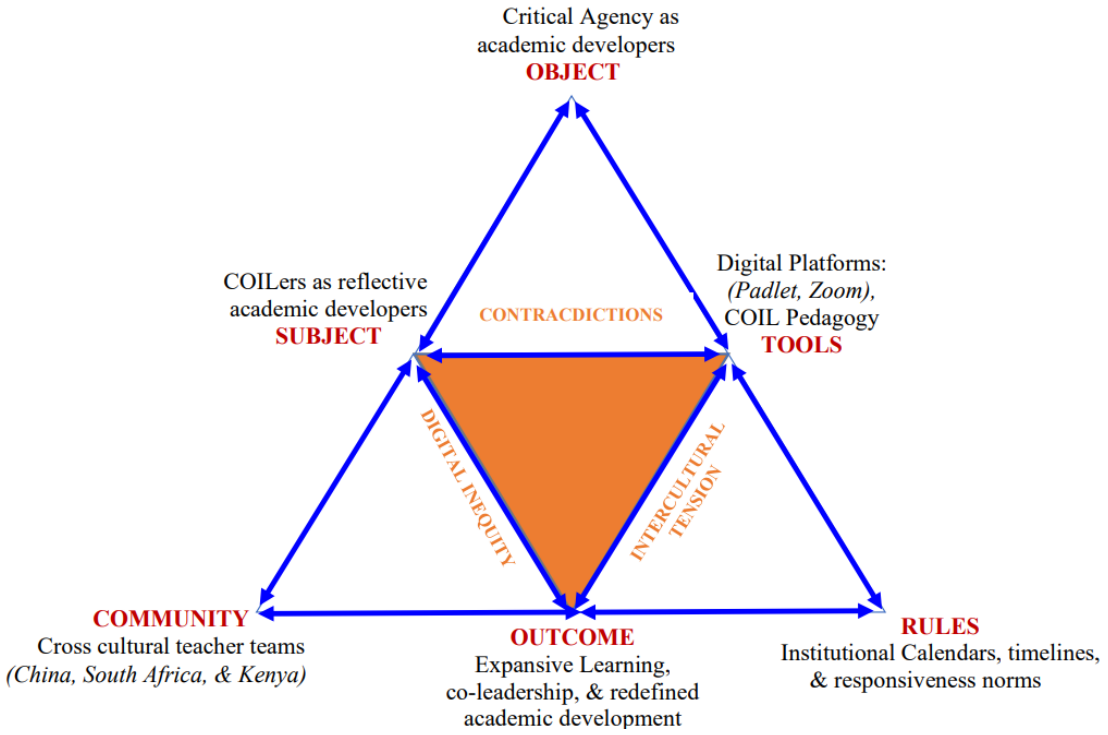


Fig. 1. CHAT-Informed Model of COILers' Enactment of Critical Agency as Academic Development.

Figure 1 illustrates how contradictions, such as digital inequity and intercultural tension, within CHAT nodes (subject, tools, rules, community, division of labor) dynamically interact to generate expansive learning, co-leadership, and redefined academic development.

Implications for Academic Development

This study redefines academic development as a *co-creative, intercultural, and dialogic practice.* When educators design COIL projects collaboratively, they enact relational agency and professional learning rather than merely receive it.

Key implications include:

- Reframing Professional Learning: Prioritize emergent co-design and distributed leadership over prescriptive training models.
- Digital Equity and Inclusion: Address infrastructure gaps and provide flexible technological ecosystems that foster participation across diverse digital platforms.
- Intercultural Dialogue as Pedagogical Practice: Cultivate mutual empathy and relational trust for sustainable professional identity formation.
- Contradictions as Professional Drivers: View tensions between institutional norms and collaborative ideals as generative forces for transformation.

In doing so, COIL becomes a living laboratory for academic development, one that bridges geographical, cultural, and disciplinary divides while cultivating resilience, creativity, and critical reflexivity.

Conclusion

By applying CHAT to a transnational COIL partnership, this study demonstrates that academic development is enacted through educators' critical agency. Dispositions, contextual mediations, and contradictions collectively produce expansive learning, transforming both personal practice and institutional culture. COIL thus exemplifies an evolving ecosystem of sustainable, globally networked professional learning aligned with the UN SDGs - SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

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Fostering global teaching competence in Japan: Insights from an EMI preparing future faculty program

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Abstract

This study examines the development and impact of the UTokyo Global Future Faculty Development Program (UTokyo Global FFDP), an English-medium faculty development initiative designed to prepare emerging educators for teaching in diverse international and multicultural contexts. Alongside the expansion of English-medium instruction (EMI) within Japan, there is increasing demand for FD programs that support Japanese educators who may teach abroad as well as international students in Japan. UTokyo Global FFDP addresses these needs through active learning, microteaching, peer feedback, and intercultural collaboration.

Drawing on two years of post-program survey data (2022 and 2023), this study employs a mixed-methods analysis to explore participant experiences. The analysis is guided by two research questions: (1) How do participants evaluate their learning and overall satisfaction with the program? and (2) How are their learning attitudes, engagement and sense of belonging reflected in the qualitative feedback? Quantitatively, satisfaction levels were consistently high across both years. Qualitatively, discourse analysis of open-ended responses revealed a shift toward more agentive and collaborative language in 2023, with participants more frequently using first-person singular or plural forms. These patterns suggest an emerging sense of learner agency and stronger community-building within the cohort. This shift may reflect program adjustment, including clearer emphasis on valuing diverse English varieties, revisions to learning activities, and a more stable classroom environment. While the program offers a promising model as an English-mediated FD program, the limited participation of Japanese EMI educators means it does not fully meet broader national FD needs.

Keywords: Faculty development, English-medium instruction, Globalization, Higher education

Extended Summary

Aim of the paper

This study examines the development and impact of the UTokyo Global Future Faculty Development Program (UTokyo Global FFDP), an English-medium (future) faculty development initiative in Japan. Drawing on two years of post-program survey data (2022 and 2023), this study analyzes quantitative trends in participant satisfaction and qualitative discourse patterns to identify program strengths and implications for future practice and research.

Background

Internationalization in Japanese higher education has accelerated, leading to growing demand for EMI. Although Ministry of Education (MEXT) promotes the cultivation of “global human resources” (MEXT, 2025) and many Japanese universities have implemented EMI programs (Iino, 2019), previous research highlights limitations. FD programs are still offered predominantly in Japanese, and English-related FD in Japan often prioritizes linguistic competencies rather than pedagogical development (Roloff Rothman, 2020). Brown’s (2015) investigation of Japanese universities offering undergraduate EMI programs also identifies insufficient professional development for EMI faculty. These findings suggest a mismatch between national policy expectations and the FD initiatives currently available.

Overview of UTokyo Global FFDP

To address these challenges above, UTokyo Global FFDP was designed with an international perspective to support graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and faculty in acquiring educational competences required for teaching at universities in Japan and overseas. Building on the Japanese-medium UTokyo FFP (UTokyo FD, n.d.), the program incorporates substantial revisions to structure, content and materials.

The course is offered in the Autumn Semester from 13:00 to 16:40 across eight sessions. It covers topics including the science of learning, assessment, class design, syllabus design, and teaching practice. Since its launch in 2022, four editions have been implemented (as of December 2025). Method

A post-survey is administered to all completers (plus observers in 2023). The 2022 questionnaire contained 51 items, while the 2023 version included 19 items. Both used six-point Likert scale items (from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree”) to assess participants’ satisfaction, self-evaluation of learning and perceptions of the course, along with open-ended questions on program strengths and areas for improvement. Surveys were distributed to 14 participants in 2022 and 22 in 2023.

Results and Discussion

Across the first three editions, 51 participants completed the program. A defining feature is its participant diversity: to date, participants have come from over 20 countries, and approximately 90% are non-Japanese. In both 2022 and 2023, most respondents were PhD students, followed by researchers, faculty members and Master’s students (Table 1). The response rates were 100% in 2022 and 95% in 2023.

Quantitative results indicate consistently high levels of participant satisfaction with the program. More than 90% of respondents across both years reported that the program met their expectations and would be useful for their future teaching (Tables 2 and 3).

Discourse analysis of the qualitative feedback revealed a strong appreciation for the program's pedagogical coherence and the quality of support. In both years, positive evaluative adjectives such as useful, helpful, well-organized and impressive were commonly used to describe class structure, feedback, and instructional design.

However, notable differences appear in agency-related expressions between years. The 2022 respondents often used inanimate subjects (e.g., The timely and detailed feedback to the assignment was very impressive). By contrast, the 2023 responses frequently included first-person subjects (e.g., I have experienced some types of learner-centered based teaching method.), thereby constructing themselves as active agents. Furthermore, the 2023 respondents used first-person plural forms (immediate We) more frequently (e.g., We had a lot of opportunities for discussion with colleagues with diverse backgrounds). Such usage is associated with a stronger collective identity and heightened sense of belonging (Zengilowski et al., 2023). These shifts may reflect program adjustments after 2022, including explicit emphasis on valuing diverse English varieties, revisions to learning activities, and a more stable classroom environment with fewer external participants. Taken together, these discourse features suggest a shift toward greater learner agency and a strengthened perception of the program as a welcoming, community-oriented environment.

Theoretical and educational significance

The findings indicate sustained high satisfaction and growth in learner agency and sense of belonging in the learning community. This cognitive aspect, as supported by previous research (e.g., du Toit-Brits's, 2022), underpins effective learning. UTokyo Global FFDP thus offers a promising model for English-mediated FD. However, as participation by Japanese EMI educators remains limited, the program does not yet fully respond to the broader need for EMI-related FD in Japan. Addressing this gap remains a key challenge for the future.

To further develop the program and generate broader implications for English-medium FD, future research should investigate participants' experiences more deeply. Ethnographic approaches, including classroom observations, interviews, and meso-level discourse analysis, could yield richer insights into how participants construct professional identities and negotiate multicultural classroom dynamics.

Table 1. Participants' status

Edition	Faculty member	Researcher	PhD student	Master's student
2022	1	5	6	2
2023	3	3	11	2

Note. Observers' statuses in 2023 were not asked in the survey.

Table 2. Responses to the statement "My expectations for the program have been fulfilled"

Edition	Positive			Negative		
	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2022	42.9%	35.7%	14.3%	0%	7.1%	0%
2023	38.1%	52.4%	4.8%	0%	0%	4.8%

Table 3. Responses to the statement "The program is useful for my future as a teacher"

Edition	Positive			Negative		
	Strongly agree	Agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2022	78.6%	7.1%	7.1%	0%	7.1%	0%
2023	61.9%	33.3%	0%	0%	0%	4.8%

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Building Agency North–South Cooperation: Meaningful Interaction and Academic Development

Robert Gray, Paul Muyinda, Nicholas Ssempijja, Kjersti Lea, Steinar Sætre

Abstract

This paper presentation examines how university teachers are given agency in the Capacity Building for Research-Based Teacher Education (CABUTE) project, which provides academic development opportunities for Ugandan teacher educators via partnerships between universities in Norway and Uganda. The primary purpose of the project is to strengthen teacher education in Uganda, but one of its main features is to offer university pedagogy courses for university faculty at Makerere University, Kyambogo University, and the Uganda National Institute for Teacher Education (UNITE).

We will present the designs and outcomes of two of CABUTE's academic development offerings: 1) an introductory course on teaching at university and blended learning and 2) a more advanced course on student interaction and engagement that were offered between 2022 and 2026. Each of these courses was offered once online and once on site.

We will discuss how the courses were set up and share data from follow-up focus group sessions with course participants where participants share how these sessions impacted their teaching practice. We will also give more information on the CABUTE project and its impact on teaching and learning both in higher education and in schools through the transformation of teacher educators' pedagogical practices, mentorship, and research.

Keywords: Academic development, Student agency, Digital learning, Writerly teaching and learning

Extended Summary

The Capacity Building for Research-Based Teacher Education (CABUTE) project is a six-year initiative (2021–2026) under NORHED II that aims to enhance teacher education quality and relevance in Uganda. The project's design centers on teacher-educator agency: building individuals' capability to initiate and sustain change in curricula, pedagogy, assessment, and organizational practices. This resonates directly with ICED26's theme, "Agency and Academic Development," and all three subthemes: Agency and Knowledge, Agency and Strategy, and Agency and Students.

A bulk of the CABUTE project's activity centers around providing scholarships, supervision, and support for master students, PhD candidates, and postdoctoral fellows. However, another important aspect of the project has been a series of academic development workshops offered throughout the project's lifespan. The project also arranged several other short workshops around academic development and digital learning in both Uganda and Norway.

The first of these workshops served as a combined introduction to teaching at university and the basics of blended learning. It was first offered as three synchronous sessions via Zoom and a wide collection of asynchronous activities between meetings in early 2022. It was then offered again onsite in Kampala in late 2022 and early 2023. The course covered the basics of course design (Fink, 2013), blended learning strategies (Bonk and Graham, 2023), active learning, and assessment (Gibbs and Simpson, 2005) and was co-taught by staff from both Norwegian and Ugandan universities.

The second workshop, on student interaction and engagement, was offered initially as a two-day in-person workshop in May 2024. It will be offered again online in the spring of 2026. Drawing on Gray's Writerly Framework for Teaching and Learning (Gray 2025; Gray et al., 2025), this course looked at concepts of interaction in the classroom and online and called for participants to design interactive assignments and activities to be used in their classrooms (face-to-face or online).

We will present how these workshops were delivered and, more importantly, using data from focus groups and other follow-up conversations with participants, how they have impacted the teaching and learning practices of teacher educators in the CABUTE project. We will also give more information on the CABUTE project and its impact on teaching and learning both in higher education and in schools through the transformation of teacher educators' pedagogical practices, mentorship, and research.

Some of the way these activities have impacted practices include a changing of their mindset for teacher-centered to student-centered practices and a genuine sense of this is what will benefit the learners, primarily by granting them agency in their learning. Others findings include the importance of contextualization and how learning should be about making meaning.

The participants' experiences and expectations as university students were reported to be very traditional. Many of them described this by referencing Paulo Freire's "banking" model of education (2018), but virtually all of them gravitated toward the excitement of promoting agency in their students, as well as in their student's pupils.

Finally, we will provide more information on the CABUTE project and its impact on teaching and learning both in higher education and in schools through the transformation of teacher educators' practices, mentorship, and research, exploring how the project explicitly attempts to build agency in students and throughout systems.

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Workshop 1

How Educational Developers Can Use Community Power to Scale Universal Design Practices

Thomas Tobin, Maureen Haran, Niamh Plunkett, Lisa Padden

Abstract

By now, you likely know the basics of universal design (UD): lower access barriers in the physical environment, as well as in the design of learning experiences. How consistently does your center or institution model these principles in your educational programming? Come to our workshop and take away concrete techniques for modeling UD in your educational-development work and scaling up to lower barriers across your institution and in your region. Using the "see one, do one, teach one" approach, you'll learn from a) an advocacy organisation that co-leads a nationwide UD credentialing programme, b) a university that adopted UD across its teaching and service touchpoints, and c) a researcher whose UD-at-scale process is a model for how you can adopt and advocate for UD in your own context. Come prepared to be part of the conversation—equal parts demonstration, proof-of-concept, and collaborative meaning-making. This workshop is for instructors, teaching-centre staff, and campus leaders at all levels.

Keywords: UD, universal design, access, accessibility

Extended Summary

Conceptual Framework: Colleges and universities ask instructors to apply inclusive principles, but sometimes miss opportunities to embody similar practices in our support and educational-development programming. We'll share universal design (UD) techniques to help you to embody, assess, and grow "innovation, communication channels, time, and a social system" (Smith, Greenwald, Nave, Mansure, & Howell, 2020) beyond just instructor training.

Take-Aways: By participating in this session, you will be able to:

- assess your educational-development work to uncover "start-here" gaps;
- build core UD skills for instructor and staff participants;
- concretely model UD in your programming;
- expand UD across campus through center support and partnership approaches;
- define how UD considerations change at the institutional and system-level scales;
- create action plans for UD along three strategic pillars of access, inclusion, and predictability; and
- attract funding, resources, and time for systemic UD application, community, and assessment.

Session Activities: Come prepared to be part of the conversation—equal parts demonstration, proof-of-concept, and collaborative meaning-making. This workshop is for instructors, teaching-centre staff, and campus leaders at all levels. We'll start with an introduction to UD in educational development (10 minutes). Then each facilitator will share an interactive micro session.

Finding Your Tribe: How Learning Communities Can Impact National and Institutional Systems (20 minutes)

> Author 1 will share how a community of practice built a 10-week Universal Design professional-development programme which reached 5,000+ teaching professionals. You'll discover how this influenced national policy and the development of a National Charter for Universal Design in Tertiary Education which ensures everyone is embedding UD across their offerings. You'll get the opportunity to reflect on who your professional-development partners might be for a push towards more inclusive practice in your context, and get key insights into how to build and leverage these communities.

From Grass Roots to Governance: Embedding UDL in Institutional Strategy at Institution 2 (20 minutes)

> What began as a grassroots effort at Institution 2—championed by a passionate community of educators and professional staff—has grown into a system-wide commitment to inclusion, equity, and access.
>
> Author 2 will outline the early momentum generated through informal communities of practice and the National UDL Digital Badge (Institution 1, 2025) which equipped thousands of educators with a shared language and approach that ultimately shaped the ALTITUDE Charter (2024)—a national framework guiding UD adoption in Country 1's tertiary systems.
>
> Author 3 will share how Institution 2's bottom-up efforts transitioned to strategic integration, through executive support, getting UD into the strategic plan, and how a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee expanded the adoption. Professional development moved beyond badge completion to meaningful institutional recognition for staff committed to inclusive design.

You'll reflect on your own institutional context by mapping existing committees, working groups, and strategic plans where you can champion and scale UD principles.

A 5-Stage Model for Scaling Universal Design (20 minutes)

How do we go from having a few people who know a lot about inclusive design (Pace, Middendorf & Shopkow, 2017-18) to helping everyone to know and do a few keystone practices based on the UD framework?

Author 4 will demonstrate how the UD framework translates into action along three strategic pillars of access, inclusion, and predictability (Tobin & Behling, 2018). You will take away models for attracting funding, resources, and time for systemic UD application (Pusateri, 2022, 39-60).

At scale, systemic UD addresses fewer, more strategic goals: learner persistence, retention, and satisfaction (Smith, Greenwald, Nave, Mansure, & Howell, 2020). As focus shifts to systemic practices, UD leverages the power of defaults and applications move beyond the classroom and formal teaching-and-learning interactions.

The work of campus support units encompasses the development of curriculum, teaching approaches, instructor career paths, and institutional policy. We will examine a five-part maturity model for adopting UD as part of your center's work and beyond (Tobin, 2026).

Collaboration, Equity, & Evidence: During our ending conversation (15 minutes), you will engage in a facilitated collaborative session with our presenters to design one actionable technique to share back with colleagues and eventually incorporate in the programming in your own college or university.

Creating safe and welcoming spaces: This session emphasizes innovative practices for which ICED members are among the campus vanguard. Collaboration in safe and welcoming opportunities for professional development helps us to "anticipate and respond to emerging institutional and student needs." Our exemplars of micro-, meso-, and macro-level professional development are designed for equity, able to be completed by everyone in varying ways, in order to "build capacity for the future of our campuses."

Principles for accessibility & inclusion: This session will provide multiple ways to keep participants engaged (solo, collaborative, and interactive), multiple ways to present information (slide visuals, video sharing, text-chat, side-channel, spoken dialogue), and multiple ways to join the conversation and show skills (in-person conversation, text chat, self-guided reflection).

Modeling equity: We will use active-learning techniques and provide use-them-now resources for participants. Especially by relating instructor-development programming to broader access, attention, and persistence benefits for all instructor participants, this session's activities serve as a model for attendees to re-frame accessible and inclusive educational-development conversations.

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Workshop 2

Generative Artificial Intelligence for Research

Diana Mireya Cuéllar Sánchez, Diana Marcela Cabrera Navarrete

Abstract

Generative Artificial Intelligence represents a significant opportunity to strengthen academic research processes, serving as a complementary resource that can enhance efficiency, creativity, and scientific innovation. This workshop aims to train participants in the conscious and strategic use of generative AI tools to support key stages of the research process, such as formulating questions, designing methodologies, and exploring conceptual frameworks. Beyond technological capabilities, the workshop emphasizes the importance of maintaining ethical judgment and critical thinking as guiding principles of the scientific process. Understanding the scope and limitations of these tools ensures a responsible and reflective application of AI in academic contexts, allowing the researcher to remain the central agent in the generation of knowledge.

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence, Digital Tools for Research, Ethical Use of AI, Academic Research, Higher Education, Innovation in Research.

Extended Summary

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has established itself as a transformative paradigm that emulates human cognitive processes through systems capable of perceiving, reasoning, and making autonomous decisions (Suazo, 2023; Plaza, 2024). It enables the efficient processing of complex data, the identification of patterns, and the generation of more accurate predictions—often surpassing traditional research methods.

Its applications include search and optimization, machine learning, neural networks, computer vision, natural language processing, and planning (FCCyT, 2018). Moreover, AI has strengthened theoretical inquiry by facilitating the identification and synthesis of conceptual frameworks, thereby promoting more timely and comprehensive research (UNESCO, 2023). In particular, generative AI has accelerated research worldwide, with an estimated 12.9% annual growth in scientific output (Elsevier, 2019), by reducing time and costs while expanding the impact and scope of studies (Soyer, 2019).

From an ethical perspective, the Beijing Consensus (2019) emphasizes that AI must serve humanity, be developed ethically, and remain subject to ongoing evaluation. Generative tools, far from being a threat, should be viewed as complementary resources that enhance productivity when used critically (Morales, 2023).

Nevertheless, since AI operates on probabilistic reasoning, it may produce inadequate or inaccurate responses, which makes active supervision by the researcher essential. In education and research, AI should be regarded as a supporting tool rather than a substitute, as critical thinking, creativity, and ethical reflection remain exclusively human attributes (González & Dagmaris, 2020; Morales, 2023).

Ultimately, AI does not alter the ethical principles that underpin science. Responsibility lies with those who use it: in the hands of honest researchers, it becomes a powerful instrument that strengthens rigor, efficiency, and innovation in research (Díaz, 2024).

Learning goals or outcomes for participants:

To apply Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) tools in academic research processes—such as question formulation, methodological selection, instrument design, and conceptual analysis—through guided practical activities, in order to assess their usefulness, scope, and ethical limits within academic development.

Description of interactive methods or activities with approximate timings:

Activity 1: GAI for Formulating and Refining Research Questions (30 minutes) Participants will use a Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) platform to generate an initial research question on a relevant topic. Then, guided by a methodological framework based on the FINER model (Feasible, Interesting, Novel, Ethical, and Relevant), they will collectively refine the question, discussing proposals and reviewing its pertinence.

Activity 2: Approaches and Designs with GAI Assistance (30 minutes) Based on the refined research question, participants will ask the GAI for suggestions on possible methodological approaches (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed) and research designs.

Activity 3: Mini Instrument Design (30 minutes): Each group will design a brief questionnaire with the assistance of GAI, primarily using Likert-type scales.

Activity 4: Concept Mapping with NotebookLM (30 minutes): Participants will upload an informational source into NotebookLM and use the Concept Map function to generate a graphical representation of key concepts within the field of AI. They will analyze how the proposed terms relate to one another and share observations about the process and outcomes.

Activity 5: Capabilities and Limits of Text-Based GAI (30 minutes) In this comparative activity, participants will evaluate how two different GAI platforms approach tasks such as text summarization, research idea generation, academic writing, and theoretical responses. They will collectively discuss the strengths, errors, and potential biases observed, and reflect on the responsible use of these technologies.

Relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education: The use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) tools in higher education environments represents a significant advancement for academic and research development. These technologies make it possible to complement and optimize processes such as formulating research questions, designing instruments, synthesizing scientific literature, and exploring conceptual frameworks. When integrated into learning activities, they not only strengthen participants' digital and methodological competencies but also foster critical thinking regarding the responsible and ethical use of technology in knowledge production. Given the exponential growth of these tools, their inclusion in university programs is not only relevant but essential to prepare students and educators to face the current challenges of academic research.

The target audience for these activities includes: University professors interested in integrating emerging technologies into their teaching and research practices. Teacher-researchers seeking to improve the efficiency and quality of their methodological processes through the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI). Undergraduate and graduate students who require support in project formulation and academic writing. Members of research groups or student research networks, who can incorporate these tools into their processes of analysis, synthesis, and scientific writing. In general, any individual interested in applying GAI as a critical and well-grounded support tool for academic research.

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Workshop 3

Teaching portfolios in the age of AI: time to rethink the assessment of teaching competencies?

Anita Iversen, Kristine Ludvigsen, Iris Borch, Marko Lukic, Ragnhild Sandvoll, Katarina Winka

Abstract

In many higher education institutions, the teaching portfolio serves as a central tool for documenting pedagogical competences in promotion and recruitment processes. Traditionally, portfolios combine personal reflection, theoretical grounding, and practical examples of teaching. Beyond documenting teachers' skills, teaching portfolios are intended to foster ongoing professional growth and the development of teaching practice. However, the emergence of large language models has made it remarkably easy to use AI-technology to generate teaching philosophies and create portfolios that appear theoretically robust, critically reflective, and richly illustrated with examples. As a result, generative AI is starting to challenge established approaches to documenting and assessing teaching competences. These changes raise critical questions about authenticity, credibility, and fairness in using pedagogical portfolios as documentation of pedagogical competence. If AI convincingly creates such documentation, how should institutions recalibrate promotion and reward systems to protect integrity and support ongoing professional development? This interactive workshop invites participants to explore these challenges through demonstrations of AI-generated portfolio texts, guided group reflections, and collaborative scenario-building exercises. Together, we will examine the balance between the "performative self" and the "authentic self" in documentation practices. Participants will also consider alternative frameworks for validating and supporting pedagogical development in an AI-rich environment. By engaging critically with AI's disruptive potential, we will co-create strategies to safeguard academic integrity and agency while reimagining recognition systems in higher education.

Keywords: Academic development, Teaching portfolios, Artificial intelligence, Agency and authenticity, Promotion and recognition

Extended Summary

Theoretical and Research-Based Foundations Teaching portfolios are increasingly used in higher education to document educational competence for recruitment, promotion, and teaching recognition and reward schemes. They serve as both reflective tools for teachers' professional development and as evidence of pedagogical quality (Sandvoll et al., 2024). Research highlights the dual role of teaching portfolios: fostering authentic reflection and development while also serving performative functions for career advancement (Pelger & Larsson, 2018; Trevitt & Stocks, 2012). This tension between the "authentic self" and the "performative self" is critical for both the portfolio owner and those assessing it. Access to generative AI is disrupting established teaching, learning and assessment practices in higher education (Frances et al., 2025, Kim et al, 2025). In our study, we used a locally hosted generative AI model, approved for handling sensitive data (ChatUiT), to assemble a teaching portfolio that met institutional requirements. Starting from a person's publicly available digital footprint and some published papers, the model quickly produced a polished portfolio with seemingly authentic and relevant references. The result sparked both anxiety and lively debate about whether the teaching portfolio remains a viable documentation format for assessment. Our experiment shows that AI can generate a portfolio that convincingly weaves together pedagogical theory, self-reflection, and illustrative examples to document competence and qualifications. Yet, although such texts read as authentic, they raise serious concerns about integrity, validity, and fairness in assessment. These issues mirror broader debates in higher education around academic integrity, authorship, and epistemic agency.

The workshop is grounded in literature on:

- Teaching portfolios and educational competence (Sandvoll et al., 2024; Winka & Ryegård, 2024)
- Authenticity and reflection in academic documentation (Pelger & Larsson, 2018; FitzPatrick & Spiller, 2010).
- Disruptive technologies in higher education (Francis et al., 2025; Kim et al., 2025). By combining empirical demonstration and collaborative reflection, the workshop will provide participants with evidence-based perspectives and invite them to co-explore and co-design alternative formats for documenting and assessing pedagogical competence in an AI-rich environment.

Learning Goals / Outcomes At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Describe how generative AI can produce teaching portfolios
- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of AI-generated portfolios, distinguishing between opportunities, risks, and the conditions for responsible use
- Critically analyze implications for authenticity, fairness, and academic integrity in recognition and promotion processes

- Reflect on the role of agency in documenting and assessing educational competence when AI challenges traditional notions of authorship
- Discuss how to make the documentation and assessment of teaching competence more robust in higher education in light of ongoing AI developments Interactive methods and activities (with approximate timings)

1. Welcome and framing (10 min)

- Facilitators introduce the workshop, its goals, and relevance to ICED26
- Participants are invited to share (via show of hands or short poll) whether they have written, assessed, or supported teaching portfolios

2. Demonstration of AI-generated portfolio (15 min)

- A short demonstration of how prompts can generate a teaching portfolio with strong theoretical grounding and illustrative teaching practices
- Comparison with authentic excerpts from real portfolios (anonymized)
- Whole-group reflection: What seems convincing? What seems problematic?

3. Small-group reflection (20 min) Groups of 4–6 discuss guided questions:

- How does AI reshape the tension between the "authentic self" and "performative self" in documentation?
- What are the risks to fairness in recruitment and promotion?
- How can AI be used constructively for professional development, not just as a shortcut?

4. Plenary synthesis (10 min):

- Groups share key insights.
- Facilitators summarize patterns and highlight unresolved tensions.

5. Co-creating future practices for documenting and assessing teaching and learning (20 min): Participants return to small groups to imagine new approaches for documenting and assessing teaching competence in an AI-rich environment. Possible prompts:

- What alternative evidence (student evaluations, peer reviews, teaching artefacts) could complement narrative portfolios?
- What alternative assessment methods (interviews, live demonstrations) could complement the assessment of narrative portfolios?
- How can institutions balance trust, accountability, and innovation?
- How might AI or collaborative approaches support authenticity?

6. Collective harvesting (10 min)

- Groups post their proposals in a shared online space (Padlet/Mentimeter) or sticky notes on board/wall
- Facilitators briefly highlight themes and practical takeaways

7. Closing reflections (5 min): Facilitators connect outcomes to the ICED26 theme of Agency and Academic Development, emphasizing how academic developers, leaders, and teachers can exercise agency in shaping fair, future-oriented recognition systems.

Relevance for academic development in higher education The workshop is directly relevant to academic development, as it addresses a rapidly emerging disruption that touches on:

- Recognition and reward systems: How to assess educational competence when AI can generate polished portfolios.
- Professional identity and agency: How teachers maintain authenticity in their documentation and how academic developers can support this.
- Institutional transformation: How universities may need to redesign frameworks for merit, promotion, and recruitment to adapt to AI. The discussion goes beyond technical concerns, focusing on the broader role of academic developers as change agents who help institutions respond to systemic challenges. Intended audience
- Academic developers supporting teachers in developing portfolios.
- Leaders and committee members involved in recognition, promotion, and recruitment processes.
- Teachers and early-career academics writing and assessing teaching portfolios.
- Policy makers and educational leaders concerned with merit frameworks and quality assurance.

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Workshop 4

Creating Safe Spaces for Critical Generative AI Literacy: Supporting Faculty Across the Adoption–Resistance Spectrum

Lydia Watson

Abstract

Three years after Generative AI has made its way into our classrooms, post-secondary faculty continue to be confronted by the task of setting their own classroom guidelines around the use of the tools amidst a changing educational landscape. As a result, educational developers face the growing challenge of supporting faculty across the spectrum, from strong adopters of Generative AI to active resisters, while creating a safe space for learning together. This workshop-in-a-box responds to that challenge by introducing critical generative AI literacy, an approach that promotes faculty to ask deeper questions: when, where, and why should we use gen AI, and when should we not, if at all. Drawing on Maha Bali's framework (2023) and through interactive activities, participants will experience how Gen AI predicts rather than understands, examine bias and sycophancy, and apply an appraisal tool to evaluate ethical implications of Gen AI usage. The workshop equips educators to adapt, and remix provided materials shared through a Creative Commons license and teach micro-lessons, engage with curated resources, and connect with one another for ongoing support. Participants will leave with practical strategies and a framework for guiding students toward responsible, reflective engagement with Gen AI, while keeping the human connection at the heart of learning experiences.

Keywords: Generative AI, Academic Development, Critical Literacy, Agency

Extended Summary

Educational developers currently face a complex challenge: supporting faculty whose attitudes toward Generative AI range from enthusiastic adoption to firm resistance, and everything in between. Recent research has shown the varying perspectives that faculty members hold when it comes to Gen AI in education (Peters et al, 2025) and this can pose a barrier to creating a safe space for faculty to share their views openly. Maha Bali's (2023) framework of critical generative AI literacy offers a compelling response. Rather than focusing solely on technical skills or complete alternatives to Gen AI, this approach encourages educators to ask deeper questions: When, where, and why should gen AI be used if at all and when should it not? It centers critical thinking, social justice, and ethical decision-making as essential components of Gen AI literacy. It leans into creating a supportive, inclusive spaces where faculty can explore these questions together, regardless of their current Gen AI philosophy or pedagogical stance.

The workshop takes participants through activities which expand on Bali's framework, and it addresses the growing need to engage students in conversations about Generative AI (Luo, 2025; Matthews, 2025). Discussing Gen AI in the classroom with accountability and transparency is imperative as it honors the unique experiences of students (Bali, 2024). Recent research shows that this transparency in the classroom can foster trust and may strengthens teacher–student relationships (Luo, 2024). By modeling openness, transparency, and critical reflection, educational developers can help faculty to support students to develop agency to make informed decisions about their use of the tools.

By creating a safe space to support all faculty while they engage in these activities with another, we invite participants to reflect upon their own use (or not) of Gen AI and how they may share this with their own students. By supporting them with openly licensed materials that they can adapt for their own discipline, we are further contributing to the sharing of open sharing praxis in the Gen AI space (Bali & Mills, 2025), thus allowing for more dialogue as we continue to navigate the changing landscape together.

Participants will engage in hands-on activities that reveal how Gen AI predicts rather than understands, surface bias and sycophancy in Gen AI outputs, and apply ethical appraisal tools (University of Waterloo Library, 2024). Exercises include simulating AI's predictive logic, testing prompts for bias, fact-checking Gen AI-generated content with intentional errors (Eaton, 2025), and learning about some of the ethical issues connected to these technologies (ecampus Ontario, 2024). These activities equip educators to guide students in using AI responsibly and critically, while challenging hype and anthropomorphism.

The session also provides practical, adaptable resources to all participants: a slide deck and facilitation guide for use across disciplines, micro-lesson templates for teaching critical AI literacy, and curated readings and videos, all of which continue to be adapted as the Generative AI landscape continues to shift.

Structure and Activities Learning outcomes: 1. define critical Generative AI literacy in ways applicable to one's teaching. 2. describe why understanding critical Gen AI Literacy matters for teaching. 3. develop learning activities that promote critical Generative AI literacy in your discipline/area. Opening Discussion Prompt: "What do you love and loathe about GenAI?" Participants reflect on their experiences and assumptions using a collaborative Padlet board

Maha Bali's Framework adapted* The Dimensions of Critical GenAI Literacy

1. Understand How It Works

Activity: Human-AI Generator

• Participants simulate AI by generating sentences word-by-word.

2. Recognize Inequalities and Biases That Exist Activity: Bias and Inequality

- Participants examine biased outputs and share discipline-specific concerns.
- Discussion highlights structural inequities in datasets and access.

3. Examine the Ethical Issues Activity: Ethical Appraisal

• Using the resource, Harm Considerations of AI (ecampus Ontario 2024), evaluate a real or hypothetical classroom use case considering:

  o Environmental impact

  o Labor and exploitation

  o Privacy and surveillance

  o Copyright

4. Experiment with the Platforms Activity: Avoiding Sycophancy

- Participants test GenAI tools with prompts designed to trigger "yes-man" behavior.
- They revise prompts to elicit more critical or nuanced responses.

5. Assess Use Cases

Activity: Reflect and evaluate upon your own gen AI use using the Gen AI appraisal tool (University of Waterloo, 2024)

6. Share Findings with One Another

• A discussion on the importance of continued sharing of information and findings Closing Circle Prompt:

- One thing I learned today is…
- One thing I'm still thinking about is…
- One step I will take is… *Bali's framework has been adapted slightly in this workshop. The sixth dimension: Sharing findings with one another was added to highlight the importance of continued learning and sharing. Crafting Effective Prompts was changed to Experiment with the Platforms to allow the participants to gain a broader view of testing the different platforms embedding prompting, but also cultivating a curiosity toward experimentation on a variety of different platforms as well as free ones that require no account or sign-in. These adaptations have been discussed with Bali and there are ongoing conversations between the author and Bali about critical gen AI literacy in higher education.

Intended Audience This workshop is designed for a broad range of higher education professionals, including:

- Early to mid-career educational developers
- Teaching staff and faculty across disciplines who want to engage students in critical conversations about gen AI.
- Instructional designers and curriculum developers integrating gen AI literacy into course design.
- Senior academic leaders

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Workshop 5

Harnessing Emotion for Learning: empowering educators and students through research-informed practice

Varia Christie, Nuria Lopez

Abstract

Research on learning has shown that emotion and cognition are deeply interconnected and equally vital aspects of learning. Teachers' understanding of how emotions impact learning is essential for making pedagogically sound decisions regarding a range of aspects that impact student learning directly, such as activity, assessment design and classroom management. Despite its importance, the emotional dimension of learning has traditionally received limited attention in teacher education and professional development. As change agents working closely with faculty, educational developers are well positioned to address this gap by promoting research-informed practices that recognise both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning.

This workshop aims to:

1. Explore research-based evidence on the key role emotions play in learning and its implications for teaching design and facilitation.
2. Provide a space for participants to share experiences and discuss how emotions could be more explicitly embedded in faculty's professional development and learning design initiatives within their institutions.

Keywords: Emotions, Learning, Professional Development, Change Agents

Extended Summary

Together with cognitive functions such as attention and memory, emotions play a critical role in learning. In fact, research shows that emotion and cognition are closely intertwined (Immordino and Damasio, 2007). Emotions can both inhibit and enhance essential cognitive skills such as memory in such a critical way that they should be carefully considered when teaching (Cavanagh, 2016). Yet, it is only quite recently that university pedagogy has started to look at emotions as a determining factor for learning and therefore, a key aspect to consider in teaching. This workshop addresses this gap by equipping participants with foundational knowledge about the role of emotions in learning, which they can apply to enhance teaching and learning within their institutions.

Building on this theoretical foundation, we will present concrete research-based strategies for designing learning environments that leverage the power of emotions. For example, learning environments that balance "high challenge" (challenging but attainable learning outcomes) and "high support" (guidance to achieve learning outcomes, gradually fading as students gain expertise) have been found to be particularly effective (Possey, 2018). Similarly, environments perceived as psychologically safe are essential to foster positive emotions and reduce the adverse impact of negative emotions. Moreover, the environments that foster students' sense of control and the perceived value of their learning can enhance positive achievement emotions, such as enjoyment, hope, and pride, thereby strengthening learner agency and engagement (Pekrun & Perry, 2014).

Through a series of provocations, examples and prompts, participants will explore approaches to leveraging emotions to enhance student engagement and self-regulation. Recognising the role of educational developers as change agents and their ability to exercise the influence on how teaching and learning is designed and facilitated in their institutions, this workshop serves a dual purpose: on the one hand, to share essential research on emotions and offer model content that participants can adapt for use within their institutions; furthermore, to use the cross-institutional setting of the conference to spark discussion on integrating these insights into teaching design and professional development initiatives. Drawing on the presenters' experiences of promoting these ideas in their role as educational developers, the workshop bridges research insights with practical considerations, such as how to support faculty in translating theoretical knowledge into concrete teaching practices or how to foster institutional cultures that value the affective dimensions of teaching and learning alongside cognitive outcomes. The underlying idea is that by making emotions an explicit element of teaching design, we not only promote research-based practice but also enhance students' opportunities to become autonomous, lifelong learners through improved self-regulation and metacognitive skills.

This interactive, hands-on workshop will include individual reflection, small-group activities, and plenary discussions. It will begin with a brief overview of foundational research on the interplay between emotion and cognition (15 minutes). Building on this foundation, we will examine a range of evidence-based teaching strategies that can be applied across disciplines and learning environments to leverage the power of emotions to support learning (30 minutes). Through guided reflection, activities and discussion, participants will be further invited to consider what role they could play or are already playing in considering emotions in teaching among faculty in their institutions (30 minutes). The workshop will conclude with a roundup of key takeaways that participants could implement locally (15 minutes).

Participants will:

- Reflect on the crucial role of emotions in learning and teaching.
- Identify strategies for designing teaching that leverages the power of emotions.
- Recognise opportunities to embed emotions as a more explicit element of teacher professional development and learning design.

The workshop aims to empower educational developers to act as catalysts for change within their institutions, supporting faculty in integrating emotional awareness into teaching design and classroom interaction. By engaging with current research and collaboratively exploring practical applications, participants will leave with a clearer understanding of how emotions shape learning experiences and how they, in turn, can shape teaching practices that acknowledge and harness this dimension.

The workshop is best suited for educational developers who can implement these takeaways through institutional initiatives, but it will also benefit individual teachers seeking to apply these concepts and strategies in their own teaching contexts.

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Workshop 6

Enhancing Assessment Literacy with the Time and Effort on Task Toolkit

Christina Magkoufopoulou

Abstract

This interactive workshop introduces the 3-step Time and Effort on Task (TET) Toolkit – a practical resource for enhancing both staff and students' assessment literacy. The toolkit can be used in a variety of ways to support and enhance the communication between staff and students around assessment demands while offering clarity on assessment expectations. The toolkit offers plenty of opportunities to highlight available support mechanisms whilst bringing at the forefront the students' time and effort investment on assessment. The session encourages active engagement, through reflection, discussion and hands-on activities. By the end of the session, you will be able to:

1. Explore the significance of student time and effort in assessment and its impact on both staff and students' assessment literacy.

2. Analyse the key components of the TET Framework and the 3 steps of the TET Toolkit by reviewing its practical applications through real classroom case studies.

3. Reflect on your own teaching and assessment practices, including how you communicate assessment demands to students, by applying the TET toolkit to your own context.

4. Adapt the TET toolkit to your own teaching and assessment context through guided activities and peer discussion.

Colleagues with academic/educational development roles will be provided with a facilitator's guide so that they can deliver the workshop to their institution.

Keywords: Assessment Literacy, Student agency

Extended Summary

This workshop will introduce the Time and Effort on Task (TET) toolkit. The toolkit can be used in a variety of ways to support and enhance the communication between staff and students around assessment demands while offering clarity on assessment expectations. The toolkit offers plenty of opportunities to highlight available support mechanisms whilst bringing at the forefront the students' time and effort investment on assessment. The TET toolkit can complement other strategies for enhancing students' and staff's assessment literacy. Therefore, it is a much needed toolkit to support students agency and students' assessment literacy development. Much of the research on Assessment Literacy has focused on improving students' response to feedback. While that is an important aspect, there is a more fundamental barrier for students, which is struggling to understand the original guidelines for the assessment (Barnard et al., 2020) and manage the workload. Students' expectations about workload vary and are dependent on the level of academic experience prior to university (Money et al., 2017). This suggests that first-year students and students new to a particular system need more support in how they understand and work on assessments in order to avoid increased workload that can lead to a surface learning approach. On the contrary, appropriate workloads, can support a critical and inquiry-based approach, resulting in deeper learning (Scully and Kerr, 2014). The amount of time and eFFort that a particular assessment requires will vary from student to student, but providing students suggested guidelines about time requirements can help them better manage their academic and non-academic time (Michel et al., 2020). The Time and Effort on Task (TET) toolkit aims to address both of these issues.

During the session participants will be shown how to implement the toolkit and how to adapt it for their own context. Participants will also be able to review how others have applied the toolkit successfully in their own context through real classroom case studies. Participants will be asked to work collaboratively through the TET Toolkit templates and reflect on their existing practice as well as consider how they could adapt the toolkit for their own context.

This work is part of a Collaborative Enhancement Project supported and funded by QAA membership. The project is led by Coventry University in partnership with Aston University, International University of Applied Sciences, Germany, University of the West of Scotland, and University of West London.

Session Timings

1. Introduction on time and effort in assessment, including Interactive quiz to explore participants approaches in relation to time and effort (15min)

2. Walk-through of the TET toolkit (15min)

3. Small Group activity Review at least one case study – (15min)

4. Hands on approach – participants can choose from: (30min)

a. use the toolkit to review their existing practice

b. plan how they can apply the toolkit in their own context

5. Plenary and feedback: collect views of participants on post-it notes/ or electronically (padlet/mentimenter) (15min)

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Workshop 7

Promoting Institutional Strategy by Building High-Impact Relationships

Laura Carruth, Rebecca Watts Hull, Kate Williams

Abstract

High-impact, strategic relationships between and among campus stakeholders are often key to institutional change. When coupled with strategic alignment to institutional priorities, these relationships super-charge change efforts. At this interactive workshop, facilitators will present a case study of their institution's teaching-oriented strategic change efforts, which have launched transformative classroom learning experiences and advanced education for sustainable development. These parallel initiatives provided multiple rounds of faculty development aligned with institutional priorities and resulted in collaboration across units, continuous improvement in organizational learning, and resiliency in navigating systemic disruptions. This work included multiple rounds of faculty mini-grants for course design/redesign, the development of a curriculum to help faculty design and evaluate teaching projects, and a series of campus-wide teaching events that showcased the projects. Altogether, the courses redesigned through this initiative have reached virtually every undergraduate student via integration with general education. Now four years into the initiatives, the work has captured the interest of institutional leaders and has produced results that point to successful change actions and opportunities for improvement. At this workshop, participants will align their work with one or more of their institution's strategic priorities and will identify new and existing high-impact relationships that could be cultivated to contribute to the success of their goals.

Keywords: Change agents, strategic alignment, high-impact relationships

Extended Summary

This workshop is based on social network theories for educational change, multi-theory frameworks for change leadership, and framing within the social movements field. Theories will be drawn from the following references.

- Coley, J. S., Das, D., Gomez, G., McElroy, J. R., & Schachle-Gordon, J. L. (2025). How educational opportunity structures shape the presence, forms, and outcomes of campus activism. Sociological Focus, 58(1), 33-50.
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Learning goals or outcomes for participants:

1. Participants will create a strategy to connect their work to their institution's goals and strategic initiatives
2. Participants will identify existing and potential high-impact relationships.

This interactive workshop focuses on two main learning outcomes with an audience-engagement activity attached to each topic.

1. Ice Breaker: Participants will engage in a Think-Pair-Share activity asking them to identify a primary goal they are working on in their specific unit and share the goal with a neighbor. (10 minutes)

2. (Topic 1) Aligning Our Work with Institutional Priorities: Presenters will compare the change efforts associated with a "mandated" and "grass roots" change effort at their institution. This will include a brief summary of sociological framing and educational opportunity structure theories and their application in higher education (Snow et al., 1986; Lessor, 2008; Coley et al., 2025) (15 minutes)

3. (Activity 1) Aligning Your Work: Participants will reflect on their institution's mission, vision, motto, or strategic plan that communicates institutional priorities. They will connect these phrases with the goal they identified in the opening ice breaker. As time allows, participants will be invited to share their observations with a partner. (15 minutes)

4. (Topic 2) Building High-Impact Relationships: Presenters will share examples of how campus stakeholders were identified and recruited to engage in change initiatives. (10 minutes)

5. (Activity 2) Case Study: Participants will read and discuss at their tables a brief fictional case study focused on curricular change at a university. Participants will identify the strategies employed by change leaders in

the case to achieve their goals. The case will help participants identify the value of frame alignment and resonance (topic 1) and high-impact, strategic relationships (topic 2). (20 minutes)

6. (Activity 3) Creating a Plan for Relationship-building: Participants will use an asset mapping template and power mapping graph to identify and evaluate existing and potential allies at their institution. The full group discussion will invite reflection on opportunities to expand high-impact relationships. (10 minutes)

7. Wrap up and next steps: The workshop will close with a shared digital document to capture participants' reflection about next steps they can take to strengthen alignment and build high-impact relationships. (10 minutes)

This presentation will introduce specific moves that academic developers can take to enhance their agency as change leaders. We will compare and contrast initiatives with financial support and those without, appealing to institutions across the spectrum of size, mission, and resources. While the ultimate focus of our project is institution-level change, many of the lessons learned will be applicable to department- and centre-level change efforts.

This workshop will be appropriate for mid-career to senior-level educational developers, academic leaders, and individually-contributing faculty who seek to engage in institutional change efforts.

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Workshop 8

Embodied Learning: Developing Human Capacities for Agency in Educational Development Practice

Carl Moore

Abstract

Academic developers are trained to think about teaching, learning, and institutional change, but rarely invited to feel it in their bodies. This 90- minute experiential workshop introduces Embodied Learning as a practiceoriented approach to developing the human capacities that underlie professional agency in educational development. Grounded in polyvagal theory (Porges, 2011), somatic psychology, and embodied cognition research (Clughen, 2024; Liu et al., 2025), the workshop guides participants through a structured sequence of somatic awareness exercises, a guided reflective protocol, and collaborative meaning-making activities designed to cultivate interoceptive sensitivity, emotional regulation, and values-aligned decision-making. The session is organized around a four-step reflective method: Recognize (attending to bodily signals), Examine (noticing cognitive and emotional patterns), Align (connecting to professional values and purpose), and Decide (choosing action from a regulated, intentional state). Participants will leave with practical tools they can immediately integrate into their own faculty development workshops, retreats, and one-on-one consultations. The workshop directly addresses the growing evidence that higher education professional development remains disproportionately cognitive and intellectually focused, neglecting the embodied dimensions of learning that research increasingly identifies as essential for sustainable professional practice, resilience, and authentic agency (University of Iowa Teaching Center, 2024). This work is grounded in a forthcoming book on embodied learning in educational contexts (Moore, forthcoming 2027).

Keywords: Embodied learning, somatic practices, faculty development, agency

Extended Summary

Educational development as a field has long championed reflective practice as central to professional growth. Yet the dominant models of reflection remain largely cognitive: practitioners are asked to think about their practice, analyze their assumptions, and plan new approaches, all through linguistic and intellectual processes. What is consistently absent is attention to the body as a site of professional knowledge, a source of regulatory capacity, and a medium through which agency is enacted or constrained.

Recent scholarship is beginning to challenge this disembodied paradigm. Clughen (2024) argues that embodiment merits paradigmatic status in higher education pedagogies, noting that the field remains “somatically impoverished” despite growing evidence that bodily processes underpin perception, memory, and decision-making. A meta-analysis of 46 studies by Liu et al. (2025) found that embodied learning approaches produce a moderate positive effect on learning performance, with particularly strong impacts when active, high-level embodiment is employed. In faculty development specifically, research on mindfulness-based somatic practices demonstrates significant improvements in self-awareness, emotional regulation, and relational capacity among educators (The Mindful Professor, 2025), while somatic embodied practices have been shown to promote teacher well-being and resilience by enhancing emotional regulation, relational trust, and sustainable teaching environments (Somatic Embodied Practices, 2023).

Polyvagal theory provides the neurobiological foundation for this workshop’s design. Porges (2011) demonstrates that the autonomic nervous system continuously evaluates environmental safety through a process called neuroception, and that an individual’s capacity for social engagement, cognitive flexibility, and collaborative learning depends on their nervous system state. For academic developers, this means that the conditions we create in workshops, consultations, and retreats are not merely pedagogical choices but neurobiological ones: they either support or undermine participants’ capacity for the kind of reflective engagement that professional agency requires (Polyvagal Institute, 2025).

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to: (1) identify the role of somatic awareness and nervous system regulation in their own professional practice as educational developers; (2) facilitate a guided four-step reflective protocol that integrates bodily awareness with cognitive reflection; (3) articulate the theoretical foundations connecting embodied learning, polyvagal theory, and professional agency in educational development; and (4) design at least one embodied learning activity they can incorporate into their existing faculty development programming. These outcomes are structured using an extended version of Fink’s (2013) Taxonomy of Significant Learning, which moves beyond cognitive acquisition to encompass application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. The workshop’s design adds a further dimension, Embodied Integration, in which participants carry awareness into daily somatic experience, demonstrating not merely cognitive understanding but observable shifts in self-regulation and intentional action.

Session Design (90 minutes):

- Opening and Grounding (15 minutes). The session begins with a guided somatic check-in: participants are invited to notice their breath, scan physical sensations, and identify their current nervous system state. This is not a relaxation exercise but a diagnostic one, demonstrating in real time how bodily awareness provides information that cognitive reflection alone cannot access. The facilitator briefly introduces the theoretical frame connecting polyvagal theory to professional learning environments.
- Guided Reflective Protocol (25 minutes). Participants are guided through the fourstep method applied to a current professional challenge they are navigating. Step one, Recognize, involves attending to bodily signals and emotional responses associated with the challenge. Step two, Examine, invites analysis of cognitive patterns, assumptions, and the influence of institutional pressures. Step three, Align, asks participants to connect their response to their core professional values and sense of purpose. Step four, Decide, involves choosing a next action from a regulated, intentional state rather than a reactive one. Each step integrates both somatic and cognitive dimensions, modeling the integration this workshop advocates.
- Collaborative Meaning-Making (20 minutes). In small groups, participants share their experiences of the protocol and collaboratively identify patterns, including where embodied awareness surfaced information that cognitive reflection alone would have missed. Groups discuss how nervous system regulation influenced their capacity for reflective engagement during the exercise.
- Application Design (20 minutes). Participants work individually or in pairs to design one embodied learning activity they can integrate into an upcoming faculty development session at their home institution. The facilitator provides a design template and circulates for consultation. Volunteers share their designs with the full group.
- Closing Reflection (10 minutes). The session concludes with a brief somatic recheck, inviting participants to notice what has shifted in their body and awareness since the opening. The facilitator synthesizes key themes and provides participants with a resource guide for continued learning, including references to the forthcoming book on embodied learning (Moore, forthcoming 2027).

This workshop is designed for educational and academic developers at all career stages who are interested in expanding their facilitation repertoire beyond cognitive-only approaches. It is particularly relevant for practitioners working in contexts of institutional change, technology disruption, or faculty well-being, where the embodied dimensions of professional practice are most acutely felt but least often addressed. The workshop directly addresses the conference theme of agency by demonstrating that professional agency is not merely a cognitive achievement but a somatic one, requiring nervous system regulation, interoceptive awareness, and embodied intentionality that can be cultivated through structured practice.

Workshop 9

(Re)Orienting Academic Development through Agency and Alignment

Nancy Chick, Peter Felten, Katarina Mårtensson

Abstract

As academic developers, we often define our work by the needs of others and act as agents of change for those others, rather than working from our own commitments or effecting change for ourselves. This orientation serves the needs of colleagues and institutions, but it doesn't necessarily contribute to developer well-being or agency. How can we support others while also honoring our own identities and commitments? This workshop will guide participants in responding to this question by drawing from my new co-authored open-access book on reorienting SoTL. In the book, my co-authors and I guide faculty in developing SoTL inquiries that emerge from their authentic identities, their deepest commitments, and their "why"—moves we too rarely turn upon ourselves. Yet if SoTL is a signature pedagogy of academic development (Felten & Chick 2018), shouldn't we also act on our authentic identities, our deepest commitment, and our "why"? This workshop will invite participants to briefly pause their outward-facing work and engage in the same "inner work" my new book on SoTL offers to faculty. Participants will explore how their identities and values shape—and are shaped by—their work. Using the book's SoTL frameworks, participants will uncover meaningful entry points for their own practice and scholarship, moving from being facilitators of others' inquiries to being authentic and agentic scholars of their own practice. Through this process, participants will not only (re)claim their own agency and connect meaningfully with other developers, but also leave with tools and insights to facilitate meaningful SoTL workshops.

Keywords: Authentic Practice, Identity, Commitments, Alignment

Extended Summary

The following sections detail the content for each type of contribution. The ICED26 conference invites us to view agency as the capacity to "exert control" and "bring about change." Yet for many academic developers, agency remains elusive (Fremstad et al, 2020) . Our role is often defined by the support of others' agency (e.g., our faculty, our institutions, our students). We then define our work by the needs of these others, acting as agents of change for them, rather than working from our own commitments or effecting change for ourselves. While this service orientation is foundational to the field, carries significant risks: recent literature points to rising burnout and decreased well-being among academic developers (Kolomitro et al, 2020; McSweeney & Moore, 2025). How can we, as individuals and as a community, support others while also honoring our own identities and commitments? This balance requires us to know and name our identities and commitments, to align them with our work, and to act on that alignment.

This 90-minute workshop posits that the most powerful form of agency arises when we align our professional practice with what matters most to us. In my new co-authored open-access book on reorienting SoTL book, my co-authors and I guide academic teachers in designing SoTL inquiries that emerge from their authentic identities, their deepest commitments, and their "why"—moves we as developers too rarely turn upon ourselves. Yet if SoTL is a signature pedagogy of academic development, as proposed by Felten & Chick (2018), shouldn't we also act on our authentic identities, our deepest commitment, and our "why"?

The parallels between SoTL and development are many: academic development, just like SoTL, is a practice aimed at improving teaching and learning in context, it's a field that extends how we in higher education build knowledge, it's a relationship-rich community, and it's a form of scholarship with socially conscious and humane roots that call on us to make a difference. Academic development, just like SoTL, also features colleagues from a range of disciplines, institutions, nationalities, and identities, representing some of the diversity of those who practice it.

The workshop will invite our fellow academic developers to briefly pause their outward-facing work and engage in the same "inner work" the new book on SoTL offers to faculty. Participants will explore how their identities and values shape—and are shaped by—their work. Using the book's frameworks for re-orienting SoTL translated to academic development, participants will uncover meaningful entry points for their own practice and scholarship, moving from being facilitators of others' inquiries to being authentic and agentic scholars of their own practice. This session operates on a meta-level as well: by experiencing these identity-based SoTL protocols firsthand, participants will not only (re)claim their own agency and connect meaningfully with other developers, but also gain the experiential knowledge, practical tools, and personal insights for facilitating more authentic, meaningful SoTL programming.

The learning goals for participants are as follows:

- Articulate how who you are shapes what you do, distinguishing authentic work from simple role fulfillment
- Map your professional and personal identities, values, and commitments as potential entry points for meaningful, agentic work

- Develop a plan for agentic academic development in your own work that takes the individual, contextual authentic priorities as a starting point
- Build community among developers doing this work The workshop will be interactive, reflective, and collegial. Participants will be guided in individual reflection, pair and small group conversation, and whole group discussion grounded in theory and research on identity, agency, academic development, and SoTL. The workshop plan will be flexible enough to account for a small or large number of participants, centering the learning goals and structured interaction among participants. The workshop structure will be, roughly, as follows:
- Brief yet meaningful introductions (10 min)
- "Why You?" for Academic Developers: Agency and Identities in Your Work (15 min reflection and pair sharing)
- Agency Mapping: Choosing Your Entry Point (10 min reflection & writing, 15 min small group work, 15 min whole group discussion)
- (Re)Orienting Your Practice: Planning for Identity-informed Agency in Your Context (10 min writing, 15 min volunteer sharing and debrief)

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Workshop 10

Create your own blueprint for institutional change: ambition to action @ KU Leuven

Mara Zutterman, Elke Van Ael, Valérie Van Hees

Abstract

Higher education institutions often set ambitious strategic goals, such as "inclusive education," but how do these translate into concrete, actionable steps? At KU Leuven, we operationalized our ambition for inclusive education via three small-scale pilot projects. These were evaluated, refined, and are currently being consolidated into a comprehensive, faculty-tailored support offer. Along the way, several strategic design choices were made and valuable lessons have been learned. This workshop targets educational developers, institutional leaders and teaching staff aiming to embed strategic themes (such as inclusion) at their institutions. Step by step, participants will build their own blueprint for implementation, according to our framework, which incorporates different change management models. The session combines inspiration with facilitated exercises and peer exchange. Participants will leave with a customized actionable blueprint to embed a strategic theme of their choosing, and clear strategies to apply within their own contexts.

Extended Summary

This workshop is designed for educational developers, institutional leaders (programme directors, vice-deans) and teaching staff acting as change agents and policy officers. It will guide the participants through KU Leuven's framework for strategic institutional change, supporting them to design a blueprint to embed a strategic theme of their choosing in their own institutions. For each step, we will provide a KU Leuven example and explain the rationale behind our choices, enabling participants to reflect on how each phase can take shape in their own institutional context.

By the end of the session, participants will:

- know which factors to consider when aiming for a culture shift (towards inclusive education or otherwise)
- understand the enabling conditions for such a shift (informed by lessons learned from the KU Leuven case)
- recognize how professional development trajectories fit within the broader process of culture change
- have designed their own blueprint for implementing a culture shift in their institution (whether for diversity and inclusion or other strategic themes)

Following a brief introduction that sets expectations and provides context (15 min), the workshop will mirror the three phases KU Leuven has gone (and continues to go) through on its journey towards an inclusive educational culture:

Phase 1 - (25 min) Strategic starting point and context analysis – Identifying ambitions, operational goals, and institutional conditions for change. Participants will actively connect this to their own context through:

• Individual reflection to map priorities

• Small-group discussion to pinpoint starting points

• Collaborative sharing using a digital whiteboard to visualize insights.

Phase 2 - (25 min) Pilot projects as transferable models – Exploring how small-scale initiatives can inform broader implementation, with KU Leuven examples illustrating design choices and lessons learned. Participants will actively connect this to their own context through:

• Gallery walk: At each pilot station, participants reflect on how the approach could be adapted within their institution.

• Takeaway sheet: For every project, participants note down key lessons and actionable ideas to guide their next steps.

and informing stakeholders, and for training the skills and attitudes needed to sustain cultural change. Participants will engage in collaborative design activities. The participants are grouped by institutional size (large institutions together, smaller ones together) to ensure relevant peer exchange.

• Blueprint creation: Through a series of guided questions, each participant will design their own blueprint for scaling up their selected pilot projects.

• Barrier analysis and solutions: Groups identify potential obstacles and brainstorm mitigation strategies. Each group shares one unresolved challenge for collective discussion.

• Action and coalition planning: The session concludes with participants committing to one concrete first action and outlining the coalition they will build to support implementation.

Each part combines evidence-based insights with interactive activities, enabling participants to translate these phases into their own institutional context. Throughout the entire workshop, participants will work on key design questions: what to offer (content), at which level (individual, faculty, institution), for which target group, and in what format (e.g., workshops, coaching, policy tools). Each activity is structured to help participants make these choices for their own context, guided by KU Leuven examples and evidence-based considerations.

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Workshop 11

Developing agency in academic development through intentional strategic approaches

Catherine Bovill, Katarina Maartensson

Abstract

This workshop focuses on critical reflections and collegial conversations regarding strategic approaches to academic development. The underpinning assumption, based on recent literature in the field, is that academic development centres (ADCs) have expanded and broadened their scope, to be more holistic (Sutherland, 2018) and to support the enhancement of teaching focusing both on individuals as well as on the higher education institutions in which the enhancement takes place (Gibbs, 2013; Wright, 2023). In order to be agentic, rather than reactive, this workshop spotlights the need for intentionality in terms of strategic approaches and explicit, thought-through, context-sensitive theories of change (Kezar, 2018) in academic development. Participants will discuss a set of questions related to strategic approaches in academic development, questions that have also formed the basis of a small-scale survey, sent to ADCs in the UK and Sweden in 2025. Results from this survey will be presented by the workshop facilitators as part of the workshop discussions, and then implications for academic development, and the need for future research will be collaboratively discussed. Participants will leave the workshop having reflected critically on their own strategic approach to academic development, having heard several other examples of approaches, and with a future plan of what they can do to be more agentic in their own academic development initiatives.

Keywords: Teaching Enhancement, Institutional Change, Agency, Strategic Approaches

Extended Summary

Internationally, Academic Development Centres (ADCs) use their agency in a range of ways. Research into ADCs have often focused on the organisation and main activities of ADCs, including for example, their scope, staffing and organisational location (Jones & Wisker, 2012; Stigmar & Edgren, 2017) Recent literature shows that ADCs gradually have expanded their agentic scope, from mainly supporting individual academic teachers to also contributing to organisational development (Gibbs, 2013), and doing more with less resources (Wright, 2023). Furthermore, Sutherland (2018) argues that academic developers, and ADCs should consider a "holistic" academic development practice, focusing on support for the whole range of academic practices, not only teaching. As part of such arguments for expanded and broadened scope for ADCs, it seems important to consider which strategic approaches and theories of change (Kezar, 2018) ADCs use, to underpin our prioritised activities. How can we ensure that we are effective agents of positive change through using intentional strategic approaches to enhance learning and teaching in our institutions? Consequently, in 2025 we piloted a small-scale study that invited 12 research intensive universities in the UK and Sweden to participate. Through an online questionnaire we asked Directors of ADCs to respond to 1) which key strategic approaches they used to support teaching enhancement across their institutions; 2) why they used these particular approaches and 3) how they know they are effective. Participants were also invited to consider if they had no resource restrictions, what they would do to enhance teaching across their institution. We received eight responses to the questionnaire, which is a 67% response rate, indicating a high level of interest in the study.

Therefore, we propose discussing these relevant questions at ICED with colleagues from around the world. We will also share some key themes from our findings focused in two main areas; 1) National differences in ADCs' practice and thinking, and 2) The role of evidence in the work of ADCs. While many of the findings demonstrated overlapping themes in the Swedish and UK data, there were some interesting national differences: the relative importance placed on mandatory preparatory courses for staff (mandatory in Sweden, common in the UK but not always mandatory);

Swedish colleagues emphasised the value of having a named academic developer for each department and also the importance of creating spaces and arenas for sharing practice; colleagues in the UK emphasised initiatives focused on bringing together university colleagues with particular roles or levels of experience; and UK colleagues also focused more on aligning their work with institutional strategies (either education-specific strategy or more general institutional strategy). Responses indicated that ADCs approach evidencing their work very differently. Many responses referred to using different methods to gather evidence, e.g. 'participant feedback', rather than the specific indicators/measures of success used by ADCs, such as 'a high percentage of staff with teaching qualifications and/or professional recognition'. We noted an interesting lack of reference to SoTL, pedagogic research and quality within the responses. Several respondents highlighted the difficulty of measuring success in academic development, and perhaps most concerning, one response was 'it is pretty hopeless to know' whether the work of their ADC is successful. The fragility and changing nature of support for ADCs means that they are frequently the focus of re-organisations, and this suggests we need to take more seriously our role in evidencing the success and value of our work. These findings motivate us to advocate for academic developers to enhance our agency including to evaluate the work we do.

After this workshop participants will have:

- reflected on the strategic approaches they use in their own academic development context;
- discussed these approaches with other participants, thereby having access to other relevant examples;
- contributed to a collaborative discussion with colleagues, to create an agenda for their own ADC for enhancing their explicit and intentional strategic approaches.

A description of activities with approximate timings:

– Welcome and introductions (10 mins)
– Introduction to our study (5 mins)
– Individually write down answers to the 4 questions from our study (10 mins)
– Share outcomes in small groups of 3-4 (20 mins)
– Write outcomes on post-its, place onto 4 flip charts, move around to see others' responses (15 mins)
– Share our study findings (10 mins)
– Questions and discussion (10 mins)
– Action points /prompts to take back to your working context (10 mins)

We argue, based on recent research, that intentional and explicit approaches to academic development are crucial to active agency and institutional success. The pilot survey that will be briefly presented in the workshop received explicit comments about the relevance of this research, and deep interest in sharing which strategies ADCs prioritise and how we measure our effectiveness. We therefore consider a workshop at the ICED Conference an excellent opportunity to discuss these important topics with colleagues from around the world.

This workshop is aimed at academic developers, experienced and new, as well as Directors of Academic Development Centres (ADCs) or equivalent departments.

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Workshop 12

Perspective Taking Outside the Box: Experiential Learning for Inter-professional Collaboration

Nanda Bognar Dimitrov

Abstract

This session introduces a framework for designing and facilitating experiential learning activities that develop perspective taking as a core competency for collaboration across professional, disciplinary and organizational boundaries. While interpersonal perspective taking has long been recognized as a transferable skill, this session extends the concept to interprofessional contexts, where learners gain agency by gaining an understanding of the lived experience and constraints of other professional groups, exploring the downstream impacts of their choices on colleagues, systems, and communities, and identifying how perspective taking can lead to better organizational and societal outcomes. Through case studies from construction management, health sciences, engineering, software design, and the social sciences, participants will explore how authentic, interprofessional tasks that allow students to step outside their usual learning environments and collaborate with other professional groups. Examples such as hands-on activities in sustainable mass timber construction illustrate how experiential learning can transform curriculum by shifting students from passive observers of professional practice to empowered partners who co-create solutions with industry experts. Participants will identify opportunities for interprofessional experiential learning within their institutions, supported by a practical framework for scaffolding and sequencing these experiences. The session equips educational developers with strategies and examples to help faculty design competence-oriented, inclusive curricula that foster student agency and interprofessional perspective taking for societal and organizational impact.

Keywords: experiential learning, perspective taking, interprofessional learning

Extended Summary

This session introduces a framework for designing and facilitating experiential learning activities that engage participants in perspective taking across professional, disciplinary and organizational cultures and differences, preparing them to collaborate more effectively in their professional and personal lives. The session will benefit academic developers who support course and curriculum design for competence-oriented, inclusive experiential learning that supports interprofessional and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Needs assessments with industry partners of postsecondary institutions consistently report that the ability to understand the downstream effects of one's decisions and actions on other parts of the organization is a core skill is valued in all professional settings. Perspective taking and empathy have been identified as key competencies developed through work integrated and experiential learning (McRae & Johnston, 2016) as well as through intercultural learning experiences (Dimitrov and Deardorff, 2023; Perez, et. al. 2015). Many of these learning experiences have focused on interpersonal perspective taking, defining it as the socio-cognitive and affective competency involving the ability and willingness to understand and consider others' viewpoints, emotions, and experiences, and to use that understanding to guide effective, respectful, and adaptive interaction. In this session, we go beyond interpersonal perspective taking to explore learning experiences that take learners outside of their usual learning context to collaborate with other professional groups in order to improve societal and organizational outcomes.

The session will introduce a design framework that educational developers can use to help faculty members create effective, impactful interdisciplinary experiential learning that promotes interprofessional perspective taking, using examples from construction management, health sciences, software design, social sciences and engineering, among others (Dimitrov and Haque, 2017; Nagel et. Al 2024)

Sample Case Study: Courses on mass timber construction at a polytechnic institute in Canada engage structural engineers and construction managers in hands-on learning activities alongside carpenters and installers to help them understand how building design decisions or mid-project design changes impact the speed of installation, logistics, construction sequencing and safety. These professional groups do not traditionally interact with each other. Construction managers or engineers often work online and only interact with 3D models of a building through a digital project delivery approach. Perspective taking here bridges the gap between design intent and buildability, between office-based decisions and field realities. By stepping out of their usual work environment, professionals gained hands-on experience using tools and installing building components on a small-scale model alongside carpenters helped them understand how the choice of a longer screw or a different piece of hardware can translate into hundreds of hours of work saved or added for trades professionals working on the building. The courses model the type of interprofessional collaboration that is required for success in this new, more sustainable way of building, thus also facilitating a shift towards a green economy.

Why interprofessional perspective taking? In interprofessional collaboration, perspective taking enables professionals to design, plan, and communicate in ways that align with the lived experiences, constraints, and expertise of others. Consultation across professional lines is already practiced in some disciplines such as user experience design or interprofessional health collaboration (CIHC, 2024), while other groups tend to operate in isolation and rarely have an opportunity to come in direct contact with the work that takes place two or three steps away from their own.

In higher education, experiential learning typically happens within a single discipline, and rarely involves students from multiple departments, institutions, or countries, with some notable exceptions in global community engaged learning that involve multiple institutions across cultures (e.g. Zecevic and Boström, 2024). For example, students training to work as finance or insurance professionals who fund and approve (or not approve) innovative approaches to construction rarely interact with designers or fabricators who design building components. Hospital administrators who design scheduling or documentation systems are far removed from the frontline experience of patient care staff – often because their education takes place at completely different institutions.

Thoughtfully designed and scaffolded interprofessional experiential learning, can help learners develop perspective taking (McRae and Johnston, 2016) using authentic work tasks in authentic work settings (actual or simulated), and supported by debriefing and critical reflection. Key design criteria include that the work of one group is significantly impacted by the other's decisions, and that effective collaboration leads to positive outcomes for both groups. Positive societal outcomes can include improvements in sustainability or climate change mitigation; more inclusive workplaces; smoother business operations or better health outcomes for patients engaging with the health care system.

Session activities:

1. Introduce 2 sample case studies of experiential learning for interprofessional perspective taking: sustainable construction and health science (15 mins)

2. Introduce the design framework and identify key strategies to scaffold, sequence, facilitate and debrief interprofessional experiential learning (15 mins)

3. Large group discussion: Participants share existing examples from their own institutions, connecting to elements of the design framework (10 mins)

4. Small group discussion: Participants collaborate to design opportunities for interprofessional collaboration to within postsecondary institutions; with industry/community partners; and between different types of post-secondary institutions (e.g polytechnic institutes and universities). (15 mins)

5. Post-it-parade/gallery walk: small groups share examples generated. (List shared with all session participants following the session) (15 mins)

6. Large Group Discussion/Synthesis: Identify the supports that academic developers and teaching centres can provide to effective curriculum design for interprofessional experiential learning (20 mins)

By the end of the session, participants will/be able to: 1. Identify key considerations for the design of interprofessional/interdisciplinary experiential learning 2. Share existing opportunities/ identify new opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration to create these learning experiences at their home institutions 3. Receive a copy of the framework, and list of examples generated in the session.

Audience: academic developers (all levels) and teaching staff

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Workshop 13

Every future begins with conversation - Asset-based feedback and student agency

Bryan Dewsbury, Sarah Cavanagh, Michele Lemons, Lindsay Wheeler

Abstract

Feedback is at the heart of learning. Not only is it main way students can progress in their skill development, but it affords an opportunity for the cultivation of their agency. But not all feedback is equally effective, and for feedback to support learning, students need to engage with it. Asset-based feedback is effectively designed and delivered feedback that attends to students' strengths, existing knowledge, motivations, and feedback literacy. It also makes clear the agency they hold over their learning growth. This interactive workshop-in-a-box will provide evidence for the importance of improving pedagogical feedback alongside seven practical strategies for instructors to engage in asset-based feedback. All slides, worksheets, and a handout with variations will be provided to attendees for use on their own campuses, with suggestions for adaptations for unique contexts.

Extended Summary

We will provide examples of educational development offerings using the toolkit (e.g., workshops, faculty learning communities), complete with both supportive documents (e.g., slide decks, handouts) and adaptations for different institutional contexts and resource availability.

The learning goals for this workshop are:

- Gain a deeper understanding of asset-based feedback as a pedagogical tool

- Explore ways to modify workshop materials for various audiences and time-frames

In this session, facilitators will:

Define asset-based feedback and ask participants to reflect on and share experiences supporting instructors in refining their feedback practices (15 min)

Guiding questions: What educational development programs or initiatives have you experienced or developed that incorporate or center asset-based feedback approaches?

Share our evidence-based conceptual model for asset-based feedback and our workshop structure (20 min)

Guiding questions: What are affordances and limitations of this model? How might you improve on this model based on your own experiences and work with instructors? What challenges to providing asset-based feedback might instructors face? How can instructors overcome those challenges?

Ask participants to explore seven principles for asset-based feedback and sample workshop activity (30 min)

Interactive activity: Participants will take the role of instructor and individually read the "Seven Principles of Asset-based Feedback" (2 pages), briefly complete a worksheet applying these principles to practice, then pair and discuss ideas for integrating one (or more!) principles.

Facilitate participant discussion of approaches for modifying this workshop-in-a-box (20 min)

Guiding questions: How might this workshop operate in your context? How might you modify this workshop for various audiences (e.g., graduate students, department chairs)? What are ways you could integrate portions of this workshop into already established programs or workshops?

Participants will leave with workshop materials (slides, activities, and handouts) as well as approaches to modify this workshop for different audiences (e.g., instructors looking to refine their feedback practices, graduate students with limited course design autonomy, department chairs and administrators aiming to support instructors in implementing asset-based feedback) and various lengths (e.g., 75-min, 3 hours).

Workshop 14

Empowering Learners: Building a Universal Design Lens for Motivation, Engagement, and Accessibility

Michele Bridge, Claudine Warburton

Abstract

This workshop explores the transformative potential of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in post-secondary education. UDL is an educational framework that removes barriers to support student success and increases accessibility to learning for all. By promoting autonomy and choice in how students access and express their knowledge, UDL fosters motivation, engagement, and the development of expert learners who can advocate for their own needs. We explore how to advance UDL practices to create inclusive learning environments in collaboration with Accessibility Services and other departments. This 90-minute session will introduce participants to UDL principles, highlight how we can promote UDL across the institute, and engage attendees in case study analysis to reflect on their own teaching and learning practices. The workshop aligns with ICED26's sub theme 3, focusing on agency, academic development, and empowering students as active participants in their education.

Keywords: Universal Design for Learning, Accessibility, Remove Barriers to Learning, Motivation and Engagement

Extended Summary

Context and Rationale: Higher education faces persistent challenges in ensuring accessibility, motivation, and engagement for diverse learners. Overlooking diversity in the classroom creates barriers that hinder student success. Previous approaches, such as differentiated instruction, focused on individual needs, but these can be unsustainable in large classes where student variability is significant (Tomlinson, 2017). Universal Design for Learning (UDL) encourages instructors to build options and choices throughout the curriculum, allowing all students to access learning in ways that meet their own needs. As an educational framework, UDL guides the design and delivery of learning environments to accommodate learner variability—demonstrating that small changes and increased choice benefit many (CAST, 2018). By proactively removing barriers and providing multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression, UDL supports all students in achieving their potential.

The adoption of UDL is reshaping teaching practices to foster agency and inclusivity at post-secondary institutes. This initiative empowers students to become expert learners—individuals who are purposeful, motivated, resourceful, and able to advocate for their own learning needs. UDL's emphasis on autonomy allows students to choose how they access content and demonstrate understanding, increasing motivation and engagement. We explore how an institute can promote UDL across its community by embedding it in the institute's Strategic Plan and Education Plan. We also look at how collaboration between Accessibility Services, instructional development consultants, other service departments, and faculty across the institute can drive the adoption of universal design – through initiatives such as professional development workshops, resource guides, and cross-departmental partnerships. These efforts build a shared understanding of UDL and support instructors in making practical, sustainable changes that benefit all learners. Importantly, in some countries, teaching and designing curriculum through a UDL lens aligns with Accessibility legislation which aims to improve accessibility by identifying, preventing, and removing barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from full participation in society. By promoting UDL adoption across the institute, we can not only enhance accessibility but also foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in teaching and learning. This collaborative approach supports the embedding of UDL in institutional practices, making education more equitable and responsive to the needs of all students.

Workshop Structure:

• Introduction and Context (20 min)

  o Definition of UDL: "Universal Design for Learning is an educational approach that removes barriers to support student success and increases accessibility to learning for all. It provides flexible pathways for students to access information and express their knowledge, fostering motivation, engagement, and autonomy."

  o Overview of UDL and its significance in higher education.

  o Narrative of one institute's journey in promoting UDL, highlighting institutional collaboration and the role of Accessibility Services.

- UDL in Action (10 min) o Demonstration of UDL strategies and tools. o Sharing a pathway of commitment toward UDL implementation.
- Interactive Component (35 min)

    - o Case study analysis: Participants work in small groups to examine real-world scenarios and identify opportunities to apply a UDL lens.
    - o Guided reflection: Facilitators encourage participants to consider how UDL principles can be integrated into their own teaching and learning contexts.
- Reflection, Group Discussion & Questions (25 min)
    - o Sharing strategies for building a UDL lens and promoting agency among students.
    - o Discussion of challenges and solutions in implementing UDL across disciplines.
    - o Additional Questions Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Define Universal Design for Learning and articulate its benefits for student success and accessibility.
- Identify strategies for promoting UDL in collaboration with institutional partners.
- Analyze case studies to apply UDL principles in diverse teaching contexts.
- Reflect on ways to foster motivation, engagement, and autonomy among learners.

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Workshop 15

Pedagogical networks and peer learning at the centre of developing teacher expertise

Erika Myllyniemi, Jenni Koponen, Kirsti Keltikangas

Abstract

The target of the workshop is to build a shared understanding of what type of networked activities or forms of peer learning would best support the development of pedagogical expertise in a multidisciplinary university. University teachers consider peer support and collegiality as important aspects of developing pedagogical expertise and well-being but often face barriers such as time constraints and a lack of systematic structures for pedagogical dialogue with significant communities. Collaborative culture, co-development of teaching and peer learning requires systematic pedagogical leadership. The outcomes of the workshop will provide insights for higher education institutions in their development of an inclusive and communal work culture,peer learning and overall well-being of the pedagogical community.

Keywords: pedagogical network, peer learning, development of teacher expertise

Extended Summary

University teachers consider peer support and collegiality as important aspects of developing pedagogical expertise and well-being but often face barriers such as time constraints and a lack of systematic structures for pedagogical dialogue with significant communities. Sharing insights and reflections in various pedagogical communities of practice supports their collective development as educators. (Lave& Wenger, 1991; Myllykoski-Laine, Postareff, Murtonen & Vilppu, 2022.)

To ensure future-led learning and high-quality teaching during changing environments, universities must enhance its teachers' pedagogical skills and well-being (Langford & Crawford, 2025). Current global phenomena that challenge education cannot be solved alone; instead, they require multidisciplinary and collaborative problem-solving, as well as the co-development of teaching.

The demands and changes related to teaching may lead to negative feelings towardsteaching tasks, increase stress, and threaten the well-being of teachers. Parpala &Postareff (2025) discuss the concept of pedagogical well-being, which is influencedby the teachers' teaching skills and pedagogical competence, ability to develop theirteaching, pedagogical leadership and the support from the community.

Smith & Wyness (2024) and Jarvis & Clarke (2020) highlight the significance of dialogic pedagogical collaboration as a solution to the isolation that is often experienced in the teaching practice as well as to respond to the complex challenges of the society. Expertise in teaching requires reflection, and social relationships and sharing with others makes the reflection effective. Universities should therefore ensure that collegiality, networking and opportunities for pedagogical dialogue are considered when developing and planning the structures, practices and support services of the universities. (Jarvis & Clarke, 2020; Pekkarinen, 2024).

In the preliminary study of a strategic project conducted in the spring 2025 in our university, we explored what types of communal or networked activities and formsof peer learning best support the development of teaching competence, appreciation for teaching, and the well-being of teachers from the perspective of our university's teaching faculty. The pre-study showed that peer support and pedagogical dialogue are highly appreciated and needed in developing teaching and as a teacher, but teachers often face barriers such as time constraints, challenges in commitment and lack of systematic structures for pedagogical dialogue with significant communities. Teaching work is often done alone, separated from the community,and there is not sufficient peer support available.

The pre-study showed that there is a need for more facilitated opportunities for peer discussions on teaching, constructive peer feedback of teaching as well as diverse peer learning activities within various community settings, where participation isboth encouraged and valued (Myllykoski-Laine et al. 2022). Peer support was sought for instance regarding current global themes that challenge education, teaching practices and methods, exploration of one's teaching identity, and advancement in a teaching career. Purposeful pedagogical dialogue with both the close community andthe larger multidisciplinary university-wide community were identified as important.

Building a strong peer learning and collaborative culture requires pedagogical leadership at all levels of the organisation. Pedagogy and the pedagogical community should be managed in systemic and consistent manner. (Langford &Crawford 2022; Mäki, Niinistö-Sivuranta & Parpala, 2025). A culture that supports collegiality and sense of belonging and offers opportunities for collaboration andpeer support reduces the risk of burnout, enhances teaching quality and improves student well-being (Postareff et al. 2025).

Learning goals or outcomes for participants

The target of the workshop is to build a shared understanding of what type ofnetworked activities or forms of peer learning would best support the developmentof pedagogical expertise in a multidisciplinary university.

After the workshop, participants will be able to

- Engage in a purposeful pedagogical dialogue with peers, share bestpractices and co-develop the topic of the workshop, creating insights forthe development of their own institution
- Identify how pedagogical communities of practice and networks form andidentify factors that encourage participants to commit to them.
- Identify activities that teachers find meaningful for the development of theirpedagogical skills.

The outcomes of the workshop will provide insights for higher education institutionsin their development of an inclusive and communal work culture, peer learning andoverall well-being of the pedagogical community. Additionally, participants willreceive a workshop model that they can use in their own organizations.

Key questions to consider in the workshop are:How do pedagogical communities of practice and networks form, and whatencourages participants to commit to them? What kind of activities does a teacher find meaningful for the development of their pedagogical skills? In what ways does an experienced and pedagogically trained teacher develop and make their skills visible to the pedagogical community?

The target group for the workshop includes all those interested in the development of skills among higher education staff and peer learning. In this workshop, we wouldlike to meet staff members from higher education institutions, engage in discussions, and share experiences regarding the establishment and functioning of existing teacher networks and peer-to-peer practices.

The workshop consists of a short introduction of the background of the topic and pre-study conducted at a university (30 min.), collaborative working in small groups(30 min.) and a joint wrap-up (30 min.).

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Workshop 16

Centers for Teaching and Learning as Catalysts for Education Innovation and Development

Ellen Bastiaens, Dorothy Duchatelet

Abstract

Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL) can be defined as institutional entities or catalysts for educational change and innovation. For 14 universities in the Netherlands, 14 different CTLs can be described regarding governance, responsibilities, position in the organization, networks within the organization and with colleague-institutes. A framework by Mihai, Beausaert and Daley (2025) provides a structured approach to examining CTL agency and strategic positioning within higher education institutions. In our opinion, it offers a valuable perspective to reflect on one owns' CTL and to define next steps in clarifying and strengthening the position of a CTL.

From a theoretical introduction into CTLs, we will introduce the framework by Mihai, followed by three case studies from three different universities in the Netherlands. In addition, we will elaborate on three different approaches to define and measure impact of the CTL on institutional, teaching, and education level.

Through guided discussions and peer exchange, participants will be inspired to reflect on structures and positioning of teaching and learning units in their own organization and to define first actions to initiate further institutional dialogue and development.

Keywords: Center for Teaching & Learning, Impact, Teaching Development, Teaching Support

Extended Summary

Introduction

Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL) can be defined as institutional entities or catalysts for educational change (e.g. Wright (2023), Kottmann (2024), Mihai et al (2025)). With an increasing attention for CTLs and their impact on education change and education innovation, the question arises how CTLs can be organized and how their impact can be defined. In this workshop we invite participants to explore how different CTL structures shape their capacity to support and influence educational development within their own organizational context.

Organization and structure of CTLs A recent development in the Netherlands Npuls (www.npuls.nl) will foresee in the founding of a CTL at every institute in Higher Education and Vocational Education (107 in total) by latest 2028. For CTLs on research university level, a network has been established in 2023, called Launcelot1. In exchange meetings of this network we notice that for 14 universities in the Netherlands, 14 different CTLs can be described regarding activities, identity, governance, social capital, and organizational context, or the four components framework for CTLs by Mihai et al (2025).

In our opinion, the framework offers a valuable perspective to reflect on one's own CTL and to define next steps in clarifying and strengthening the position of a CTL. It also supports in articulating how structural features of one's own CTL influence the ability to contribute to educational innovation across levels of the institution.

Based on a descriptive case study methodology, we will elaborate on three CTLs following the framework by Mihai et al. (2025). We will explain similarities and differences of these CTLs and highlight some key features of CTLs with impact on education change and innovation. From these three case studies, we can substantiate the following essential features:

A. Is there a direct relation between the CTL and the key stakeholders AND

executive administration of the HEI? B. Is there a clear focus and mission statement of the CTL? C. Is the financial situation of the CTL stable and long term/permanent?

By comparing these elements, we aim to help participants recognize analogous structures, constraints, or enablers within their own CTL or equivalent unit. This reflection also highlights how CTL structures shape the strategic room for action available to educational developers and leaders.

Impact of CTLs From a literature review (Pan & Bastiaens, 2025), it has become clear that still little is known about the impact of CTLs and on how to measure this impact. The three universities that are used as case studies in this workshop, have developed three different approaches to investigate their impact.

1 Dutch acronym for LAndelijk Universitair Netwerk van Centers voor Leren en Trainen

- OU uses a technique called Synthetron2 where they interact with a large and varied audience related to teaching and learning in an online environment. Via this technique they collect data on emerging questions and facilitate new connections and collaborations.

- UM is inspired by the Theory of Change. Via participatory action research the CTL mapped activities, outcomes and direct and indirect outcomes. From this mapping, questions were derived to discuss with her key stakeholders in teaching and learning.
- RU has conducted a qualitative study of five years of seeding money projects on value for the grant-receiver for an education innovation/research project, the outcomes of the project, and the dissemination of the innovation/findings of the project.

These cases illustrate a range of evidence-informed approaches that participants can adapt to evaluate or strengthen the relevance, visibility and legitimacy of their own CTL.

Design of the workshop in a time-schedule Table 1 presents the time-schedule of the workshop

Minutes	What	Who
0-5	Presentation: introduction design and learning objectives workshop	Dr. Dorothy Duchatelet Dr. Ellen Bastiaens
5-10	Mentimeter: inventory of learning questions by participants to connect workshop focus to participant needs	Participants
10-30	Presentation: theoretical framework with three cases from OU, UM, and Radboud to illustrate how structure and strategy influence the functioning of the CTLs	Dr. Dorothy Duchatelet Dr. Ellen Bastiaens
30-60	Handouts: participants analyze their own organization and the way education development is organized, using the framework	Participants
60-70	Speed dates: introducing own analysis to other participants (in groups of 3-4) to identify shared challenges and strategic opportunities	Participants
70-90	Discussion and reflection: Two leading questions:	Dr. Dorothy Duchatelet Dr. Ellen Bastiaens
	a. What insights from the framework help you understand your own CTL's current position? b. What first steps could strengthen educational development structures within your own organization?	& participants

Table 1 Time-schedule workshop

Learning objectives

After the workshop, we hope to have

a. provided in a sound theoretical basis on CTLs

b. inspired the participants with different designs and different responsibilities of three CTLs

c. drafted their own structures and positioning of units responsible for teaching and learning in a very first mapping

d. define first actions to initiate further reflection within their own organization

These objectives aim to support participants in articulating organizational conditions that shape educational innovation and to identify concrete next steps for strengthening their local CTL or equivalent unit.

Intended audience: Early-career academic developers, CTL staff, educational advisors, policy officers, educational leaders, and anyone involved in designing or structuring teaching and learning support within higher education institutions.

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Workshop 17

Making student learning visible: critical thinking in a world of invisible AI

Robert Eaton, Abby Osborne, Richard Mason, Sonja Strydom, Hanelie Adendorff

Abstract

Drawing on international, cross-institutional perspectives, this workshop invites delegates to explore how authentic learner agency, in an era shaped by Generative AI (GenAI), depends on greater visibility of learning processes and transparency around critical thinking.

Building on findings from our collaborative enhancement project, this interactive workshop will engage participants in dialogue about making critical thinking visible within diverse educational and cultural contexts. We will introduce our empirically developed Critical Thinking Framework, which conceptualises critical thinking as developmental, iterative, and context-dependent.

Together, we will explore a range of practical and inclusive interventions which can be embedded in the classroom to support student clarity and understanding around critical thinking. Participants will be able to consider a broad range of applications which the Framework supports, from designing learning outcomes and activities to implementing clear marking criteria and actionable feedback.

As a collaborative and international project, this workshop presents a valuable opportunity to draw on the wide range of academic development practice experience held by delegates. Collectively, we aim to safeguard the "human" in learning by opening up critical thinking as a visible, inclusive, and globally relevant practice. Leaving with new ways of thinking and practical strategies to adopt in our own institutional and professional contexts, we will be better placed to shape an equitable and future-focused higher education system.

Keywords: Critical thinking, Generative AI, visible learning, student agency

Extended Summary

Drawing on international, cross-institutional perspectives, this workshop invites delegates to explore how authentic learner agency, in an era shaped by Generative AI (GenAI), depends on greater visibility of learning processes and transparency around critical thinking.

GenAI is frequently celebrated as an enabler of learner agency, offering immediacy, efficiency, encouragement, and patience (Qian, 2024). While it can support personalised learning, graduates will increasingly inhabit a world where GenAI is not only ubiquitous but embedded in everyday life (Taylor, 2023).

In this context, students must develop a transparent understanding of their own learning, recognising the critical choices they make, the knowledge they engage with, and the boundary between machine 'intelligence' and human

thought. Without visibility of human learning, GenAI's invisible role in education risks diminishing learner agency rather than strengthening it (Roe & Perkins, 2024).

Critical thinking, widely regarded as a core graduate attribute (Okolie et al., 2021), is particularly significant at the intersection of human and GenAI learning. Yet despite this, our review of the literature indicates that the meaning of critical thinking, and subsequent assessment, often remains opaque across disciplines, existing as a highly prized attribute that is somehow based on intuition or something learnt by osmosis as students grapple with their learning. This lack of transparency has implications for curriculum design, assessment practices, student wellbeing, and inclusive learning environments, as well as students' ability to apply critical thinking effectively in the context of GenAI. Building on findings from our collaborative enhancement project, this workshop will engage participants in dialogue about making student critical thinking visible within diverse educational and cultural contexts. We will introduce our Critical Thinking Framework, developed through empirical research with academic staff and students, which conceptualises critical thinking as developmental, iterative, and context- dependent.

The framework fosters dialogue, reflection, and consistency while respecting local variation. Participants will actively explore three dimensions:

- Critical Context – reflecting on disciplinary and cultural perspectives
- Critical Clarity – examining the language and terminology used
- Critical Capital – identifying barriers students face when engaging with critical thinking

Together we will explore a range of practical interventions which can be embedded into the classroom to support student clarity and understanding around critical thinking. Activity is designed to enable participants to contribute from their own experience and contexts, fostering greater awareness of cross-cutting themes and the broad range of

applications which the Framework supports. GenAI has the potential to enhance education and with it, to support equitable student access and agency; yet, without making the process of learning and assessment transparent and visible, we run the risk that GenAI may replace – or hide – human intelligence, critical thinking and agency, all of which are essential graduate skills of the future (Brown, 2023). The collaborative and international nature of the project has provided an invaluable opportunity to address a very real global challenge, drawing on different cultural contexts to find viable solutions which work in a broad range of cultural contexts. Ultimately, this workshop aims to safeguard the "human" in learning by opening up critical thinking as a visible, inclusive, and globally relevant practice. We welcome the opportunity to share our experiences and widen the dialogue with others internationally so that we can ensure graduate agency is placed at the heart of our evolving relationship between human and machine learning (Chatfield, 2025).

Through active engagement in the session, participants will:

• Reflect on their own conceptualisation of critical thinking using the Critical Thinking Framework .

• Identify opportunities and barriers in relation to students' understanding and development of critical thinking in order to enhance agency and active participation in education.

• Understand how academic developers can scaffold professional learning activities to enhance the inclusive teaching of critical thinking in a variety of contexts including GenAI.

1.2 Methods and activities

We value the contributions that all participants will bring to the session and have embedded a range of inclusive activities to ensure individuals can reflect, discuss, and share. The workshop will include:

• Introduction: including interactive mentimeter activity to engage participants and allow activity and discussion to build on their contexts and contributions.

• Group activity: practical, hands-on exploration of the Critical Thinking Framework to surface participant conceptions of critical thinking.

• Group feedback and discussion.

• Pair activity: facilitated to support participants to draw creatively on their own contexts to identify practical applications of the Framework in academic development.

• Reflections and next steps: equipping all participants to leave with practical actions identified.

Relevance of topic for academic development in higher education:

Focusing on the significant issue of critical thinking in a world of GenAI, this practical workshop will support academic developers in leading and guiding teaching staff to develop student agency and empowering them as active participants in their education.

The workshop aims to support academic developers in reflecting on critical thinking as a key graduate outcome and the way in which different subjects and programmes provide a context for student learning. The topic encourages participants to reflect on the impact of GenAI on teaching and learning practice and the role of academic developers in enhancing learning experiences through evidence-based innovative practices. The themes and workshop methods will draw on participants' own experience and expertise to provide highly relevant and meaningful cross-cultural discussion on the role of academic development.

This workshop is designed to be relevant for:

• Academic/educational developers.

• Teaching practitioners.

• Academic skills tutors.

• All who are interested in exploring pedagogical approaches to the interface between student learning and GenAI.

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Workshop 18

From Policy to Practice: Experiential and Participatory Teacher Development for Interdisciplinary Education

Elma Zijderveld, Esther Slot

Abstract

Interdisciplinary education (ITD) is essential for preparing students to address complex societal challenges, yet institutional ambitions often remain disconnected from day-to-day educational practice. This workshop showcases an interdisciplinary teacher development program as an example of how experiential and participatory approaches can bridge this gap. Participants engage in a short "pressure-cooker" activity based on Integrative Teaching Methods (ITMs)—including systems thinking, IRP processes, and travelling concepts—to experience how structured integrative methods make epistemic integration tangible and accessible for teachers. This hands-on activity illustrates the central pedagogical principles underpinning the program: learning through interdisciplinarity, not merely about it. The workshop further highlights how these experiential activities are embedded in a broader participatory design process in which teachers collaborate with students, educational developers, policy makers, and societal partners. This approach strengthens teacher agency, fosters interdisciplinary teaching communities, and creates alignment between micro-level curriculum design and macro-level institutional frameworks. Through guided reflection and collaborative dialogue, participants explore how these methods and design principles can be translated to their own institutional contexts. The workshop offers research-informed, practical tools to support academic developers, teachers, and educational leaders in fostering sustainable interdisciplinary curriculum innovation.

Keywords: interdisciplinary education, teacher agency and participatory design, strategic academic development, organizational learning in higher education

Extended Summary

This workshop addresses a key challenge in higher education: how to translate institutional ambitions for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education (ITD) into meaningful, sustainable practice at the level of teachers and programs. Interdisciplinary education requires learners to navigate epistemic differences, bring together diverse disciplinary logic, and collaboratively address complex societal challenges. Experiential learning offers a strong pedagogical foundation for this work by enabling learners to engage directly with complexity, uncertainty, and multiple perspectives. Research on boundary crossing conceptualizes learning as a process that occurs when individuals encounter and work across differences between practices, assumptions, and epistemic cultures (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011). This aligns with the pedagogical rationale of the workshop: participants learn through interdisciplinary engagement rather than about it.

A second theoretical foundation is the use of Integrative Teaching Methods (ITMs), developed within an interdisciplinary teacher development program. Methods such as systems thinking, IRP-based structuring (Repko & Szostak, 2020), and travelling concepts or object orientation (Van Lambalgen & Van der Tuin, 2025) support learners in identifying disciplinary assumptions, tracing conceptual differences, and synthesizing integrative insights. These methods scaffold epistemic integration and are highly suitable for teacher development in interdisciplinary contexts. The workshop models this approach through an experiential pressure-cooker activity. Participants work in small groups for approximately 25 minutes on a real-world problem using one selected ITM. A brief introduction (5 minutes) explains the method and its purpose. Groups then apply the method (20 minutes) under time pressure, resulting in rapid but collaborative meaning-making. This activity demonstrates how structured integrative methods enable teachers to facilitate interdisciplinary learning even in a limited time.

Following the activity, a 15-minute guided reflection invites participants to examine their experience with interdisciplinary learning during the workshop. They consider which disciplinary assumptions became visible, how the method influenced their reasoning, and what integrative insights emerged. Facilitators then help participants translate these reflections into implications for designing and implementing interdisciplinary education from three vantage points: the student's learning experience, the teacher's role and pedagogical choices, and the broader program or curriculum design. The workshop then presents the interdisciplinary teacher development program (20 minutes), offering participants a concrete case of how integrative methods, experiential engagement, and participatory design processes are connected. Teachers in the program co-create interdisciplinary learning education with students, developers, policy makers, and external partners. This participatory approach strengthens teacher agency and creates alignment between micro-level curriculum design and macro-level institutional frameworks.

A short collaborative dialogue (10–15 minutes) invites participants to consider how similar approaches could be implemented in their own institutional contexts, identifying enabling and limiting conditions. The workshop concludes (5 minutes) with shared takeaways.

Learning outcomes for participants.

- Experience how integrative methods support interdisciplinary thinking and collaboration
- Understand the role of experiential learning in fostering interdisciplinary learning
- Analyze the case to identify principles for designing interdisciplinary teacher development
- Reflect on how participatory and integrative approaches can support curriculum innovation
- Identify ways to translate these approaches into their own institutional settings Relevance for academic development. The workshop contributes to ongoing conversations about teacher agency, curriculum renewal, and institutional support for interdisciplinarity. It demonstrates how experiential, integrative, and participatory approaches can strengthen academic development practices and build sustainable interdisciplinary teaching communities.

Intended audience: Educational developers, teaching staff, program coordinators, policy officers, and educational leaders interested in interdisciplinary education, curriculum innovation, and teacher professionalization.

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Collaborative Space 1

Global Perspectives on Peer Observation: Practices, Tools, and Culture in Higher Education

Lauren Barbeau, Claudia Cornejo Happel

Abstract

Higher education internationally has begun to embrace peer observation of teaching for its potential to enhance instructional quality and foster instructor professional development. Increasingly, institutions look to peer observation as a means to assess teaching effectiveness. Though peer observation has become more widespread, practices vary significantly across institutions and national contexts. This roundtable invites participants to explore international approaches to peer observation, drawing on preliminary findings from a multi-phase study of peer observation practices in higher education internationally but with a focus on U.S. institutions. The study uses an explanatory sequential design, beginning with an international survey of educational developers, instructors, and academic leaders, followed by individual interviews to explore institutional models, tools, and cultural factors shaping peer observation. Key themes include formative vs. evaluative uses, faculty attitudes, and the role of institutional culture in shaping acceptance and sustainability.

Roundtable participants will engage in structured dialogue around emerging findings, share experiences from their own institutional and national contexts, and collaboratively identify promising practices and persistent challenges. The session aims to foster cross-cultural exchange and generate insights that inform the development of inclusive, effective, and scalable peer observation programs. This session is especially relevant for educational developers, academic leaders, and faculty involved in teaching enhancement initiatives. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of the global landscape of peer observation and practical ideas for improving or initiating programs at their own institutions.

Keywords: Peer observation of teaching, peer review of teaching, evaluation of teaching, assessment of teaching

Extended Summary

Peer observation of teaching can improve instruction and foster professional growth; its success depends on thoughtful design, contextual awareness, and institutional support. While use of peer observation in higher ed continues to spread, the implementation of programs varies significantly across institutions and countries. Differences in purpose (formative vs. evaluative), tools, institutional culture, and faculty engagement all influence how peer observation is perceived and practiced. Despite its prevalence, few studies have systematically examined these variations. This collaborative session, grounded in a research study exploring peer observation practices in higher education internationally, offers an opportunity to explore common models, tools, and cultural factors that shape peer observation programs and to foster dialogue around best practices and challenges in implementation.

Study Design and Methodology

The research employs an explanatory sequential design, beginning with a broad survey and followed by qualitative interviews:

- Phase 1: SurveyAn open-ended online survey distributed via professional networks (e.g., POD Network) gathered baseline data on institutional policies, observation practices, tools used, and cultural considerations. Up to 500 participants, including educational developers, faculty developers, and academic leaders, were invited to participate.
- Phase 2: InterviewsSemi-structured interviews with a subset of survey respondents provided narrative accounts of institutional decision-making, implementation strategies, and perceived effectiveness of POT programs.

Data were collected digitally using Qualtrics (survey) and Zoom (interviews). Analysis included thematic coding of qualitative data and descriptive/inferential statistics for survey responses.

Preliminary Findings

While full analysis is ongoing, early findings suggest several key themes:

1. Formative vs. Evaluative Tensions

Many institutions struggle to balance developmental goals with accountability measures. Educational developers often advocate for formative approaches, but institutional pressures push toward evaluative models.

2. Tools and Protocols

A wide range of instruments are used, from standardized rubrics to open-ended reflection guides. The choice of tool often reflects institutional priorities and disciplinary norms. Tools used can also shape faculty attitudes.

3. Faculty Engagement

Engagement is highest when observation is framed as a collaborative, non-judgmental process. Programs that emphasize peer learning and mutual support tend to be more sustainable.

4. Cultural Acceptance

Institutional culture plays a critical role in shaping perceptions of peer observation. In some contexts, observation is viewed with suspicion or anxiety. In others it is embraced as a norm of professional practice and an opportunity for growth.

5. Scalability and Sustainability

Scalability and sustainability pose challenges for institutions across the board. Successful programs rely on clear communication, administrative support, and integration with broader teaching enhancement initiatives.

Roundtable Goals and Format

This roundtable provides space for participants to:

- Reflect on the preliminary findings from the study.
- Share experiences and practices from their institutions and national contexts.
- Discuss challenges and opportunities in implementing peer observation programs.
- Explore cultural factors that influence faculty engagement and program success.
- Identify promising practices and areas for collaborative research.

The session will begin with a brief presentation of study findings, followed by guided discussion prompts. Participants will be encouraged to contribute examples, raise questions, and engage in collaborative problem-solving.

Relevance and Impact

This session is relevant for:

- Educational developers designing peer observation programs.
- Academic leaders seeking to improve teaching quality and faculty development.
- Researchers interested in comparative education and teaching enhancement.

By grounding the discussion in empirical data and inviting international perspectives, the roundtable advances understanding of peer observation as a global practice and contributes to the development of more effective, sustainable models.

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Collaborative Space 2

Sharing Academic Agency: A Collaborative Model for a Virtual Global Professional Development Framework

Olivia Fleming, Karen Skibba

Abstract

This session introduces a transformative, open-source model for professional development designed to bridge the widening "support gap" in higher education. We present a virtual global professional development community—a nationally recognized digital ecosystem that serves as a blueprint for both institutional efficiency and instructor autonomy. For institutions, this global framework addresses declining local budgets by reducing the need for redundant content creation. Centers for Teaching and Learning can "wrap" evidence-based pedagogical content with their own campus-specific resources, allowing staff to shift from content development to high-impact coaching. For instructors, this digital ecosystem provides a low-stakes, private environment for self-reflection and "bite size" resources for faculty development. Hosted globally, it offers a permanent professional "home" for instructors to document their growth throughout their careers. Participants will exercise academic agency by deconstructing the digital ecosystem's evidence-based pillars, distinguishing between transferable pedagogical logic and institution-specific content. We will move beyond passive observation to brainstorm adaptation strategies and low-cost implementation models. By joining this global community network of collaborators, you will help build a sustainable community asset that empowers both organizational development needs and the individual teaching practices of a diverse faculty population.

Keywords: Course Design and Teaching, Instructor Reflection, Instructional Support

Extended Summary

By the end of this collaborative session, participants will be able to:

• Utilize a self-reflection framework to produce an evidence-based professional development plan.

• Integrate universal pedagogical principles with specific local campus support resources.

• Implement a "virtual consultant" model into existing structures such as orientations or instructional consulting.

• Contribute to the global commons by identifying pathways to share institutional expertise and webinars.

The current landscape of faculty development is characterized by a profound contradiction. According to the OneHE and POD Network Faculty Wellbeing 2026 Survey results, instructors are facing unprecedented disruptions—ranging from the rapid integration of Generative AI to escalating workloads—yet faculty consistently report battling “time scarcity” and a “lack of funding” for professional development. As a result of these compounding pressures, nearly 42% of educators currently feel discouraged, stuck, or “entirely overwhelmed by their roles.” This "support gap" is most acutely felt by adjunct and early-career faculty who often lack access to centralized resources. In response, this session proposes a shift toward Shared Academic Agency, moving professional development away from siloed, resource-heavy institutional models and toward a global, open-access "Virtual Consultant" framework. OneHE provides instructors with a flexible, lifelong professional "home" for reflection and growth. This model is built on the philosophy that while pedagogical excellence is a universal goal, its implementation must be context-aware and locally supported. The Pedagogical Framework To facilitate this context-aware growth, the session utilizes a framework organized around core "Branches" of teaching excellence. Participants will explore these pillars using action-oriented strategies:

- Artificial Intelligence: Addressing faculty who feel high uncertainty regarding AI by exploring literacy, ethical use, and AI-resilient assessments.
- Inclusive Teaching and Learning: Prioritizing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and student-student interaction to close equity gaps. And prioritizing both instructor and student well-being by utilizing inclusive and kind teaching practices.
- Effective Course Design: Utilizing "backward design" to build clear structures and measurable outcomes.
- Assessment & Feedback: Creating inclusive, authentic, and timely evaluation loops.
- Online and Hybrid Pedagogy: Optimizing asynchronous engagement and digital presence.

The Dual Empowerment Model: Institutional & Individual

The transition to a global virtual professional development ecosystem functions as a blueprint for both institutional efficiency and instructor autonomy:

1. Institutional Efficiency: Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) can connect global pedagogical content with their own local resources (e.g., campus-specific IT support). This reduces the need for costly, redundant content creation, allowing CTL staff to focus on high-impact consulting.

2. Individual Autonomy: Instructors gain a low-stakes, private environment for selfdirected faculty development. Because the framework is hosted globally, their progress remains with them throughout their career, providing a "home" for instructors who currently rely on informal peer networks for support.

Case Studies in Success

We examine two distinct institutional approaches to this model:

• University of South Florida (USF): Faced with supporting 2,700+ faculty across multiple campuses, USF adopted a "flipped" professional development model. Faculty engage with global micro-learning independently and then meet locally to solve institutional challenges.

• California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI): To reach a diverse and "untethered" faculty population, CSUCI used the framework to provide instant agency, allowing busy instructors to find relevant content in 20-minute increments.

A Collaborative Digital Ecosystem

A unique feature of this model is its openness to contributors. OneHE is a thriving community where educators are invited to share their own expertise within a co-created ecosystem. Participants will join a global network of collaborators who contribute micro-courses, activity templates, and webinars, ensuring that the latest innovations in teaching and learning are shared across borders. This democratization of content creation ensures the resources remain current with emerging trends like AI and student mental health, transforming a once-static guide into a dynamic "Virtual Consultant." During this session, you will learn how to utilize and contribute to OneHE's shared global community resource site.

Session Structure

The 60-minute session is divided into four active segments designed to move from theory to application:

Part 1: Analyze the Dual-Benefit Model (15 minutes):

- Introduce the collaborator model for global experts.
- Share the University of South Florida and California State University Channel Islands success stories.
- The Institutional Lens: How to utilize the OneHE digital ecosystem and integrate into local resources and faculty development.
- The Instructor Lens: How the OneHE digital ecosystem can be used to develop a personalized faculty development plan and connect with other instructors and global experts.

Part 2: Engage with the "Try It Yourself" Lab (20 minutes):

- Activity: Complete a brief guided reflection.
- Resource Experience: Experience how the OneHE digital ecosystem provides immediate, "bite-sized" pedagogical recommendations.
- Group Debrief: Using "Think-Pair-Share" to discuss utility and institutional application.

Part 3: Brainstorm Adaptation & Localization (15 minutes):

- Activity: In small groups, participants will discuss how they might map their own local campus resources and utilize in faculty development.
- Group Debrief: Identify specific "gaps" that community-contributed resources could help fill.

Part 4: Wrap Up: Scaling Success (10 minutes):

- Action: Participants share one way they could use the OneHE digital ecosystem.
- The Feedback Loop: Share feedback and insights.
- Open for Questions.

Conclusion

In an era of shrinking budgets and increasing complexity, we cannot afford to work in isolation. This collaborative space offers a path forward that values the professional agency of the individual instructor while providing institutions with a scalable, sustainable infrastructure for excellence through a shared global framework within a well-respected and resourced digital ecosystem.

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Collaborative Space 3

Educational Development Through an Organizational Lens

Mary Wright, Laura Cruz, Alexandra Mihai

Abstract

From their origins in the 1960s, Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) have evolved dramatically, moving from support services to strategic organizations that must navigate complex institutional and global landscapes. Apace with the growth of CTLs, there has been an emergence of international scholarship about educational development organizations. Although this literature is becoming more theoretical, it is often not conceptually anchored and most scholarship of academic development still takes place from an individual lens. The ambition for this Collaborative Space session is to start generating a research agenda around "Educational Development Through an Organizational Lens." This session will help to shape an upcoming special issue of the International Journal for Academic Development (IJAD).

Keywords: Organizations, Organizational Development, Centers/Centres for Teaching and Learning, CTLs, Strategy

Extended Summary

Background/context of the idea From their origins in the 1960s, Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) have evolved dramatically, moving from support services to strategic organizations that must navigate a complex institutional and global context. Accordingly, in recent years, there has been an emergence of international scholarship about these educational development organizations. Early work includes descriptive studies, such as Gosling's (2009) study of educational development units at 40 UK institutions, and Holt et al.'s (2011, p. 9) look at "10 key points of leverage for the strategic leadership of teaching and learning centres" at Australian universities. Later work includes Bitar and Davidovich's (2025) study of Israeli CTL strategic positioning, Kenny et al.'s (2025) interviews of 22 teaching and learning centre leaders, Czerniewicz's (2021) overview of six South African CTLs, and several works on US centers (Kelley et al., 2017; Mihai et al., 2025; Schroeder et al., 2010; Wright, 2023) analysis of US CTLs. Although this literature is becoming more theoretical, it is often not conceptually anchored, such as in the sociology of organizations. Additionally, most scholarship of academic development still takes place through the lens of individuals. Rationale for the collaborative format The rationale for this Collaborative Space session is to start generating a research agenda around "Educational Development Through an Organizational Lens." This session will help to shape an upcoming special issue of the International Journal for Academic Development (IJAD).

Intended goals :

Participants in the session will:

1/ Engage with recent scholarship on educational development organizations

2/ Help to co-construct an upcoming IJAD special issue on "Educational Development Through an Organizational Lens," guest edited by the presenters of this session

3/ Gain familiarity with relevant theories and frameworks of organizational development

This 60-minute session will be structured as follows:

1/ The presenters will briefly introduce themselves and the topic (10 min)

2/ Participants will engage in a carousel brainstorm to begin to generate a research agenda for the IJAD special issue. Sheets will be rotated around the room, for small groups to brainstorm specific research questions/ topic ideas around these seven broad categories:

- Organizational structures and their evolution
- Purpose and strategy
- Comparative and cross-cultural
- Inter-institutional collaborations
- CTL origin stories & sustainability
- Labor and employment
- Other After several rotations (20 minutes), each small group will report out a few promising questions (15 minutes).

3/ The session will end with discussion and next steps for attendees who wish to submit a proposal or manuscript to the special issue. (15 min)

The target audience includes educational and academic developers who are interested in educational development through an organizational lens. It also includes those interested in publishing in the International Journal for Academic Development, a Q1 journal, or another educational development outlet.

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Collaborative Space 4

Beyond Mandatory: Enhancing Student Attendance and Agency in Active Learning Environments

Malin Östman

Abstract

Student attendance—or absence—at non-mandatory course activities has become a challenge for many courses, particularly those based on active or collaborative learning. These sessions aim to provide more than repetition of lecture material; they are intended as spaces for deepening, reflection, and joint knowledge development. However, students often prioritize mandatory components, driven by grade-related motivation, making it difficult to maintain constructive alignment and pedagogical coherence. This collaborative space will explore strategies to address low attendance without simply increasing compulsory elements. Building on a newly granted pedagogical project and drawing on experiences from CEMUS studentled courses at Uppsala University as well as previous faculty-wide discussions within TUR (the Council for Educational Development), the session will be a space for sharing perspectives and ideas on how to respond to the pedagogical challenge of failing attendance.

Participants will be invited to share perspectives, compare approaches, and co-create ideas for interventions. The session seeks to identify common challenges, exchange best practices, and explore opportunities for joint research or future collaborations. .

Keywords: Student Attendance, Student Agency, Pedagogical Development, Active Student Participation, Collegial Cooperation

Extended Summary

Background and Context: Student attendance—or rather, absence—at non-mandatory course activities has become a pedagogical challenge in higher education. This phenomenon is particularly problematic for teaching formats that rely on active or collaborative learning, where students' shared engagement with course content is central. The ambition is that the classroom should offer more than a repetition of lecture material or readings; it should be a space for deepening, reflection, and knowledge development.

Students who adopt an "assessment thinking" perspective tend to focus on mandatory components and are primarily driven by grade-related motivation (Moore, Armstrong & Pearson, 2008). It can be difficult to make clear how non-mandatory learning activities contribute to better final grades, even when this is true. At the same time, solving the problem by making more activities compulsory is not sustainable.

When students only take part in mandatory sessions, it becomes harder to maintain the course's pedagogical coherence. According to the principle of constructive alignment, course objectives, learning activities, and assessment should be interconnected and integrated (Biggs & Tang, 2007). If parts of the course are skipped by some students, the overall alignment risks being lost.

Universities also have an important societal role as meeting places for students, teachers, and researchers. A study from the pandemic period highlights the importance of physical interaction: students who did not know each other before an online course rarely developed connections during it (Fjelkner, Roxå & Warfvinge, 2021). It is in the physical meeting that new relationships are formed and understanding of different perspectives can grow.

Attendance is not only about physical presence but also about engagement and motivation. Previous research shows that classroom engagement correlates with performance (Büchele, 2020). This will be particularly interesting to examine within the project that this abstract is based on (funded by the faculty of Technology and Science for 2026).

The question of student attendance has been raised in several contexts within Uppsala University and the teaching community. Thus Im confident the interactive format of this session will be rewarding. This collaborative space will build on fostering conversations and seeks to extend them by inviting international perspectives and exploring opportunities for joint research and development.

Rationale for the format: The complexity of this challenge calls for dialogue and shared exploration. For instance, a new report from Lund University about student absence recommends a new way of looking at the issue and reevaluating the way we see teaching (Samuelsson at al. 2025). There are emerging insights, and great need for sharing experiences. While the problem is evident in CEMUS courses, it is far from unique; similar patterns are reported across faculties and institutions. The collaborative space format provides an opportunity to:

- Share emerging research questions and conceptual frameworks.
- Compare strategies for promoting attendance and engagement.
- Explore possibilities for joint projects.
- Build interdisciplinary connections around active learning and student motivation.

Rather than presenting finalized results, the session will focus on exchanging ideas, identifying common challenges, and co-creating potential solutions.

Intended goals and outcomes - The session aims to:

1. Collect examples of interventions that have been tried in different contexts.

2. Generate new ideas for strategies that foster engagement without increasing compulsory elements.

3. Identify opportunities for collaboration, including research projects or pedagogical development initiatives.

Participants will hopefully leave with a set of practical insights and potential partners for future work.

Target Audience and Institutional Context:

CEMUS – Centre for Environment and Development Studies – is a student-driven center at Uppsala University. Its unique model, where empowered students are employed as teaching assistants, represents an innovative approach within higher education.

TUR – The Council for Educational Development at the Faculty of Science and Technology – plays a key role in supporting pedagogical quality enhancement at Uppsala University. The author represents both CEMUS and TUR.

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Collaborative Space 5

The Future of Open-Access Publishing in SOED and SOTL

Eileen Grodziak, Ted Murcray, Michelle Yeo, Laura Cruz, Daniella Gachago

Abstract

Academic publishing is entering a post-authorship paradigm that is reshaping not only how knowledge is disseminated, but how it is created, governed, and sustained. In fields such as Scholarship of Educational Development (SOED) and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL), these shifts are intensified by the rapid emergence of AI technologies, changing incentive structures, and increasingly complex funding and ownership models. This collaborative session responds to these challenges by bringing together editors from four international open-access journals. Through structured dialogue and collaborative design activities, attendees will critically evaluate post-authorship challenges, identify opportunities for their own scholarly growth as authors or editors, and co-generate visions for the future of open-access publishing in SOED and SOTL. No prior publishing or editorial experience is required; all who wish to contribute to shaping inclusive, sustainable academic publishing futures are welcome.

Keywords: academic publishing, post-authorship, editorship, SOED

Extended Summary

Background Academic publishing is moving into the post-authorship paradigm (Abdul-Jabbbar & Bhatt, 2025), and this has repercussions not just for knowledge dissemination but also for knowledge creation. This session will be led by editors of four open-access international journals. Some of the challenges facing the sustainability of open-access publishing in SOED and SOTL include the following:

- Rapidly shifting funding models with open-access publishing no longer a low-cost endeavour.
- Challenging contexts for journal/intellectual ownership and reciprocity agreements.
- Decentring of editorial expertise.
- Changing incentive structures for participation in all stages of publishing processes (editors, authors, reviewers).
- Declining bandwidth of what is often unrecognized and uncompensated labour.
- Responding to post-authorship in the age of AI which requires journal leadership to manage the sharing, impact, and ethical considerations of authors' work. New Opportunities for Open Access academic publishing in SOED and SOTL:
- Opening new pipelines for editorship as professional development.
- Amplifying voices of nascent and underrepresented scholars.
- Expanding the definition of scholarship (article type, multimedia, etc.)
- Exploring emergent strategies for growing and maintaining a vibrant journal community and broadening the journal's impact.
- Extending academic hospitality (Cruz et al., 2025; Phipps & Barnett, 2007).

Rationale for the collaborative format.

At this critical juncture with the rapid emergence of Artificial Intelligence technology, we know that the future of open-access publishing must be co-created. Furthermore, open-access publishing will not withstand the lone editor model. In this session we will co-create the future.

Intended goals and outcomes.

1. Critically evaluate post-authorship challenges to open access publishing in SOED and SOTL

2. Identify opportunities for your own scholarly practice/professional development

related to open access publishing - editorship and/or authorship 3. Cogenerate possible future vision and directions for open access publishing in SOED and SOTL.

Target audience

- Conference attendees interested in having a voice in the future direction of open-access SOED or SOTL or
- Conference attendees who are exploring editorship and/or authorship as part of their professional development.
- It is not necessary to be a published author or editor in SOED or SOTL to participate in this session.

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Collaborative Space 6

Designing a Toolkit for Agile Backward Design in Curriculum Development ▸

Birgit Hawelka · Regine Bachmaier

Abstract

To collaboratively develop a curriculum on planetary health, we conducted a module workshop at the University of Regensburg using an agile backward-design approach. The workshop consisted of two 120-minute design sprints held two weeks apart and involved academic physicians, practicing pediatricians, students, and instructional designers. Through iterative design cycles in cross-functional teams and ongoing feedback, this approach fostered collective engagement and rapid pedagogical refinement. The evaluation results demonstrate the effectiveness of this method. During the development process, however, differing understandings of methodological and didactic principles proved challenging: the lack of a shared knowledge base delayed substantive progress and increased coordination efforts. To address these challenges, we plan to develop a toolkit consisting of visualization templates and accompanying guidelines for future module workshops. Within this collaborative space, we aim to exchange experiences on co-creative, agile approaches to curriculum design. Participants will be invited to provide feedback on draft visualization templates, drawing on their diverse disciplinary and professional perspectives to enhance the clarity and usability of these materials. Furthermore, the session will explore opportunities to establish partnerships for the joint development of a toolkit intended to support agile backward design practices in curriculum development. This initiative directly contributes to academic development by offering a scalable, evidence-informed model for collaborative curriculum design.

Collaborative Space 7

How to stimulate professional agency of educators in innovative education in higher education?

Wâtte Zijlstra, Janine Haenen, Max Kusters

Abstract

Rapid technological, social, and economic changes demand higher education to be agile and innovative. This requires educators to collaborate beyond classroom and program boundaries, engaging at faculty and institutional levels to drive sustainable educational change. However, many innovations fail to endure, highlighting the need to strengthen educators' professional agency—their capacity to act intentionally and reflectively within innovation contexts. Building on research into student and teacher agency, we developed the Professional Agency in Educational Innovation (PAEI) model, which links agency to personal, organizational, and learning resources and manifests in agentic behaviours such as leading or supporting roles in change processes. At ICED 2026, we aim to explore this model through a collaborative session with educators, researchers, and trainers in the field of teaching & learning. The session will identify key resources for sustainable change, gather feedback on the PAEI model, and foster knowledge exchange to potentially establish a network focused on stimulating professional agency in educational innovation.

Keywords: Educational Innovation, Professional Agency, Change Management

Extended Summary

Background Rapidly evolving technologies and social and economic developments require higher education to be agile and proactive. This means that programmes must continuously adapt to new knowledge, skills, and learning methods. As a result, not only what we teach is changing, but also how we design, organise, and assess (OECD, 2018). For educational professionals, this means that they must collaborate not only at the micro level (classroom, program), but also across the boundaries of their discipline, program, or even institution: at the meso level (faculty/domain) and macro level (institution) (Coppoolse et al., 2025; NRO, 2025). The question is how to professionalise educational professionals to initiate change at the meso and macro level, needed for sustainable educational innovation. This is a relevant question, because many educational innovations are not sustainable, as various studies have shown (Vanlommel et al., 2023). The quality of educational innovations is highly dependent on the professional agency of educators (Schaap et al., 2025). We define professional agency as the capacity of educators to act intentionally and reflectively within their educational innovation context (based on studies on student agency by Haenen et al., under review; and teacher agency by Kusters, 2025). This agency is fueled by resources such as the values, motivation, and self-efficacy of the professional or characteristics of the learning environment or organization (e.g., Bandura, 2018; e.g., Jääskelä, 2021) and is visible in agentic behaviour Kusters, under review, 2025). Based on previous research of student and teacher agency (Haenen et al., under review; Kusters, 2025), we have created the Professional Agency in Educational Innovation Model (PAEI model to visualise how the capacity of professional agency relates to the agency-resources and agentic behaviour. In this model, we have divided the resources into three categories: personal, team/organisation, and learning & development. Using this model, we investigate which factors influence the capacity of educators to act intentionally and reflectively (professional agency) and to what extent. We also look at how this manifests itself in agentic behaviour within the change processes of educational innovation. These can be, for example, leading roles, supporting or accommodating roles. In the collaborative space, we want to explore this model further based on the following questions:

- What agentic behaviour is required to obtain sustainable educational change?
- What underlying factors influence agentic behaviour?
- What does this mean for the learning & development of educators?

During ICED 2026, we want to organise a collaborative space for educational professionals and experts in educational innovation and teaching & learning. During the collaborative space, we want to jointly explore the possibilities of how we can stimulate the professional agency of educational professionals in educational innovation, and we want to learn from the experiences that already exist among the participants. Our goal is to obtain feedback on the Professional Agency in Educational Innovation (PAEI) model and our research questions. In addition we want to share and bring together knowledge and experiences among the participants to explore the possibility of starting a knowledge network around this issue. Overview structure session and target audience During the collaborative space of 60 minutes, we work in three blocks of 20 minutes

1. In groups of 4-6 people, the participants will get acquainted and introduce themselves based on the participants' experiences with educational innovation and what they consider to be the three most important resources for successful (sustainable) change. We will collect these resources with post-its.

2. We will present our Professional Agency in Innovation model (PAEI model) and ask for feedback from the groups based on the input in the first block.

3. During a 5 to 10-minute wall dialogue about the PAEI model, participants write and draw their feedback on the model and respond to each other. We conclude with a plenary (spoken) feedback session.

The target group for the collaborative space is educational professionals in the broadest sense of the word: teachers, trainers in the field of teaching & learning, researchers in the field of educational sciences and change management, policy officers, and management. Students are also welcome as experts by experience with educational changes. Outside the field of education, all stakeholders who collaborate with higher educational institutions and have an interest in flexible education and interdisciplinary collaboration are welcome.

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Collaborative Space 8

Co-Lab for Curriculum Change: Building Reflective and Distributed Leadership

Linde Moriau, Céline Cocquyt, Silke Vanslambrouck

Abstract

Since three years our university has been piloting Curriculum Redesign Mandates (CRM), partially freeing academic staff from educational, research, managerial and/or administrative tasks to lead a long-stretched and team-based curriculum development process. Support staff members guide and document the innovation processes, encouraging educational teams to critically revisit their curricula, in alignment with institutional priorities, societal and disciplinary evolutions. While such processes are increasingly common in higher education, they still lack evidence-informed grounding touching upon questions of academic agency, distributed leadership, and change management. In a rapidly evolving world, guiding long-term-focused curriculum innovations is not a straightforward task. It requires careful navigation and consideration of tensions and dilemmas that are both practical and relational, technical and cultural, highlighting the need for support practices that are reflective, dialogical, and capable of strengthening the reflective dispositions of those involved. The session aims to create a dialogical space where participants can critically reflect on their own institutional practices, share challenges, and co-develop principles for enabling sustainable curriculum redesign. We seek to connect theory and practice, linking participants' lived experiences with current research on academic leadership and change.

Keywords: Curriculum Development, Distributed Leadership, Reflective Practice, Academic Resilience

Extended Summary

Background: Since three years our university has been piloting Curriculum Redesign Mandates (CRM), partially freeing academic staff from educational, research, managerial and/or administrative tasks to lead a long-stretched and team-based curriculum development process. Support staff members guide and document the innovation processes, encouraging educational teams to critically revisit their curricula, in alignment with institutional priorities, societal and disciplinary evolutions. While such processes are increasingly common in higher education, they still lack evidence-informed grounding touching upon questions of academic agency, distributed leadership, and change management. In a rapidly evolving world, guiding long-term-focused curriculum innovations is not a straightforward task. It requires careful navigation and consideration of tensions and dilemmas that are both practical and relational, technical and cultural, highlighting the need for support practices that are reflective, dialogical, and capable of strengthening the reflective dispositions of those involved. The session aims to create a dialogical space where participants can critically reflect on their own institutional practices, share challenges, and co-develop principles for enabling sustainable curriculum redesign. We seek to connect theory and practice, linking participants' lived experiences with current research on academic leadership and change.

Rationale for the Collaborative Space Format: The collaborative space format provides an ideal setting for experience sharing and reflection. It allows participants to engage with each other's ongoing practices, to analyse dilemmas collectively, and to co-create hands-on solution strategies. This peer-learning orientation reflects the very principles of agency and professional reflexivity that our session seeks to foster. We will introduce participants to VUB's methodological approach, using Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 1987, 1999, 2010), as an analytical lens for understanding the tensions and dilemmas that one comes across in processes of curriculum development. By applying this lens in a collaborative workshop, participants will gain a structured way of reflecting on their own support practices while contributing their expertise to the group. In doing so, the collaborative space will contribute to both conceptual reflection and practical development, supporting participants in becoming more effective enablers of academic agency. Intended Goals and Outcomes By the end of the session, participants will have:

- Gained insight into the CRM support methodology piloted in our university.
- Engaged with lived dilemmas of curriculum support as concrete cases, recognising parallels with their own experiences, institutional practices or context.
- Practiced using CHAT as an analytical tool to better understand the dynamics of curriculum development and change processes.
- Generated practical strategies and tips for navigating tensions such as ownership, resistance, and policy alignment.
- Strengthened their sense of professional agency, through both the recognition of shared challenges and the exchange of supportive strategies.
- Built connections with peers in similar roles, opening possibilities for further collaboration or comparative inquiry.

Session Structure: The session will be designed to maximise participation and dialogue, within a 60 minutes timeframe.
1. Check-in (5 minutes): Short introductions and a warm-up exercise to situate participants' experiences with curriculum development support.
2.Introduction (10 minutes): Presentation of the CRM support methodology, combined with a concise explanation of CHAT as a tool for analysing support dilemmas.
3. Small-group discussions (20 minutes): Each group will work with a case scenario based on lived experiences and dilemmas (e.g. innovation vs. safety, support vs. steering). Groups discuss the case, connect it to their own experience and practice, apply the CHAT lens, and formulate guiding principles for support staff.
4. Plenary sharing (20 minutes): Each group presents their case and key insights. Facilitators summarise and connect the findings across cases with existing research.
5. Check-out (5 minutes): Participants share one personal takeaway or insight.

Target Audience: The session is designed for higher education support staff, broadly defined: educational developers, curriculum advisors, instructional designers, policy officers, and others engaged in supporting academic teams in change processes. The ideal group size is up to 30 participants, to allow for meaningful dialogue in small groups while keeping the plenary manageable. By participating, attendees will contribute not only to their own development but also to a collective reflection on how support roles can strengthen academic agency in times of change.

Collaborative Space 9

Empowering academic developers with agency through articulation of expertise, knowledge and practice

Kerry Dobbins, Helen King

Abstract

How do academic developers construct, share, and apply knowledge in interdisciplinary and collaborative contexts? What are the features that characterise academic developers' expertise? What are the connections between these features and the impacts of our activities? To explore these questions, we have been conducting a participatory research project with academic developers in the UK with two aims: 1) to surface the values, traits and aptitudes that underpin how academic developers carry out their roles; 2) to map the characteristics of our expertise to the impacts of our activities through a Theory of Change framework. Our ultimate objective is the creation of a framework that will support the academic development field in articulating what we do, what we impact upon and how we do that.

As a participatory research project, collaboration with the community has been at the heart of our study design and process. In this collaborative space session, we will share the data gathered from our research and the framework that we have begun to develop from this data. Participants will be invited to share insights on this data, particularly exploring any similarities, differences, gaps, etc., across the various international contexts of those attending. These insights will then inform discussions on the initial Theory of Change framework, which will be further developed and refined through collaborative activity within the session. As an ongoing project, we hope to explore potential partnerships to expand the study and connect with work others are pursuing in similar areas.

Keywords: Theory of Change, Expertise, Agency, Ways of Working

Extended Summary

This collaborative space proposal directly addresses the conference theme of Agency and Knowledge through exploring how academic developers can be empowered with agency through the articulation of our expertise, knowledge and ways of working. The session will draw on our research, funded by the Staff & Educational Development Association (SEDA) in the UK, exploring the features that characterise academic developers' expertise. The impetus for this project emerged from various threads, including King's (2022) work on characterising teacher expertise; continuing debate within the literature about how, and if, the field of academic development may be united in terms of core principles, practices and knowledge (e.g., Felten and Chick, 2018; Sutherland, 2018; Evans, 2024); and experience of the challenges faced by academic developers in articulating their value in an increasingly resource-constrained environment. As a participatory research project, the study has centred engagement of the community within the research process to facilitate participation, shared decision making and mutual learning (Vaughn and Jacquez, 2020). This participatory ethos means that the collaborative space session is the most relevant and meaningful to share the outcomes of the project so far and gain community insight to refine and extend the work further. Our participatory research project has gathered data from academic developers in the UK, which highlights the values, traits and aptitudes that underpin how academic developers carry out their roles. Significantly, our data suggests that knowledge, skills and ways of working are largely situated within the interpersonal realm, and that 'expertise' of academic developers may centre on the intangible ways that we work with others to lead and facilitate change. These findings support previous work suggesting that the expertise of academic developers may lie in the process of facilitating and leading change (e.g., Timmermans, 2014). However, our work goes beyond previous studies to map the characteristics of our expertise to the impacts of our activities. We are doing this through the creation of a Theory of Change framework that aims to support the academic development field in articulating what we do, what we impact upon and how we do that. This collaborative space session will enable us to share the data gathered from our research and the framework that we have begun to develop through a Theory of Change approach. Importantly, we are not seeking simply to present our data and framework but to offer our work as a starting point for participants to share their insights and perspectives on how this work should develop. As a UK-based study, the collaborative format also provides opportunity to gain viewpoints from those working in other global contexts and regions, particularly exploring any similarities and differences participants may see within their contexts and illuminating any gaps that might be evident in our data. Our aim is also to initiate collaborations or partnerships that will enable the project to expand beyond its current UK focus. The session will begin with a brief presentation about the research project, its participatory approach and the methodology employed. We will then share the data gathered followed by small and whole group discussion activities that will enable community exploration and interrogation of the data to reveal patterns, trends, gaps, etc, that connect with participants own experiences and contexts. We will then share our framework, informed by the Theory of Change approach, mapping the expertise characteristics identified in our research sample to the impacts of our activities. From the patterns, trends, gaps, etc., identified in the previous discussion, we will explore as a community how, and if, this framework can be developed to resonate with the field globally about what academic developers do, what we impact upon and how we

do that. The nature of our research and our participatory approach means that this session will embrace any participants who have an interest in considering the nature of what we do and our ways of thinking, knowing and doing as academic developers. We will particularly welcome those who are pursuing work in similar areas so that we may explore connections and alignments between our activities and possible collaborative opportunities

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Collaborative Space 10

Coordination: the scaffolding required for effective collaboration and integrated university education

Lourdes Orejana, María Iserte, María José Sánchez de Miguel

Abstract

In the current university context, characterized by increasing complexity in the organization of curricula, methodologies and teaching profiles, as well as the creation of more and more interdisciplinary degrees, coordination has become an essential approach to guarantee coherence and quality in teaching.

The coordination project of our institution aims to improve the organizational culture of centres and teaching collaboration in order to enhance the coherence of degrees and thus have an impact on improvements in teaching.

After a thorough review of all actors involved, the need for collaboration at different levels became apparent. To this end, a number of guidance documents and tools were prepared so that each centre could design and implement its own coordination protocols while respecting its own culture. The first phases of the model for accompanying the centres developed by our institution are now being presented. So far, the process includes a diagnosis of the state of teaching; a review of existing coordination protocols at macro level (university) and intermediate level (centre) and the implementation of spaces for dialogue and reflection at micro level (group workshops and interviews). This article presents a transferable project at an early stage of implementation. The aim is to offer a proposal that connects the institutional strategy with classroom teaching practice.

The goal of this article is to start a dialogue with other universities, share the challenges of implementation and explore lessons learned from similar experiences in change management in higher education.

Keywords: collaboration, teaching management, institutional policies

Extended summary

Background/context of the idea: To ensure coherence and the right level of university education, coordination is seen as an essential approach, especially given the current scenario defined by the complex organization of curricula, methodological diversity, the varied backgrounds of teaching staff and the emergence of degree programmes featuring more than one discipline.

Over the last five years, the centres of our University have detected the importance of the systematization of coordination, thanks to projects promoted by the Vice-President's Office for Teaching. The first indication was a project whose reports analysing the state of teaching of degree programmes revealed the difficulty of achieving effective, sustainable coordination.

Furthermore, the results of student satisfaction surveys and external audit reports (the AUDIT programme for institutional accreditation) reinforced the need for improved coordination at centres. However, in the dialogue with the associate deans of teaching, a single standard protocol was ruled out, given the specific features, culture, training and teaching staff profile of each centre.

As a first step, the concept of coordination at our institution was jointly defined. It was concluded that, besides being an administrative and organizational task, coordination is a pedagogical tool to ensure student progression and comprehensive learning while also serving as a guiding principle for professor collaboration.

The next step taken by the Vice-President's Office for Teaching was to create a Teaching Committee at each centre to provide a driving force for promoting and reflecting on collaboration at all levels, among other tasks. In order to provide effective assistance, we developed and shared a roadmap with deadlines and documents for guidance in the process of designing the coordination protocol for faculties and schools.

Rationale for the collaborative format In the first phase, the work involved project design and the preparation of documents and tools for professor support. Before embarking on the second phase, in which each centre will work independently, we are eager to enter into dialogue with other institutions to receive feedback on different experiences and to inspire and support other universities whenever possible.

The ideas we would like to discuss include:

-Is it true that coordination is not merely an organizational management model? We understand coordination to be the basis of a joint project that can actively involve the centre and the entire university community (teaching staff, students and administration and service staff).

-Is coordination actually a key element in curriculum design, development and assessment?

-We have chosen to follow a process from micro level to macro level, in which the protocol of each centre emerges from the contributions made by its community. Is this an acceptable way to go about it or would it be preferable to respect the traditional hierarchy (from macro to micro level)?

-Can possible critical points be predicted that might hinder implementation of the protocol?

Intended goals and outcomes

The expected outcome is a coordination protocol for each centre: a clear, living document that goes beyond mere management. This protocol will set out the guidelines and reflections on teaching that define coordination at the centre and its impact on the educational project. It will also establish the formal structure of teaching management (by clarifying responsibilities, functions, specific tasks and the academic calendar), while avoiding bureaucratic superstructures.

This project has the following goals:

-To consolidate flexible structures that establish effective channels for communication and ensure interrelation between subjects, curricular coherence, the emergence of competences and the continuous improvement of the quality processes of teaching and learning.

-To move the protocol beyond the simple organization of timetables or assignment of classrooms and to place coordination at the heart of institutional development while ensuring that knowledge is included in training programmes.

-To make this protocol known to all the agents involved in each degree programme, ensure that they make it their own, and be confident that they have a thorough knowledge of the syllabus of the degree in which they participate. Only when this knowledge is obtained is it possible to create a joint plan that minimizes the duplication of effort, favours the implementation of shared teaching strategies, enriches the teaching experience and improves communication between members of the educational community.

- To ensure that the coordination protocol of each centre is not a static document, but one that can be enriched and modified periodically.

A brief overview of how you plan to structure the session

-Concise presentation of the context of the project: the need detected, the redefinition of coordination as a teaching tool (not just a management tool) and the creation of the Teaching Committees and the roadmap.

-Collaborative dialogue:

-Example 1: The nature of coordination: Is it just management or a common project? Is it key to the curriculum?

-Example 2: The methodology of implementation. Discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of our bottom-up approach (micro to macro) compared to the traditional top-down approach.

-Example 3: Anticipation of barriers. Joint identification of possible critical

-Next steps. Brief reflection on how this feedback enriches phase 2 of the project at our University.

Target audience

-Professors: the main people affected by this type of policy and a driving force for collaboration between colleagues.

-Teaching managers, who are responsible for the design and development of degree programmes.

-Students (as applicable): the ultimate beneficiaries of good collaborative practices between parties.

Collaborative Space 11

Painting a Family Portrait: Academic Development, Teacher Education, and SoTL

Kimberley Grant, Michelle Yeo, Odd Rune Stalheim

Abstract

The collaborators, who work in different institutional and national contexts, come to the topic of agency in academic development (AD) with our lived experiences working in and across teacher education and SoTL as well as formal and informal AD roles. Drawing on frameworks that conceptualize professional identities and relations as well as Wittgenstein's concept of family resemblances, we have begun to explore the connections and distinctions among these fields. Our preliminary explorations and curiosities have highlighted the value of expanding these conversations to include additional voices and experiences.

Through sharing personal narratives and facilitated small-group discussions using a World Café format, participants will explore (1) similarities and tensions among these fields, (2) possible reasons for their artificial siloing, and (3) potential synergies and collaborative opportunities. This session invites participants from diverse roles and backgrounds—including those with experience in K-12 or teacher education, SoTL practitioners, and academic developers from other disciplinary pathways—to contribute multiple perspectives to the conversation.

Keywords: Academic Development; Teacher Education; SoTL; Family Resemblances

Extended Summary

Background/context of the idea: While the presenters work in different institutional and national contexts, we all come to conversations around agency in academic development (AD) with our lived experiences in teacher education and SoTL as well as formal and informal AD roles.

Before completing a PhD in Curriculum, Learning, and Teaching and beginning work as an academic developer at the [anonymized institution name], Collaborator 1 was a high school teacher then teacher educator. These experiences continue to shape her AD work as well as her engagement with SoTL. In turn, her work in AD and SoTL also inform her practice as an adjunct instructor in undergraduate courses for K-12 teacher candidates.

Collaborator 2 began as a kindergarten school teacher, and then became a teacher educator and completed graduate work in Language and Literacy. Somewhat accidentally, she became an academic developer almost two decades ago at [anonymized institution name]. More recently, she directed [anonymized institution name], and currently directs the Academic Development Centre. All of these roles have convinced her about the overlaps, intersections, and at times tensions between these related fields.

Collaborator 3 worked for many years as an elementary school teacher after completing teacher education for grades 1 through 10. Later, he earned a master's degree in pedagogy, followed by an interdisciplinary PhD in innovation and higher education pedagogy, and then became a teacher educator. Along the way, he has explored quality in teaching and learning, digital learning technologies, and professional learning in an educational research community. He became involved in the [anonymized country name] national network for university pedagogy, which is mainly composed of academic developers. Then, by some coincidence, he attended a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) conference and got involved in an international research project. These experiences have deepened his interest and understanding of the intersections—and occasional tensions—between educational research, teacher education, and academic development (university pedagogy).

Given the absence of scholarship that includes or addresses practitioners whose work and professional identities span AD, teacher education, and SoTL, we have begun to explore frameworks and theories from other fields to open this conversation. Drawing on research regarding professional boundaries and relations by Noordegraaf (2020) and Anteby, Chan, and DiBenigno (2016), we are interested in exploring the tensions and intersections of the identities, practices, and relationships of those who work in AD, teacher education, and SoTL. The work of Bath and Smith (2004), drawing on Becher and Trowler's (2001) earlier work on academic disciplines, describes academic development as a "tribe with its own territory" (p. 10). The emphasis on creating a distinct AD field may help explain the apparent lack of collaboration among these fields; however, we have begun to explore how it may be more productive to consider, in Wittgenstein's term what we might consider the "family resemblances" (Fogelin, 1996, p. 50) among teacher education, AD, and SoTL rather than trying to delineate the territorial boundaries of each. In our session, we plan to propose different ways of conceptualizing the relationships and synergies among these three related fields of practice and research with a particular focus on the experiences and identities of those whose work spans these domains.

Rationale for the collaborative format: This is an early exploratory collaboration, and we are interested in deepening this exploration and gathering feedback and responses from the ICED community. It may be the case that others hail

from similar backgrounds and may be interested in sharing and/or collaborating with us - we would be interested in exploring these questions from a variety of international perspectives.

Intended goals and outcomes

1. To explore both the similarities and tensions among teacher education, academic development, and SoTL
2. To explore the potential reasons for the artificial siloing of these fields with strong family resemblances
3. To explore potential for synergy among the fields, and identify potential collaborators in the work

A brief overview of how you plan to structure the session: We plan to spend the first part of the session introducing ourselves and speaking about our own histories with academic development, teacher education, and SoTL, and share how these intersecting backgrounds have informed our work. Then, we would expect to use a world cafe format where small groups are invited to explore a series of three questions that build upon the previous question, with the groups mixing between so that audience members have the opportunity to speak with a variety of other participants. Then, we will have time for a sharing back and an invitation to collaborate.

Target audience (who should join and why): We welcome audience members who may represent a variety of groups:

- Academic developers who have worked in teacher education
- Academic developers who have a background in K-12 education and who may have taught in that context
- Academic developers who do not have this background but come from other disciplinary pathways

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Collaborative Space 12

Enhancing Accessible Learning Through a Lead Teaching Assistant Program

Gregg French, Brennen Siemens

Abstract

This session will introduce those in attendance to the potentially mutually beneficial outcomes of the creation and development of a Lead Teaching Assistant (TA) Program in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. The presentation will outline the establishment and early evolution of the Lead TA Program within my home department, with a specific focus on its implementation in a first-year online course, which took place between January and April of 2025. Additionally, this collaborative space will provide myself and the Lead TA with an opportunity to receive constructive feedback, consider the scalability of the initiative, and establish connections across the post-secondary sector. The Lead TA role positions the upper-year student as a focal point of the course, as they assist with course design; receive mentorship from the instructor, while mentoring their fellow TAs; and serve as an accessible point of contact for first-year students who may be hesitant to approach their instructor. This experiential learning role offers the Lead TA an opportunity to develop their pedagogical content knowledge and disciplinary instructional competence. Simultaneously, it provides both the instructor and first-year students with an additional level of support in a far too often disconnected online learning community.

Keywords: Teaching Assistants; mentorship; experiential learning; students as partners

Extended Summary

The neoliberalization of the post-secondary sector has forced many arts, humanities, and social science departments to expand the size of their lower-level courses in the hopes of attracting more interest-based learners from outside of their home departments. Compounding this issue was the normalization of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in the proliferation of online course offerings in recent years that are no longer limited by the number of seats in traditional classrooms. Taken collectively, these factors place conscientious teacher-scholars in a difficult predicament. Moreover, our present reality compels instructors to ask themselves how they can develop an enriching, accessible, and inclusive learner-centred community for a large, broad base of students, while also offering unique experiential learning opportunities for high-achieving future scholars?

In an attempt to develop this learner-centred community for first-year students and offer unique experiential learning opportunities for high-achieving upper-year students, I created a Lead TA Program within my home department with the financial support that I received from a teaching and learning grant. I began this program with one of my former TAs, who recently completed a semester as the Lead TA in my first-year, asynchronous online courses and is the co-investigator on this project. As we began to sift through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning- (SoTL) based research on the topic, it quickly became clear that there was a dearth of research that specifically dealt with the creation and development of Lead TA Programs in non-STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. In turn, we modelled our holistic, learner-centred approach from the campus-wide Lead TA Program offered by the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Western University (London, Canada). This resulted in the Lead TA assisting with course design; receiving mentorship from the instructor, while mentoring their fellow TAs; and serving as an accessible point of contact for first-year students. While this was occurring, we were continuously evaluating how this approach could be used to enhance student experiences across the arts, humanities, and social sciences; the professional development of the Lead TA; and forthcoming Lead TAs in the program. Now that we have concluded our first semester of the program and received feedback from both the TAs and students in the course, we are prepared to begin to disseminate our practices, experiences, and results to teachers, academic developers, graduate students, and campus leaders. Our goal will be to generate a learner-centred environment within our collaborative session with the hopes of creating a space for open discussion, which will provide us with additional feedback at this early stage of our program and encourage those in attendance to established similar initiatives at their own institutions.

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Collaborative Space 13

A Framework for Building and Assessing Equity-Centered Peer Mentoring Programs

Krista Craven, Olivia Choplin, Margarita Safronova, Gabriel Kwek Wu-Xin, Diana Gregory

Abstract

In this collaborative space, we will introduce a conceptual framework for equity-centered peer-mentoring practices in academic support programs. This framework builds on an existing body of scholarship (Rawlinson and Willimott, 2016) and was further developed through a 3-year comparative study of peer-led academic support programs at universities in Canada, Singapore, and the United States. In this session, participants will engage with key project findings and explore an assessment instrument for programs that utilize peer support to help students navigate their academic experience in higher education. This collaborative space will also create a space for session participants to explore and reflect on the tool's potential value for campuses seeking to build new or improve existing peer mentoring programs.The results of this study and the assessment framework are situated within the broader realities of the current higher education landscape, where faculty and staff are often navigating heavy workloads, resource constraints, and increasing student needs. Despite these pressures, many of these educators and academic support staff continue to seek meaningful ways to create supportive, responsive, and equitable learning environments. Our framework is designed with this context in mind, offering practical, research-informed approaches that can help institutions strengthen peer-mentoring structures while acknowledging the complex conditions under which they operate.

Keywords: Peer Mentoring, Equity, Capacity-Building, Organizational Transformation

Extended Summary

Background and Context: Equity in higher education requires the removal of barriers and the provision of opportunities, resources, and support systems so that all students, particularly marginalized students, can succeed and thrive (Fraser 2008; Gewirtz 2006; Gorski 2017; Zajda 2010). Peer mentoring programs help increase the pool of individuals from whom students can receive support, particularly when higher education faculty and staff are overburdened and overwhelmed. Although there is extensive research on policies and pedagogical practices that foster equity, less is known about the role that peer mentoring programs play in advancing equity.

Peer mentoring programs can serve as a crucial tool for enhancing equitable outcomes for students, improving retention, engagement, and success, particularly among marginalized student groups (Mullen and Klimaitis 2021). In higher education, these programs often aim to provide academic, social, and emotional support that fosters a sense of belonging and community among students (Schlange and Burnett 2023). How peer mentoring programs actually facilitate equitable outcomes for students through theory-driven practices, however, is not as clear within the extant literature. To address this gap, our analysis draws on Rawlinson and Willimott's (2016) conceptual framework which integrates social justice principles (Creagh et al. 2013) with student-centered learning strategies (Taylor 2013) to investigate practices within peer mentoring programs. Rawlinson and Willimott's (2016) framework outlines the following five social justice principles for creating equitable and inclusive peer mentoring programs: self-determination, rights, access, equity, and inclusive participation. Our research team conducted a three-year comparative analysis of peer-led academic support programs at universities in Canada, Singapore, and the United States utilized this existing framework to explore how equity-centered peer-mentoring practices operate in diverse institutional contexts. Rationale for the collaborative format: Our study revealed that peer-led academic support programs operate within highly diverse institutional cultures and resource environments across Canada, Singapore, and the United States. These differences shape how equity-centered peer-mentoring practices are interpreted, enacted, and sustained on individual campuses. As such, our research findings led us to adapting and expanding Rawlinson and Willimott's (2016) framework into what we are calling an "Equity-Driven Mentoring Evaluation Framework."

We would like to facilitate our session as a collaborative space to be able to share this evaluation framework and discuss its utility for campuses aiming to build new or improve existing peer mentoring programs. Engaging participants in dialogue allows us to gather diverse perspectives on how different institutional contexts could affect the implementation of the framework. This format would also provide an opportunity for attendees to identify potential barriers, contextual adaptations, and equity considerations beyond what we have found in our study.

Additionally, because peer-led academic support programs often operate within conditions where faculty and staff are navigating heavy workloads and increasing student needs, the collaborative format offers a way for us to collectively imagine feasible, equity-centered strategies that align with existing capacities. By inviting session attendees to apply components of the framework to their own institutional settings, we aim to refine and strengthen the tool and ensure that the framework ultimately supports campuses working to build or enhance peer-mentoring programs in meaningful, context-responsive ways.

Intended Goals and Outcomes:

- Attendees will discuss and identify peer mentoring practices that can foster more equitable outcomes for students within the context of their particular post-secondary institution.
- Attendees will explore how the framework in part or in whole can help in the development of programming to support students through peer mentoring.
- Attendees will practice applying the framework, in part or in whole, to peer mentoring/academic support programs on their own campuses.

Overview of the Session:

1) Introduction of the research team and the background of our project, including our research process. (6 minutes) 2) Large-Group Discussion: What are some of the barriers to equitable academic outcomes on your campus? (5 minutes)

3) Research foundation: Why peer mentoring programs contribute to equitable outcomes? (4 minutes)

4) Introduction of the framework (5 minutes)

5) Application of the framework (30 minutes)

a. We will distribute a handout with the draft framework and ask attendees to gather into groups to examine 1 piece of the framework in detail and how it could apply to peer-led programs on their own campuses.

b. We will give participants time to discuss with other attendees any areas that could be nuanced in the piece of the framework they are examining and/or any potential challenges in applying that dimension part of the framework in their particular institutional contexts.

6) Debrief, Q&A, and discussion of follow-up. (10 minutes)

a. We will invite feedback on the rubric, asking each small group to report their takeaways. Participants will have an opportunity to fill out a form via QR code to indicate interest in a follow-up conversation about researching the framework.

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Collaborative Space 14

Empowering Learners Through Reflective Assessment

Andrea Aebersold, Jenna Jones, Erica Shea

Abstract

This collaborative space shares how instructors at X University use an instructional strategy, called the "exam autopsy." The exam autopsy is a post-exam reflective assessment tool that helps students identify exam errors, reflect on study strategies, and articulate adjustments in preparing for future exams. The project aims to empower students through metacognition to better understand how they are learning and methods that lead to increased academic success. Still in its early stages, we are eager to share this project and gain valuable feedback and iterations from an international academic development community. This session invites participants to review the tool and offer feedback/refinements as we look to offer the tool across disciplines and course modalities. There will also be opportunities for participants to explore adoption of the exam autopsy through interdisciplinary partnerships.

Keywords: Learner Agency, Student Metacognition, Curriculum Innovation, Student Motivation

Extended Summary

Our team designed the exam autopsy project based on attending conference presentations and reviewing journal articles about the tool (Owen 2019). In summary, the exam autopsy is a metacognitive tool that engages students in a post-exam assessment. Students review incorrect answers and indicate why they answered incorrectly from a list of error types (poor preparation, lack of understanding, careless mistakes, test anxiety, etc). Students then indicate the strategies they used to prepare for the exam as well as strategies they plan to use for the next exam. Finally, students submit a short action plan on how they plan to improve based on their error types and preparation strategies. The goal is to use reflection and planning as ways to empower students to be more active agents in their learning. One faculty member, already using the exam autopsy tool in Radiologic Technology courses, found that mean exam scores were higher for students using the exam autopsy. And national licensure exam pass rates increased from 78% in 2023 to 100% in 2024 following implementation of the tool. Our institution's Center for Teaching and Learning recently partnered with this faculty member to help adapt and grow the use of the tool across disciplines. Our team recruited a small group of interdisciplinary faculty to review and revise the tool to fit more course and exam types. We also built the tool in Qualtrics to better track student responses and trends across courses. We hope to use this data to measure improvements in exam performance and better understand the types of mistakes students are making, how they are learning from them, and how they are adjusting their preparation strategies. What we learn will inform student support workshops as well as faculty development workshops. We anticipate this project, and subsequent research, will also be a valuable contribution to academic development and metacognition fields.

The exam autopsy project is still in its early stages at our institution. As we plan to expand the use of the tool across disciplines, we are eager to gather feedback and iterations from an international community of academic developers. What adaptations could make the tool useful in different subjects and modalities? How can the tool empower students outside the classroom? What else could the exam autopsy tell us about teaching and learning needs? Input from this community can improve the tool as well as the project's outcomes while also inspiring participants to adopt the tool and/or collaborate with institutions. If any participants are already engaged in a similar project, we would invite them to share insights that may improve upon on our use of the exam autopsy tool.

The overall goal of the session is to gather feedback that potentially improves the tool and expands possibilities for use in the classroom and academic development. How could this tool be applied in online or hybrid courses? Are there adaptations for courses that use projects or papers instead of exams? How else can data from completed exam autopsies inform teaching and learning efforts? Answers to these types of questions will help the project evolve to promote student agency and metacognition through assessment tools beyond exams, therefore reaching more disciplines. Input will also help evolve the tool for use in online/hybrid courses. Finally, we hope to expand the outcomes of the project to inform campus student support (such as tutoring services), faculty reflection on teaching practices, and future professional development offerings.

The session will begin with an introduction of the exam autopsy tool and how presenters have begun implementing this tool across disciplines while also gathering data on student study habits and test taking strategies that can inform teaching and learning support. Presenters will then share questions designed to solicit feedback and project iterations. Participants will split into groups to review the tool and discuss the posed questions. Groups will share out takeaways from these discussions, which presenters will synthesize and generate a collaborative group discussion on possible iterations of the tool and its outcomes. The session will close with an invitation for future collaborations on the exam autopsy project.

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Collaborative Space 15

Compassionate Instructional Design in South African Higher Education

Heinrich Prinsloo

Abstract

An exploration of the potential of compassionate instructional design as a transformative framework for addressing persistent learning barriers in South African higher education, grounded in trauma-informed pedagogies. While instructional design has traditionally focused on efficiency and alignment, this session invites participants to reconsider its role in supporting student well-being, engagement and persistence within complex learning environments. Drawing on an emerging action research project, the session will create a dialogic space for participants to reflect critically on their own design practices and explore how compassion can be intentionally embedded into curriculum, assessment, and learning environments. Rather than presenting a fixed model, this space invites collaboration to refine an evolving conceptual framework that centres care, relationality and justice in learning design. Participants will engage in structured reflection and small-group dialogue to share contextual challenges, design responses and questions for future research and practice. The session aims to generate collective insights, strengthen cross-institutional connections, and support the development of more humane, responsive instructional design practices in higher education.

Keywords: Instructional Design, Trauma-Informed Pedagogy, Compassionate Education, Higher Education

Extended Summary

South African higher education is situated within a socio-historical context marked by inequality, intergenerational trauma, and systemic exclusion. Although access to higher education has expanded, student success remains uneven across socio-economic, racial, and geographic groups. Many students navigate academic life while facing ongoing stressors such as financial hardship, food insecurity, inadequate schooling backgrounds, and emotional or psychological strain. Traditional instructional design practices in many higher education institutions prioritise efficiency, standardisation and cognitive learning outcomes. While these are important, such approaches often fail to adequately account for students' emotional, psychological and contextual realities. As a result, many well-designed courses still struggle with low engagement, poor persistence and limited student motivation. This collaborative space arises from an ongoing action research project exploring the integration of compassionate instructional design with trauma-informed pedagogical principles as an alternative design lens for South African higher education. The project investigates how curriculum and learning design can intentionally address student vulnerability while maintaining academic quality and rigor. Rather than positioning trauma-informed and compassionate approaches as "soft add-ons," this work seeks to reposition them as core design principles that shape structure, communication, assessment and learning environments.

This work is still in an emergent conceptual and practical phase, making it highly suitable for ICED's Collaborative Space format. The complexities of designing for compassion in higher education cannot be resolved in isolation; they require collective sense-making across institutional, disciplinary and national contexts. The collaborative format allows for:

- Dialogue across different higher education contexts and roles (academic developers, instructional designers, lecturers).
- Critical engagement with the tensions between academic rigor and compassionate practice.
- Co-construction of practices and conceptual language around trauma-informed instructional design. Exploration of future research collaborations and cross-institutional case studies.

Rather than offering a polished framework, this space intentionally invites critique, expansion and co-creation, allowing the model to be enriched through diverse global and local perspectives.

Intended Goals and Outcomes:

By the end of the collaborative space, participants will:

1. Develop a shared understanding of what "compassionate instructional design" means in the context of higher education.
2. Critically explore how trauma-informed pedagogical principles can practically inform design decisions across curriculum, assessment and learning environments.
3. Reflect on the relevance of this approach within their own institutional or national contexts.
4. Contribute feedback and ideas that will help refine the emerging framework and inform future research outputs.

5. Identify opportunities for collaboration, joint research or comparative studies across institutions. The session is not framed as a training workshop but as a collaborative inquiry space, where learning happens through exchange, reflection and shared problem-solving. Structure of the Session (60 minutes)

The session will be structured as follows:

1. Framing and Context Setting (10 minutes) A brief overview of the South African higher education context, the challenges informing this project, and the conceptual grounding of compassionate instructional design and trauma-informed pedagogies. This will also include a short introduction to the action research approach guiding the work.

2. Small Group Collaborative Dialogues (25 minutes) Participants will be divided into small groups and guided through structured reflective prompts, such as:

- How do learning barriers manifest in your context?
- In what ways does your current instructional design practice address (or fail to address) student vulnerability?
- Where could compassion be more intentionally embedded in curriculum design decisions?

Groups will be encouraged to share practical examples, tensions, and institutional constraints from their own contexts.

3. Plenary Sharing and Thematic Synthesis (15 minutes) Groups reconvene to share emerging insights. The session facilitator will help synthesise key patterns: similarities across contexts, divergences, and critical questions that arise.

4. Collaborative Mapping and Next Steps (10 minutes) Participants will contribute ideas for refining the framework and identify possible future collaborations, such as cross-institutional studies, publications or communities of practice.

This collaborative space is intended for:

- Academic developers
- Instructional designers and learning designers
- Educational technologists
- Lecturers and curriculum coordinators
- Scholars interested in student success, decolonisation, or care-based pedagogies

Participants should join this session if they are currently grappling with questions around student engagement, well-being, persistence and equity in learning design, particularly in complex or high-stress learning environments. The space will be valuable for those who want to move beyond technical curriculum design and engage with the ethical, relational and human dimensions of educational practice.

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Collaborative Space 16

Mapping Curriculum Development Across Three Levels: A Collaborative Exploration

Lisa David, Rüdiger Rhein

Abstract

Designing curricula for study programmes is a complex challenge, shaped by rising expectations regarding competence orientation, the shift from teaching to learning, student diversity, digitalisation, and organisational coherence. The Reference Framework for Higher Education Development by Brahm, Jenert, and Euler (2015) provides a valuable conceptual lens for understanding this complexity across three interconnected levels: learning environments, programme design, and organisational conditions. Drawing on accumulated practical experience and insights from research, we have compiled a wide range of characteristics and design principles—such as key competencies, digital learning formats, internationalisation, and the student life cycle—that fit to one or more of the three levels. The framework offers a promising structure for mapping and integrating these elements more coherently.

The proposed Collaborative Space invites participants to jointly explore how the framework can guide curriculum development practices. Through group work, visualisation, and iterative reflection, participants will review, challenge, and refine this mapping, contributing their own expertise and experiences. The session thus emphasises co-construction rather than the presentation of predefined results, acknowledging the distributed and multi-actor nature of curriculum development.

Intended outcomes include: (1) reflecting on the usefulness of the framework for structuring curriculum development, (2) refining and expanding the set of identified characteristics, and (3) initiating a practice-oriented overview of how elements of curriculum development connect across levels. Ultimately, the session aims to create shared insights that support more coherent and informed approaches to curriculum design.

Keywords: Curriculum Development, Reference Framework, Reflection, Co-Construction

Extended Summary

The development of high-quality study programmes has become an increasingly complex task in higher education. Institutions face growing expectations regarding competence-oriented curricula, constructive alignment, student diversity, digitalisation, quality assurance, and organisational coherence. Against this background, the Reference Framework for Higher Education Development by Brahm, Jenert, and Euler (2015) offers a valuable conceptual lens for understanding curriculum development as an activity that unfolds across three interconnected levels: (a) the level of learning environments, focusing on competence development and didactic design; (b) the level of study programmes, concerned with the coherence, profiling, and structural integration of curricula; and (c) the organisational level, which shapes the cultural and structural conditions that enable or constrain meaningful innovation.

Over the past years, drawing on both practical experience in programme development and insights from empirical research, we managed to collect a broad variety of characteristics, design principles, and success factors that appear across these levels. These characteristics include, for example, key competencies and future skills, student engagement, digitally enhanced teaching and learning formats, student life cycle, internationalisation etc. While many of these elements are documented in the literature, practitioners often experience them in fragmented ways, making it difficult to reflect on how they interrelate and how they can be systematically addressed. The afore mentioned Brahm–Jenert–Euler framework provides a promising structure to make the different kind of elements visible.

We aim at collectively reflecting on how the framework can support and guide practitoners of curriculum development processes, f.ex. Finding the right experts to consult on different aspects of a curriculum. Also we aim at getting feedback to the current map of curriculum elements within the Brahm-Jenert-Euler framework and develop it further with a group of experts. This would be a part of a loose research project, that focusses on how to frame the development of curricula.

The conference format Collaborative Space would fit perfectly for discussing the emerging insights that arise when accumulated practical experiences are viewed through the lens of the three-level framework. Also, the collaborative format acknowledges that curriculum development is inherently a distributed, multi-actor process. It relies on the collective knowledge of instructors, programme coordinators, educational developers, and administrators. A dialogical, co-constructive format is therefore more appropriate than a traditional paper presentation. It allows participants to contribute their own observations, validate or challenge the characteristics identified so far, and expand the preliminary mapping. In this sense, the session is designed as a shared exploration rather than a transfer of predefined results.

The intended outcomes are:

1. To jointly reflect on the Brahm–Jenert–Euler framework and explore how it can help structure programme development practices more coherently.

2. To collectively review and refine the set of characteristics we have gathered from experience and research. This may include identifying gaps, overlaps, or alternative interpretations. 3. To initiate the co-creation of a more systematic and practice-oriented overview of characteristics associated with each level of the framework. Ideally, participants will leave the session not only with new insights, but also with a clearer sense of how different elements of programme development connect across levels. Session structure:

- Welcome and short introduction (10 Minutes)
- Introduction of the reference framework and the initial clustering of characteristics across the three levels of the framework (10 Minutes)
- Discussion in three groups: Each group will be assigned one of the three levels, evaluating the initial clustering as well as enhancing it. The results should be recorded visually (20 Minutes)
- Presentation of Results: Groups rotate across levels, reflecting and commenting on the results (10 Minutes)
- Final Reflection about the learning outcomes and insights (10 Minutes)

The target audience for this Collaborative Space includes educational developers, programme coordinators, curriculum designers, faculty members involved in programme leadership, and researchers focusing on higher education development. Participants should join if they are interested in gaining a more systematic understanding of programme development, if they wish to contribute their own experiences to shaping an emerging practice-informed framework, or if they are looking for a space to discuss the tensions and possibilities inherent in complex curriculum design processes. Because the session relies strongly on participants' input, it is particularly suitable for colleagues who are open to reflective dialogue and collaborative knowledge creation.

In sum, the proposed Collaborative Space creates a structured yet open environment to explore how individual experiences, research-informed insights, and a shared conceptual framework can be brought together to deepen our understanding of programme development. By mapping concrete characteristics onto the three levels of the Brahm–Jenert–Euler model and examining their interrelations, the session contributes to building a more coherent and practice-relevant foundation for future work in curriculum and higher education development.

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Collaborative Space 17

Bridging the Gap: Transfer from Theory of Research-Based Learning into Teaching Practice

Patrizia Köhler, Franziska Nickolaus

Abstract

The Collaborative Space is designed to explore how research-based learning can be effectively transferred from theory into teaching practice. Research-based learning actively engages students in generating and reflecting on their own insights through guided or self-directed research processes. While its theoretical foundations are well established, implementing it in diverse teaching contexts remains challenging for teachers and lecturers. To support this transition, the [name of the program] developed an online workshop, regularly offered by the [name of the university], which helps lecturers design and reflect on research-based teaching formats. A systematic analysis of participants' reflection papers revealed key success factors and challenges in applying research-based learning. The Collaborative Space provides a structured forum for higher education professionals and lecturers to discuss these findings. Interactive phases are used to collaboratively identify supportive conditions, didactic strategies, and institutional frameworks that foster successful implementation. The findings are directly incorporated into the further development of the online workshop and broader support services for teaching. Ultimately, the Collaborative Space contributes to improving teaching quality and promoting a research-oriented learning culture in higher education by enabling shared reflection, peer consultation, and practical strategy development.

Extended Summary

Context of the idea

Research-based learning is considered a key element in linking research and teaching. It is a didactic concept that enables students to actively engage with open questions, generate their own insights, and critically reflect on them. The spectrum ranges from strongly guided teaching formats to open, self-directed research processes (Huber, 2014). In this context, Reinmann (2016) explores the relationship between learning and research, focusing on three categories:

Learning about research means engaging with research as a subject. Learning for research refers to preparing for research. Learning through research means learning by conducting research oneself. This differentiation helps to clearly distinguish research-based learning from other research-related teaching formats and highlights the aim of actively involving students in the research process.

Similarly, Jenkins & Healey (2009) differentiate between four forms of linking research and teaching, which move along the dimensions of focus on research process vs. research outcome and receptive vs. active learning behavior. Their typology complements Reinmann's perspectives by making different didactic objectives visible and showing how teaching formats can differ in whether students merely follow research or actively engage in it themselves. Taking these three definitions into account, research-based learning is best understood as an approach where students actively learn by conducting their own research and exploring their knowledge.

However, transferring these concepts into concrete teaching practice poses challenges: lecturers face the task of translating theoretical models into their individual teaching contexts while considering both the framework conditions of their university and the needs of their students. The necessity to adapt didactic concepts also requires a high degree of reflection and a willingness to question one's own teaching habits. Against this background, a higher education didactics online workshop on research-based learning was. This network consists of ten local offices located at various universities in the state and a central office. The higher education didactics office at [name of the university] regularly offers this online workshop on research-based learning, embedded in [name of the university] teaching strategy, which pursues research-oriented teaching as a central strategy. The aim of the online workshop is to support lecturers in designing, critically reflecting on, and purposefully developing their teaching formats in the spirit of research-based learning. A systematic analysis of anonymized reflection papers from workshop participants was initiated in order to gain insights into the conditions and success factors for transferring research-based learning into teaching practice and to derive impulses for the further development of support services for higher education didactics. The reflections provide insight into the individual approaches of instructors and lecturers, their didactic considerations, and the challenges they experience in implementing research-based learning. Both structural and personal influencing factors become apparent. The analysis of the reflection papers makes it possible to identify typical patterns and stumbling blocks that are of great importance for the further development of higher education didactics training programs. As Wildt (2009) emphasizes, research-based learning does not only mean learning about research, but learning in the format of research – that is, practicing scientific thinking and working methods within learning processes. This perspective highlights the importance of authentic research situations for didactic design and supports the workshop's goal of enabling lecturers to develop such formats.

Rationale for the Collaborative Format

The chosen cooperation format Collaborative Space offers the opportunity to discuss these findings together with higher education didactics professionals and lecturers. The interactive structure of the format promotes the exchange of experiences, perspectives, and solutions, thus creating a space for collegial consultation. The goal is to jointly identify which framework conditions, support structures, and didactic factors favor the successful implementation of research-based learning. In addition, the results are intended to contribute to the further development of the online workshop in order to support lecturers more effectively in the future.

Structure of the Session

The session is divided into three phases:

1. First, there is a brief introduction to the concept of research-based learning and a presentation of the online workshop context. Then, a tabular overview of reflection results is presented and discussed together.

2. In the second phase, participants discuss in small groups the specific success factors, challenges, and necessary support structures that enable research-based learning. The group work is structured by specific questions which are designed to stimulate discussion, enabling a systematic collection of experiences and recommendations.

3. Finally, the key results of the groups are compiled and documented in a plenary session so that they can be incorporated into the further development of the online workshop.

Target Audience

The target group of this contribution includes teachers and lecturers from all disciplines who have experience and interest in incorporating research-based learning in their teaching or further developing existing teaching formats. Higher education didactics professionals, who accompany lecturers in this process and design corresponding training offerings, are also particularly addressed.

Intended Goals and Outcomes

Participation offers the opportunity to …

• reflect on one's own experiences,

• gain new impulses,

• and exchange ideas with colleagues about successful practices.

The joint reflection and discussion are intended to help develop tangible perspectives for action and further improve didactic support in higher education. In this way, the Collaborative Space contributes to quality development in teaching and the promotion of a research-oriented learning culture at universities.

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Collaborative Space 18

From Theory to Practice: Operationalising FCCS as a Friction Analysis Tool

Lars Klingenberg, Lotte Ebsen Sjøstedt

Abstract

While Henderson et al.'s Four Categories of Change Strategies1 (FCCS) offers a comprehensive framework for understanding educational change, a gap persists: how can we systematically identify specific frictions hindering evidence-based teaching adoption? This collaborative space examines operationalising FCCS within the Behaviour-Friction-Solution2 framework to develop actionable change strategies. Sustainable implementation involves going beyond merely categorising change strategies to actively diagnosing friction patterns. By mapping FCCS categories onto friction types, we determine whether barriers are rooted in knowledge, beliefs, structural issues, or cultural factors. This diagnostic approach uncovers that various institutional contexts require different intervention strategies. Nonetheless, applying generic frameworks to specific institutional realities offers both opportunities and challenges. Our preliminary framework suggests that identifying frictions rather than creating solutions is the key to sustainable change. While solutions tend to be generic, frictions are deeply contextual and interconnected across individual and organisational levels. This session invites participants to develop and test friction-mapping using institutional cases collaboratively. We seek input on how academic developers can use FCCS categories to prioritise interventions. What tools would make friction analysis more practical? How can we balance comprehensive analysis with actionable insights?

The session aims to establish a community of practice around systematic friction analysis and to explore cross-institutional research opportunities to implement evidence-based teaching through strategic friction identification.

Keywords: Educational change, friction, behavioural design

Extended Summary

Background/Context The Novo Nordisk Foundation Center for University Science Education (USE) in Denmark acts as a catalyst for discipline-based education research (DBER) in the country. One of four main activities in the center is USE CHANGE, serving as its "impact engine" to foster sustainable organisational transformations in university science education. This initiative operates through a comprehensive logic model that links research and practice in both directions – where DBER research guides educational activities and strategies, and practice informs new research questions. At the heart of USE CHANGE's mission is promoting the sustainable adoption of evidence-based teaching through structured support for change processes, professional development activities, and frameworks for organisational transformation. Despite extensive research in DBER and general university pedagogy demonstrating effective teaching methods, sustainable implementation remains frustratingly limited. Current change efforts predominantly operate within Henderson et al.'s Dissemination quadrant, focusing on developing and distributing innovative materials and methods. This solution-first approach overlooks critical frictions across all four quadrants of the Four Categories of Change Strategies (FCCS, fig. 1): knowledge gaps (Dissemination), belief systems and professional identity (Developing), structural barriers and policies (Enacting), and cultural misalignment (Shared Vision). Without systematic friction analysis, in our opinion, even well-designed interventions fail to achieve sustainable adoption.

To address this implementation gap, we apply behavioural design principles through the Behaviour-Friction-Solution (BFS) framework, which mandates identifying desired behaviours and analysing barriers before designing interventions. While Henderson et al.'s FCCS model initially categorised existing change initiatives, we propose repurposing it as a diagnostic tool. Using FCCS categories as an analytical lens enables systematic identification and categorisation of frictions across individual and organisational levels, providing the nuanced understanding necessary to design contextually appropriate interventions that can achieve the sustainable educational transformation envisioned in USE CHANGE's impact model (see fig. 2) Rationale for the Collaborative Format The collaborative space format is ideally suited to our purpose of testing FCCS as a friction analysis tool, as it represents early-stage conceptual work that requires formative feedback from diverse institutional perspectives. Our framework for operationalising FCCS within behavioural design principles is still emerging, making this format's emphasis on constructive dialogue and refinement particularly valuable. This format enables us to gather critical input from practitioners, change agents, researchers, educational leaders, etc, who face different contextual realities across institutions, disciplines, and national contexts. The 60-minute timeframe provides sufficient depth for meaningful engagement while allowing flexibility to adapt based on participant numbers and interests. Rather than presenting a finished framework, we seek to co-develop and validate the approach through collective exploration of real institutional cases. The collaborative nature aligns with USE CHANGE's philosophy of bidirectional knowledge flow, in which practice informs research and development. By engaging people with different perspectives on agency and strategy developers in testing our friction-mapping approach, we can identify both the framework's strengths and limitations before broader implementation. Additionally,

this format facilitates exploration of partnerships for future cross-pollination between institutions, potentially establishing a community of practice around systematic friction analysis that extends beyond the conference. Intended Goals and Outcomes This collaborative session aims to achieve multiple interconnected outcomes. Primarily, we seek to validate whether FCCS can function as a practical friction-analysis tool that transcends specific contexts and works effectively across different organisations, countries, and academic cultures. This validation requires testing whether a generic framework can meaningfully capture situated realities without losing analytical power. A critical goal is to identify blind spots in our approach. Through collective exploration, we aim to uncover both individual oversights and shared blind spots that may systematically limit our understanding of implementation barriers. Are there friction categories the FCCS model doesn't capture? Do specific contexts reveal limitations in our approach? Beyond theoretical validation, we intend to develop concrete protocols and tools that organisations and individual change agents and consultants can immediately apply. These should be robust enough for systematic use yet flexible enough for contextual adaptation. We particularly seek to create resources that help educational leaders navigate the competing pressures they face when driving organisational change, balancing top-down mandates and strategies with bottom-up resistance, research ideals with practical constraints. Finally, we aim to establish practice-oriented partnerships that extend beyond traditional research collaborations. By connecting practitioners facing similar challenges, we can create sustained networks for sharing friction-analysis experiences and co-developing solutions grounded in diverse institutional realities.

The 60-minute collaborative space follows this flow:

1. Introduction (10 minutes)

a. Present and demonstrate the FCCS+BFS framework integration b. Share a concrete example distinguishing solution-generation from friction-identification approaches

2. Hands-on Friction Mapping (35 minutes total)

a. Initial mapping phase (15 minutes): Groups apply FCCS categories to analyse institutional cases using the template b. First feedback loop (5 minutes): Groups share initial friction patterns identified, enabling cross-pollination of insights

c. Refined analysis phase (10 minutes): Groups incorporate peer feedback to deepen their friction analysis

d. Second feedback loop (5 minutes): Groups present refined analyses, highlighting new insights

3. Collective Synthesis (15 minutes)

a. Map identified frictions across FCCS quadrants on a shared visual display

b. Distinguish universal friction patterns from context-specific barriers

c. Document limitations discovered in the framework application

d. Capture refinements and adaptations

e. Establish next steps for continued collaboration and framework development

Facilitation approach: Using visual documentation such as sticky notes and shared boards throughout the process ensures all insights are captured. Group sizes and timings remain flexible depending on participant numbers, while maintaining the iterative structure vital for both framework validation and practical tool development. The template offers structure and allows for contextual adaptation based on the realities of each institution.

This session targets practitioners at the intersection of educational development and organisational change:

- Academic developers and pedagogical consultants seeking practical tools for systematic friction analysis in their support work
- Educational leaders (formal and informal) needing frameworks for navigating complex implementation strategies
- Change agents working to bridge research-practice gaps
- SoTL practitioners interested in structuring investigations of implementation barriers
- DBER researchers exploring translational aspects of educational research

Tables, Images and equations format

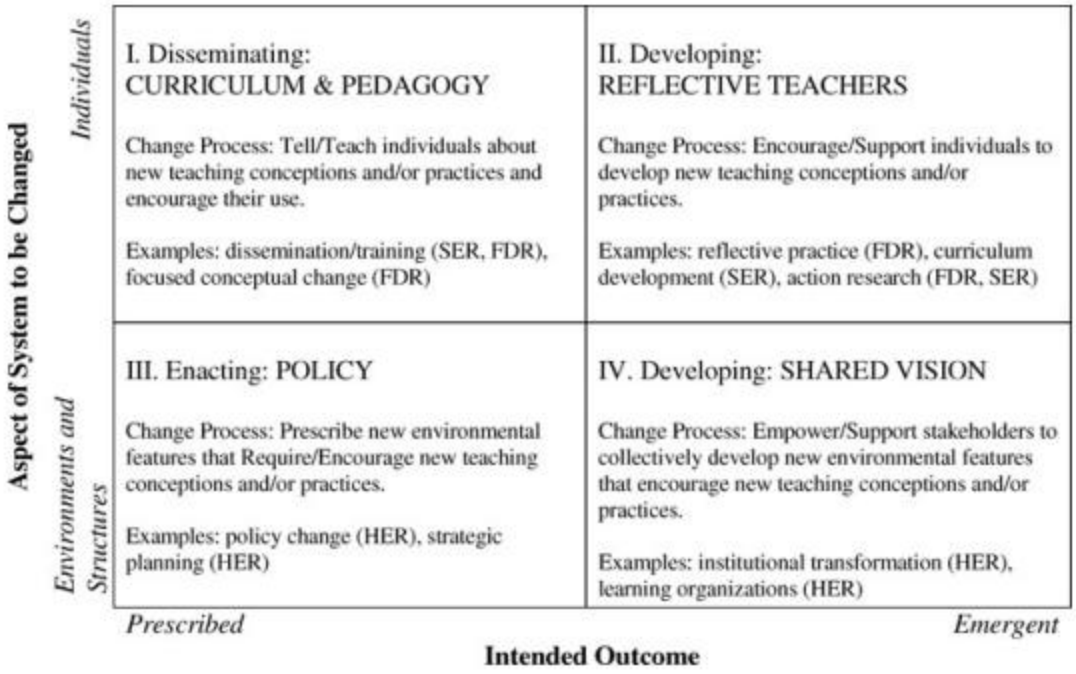


Fig. 1. Overview and conceptual underpinnings of the four categories of change strategies. From Henderson et al. (2011)

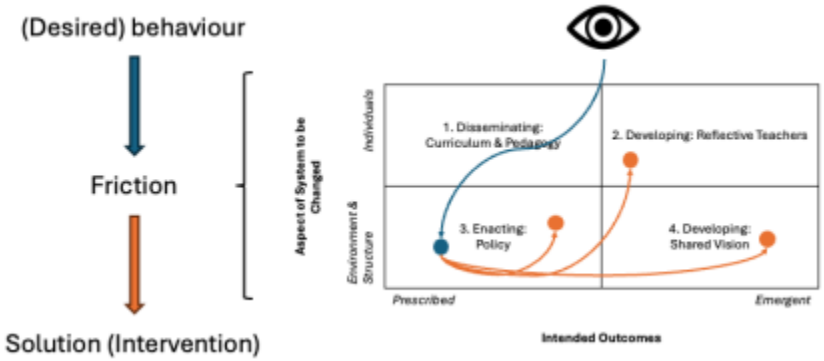


Fig 2. When a desired behaviour is described (eye), frictions (blue dot) are identified using the four categories of change strategies. Once the frictions have been identified, possible solutions (orange dots) to each identified friction can be mapped within the same model.

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Collaborative Space 19

Who's in the Room?: Towards an Ecological Framework of Scholarly Domains in Teaching and Learning

Laura Cruz, Anna Santucci, Johan Geertsema, Rik Vangangelt

Abstract

As educational developers, how do we conceive of, inhabit, and contribute to scholarly conversations about teaching and learning? This session engages ecology theory - which embeds people, places, and ideas in the context of the larger systems that influence their development - to "map knowledge about higher education" (Renn & Smith 2023, p.15). As a team of facilitators with experience across diverse international contexts (Ireland, Kosovo, Mongolia, Netherlands, Singapore, South Africa, UK, US), we invite participants to render an ecological map of the current landscape of pedagogical research - including scholarship of academic development (SoAD), scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), higher education studies, discipline-based educational research (DBER), design-based research (DBR), and more.

This mapping exercise invites dialogue about the relationships between scholarly forms, their purpose(s), and the broader context(s) in which they are embedded - including recognizing the current imperative to re-position the mission of modern universities. Applying and extending Gaipa's metaphor of scholarly conversations as tables within "ballrooms" (2004), we invite insights into how names relate to ontological and epistemological assumptions that shape mattering within scholarly community(ies) (who is at the table?), the challenges of delineating boundaries (how many and which tables?), and the potential affordances of leveraging the relationships between them (the ballroom itself). Who are we inviting in, and who are we potentially leaving out, when we choose what we call our work? And, ultimately, where (and how) do we situate ourselves within the grand ballroom of scholarly conversations about teaching and learning in higher education?

Keywords: Scholarship of academic development (SoAD), scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), ecological theory

Extended Summary

In 2004, humanities scholar Mark Gaipa published an article in which he articulated (in words and pictures) an extended analogy for an academic literature review that he uses with his students. Imagine, he suggests, a large hotel ballroom, filled with many tables. The tables represent significant scholarly conversations, and, in his analogy, the purpose of the literature review is for the author(s) to make the case for why they should be given a seat at a particular table. The depiction is compelling, but it does beg the question of how the tables are constituted---what kinds of scholarly conversations warrant their own tables, for example, compared to those that might be considered components of existing discussions (tables)? And what about the ballroom itself?

In our current work, we have been applying (and extending) Gaipa's metaphor to research on teaching and learning, suggesting that the ballroom(s) serve as a conceptual proxy for the broader context in which this scholarship is embedded. Indeed, higher education scholars are increasingly recognizing the imperative to (re-)position the broader mission of higher educational institutions within contemporary socio-political realities (Barnett, 2017, 2024; Felten & Geertsema, 2023) This perspective is supported by ecology theory which serves to embed people, places, and even ideas, in the context of the larger systems that influence their development. In their recent overview of the theory and its applications, Renn & Smith (2023) make the case for an ecological perspective as a potential lens to "map knowledge about higher education" (p.15). To take up their challenge, we present a collaborative space in which we render an ecological map of the contemporary landscape (i.e., the ballroom) of research on teaching and learning.

Historically, the field of educational development has often been closely linked with the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) movement (Cruz et al., 2024l Felten & Chick, 2018). Even within this professional domain, however, there is growing recognition that the SoTL movement is not inclusive of all approaches to studying teaching and learning in higher education (Booth & Woollacott, 2018; Geertsema, 2016). There are scholarly movements that came before SoTL, grew up alongside of SoTL, as well as others that evolved from contention with SoTL practices, or that differ from SoTL in language, orientation, outcome, or values (Canning & Masika, 2022). In addition to the perhaps familiar domains of the scholarship of academic development (SoAD) (Cruz et al., 2022; Kenny et al, 2017; van der Rijst et al., 2022) and higher education studies (leRoux et al., 2022), there are other contenders, such as discipline-based educational research (DBER) (Douin et al., 2025), design-based research (DBR) (Barab & Squire, 2016), and a/r/tography (Dahl-Tallgren, 2023; Belliveau, 2015). And newcomers continue to emerge, especially in relation to efforts to connect similar movements across the globe. Many of these domains overlap or intersect in meaningful ways, but the different labels reflect substantive differences related to what pedagogical scholarship is, how it is made, how it is supported, and by/for whom. While SoTL remains prevalent in many places, we will explore the evolving relationship between these other scholarships, SoTL, and educational development work.

The exercise of mapping these domains invites dialogue about the relationships between scholarly forms, their purpose(s), and the broader context(s) in which they are embedded. The activity also invites insights into how the language we use relates to ontological and epistemological assumptions that shape mattering within scholarly community(ies) (who is at the table), the challenges of delineating constructive boundaries (how we create and develop scholarly tables), and the potential affordances of leveraging the broader context of our work (the ballroom itself). In other words, who are we inviting in, and who are we potentially leaving out, when we choose what we call our work? And, ultimately, where (and how) do we situate ourselves within the grand ballroom of global scholarly conversations about teaching and learning in higher education?

We are a team of facilitators with experience across diverse international contexts (Ireland, Kosovo, Mongolia, Netherlands, Singapore, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States). We propose this session as a "Collaborative Space" to leverage the richness of diverse perspectives and lived experiences that conference participants will be able to contribute in relation to this topic. Through our session facilitation, participants will concretely explore the evolving nature of the complex ecology, as well as its fascinating conceptual challenges and affordance. We will present our questions as invitations into dialogue, rather than codifying them as pre-determined or prescribed ideas. Thus, we aim to engage and include all conference attendees, regardless of their prior experience with scholarship, in a co-creative process of collaborative inquiry - culminating in insights that participants will be invited to contribute to future iterations of this emergent framework.

The session will utilize embodied learning, leveraging the conference space itself as both the physical and metaphorical "ballroom" of scholarship in teaching-and-learning-related areas and fields. Participants will be invited to move about the room to represent the model being used (note that participation in this embodied element is voluntary, alternative engagement guidelines will be provided for observers).

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Collaborative Space 20

What makes academic developers thrive? An exploratory collaborative space

Lars Larsson, Björn Kjellgren, Åse Nygren

Abstract

This collaborative space invites academic developers to an exploratory process with the specific aim to identify and discuss personal core values guiding their everyday practices. In a professional community there need to exist shared values of some kind. Arguably those values are formed and carried through the participant's personal ethos, and as such they are essential for thriving academic developers. What if a national collegial network could find ways to nurture those aspects of professional identity and development? This is the guiding question for the collaborative space organised by Swednet – The Swedish Network for Educational Development in Higher Education. The collaborative space consists of two main parts – a nonstop-writing session which is followed by a reflective discussion about the statements that was produced during the first part. The insights that evolve will guide Swednet's work with supporting academic developer's capacity to act in wise and productive ways.

Extended summary

What makes academic developers thrive in their profession? Arguably when a personal ethos aligns well with everyday practices through the support of professional communities and networks. Wilson & Popovic (2025, p.15) call for "global associations and networks to undertake organized examinations of possible self-determined formulations of increased professionalization". Their call is specifically for the advancement of trust in academic development, understood as communally developed understandings of what to know, do and care about. Mori et al (2022) make the claim that such a shared professsional identity necessarily is carried by personal identities. Who we are and what we aspire towards as individuals – our personal ethos – co-create our communities (Lee & Ragupathi 2025).

The Swedish Network for Educational Development in Higher Education (Swednet) is currently in a process of redefining ways to "strengthen the identity and promote the professional development of individuals involved in development-oriented work in higher education" (About us – Svenskt nätverk för pedagogisk utveckling inom högre utbildning). One activity is to learn more about individual academic developper's personal ethos as it is put into play in their everyday practices.

Hence, this collaborative space invites participants to an exploratory process with the specific aim to identify core values among academic developers. We primarily invite academic developers – from those recently joining the community to those with lots of experience from the field. Ultimately, our ambition is to boost academic developper's capacity to act in wise and productive ways.

Our setup is inspired by concepts such as "speed writing" (Dysthe et al 2010) and "exploratory free writing" (von Schantz et al 2025). After a guided thematic introduction the participants in the collaborative space will write non-stop during a limited amount of time. The writing aims to make the participants "write out loud" (von Schantz 2025, p. 12), to put whatever pops up in their minds on paper, entirely unedited. Rather than iterating concepts or models developed by others, we aspire to voice essential, individual values. The next step is to formulate a core message from the writing, which then will be discussed and expanded on through a collaborative process.

Collaborative space setup

Here the stepwise process of the collaborative space is elaborated further.

Timeframe: 60 minutes.

1. Time: 6 minutes.

We, the authors, will initiate the process through a rather brief description of the actual situation that we are facing, presenting the aim with the collaborative space and its sequences. This includes distribution of supporting materials.

2. Time: 6 minutes.

As a starting point for the exploration, we will then provide a prompt as a guidance of the participant's minds towards the writing session that follows. The guiding prompt will touch upon what made the participants want to become an academic developer. What makes them thrive? When do they feel connected and in resonance with their work tasks? Where, when and how do they find inspiration, encouragement, and energizing challenges?

3. Time: 8 minutes.

Everyone delves into the exploratory free writing. During this session there is no talking, only non-stop writing. Whatever comes to mind in relation to our prompt should be put on paper. These texts are not shown or shared with anyone else.

4. Time: 5 minutes.

Everyone reads through what they have written and condense the main content into one sentence. That sentence will express a preliminary, personal ethos and will be shared. Each sentence, in readable handwriting, is attached to whiteboards or walls.

5. Time: 30 minutes.

Guided discussion among the participants about what is stated in the sentences. If practically possible everybody engages in the same discussion, otherwise the participants will be divided into groups. They are encouraged to keep on sharing among each other and add to the collection of statements on the wall. They are also free to link and group statements to each other.

6. Time: 5 minutes.

Wrap-up of the collaborative and concluding remarks.

We invite the participants to experience a collegial, thematic exploration through free writing, perhaps for them to use elsewhere, and to engage in conversations about what matters most to them in their role as academic developers. For us as authors the ethos statements will provide valuable input in Swednet's continuous work to support professional development for academic developers in Sweden.

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Posters 1

Mapping the Scholarship of Academic Development in Germany: A National Snapshot

Angela Weißköppel, Anita Sekyra, Claudia Bade

Abstract

This poster presents the first exploratory survey on the Scholarship of Academic Development (SoAD) in the German higher education context. Conducted by the SoAD Working Group of the German Society for Higher Education Didactics (dghd), the study aims to map how academic developers in Germany engage with research and reflective inquiry into their own professional practice. Based on the conceptual framework proposed by Daele and Riccardi Joos (2016), the survey investigates the current understanding, scope, and goals of SoAD across diverse professional fields such as higher education development, media didactics, quality management, and academic leadership. The questionnaire, distributed in October 2025, explores who conducts SoAD, with what intentions, and how SoAD is integrated into professional roles and institutional mandates. Preliminary results will provide a first empirical snapshot of SoAD activities and orientations in Germany, offering insights into emerging scholarly identities and epistemic agency among academic developers. The poster will outline the survey design, present key descriptive findings, and reflect on implications for strengthening SoAD networks, visibility, and future research within the German-speaking academic development community.

Keywords: Scholarship of Academic Development, Epistemic agency, Professional identity, Survey study

Extended Summary

The Scholarship of Academic Development (SoAD) is an emerging field that connects higher education development practice with systematic inquiry and reflective, evidence-informed approaches. While SoAD has become a key concept in international debates on academic development, little is known about how it is understood and practiced in the German-speaking context. This study presents the design and preliminary findings of a national survey conducted by the SoAD Working Group of the German Society for Higher Education Didactics (dghd). Its purpose is to provide an empirical snapshot of SoAD-related activities, self-understandings, and institutional frameworks among academic developers in Germany. The central research question guiding the study is how SoAD is distributed, interpreted, and enacted among professionals engaged in teaching development. The survey explores who engages in SoAD, with what goals and understandings, and under which institutional conditions. It thus aims to map epistemic and professional agency in the field of academic development and to contribute to a shared understanding of SoAD within the German higher education community. The conceptual framework is based on Daele and Riccardi Joos (2016), who describe SoAD as a scholarly engagement with one's own professional practice that integrates evidence, reflection, and research into educational development. Their model emphasizes that academic developers, like academics in teaching and learning, can act as scholars by systematically investigating and sharing insights about their work. Building on this understanding, the survey conceptualizes SoAD as both an epistemic and professional practice – one that reflects the capacity of academic developers to generate, interpret, and apply knowledge in ways that shape institutional learning and transformation.

Empirically, we use a cross-sectional online survey administered in October 2025 to professionals involved in teaching development across German higher education. Recruitment relied on national networks and communication channels of the dghd and allied communities. Participation is voluntary and anonymous; no identifying data are collected. The instrument, developed by the SoAD Working Group, was iteratively refined based on Daele and Riccardi Joos (2016). It consists of five sections: personal and institutional background; reflective engagement with practice and the use of data in one's development work; dissemination and publishing practices within and beyond one's team; organizational and structural conditions, including formal recognition and typical constraints; and respondents' own definitions and perceptions of SoAD. Items combine multiple-choice formats and five-point Likert scales with optional open-text fields that allow respondents to elaborate on experiences, challenges, and needs. Data analysis focuses on descriptive statistics and frequency distributions for the closed questions, complemented by an interpretive summary of the open-text responses. The results aim to provide a first empirical overview of SoAD practices and attitudes in Germany. At the time of submission, data collection has been completed and only an initial screening of the dataset has been completed. Consequently, the submission emphasizes the study's rationale, instrument design, and conceptual framing, and outlines the planned analytic strategy. By the time of the ICED 2026 conference, the full analysis will be complete and presented in the poster. We will report descriptive results on reflective practices (including the use of evaluations, interviews, learning analytics, and other data sources), patterns of dissemination (conference presentations, journal publications, community engagement), and organizational conditions (formal mandate, time and resource constraints, recognition). We will also present respondents' their own definitions of SoAD and their views on SoAD as a form of research, reflective culture, and institutional contribution. Together, these results will provide the first empirically

grounded overview of SoAD in Germany. The significance of this work lies in providing a national baseline against which subsequent studies can be designed and compared. Mapping SoAD in this way maes visible forms of epistemic agency among academic developers, identifies domains and contexts where scholarly practices are already embedded, and highlights structural levers for further development—such as formal recognition, time allocation, and capacity-building. The findings will be of practical value to leaders of academic development units and to policymakers seeking to strengthen evidence-informed educational change. They will also support community building within the German-speaking academic development landscape by clarifying shared terminology, highlighting exemplars, and identifying unmet needs for networking and methodological professionalization. In addition to reporting the national snapshot, the poster will discuss implications for future research. These include targeted qualitative follow-ups to probe institutional cases where SoAD is most developed, comparative analyses across domains of development practice, and longitudinal monitoring of how recognition and resources shape scholarly engagement over time. By situating German evidence within international conversations about educational development, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how knowledge is created, shared, and mobilized in service of teaching and learning enhancement.

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lehrblick.de - a blog to support the professional development of academic developers

Regine Bachmaier, Birgit Hawelka

Abstract

Many academic developers seek a stronger scholarly grounding for their work. While textbooks offer excellent overviews, they cannot fully address emerging debates. Research articles, on the other hand, often assume extensive theoretical knowledge, which can make them hard to interpret. Against this backdrop, the Centre for Teaching and Learning at a German university launched a blog in 2021, which offers evidence-based insights and inspiration for higher education teaching on a monthly basis. Its author team consists of experienced academic developers with expertise in educational science, complemented by guest authors and award-winning teachers. The platform integrates research, practical experience, and teaching support. All contributions undergo systematic quality assurance, including compliance with standards of good academic practice, internal editorial standards, and peer review. The structure and design of the articles follow pedagogical principles and didactic standards comparable to formal training. User data indicate an increasing number of readers among academic developers and lecturers. As a flexible resource, the blog supports self-study, enriches informal learning, and enables academic developers to share their expertise as contributors. Furthermore, it supports their daily work: Centres for Teaching and Learning incorporate the blog's posts into faculty development programmes in various ways.

Keywords: blog, professional development, evidence-based teaching, academic development

Extended Summary

This poster demonstrates how a blog on teaching and learning in higher education can support the professional development of academic developers.

Theoretical framework

Academic developers have diverse educational and professional backgrounds, holding degrees from a wide range of disciplines. Tremp (2025) therefore describes academic development as a patchwork-like profession, shaped more by individual trajectories than by structured qualification pathways. While most academic developers engage extensively in reflective practice in higher education teaching, their expertise is often grounded in experience rather than in systematically acquired theoretical knowledge. According to a study by Kraut et al. (2023), many academic developers seek a stronger scholarly grounding for their work. In recent years, several textbooks for academic developers have been published. These provide an excellent overview of fundamental topics, yet they are limited in their ability to address current debates. Research articles, by contrast, offer up-to-date insights into scholarly debates. Their interpretation, however, requires a solid grounding in the respective theoretical and methodological frameworks. Many practitioners might find it more helpful to engage in concepts and perspectives that have clear pedagogical relevance. So-called action theories (Entwistle, 2019) use a language that is readily accessible to practitioners and enables academic developers to think about improving the effectiveness of their work.

Content and structure of the blog

Against this backdrop, the University of Regensburg launched a blog in 2021. Each month, it provides academic developers and interested faculty with evidence-based insights and inspiration for university teaching, published in both German and English. The editorial team consists of four experienced academic developers with sound expertise in educational science. They are complemented by guest contributors—typically academic developers themselves—who provide expertise on specific topics, as well as by award-winning professors. The platform is structured into three sections that connect research, practical experience, and everyday teaching support. In the Teaching Concepts section, the current state of research on teaching and learning in higher education is reviewed and discussed. Original articles published in peer-reviewed journals are a crucial source. In the Teaching Practice section, award-winning professors share their insights into effective methods and approaches. In doing so, the blog offers a structured platform for disseminating valuable expert knowledge that often remains overlooked (Shim & Roth, 2009). In the category Teaching Tips, there are a wide variety of tips and tools provided to make instructors' day-to-day easier and to improve teaching effectiveness. Quality assurance is an essential part of the entire editorial process. The editorial team works with an academic advisory board to select topics for the blog. Authors commit to following the guidelines for good academic practice. Internal guidelines for content structure and style promote consistency in content creation. All articles undergo peer review. The structure and design of the articles adhere to pedagogical principles and didactic standards comparable to those used in formal training. In terms of media design, we follow established principles of effective multimedia presentation. Reader-friendly layouts and the consistent explanations of technical terms help sustain engagement and comprehension (Hawelka & Bachmaier, 2023).

Use and reception

With more than half of the posts (54.9%) falling into the Teaching Concepts section, the blog clearly highlights the scholarly foundations of academic development. User statistics demonstrate that the blog has become an established medium, with continuous growth over time. Average monthly page views increased from 157 in 2021 to 3,759 in 2025 with up to 6,000 views per post. Readers come from 119 countries, with the majority based in Germany (70.7%) and the USA (10.3%). The low bounce rate of 33.3% indicates that the content successfully meets readers' needs. Even though we cannot determine precisely who is reading our blog, the demographics of our LinkedIn followers indicates that nearly a quarter (23.1%) are academic developers, and another third (31.5%) are university lecturers.

Practical significance for academic developers

The blog offers concise, quality-assured action theories on innovative topics in higher education teaching and learning. These texts can be used by academic developers for self-study, independent of time or location. It can further serve to enrich informal learning within networks or communities of practice. Reading circles may use this source to challenge misconceptions and acquire current, research-based knowledge. Additionally, academic developers can contribute to the blog as guest authors. Through the process of writing an article, individuals refine their own expertise (Mårtensson & Roxå, 2021) while contributing to collective knowledge-building in the field. The resource also supports academic developers in their daily efforts to provide faculty at their institutions with evidence relating to teaching and learning. At least 12 Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) have already used articles from our blog to enrich faculty development initiatives at their universities. The blog lends itself to a range of practical uses. For instance, it can be used as a course handout to strengthen the scholarly basis of workshops. It can also be supplemented with targeted discussion prompts that encourage lecturers to reflect on and refine their teaching practice (Hawelka & Bachmaier, 2023).

In this way, research-based material becomes actively integrated into professional practice, fostering ongoing reflection, experimentation, and adaptation.

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Professionalising University Teaching in the European Higher Education Area: A Mixed-Methods European Research

María-José Rodríguez-Conde, Serena Rivetta, Susana Olmos-Migueláñez

Abstract

This paper examines how faculty professional development (FPD) is currently conceptualised, implemented, and recognised across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In a context where teaching quality has become central to institutional accountability, innovation, and sustainability, the professionalisation of university teaching remains unevenly embedded in academic career structures. Using a mixed-methods sequential exploratory design, the study integrates qualitative interviews with academic staff and educational leaders from European universities and quantitative survey data collected from faculty members and programme coordinators. The findings reveal substantial cross-national variation in the organisation, mandatory nature, and accreditation of pedagogical training, as well as persistent tensions between voluntary participation and institutional recognition. While structured and compulsory models are more prevalent in Northern European systems, Southern contexts continue to rely largely on fragmented and voluntary approaches. The paper argues for an integrative European framework that aligns pedagogical training, mentoring, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) with academic evaluation and career progression, and discusses implications for policy and institutional practice.

Keywords: Faculty professional development, University teaching, European Higher Education Area, Academic careers

Extended Summary

The professional development of university teaching staff has become a central concern within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), particularly in the context of ongoing reforms aimed at enhancing teaching quality, institutional accountability, and the social responsibility of universities. While research performance continues to dominate academic recognition systems, teaching quality is increasingly acknowledged as a strategic dimension for institutional sustainability and innovation. However, the extent to which faculty professional development (FPD) is systematically integrated into academic career structures remains uneven across European higher education systems.

The aim of this paper is to examine how faculty professional development is perceived, structured, and recognised across different European contexts, and to identify evidence-based principles for the development of a more coherent European framework for the professionalisation of university teaching. Specifically, the study seeks to analyse existing models of pedagogical training, mentoring, and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), and to explore their alignment with institutional evaluation, accreditation, and career progression processes (Rivetta, 2025).

The study is grounded in an integrated theoretical framework that combines three complementary perspectives. First, pedagogical training is conceptualised as a key driver of teaching quality and curricular innovation, requiring sustained institutional commitment rather than fragmented or optional initiatives (Zabalza Beraza, 2013). Second, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) positions teaching as a legitimate field of scholarly inquiry, emphasising systematic reflection and evidence-based improvement of teaching practice (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999). Third, academic mentoring is understood as a peer-based and relational approach to professional learning that supports reflective practice and the development of pedagogical expertise (Allen et al., 2008). Together, these perspectives highlight the need for integrated faculty development ecosystems that connect professional learning with academic recognition.

Methodologically, the research adopts a mixed-methods sequential exploratory design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), which allows for an in-depth exploration of perceptions and practices followed by a broader examination of structural patterns across contexts. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with academic staff and institutional leaders responsible for teaching and learning development in several European universities. Thematic analysis of the interview data revealed four central and interrelated axes: (1) a growing awareness of the importance of pedagogical training for improving teaching quality; (2) a persistent lack of institutional recognition for teaching-related professional development; (3) significant fragmentation of national and institutional faculty development models; and (4) a strong perceived need to link pedagogical training more clearly to academic career progression.

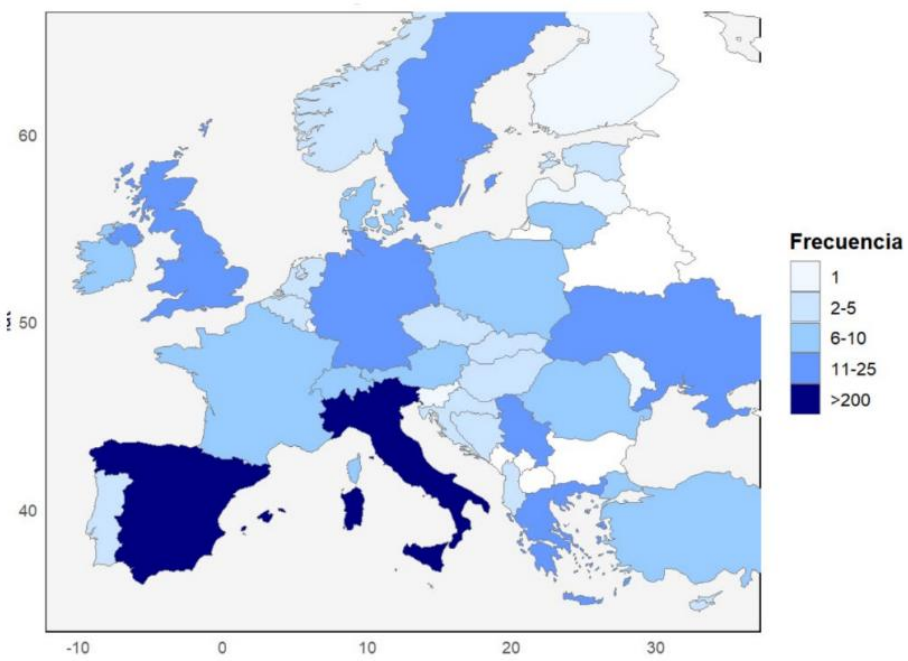


Fig. 1. Geographic distribution of 952 valid surveysy.

These qualitative findings informed the design of two quantitative questionnaires, which were subsequently validated through content validity procedures (Escobar-Pérez & Cuervo-Martínez, 2008) and reliability analyses (Aiken, 1985). One questionnaire targeted approximately one thousand university teachers across different European countries, while the second addressed managers and coordinators of faculty development programmes. This design ensured conceptual coherence between qualitative insights and quantitative measurement.

The results of the faculty survey indicate that pedagogical training programmes are widely available across Europe, but their institutional status and impact vary considerably. In Spain, training opportunities are relatively extensive, yet participation is predominantly voluntary and weakly connected to promotion or evaluation processes. In Italy and other Mediterranean countries, faculty development remains less institutionalised and often dependent on isolated initiatives. By contrast, Northern European systems more frequently implement compulsory and accredited models of pedagogical training, often aligned with national or international frameworks such as the Professional Standards Framework promoted by Advance HE (2023). These differences reflect broader cultural and policy variations regarding the status of teaching within academic work.

Findings from the managers' questionnaire further reveal that, despite the existence of training programmes, significant challenges persist. Respondents report limitations in financial and human resources, insufficient incentives for academic staff, and weak formal recognition of pedagogical engagement. Most notably, the connection between participation in faculty development, teaching evaluation, and academic career progression remains fragile across most contexts. Taken together, the findings suggest that while faculty development is increasingly institutionalised across Europe, its impact continues to be constrained by research-dominated reward systems and the predominance of voluntariness (Dennin et al., 2017).

The integration of qualitative and quantitative evidence allows the study to conclude that European faculty professional development is currently in a phase of partial consolidation. Institutional architectures supporting pedagogical development are expanding, but their implementation remains uneven and fragmented. In many cases, pedagogical training, mentoring, and SoTL initiatives coexist without being strategically aligned. Nevertheless, the study also identifies emerging trends towards convergence, supported by professional networks and associations such as RED-U in Spain, ASDUNI in Italy, and the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED).

From a theoretical and educational perspective, this paper contributes to the literature by offering a comparative, evidence-based analysis of faculty development across the EHEA and by integrating SoTL, mentoring, and pedagogical training within a single analytical framework. In terms of practical and policy implications, the findings underline the need to advance towards a shared European framework for faculty professional development, articulated around three key pillars: (1) the systematic integration of SoTL and mentoring as complementary strategies for professional learning;

(2) the formal embedding of pedagogical training within academic accreditation, evaluation, and promotion processes (Advance HE, 2025); and (3) the creation and strengthening of inter-university Teaching and Learning Centers to support research, innovation, and collaboration in faculty development (Beach et al., 2016).

In conclusion, the study advances the argument that faculty professional development should not be treated as an ancillary activity but as a foundational component of quality, innovation, and social responsibility in European universities. By grounding its proposals in empirical evidence and international good practices, the paper offers relevant insights for institutional leaders, educational developers, and policymakers, and identifies directions for future research on the systemic integration of teaching excellence within academic careers.

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Enacting the Hub Function of a Teaching and Learning Center: An Insider Action Research on Faculty Learning Communities

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Abstract

Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) have been recognized as a powerful model for fostering cross-disciplinary dialogue, reflective practice, and collaborative professional learning. While studies have documented the theoretical foundations and institutional benefits of FLCs, less is known about how small and newly established Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) enact the "hub" function that activates such communities within fragmented institutional cultures. This study employs insider action research to analyze four years of activities at a Japanese CTL established in 2021. Using annual reports, workshop records, consultation logs, and newsletters as institutional artifacts, the study examines how the CTL created opportunities for cross-unit interaction; supported instructional consultation and professional development; and gradually cultivated faculty learning cultures through low-threshold, dialogic initiatives such as Faculty Cafés. Findings show that the CTL's hub role emerged incrementally through (1) consistent consultation services, (2) intentional design of informal and inclusive dialogue spaces, and (3) connections with institutional committees that enabled broader organizational learning. While participation patterns fluctuated by year, evidence indicates growing cross-disciplinary collaboration and the emergence of a campus-wide sense of belonging and shared responsibility for teaching. The study illustrates how insider action research can illuminate the micro-processes of CTL strategy enactment and offers implications for strengthening the complementary functions of the HITS framework in diverse higher education contexts.

Keywords: Faculty Learning Communities, Insider Action Research, Center for Teaching and Learning, Hub Function

Extended Summary

This study investigates how a newly established Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) enacted its "hub" function through the development of Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs). Using an insider action research approach, the study analyzes four years of annual reports and institutional documents to reveal how cross-disciplinary faculty engagement was cultivated and how reflective professional learning practices emerged.

Theoretical and Institutional Background

FLCs, first systematized by Cox (2004), have been widely adopted in North America as a form of professional learning community that stimulates reflective practice, peer dialogue, and instructional improvement across disciplinary boundaries (Lenning et al., 2013). In Japan, FLCs are gaining attention as a framework to promote collaborative faculty development and cross-departmental engagement.

Meanwhile, the POD Network's Defining What Matters (2018) identifies four strategic functions of CTLs—Hub, Incubator, Temple, and Sieve (HITS). Among these, the hub function is most aligned with FLC development, as it positions CTLs as connectors that bring people, units, and microcultures together to support institutional learning. Aligning CTL activities with appropriate strategic functions is crucial for ensuring coherence between intentions, tactics, and evaluation indicators (Wright, 2023).

Methodology: Insider Action Research

This study adopts an insider action research design, in which the researcher serves simultaneously as CTL designer, practitioner, and evaluator. This orientation provides access to tacit decision-making processes and reflective cycles that are often invisible to external reviewers.

The action research cycle—(1) planning and action, (2) observation, (3) reflection, and (4) redesign—was embodied in the creation of the CTL's annual reports. These reports documented quantitative indicators (consultation counts, workshop participation, resources used) and qualitative narratives (faculty comments, dialogue summaries from Faculty Cafés, workshop reflections). The analysis draws on these artifacts from 2021–2024.

Findings

Establishing Foundations (2021)

The CTL's first year focused on creating essential structures and defining its mission as a "knot" connecting sites of teaching and learning. Activities included 79 consultations, Faculty Cafés in each academic division, and the establishment of a shared institutional vocabulary through the adoption of a mission–vision–values framework.

Expansion and Increased Engagement (2022)

Consultations more than doubled (175 cases), and FLC-like dialogue deepened through both discipline-specific and cross-unit cafés. A new "Faculty & Staff Café" broadened participation beyond faculty, promoting inclusive professional dialogue. These developments marked the explicit emergence of the CTL's hub function as informal networks expanded.

Diversification and Strategic Adjustment (2023)

Consultation numbers declined (104 cases), partly due to greater faculty familiarity with foundational practices and increased institutional demands on staff. However, program quality deepened through follow-up consultations and coordinated events, including co-hosting a national academic development meeting with 323 participants. These activities advanced the CTL's role in organizational learning.

New Phase and Re-definition (2024)

Consultations surged again (209 cases), including more complex and curriculum-level requests. Cross-disciplinary Faculty & Staff Cafés expanded, and new initiatives involving generative AI and micro-workshops were piloted. The CTL identified the year as one of re-definition, highlighting shifts toward mid-level curriculum enhancement and wider institutional collaboration.

Discussion: Enacting the Hub Function through FLC Structures

Across four years, three mechanisms contributed to the enactment of the CTL's hub role:

1. Consistent, low-threshold consultation services enabled trust building and recurring faculty engagement.

2. Dialogic spaces such as Faculty Cafés functioned as incubators of micro-FLCs, fostering informal networks across departments and professional groups.

3. Strategic committee partnerships connected CTL initiatives with institutional priorities, facilitating organizational learning and broader impact.

These findings illustrate how the hub function emerges not through large-scale initiatives alone, but through cumulative, relational work that supports belonging, informal learning, and reflective dialogue.

The study contributes to academic development research in three ways:

- It demonstrates how insider action research can illuminate micro-processes underlying CTL strategy implementation.
- It shows how small-scale dialogic practices can seed FLCs in Japanese institutional contexts.
- It proposes future directions for aligning hub, incubator, temple, and sieve functions within comprehensive CTL evaluation frameworks.

Strengthening complementary strategies—for example, incorporating evidence dissemination (sieve) and identity-forming ritual spaces (temple)—may enhance CTL sustainability and cultural influence.

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Impact of research in university teaching: Evidence from the REDICE call

Lissette Fernandez-Nuñez, Ernest Pons-Fanals

Abstract

The 20th anniversary of the REDICE call has been an opportunity to conduct a global analysis of the impact of the research projects on university teaching funded by the REDICE call of the University of Barcelona (UB)'s Institute for Professional Development (IDP). The main objective of the study is to analyze the impact of the research projects on university teaching funded by the REDICE call in order to (a) guide future REDICE calls and enhance the impact of research on university teaching at the UB, particularly through the REDICE projects; and (b) inform practice and policy decisions at the institutional level. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches has been used. Also, a research impact assessment was conducted through a research impact assessment framework. The findings lead to the identification of the characteristics of the research teams and projects, their scientific production, and the bibliometric impact of their outputs; also to the identification of 59 barriers and enablers to research in university teaching. These barriers and enablers are present in 4 contexts, going from the micro-level to the macro-level. Additionally, the analysis of the projects' characteristics (general and methodological) allows the identification of a profile of a prototypical project. Recommendations oriented to minimizing barriers and maximizing enablers are indicated and classified according to the two levels identified: UB and IDP levels. As a final conclusion, the achievements of the REDICE call identified through this global analysis are highlighted.

Keywords: university teaching research, university education, impact assessment, barriers and enablers

Extended Summary

Introduction

In Academia is important using research findings to inform practice and policy decisions (Brown, 2017), not only at a micro-level, but at a meso and a macro-level too. So, the 20th anniversary of the REDICE call has been an opportunity to conduct a global analysis of the impact of this research projects on university teaching. This is a competitive biannual call, based on peer review evaluation, where the assessment of research projects is based on their methodological rigor, feasibility, and impact.

Objective

To analyze the impact of the REDICE call in order to (a) guide future REDICE calls and enhance the impact of research on university teaching at the UB, and (b) inform practice and policy decisions at the institutional level.

Methods

Over the years, several studies have been conducted to analyze the general characteristics, methodological approach, and scientific production of projects. A combination of quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches has been used. Also, a research impact assessment was conducted (Adam et al., 2018; Deeming et al., 2017; Donovan & Hanney, 2011; Frank & Nason, 2009; Thonon et al., 2015), using quantitative bibliometrics, and perceived impact narratives through a structured open questionnaire exploring five areas of impact (Gallo et al., 2025). Now a comprehensive analysis was conducted using a quantitative-qualitative data analysis approach.

Findings

Over REDICE's 11 editions, 333 research projects have been funded with the participation of 3,192 researchers. Scientific production of the 333 projects is represented by 1,182 outputs, mostly contributions to conferences (national or international) and articles in scientific journals. The analysis lead to the identification of 59 barriers and enablers to research in university teaching. These barriers and enablers are present in 4 contexts, going from the micro-level to the macro-level: (a) The research/academic team; (b) Inside Faculties and Departments; (c) Within the UB, and (d) Beyond the UB. Each of these elements exist along a continuum, ranging from negative (barrier) to positive (enabler). The same element can function both as an enabler and a barrier, depending on its presence, absence, and intensity.

Additionally, a profile of a *prototypical project* emerged from the analysis of the projects:

- Area of knowledge: Educational Sciences or Health Sciences.

- Analysis technique: a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

- Information collection techniques: surveys, focus groups, interviews or documents analysis.

- Methodological approach: predominantly the empirical-analytical, but the interpretative-transformative also present in Educational Sciences and in Human and Social Sciences.

- Sampling: intentional sampling with a sample size between 50 and 500 participants. Samples above 500 subjects also present in Law, Economics and Education.

- Research type: evaluative or descriptive research.

Conclusion

The impact of research in university teaching should go beyond offering resources for the publication of research results. In that sense, the impact assessment of the REDICE projects led to a series of recommendations oriented to minimizing barriers and maximizing enablers. These recommendations were classified according to the two levels identified: UB and IDP (Gallo et al., 2025).

Some of these recommendations are:

UB level:

- Create appropriate institutional communication channels to deliver the results and products of the REDICE projects.

- Create exchange environments where the results of the REDICE projects can be shared and then used in institutional decision-making.

- Promote initiatives to give recognition and visibility to research in teaching and not only to disciplinary research.

- Create formal institutional mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of teaching research projects. Researchers should not depend on their personal or professional relationships, the positions they may hold at the time of carrying out the project, and/or their proximity to the recipients to be able to carry out this implementation.

IDP level:

- Maintain the design of the transfer and dissemination plan before the start of the projects. This pre-planning can contribute to greater dissemination and, consequently, amplify the impact.

- Create stable and shared communication channels to disseminate and transfer the results and products of their REDICE projects, inside and outside the UB.

Achievements of the REDICE call:

- Creation and consolidation of multidisciplinary groups to conduct research in university teaching, in parallel with their disciplinary research.

- Creation and consolidation of research lines in university teaching.

- Creation of scientific journals on university teaching in different faculties of the UB.

- Inter-university collaboration, including universities inside and outside Catalonia.

- Enhancing the quality of teaching and student learning

- Internationalization through the publication of scientific articles in international journals, participation in European projects, or participation of international researchers.

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Data-Driven Agency in Educational Development: Ten Years of CTL at H University

Kenichi Yamamoto, Rei Kataoka, Yu Tachibana

Abstract

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), where the presenter is affiliated, marks its tenth year since establishment. During this period, CTL has accumulated data such as participant demographics, immediate post-session survey responses, the number of training sessions, and changes in its operational scale, including staffing and budget. This presentation analyzes these data through the lens of agency in educational development, focusing on how CTL has expanded its role across three dimensions: (1) organizational agency, (2) teacher agency, and (3) the cultivation of a training participation culture. The age distribution of participants aligns with national faculty demographics, while the higher-than-average proportion of women participants reflects the substantial participation of nursing faculty. Higher satisfaction ratings for face-to-face sessions compared with online formats demonstrate the continued value of in-person interaction. Meanwhile, lower self-ratings of the likelihood of behavior change compared with satisfaction highlight the challenges of applying newly acquired knowledge to practice and the need for mechanisms that further support teacher agency. The increase in annual sessions (from 17 to over 50), the growth in participating institutions, the high proportion of internal participants, and the expansion of staff illustrate how organizational agency has been enacted and how a sustainable participation culture has taken root within the university. By visualizing these indicators, the presentation aims to illustrate how the three layers of agency interact and to provide an opportunity for dialogue on the evolving roles of educational development units.

Keywords: Organizational Development of CTL, Agency in Educational Development, Participation Data, Participation Culture

Extended Summary

The aim of this poster is to re-analyze the faculty development (FD) activities conducted over the past ten years by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), where the presenter is affiliated, through the lens of agency in educational development. In particular, the study examines how the presenter's institution (hereafter referred to as "H University") has expanded its role in educational development and fostered change among faculty members and the institution itself, focusing on three dimensions of agency: (1) organizational agency, (2) teacher agency, and (3) the cultivation of a training participation culture. This summary highlights key indicators only; detailed visualized data will be presented in the poster session.

The methodological approach

The analysis draws on quantitative data that CTL has systematically collected over the past decade, including participant demographics (age and gender), satisfaction levels, perceived likelihood of behavior change after training, repeat participation rates, annual numbers of sessions and participants, institutional participation, same-day cancellation rates, and changes in staff numbers. Rather than employing statistical causal analysis, this study adopts a practice-based analytical approach to portray the center's activities as a process of organizational and cultural change.

Key findings

Characteristics of teacher agency

The age distribution of training participants closely resembled that of university faculty nationwide, while the proportion of women participants exceeded the national average. This reflects the large number of nursing faculty members who participated. Satisfaction scores showed that face-to-face sessions (average 4.63) were rated higher than online sessions (4.32) in 2024 (five-point scale), indicating the continued perceived value of in-person learning experiences. Meanwhile, the perceived potential for changing future practice was lower than their satisfaction levels, revealing the challenges participants face in applying what they learned (see Fig. 1). The annual proportion of repeat participants remained modest at around 20–30%, suggesting the difficulty faculty face in engaging continuously due to the demands of their teaching and administrative duties.

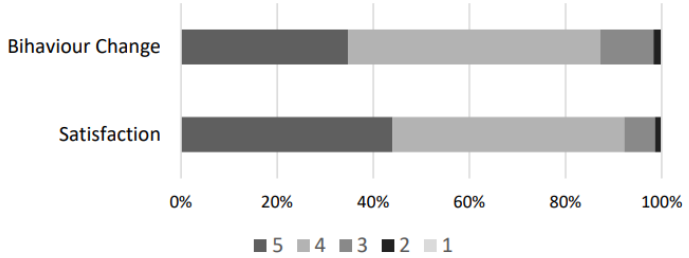


Fig. 1. Satisfaction and perceived potential for changing their future practice (10-year average)

Manifestation of organizational agency

The number of training sessions increased from 17 in CTL's founding year to more than 50 in recent years (see Fig. 2), while the number of participants expanded from roughly 700 to around 2,000, and participating institutions increased from 90 to approximately 250. Notably, the shift to online training during and after the COVID-19 pandemic enabled nationwide participation, allowing H University—despite being a regional institution—to function as a national hub for educational development. Also, the high proportion of internal participants (66% pre-pandemic, 51% post-pandemic) indicates that CTL has built trust and established legitimacy within the university. Staff numbers also increased from 2 to 10, demonstrating the strengthening of the organizational infrastructure that supports the expansion of its activities.

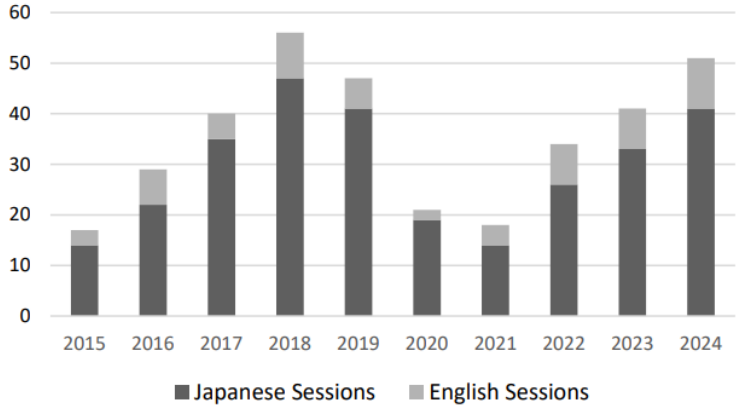


Fig. 2. Annual number of training sessions

Cultivation of a training participation culture

The proportion of registrants who were unable to attend on the day (cancellation rate) remained between 20% and 30% throughout the decade. Although cancellations are undesirable, CTL interprets this pattern as a natural consequence of busy academic workloads and as consistent with its philosophy of creating learning opportunities that faculty can join flexibly and without pressure. Such flexibility has contributed to the formation of a sustainable participation culture. CTL categorizes its training into six categories: course design, teaching skills, trends in higher education, student support, management, and communication. Among these, communication-related sessions were the most frequently offered over the ten-year period (see Fig. 3), reflecting the need for effective communication in faculty–staff collaboration and in preventing harassment in interactions among faculty, staff, and students.

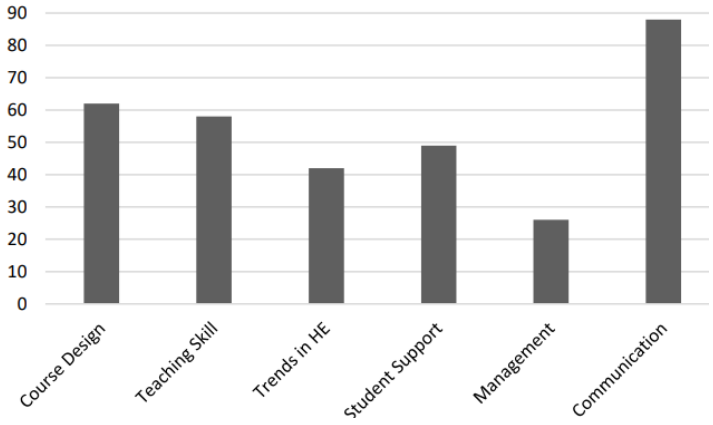


Fig. 3. Number of sessions by category (10-year total)

Theoretical and educational significance

This analysis offers a perspective that redefines the role of a center for teaching and learning not merely as a training provider but as an active agent driving institutional change. The three dimensions of agency identified in this study—teacher agency, organizational agency, and cultural agency—demonstrate that educational improvement does not rely solely on individual effort but instead emerges through the interaction of structural, institutional, and cultural supports. From the perspective of teacher agency, the gap between satisfaction and perceived behavioral change indicates that

single-session workshops alone are insufficient; ongoing support such as follow-up activities and communities of practice is necessary to enable meaningful changes in teaching practice. Organizational agency is evident in the increase in the number of training sessions offered, the expansion of participating institutions, and the growth of the CTL staff. These developments show how H University has come to treat educational development as a strategic priority and strengthened its ability to support and drive change. Cultural agency is reflected in the creation of an accessible, low-barrier environment that has fostered a sustainable participation culture and encouraged continuous learning among faculty and staff. Collectively, these findings provide internationally relevant insights into how universities can intentionally cultivate multi-layered forms of agency—teacher, organizational, and cultural—to achieve sustained, impactful educational development. Through this poster, we aim to visualize how these three layers of agency interact and to provide a space where participants can reflect on their own institutional contexts and engage in dialogue about the evolving roles, challenges, and opportunities of educational development units.

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Beyond Faculty Development: The Expanding Roles and Responsibilities of Faculty Development Units in Japanese Universities

Yoshikazu Takenaka

Abstract

This study examines current trends in the roles assumed by organizational units responsible for faculty development (FD) at Japanese universities. In Japan, universities are required to undergo accreditation at least once every seven years. Using data from "self-inspection and evaluation reports," FD-related organizations at 768 universities were identified. Among these, 274 universities have made their official regulations specifying the purpose and role of their FD units publicly available. This study analyzes the content of these documents to investigate what responsibilities, beyond FD, are assigned to these organizations. The results indicate that the most common additional role is staff development (SD), including training for administrative staff and senior leadership, identified at 33.6% of the institutions. This was followed by institutional research, higher education research, internal quality assurance, curriculum management, and general education. The high prevalence of SD is likely attributable to the mandatory nature of SD for all universities, similar to FD, as well as the strong synergy between FD and SD, given their shared core function of providing professional development. Furthermore, national universities tended to assign a greater number of roles to a single FD organization than public and private universities. This trend appears to stem from organizational structure: while private universities often establish committees specialized solely in FD (e.g., "FD Committee") to serve as their FD unit, national universities are more likely to adopt broad organizational frameworks (e.g., "Institute for Education and Student Support") that encompass multiple functions.

Keywords: Faculty Development, Staff Development, Japanese Universities, Organizational Structure

Extended Summary

In recent years, ensuring the quality of education has become a paramount priority for Japanese universities. Since the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology mandated the implementation of faculty development (FD) in 2008, FD activities have become a universal standard across Japanese higher education institutions. Universities have actively introduced workshops, peer reviews, and student evaluations to enhance teaching quality. However, while the content of FD activities has been widely discussed and shared, research on the organizational structures supporting these activities remains limited. Although Sato (2023) clarified the characteristics of FD in Japan through its historical context and international comparisons, this study did not capture nationwide trends based on the actual conditions of FD organizations at individual universities. Similarly, while Kawashima (2020) examined the realities of university teaching and learning centers, this research only covered the status of FD in universities where such centers are established. Understanding the types of departments or units that manage FD initiatives and how FD activities are positioned within a university's organizational structure is essential for understanding the reality of educational governance. Therefore, this study aims to clarify the structural and functional realities of FD organizations in Japan.

Purpose:

This study's primary purpose is to clarify the organizational structures and functional roles of the units responsible for FD in Japanese universities. Specifically, this study addresses the following two research questions:

- What forms do FD organizations take, and how can they be classified?

- What specific roles do these organizations fulfill beyond FD itself?

By answering these questions, this study elucidates the evolving nature of educational governance in Japan.

Methods:

First, this study identified the organizations responsible for FD at Japanese universities using "Self-Inspection and Evaluation Reports." In Japan, all universities are required to undergo accreditation at least once every seven years and must submit these reports as part of the process. Although multiple accreditation agencies exist, FD implementation is a universal evaluation criterion; thus, reports generally contain detailed information on FD organizations and their structures. Data related to FD organizations were extracted from these publicly available reports. Subsequently, to examine the roles of these organizations, the websites of the identified universities were reviewed to determine whether official regulations specifying their missions and duties were available. Universities whose regulations were accessible online were selected for analysis. The regulations were then reviewed to identify the organizations' stated responsibilities. In content analysis, roles beyond FD were extracted and classified. For example, if a regulation explicitly stated "matters related to institutional research (IR)," the organization was regarded as being responsible for IR. Furthermore, even in the absence of the explicit term "IR," responsibilities such as "educational evaluation," "visualization of learning outcomes," and "analysis of internal data" were considered functionally equivalent and were categorized as IR.

Results:

This study examined the "Self-Inspection and Evaluation Reports" of 768 universities in Japan and identified the organizations responsible for FD at these institutions. Subsequently, a website search for the regulations of these FD organizations revealed that 274 universities publicly disclose such regulations.

Organizational Forms of FD

Based on an examination of the names of the organizations responsible for FD at 768 universities, their organizational forms were classified into three main types: (1) committee, (2) center, and (3) institute (functioning as an umbrella organization).

Table 1. Distribution of FD Organization Types by Institution Type

	Public (n = 95)	National (n = 81)	Private (n = 592)	Total (n = 768)
(1) Committee	73.7%	21.0%	80.4%	73.3%
(2) Center	22.1%	38.3%	13.5%	17.2%
(3) Institute	0.0%	23.5%	1.2%	3.4%
(4) Other	4.2%	17.3%	4.9%	6.1%

Table 1 presents the distribution of these FD organization types by institution type. Committees were the most common, accounting for approximately 70%, followed by centers and then institutes. However, national universities showed a different trend, with centers and institutes being more prevalent than committees. This suggests that national universities tend to position FDs within a more permanent organizational structure.

Roles of FD Organizations

Analysis of these regulations revealed that FD organizations fulfill a wide range of roles beyond the FD itself. As presented in Table 2, these organizations are tasked with various functions identified at 10 or more universities. Notably, many FD organizations perform multiple roles. The average number of roles per organization was 4.04 at national universities, exceeding the averages at public (3.03) and private (2.60) universities. This trend likely stems from the fact that national universities often position FD within comprehensive structures, such as "Institutes for Education and Student Support," which encompass a wide range of educational functions. In contrast, public and private universities typically establish committees responsible for both FD and staff development (SD), such as "FD/SD Committees," which were identified in approximately 150 universities. In Japan, SD is required for all universities, similarly to FD. Considering that both involve professional development and training, it is likely that their functional overlap promotes the integration of these roles within a single organization.

Table 2. Roles of FD Organizations (Other Than FD)

	Public (n=58)	National (n=74)	Private (n=142)	Total (n=274)
(1) Staff Development	51.7%	20.3%	33.1%	33.6%
(2) Institutional Research	17.2%	40.5%	8.5%	19.0%
(3) Higher Education Research	19.0%	23.0%	16.2%	18.6%
(4) Internal Quality Assurance	13.8%	35.1%	8.5%	16.8%
(5) Curriculum Management	20.7%	23.0%	12.0%	16.8%
(6) General Education	15.5%	29.7%	9.9%	16.4%
(7) Learning Support	5.2%	12.2%	9.9%	9.5%
(8) Self-Assessment	6.9%	12.2%	5.6%	7.7%
(9) Student Support	6.9%	20.3%	1.4%	7.7%
(10) ICT and Digital Transformation	0.0%	18.9%	2.8%	6.6%
(11) Admissions	5.2%	18.9%	0.0%	6.2%
(12) Discipline-Specific Education	6.9%	12.2%	1.4%	5.5%
(13) Faculty Evaluation	5.2%	6.8%	2.1%	4.0%
(14) Other	34.5%	48.6%	51.4%	47.1%

Conclusions

This study analyzed FD organizations at 768 universities and classified them into committees, centers, and institutes. The results indicate that national universities favor permanent structures with broader responsibilities, whereas public and private universities often integrate FD and SD within committees. Overall, FD organizations have evolved beyond mere training into central entities for maintaining and improving educational quality. However, as this study relied on public documents, discrepancies in actual practice may exist. Future research should assess the effectiveness of FD organizations and position them in a global context.

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An Extended Model of Educational Development, Teaching, and Learning that Includes Sessionals

Brandon Sabourin

Abstract

This paper advances the importance of instructors' approaches to teaching and conceptions of teaching as valuable data to consider in the development of educational development programming for sessional instructors. Drawing on data from a larger phenomenographic study that explored sessionals' educational development needs, on data collected through two online surveys and a series of interviews, the author will present key theoretical amendments to Light et al.'s (2009) model which highlight opportunities for continued integration of sessionals into institutional models of teaching and learning. Structural changes to the model include the bi-directional influence of instructors' approaches to teaching and conceptions of teaching position educational development as an ever-important catalyst for change in higher education. Considerations for future practical implications will be discussed.

Keywords: sessional instructors, approaches to teaching, conceptions of teaching, theoretical models of higher education

Extended Summary

Introduction / Aims

There exist direct relationships between conceptions and approaches to teaching and learning (Biggs, et al., 2001; Kember 1997, Light et al., 2009 Purdie et al., 1996). Kember's (1997) model was one of the first to outline the relationships between institutional influence, instructors' conceptions and approaches to teaching, and student approaches to learning, Building off Kember (1997), Light et al. (2009) added the including faculty development as an intervention in order to impact conceptions of teaching, approaches to teaching, and curriculum design. Approaches to teaching act as categorical descriptions of what is valued in the teaching–learning relationship. Prosser and Trigwell (1996) outlined how teacher-focused approaches tend to rely of the transmission of knowledge, facts, or concepts of a given discipline, while student-focused approaches lend themselves to developing and potentially changing students' conceptions of a discipline. This distinction manifests itself in the actions a teacher takes, which is usually how approaches are identified.

Study Design

In a recent study, I explored these theoretical components within the context of sessional teaching. Seventeen sessional instructors from a Canadian university participated in phenomenographic interviews, which were designed to lead participants through reflection on teaching practices and respond to broader questions about their conceptions of teaching and learning.

Theoretical Findings

This paper is theoretical in nature; I am proposing theoretical revisions to Light et al.'s (2009) Model of Faculty Development, Teaching, and Learning (fig. 2). Revisions from my work (fig. 3) include:

- Broadening the element of faculty development to educational development, recognizing the impact of curriculum activities and educational research, including the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).
- Defining an indirect relationship between educational development to institutional influence to acknowledge the role that educational development plays in shaping institutional teaching culture.
- Defining an indirect relationship from conceptions of teaching to educational development to encourage educational developers to take instructors' conceptions into account when planning programming.

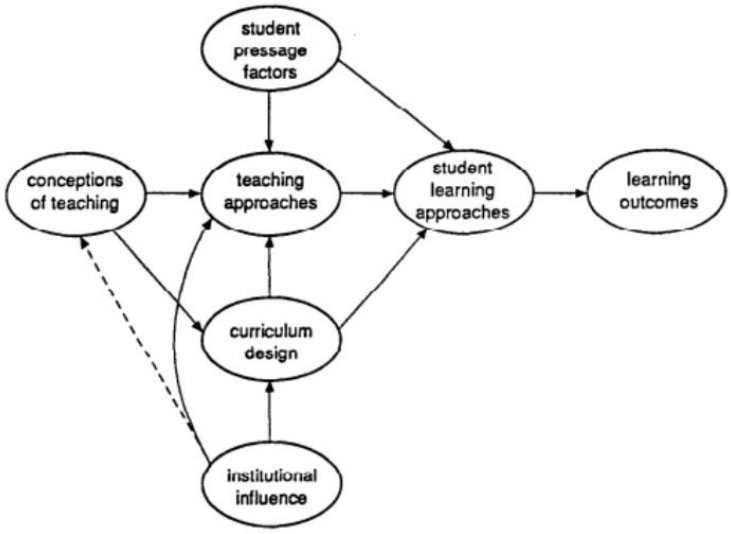


Fig. 1. Kember's (1997) Descriptive Model of Learning and Teaching.

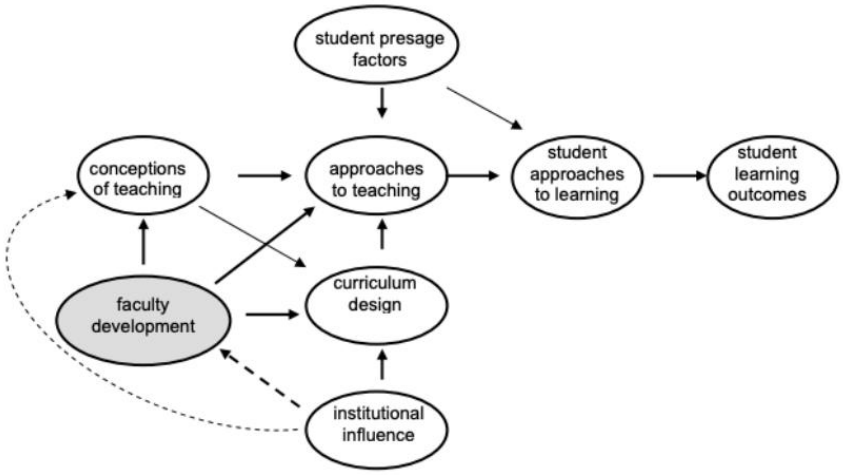


Fig. 2. Light et al.'s (2009) Extended Model of Faculty Development, Teaching, and Learning.

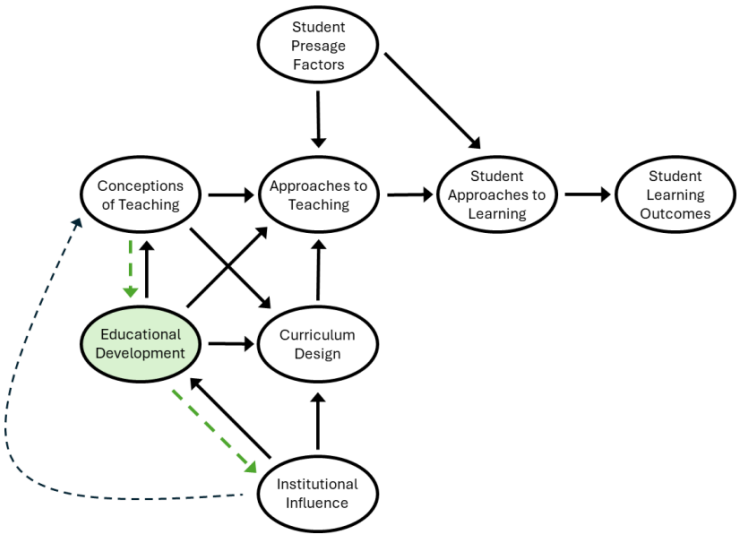


Fig. 3. Extended Model of Educational Development, Teaching, and Learning (Author, 2025)

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Transformative Learning in Maltese Further and Higher Education: A grounded Theory Study

David Kenely

Abstract

Transformative learning has become increasingly important in higher and further education, especially in small-island contexts where institutions are expected to prepare students for changing labour markets, lifelong learning and active citizenship. In Malta, these expectations sit alongside growing attention to sustainability and learner wellbeing, raising questions about how educational institutions can move beyond transmission-oriented approaches to teaching and support deeper shifts in students' assumptions, identities and ways of knowing. This study explores how higher and further education institutions in Malta foster, or limit, opportunities for transformative learning. It is the initial research of an ongoing doctoral study and focuses on the perspectives of senior institutional leaders. Located within an interpretivist paradigm, the study adopts a constructivist grounded theory design. Four senior officials from different Maltese higher and further education institutions participated in in-depth semi-structured interviews. The analysis explored how they understood transformative learning and which institutional conditions enabled or constrained it. Emerging findings suggest that relational support, space for critical and student-led learning, and institutional cultures that value deep learning can create conditions for transformative change in students' frames of reference. At the same time, strong pressures for standardisation, performance metrics and risk-averse practices may restrict such possibilities and reinforce more superficial forms of learning. The study offers a contextually grounded lens for academic developers and institutional leaders seeking to align organisational conditions, staff development and curriculum practices with the goal of fostering more transformative learning environments in Maltese higher and further education.

Keywords: Transformative Learning, Higher education, Academic Development, Malta

Extended Summary

Aim of the paper/poster. This research examines how higher education institutions in Malta, which operate under a persistent mandate influence and structure students' opportunities for transformative learning and, in turn, their development as agentic learners. In a small-island context where tertiary education is expected to support employability, lifelong learning and active citizenship, institutions are under pressure to do more than transmit disciplinary knowledge. Transformative Learning provides a robust theoretical and practical framework, providing a rigorous pedagogical foundation and a structured approach for defining and monitoring successful transformative change (Taylor 2000). The study forms part of an ongoing doctoral project that seeks to develop a grounded theory of transformative learning in Maltese higher and further education. It examines how institutional leaders understand and operationalise transformative learning, and how their decisions shape academic development, curriculum design and teaching practices. Building on work that distinguishes teaching as transmission, transaction and transformation (Johnson, 2009), it analyses how institutional conditions support or undermine more transformative approaches and, by engaging with debates on student agency, institutional change and educational development, considers how academic development can foster more critical and responsive forms of higher education. The theoretical framework and/or methodological approach. The study is located within an interpretivist paradigm, adopting a constructive ontology, viewing realities as socially constructed through interaction. As recommended by Charmaz (2025), the researcher acknowledges subjectivity and the involvement in the construction and interpretation of the data, having worked in the sector for 25 years. Transformative learning theory provides the core analytical lens, highlighting how critical reflection, dialogue and disorienting experiences can prompt shifts in learners' frames of reference (Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2000). Methodologically, the project used a constructivist grounded theory design (Charmaz, 2025) to generate a contextually grounded, mid-range theory of how institutions enable or constrain transformative learning.

A mono-method qualitative design was employed. Four senior officials occupying strategic leadership roles in different Maltese higher and further education institutions were recruited through initial convenience and subsequent purposive sampling, ensuring variation across public and private providers. Data were generated through in-depth interviews, which were digitally recorded and then transcribed verbatim. In grounded theory, data are collected and analysed iteratively; emerging insights then inform further, more focused data collection in order to refine and address developing analytical questions (Charmaz, 2025). A temporal pause was inserted between interviews. Transcripts were analysed through initial coding, using MAXQDA software, which supported systematic organisation of data, comparison across interveiws, as well as the identification of emerging patterns. The use of initial coding (Charmaz 2025) enabled the researcher to remain open to exploring theoretical possibilities, with codes emerging from the data, rather than fitting into pre-existing categories. Following the initial analysis of the first interview, the same process was applied to subsequent interviews. As interviews were conducted, recorded, transcribed and analysed, constant comparative analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, cited by Charmaz 2025) was employed throughout the study, allowing the researcher to identify similarities and differences within the developing dataset. In line with Charmaz's (2025) view that researchers' perspectives, histories and methodological choices shape what they are able to notice, memo-writing was used to support reflexive engagement with the data. The systematic process of writing memos and analytic comments

helped the researcher to remain closely attuned to the data while encouraging critical critical questioning and deeper interpretation based on reflexivity. Memos captured the researcher's evolving understanding and assisted in identifying gaps, contradictions, and patterns within the data, ultimately supporting initial theory construction.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes. Analysis identified interrelated institutional conditions that either fostered or limited transformative learning and student agency. Three themes described enabling conditions: (1) relational belief and holistic support, where staff who believed in students, offered challenge and guidance, and recognised learners' wider lives helped students see themselves as capable and responsible; (2) pedagogical spaces for critical, student-led learning, including teaching that cultivates curiosity and research-mindedness, develops learning and thinking skills, and allows students to pursue their own questions; and (3) institutional cultures that value deep learning and inclusion, marked by openness to change, support for innovative pedagogy, and flexibility in curriculum design. Three further themes captured constraining conditions: deficit expectations and limited teaching capacity, which normalised superficial engagement; structural logics of standardisation and measurement, where heavy emphasis on credits, assessment loads and performance indicators narrowed attention to what is easily measurable; and wider socio-cultural and policy constraints, including tensions between European standards and local realities, hierarchies between academic and vocational routes, and concerns about plagiarism and AI that encouraged risk-averse practices. Overall, the findings suggest that transformative learning is not merely a classroom process but an institutional accomplishment shaped by how leadership, structures and cultures intersect with academic development work. Theoretical and educational significance including implications for practice, policy, or future research.

The study contributes to transformative learning scholarship by foregrounding the institutional and systemic conditions that shape whether such learning can occur, rather than treating it solely as an individual psychological process (Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2000), and by conceptualising transformative learning in Maltese higher and further education as the product of interactions between relational practices, pedagogical design, institutional cultures and macro-level policy discourses. For academic development, the findings offer a framework for interrogating how existing strategies, quality assurance mechanisms and staff development initiatives may unintentionally inhibit transformative learning and student agency, while identifying points of intervention in curriculum, assessment and institutional narratives. In a small-island system such as Malta, the study underscores the need for context-sensitive approaches to academic development and policy, with subsequent stages of the doctoral research extending the model through the perspectives of students and academic staff.

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Posters 2

Building Early-Career Instructor Agency through GTA and New Faculty Learning Communities

Ashli Tomisich, Janel Seeley

Abstract

Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and new faculty are often responsible for substantial undergraduate teaching while still forming their pedagogical identities and navigating institutional expectations, often with little or no formal teaching training. This poster examines a coordinated learning community model at a research-intensive university in which GTAs and new faculty participate in cohort-based Learning Communities. Both programs are facilitated by the university's Center for Teaching and Learning, draw on practical, research-informed resources such as *The Successful TA: A Practical Approach to Effective Teaching*, and focus on core topics including course design, active learning, assessment, feedback, digital landscapes, and managing the affective dimensions of teaching. Using the ICED26 lens of "agency and academic development," the poster explores how these structured, small-cohort communities support early-career instructors' pedagogical confidence, sense of belonging, and capacity to influence curriculum and teaching culture over time. Drawing on program design documents, participation data, and formative stakeholder feedback, the poster identifies design principles, tensions, and future directions for integrating early-career learning communities into institutional strategy, graduate education, and faculty development portfolios.

Keywords: Graduate teaching assistants; new faculty; learning communities; pedagogical agency

Extended summary

Aim and background Early-career instructors occupy a pivotal, yet vulnerable, position in higher education. Graduate teaching assistants often teach high-enrollment courses with limited formal preparation, while new faculty must rapidly balance research expectations, service, and high-quality teaching. Scholarship on graduate and early-career teaching highlights persistent challenges—high anxiety, isolation, and a survival-oriented focus—as well as the potential of structured, collaborative development to foster more learner-centered, reflective practice. Concurrently, the academic development literature underscores faculty learning communities as powerful vehicles for building pedagogical agency, collegial networks, and evidence-informed teaching, aligning closely with ICED26's emphasis on agency, knowledge, and strategy. In response, the university's CTL has developed a coordinated learning community ecosystem targeting early-career instructors at two key entry points: a required GTA Learning Community for funded graduate assistants and a New Faculty Learning Community (NFLC) for up to 30 new instructors. Together, these programs aim to normalize pedagogical learning, embed academic development into formal role expectations, and cultivate a culture in which early-career instructors see themselves as capable, connected educators who can shape student learning and departmental teaching practices. The aim of this work is to examine how this dual learning community model supports GTAs' and new faculty members' pedagogical agency, sense of preparedness, and participation in institutional teaching culture, and to surface design principles and strategic questions relevant to academic developers internationally.

Program design and methodology: The GTA Learning Community is a required condition of assistantship funding. GTAs register for a small, in-person cohort during their first term of appointment; each cohort (approximately 12–15 participants) meets six times per semester for 90-minute sessions, facilitated by a faculty fellow. GTAs must attend at least five sessions to complete the requirement; those hired mid-term participate in a subsequent semester, with roughly ten cohorts running each term. Sessions focus on practical, recurring teaching challenges such as planning the first class, communicating expectations, facilitating discussions and labs, supporting diverse learners, assessing student work, and managing anxiety. The NFLC provides a yearlong learning community for up to 30 new faculty, 15 per cohort, online and in-person, supported by an administrative coordinator and three faculty-mentor fellows. The NFLC offers a sequenced curriculum that deepens topics such as course and syllabus design, alignment of learning outcomes and assessment, active learning, use of educational technologies, feedback and grading, and mid-course evaluation and reflection. NFLC participation is designed with 6 meetings over the fall term, followed by 3 meetings in the spring with additional elements (e.g., classroom observation, teaching consultations, and documentation of teaching effectiveness) This poster presents a design-based evaluation drawing on:

- Program documents (proposals, agendas, learning outcomes, staffing and cost models) that articulate the intended purposes, structures, and institutional positioning of both learning communities.
- Structural and participation data (numbers of GTAs and new faculty served, cohort sizes, attendance requirements) that speak to scalability and resource implications.
- Initial feedback and reflections gathered from GTAs, NFLC participants, and faculty fellows through surveys and informal debriefs, focusing on perceived value, changes in teaching attitudes and practices, and suggestions for improvement. Analysis is exploratory and thematic, aimed at generating practical design insights and framing questions for more systematic future research rather than making causal claims.

Findings and outcomes: Across both programs, three early patterns emerge. First, formalizing participation signals institutional valuing of teaching and reduces the perception that pedagogical development is optional or remedial. The GTA LC's linkage to assistantship eligibility and the NFLC's positioning, supported by Academic Affairs and aligned with strategic planning, both communicate that learning to teach well is a core professional responsibility for early-career instructors. This institutional framing resonates with literature suggesting that structural supports and expectations are critical for nurturing sustained engagement in teaching development. Second, small, sustained cohorts appear to foster a sense of community, shared vocabulary, and mutual support around teaching. GTAs and new faculty report appreciating the opportunity to hear how peers across disciplines address common classroom issues, to normalize anxieties, and to exchange concrete strategies. The use of accessible, research-informed resources such as The Successful TA provides a common language and practical tools—e.g., planning the first day, designing active learning tasks, giving efficient feedback—that participants can adapt to their contexts. These features align with work on learning communities and pedagogical metacognition that emphasizes collaborative reflection and shared frameworks as catalysts for agency. Third, participants' reflections suggest gradual shifts from inward-focused survival concerns to more outward-focused attention to student learning, course design, and alignment. GTAs, for example, describe moving from worrying primarily about "getting through" a lab or discussion to considering how to check for understanding and engage quieter students, while new faculty report rethinking assessments and participation policies to better support diverse learners. These shifts echo research that links effective TA and early-career development to greater confidence, a learner-centered orientation, and a willingness to experiment with evidence-informed practices. However, both programs face notable tensions. In-person participation enhances engagement but creates scheduling and access challenges for some GTAs and faculty, particularly those with heavy teaching loads or caregiving responsibilities. Scaling cohorts requires sustained investment in CTL coordination and faculty fellow roles, raising questions about recognition, workload, and long-term funding within the broader academic development portfolio.
Theoretically, this work contributes to the ICED26 conversation on "Agency and Academic Development" by framing GTAs and new faculty as linked, early-career populations whose teaching identities can be shaped through coherent, staged learning communities rather than isolated workshops. Conceptualizing the GTA LC and NFLC as overlapping communities of practice highlights how academic developers can design structures that foster epistemic agency (seeing oneself as a generator and sharer of pedagogical knowledge) and strategic agency (participating in shaping curricula, assessment practices, and teaching culture).

Educationally, the case offers a practical model for CTLs seeking to integrate early-career learning communities into institutional strategy. Key design elements include:

- Required, cohort-based participation tied to role expectations and, for GTAs, funding;
- Cross-disciplinary small groups that meet regularly over time;
- Use of concise, practice-oriented teaching resources to anchor discussion and experimentation;
- Integration of faculty fellows and CTL staff to provide mentoring, observation, and feedback;
- Alignment with broader initiatives, such as strategic plans and teaching certification pathways, to enhance sustainability and institutional impact.

For the ICED community, this work raises questions about how academic developers can design ecosystems that support early-career instructor agency across the graduate and faculty continuum, how to balance in-person community with flexible access, and how to evaluate the longer-term effects of such programs on student learning and institutional teaching cultures. Future research will involve more systematic study of changes in self-efficacy, teaching practices, and course outcomes, as well as longitudinal tracking of how participation in these learning communities influences career development and leadership in teaching.

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Preparing Teachers of General Subjects for Vocational Education: Relevance, Practice, and Reflection

Siw-Aina Holck

Abstract

Vocational education programs present unique challenges for teachers of general subjects, who must engage students with a practical orientation, varying levels of school motivation, and a strong need for relevance. This presentation explores how teacher education can prepare future teachers for this task through a pedagogical approach that combines vocational relevance, practice-based learning, and research-informed reflection. We argue that teacher education should integrate authentic, work-related assignments, interdisciplinary collaboration, and workplace observation to strengthen students' professional understanding. Furthermore, we demonstrate how digital tools and case analysis can be used to develop teaching strategies that promote mastery and motivation among vocational students. The goal is to contribute to teacher education that not only provides subject knowledge but also equips future teachers to create meaningful and inclusive learning experiences in general subjects within vocational programs.

Keywords: Vocational relevance, Teacher education, Research-informed pedagogy, Interdisciplinary collaboration

Extended Summary

Background and Rationale

Teachers of general subjects in vocational education face a distinct set of challenges: many VET students are practically oriented, demand visible relevance, and show more diverse prior attainment and motivation than typical upper-secondary students. Over the last decade, research in Norway has consistently shown that relevance and vocational alignment in common-core subjects (e.g., English, Norwegian, mathematics) are associated with stronger engagement, mastery, and completion rates in VET. Qualitative case studies and mixed-methods projects document that when teachers make explicit connections between subject content and workplace practices, students report greater meaning-making and persistence; conversely, weak or "artificial" connections may backfire if classroom fundamentals—relationships, classroom management, and clear goals—are not already in place.

Problem Space in Teacher Preparation

Empirical work on teachers' encounters with VET students indicates that the organization of schooling, schedules, assessment regimes, and program fragmentation can constrain meaningful "vocationalization" of general subjects. Teachers respond by developing pedagogical moves—e.g., differentiated tasks, mini-projects tied to trades, and negotiated goals—but they also report tensions between curriculum coverage and vocational relevance, between exam demands and authentic tasks, and between individual support and large, heterogeneous classes. This points to a preparation gap: teacher education must explicitly cultivate the ability to bridge disciplinary knowledge with the epistemic cultures of trades, while preparing novices to navigate structural constraints in ways that do not dilute disciplinary rigor.

Conclusion

Preparing teachers of general subjects for VET is not merely a matter of adding examples about trades. It requires a pedagogical redesign of teacher education that aligns disciplinary knowledge and realities of VET classrooms. By foregrounding vocational relevance, embedding authentic practice, leveraging research-informed reflection, and strengthening assessment literacy, teacher education can produce graduates capable of delivering inclusive, rigorous, and meaningful instruction that supports VET students' progression and completion.

Focus of the Ongoing Work

This presentation is part of an ongoing research and development project that aims to strengthen teacher education for general-subject teachers in vocational programs. The project will investigate two key dimensions:

- New teachers' experiences as they enter the role of teaching general subjects in VET, including their perceived preparedness, challenges, and strategies for vocational relevance.
- Vocational students' perspectives on what they need from their teachers in general subjects—what makes teaching meaningful, motivating, and supportive of their vocational identity.

Findings from these studies will inform the development of a research-based book designed as core reading in teacher education programs. The book will provide practical frameworks, case studies, and pedagogical principles for integrating vocational relevance, practice-based learning, and research-informed reflection into teacher preparation.

Contribution

By combining empirical research with pedagogical design, this work seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practice in teacher education. It will offer actionable strategies for preparing future teachers to create inclusive, relevant, and motivating learning experiences for vocational students, while maintaining disciplinary rigor. Ultimately,

the project aims to influence curriculum design in teacher education and contribute to international discussions on preparing teachers for diverse educational contexts.

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Role Of Agency in Teaching Identity Development in Graduate Student Teaching Assistant

Sreyasi Biswas, Ehsan Ur Rahman Mohammed

Abstract

This presentation emerges from a collaborative exploration between an academic developer and a graduate teaching assistant (GTA), examining the practical implications of agency in teaching identity development. Drawing on recent research examining how GTAs construct professional identities within institutional constraints, we analyze theoretical frameworks to decipher actionable strategies and gaps that exist in these frameworks in supporting agency in GTA's teaching identity development. Through a combination of literature scan and a dialogical approach, we aim to address critical questions facing graduate programs: How can GTAs exercise meaningful agency in prescribed teaching environments? What institutional structures enable or inhibit identity exploration? How can academic developers create spaces that give GTAs agency while meeting programmatic requirements? What do GTAs themselves experience in terms of agency in this uncertain era of teaching in higher education due to the influx of AI? The GTA perspective illuminates real tensions between autonomy and expectation, while the developer offers evidence-based approaches to fostering agentic practice within institutional parameters. We will present concrete recommendations emerging from our dialogue, including structured reflection prompts to gauge extent of GTA agency within a course, instructor-GTA partnership models that support collective agency-building, and departmental policy reforms that enhance GTA agency. We welcome dialogue with academic developers, program administrators, faculty mentors, and GTAs about contextual challenges and successful interventions. By bridging scholarly insight with practitioners' experiences, we demonstrate that meaningful GTA development requires considering graduate students as agentic professionals capable of shaping their own pedagogical journeys within supportive structures.

Keywords: graduate teaching assistant, teaching identity, agency, professional development

Extended Summary

Background

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) are a vital part of undergraduate education in the Canadian post-secondary education. GTAs are graduate students who are paid to teach and support learning in undergraduate courses. They fill a variety of roles, including lead instructor, lab supervisor, or grader. GTAs comprise a unique population because, while they are essential contributors to undergraduate education, they are ultimately graduate students and researchers within the institution. This creates tension between their significant teaching responsibilities and their institutional positioning as students first, educators second, which influences how they see themselves professionally. Professional identity encompasses how individuals define themselves professionally including workplace values, roles, and responsibilities, and how others perceive them (Hall & Burns, 2009). Teachers' professional identity, constructed through ongoing interpretation of experience rather than being fixed or imposed (Tickle, 2000), provides a framework for educators to understand 'how to be', 'how to act', and their place in the profession. (Brownell & Tanner, 2012) hypothesized college faculty may face barriers to developing a professional identity as a college teacher and that faculty without this identity may be less willing to engage in instructional innovations thus, negatively impacting undergraduate learning experience. Graduate school is a key time for professional identity development. Teaching as a GTA is oftentimes the first introduction to formal teaching for graduate students who go on to become college teachers. These GTA experiences, hence, can have a large influence on faculty members' and instructors' conceptions of teaching and learning and their professional identities. While teacher identity in K-12 and university contexts has been reviewed (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004), a systematic synthesis for GTAs remains lacking. Since GTAs uniquely navigate simultaneous student, teacher, and researcher roles, their identity development may differ from other educators. Our study addresses this gap by synthesizing current literature on GTA teaching identity, focusing on factors that enhance or constrain development. We further bridge research and practice through a dialogical approach bringing together GTA and academic developer perspectives to generate practical recommendations for supporting GTA teaching identity development.

Aim

We will present a summary of the findings from our literature scan on teaching identity development in GTAs with a special emphasis on the role of agency in identity development. Further, we will provide concrete recommendations on how to create space and opportunities for GTAs to exercise agency within the course and institutional parameters. These recommendations will emerge from our dialogic approach.

Methodology

We conducted a literature scan to identify factors that enhance or constrain teaching identity development in GTAs. We performed a systematic and comprehensive search to identify relevant empirical and review studies (2005-2025) published in peer-reviewed English-language journals using terms including teacher identity, professional identity, graduate teaching assistants, and higher education. Title, abstract, and full-text screening yielded 19 studies for

analysis. To translate these findings into actionable recommendations, we employ a dialogic approach that examines the literature through our lived experiences, one as a GTA navigating varied teaching contexts and the other as an academic developer supporting GTA development. This dual perspective allows us to bridge theory and practice, generating concrete strategies for fostering GTA agency within institutional constraints.

Outcomes

The literature scan identified ten factors influencing GTA teaching identity development. This proposal focuses specifically on agency as a critical factor shaping how GTAs construct their professional identities as teachers. Agency is the capacity to make meaningful choices and enact intentional decisions within structural constraints (Moore, 2016). The literature scan revealed three primary dimensions shaping GTA agency: role interpretation, course structure, and supervisory dynamics.

Role interpretation: Research reveals that GTA identity development depends on their specific roles and responsibilities, which vary widely across disciplines from assisting in course delivery to facilitating learning through grading and feedback. How GTAs perceive their agency is shaped by how they interpret and understand their roles. GTAs who see themselves primarily as "instructors" or "teachers" may expect greater agency over pedagogical decisions, while those who view themselves as "assistants" or "support staff" may accept limited agency in their position.

Course structure: GTAs in structured programs face multiple constraints that limit their instructional agency. They typically have no control over course content and materials, which are often pre-developed by faculty or departments. Supervisors may mandate specific teaching methodologies and expect strict adherence with no room for alternative approaches. Additionally, GTAs are often tasked with administering quizzes and exams they did not create, based on pedagogical principles they do not hold. Supervisor dynamics: Faculty members can act as 'gatekeepers' who either enable or restrict GTA agency, as positive relationships and explicit permission are often necessary for GTAs to undertake new tasks, conduct lectures, or explore pedagogical risks. GTAs' experience diminished agency when supervisors exclude them from pedagogical decision-making processes, highlighting how supervisory approaches can either foster or constrain GTA professional development and teaching identity formation. While these findings illuminate the complexities GTAs face, they also raise critical questions about how to translate research into practice. To bridge this gap between theory and application, we adopted a dialogical approach that brings together the perspectives of a GTA and an academic developer. For each identified dimension, we ask ourselves the following questions.

- What course components might be reimagined as opportunities for GTA agency?
- How can supervisors and GTAs co-create relationships that support agency?
- How can academic developers and supervisors support GTAs in interpreting their roles as emerging educators?

Significance

By integrating lived experience with educational development perspectives, this project moves beyond identifying GTA challenges to offering concrete, actionable recommendations. The proposed strategies acknowledge that while GTAs operate within fixed institutional structures, meaningful forms of agency can still be cultivated through intentional mentoring, reflective practice, and advocacy for policies that recognize GTAs as emerging educators. This collaboration advances academic development by centring GTA voices and positioning them as co-creators of knowledge rather than passive recipients in conversations often dominated by faculty. Our dialogical approach demonstrates that strengthening GTA agency and improving teaching culture requires an equitable framework that values GTA insight and experience.

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From Obligation to Choice: How Autonomy Becomes a Driving Force for Transformative Change

Iwona Maciejowska, Anna Sajdak-Burska

Abstract

In Poland, university teachers are not required to hold certified teaching competences, and job advertisements typically refer only vaguely to 'experience in teaching students'. In this context, the Ars Docendi Centre for Teaching Excellence at Jagiellonian University chose to build a development strategy grounded not in obligation or supervision, but in autonomy, trust, and intrinsic motivation. This approach contrasts with earlier historical models in Central and Eastern Europe, where mandatory pedagogical training produced negative long-term effects. This case-study presentation outlines how a large research university can develop a culture of teaching and learning quality without formal regulatory requirements. The strategy draws on humanistic theories of adult learning (Rogers, Knowles), emphasising autonomy, agency, and reflective practice. Methodologically, it is based on qualitative analysis of institutional initiatives, participation data, and collaboration with university leadership. Six interconnected areas shape this model: (1) voluntary, high-quality training programmes supported by a widely attended webinar series that builds developmental interest; (2) individual support through consultations and mentoring; (3) systemic shift toward developmental and peer-review-based teaching observations; (4) co-creation of institutional policies, including a multi-level teaching-competence certification framework; (5) strong cooperation with university leadership to strengthen educational leadership; and (6) support for innovation through competitive funding, the Teaching Slam competition, and international collaborations. The Jagiellonian University experience demonstrates that meaningful transformation of teaching culture can be effectively driven through trust-based, voluntary engagement rather than formal obligations. It highlights how universities can design systemic support that staff willingly use, fostering agency, innovation, and long-term organisational learning.

Extended Summary

Poland has historical experience with the first approach. Between the 1960s and 1980s, in line with practices in much of Central and Eastern Europe, academic pedagogy training was mandatory, normative, and instructional. These experiences were largely negative and their consequences remain visible today. For this reason, when establishing the Ars Docendi Centre for Teaching Excellence at Jagiellonian University, we deliberately chose the second approach — one rooted in a deeply humanistic perspective on adult learning.

The aim of this presentation is to outline the strategy for developing teaching competences among academic staff at Jagiellonian University in a context where no national regulatory framework requires pedagogical preparation for university educators. The presentation examines how a culture of teaching-and-learning quality can be built through a philosophy of trust, autonomy, and voluntariness, and how bottom-up initiatives can generate impulses for systemic transformation across a large academic institution. It also highlights practical solutions that support teachers' professional development and contribute to co-creating university-wide teaching policies.

The theoretical framework draws on the humanistic concept of adult learning developed by Carl Rogers, Malcolm Knowles, and other scholars, which emphasises autonomy, responsibility, intrinsic motivation, and an environment free from coercion or supervision. Methodologically, the work adopts a qualitative case-study approach examining Ars Docendi's institutional strategy through analysis of its initiatives, participation data, and the Centre's collaborations with university governance structures. Reflective practice and examination of organisational arrangements play a central role.

Six key areas of activity constitute the core of this strategy.

(1) Structured strategic actions supporting academic staff. A crucial initial step in encouraging academic teachers to engage in development is demonstrating the richness and diversity of contemporary academic pedagogy. To do this, four years ago we launched the webinar series Didactic Digressions, in which invited experts present topics related to methodological micro-skills, educational technologies, group processes, teacher identity, student needs, or multicultural environments. Participation is entirely voluntary, yet the initiative has attracted a knowledge-sharing community of around 2,000 participants. These webinars stimulate developmental needs and foster curiosity.

The second layer consists of voluntary training programmes using active, constructivist methods and Kolb's experiential learning cycle. For newcomers or staff wishing to refresh their foundational knowledge, onboarding courses such as Dydaktyka (od)nowa or AI in Academic Teaching were developed. Demand substantially exceeds available places (e.g., 200% of capacity for Dydaktyka (od)nowa; 400% for AI courses), demonstrating that voluntary models can be highly effective when designed strategically and delivered with high quality.

(2) Individual support as a driver of cultural change. A humanistic approach requires attention to individual needs. Therefore, Ars Docendi offers two forms of personalised support: pedagogical consultations (HelpDesk) and mentoring. Trainers act as facilitators of individual learning processes, helping teachers address teaching challenges, strengthen reflective practice, and build a sense of agency. Additionally, to broaden perspectives and learning experiences, we

designed teaching internships and study visits. Supported by external TED funding, these opportunities reach approximately 300 staff members.

(3) Building organisational culture at the institutional level. To shift from a supervisory to a developmental culture, we work on replacing evaluation-focused teaching observations with developmental observations and peer-review models (Gosling 2002). We created a comprehensive toolkit including regulations, guides, observation templates, and training workshops to support this transition. However, longstanding academic cultures based on control pose challenges, and changing mindsets requires sustained effort. This inspired the creation of Ars Docendi Ambassadors—educational experts positioned within faculties to bridge central policies with local needs and to support cultural transformation.

(4) Co-creating university-wide policies. Systemic change requires institutional frameworks and shared policies. Within the nationwide Excellence in Teaching project, a competence framework for academic teachers was developed. A multi-level teaching-competence certification system was also created, including basic, specialist, and advanced certificates. These frameworks support the development of HR policies within the HRS4R initiative and highlight the role of educational developers as strategic partners and knowledge brokers.

(5) Collaboration with leadership and strengthening educational leadership. Strategic cooperation with university governance is essential for sustainable change. We work closely with the Vice-Rector for Student Affairs, Vice-Deans, and the Chancellor. Joint activities include diagnostics, presentations to Senate committees, consultations during off-site retreats, and collaboration on faculty-level teaching teams. This cooperation fosters shared responsibility throughout organisational structures.

(6) Supporting innovation and organisational learning. To promote and recognise innovative practices, the Rector established the Teaching Development Fund, supporting pedagogical innovation through competitive grants with an annual budget of roughly €100,000. The Teaching Slam competition highlights micro-innovations through 8 mins long presentations by academic staff. We also maintain extensive national and international collaboration in academic teaching research and staff development, organise the scientific Ars Docendi Conference, and publish the peer-reviewed monograph series Academic Didactics.

The Jagiellonian University case demonstrates that teaching innovation can be effectively driven by trust rather than formal requirements. This confirms assumptions of humanistic learning theories and teacher-agency research: development is most effective when rooted in autonomy and intrinsic motivation. The model shows how systemic support can be designed so that staff willingly and genuinely engage with it. Continued development of certification frameworks, supportive observation systems, and communities of practice remains essential, as does strengthening educational leadership at all organisational levels.

Embedding Agency within Professional Development in Teaching: A Case Study

Stefan Walter, Pia Scherrer, Karin Brown, Samira El Boudamoussi, Florian Rittiner

Abstract

Universities must prepare students for complex futures, requiring lecturers to foster competencies such as self-direction, adaptability, and reflective practice among students. We argue that professional teaching development needs to embody these qualities to cultivate agency among lecturers. At ETH Zurich, a Competence Framework for students was introduced in 2023. Inspired by this framework, we are redesigning professional teaching development to include modular formats and personalized pathways that respond to the diverse needs of teaching staff. In this paper we present a framework of how reflective practice, peer learning and mentoring function as centralised strategies that support both individual agency - planning, forethinking, self-regulation, and self-reflection – as well as collective agency - sharing best practice, community building, and peer exchange - among lecturers. In so doing, we discuss how to contribute to a culture where teaching is valued as a professional practice and a shared responsibility.

Keywords: Individual agency; Collective agency; Personalized pathways; Modularization

Extended summary

As university teachers prepare students to face tomorrow's complex challenges, the question arises: what kinds of learning experiences must professional teaching development offer to equip lecturers with effective teaching strategies and help shape curricula towards this goal? Drawing on Olesson & Hora's (2014) research into teachers' experiences of teaching, we suggest that lecturers must engage with comparable aspects in their own teaching education to develop the agency that will help them foster these qualities among their students.

Our contribution illustrates how professional teaching development can respond to this challenge. At ETH Zurich, an institutional Competence Framework has guided the professional and personal development of students since 2023 through curricular development. Among other competencies, it emphasizes self-direction and self-management. We are redesigning professional teaching development at ETH Zurich to align with these competencies. The new approach adopts a modular format and personalized development pathways, designed to address diverse teaching needs while supporting lecturers in cultivating students' future-oriented skills (Ehlers, 2022). Central to this redesign is the concept of agency, both individual and collective. Lecturers must be able to adapt to diverse student needs, shifting disciplinary boundaries, and evolving societal expectations. Drawing on Bandura (2018), we seek to promote individual agency as teachers' capacities to anticipate and self-guide, self-regulate, and self-reflect. P

rofessional teaching development which cultivates agency helps lecturers enhance their own teaching and empowers them to shape curricula in ways that prepare students for complex futures. At the same time, collective agency is fostered to promote a culture in which teaching is valued as a professional practice and embraced as a shared responsibility across the institution. Professional teaching development thus moves beyond a matter of individual growth towards building a community of practice. Key strategies in the modularized programme include opportunities for reflective practice, peer exchange, and mentoring. These approaches encourage lecturers to critically examine their teaching, learn from one another, and engage in sustained dialogue about teaching and learning. In doing so, they contribute to a culture that transcends individual classrooms and strengthens the institution as a whole. In summary, our work at ETH Zurich demonstrates how professional teaching development can evolve to meet the demands of contemporary higher education. By embedding agency, reflective practice, and community-building into modular and personalized pathways, we aim to create a system in which teaching is recognized as a professional practice and embraced as a shared responsibility. This approach not only supports lecturers in their own growth but also enables them to prepare students for the challenges of tomorrow.

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Building Agency and Sustainable Writing Habits with Writing Accountability Groups

Nicole Frank, Debby Pfeifer

Abstract

Creating sustainable networks in which faculty from across the disciplines build agency and share knowledge can be challenging when faculty participation in academic development is stagnant. Writing Accountability Groups (WAGs) provide space to create such networks while addressing an inherent faculty need: protected time for writing. WAGs reduce feelings of doubt and shame, increase overall time dedicated to writing, and boost scholarly productivity. These benefits are especially helpful for fostering epistemic agency among women and BIPOC faculty, who often juggle disproportionately heavy service and teaching loads with family caretaking expectations and who are progressively less represented in higher faculty ranks; e.g., women are more heavily represented in adjunct positions than in associate professor positions. In this poster session, the presenters will summarize research about WAGs and share best practices for establishing these powerful, sustainable networks at your institution, based on both existing research and their experience establishing WAGs at their institution.

Extended Summary

The aim for this work was twofold: to respond to faculty calls for more scholarship support, and to create sustainable, interdisciplinary networks of support among faculty.

Background: The University is a regional comprehensive institution. In alignment with contextual norms at regional schools, faculty are considered teacher-scholars, with teaching emphasized as a vital institutional value, and tenure-track faculty are required to teach at least four courses each semester. Perhaps as a consequence of this emphasis on teaching, faculty have expressed in morale surveys a lack of support for their scholarship, compared to institutional support for their teaching.

Academic developers at this institution reviewed these morale surveys and read research about scholarship-focused programming, principally, faculty writing groups. They found that faculty who participated in writing groups published more frequently (Badenhorst, 2013; Chai et al., 2019; McGrail et al., 2006; Tysick & Babb, 2006), and experienced increased morale and community (Brandon et al., 2015), and less isolation (Skarupski, 2018).

After gathering faculty interest, they established two small writing groups in the summer of 2022 and have held five writing groups most semesters since.

Methodology:

Participants in WAGs completed surveys asking about their satisfaction, learning, behavior, and results.

Findings or outcomes:

In alignment with the Hines Model (2017), participation data included frequencies, recorded as attendance instances. WAGs remain a reliable source of engagement in sustainable networks; each participant attended an average of 12.16 sessions in 2022-23, 16.08 sessions in 2023-2024, and 19.63 sessions in 2024-2025. Numbers of participants from 2025-2026 will be included in this poster, as well.

In Spring 2025, WAGs were formally assessed based on Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2016) Four Levels of Training Evaluation. Qualitative feedback highlighted the development of sustainable networks and the agency created when faculty are provided an opportunity to set their own goals, strive toward those goals, and share their progress with colleagues from across the university.

Theoretical and educational significance, including relevance to academic development:

When creating and maintaining the WAGs, the academic developers at this institution utilized Knowles's (1968) Adult Learning Theory, particularly its emphasis on self-directed learning, which asserts that adults should determine their own goals and learning experiences. The developers also used an adapted version of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity's Mentoring Map (NCFDD, 2011) to guide faculty toward designing their own network of support, including support for scholarly work. The developers incorporated faculty goal setting into WAGs by following Skarupski's (2018) model and making goal setting is an inherent part of every WAG meeting. Adult Learning Theory, applied in this way, fostered faculty agency by providing an opportunity for faculty to take responsibility for their own scholarship goals in a supportive environment.

WAGs were assessed using the Hines (2017) and Kreber & Brook (2001) models to determine faculty participation patterns, reaction, learning, behavior, and results. Hines (2017) and Kreber and Brook (2001) are all working educational developers, and their assessment models are designed specifically for academic development. Learning how faculty responded to WAGs at one institution, in terms of these assessment models, can be especially helpful to academic developers who are considering how they can support their faculty members' scholarly work.

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Redesigning the Academic Portfolio Chart: Enhancing Reflection for Faculty and Future Faculty

Kayoko Kurita

Abstract

Academic Portfolios (AP,Seldin & Miller, 2009) are powerful tools for faculty reflection, yet their extensive format can be a barrier. To address this, the "Structured Academic Portfolio (SAP) Chart" (Yoshida & Kurita, 2016) was previously developed and achieved comprehensive reflection in a simplified format. However, practice revealed two issues: (1) Conceptual adaptation, where, particularly in the Japanese context, explicitly distinguishing "University Management" and "Social Contribution" rather than grouping them as "Service" makes it easier for users to engage with the tool; and (2) Structural fragmentation, where the fixed, box-style layout visually separated teaching, research, and service, failing to accommodate the diverse workload balances of individual faculty members.This paper reports on the development of the improved "AP Chart", designed for versatility across career stages—from Pre-Faculty Development (Pre-FD) to senior Faculty Development. The redesigned chart features a circular structure with the faculty member's "Philosophy (Core)" placed at the center, visually connecting all activities. The "Service" domain is explicitly split into "University Management" and "Social Contribution." This paper discusses how this tool offers greater flexibility than the previous version in envisioning career paths, and facilitates easier reflection.

Keywords: Academic Portfolio, Reflection, Career Path

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper

The aim of this paper is to propose the "AP Chart," a redesigned reflective tool that ensures continuity in academic development from graduate students (Pre-FD) to active faculty members. While the Academic Portfolio (AP, Seldin & Miller, 2009) is established as a method for documenting and reflecting on scholarship (Boyer, 1990), the full creation process is time-consuming. We report on the redesign of its simplified version, the SAP Chart (Yoshida & Kurita, 2016), into the AP Chart. We argue that by resolving visual fragmentation and conceptual adaptation issues, the new tool serves as a versatile platform for fostering "Academic Identity" across different career stages. Specifically, we highlight its function as a flexible framework not only for reflection on the past but also for envisioning future career paths.

Issues with the Previous Tool

The "Structured Academic Portfolio (SAP) Chart" (Yoshida & Kurita, 2016), a worksheet designed to guide step-by-step reflection on academic portfolios, achieved comprehensive reflection in a simplified format. However, practice revealed two issues that hindered its effectiveness:

- Visual Fragmentation and Rigidity: The SAP Chart utilized a fixed linear layout with pre-sized rectangular frames for Teaching, Research, and Service. This rigid structure failed to accommodate the diverse workload balances of individual faculty members, as it forced equal space for each domain regardless of actual effort distribution. Furthermore, users reported that the separated boxes created a "siloed" image, making it difficult to see the organic connections between different domains.
- Conceptual Adaptation of "Service": Following standard classifications, the SAP Chart grouped all non-teaching and non-research activities under "Service." For graduate students with limited experience, distinguishing between "University Management" (internal governance) and "Social Contribution" (external outreach) was difficult. This often led to confusion in writing, preventing them from envisioning clear professional roles.

Design of the New "AP Chart"

To address these issues, we employed a design-based research approach to develop the new AP Chart (Figure 1). The redesign focused on two key transformations:

• From Linear Boxes to a Concentric "Core" Structure: The most significant change is the visual shift from a fragmented layout to a circular, integrated design.

o The Core (Philosophy): The new chart places the user's "Philosophy" and "Core Identity" at the absolute center. This visual positioning sends a strong message: all academic activities must stem from and return to one's core values. o Circular Integration: Surrounding the core are the domains of activity. Unlike the rigid boxes of the SAP Chart, this circular layout implies a holistic unity. It allows users to flexibly adjust the proportions of each sector, intuitively visualizing how their energy is distributed around their core identity. This flexibility enables them to represent the shifting balance of activities throughout their career phases, capturing the fluidity of academic life unlike the static boxes of the previous version. • Refining the Domains for Versatility: The ambiguous "Service" category was explicitly divided into "University Management" and "Social Contribution."

o For Pre-FD (Graduate Students): Even if they currently lack experience in management, having these specific distinct sections functions as a "career map." It visualizes the "growth areas" they need to fill as future University Citizens,

thereby aiding in concrete career envisioning. o For Faculty Members: It allows for a more accurate categorization of their diverse workload, making the chart immediately applicable to their actual practice. Furthermore, by visually grasping the balance of the four domains, faculty members can recognize their current activity distribution and strategically define the direction of their future professional growth.

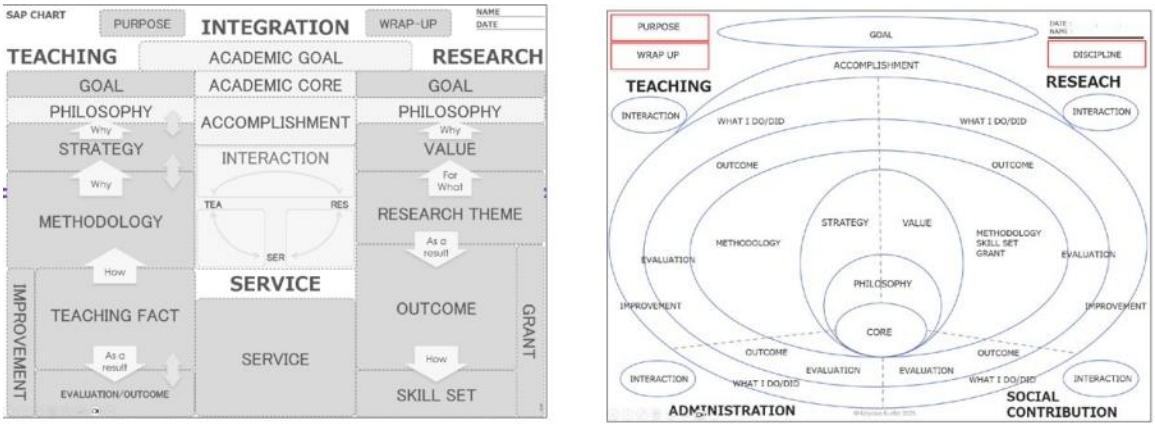


Figure 1 SAP Chart (Left side) and New AP Chart (Right side)

Outcomes and Significance

The AP Chart has been implemented in "The University of Tokyo Future Faculty Program (UTokyo FFP)," a semester-long course for graduate students.

- Enhanced Reflection: Qualitative feedback indicates that the circular design helps users identify the "Why" (Philosophy) behind their work more easily than the previous linear format. The connection between the central "Core" and the surrounding activities has made the concept of "integration of scholarship" tangible.
- Operational Versatility: By creating a single, scalable tool that functions as a "future map" for novices and a "current status map" for experts, we have eliminated the need for separate worksheets. This ensures that the reflective skills cultivated in Pre-FD can be seamlessly carried over to their faculty careers using the same framework. The AP Chart offers a practical, scalable solution for institutions seeking to implement effective reflection. Ultimately, by visualizing empty domains as "future maps," the chart bridges the gap between graduate study and faculty responsibility, fostering the autonomous formation of academic identity from the Pre-FD stage.

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Quality and Impact of Peer Mentoring for Educational Development

Anna Serbati, Marco Turrini, Michela Vignoli, Ettore Felisatti

Abstract

This study evaluates the quality and impact of a peer mentoring program aimed at faculty members at a University. The primary objective is to analyze changes in mentors' expectations and perceptions regarding career development, roles, satisfaction with mentoring training, the nature and impact of peer feedback, and the overall perception of the students involved. The program is designed as a strategic intervention operating at both individual and institutional levels to align teaching practices with organizational goals and to promote a reflective and collaborative culture. The procedure includes training sessions, reciprocal teaching observations, feedback sessions, and dialogues with students. A mixed-methods design is adopted, involving pre-post questionnaires completed by professors and surveys to students, complemented by debriefing recordings and qualitative reports. The sample includes 16 teachers organized into 4 mentoring units and their students. Preliminary results indicate high satisfaction with the training sessions. Significant changes in expectations and role perceptions are anticipated, evidence on the role of feedback for teaching innovation, and confirmation of the positive impact perceived by students. The implications highlight mentoring as a lever for professional agency and organizational transformation in the context of faculty development.

Keywords: Peer mentoring, Faculty development, Teaching innovation, Organizational development

Extended Summary

The aim of the paper.

The research aims to evaluate the quality and impact of a peer mentoring program for faculty members at a University. The primary objective is to analyze changes in expectations and perceptions of the roles of mentors for career development, satisfaction with mentoring training, the nature and impact of feedback between peer mentors, and the overall perception of students involved in the program (Poston & Boyer, 1992). This study is part of the broader framework of organizational transformation and professional development strategies, considering mentoring as a strategic lever to promote individual and collective agency and encourage innovative teaching practices (Felisatti et al., 2019; Felisatti et al., 2022; Torre et al., 2025).

The theoretical framework and/or methodological approach.

The peer mentoring program is examined as a strategic intervention operating at both individual and institutional levels to align teaching practices with organizational objectives and to cultivate a reflective and collaborative culture (Allen et al., 2004; Steinert, 2017). The program implies training sessions, peer observation of teaching, feedback sessions among participants and dialogues with students. A mixed-methods approach is employed, integrating quantitative data from pre- and post-intervention questionnaires completed by professors and surveys completed by their students, and qualitative data from debriefing recordings and feedback reports. The sample comprises 16 teachers participating as mentors/mentees (divided in 4 mentoring units operating together), selected to represent diverse disciplines and experience levels, as well as their students.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes.

Preliminary results on the training sessions conducted before the starting of the program showed higher levels of mentors' satisfaction. We expect the overall program's findings to reveal a significant variation in expectations and perceptions of the roles of mentors and mentees. Feedback from peer mentors can highlight key practices for continuous improvement and the development of teaching innovation and career development. The results related to the students can reinforce these outcomes by confirming the perceived positive impact of the program on the quality of the educational experience. Based on these results, we expect support for mentoring as a strategy for agency and organizational transformation, capable of promoting alignment between teaching practices and institutional objectives. The theoretical and educational significance of the work, including implications for practice, policy, or future research. This research confirms mentoring in Faculty Development as a strategic practice of organizational change (Underhill, 2006). On a theoretical level, it points out how mentoring can improve individual and collective agency, giving rise to practice-based strategies of professional learning and development which are allied to institutional priorities. On an educational level, it makes the integration of feedback and continuous assessment a key element in guaranteeing lifelong learning in the teaching profession characterized by collaboration. The model of peer mentoring analyzed here is configured as a flexible and adaptive device that can answer to systemic challenges and build a teaching culture oriented toward innovation and the sustainable transformation of university teaching (Sorcinelli & Yun, 2015).

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Faculty-Enabled Student Agency: A Scalable Model for International Student Support

Liza Choi

Abstract

Iinternational students' success is often addressed through discrete services(orientation, language workshops, advising). Yet many barriers to belonging and academicprogress emerge in everyday learning spaces where faculty agency, course design, andassessment practices shape student experience. This interactive poster presents a scalable,community-based model that equips faculty and peer mentors to strengthen internationalstudents' academic literacies, confidence, and sense of belonging over time.The model integrates (1) structured peer and near-peer mentoring, (2) bidirectional culturallearning that positions students as contributors (not deficits), and (3) faculty-facing practices thattranslate EAL-informed insights into course-level supports (e.g., transparent assessmentexpectations, feedback for learning, and psychologically safe learning environments). Theapproach is grounded in communities of practice and student agency perspectives, aligning with ICED26 Sub-theme 3 by focusing on how learning partnerships promote self-regulation,engagement, and inclusive curriculum transformation.The poster shares high-level implementation components, facilitator scripts, and outcomes fromlong-running practice in a teaching-focused institution, including indicators of increasedhelp-seeking, confidence in academic communication, leadership development among mentors,and improved belonging. Participants will leave with a one-page starter resource and acontext-tailored adaptation plan for applying the model in resource-constrained settings.

Keywords: international students, EAL support, mentoring, student belonging

Extended Summary

Aim and background

Internationalization strategies often emphasize recruitment, compliance, and discrete studentservices. However, many barriers to international students' belonging and academic progressemerge in everyday learning spaces where course design, assessment expectations, feedbackpractices, and classroom participation norms shape who can access success. For students whoare English-as-an-additional-language (EAL) learners, the challenge can be a double bind: highperformance expectations alongside hidden rules about academic discourse, participation, andassessment standards. Supports positioned as remedial or optional can reduce uptake andunintentionally reinforce deficit narratives. This poster advances an alternative: afaculty-enabled ecosystem that strengthens students' agency and belonging by embeddingEAL-informed practices into routine teaching and learning.The aim is to present a scalable, community-based model that (a) equips faculty with lightweightroutines that clarify standards and reduce hidden curriculum, and (b) builds a structured peerand near-peer mentoring spine to support academic literacies, self-regulation, and help-seekingacross a semester. The contribution aligns with ICED26 Sub-theme 3 (Agency and Students) byshowing how learning partnerships and staff enablement can operationalize student agencywithin resource-constrained contexts.

Conceptual framing

The model draws on three complementary lenses. First, student agency is understood asstudents' capacity to influence their learning through intentional planning, monitoring,help-seeking, and meaning-making (Bandura, 2001; OECD, 2019). Second, communities ofpractice frame learning as participation: newcomers gain access to disciplinary discoursethrough legitimate participation, feedback, and social belonging (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Third,an asset-based approach to internationalization positions students' languages and culturalknowledge as resources for learning, leadership, and curriculum enrichment, supportingintercultural competence development (Deardorff, 2006). Together, these lenses shift supportaway from a deficit model and toward shared responsibility for inclusive learning design.Practically, the work also aligns with scholarship on engagement and belonging in theeducational interface, where the quality of interactions between students and the institution(including teaching practices) shapes engagement trajectories and persistence (Kahu & Nelson,2018; Tinto, 1993).

Model overview

The poster visualizes a mentorship-centred, faculty-enabled model that grew from a grassrootsinitiative into a scalable support ecosystem. Instead of expecting students to navigate a "servicescavenger hunt" across disconnected offices, the model functions as one relational hub thatoffers a psychologically safe entry point and coordinated pathways to academic, social, andwell-being supports.

- Layer A: Psychological-safety-first relational hub and mentoring spine (peer/near-peer).Students opt in early and join a non-graded learning communityanchored by regular mentor meetings. An intake-and-matching process supports fit andcontinuity. Sessions integrate academic literacies (discipline language, participationnorms, assessment expectations) with whole-student needs (belonging, identity, andnavigating how the institution works), strengthening self-regulation, confidence, andtimely help-seeking.

- Layer B: Faculty enablement and course-level routines (the feedback loop).Faculty adopt a small menu of practices that reduce hidden curriculum and expand access tohigh standards: transparent criteria, exemplars, staged drafts, feedback that targets nextactions, and micro-practices that normalize questions and multilingual sense-making.Insights from mentoring and workshops are translated into teachable routines thatstrengthen psychological safety in everyday learning spaces while keeping workloadmanageable.
- Layer C: Bidirectional cultural learning and leadership development.The model positions international students as contributors, not deficits. Mentors learn culturalmeanings, communication norms, and perspectives from students as much as studentslearn local academic culture from mentors. Structured cultural sharing, reflectivedialogue, and visible leadership roles build intercultural competence and cultural humilityamong mentors while expanding students' confidence to participate academically andsocially.

The poster highlights a high-level implementation pathway and a menu of adaptable tools (e.g.,mentoring flow, intake-and-matching considerations, facilitator moves, and facultymicro-practices). Full examples are intentionally reserved for in-person dialogue, so participantscan identify their institutional constraints and leave with a tailored adaptation approach.

Methodological approach and practice evidence

The model is presented as a practice-based innovation informed by hermeneuticphenomenology: ongoing attention to learners' lived experience (belonging, psychologicalsafety, identity, and participation) guides iterative redesign over time. Practice evidence is drawnfrom semi-structured qualitative interviews with student participants and mentors, structuredreflections and debriefs, facilitator field notes, and stakeholder feedback from faculty partners; itis supplemented by descriptive quantitative data (participation patterns, continuation within thesupport stream, and brief surveys of belonging, confidence, and help-seeking). Data areanalyzed interpretively to surface recurring patterns and guide continuous improvement;sources are triangulated to strengthen credibility. The poster does not claim causal attribution,but links design features to converging indicators of change.

Outcomes highlighted on the poster (as practice indicators) include:

- Belonging and psychological safety:students describe a safe, non-judgmental space to ask "basic" questions, practise language and participation, and feel recognized aswhole people.
- Academic agency and help-seeking:students report earlier use of feedback, clearer planning for assignments and assessments, and greater comfort approachinginstructors, peers, and other supports.
- Bidirectional learning and mentor leadership:mentors develop coaching skill, intercultural competence, and cultural humility through reciprocal learning, creating aleadership pipeline that benefits programs and workplaces.
- Faculty and program benefits:faculty partners report fewer late-stage crises, clearer communication about expectations, and improved classroom climate when inclusiveroutines are embedded intentionally.

For academic developers, the model reframes international student support as a sharedteaching-and-learning responsibility, not a siloed service. It provides a concrete pathway tooperationalize agency by building staff capability (faculty agency) while strengthening students'capacity to act (student agency). For institutions, the approach offers a scalable way to advanceinclusive curriculum transformation through everyday practices that increase transparency andpsychological safety.

Interactive poster experience and takeaways

During the interactive poster session, participants will receive a brief walkthrough of thehub-and-spine model and will be invited to map one of their own courses or support structuresto the three layers (relational hub and mentoring, faculty routines, bidirectional learning).

Participants can scan a QR code for a one-page starter resource (core components + a fewadaptable prompts). Expanded templates and examples are shared through conversation at theposter, so you leave with a version tailored to your context—not a one-size-fits-all kit.

Participants will leave with an adaptation plan that identifies: (1) one low-lift faculty routine topilot next term to increase transparency and psychological safety, (2) one mentoring structurethat fits local staffing and scheduling, and (3) one culturally sustaining practice that positionsinternational students as contributors to the curriculum and learning community.

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Iced Talks 1

Strengthening Teachers and Teaching Communities: Experiences with Collective Academic Supervision

Iris Maria Pedersen, Simone Brendstrup

Abstract

Join us for this talk to meet Maya, a persona representing early career academics participating in a university pedagogical course, where we piloted implementing Collective Academic Supervision (CAS) as the primary supervision format for pedagogical development projects. Traditionally, such projects have been supported through individual supervision, but recurring challenges – including difficulties in using pedagogical terminology, feelings of isolation, and a desire for collegial dialogue – motivated us as instructors and supervisors in the course to experiment with CAS. We chose to implement CAS because, as a structured, feedback-rich, and collaborative process, it holds potential to strengthen academic dialogue, accelerate writing, reduce isolation, and support discipline-specific argumentation. Further, drawing on research in higher education development, we situate CAS within broader discussions of professional identity formation, engagement, and the importance of communities of practice for early career academics. In the talk, we share participant perspectives alongside our own experiences as supervisors to illuminate the affordances and limitations of CAS in faculty development contexts. The intended takeaway is to inspire instructors and educational developers to consider collective supervision formats as a way to foster collaboration, strengthen teaching-focused communities of practice, and enhance the development of teacher identity.

Keywords: Collective Academic Supervision (CAS), Faculty Development, Teacher Training Course, Communities of Practice, Peer Mentoring

Extended Summary

In this talk you are going to meet Maya, a persona of an assistant professor and university teacher participating in a university pedagogical course. You will also meet X and Y, the presenters who are also instructors and supervisors in the same university pedagogical course. Through a narrative-style talk we will address the question of how both participants and supervisors experienced Collective Academic Supervision (CAS) in a university pedagogical course. The course supports early career academics in designing, implementing, and analysing a pedagogical development project tied to their own teaching practice. Historically, this project work has been supported primarily through individual supervision. In the lights of our talk, we hope to discuss experiences from other educational contexts and institutions and to inspire others to consider alike supervision formats with more emphasis on learning in collective settings. But why did we even set out to try CAS? For several years, we have supervised faculty members like Maya in their work with a SOTL-inspired, pedagogical development project, and for several years, we have experienced the obstacles they face regarding: 1) using pedagogical concepts and terminology to argue for and reflect upon their interventions in their own practices, and 2) feeling isolated with their projects along with 3) their longing for discussing their teaching and supervision practices with both colleagues and peers. So, when we encountered the method CAS, we saw the potential to accommodate those obstacles and longings by implementing CAS as the main supervision format in the university pedagogical course. This is because, besides exchanging feedback and supporting project development, the overall purpose of CAS is to support a professional, academic dialogue, and to support each other in the learning process (Montes de Oca et al. 2025). Research about CAS also points to a number of advantages (edu.usn.no):

- Begins writing earlier and writes more quickly
- Feels less alone with their projects
- Receives feedback from multiple people
- Learns to recognize and apply the discipline's criteria and genre requirements more quickly
- Practices scientific argumentation and professional dialogue

So, what does the research point to? Within the field of Higher Education Development, there is substantial research on support structures and initiatives related to how supervisors, mentors, peers, and educational developers can foster the development of teaching competences and teacher identity among Early Career Academics (ECAs). This research highlights a connection between ECAs' engagement and their perceived competence in their work, which makes it essential for an effective support strategy that ECAs have access to continuous professional development, especially in new areas such as teaching (Crome et al. 2019). The degree of social support in the work environment (Pyhältö et al. 2017), as well as belonging to and receiving feedback from a community of practice, are also important for the development of new teachers' professional identity (Remmik et al. 2011). In summary, the research indicates that the way new university teachers perceive themselves within a community of practice influences their formation of professional identity. Therefore, it is also important for a university pedagogical center such as ours, to support communities of practice related to teaching. In our university pedagogical course, Maya and fellow assistant professors are brought together specifically around their teaching practice, and we see this as a unique opportunity to engage in

a community of practice through CAS of their respective pedagogical development projects. How did we design CAS then? As a first step, we designed a CAS process and piloted it in one of the university pedagogical courses this autumn (2025) to gain experiences, to see whether some of the challenges would be tackled, and to get feedback from the participants on how they experience this supervision format. Both our pilot CAS process and feedback from the participants will serve as examples in the talk. In the CAS process, the participants are divided into groups of four, and each group will meet three times during the course. Each meeting addresses a specific 'subject' or part of their project:

1) Discussing ideas for the development project

2) Couplings between problem and theoretical perspectives

3) Couplings between theoretical perspectives and intervention design

Before each meeting, each participant will write ½-1 page addressing a few provided questions relating to the meeting subject. Further, each participant will give and receive written feedback from a group member. The supervisor will give written feedback to all members. And all received feedback must be read prior to the meeting, because the agenda at the meeting is discussing the feedback and helping each participant even further with their projects. Each meeting follows the same script:

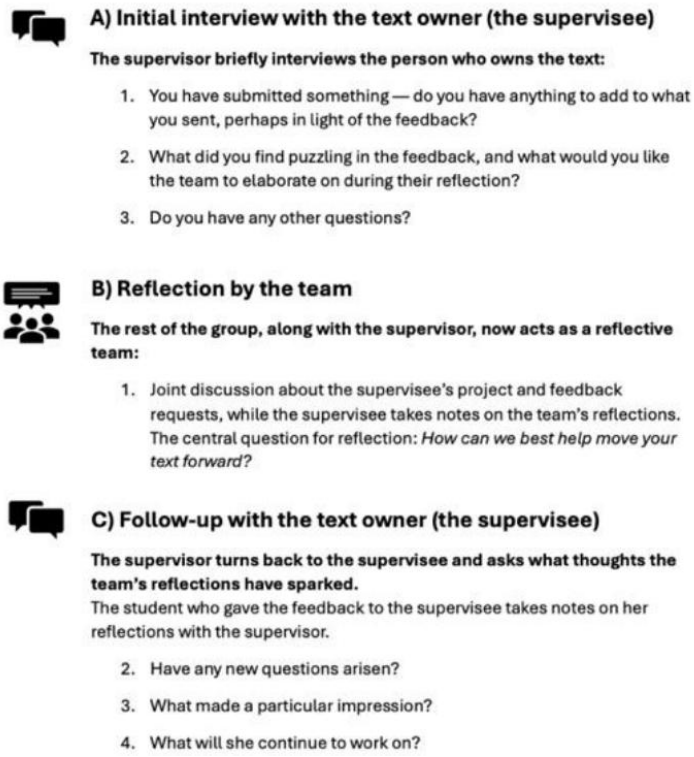


Fig. 1 The script for all CAS meetings. What are the pros and cons of implementing CAS in faculty development?

At the talk we will share the experiences and feedback with the audience as arguments for what to consider (pros and cons) if implementing CAS in university pedagogical courses and maybe even broadly in faculty development. Through both our, the supervisors, and the participants', Maya's, experiences we hope to inspire other instructors and supervisors – especially in faculty development – to try other, and more collective supervision formats to support a community of practice around teaching, including pedagogical dialogues, developing teacher identity and engagement. And we are eager to be inspired by others' experiences with collective supervision formats as well!

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Pathfinding a Culture of Collaborative Learning: Building Momentum for a National TBL Hub in Irish Higher Education

Anne O'Brien, Nuala Harding, Gina Noonan

Abstract

Summary This ICED Talk examines how a cross-university partnership is establishing the foundations for a scalable, future-focused ecosystem of Team-Based Learning in Irish higher education. The aim of the talk is to demonstrate how structured, relational academic development can shift institutions from isolated active-learning projects to a coordinated national strategy. In response to sector-wide challenges such as declining student engagement, issues of belonging, concerns around critical thinking, and the accelerating influence of artificial intelligence, the initiative positions TBL as a structured, human-centred pedagogy that can strengthen both academic integrity and student retention. Key activities include developing a 15-credit professional qualification in TBL, creating open-access learning and teaching resources, and conducting a coordinated scoping exercise to better understand staff readiness for large-scale pedagogical change. Introductory workshops, along with the integration of digital learning tools such as Learning Activity Management System (LAMS), have enabled staff across participating institutions to experience how TBL can be delivered consistently and seamlessly. The narrative presented in the talk traces how early capacity building efforts created momentum for institutional alignment. A particularly significant milestone involved bringing academic leaders to an established international TBL hub where they observed a mature, institution-wide TBL ecosystem.

Extended Summary

This ICED-Talk explores a central question: How can Irish higher education move from isolated experimentation with active learning to a sustained, scalable ecosystem of collaborative, team-based pedagogy? Drawing on the Pathfinder-funded partnership between TUS and SETU, the talk offers a narrative of institutional change, academic development leadership, and the emerging rationale for establishing Ireland's first National TBL Hub.

The story begins with the challenges that sparked the Pathfinder initiative: widespread recognition across TUS and SETU that student engagement, belonging, and critical thinking were suffering in traditional lecture-dominated environments. Both universities had pockets of innovative practice, yet no cohesive framework for scaling active learning. Team-Based Learning (TBL), grounded in decades of research and international uptake, offered a structured, evidence-informed model capable of delivering consistency, inclusion, and deeper learning at scale.

To address this, We designed and led a multi-phase TBL capacity-building strategy across both institutions. A central strand was the creation and delivery of the 15-credit Certificate in Team-Based Learning, which enabled lecturers to redesign modules, implement TBL in live settings, and participate in peer-learning communities. Staff from diverse disciplines, engineering, business, social care, and nursing, engaged in the programme, discovering a shared language and structured pathway for pedagogical transformation. Many described "lightbulb moments" as previously passive cohorts became energised, articulating reasoning, challenging ideas, and collaborating with purpose. Students consistently reported increased belonging, motivation, and clarity of expectations.

Alongside this, the cross-institutional collaboration between TUS and SETU evolved initially as a strategic scoping exercise designed to understand staff openness, readiness, and appetite for adopting TBL at scale. Through exploratory discussions and mapping of existing practices, we identified opportunities and challenges for embedding team-based pedagogies. As part of this process, I delivered introductory TBL workshops across both institutions, enabling staff to experience readiness assurance, team application tasks, and the underpinning design principles. These sessions also introduced colleagues to LAMS, demonstrating how the platform can support seamless design and delivery of TBL sequences and reduce barriers for new adopters. This scoping phase culminated in bringing teams from both institutions to Manchester, allowing staff and leaders to observe a mature, large-scale TBL ecosystem and envision how a similar model might develop within the Irish higher-education context.

Crucially, the significance of this work is heightened in the current landscape of artificial intelligence and increasing student-retention challenges. As generative AI disrupts conventional assessment and undermines traditional models of content delivery, TBL foregrounds the human capabilities that AI cannot replicate: judgement, reasoning, collaboration, negotiation, and ethical decision-making. By requiring students to justify responses, debate alternatives, and engage in team deliberation, TBL builds cognitive resilience and mitigates over-reliance on AI-generated answers. Simultaneously, TBL strengthens belonging, connection, and persistence three of the strongest predictors of student retention. The use of stable, long-term teams helps students feel seen and supported, reducing feelings of academic isolation and fostering a sense of shared purpose. In a moment when higher education must simultaneously protect integrity and cultivate engagement, TBL offers a human-centred, future-proof pedagogical response.

A pivotal moment in the project came with the decision to bring senior university leaders to the UK National TBL Hub at the University of Manchester. This strategic move shifted TBL from an innovative practice to an institutional priority. Supported by Pathfinder funding, the group including academic managers, the TUS TBL Champion, and the Head of

CPID participated in a structured programme with Professor Paul Shore and his team. They examined how Manchester scaled TBL to thousands of students across Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Audiology, Optometry and Biology; toured purpose-built active learning spaces; explored digital infrastructure including LAMS; and learned about staff-development structures that underpin sustainable delivery.

The visit demonstrated what becomes possible when an institution commits to a coherent, long-term vision for active learning. Leaders witnessed how Manchester used TBL to strengthen critical thinking, enhance inclusivity, and prepare graduates for a future shaped by AI and rapid technological change. Importantly, they saw the cultural and infrastructural conditions such as coordinated leadership support, cross-functional academic-developer teams, and purpose-built teaching spaces that enable transformation at scale. This experience validated the TUS–SETU direction of travel and generated institutional readiness to progress the next step: the establishment of an Irish TBL Hub.

Throughout the talk, compelling examples illustrate how TBL shifts classroom dynamics. Lecturers describe the moment they realised that deep learning occurs through structured collaboration rather than extended lecturing. Students recount discovering their voice within teams, navigating diverse perspectives, and building confidence through engagement and accountability. Academic developers reflect on how TBL provides both structure and psychological safety, enabling lecturers to experiment confidently and students to engage meaningfully.

The significance of this work for academic development is twofold. First, it demonstrates that pedagogical transformation depends on ecosystems, not events. One-off workshops cannot shift culture; long-term, relational, scaffolded development can. Second, it highlights the essential role academic developers play as brokers of change integrating research, leadership, curriculum design, staff development, and student experience to create sustainable improvement.

The talk concludes by looking forward: to continuing professional-learning communities; embedding TBL in curriculum design processes; developing cross-institutional research; and ultimately realising the vision of a National TBL Hub. Such a centre would support active learning at scale, build staff capacity nationally, create open resources, strengthen retention, and prepare graduates for a world where human collaboration and critical thinking matter more than ever.

Publishing in Partnership: Ethical and Equitable Co-Authorship in Faculty-Developer Collaborations

Breana Bayraktar, Dayna Henry, Jessica Taggart

Abstract

Academic developers increasingly occupy dual roles as facilitators of faculty learning and active partners in collaborative Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). These hybrid roles raise ethical and practical questions when developers move from supporting inquiry to co-authoring scholarly work with faculty—particularly in large, distributed, cross-institutional teams. This ICED Talk examines how issues of authorship, ownership, and recognition surface during the transition from inquiry to dissemination, and why these moments matter for equity and agency in academic development. Drawing on our experience leading a multi-institutional research (MegaSoTL) project on generative AI involving seven interdisciplinary research teams, we share concrete examples of how unclear expectations around data ownership, uneven labor distribution, and varying levels of research experience complicate decisions about co-authorship. We describe strategies we developed to navigate these tensions, including transparent authorship criteria, intentional mentoring structures for scholarly writing, and practices for recognizing contributions across positional hierarchies. Throughout the talk, we reflect on how our dual identities as academic developers and scholars required us to balance faculty autonomy with the intellectual leadership developers often provide in collaborative SoTL work. We argue that authorship should be understood as an extension of academic developers' pedagogical and relational practice. By approaching co-authorship as a site for cultivating faculty agency, supporting scholarly identity formation, and modeling ethical collaboration, academic developers can strengthen institutional cultures of inquiry and belonging. Attendees will leave with concrete considerations and reflective questions to guide equitable co-authorship practices in their own contexts.

Keywords: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL); Collaborative scholarship; Authorship; Academic developer agency; Scholarly identity

Extended Summary

Academic developers increasingly occupy hybrid roles that blur the boundaries between support, scholarship, and leadership. As developers become more deeply involved in Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) initiatives—as project leads, methodologists, grant writers, and research coordinators—questions of authorship, ownership, and recognition become unavoidable. This ICED Talk explores how academic developers can navigate ethical and equitable co-authorship with faculty while honoring faculty autonomy, disciplinary norms, and diverse forms of scholarly labor. The talk is grounded in our experience leading a cross-institutional MegaSoTL initiative focused on teaching and learning with generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). The project positions academic developers as primary investigators, bringing together faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars, graduate students, and undergraduate researchers from multiple institutions and disciplines across a U.S. state system. Across seven interrelated research projects, academic developers have played central roles in shaping research questions, coordinating ethics approvals across institutions, designing data collection protocols, managing shared datasets, and supporting analysis and dissemination. This level of involvement surfaces a productive—but often uncomfortable—question: When academic developers do substantial intellectual and organizational labor in SoTL projects, how should authorship be negotiated ethically and transparently? More specifically, how can developers contribute as scholars without unintentionally reproducing power imbalances or undermining faculty agency in research that is often framed as "faculty-led"?

The talk begins by naming a tension many academic developers recognize but rarely discuss openly: the expectation to both support faculty scholarship and step back from it, even when developers' contributions are central to the work. In large, collaborative projects—particularly those involving grants, multiple institutions, or interdisciplinary teams—authorship decisions are not neutral. They are shaped by academic hierarchies, employment classifications, disciplinary conventions, and assumptions about whose labor "counts" as scholarship. Drawing on concrete moments from the MegaSoTL project, the talk highlights key decision points where questions of authorship surfaced. These include negotiating who leads manuscripts versus collaborative reports, determining how to credit invisible labor such as project coordination and IRB management, and supporting faculty who are new to SoTL while also asserting developers' scholarly identities. These examples illustrate how good intentions alone are insufficient; without explicit structures and shared language, inequities can persist even in values-driven projects. The central argument of the talk is that ethical and equitable co-authorship does not happen by default—it must be intentionally designed. Academic developers are uniquely positioned to lead this design work, not because they hold authority over faculty, but because they often see the full ecosystem of labor that makes collaborative scholarship possible. When developers treat authorship as a pedagogical and relational practice rather than a transactional outcome, co-authorship becomes a site of learning, mentorship, and trust-building.

The talk shares several strategies that have shaped our approach to equitable co-authorship. These include developing transparent authorship guidelines early in the research process, revisiting roles and contributions as projects evolve, and creating multiple dissemination pathways that honor different goals and forms of impact. For example, alongside

peer-reviewed journal articles, teams have pursued practitioner-facing reports, conference sessions, and institutional briefs—each with intentionally negotiated credit structures. These practices acknowledge that scholarly contribution is not one-size-fits-all and that equity sometimes requires flexibility rather than uniformity. Importantly, the talk does not present these strategies as a checklist or best-practice model. Instead, it emphasizes reflection, dialogue, and contextual judgment. Our experience shows that tensions around power, voice, and ownership do not disappear when named; they require ongoing attention, especially in teams that include faculty, staff, and students with different positionalities and stakes in academic publishing.

The significance of this talk for academic development lies in its invitation to rethink what partnership means in scholarly work. As academic developers increasingly engage in SoTL and other forms of collaborative inquiry, co-authorship becomes a key site where values are enacted—or undermined. By approaching publishing as a shared, ethical practice rather than an individual achievement, academic developers can help foster scholarly cultures that are more transparent, inclusive, and sustainable. The intended takeaway for attendees is not a prescriptive answer to authorship dilemmas, but a reframing: ethical co-authorship is part of academic development work. It is an extension of how we design learning spaces, facilitate dialogue, and support agency. This talk aims to spark conversation among academic developers about how we claim our scholarly identities responsibly, support faculty-led inquiry, and model equitable practices for the next generation of SoTL scholars.

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Designing a Toolkit for Agile Backward Design in Curriculum Development

Birgit Hawelka, Regine Bachmaier

Abstract

To collaboratively develop a curriculum on planetary health, we conducted a module workshop at a German university using an agile backward-design approach. The workshop consisted of two 120-minute design sprints held two weeks apart and involved academic physicians, practicing pediatricians, students, and instructional designers. Through iterative design cycles in cross-functional teams and ongoing feedback, this approach fostered collective engagement and rapid pedagogical refinement. The evaluation results demonstrate the effectiveness of this method. During the development process, however, differing understandings of methodological and didactic principles proved challenging: the lack of a shared knowledge base delayed substantive progress and increased coordination efforts. To address these challenges, we plan to develop a toolkit consisting of visualization templates and accompanying guidelines for future module workshops. Within this collaborative space, we aim to exchange experiences on co-creative, agile approaches to curriculum design. Participants will be invited to provide feedback on draft visualization templates, drawing on their diverse disciplinary and professional perspectives to enhance the clarity and usability of these materials. Furthermore, the session will explore opportunities to establish partnerships for the joint development of a toolkit intended to support agile backward design practices in curriculum development. This initiative directly contributes to academic development by offering a scalable, evidence-informed model for collaborative curriculum design.

Keywords: agile backward design, curriculum development, guideline, visualization

Extended Summary

Agile Backward Design

Innovating higher education curricula is essential for cultivating students' workforce-relevant skills and promoting their responsible citizenship in future society (Wissenschaftsrat, 2022). In reality, however, the development of innovative curricula is confronted with numerous barriers. In a literature review, Tight (2023) identifies two particularly significant obstacles: (1) the (re-)design of curricula is embedded in administrative processes that are often inflexible and time-consuming. (2) The approach is shaped by an individualistic, "everyone for themselves" mentality. Curriculum design is typically led by a single academic, while colleagues, students, and other stakeholders from industry and society are only marginally involved. Agile backward design (Dazeley et al., 2025) provides a conceptual framework for addressing these issues. This approach combines backward design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2011) with principles of agile methodology (Seidl & Vonhof, 2017) to create engaging and authentic learning environments that effectively respond to diverse student needs. Iterative design cycles in cross-functional teams and ongoing feedback cultivate a strong sense of collective ownership.

Practical experience

We applied this approach in a module workshop to collaboratively develop a curriculum on planetary health. The workshop consisted of two 120-minute design sprints held two weeks apart and involved academic physicians, practicing pediatricians, students, and instructional designers. In Sprint 1, participants discussed the core concept of the module and condensed it into a tweet-like statement (maximum 250 characters). Subsequently, the group identified the competencies the students should acquire. Building on this foundation, participants then considered a range of formative and summative assessment strategies to evaluate the intended learning outcomes. In Sprint 2, participants explored learning activities most conducive to supporting the intended learning outcomes. Finally, they developed an action plan outlining the subsequent steps, such as creating learning materials. The evaluation results (xxx et al., 2025) demonstrate the effectiveness of the described approach. The resulting module was rated by students as meaningful, intellectually engaging, and of high didactic quality. During the development process, however, one issue emerged as particularly problematic: Members of the cross-functional teams held differing understandings of the methodological and didactic principles employed. This lack of a shared knowledge base slowed the start of substantive work and initially increased the need for coordination. To address these challenges, we plan to introduce a toolkit containing visualization templates and accompanying guidelines for future module workshops. We expect that these visualization tools will establish a shared point of reference, help align mental models, reduce complexity, and enhance interdisciplinary communication. The design of these materials draws on Atkinson's (2022) concepts for visualizing intended learning outcomes, assessment formats, and learning activities, as well as Young and Perović's (2020) approaches for illustrating the purpose and structure of planned modules. A guideline for participants will help familiarize them with the method. A complementary guide for facilitators will assist in maintaining the structure of the workshop, ensuring consistent application of the method, and employing strategies that promote inclusive and balanced participation. This toolkit not only ensures consistent quality across different groups but also makes the method scalable across universities.

Rationale and planned structure of the collaborative space

Within this collaborative space, we aim to exchange experiences on co-creative, agile approaches to curriculum design. Participants will be invited to provide feedback on draft visualization templates and guidelines, drawing on their diverse disciplinary and professional backgrounds to enhance the clarity and usability of these materials. Furthermore, the session will explore opportunities for establishing partnerships for the joint development of a toolkit designed to support agile backward design practices. By the end of the session, both participants and facilitators will have deepened their understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with applying agile methods in collaborative curriculum design. They will also have a clearer understanding of the requirements and design principles for effective visualization templates. The session will open by outlining the theoretical foundations of agile backward design and presenting initial experiences from its implementation. This will be followed by a brief discussion to clarify any remaining questions. Participants will then engage in a mini poster walk, examining draft visualization templates for the planned toolkit. Using sticky notes, they will provide feedback, which will subsequently be compiled and discussed in plenary. The session will close with a concise recap.

This session is designed for anyone currently involved in module or curriculum development, as well as those who plan to take on this role in the future. It is likewise relevant for faculty and academic developers interested in engaging in discussion on agile, co-creative methods. Participants will benefit from practical insights, shared experiences, and opportunities to contribute to the development of tools that support agile curriculum design.

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Iced Talks 2

Fostering Student Agency Through Transformative Core Competencies Education

Reya Saliba

Abstract

This talk examines how an 8-week core competencies course fosters student agency in higher education. Through students' feedback and paired assessments, the study explores pedagogical strategies for developing Collaboration & Teamwork, Communication & Presentation, Information & Data Literacy, and Intercultural & Global Literacy. Findings reveal a striking metacognitive gap: students demonstrated the strongest learning gains in Information & Data Literacy yet reported the lowest confidence in this competency. Conversely, Communication & Presentation, rated most useful by students, showed minimal measurable gains. This disconnect highlights the necessity of using multiple assessment methods to capture authentic learning. When curriculum positions students as co-creators through experiential learning and reflective practices, significant gains emerge across competencies. Students strongly preferred active, real-world engagement over traditional approaches, reinforcing the importance of student-centered pedagogies. These findings offer practical implications for designing transformative curriculum that empowers students while developing essential competencies for diverse academic and professional environments.

Keywords: Core Competencies, Competency-Based Education, Curriculum Design, Transformative Learning

Extended Summary

In an era where higher education is increasingly scrutinized for its relevance and responsiveness to student needs, this talk addresses a fundamental question: How can we design curriculum that transforms students from passive recipients of knowledge into active agents of their own development? Drawing from a quality improvement study of an 8-week core competencies course at an institution [name removed for peer-review], I will share insights into how intentional pedagogical design can empower students while developing essential skills that transcend disciplinary boundaries.

At its heart, this talk explores the intersection of student agency and competency-based education. The course examined in this study focused on developing four essential competencies: Collaboration & Teamwork, Communication & Presentation, Information & Data Literacy, and Intercultural & Global Literacy. But beyond simply teaching these skills, the course was designed to position students as co-creators of knowledge who actively shape their learning experiences rather than merely absorbing predetermined content. The central message is that transformative curriculum design must do more than deliver content: it must fundamentally reimagine the relationship between students and their education. When we intentionally disrupt the traditional teacher-as-expert model and create spaces for students to exercise choice, voice, and influence, we see remarkable outcomes that extend far beyond skill acquisition to encompass metacognitive growth and enhanced self-efficacy.

This work emerges from the institution's uniquely multicultural environment, where students from diverse cultural backgrounds come together to learn. This context provided a natural laboratory for exploring how competency-based education can prepare students for global citizenship while honoring their varied experiences and perspectives. The 8-week mini-course format, while condensed, offered an opportunity to test whether intensive, focused competency instruction could produce measurable learning gains and shift student perceptions about their own capabilities. The pedagogical approach emphasized experiential learning through real-world scenarios, collaborative activities, and reflective practices. Students maintained "connection notebooks" where they linked competencies to their lived experiences, participated in group discussions that valued diverse viewpoints, and engaged with case studies that challenged them to apply emerging skills. This student-centered methodology deliberately positioned learners as bringing valuable knowledge to the classroom, not merely receiving it.

Perhaps the most striking discovery emerged from comparing what students perceived about their learning with what they actually learned. The study employed both student feedback and paired pre/post assessments to capture this dual perspective. What emerged was a fascinating metacognitive gap: Information & Data Literacy, the competency where students demonstrated the strongest objective learning gains, was also where they reported the lowest confidence and understanding. Conversely, Communication & Presentation, which students rated as most useful for their futures, showed minimal measurable gains. This disconnect reveals something profound about student learning: students don't always recognize their own growth, particularly in technical skill areas. When they encounter genuinely new concepts and develop capabilities they previously lacked, they may experience this discomfort as inadequacy rather than recognizing it as evidence of genuine learning taking place. This finding challenges us to reconsider how we assess competency development. Traditional student satisfaction surveys or self-reports, while valuable, may not fully capture learning, especially transformative learning that involves understanding how students see their field and themselves.

Another compelling finding concerned course relevance. While half of the students found the course very or extremely relevant to their multicultural experience at institution [name removed for peer-review], few found it not or only slightly relevant. Initially, this might seem problematic. However, deeper analysis revealed a more nuanced story: many students who perceived limited relevance actually possessed strong knowledge of competencies in these areas. This creates a fascinating pedagogical challenge: How do we honor students' existing knowledge while deepening their understanding? The answer lies in helping students recognize that possessing skills and understanding how to strategically deploy and continuously develop them represent distinct levels of competency. The course wasn't just about learning to collaborate or communicate; it was about developing metacognitive awareness of when, how, and why to apply these competencies strategically.

Students' preferences for learning activities reinforced the importance of active, experiential approaches. Real-world scenarios were most valued, followed by group discussions and individual reflections, while more traditional approaches like case studies received moderate endorsement. This pattern emphasizes that student agency flourishes when learners engage with authentic contexts rather than abstract concepts. The findings also revealed limitations of the compressed 8-week format. While it produced statistically significant learning gains, students consistently requested more opportunities for practical application and extended practice. This tension between demonstrable learning outcomes and students' desire for deeper engagement suggests

that primer courses like this one work best when designed explicitly for transfer, equipping students with frameworks and awareness they can continue developing throughout their academic careers.

This work contributes to our understanding of how competency-based education can foster student agency in three important ways. First, it demonstrates the necessity of using multiple assessment methods to evaluate learning, as student perceptions and objective measures often tell different and complementary stories. Second, it provides empirical evidence that explicit competency instruction can effectively prepare students for diverse academic environments. Third, it highlights how transformative curriculum design must balance skill development with metacognitive growth, helping students not just acquire competencies but understand when and how to apply them. This talk invites participants to reconsider fundamental assumptions about curriculum design and assessment. It offers both inspiration and practical frameworks for creating learning experiences that position students as active agents while developing competencies essential for success in our increasingly complex, interconnected world. Most importantly, it demonstrates that when we trust students as co-creators of knowledge and intentionally design for their agency, remarkable learning becomes possible.

Walking Besides, Not Ahead: A Mentoring Story of Shared Power

Vanessa Drew

Abstract

"I trust that meaningful learning can take place only when we honor the voices of those who have been silenced." — Bell Hooks

When the project first began, the students weren't sure that their voice, voices shaped by the ALANAM (African American/Black, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian & Pacific Islander, Native American, Alaskan Native, and Multiracial) experience at a predominantly white institution, were meant to belong in the realm of formal research. But research? That belonged to someone else. Or at least, that's what they had been taught to believe.

But everything changed when my mentoring model changed.

Rooted in equity-informed, culturally sustaining practices, the mentoring approach refused the familiar hierarchy in which faculty lead and students follow. Instead, it invited students into a shared space of inquiry, a space where their lived realities were not only relevant, but essential. As we co-designed something profound happened: the students began to see themselves as knowledge-producers, capable of shaping conversations far beyond the classroom and adding to the body of scholarly knowledge that shapes our academic experiences.

This student-led led project illuminated patterns that faculty rarely glimpse and that institutions often overlook. They brought these insights together, the students realized that they had built something more than a research project, they had built a mirror their institution needed.

This talk tells the story of that transformation: how mentoring that centers equity can shift the trajectory of students' academic lives, unlocking their confidence, sharpening their research identities, and expanding their sense of possibility. It also tells another story, one about academic developers and faculty discovering new ways of seeing their students, their pedagogy, and their institution.

Participants will leave with an invitation: to reimagine mentoring as a collaborative, humanizing practice capable of sparking dialogue, inspiring institutional change, and opening fresh perspectives on what higher education can become when students are empowered to lead.

Keywords: Equity-Informed Mentoring; Student Agency; Undergraduate Research; Inclusive Curriculum

Extended Summary

This ICED-Talk begins with a simple but powerful question: What becomes possible when students who have been historically marginalized are invited, not as assistants, but as co-creators of knowledge? The story that follows begins long before the research project took shape, in a predominantly white institution where ALANAM (African American/Black, Latinx/Hispanic, Asian & Pacific Islander, Native American, Alaskan Native, and Multiracial) students often carried an unspoken assumption: that their voices, shaped by racialized and cultural experiences, did not belong in the realm of formal research. Research was something done about them, rarely with them, and almost never by them.

The turning point came when the mentoring model changed. Rather than approaching mentoring through traditional academic hierarchies, where faculty lead and students follow, the project embraced an equity-informed, culturally sustaining approach. This model drew inspiration from affirming and validating pedagogies, the power of shared authority in mentoring and the understanding that meaningful scholarship is enriched when students lived experiences are recognized as knowledge-bearing.

From the very first meeting, the goal was not to train students to fit neatly into preexisting research roles, but to create a shared intellectual space, one where the students' identities, histories, and insights shaped the direction of the work. Together, we co-designed the study: crafting research questions, drafting the IRB protocol, selecting focus group prompts, and envisioning how the findings might shape institutional change. For many students, this was the first moment they saw themselves as legitimate researchers. One remarked, "I never knew my experience counted as data." That moment became the heartbeat of the project.

Once the framework was established, the research team conducted eight focus groups with ALANAM students. These conversations, ranging from laughter-filled stories to emotionally charged reflections, revealed a complex portrait of life in the classroom. Students described the joy of being in classes where professors created intentional community, used diverse course materials, or invited open dialogue. They also shared the weight of experiences marked by tokenization, silence, or the expectation that they speak on behalf of an entire racial group. Their narratives reflected patterns long documented in the literature on racialized classroom climates, microaggressions, and academic isolation.

While facilitating the focus groups, the undergraduate researchers discovered something transformative: the courage to listen deeply. They heard their peers describe moments of affirmation and moments of profound invisibility. They

listened to stories of peer support that made classrooms feel safe, and stories of participation policies that felt performative rather than inclusive. They recognized themselves in these narratives. They also recognized the institution.

The most powerful part of the project emerged during data analysis. Using Dedoose, students worked side-by-side, coding transcripts, identifying themes, debating interpretations, and reflecting on their own assumptions. This collective interpretive work echoed the traditions of participatory research and youth–adult inquiry partnerships, where research is not merely a technical process, but a relational and reflective one. Through this process, students began to articulate complex understandings of structural inequity, belonging, and academic identity.

One moment stands out vividly. After reading a transcript where multiple students described feeling "on display" during classroom discussions about race, a member of the research team said quietly, "I thought that was just me." That recognition, that personal experience could be part of a systemic pattern, marked a shift toward what critical scholars describe as critical consciousness. Through the data, students were not only understanding their institution, but they were also understanding themselves.

As themes emerged, the students crafted insights that faculty seldom glimpse, and institutions often overlook. The study findings echoed broad patterns in higher education research but carried the unique power of student voice, contextualized, embodied, and grounded in lived experience.

As the project unfolded, something else began to shift. Students started referring to themselves not as "helping with a study," but as "our research team." Their confidence deepened. Their scholarly voice sharpened. They began envisioning future research projects, graduate school pathways, and professional trajectories they had not previously considered. This transformation aligns with research showing that when marginalized students participate in meaningful, identity-affirming research experiences, they develop stronger academic self-efficacy and persistence.

But the transformation was not limited to students. The faculty mentors and academic developers involved in the project also began to see their roles differently. The mentoring relationship became reciprocal an exchange of insight, vulnerability, and shared learning. Faculty gained a deeper awareness of how their pedagogical choices impacted students from marginalized communities, and how powerful student-led research could be as a tool for institutional reflection. This mirrors the growing movement in higher education that positions students as partners in teaching and learning (Cook-Sather, Bovill & Felten, 2014; Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2016).

By the end of the project, the students had built something much larger than a research study, they had constructed a mirror their institution needed. Their findings now inform faculty development workshops, curriculum design conversations, and broader institutional dialogues about equity and inclusion. They have sparked new conversations about whose voices guide decisions about teaching, and what it means for academic developers to cultivate learning environments where every student can thrive.

This ICED-Talk shares our mentoring journey. It invites academic developers to imagine mentorship as a collaborative, humanizing practice capable of transforming both students and institutions. It asks: What if mentoring became a site of liberation? What if research became a space where marginalized students discover the power of their voices? And most importantly: What might higher education become if we learned to listen?

As bell hooks reminds us, "The heart of education is the process of becoming." This project shows students becoming scholars, and universities becoming more just.

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Stimulating agency through co-creation using the 'Enabling Students as Partners Framework'

Nurun Nahar, Nykia Chance, Power Bright Williems

Abstract

This ICED-Talk shares an academic development case from a UK higher education institution exploring a new curriculum model in which students-as-partners is embedded as a core design principle rather than an optional enhancement. Drawing on the "engagement through partnership" conceptual model (Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014), the approach positions partnership-building as foundational to curriculum renewal: students and staff co-create not only learning experiences, but also the partnership principles that will govern how decisions are made, whose expertise counts, and how power is shared.

Framed through agency as the capacity to influence action and change (Bandura, 2001) and student agency as goal setting, reflection, and responsible action (OECD, 2019/2030 Learning Compass), the talk argues that co-creation can be a practical mechanism for developing learner agency at scale. Building on Bovill's work on whole-class co-creation and relational pedagogy (Bovill, 2020) and Matthews' scholarship on genuine partnership and power (Matthews, 2016; Matthews, 2017), we outline a replicable process for academic developers: convening co-design spaces, negotiating shared principles, and translating these into curriculum governance and staff development. The intended takeaway is a principles-to-practice blueprint that academic developers can use to spark dialogue, shift cultures toward power-sharing, and make agency-building an explicit curriculum outcome.

Extended Summary

This talk responds to the conference theme that positions academic development as a field that bridges scholarship, practice, and policy to enable meaningful transformation in universities.

It starts from a simple question: if our institutions are redesigning curricula for uncertain futures, how do we ensure students are not merely 'consulted' but are enabled to exercise genuine agency through power-sharing partnership? Agency here is understood in Bandura's sense as the capacity to exert control and influence over one's life circumstances, rather than simply respond to them (Bandura, 2001). In higher education, that lens invites us to treat curriculum not only as content and assessment design, but as a site where relationships, decision-making, and legitimacy are negotiated—often implicitly, and often unevenly.

Context and experience inspiring the talk:

The case shared comes from a UK higher education institution exploring a new curriculum model aimed at being more inclusive, future-ready, and resilient in the face of disruption (including digital transformation and artificial intelligence). A key decision in this redesign was to embed students as partners at the core of the model rather than as a project add-on or "good practice" aspiration. To do this, the institution developed an "Enabling Students as Partners" framework as a practical scaffold for staff and students to co-create (1) curriculum elements

(e.g., assessment briefs, learning activities, evaluation processes) and (2) the partnership conditions (e.g., how decisions are made, how disagreements are handled, what 'success' means, and how power is shared).

The talk acknowledges that partnership is not self-evidently equitable. Matthews argues that partnership can easily drift into symbolic participation unless power, ethics, and inclusion are treated as central design questions (Mathews, 2017). Bovill similarly cautions that co-creation must be intentionally structured if it is to be meaningful and accessible beyond small groups of 'usual voices,' making the case for approaches that can work with whole cohorts (Bovill, 2020). These warnings shaped the institutional approach: the framework was designed to scale partnership while staying attentive to representation, workload, and whose knowledge counts.

The talk argues that student agency is not only an attribute to be developed in learners but also an institutional outcome that must be designed into curriculum governance. Student agency, in OECD terms, includes the capacity to set goals, reflect, and act responsibly to effect change—and is strengthened through co-construction and 'co-agency' with others ((OECD, 2019). In a curriculum redesign context, this means moving beyond asking students for feedback on pre-made decisions. Instead, students are invited into earlier, more consequential spaces where the curriculum's purposes and principles are negotiated.

The narrative is organised around three linked design moves, each illustrated with examples from curriculum redesign activity:

From 'student voice' to 'shared authorship': co-creating partnership principles

Drawing on Healey, Flint and Harrington's conceptual model of engagement through partnership, the institution treated partnership as a way of working that can operate across learning, teaching, and broader enhancement activity (Healey et al., 2014). A pivotal early step was to co-create a short set of partnership principles with students and staff that formed the guiding principles for co-designing a pilot study to evaluate block curriculum experience for students

and staff across a whole school. This deliberately shifted partnership from an individual educator's choice to a shared institutional language that could inform programme design, module review, and enhancement conversations.

Designing for power-sharing, not just participation: using propositions as 'checks'

Matthews' Five Propositions for Genuine Students as Partners Practice were used as a reflective tool to stress-test partnership plans—particularly around power, ethics, and equity (Mathews, 2017). In practice, this meant building in explicit mechanisms for decision visibility (what is open for co-creation, what is constrained, and why); role clarity (who decides what, when, and with what evidence), and protection against extraction (recognising student labour, avoiding tokenistic "representation," and supporting students to participate meaningfully).

Scaling co-creation without losing its relational core: whole-class approaches

To avoid partnership becoming limited to a small advisory group, exploring how staff can adapt existing models of whole-class co-creation strategies (for e.g. using recommendations from Bovill, 2020 and Leach & Healey 2025) so that larger cohorts could shape elements of learning design (e.g., assessment criteria interpretation workshops, co-created exemplars, negotiated seminar questions, or student-led inquiry themes) (source).

The emphasis here is not that everything is negotiable, but that some aspects are intentionally opened—and that opening is framed as developing student capability for responsible action and reflective decision-making (i.e., agency). Alongside these moves, the talk draws on Matthews' argument that "students as partners" is a mindset and relational practice, not merely an outcome measure—helping explain why partnership must be embedded culturally if it is to endure beyond isolated projects (Mathews, 2016).

Significance for academic development

The talk positions academic developers as system-level enablers of agency. If agency is central to transformation, then academic development work includes shaping enabling conditions, building staff confidence, and translating values into workable processes. This matters because curriculum change often fails not due to lack of ideas, but due to misalignment across policy, practice, and culture. Partnership provides a coherent thread linking those levels—when it is designed as power-sharing rather than consultation. Concretely, the talk offers a principles-to-practice blueprint for academic developers, including:

1. A partnership-principles workshop sequence co-facilitated with students.

2. A toolkit including a holistic approach to reviewing assessment and feedback practices using established frameworks with students using co-designed templates to facilitate partnership dialogue.

Participants will leave with a practical way to embed students-as-partners into curriculum redesign that is conceptually grounded, ethically alert to power dynamics challenges, and scalable through a whole-institution co-creation strategy, while explicitly linking partnership to the development of student agency. The talk aims to spark dialogue about what we mean by "agency" in our institutions—and how academic development can move partnership from inspiring rhetoric to sustainable curriculum architecture.

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Creating cultures of student-staff partnership to reimagine student education

James Forde, Lucy Mason, Laura Conroy, Libby Johnstone, Jenna Isherwood, Nely Konstantinova

Abstract

As co-creation practices become ever more embedded in institutional strategies to enhance teaching and learning, how can we shift perceptions of partnership working from something that is done as a one-off activity to something that is a constant and continuous way of doing and being within universities? This fundamental question will be interrogated through the lens of a recent change programme designed to redefine curricula across an entire institution and the subsequent support that was put in place to guide and influence teaching staff in the use of co-creation methods and tools. As part of this institutional drive, a team of Student Partnerships Advisors was created to work with academic leaders to audit, critique and rethink their approaches to co-creation and partnership within their courses and / or departments. This talk highlights the successes and challenges presented with this approach, and it outlines a unique perspective on the role of academic developers in creating cultures in which students are empowered to influence their own learning journeys and in which staff develop new practices and mindsets outside of traditional development programmes. The audience will be encouraged to engage with this approach to student-staff partnerships as a foundational and lasting way to iteratively reimagine teaching and learning across a large institution, and they will be asked to consider the possible advantages and challenges to adopting such an approach within their own areas of work.

Keywords: co-creation; people-centred design; partnerships; teaching & learning enhancement

Extended Summary

It has become a tenet of HE institutional strategies that staff will work in partnership with their students to create exceptional learning experiences that are indicative of learners' needs and motivations. But how can we translate an institutional expectation into meaningful practice, particularly at scale? How can we build lasting foundations for partnership work to thrive so that learners are continuously empowered to shape their own learning experiences and those of future students? And ultimately, how can academic developers lead the drive to change such practices and mindsets in our institutions? This talk addresses these fundamental questions with the example of a large-scale programme of change that has asked staff members to reimagine teaching and learning experiences across an entire institution. This transformational programme was launched with a key ambition that working in partnership with students would bring about radical and innovative change across its programmes of study for over 40,000 students. The key challenge for the institution was how to avoid tick-box approaches to teaching and learning enhancement in response to such a top-down, executive level mandate. Instead, we wanted to ensure that teaching staff felt empowered and supported to be truly creative and innovative in transforming curricula in ways that would meet the needs and expectations of their students, as well as helping to meet institutional and sector challenges. To meet this key aim, a team of Student Partnerships Advisors was formed with the primary goal of developing and embedding lasting cultures of student-staff partnerships at programme and school / department levels. In so doing, the enhancement of teaching and learning experiences becomes a continuous, iterative process – and one that places student agency and empowerment at the centre. Traditional co-creation programmes–which connect staff members with students and provide frameworks for co-creation within a defined project or initiative–undoubtedly have a role to play in academic development (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). But, as this talk outlines, such an approach would not have addressed a central challenge for this institution, at this time; namely, how to enhance and connect its existing platforms for partnership to create long-lasting foundations for educational enhancement that are inherent to schools/departments. To meet this ambitious aim, a more unique and bespoke model of development support was needed. The approach that was devised deliberately deviated from traditional partnership programmes to focus on the interconnections between student voice spaces, student representative structures and co-creation projects. The extent to which these different platforms align with the aims and principles of authentic student-staff partnerships has drawn increasing attention and debate in recent years (Matthews & Dollinger, 2023). Student voice platforms provide valuable spaces for feedback and insight but can avoid meaningful dialogue between staff and students. Student representative structures hold institutions to account for key decisions and actions, but they are not always the most appropriate or productive spaces for partnership working between staff and students to thrive. And co-creation projects can result in truly unique and transformative outcomes for staff and students alike, but they can be limited in their scope and are in danger of relying on a few students to represent the ideas and opinions of a much larger cohort of peers.

This talk will explain how, by focussing on the development of cultures (rather than individual instances) of partnership, this team of academic developers have been able to help staff members within schools / departments to see partnership through a more holistic and interconnected lens. This is vital in ensuring that this approach to educational enhancement is sustainable and driven from within schools, rather than relying on top-down, executive-driven, programmes of change. In only 18 months, the impact of this work within the institution has been profound, with some senior academic leaders stating that this has been the most valuable academic development support they have ever received. Academic leaders have seen the value of more carefully considering which partnership approaches are

needed within the unique context of their own departments, its staff members and its students. Teaching staff have also responded particularly positively to the approach to academic development on offer. Rather than offering ideas and theoretical underpinnings through development courses that are delivered within a specified window, in this approach academic development advisors work with staff on a 1:1 basis to understand current approaches and challenges; to co-design a plan for how to create a more enhanced culture of partnerships; and to embed these ideas and help them to manage the potential change in mindsets and practices for staff and students that these will ideas will result in.

This talk seeks to inspire change in terms of traditional approaches to student-staff partnerships work within HEIs. It hopes to stimulate conversations and ideas about how the aim of co-creation work to be a driver in transforming approaches to teaching and learning can be translated from an executive-level mandate to one that is viewed as attainable and necessary by teaching staff within HE institutions. This talk also seeks to offer a fresh perspective on academic development more broadly: namely, to rethink traditional methods of development and to argue for the need of institutions to resource and empower centres of teaching and learning to lead on-the-ground development work, and to support academic colleagues who may be hesitant or fearful of introducing radically different ideas into their programme, school or faculty.

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Thursday 25 June 2026

Symposium 3

Problems, Provocations, and Possibilities in Educational Development

Mary Wilson, Celia Popovic, Donna Ellis, Åse Nygren, Anna Santucci, Jeanette Sjöberg

Abstract

Around the world, educational developers are navigating a higher education landscape profoundly shaped by the current ascendance of neoliberalism and its market-driven logics of managerialism, efficiency, and accountability. These pressures re-shape educational development roles, the work of teaching centres, and institutional teaching cultures, challenging developers to balance personal and institutional demands while upholding a culture of teaching excellence and protecting the professional integrity of educational development.

While it is the case that challenges abound, educational developers also occupy a uniquely strategic position to challenge, reframe, and humanize teaching cultures and capabilities. This symposium brings together international perspectives to interrogate the provocations and possibilities for our profession at this moment. zPapers in this symposium explore how educational developers can better equip themselves for meeting the moment by deepening theoretical and practical knowledge and further developing future-oriented mindsets, as well as professional identity through engagement in formal and informal educational experiences. Contributors also examine conflictions and possibilities in various conceptualizations of educational development as a field, discipline, and profession.

Keywords: global perspectives, neoliberalism, educational development profession

Presentation 1: Formal Credentials for Educational Developers

Over the last two decades, the presenter has become increasingly interested in formal qualifications for educational developers. As others have observed, there is a large degree of serendipity involved in the way many of us come to the field. The presenter's own journey included a highly impactful course run by POD, Institute for New Educational Developers, and many workshops and meetings held by SEDA. They taught the online course for SEDA Fellowship for several years, as well as organizing a dozen colleagues to run a MOOC for would-be developers. They have created an undergraduate certificate in Educational Development at their home institution that sits within a BA in Educational Studies. Over the past four years, each cohort of 100 or so students has learnt about our profession.

The presenter is now working on proposals for a Graduate Diploma and a Master's Degree in Educational Development. They will give an overview of the proposed content and assessment for the two programs. These credentials will be offered online from Fall 2026.

Presentation 2: Adopting a future-oriented, wicked opportunities mindset

Current conditions in higher education globally are seeing unit mergers, academic program streamlining and closures, student and parent questions about the value of university credentials, and faculty disorientation from being pulled in multiple and sometimes competing directions in an attempt to address compounding and interconnected priorities and challenges. As educational developers, we also need to navigate this complex and volatile landscape. What will the future of our work entail? How might artificial intelligence change it? What do we need to question? What do we need to (try to) retain? This presentation will endeavour to address such questions in relation to a wicked opportunities mindset framework that educational developers can use to help navigate our uncertain future. This framework pairs a wicked problems mindset (Bass, 2022) with an infinite mindset (Sinek, 2019) and then combines that with possibilities thinking (Achi & Berger, 2015; Eggers & Muoio, 2015), providing a road map for how we can approach our future work in familiar yet different ways.

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Presentation 2:

Are there fundamental traits of educational developers' professional identity? If so, how are they defined and acquired? Are they portable nationally and internationally? Developers have been socialized into this learning in a variety of diverse ways and some argue that specifically designated qualifications would help advance trust in educational development as a profession (Wilson & Popovic, 2024). What are the affordances and challenges of our field's emergent state? What would we stand to gain or lose in formalizing educational pathways for developers? Can we codify our profession to be more transparently accessible and recognized, without constraining it within disciplined boundaries (Cruz et al, 2024)? What types of credibility (Little & Green, 2022) will the future of our profession need and choose? How might developers "resist [Said's (1994)] four pressures of professionalization: narrow specialization, certification of expertise, co-option by power, and intellectual conformity" (Felten & Geertsema, 2023)? How do these considerations intersect with envisioning partnership-informed educational futurities that equitably position all actors involved as collegial co-learners?

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Presentation 3: From Metrics to Meaning: Reframing Neoliberalism and Digitalization for Transformative Learning

Neoliberal pressures—such as accountability metrics, outcomes-based learning, and vocational priorities—combined with rapid digitalization challenge educational developers to preserve transformative teaching and learning in higher education (Brady & Bates, 2016; Havnes & Prøitz, 2016; Ljungqvist & Sonesson, 2022). This presentation critically examines how these forces reshape teaching cultures and proposes a practical framework for educational developers to redirect them toward fostering deep, learner-centered environments. Drawing on global educational development literature, the framework emphasizes critical inquiry, interdisciplinary connections, and professional growth to counterbalance market-driven logics. The session will explore strategies for developers to navigate these tensions, offering practical approaches to cultivate autonomous, reflective learners. It will also reflect on how to adapt these strategies to their institutional contexts and enhance the role of educational developers in shaping future-oriented teaching cultures.

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Symposium 4

Building Knowledge Together: fueling Student and Teacher Agency development with Epistemic Agency

Renée Hendriks, Belinda Ommering, Janine Haenen, Max Kusters, Jacob Nouta

Abstract

Agency is a key concept for meaningful higher education, enabling students to flourish and teachers to adapt to the evolving dynamics of higher education. Developing agency is also essential to prepare students for diverse and rapidly changing professional environments. Yet, student, teacher, and epistemic agency, are often discussed separately or even confused when applied in educational contexts. This symposium brings these perspectives together to clarify their meanings, explore their interrelations, and propose a comprehensive understanding of agency in higher education.

The first presentation examines student agency as the capacity to intentionally self-regulate learning and influence the learning environment. It introduces a model linking students' agency resources (personal, relational, and experiential) to agentic behaviour such as help-seeking and choosing learning strategies. The second contribution explores teacher agency through a qualitative study of university lecturers, identifying five purposes that guide agentic action: navigating institutional structures, acting on ethical commitments, negotiating tensions, fostering growth, and building relationships. The third paper investigates manifestations of epistemic agency among teachers in higher professional education, conceptualized as the capacity to actively use and create actionable knowledge in daily practice.

Together, these studies reveal that agency is inherently relational, contextual, and purpose-driven, shaped by individual capacities, social interactions, and institutional affordances. The concluding discussion integrates these perspectives into an innovative, coherent framework and invites participants to relate it to their own teaching and professional development practices, offering insights for fostering agency-rich learning environments across higher education.

Keywords: Student Agency, Teacher Agency, Epistemic Agency

Presentation 1: Stimulating student agency in higher education: the relation between resources of student agency and agentic behaviour

Stimulating student agency in higher education is needed to prepare future professionals for lifelong learning (OECD, 2019). Student agency refers to the capacity to intentionally self-regulate learning and influence the learning environment (Bandura, 2018). Not all students are capable of showing agentic behaviour (Van Casteren et al., 2021), even when they have access to conditions that can enable such behaviour. We refer to these conditions as agency resources. Agency resources consist of personal resources like self-efficacy, relational resources like a safe learning climate, and earlier experience resources like agentic behaviour in past learning contexts (X., under review; Jääskelä et al., 2021). Agentic behaviour refers to self-regulative processes like choosing and evaluating learning strategies, help seeking, and active participation (Bandura, 2018; Jääskelä et al., 2021). We present a model to connect the agency resources to agentic behaviour. The aim is to study how resources of agency are related to students' agentic behaviour in order to gain insight in how to support agentic behaviour. 315 first to fourth year students filled out a self-report questionnaire about available agency resources and their agentic behaviour. Multiple regression analyses showed a significant relation between specific agency resources and agentic behaviour: 63.8% of the variance of choosing and evaluating learning strategy behaviour, 64% of the variance of help seeking behaviour, and 54.9% of the variance of active participation behaviour is explained by the agency resources. In our presentation, we will explain our agency model, and discuss conclusions and practical implications of our study.

Presentation 2: Relational dimensions of teacher agency in universities: Five purposes for exercising agency in teaching

Understanding why university lecturers exercise teacher agency is essential for making sense of how teaching unfolds within complex and rapidly shifting institutional landscapes (Kusters et al., 2025). Therefore, we investigated the purposes driving lecturers' agentic actions in university teaching amid competing demands, fluid relationships, and structural constraints. Teacher agency refers to lecturers' capacity to act purposefully and make informed, value-driven decisions within their teaching practice (Priestley et al., 2015; Toom et al., 2015). While ecological models conceptualize teacher agency as an interplay of past experiences, present judgments, and future aspirations, far less is known about the underlying intentions that guide lecturers' professional decision-making. Using 23 validated teaching scenarios (cf. Kusters et al., 2024), scenario-based interviews were conducted with 12 lecturers in a Scottish university. Participants selected scenarios relevant to their own practice and explained both how they would respond and why. Reflexive thematic analysis (cf. Braun & Clarke, 2021) revealed five interrelated purposes for exercising agency: (1) navigating and adapting to institutional structures; (2) acting on moral and ethical commitments; (3) negotiating tensions between personal values and institutional expectations; (4) directing professional growth; and (5) fostering care and connection with students and colleagues. These findings demonstrate that teacher agency is relational, interpretive, and value-

laden, emerging through ongoing negotiation with people, structures, and professional identities. The study enriches ecological understandings by distinguishing between what agency is and what agency is for, highlighting the need for professional development environments that support reflection, relational engagement, and purpose-driven educational judgment.

Presentation 3: Manifestations of epistemic agency in the work of teachers in higher professional education

Epistemic agency (EA) is recognized as a vital capacity for teachers in higher professional education (or universities of applied sciences). EA is a specific type of agency to decide and take action in developing own knowledge and knowledge for others. HPE teachers typically are experienced professionals from the field, bringing with them deep domain-specific expertise and strong professional orientation. Their teaching role, however, requires them to navigate a complex and multifaceted profession that involves many roles and continuous adaptation of educational practices (X, 2025). Unlike their disciplinary expertise, their pedagogical and didactic skills are largely acquired through everyday teaching practice. In this context EA becomes vital, as it enables teachers to recognize gaps in their educational knowledge and to collaboratively build actionable knowledge for themselves and for others (Heikkilä et al., 2023; Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2017; Munneke, 2024). This study, consisting of observations of and interviews with a broad range of HPE teachers in The Netherlands, explores how EA manifests in their work, using an ecological, emergent perspective (Priestley et al., 2015). Teachers demonstrate EA through dialogue, reflective practices (often involving students), and experimentation with new approaches. Data analysis through open, selective and axial coding reveals that EA is shown to be dynamic, interactive and context-dependent. By adopting an ecological lens, this study deepens current understandings of teacher agency and provides a foundation for future research aimed at developing design principles and interventions that support HPE teachers in cultivating and applying EA in their daily work.

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Symposium 5

Enriching Pedagogical Training Across Borders: A Comparative Analysis within the EUGLOH Alliance

Maria Larsson, Réka Ökördi, Ashley Haberman-Lawson, Sara Andersson, Gunda Mohr, Nadia Blüthmann, Andrea Watkins Perez, Isabel Martins, Pedro Graça, Sira Danfakha

Abstract

This symposium examines how transnational collaboration can strengthen pedagogical training for early-career academics within a European university alliance. High-quality teaching in higher education depends significantly on the professional development of academic staff, particularly those new to teaching roles. Teaching and learning centres play a crucial role in cultivating scholarly informed and reflective teaching practices (Wright, 2023). Building on earlier work that mapped the organizational foundations for educational development across partner institutions (EUGLOH, 2024), this joint initiative conducts a comparative analysis of frameworks, course designs, and material resources used in introductory pedagogical programs for new academic staff.

The session brings together complementary presentations from educational developers who exchanged and analysed organisational contexts, course structures, assignments, and teaching materials. This collaborative process revealed shared challenges as well as innovative practices that can enhance support for new teachers. The individual presentations resonate well with the four themes presented by O'Mahony et al (2025); the institutionalisation of staff development, the shift from compliance-driven participation toward a culture of teaching and learning, the role of relationships and connection in development initiatives, and the need to examine barriers to engagement.

By presenting converging themes and distinct institutional approaches, the symposium demonstrates the value of cross-border dialogue in improving program design and fostering professional growth. It highlights how systematic comparison and knowledge sharing across institutions can promote academic

development, offering actionable insights for rethinking and enriching teaching and learning courses and programs in diverse higher education contexts.

Keywords: Transnational Collaboration, Academic Development, Pedagogical Training, Extended Summary

Presentation 1: Ensuring pedagogical development over time

Preparing university teachers for a trajectory of sustained pedagogical growth remains a persistent challenge. Introductory courses programs offer important foundations but are often insufficient on their own; many institutions provide few structured opportunities for ongoing development once these initial activities conclude. According to the literature, research on the pedagogical preparation of early-career university teachers focuses predominantly on graduate teaching assistants leaving the broader support needs of new teachers largely unexplored. Moreover, literature highlights the lack of a validated framework for preparing early career teachers for university teaching. While Sharpe's (2000) model is frequently cited (e.g., Slaughter et al., 2023), a coherent structure for development is absent. Evaluations report mixed effects on teaching self-efficacy and pedagogical awareness (Navlekar et al., 2025; Brown & Archbell, 2025), relying on short-term, self-reported measures. Systematic reviews (Xia et al., 2025) reveal significant variability in program aims and delivery, with limited European studies.

This contribution offers a conceptual, evidence-informed analysis of how universities can ensure pedagogical development over time, from early teaching experiences to sustained career growth. Building on comparative analysis within the EUGLOH alliance, we examine how teaching and learning centers can support career-long pedagogical development through thematic courses, hands-on workshops, SoTL-focused initiatives, and networks for collaboration. The analysis identifies organizational strategies, such as scaffolding progression across career stages, aligning recognition systems with pedagogical engagement. The contribution argues that connecting early-career teacher preparation with long-term, institutionally supported professional development is essential to enhancing teaching quality and fostering scholarly, reflective practice throughout the academic career.

Presentation 2: If we build it, will they come? Lessons from the EUGLOH Alliance

Within the EUGLOH Alliance, approaches to basic teaching qualification for early-career academics vary; some member universities require mandatory training (Lund University, Université Paris-Saclay, University of Alcalá), while others rely on voluntary participation (Universität Hamburg, LMU Munich, University of Porto, University of Szeged, UiT The Arctic University of Norway, University of Novi Sad). Despite these differences, all institutions at some point provide opportunities for educators to enhance their pedagogical skills through open-access courses and self- study resources. This raises a critical question: "If we build opportunities for qualification, will faculty make use of them?"

Drawing on experiences from across the Alliance, we discuss how centers for teaching and learning, together with other university actors, can foster an institutional culture in which teaching is valued as highly as research (OECD, 2024, Kwiek,

2019), and ongoing pedagogical development becomes routine. Our findings highlight strategies for encouraging participation, such as targeted outreach, incentive structures, and the integration of professional development into institutional norms to recognize the value of teaching (Zhang, 2025).

Comparative analysis and dialogue with colleagues from diverse university contexts reveal common challenges such as lack of time and recognition (Zhang, 2025), innovative methods, and transferrable best practices. The results emphasize that systematic comparisons and cross-border knowledge exchange can substantially enhance faculty development programs, offering practical guidance for both voluntary and mandatory approaches to academic staff development.

Presentation 3: Catalyzing professional development

Pedagogical training (PT) has the potential to play a significant role in the professional development of academic teachers. Griffioen (2023) argues that balanced professionalism has three integrated dimensions: professional identity, professional knowledge, and professional action. Together, they amount to a sense of who I want to be, what I need to know, and what I need to do in encountered professional situations. It must be recognized by PT instructors that the development of such a sense relies heavily on situated and informal learning (Evans, 2019) that largely happens outside of the training per se. However, it is also vital that instructors recognize how they can play a role in catalyzing such situated, informal learning by communicating insights and concepts that stimulate and support teachers' perception of what is pedagogically significant in a situation; reflection on what happened and why; and deliberation on implications for practice and how to act on them.

In this presentation, we offer three examples of practices within the EUGLOH network that we perceive as relevant in relation to the catalyzation of situated and informal professional learning in academic teachers. These are micro-teaching sessions, mentorship programs, and ABC Learning Design workshops. The examples are briefly set out in terms of practical implementation before they are discussed in terms of their catalyst value.

Presentation 4: Is it possible to reach common ground?

Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to support teaching quality and identity formation, evaluate teaching performance, and create structured pathways for academic and professional development.

This conceptual contribution examines whether a shared foundation for initial pedagogical training can be established across the diverse institutions of the EUGLOH Alliance. Drawing on a comparative analysis of organizational contexts, course structures, and teaching materials exchanged among educational developers, the study identifies common elements that could inform a collective framework for supporting early-career teachers.

Although significant differences persist across European higher education systems, the analysis highlights several converging principles that underpin staff development in teaching and the widespread adoption of mandatory training for newly hired academics suggests that the baseline conditions for convergence already exist. Although the concept of staff development is interpreted differently across institutions, it generally encompasses: the need for a structured initial training program for newly appointed teaching staff; the value of institutional reference frameworks that articulate what constitutes high-quality university teaching; and the importance of a dedicated organizational body responsible for program design and quality assurance.

Within a European context, the training of higher education teachers should incorporate both the fundamental values of the European Union and the guiding principles of European educational policies. These values should inform pedagogical practices, professional attitudes, and institutional ethos.

The contribution explores the possibilities—and limitations—of reaching a common ground in pedagogical training across borders.

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Symposium 6

Educational leadership of, for, with and through academic development

Klara Bolander Laksov, Cormac McGrath, Anna Serbati

Abstract

This symposium explores the concept of educational leadership of, for, with, and through academic development, engaging authors from an ongoing special issue of IJAD in a collective conversation on how institutions can enable and support educational leadership. The session brings together diverse perspectives on leadership in higher education, addressing challenges that arise during organizational change, the negotiation of leadership across formal and informal roles, and the role of professional development programs in fostering educational leadership. Contributions also examine what motivates faculty to engage in informal pedagogical leadership and how academic development units can act as catalysts for leadership practices. Drawing on insights from an ongoing review study that conceptualizes discourses of educational leadership in academic development literature, the symposium aims to provide participants with both theoretical and practical lenses for understanding leadership as a distributed and relational practice. By emphasizing complementarity among the presentations, the session seeks to inspire academic developers and institutional leaders to imagine new strategies for advancing educational leadership in their contexts.

Keywords: Educational Leadership, Academic Development, Organizational Change, Professional Development

Presentation 1: AD Leadership in Higher Education Mergers: A Case Study of two Norwegian Mergers

Norwegian higher education underwent major restructuring in 2016 through mergers of universities and university colleges. This study explores academic development (AD) leadership challenges and opportunities following these mergers at two universities and four university colleges. Based on interviews with faculty, leaders, and academic developers four years post-merger, it examines the interplay of leadership, AD, and institutional reorganisation. Findings reveal that managerial integration, unclear AD leadership mandates, and hierarchical attitudes in central AD units constrained their potential as leaders of, for, with, and through academic development. These insights offer lessons for higher education mergers beyond Norway.

The role of education al innovation projects and academic developers in the development of educational leadership Developing educational leadership in senior academics benefits both individual and institutional needs. Professional development (PD) programmes often require participants to implement educational innovation projects. This study explores how such projects and facilitation by academic developers support leadership development. Interviews with three facilitators and six participants from two PD programmes reveal that projects act as boundary objects, linking programme and practice. Facilitators play a key role in coaching and modeling leadership through their own expertise. To strengthen this process, academic developers should also have opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Presentation 2: Why Faculty Lead: Motivations and Benefits for Informal Pedagogical Leadership

Recent changes in higher education underscore the importance of pedagogical leadership in driving educational change. This study explores informal pedagogical leadership across three programmes in two national contexts, using focus groups with 45 participants and Bolander-Laksov and Tomson's (2017) framework. Findings reveal additional dimensions beyond the original model: enabling learning for teachers and students and professional development consistently motivate engagement, though benefits vary by context. Conference presenters value visibility, departmental ambassadors prioritize new learning spaces, and teaching fellows emphasize change leadership. Insights inform how academic developers can design programmes that support faculty stepping into informal leadership roles.

Presentation 3: Redefining Faculty Mentorship: Identity, Community, and Pedagogical Leadership During an Institutional Transition

This qualitative study examines how faculty enacted peer mentoring roles during a university-wide LMS transition, framing mentoring as both a response to change and identity work. Data from 27 mentors' applications, surveys, and reflections reveal motivations, evolving identities, and collaborative practices. Initially uncertain, mentors reframed their roles as leaders and learners through training, cross-disciplinary exchange, and collaboration with instructional designers. Mentoring extended beyond technical support to distributed leadership, pedagogical modeling, and institutional sense-making. The cohort model fostered a community of practice and lasting networks.

Findings highlight mentoring as relational and identity-driven, with implications for designing faculty development programs.

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Symposium 7

Disciplinary research to promote deep learning and self-regulation

Macarena Trujillo Guillen · Amparo Fernández March, María Pino Sancho Fernández, Lorena Atarés Huerta, María José Canet Subiela, María Asunción Pérez Pascual, María Ángeles Carabal Montagud, Paulo Sarriugarte Onandia, Kristina Zuza Elosegi

Abstract

The objective of this symposium is to underline the importance of research in teaching as a driving force to foster student self-regulation and help teachers to guide them toward a deep approach to learning. The interest in this proposal focuses on understanding the different pathways through which disciplinary research is promoted and carried out. Among the options for engaging with disciplinary research, two are developed. On one hand, there is what is known as Scholarly, which involves basing teaching in the discipline on existing research. And on the other hand, there is Scholarship, which additionally entails considering one's own teaching as a focus of research.

Keywords: students self-regulation, deep learning, scholarly, scholarship

The symposium is structured into a brief introduction conducted by the session chair, followed by three presentations, the discussion, and closing. The objective of the introduction is to center the topic on research within the disciplines and its importance in promoting students' self-regulated learning and achieving a deep approach to learning.

Presentation 1: Research in teaching disciplines: the ability to transform one's own teaching and contribute to the generation of expert knowledge

All learning begins with asking questions. This phrase, which we have taken for granted when talking about student training, takes on special relevance when we think about it in relation to teachers, because advancing in our understanding of teaching and learning also involves an evolution in the type of questions teachers ask themselves about their own teaching. At first, there may not be many questions, which means that there is no development; with experience, spontaneous questions arise, based on common sense and not very systematic, they may begin to be based on existing (scholarly) literature, but undoubtedly, the qualitative leap is found when they immerse themselves in research processes. The thesis put forward in this contribution is that research is fundamentally about asking questions, increasingly better questions, and that this learning process is a powerful strategy for contributing, on the one hand, to the individual transformation of teachers and, on the other, to the evolution of university teaching as a whole, as it generates academic communities of practice that produce knowledge and advance the training of our students in a much more solid way. There are two main arguments to support this thesis: The first is that research tests a theoretical framework in a specific context, critically and openly and using accurate data, which allows us to think about teaching in a systematic way; and the second is that this production of knowledge takes place in a social context, in which peer deliberation and the academic community of reference take place. In short, we are talking here about the academic approach to teaching, or SoTL.

Presentation 2: Design-Based Research in the teaching of electric circuits

This presentation aims to show the main research works carried out within the 'Discipline-based research' research line of the IkasGaraia research group. Following this introduction, the presentation will focus on a specific example showing how a Teaching-Learning Sequence (TLS) is generated using the Design-Based Research (DBR) methodology on electrical circuits for introductory university courses. In the case of this specific example, the detailed application of the DBR methodology will be shown, starting with the application of design tools (epistemological analysis and learning demands) to define the learning objectives and their relationship with the students learning difficulties to be addressed. Based on these foundations, the learning pathway and specific activities will be defined to guide students during implementation. This implementation will be evaluated in different dimensions related with quality of the sequence and the achievement of learning objectives by students. The results of this evaluation will be the basis for redesign of a second TLS and its implementation. Quantitative and qualitative results of the evolution of the TLS and the achievement of learning objective by students will be presented.

Presentation 3: IDEALES Network: Advancing Disciplinary Learning through SoTL

The IDEALES Network (Disciplinary Research for Teaching, Learning and Leadership with a SoTL Approach) was created within REDU (Spanish Network for University Teaching) to promote educational research aimed at improving disciplinary learning through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) framework. It brings together teams from Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV), Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), University of Deusto, and University of Zaragoza (UNIZAR), forming a collaborative academic community committed to enhancing student learning and advancing knowledge. The network focuses on fostering deep understanding over surface learning through applied research. Its main lines of work include: studying threshold concepts, alternative conceptions, and systems

thinking; developing techniques to decode expert reasoning and make novice thinking explicit; and exploring self-regulation, emotional influences, and learning-friendly environments. These initiatives are complemented by faculty development activities, seminars, and webinars within REDU, as well as participation in symposia, consolidating IDEALES as a hub for pedagogical innovation and academic leadership. Key achievements so far include three educational innovation projects at UPV: developing an AI-based Socratic tutor, analyzing the role of systems thinking in comprehension challenges, and studying emotional influences on learning mathematical functions. Looking ahead, IDEALES aims to expand by incorporating new institutions and strengthening collaborative research. Through these efforts, IDEALES seeks to become a benchmark in integrating the SoTL approach to transform learning experiences in higher education.

Papers 12

If Grades Undermine Learning, Why Do We Still Use Them? Navigating the Pedagogical and Institutional Conditions for Change

Varia Christie, Camilla Falk Rønne Nissen

Abstract

This paper explores how grade-free assessment formats can promote student agency, resilience, and meaningful engagement with learning, addressing challenges associated with high-stakes, graded exams. We draw on two years of implementation of the “Active Participation” exam format at Copenhagen Business School, a pass/fail model that assesses students’ engagement with a range of learning activities distributed across the semester. Designed to reduce performativity pressures and encourage sustained participation, the format embeds multiple feedback opportunities within course design. Guided by a compassionate assessment perspective, our analysis brings together teacher experiences documented through educational development work and student perspectives captured through narrative interviews supported by visual methods. This data illuminates how students’ motivation, confidence, and stress levels evolved, and how the grade-free format reshaped their relationship to participation and learning. Findings indicate that the format can effectively redirect student focus from performance to learning, though successful adoption requires thoughtful teacher facilitation and clear communication of expectations. The study also highlights institutional enablers and barriers, emphasising the strategic role of educational developers in translating assessment policy into practice. This session will engage participants in discussing both policy-level implications and practical design strategies, offering actionable insights for colleagues seeking to implement learning-oriented, low-stakes assessment approaches.

Keywords: Grade-free assessment, Compassionate assessment, Student agency, Engagement, Institutional conditions

Extended Summary

Assessment design plays a pivotal role in student learning. While well-designed assessments can effectively guide student effort and engagement towards the development of self-regulation skills (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006), others induce stress and anxiety, and re-orient students towards performance rather than learning, negatively impacting learning outcomes (Nieminen & Yang, 2024). These challenges are particularly pronounced in graded components, as evidenced by prior research, especially in high-stakes, end-of-course exams - such assessments can misdirect student motivation, stifle their creativity and interest in learning, and harm students' overall well-being (Gibbs, L., 2020; Currant, N. et al., 2024). To address these issues, many educators are seeking assessment approaches that foster meaningful engagement with learning and help students develop agency and resilience—competencies increasingly vital in today’s complex and volatile world. However, rigid institutional regulations often limit teachers’ opportunities to innovate or experiment with alternative approaches. This paper seeks to prompt a discussion on the role of grade-free exam formats to promote student agency and self-regulated learning by reflecting on our experiences at Copenhagen Business School (Denmark). In December 2023, the institution approved the "Active Participation" exam format, a pass/fail assessment method that assesses students based on their engagement with various learning activities throughout the term. This format aims to enable teachers to holistically assess whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes while encouraging ongoing interaction with content, peers, and feedback. Activities include authentic exercises, peer-feedback cycles, individual reflections, group discussions, and engagement in collaborative work. The initiative was driven by two key goals: (1) to mitigate the performativity culture associated with end-of-course exams, which can hinder learning and intrinsic motivation, and (2) to promote consistent effort and sustained engagement across the term, supported by formative feedback opportunities built directly into the course design. Guided by a compassionate assessment perspective (Gibbs, 2017), this paper presents insights from the first two years of implementation. Our analysis brings together the experiences of individual teachers we supported in our work as educational developers and student perspectives captured through a series of qualitative interviews. The interviews drew on a narrative approach (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000) supported by visual methods (Bagnoli, 2009). In these interviews, students were invited to draw a “typical” week, illustrating events, places, and study-related activities, as well as fluctuations in study intensity across courses and throughout the semester. This approach proved particularly effective in eliciting how students’ motivation, confidence, and engagement evolved over time, and how they interpreted the pass/fail format in relation to stress, learning, and participation. Combining these teacher and student perspectives enables us to develop a holistic understanding of how grade-free assessment can reshape classroom cultures and student–teacher relationships.

Our findings demonstrate that the ’Active Participation’ exam format can effectively shift student focus from performance to learning, although this also requires a thoughtful and sustained teacher effort. We balance the discussion of pedagogical advantages with a reflection on the practical constraints that impede wider adoption of this exam format, such as concerns about workload, relevance across disciplines, and the need for explicit communication

about pedagogical values and expectations. As such, the paper illuminates not only the pedagogical implications of grade-free assessment but also the institutional conditions that enable or hinder such initiatives. We argue that institutional strategy plays a crucial role in creating the necessary frameworks and that educational developers are essential actors in supporting teachers, translating policy into practice, and disseminating effective approaches. The session is designed to engage participants with both policy-level considerations and concrete learning design strategies. We aim to highlight key challenges and offer multiple examples from our experience, enabling participants to explore how grade-free assessment formats can reduce stress, foster engagement, and enhance learning outcomes in their own contexts.

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Enhancing student feedback literacy development through online interactive peer assessment

Ying Zhan, Zhi Hong Wan

Abstract

Cultivation of student feedback literacy is a challenging task for university teachers. They are facing the challenges of integrating training of student feedback literacy into the crowded curricula and finding effective methods to conduct such training. This study employed online interactive peer assessment to promote students' feedback literacy through a quasi-experimental design. The experiment involved 114 students in three experimental class groups and 104 in three control class groups. Pre- and post-surveys on feedback literacy, as well as individual interviews, were collected to determine whether online interactive peer assessment influenced the development of student feedback literacy. The results showed that, compared with the control groups, the experimental groups increased their feedback literacy more significantly, especially in terms of appreciation of feedback and readiness to engage.

Keywords: feedback literacy, online interactive peer assessment, higher education

Extended Summary

Introduction

Increasingly, researchers have recognized that the impact of feedback on learning cannot be fully realized without students' active engagement with it. Students' agentic engagement with feedback requires them to be equipped with adequate feedback literacy, which includes their competencies and dispositions (Carless & Boud, 2018). Cultivation of student feedback literacy is a challenging task for university teachers. They are facing the challenges of integrating training of student feedback literacy into the crowded curricula and finding effective methods to conduct such training. To meet the first challenge, the development of feedback literacy can be integrated within disciplinary curricula to save course time and space. For the second challenge, researchers have proposed potential ways such as peer assessment, analysing exemplars, feedback requests and self-assessment (Careless & Boud, 2018). Among these strategies, peer assessment has been applied to authentic teaching settings and has been initially demonstrated as a powerful approach (Ketonen et al., 2020). The potential of peer assessment in promoting feedback literacy has been enhanced by technology (Carless & Boud, 2018). In addition to convenience, speed of delivery and traceability, the biggest affordance of technology is to provide more efficient and meaningful interaction between students when they are engaged in peer assessment process (Wood, 2022). Interaction between peers is crucial for student feedback literacy development because it provides opportunities of questioning, clarifying, reflecting and monitoring to understand and use feedback for improvement (Malecka et al., 2022). However, few studies have investigated the impacts of online interactive peer assessment (OIPA) on student feedback literacy development. To address this research gap, this study explored a major question: to what extent and in what aspects does OIPA improve student feedback literacy?

Design of online peer assessment activities

Maintaining a productive dialogue around feedback can be challenging for students without systematic guidance and structure (Er, Dimitriadis & Gašević, 2021). To enable the participants to engage in fruitful interactions in the experiments, the '4 R' stages of OIPA (i.e., Requesting peer feedback; reviewing peers' work; responding to peer feedback; and revising work based on peer feedback) (see Figure 1) were designed and implemented in three cycles. Requesting specific feedback from one's peers is an effective strategy and was done at the beginning of OIPA. After peers submitted their finished assessment tasks, the teacher exchanged their work on Google Drive. They reviewed each other's work and gave comments based on the assessment criteria provided by the teacher. In addition, they responded to feedback requests from their peers. Following that, a feedback discussion took place between the feedback receivers and the feedback givers. The discussion required the participants to engage critically with feedback and to justify their acceptance or rejection of peer feedback. After the discussion, the participants determined an action plan for revising their work. The revised work was finally submitted for teachers' evaluation.

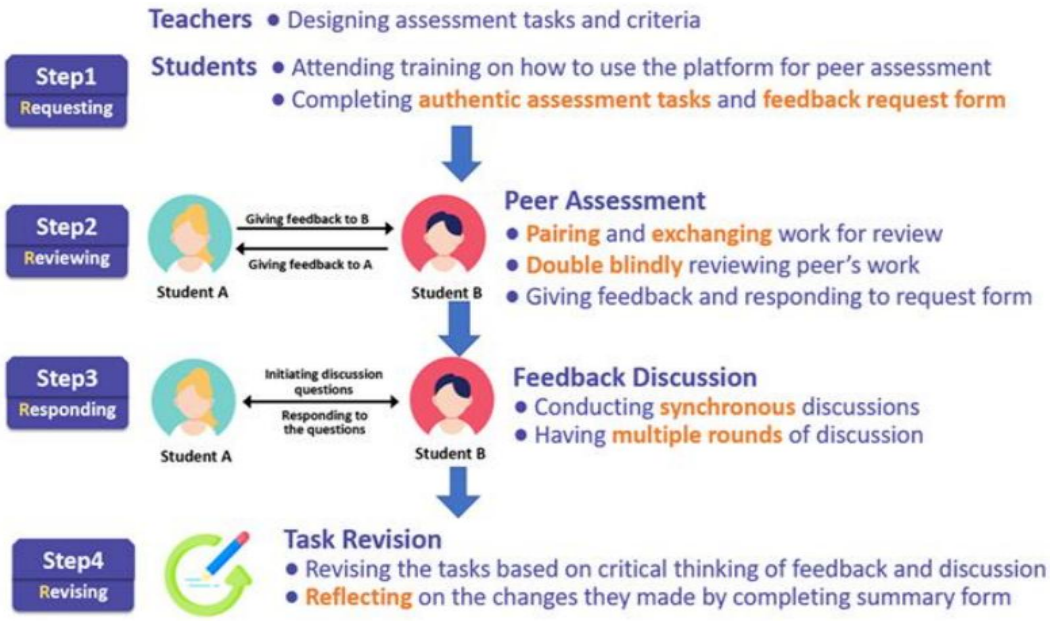


Fig 1: Design of OIPA

Data collection

This quasi-experiment involved 114 students in three experimental class groups and 104 in three control class groups. Pre- and post- surveys on feedback literacy was collected to discern whether online interactive peer assessment impacted the development of student feedback literacy. The feedback literacy scale developed by the author contains six dimensions, which include students' competencies of a) eliciting, b) processing and c) enacting feedback and the students' disposition in terms of d) appreciation of feedback, e) readiness to engage and f) commitment to change. Post-survey interviews with participants from the experimental groups (n = 31) were conducted to triangulate the survey data and explore the reasons underlying any possible change in feedback literacy.

Findings

The results showed that, compared with the control groups, the experimental groups increased their feedback literacy more significantly, especially in terms of appreciation of feedback and readiness to engage after completing OIPA for three rounds (Table 1). The interview results reveal that dialogic feedback embedded in OIPA was crucial in promoting student feedback literacy. For example, one participant mentioned that "the feedback request form increased my motivation for participating because it helps me make sure what I want to discuss with my peers. This way, the follow-up interactions can be more focused, rather than just briefly saying that the peer did a good job."

Table 1. ANCOVA for the control and experimental groups

Dimensions	Group	Mean	S.D.	p
Student feedback literacy	Control groups	4.61	.804	.038*
	Experimental groups	4.80	.670	
Feedback competencies	Control groups	4.57	.852	.112
	Experimental groups	4.70	.788	
Eliciting	Control groups	4.67	.919	.423
	Experimental groups	4.72	.911	
Processing	Control groups	4.59	.857	.076
	Experimental groups	4.75	.844	
Enacting	Control groups	4.48	.967	.417
	Experimental groups	4.56	.895	
Feedback dispositions	Control groups	4.67	.801	.102
	Experimental groups	4.86	.719	
Appreciation of feedback	Control groups	4.79	.891	.013*
	Experimental groups	5.07	.771	
Readiness to engage	Control groups	4.70	.873	.049*
	Experimental groups	4.96	.868	
Commitment to change	Control groups	4.44	.971	.509
	Experimental group	4.41	1.008	

Conclusion

Unlike other studies, which have claimed the effectiveness of peer assessment on student feedback literacy in a qualitative manner, this study provides a more accurate estimation of the effects of OIPA in a statistical manner. This study highlights that OIPA is powerful in enhancing student feedback literacy.

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Student Perspectives on Assessment Reform: Towards Inclusive and Responsive Practices

Dr. Karla Lopez-Murillo, Pamela Thomas, Hayley Pazmino Guevara

Abstract

Over the past five years, the assessment landscape in UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has undergone significant transformation—initially accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic and more recently challenged by the emergence of generative AI. In response, HEIs across the UK have adopted Principles of Assessment for Learning to guide the redesign of assessments that are more inclusive, transparent, and aligned with educational quality assurance frameworks. In a post-1992 UK university, the Academic Development Team within the Centre for Research Informed Teaching (CRIT) developed the Assessment Principles (APs) in the spring 2024 to address the institutional need for equitable and meaningful opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and behaviours in line with the internal Curriculum Framework and institutional Education strategy. This paper explores the ways in which current assessment and feedback practices are perceived and experienced by students across different disciplines, within the context of ongoing institutional reform. Drawing on a mixed-methods approach, this paper presents key findings from a university-wide survey (n=287) and focus groups (n=13) conducted during the 2024–25 academic year. Findings reveal students' calls for fairer and more consistent feedback, clearer assessment guidelines, and student-centred assessments that reflect real-world scenarios and support the development of practical skills. Additionally, students emphasised the importance of pastoral care, more opportunities to engage with lecturers, and develop stronger peer support networks. These findings underscore the need for inclusive, context-sensitive dialogue with students and the integration of their voices into assessment design.

Keywords: assessment, feedback, student voice, academic development

Extended summary

Background

After the Covid-19 pandemic and the rapid integration of digital technologies the university faced significant institutional changes, most notably, the redesign of assessment and feedback/feedforward practices. These changes underscored the importance of a strategic response to meet emerging institutional priorities. They also prompted the exploration of ways in which lecturers could be supported to design appropriate, inclusive, and innovative assessments, aligned with learning outcomes to ensure equitable opportunities for students to demonstrate the acquisition of relevant competences.

This led to the formation of the Assessment Framework and Strategy Project team who developed and implemented the Assessment Principles (APs) across all course structures within the university. The team began investigating how students were coping with the institutional changes and initiated a collaborative partnership with the Access and Participation Plan (APP) team. This partnership aimed to explore what current assessment and feedback practices were effectively supporting students in

Despite widespread assessment reform across the sector, there is limited evidence on how such reforms are experienced by students (Freeman & Dobbins, 2013; Jones et al., 2021). Existing research focuses on institutional policy, academic staff perspectives, or conceptual models of inclusive and authentic assessment (Shaw et al., 2020; Walker, 2025; Winstone & Boud, 2022). Little is known about how students interpret the clarity, fairness, and relevance of assessment practices following the implementation of new principles-based frameworks (O'Neill, 2017). Moreover, few studies take a mixed-methods approach to capture students experiences across diverse cohorts (Jones et al., 2021). This gap is especially significant given national calls for inclusive, transparent, and responsive assessment systems.

To address this gap, this paper examines how students perceive and experience current assessment and feedback practices within the context of ongoing institutional reform. The insights generated aim to inform the strategic enhancement of assessment design and contribute to wider sector discussions on inclusive and student-centred assessment.

Aim of the paper

This paper advances discussions around inclusive, student-centred assessment practices that reduce barriers to engagement and enhance student success in the broader Higher Education (HE) space. Findings highlight how student voice can shape institutional reforms and position academic developers as key agents for sustainable improvements in teaching, learning, and assessment.

Methods

A mixed-method design combined an online survey (n=287) and five focus groups (n=13) representing diverse student cohorts, including undergraduate, postgraduate, apprenticeship, and disabled students. The survey launched in the summer of 2025, featured Likert-scale and open-ended questions on assessment experiences, preferences, and feedback practices. Focus groups provided deeper insights into student perspectives. Each focus group lasted

approximately one hour and was recorded on Teams where a transcription was generated with students' written consent. Although the sample size does not represent the wider institution population, students' interviews offered rich insights into their experiences and those of their peers.

The survey instrument was analysed using descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data through thematic analysis. Prior to beginning the iterative coding process, researchers engaged in reflexive positionality checks to minimise bias and enhance credibility and rigor (Braun & Clarke, 2023).

Key findings

This paper presents three key themes drawn from the larger project: consistency and clarity in assessments and marking criteria communication, meaningful and relevant assessments, and improvement of feedback practices. Two-thirds of survey respondents found assessment instructions and marking rubrics clear, yet a third rarely received marking criteria in advance, highlighting communication gaps.

Finally, two-thirds of students said feedback helped identify knowledge gaps, and 60% felt it supported academic skill development. Qualitative insights further revealed that students value constructive feedback that includes actionable suggestions for improvement, as well as recognition of strengths to boost their confidence. Some students emphasised the importance of linking feedback to marking criteria and called for more formative feedback opportunities and creating more spaces for dialogue with lecturers and peers to deepen understanding and support learning from mistakes. Additionally, some noted disparities in feedback detail among peers within the same module, leading to perceptions of disadvantage. This prompted recommendations for clearer institutional standards and consistent marking rubrics.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and current literature, we propose five strategic actions to enhance student learning and assessment practices:

Strengthen Communication of Assessment Expectations Academic developers should collaborate with Schools to ensure consistent and transparent communication of assessment expectations and marking criteria. Provide timely access to rubrics and guidance for staff and students to promote clarity and fairness.

Embed Personalisation and Pastoral Support into Academic Development Reinforce personal tutoring as a strategic mechanism in alignment with the university commitment for inclusive education. Encourage regular 'open office' hours and empathetic communication to foster a culture of care, belonging, and academic confidence.

Scale and Resource Peer-Assisted Learning (PAL) Building on existing peer support cultures, find ways for the expansion and institutional recognition of the PAL scheme. Adequate resourcing and promotion will strengthen student agency, collaborative learning, and retention.

Operationalise Feedback Standards Across the Institution Develop and disseminate guidelines for formative feedback aligned with marking criteria. Promote reflective dialogue between students and staff to address inconsistencies and improve feedback quality.

Integrate Student Voice into Assessment Design Facilitate co-creation by embedding student feedback into assessment redesign processes. This aligns with institutional APs and supports equity and responsiveness to diverse learning needs.

This paper contributes to broader HE debates on inclusive assessment, feedback equity, and co-creation. It also reinforces the role of academic developers in shaping policy, aligning curricula with institutional goals, and embedding reflective and participatory approaches in teaching and learning. Ultimately, the study provides a practical model for integrating student voice into institutional change processes, offering transferable insights for universities aiming to create fairer, more responsive, and learning-oriented assessment systems.

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Reconceptualizing assessment workshops for staff development in an era of Generative AI

Kershree Padayachee, Greig Krull, Laura Dison

Abstract

The current disruption created by Generative AI (GAI) and the emerging discourse around its impact on assessment in higher education presents a unique challenge for the academic community. For academic developers, GAI requires simultaneous personal upskilling and providing guidelines and spaces for academics to explore the implications (real and potential) of GAI on pedagogical practices. Similar to the COVID-19 pandemic, assessment has emerged as a significant area requiring transformation. We present the findings from a qualitative study involving focus groups that was conducted at a university in South Africa, that aimed to reveal the ways in which students and staff are integrating GAI in learning, teaching and assessment. Assessment integrity emerged as a dominant concern. We explore the implications for assessment transformation possibilities, using Hanson's (2001) conceptual framework of institutional theory and educational change. This framework helps to illustrate how institutional memory and organizational learning may influence educational transformation with respect to GAI integration. The objective of this study is to consider how academic developers may use this framework to develop a nuanced understanding of the mechanisms influencing educational change, particularly for GAI and assessment. This can be leveraged in reconceptualizing academic professional learning to foster academic agency to meet the assessment challenges related to GAI.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Assessment, Academic Staff Development, Assessment Principles, Transformation

Extended Summary

The current disruption created by Generative AI (Gen AI) and the emerging questions for integration in learning and teaching in higher education presents a complex, system-wide challenge for the academic community (Corbin et al., 2025). For academic developers, supporting academic staff to respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by Gen AI requires simultaneous personal upskilling and the provision of guidelines and transformative spaces for staff to interrogate the implications (real and potential) of these technologies and rapidly transform praxis. The latter presents unique challenges for academic developers who must navigate the scepticism, tensions and uncertainties experienced by academic staff while attempting to facilitate these dialogues in the context of professional learning opportunities such as workshops, short courses, and community of practice sessions.

To address the challenges in our research-intensive South African university context, a study was conducted to reveal the ways in which students and staff were integrating Gen AI in learning, teaching and assessment to inform the development of professional learning opportunities for academic staff. Four focus groups were conducted with students and two focus groups with academic staff. Of the themes derived after inductive analysis and coding of the transcripts, assessment validity, reliability and integrity emerged as the dominant concern, alongside the perceived inability to convincingly detect the use of Gen AI. Both academic staff and students were also concerned about how Gen AI use may be undermining deeper approaches to learning (Biggs, 1988), the implications for academic literacies (Lea & Steet, 2006), and implications for the achievement of intended learning outcomes.

For the researchers, who are also academic developers, these findings indicate a moment of disequilibrium in the teaching and learning system which we need to address with academic staff and students. We aim to share our interpretation of the findings of the study in relation to the question of Gen AI integration in learning and teaching in the institution, with attention given to the implications for assessment transformation. Our interpretations and the implications for institutional change draw on Hanson's (2001) conceptual framework of institutional theory and educational change. We drew on this framework to illustrate how current views and practices of assessment may shape responses to Gen AI integration. Hanson's framework synthesizes three areas that collectively influence the type of responsiveness to an institutional problem to be solved: organizational memory, organizational learning, and institutional theory. Organizational memory refers to the collective knowledge, experiences, and practices that individuals and the organization accumulate over time.

The responses of academics in the focus groups demonstrated strong institutional memory with respect to informal assessment knowledge such as shared norms and values, unwritten rules governing the purpose of assessment, and associated assessment practices. The theme of the danger of Gen AI for assessment integrity reveals a strong "assessment of learning" culture and practice (Boud, 2007), underpinned by the shared norm of assessment for certification. These views and associated assessment practices could negatively impact the resilience and sustainability of the university by potentially suppressing Gen AI use and curtailing assessment transformation. However, the data from the study suggests that this exists in tension with an acknowledgement of the need to include "assessment for learning" strategies (Boud, 2007) that include opportunities for integrating Gen AI. The divergent views expressed by staff and students link to organizational learning (the process by which institutions acquire, interpret, and apply knowledge to improve functioning and adapt to change). The dilemmas suggest that the institution may be caught between an homogenization phase of organizational learning driven by quality assurance imperatives and maintenance

of legitimacy, and an evolution phase of organizational learning (Hanson, 2001) characterised by a greater willingness to explore new possibilities.

The tensions experienced appear to be manifesting as cognitive dissonance for academic staff. Third space professionals (Whitchurch, 2012) like academic developers are also experiencing a similar feeling of dissonance as we attempt to navigate between the need to uphold the quality assurance purposes of assessment, and the equally important imperative to transform assessments for learning, potentially through the integration of Gen AI. We describe the challenges we face as we attempt to facilitate the promotion of lecturer agency to transform assessment praxis, while concurrently attempting to challenge and transform entrenched views and practices of assessment in a complex higher education system, where change is never linear. As academic developers, we highlight the need for us to better understand the role of institutional context and institutional memory in maintaining institutional rigidity or enabling institutional transformation. Hanson's framework may be used to develop this understanding and to reconceptualize professional learning opportunities around assessment. We reflect on how this approach may be used to facilitate critical conversations with academics and collectively construct new frames of reference for the critical integration of Gen AI in rapidly evolving higher education contexts.

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Cultivating Teacher Agency: An Examination of Capstone Projects in a Master of Education Programme

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Abstract

This presentation investigates teacher agency as enacted by Master of Education (M.Ed.) candidates within an online, equity-focused graduate programme at a private university in the Southeast United States. Drawing on critical sociocultural perspectives, we conceptualize teacher agency as relational and justice-oriented. We conducted a cross-case thematic analysis of eight candidates' capstone posters and video presentations to identify evidence of agency. Findings indicate that candidates enacted teacher agency by integrating research, theory, and reflection to design and implement meaningful instruction in K-12 contexts. Projects centered on developing K-12 student agency and on promoting social, emotional, academic, and cultural growth, often extending their impact to families and local communities. These findings demonstrate how graduate study can foster the development of teacher agency as both practice and advocacy, cultivating educators equipped to reimagine learning and challenge inequitable structures. By positioning K-12 students as co-creators of learning experiences, candidates' projects illustrate how equity-driven curriculum design can deepen engagement, foster inclusive and sustainable educational practices, and extend meaningful impact to families and communities. This underscores the role of equity-focused graduate programme design in advancing teacher agency and shaping justice-oriented academic practice.

Keywords: Teacher Education, Graduate Teacher Education, Teacher Agency, Social Justice

Extended Summary

Definitions of teacher agency mention the capacity of teachers to make choices and implement actions to enact change (Anderson, 2010; Cong & Lem, 2021; Molla & Nolan, 2020). This paper examines how such agency is enacted and cultivated within a graduate teacher education programme.

Context and Aim of the Study

This study was conducted within an equity-focused, online Master of Education (M.Ed.) programme at a private university in the Southeastern United States. The programme emphasizes justice-oriented pedagogy and co-created learning experiences. The study is part of a larger ongoing investigation into the preparation of graduate students (i.e., M.Ed. candidates) and aims to describe how candidates exhibited agency within their graduate capstone project course sequence, in turn designing for K-12 student agency in their own teaching practice.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in critical sociocultural conceptions of teacher agency (e.g., Biesta et al., 2015; Holland et al., 2001; Priestley et al., 2015b), viewing agency not as an individual capacity alone, but as relational and inherently political, emerging at the intersection of professional knowledge, institutional structures, and social justice imperatives. Epistemic and strategic agency (see Toom et al., 2015) provide analytic lenses for this work: the former foregrounds teachers' authority to generate, justify, and use knowledge to disrupt inequitable schooling; the latter, their efforts to enact advocacy and institutional change. These theoretical underpinnings foreground how programme structures, such as co-created learning experiences and justice-driven curricula, make possible (or constrain) critical action by teachers, both in the classroom and in broader communities.

Methodological Approach

The current study examined how eight M.Ed. candidates exhibited agency within their two capstone courses. Participants included teachers in their second year of teaching (n = 3), teachers with more than two years of experience (n = 5), educators working in elementary schools in the U.S. (n = 4), and international teachers (n = 4). The majority of participants were female (n = 6) and worked with students in grades 1-5 (n = 6). Sources of data included candidates' culminating posters and their 10-minute video presentations of said posters. Using a cross-case thematic analysis approach (Charmaz, 2014), members of the research team separately examined participants' presentation materials for evidence of teacher agency enacted through equity-centered instructional design and programming, then met to compare findings and determine outcome categories. Data collection reflects the iterative nature (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) of the capstone sequence. This approach enables the research to capture evolving expressions of agency in real time.

Key Findings

Analysis of eight completed capstone project posters and 10-minute video presentations indicated that participants exercised robust forms of teacher agency in designing instruction to promote K-12 students' social-emotional development, STEM learning, literacy competencies, civic engagement, and/or performing arts skills. All projects were grounded in theory; candidates enacted theory-driven epistemic agency (Toom et al., 2015). They identified instructional dilemmas in their local contexts and mobilized frameworks such as culturally responsive teaching, social-emotional learning, and democratic education to justify their design decisions.

A prominent cross-case theme is the co-creation of learning experiences with K-12 students. At least three candidates deliberately positioned students as co-designers of classroom spaces, routines, and projects, for example, engaging first graders in shared decision-making about classroom environments or asking elementary students to make design choices in project-based mathematics. Across these cases, students exercised learner agency through meaningful choices, collaborative problem-solving, and shared responsibility for outcomes, blurring the line between "teacher" and "learner" work.

The artifacts also provide evidence of emerging strategic agency (Toom et al., 2015). Many projects extended beyond individual lessons to address broader community or structural aims, such as strengthening restorative practices, expanding arts access, fostering civic participation, deepening family partnerships, or influencing grade-level team decisions. Candidates explicitly described advocating for adaptations to mandated curricula, reframing after-school clubs as inclusive STEM spaces, and sharing findings with colleagues and administrators. These moves signal that participants are already conceptualizing advocacy-oriented action within wider institutional and community contexts.

Implications and Theoretical and Educational Significance

Candidate presentation materials underscore the theoretical significance of examining teacher agency within graduate-level academic development. Across posters and video recordings, candidates mobilized research, theory, and contextual knowledge to inform equity-centered instructional decisions.

A key contribution of this work is the consistent positioning of K-12 students as co-creators of learning experiences. Through collaborative design cycles, shared decision-making, restorative dialogue, and participatory inquiry, candidates structured learning environments in which agency was relationally enacted rather than individually possessed. These findings align with sociocultural perspectives that conceptualize agency as distributed, situated, and cultivated through purposeful interaction (Priestley et al., 2015a). Educationally, the findings suggest that inquiry-oriented, equity-focused programme design prepares teachers to enact agency. Ongoing analysis will extend these findings by incorporating surveys, interviews, and course-embedded artifacts to examine how programme structures support the longitudinal development of teacher agency and the sustained impact of co-created learning experiences on both teachers and students.

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Papers 13

Beyond belonging: Dynamic, self-regulated agentic connecting for STEMM students

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Abstract

Calls for United Kingdom (UK) higher education (HE) to become more inclusive, socially just and supportive (Banerjee, 2018) have resulted in a broader range of international students and those from underrepresented backgrounds entering UKHE.

This unfolding agenda underscores the importance of supporting a sense of belonging for all students. Despite efforts to promote diversity, inclusion, and policies to widen participation in HE, many students feel pressure to become a prototypical university student (Wong, et al. 2022). The unintentional assumption underpinning student belonging is twofold: on one hand, there is the assumption that students themselves make of what it means to be an ideal or typical university student, including engagement and belonging within their discipline (Wong, et al. 2022); on the other, there is the university or institution's assumption of how their students should 'belong'. These challenges may be exacerbated by the typically strategic and performance-oriented, disciplinary focus of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) students (Howson & Kingsbury, 2024).

Belonging is a human need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), but while it is often conceptualized as a stable outcome that students achieve once successfully 'integrated' (Goodenow, 1993), Strayhorn (2018) critiques this view, arguing that belonging is instead a continual process of negotiation and validation. We therefore set out to investigate changing perceptions over time, capturing longitudinal belonging narratives.

This study is set in a UK university with a specialist STEMM focus and a research-intensive, competitive culture. We present data from 117 semi-structured interviews with 48 participants who were interviewed two or more times over a five-year period (one had five interviews, four completed four interviews, ten had three interviews, and 33 participants completed two interviews). We first listened to and transcribed each interview; then employed abductive thematic analysis. Authors independently coded transcripts, these were discussed and consolidated to create themes that described phenomena observed. We then theorized to explain the relationships and narrative observed in the themes and entire dataset (Thompson, 2022).

We acknowledge that individual student's experience is shaped by their individual habitus and social capital, individual stories all matter and helped us construct an understanding of belonging as dynamic connection influenced by factors over time. Figure 1 presents an illustration of three participants' stories of belonging, with each point representing a factor they reported as influencing their connections. These three narratives represent similar sorts of perceived trajectories articulated by multiple participants. 'Henry's' story represents a common narrative that positions factors as aligning and resulting in a growing sense of belonging over time. 'Sarah's' narrative illustrates an initial perception of disconnection changed to one of reasonable and ongoing connection perceived as stemming from feeling part of an authentic context and community. In contrast, 'Abdul's' story shows feelings of disconnection strongly linked to early perception of discrimination, with this only being moderated post-graduation following retrospective reflection during postgraduate research experience.

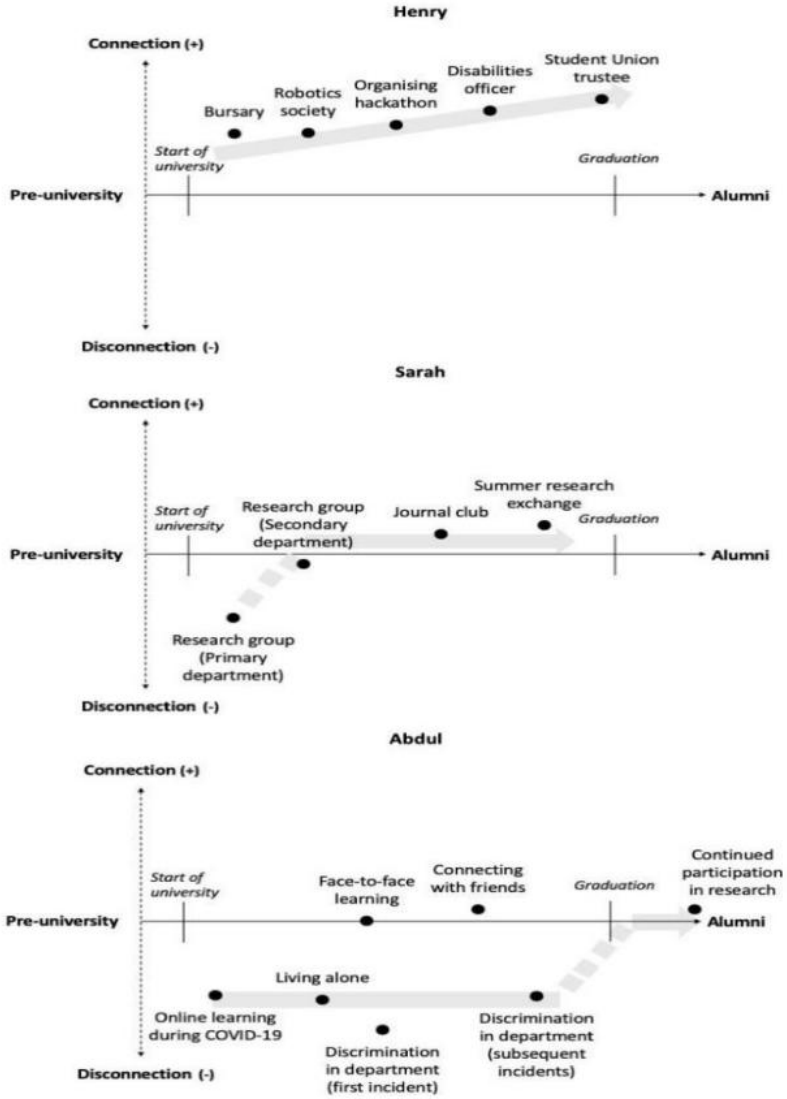


Figure 1: Perceived Trajectories.

In studying the 48 individual narratives of belonging we appreciated that individuals interpreted different experiences as having different influences on their individual feelings of belonging, some positive and others negative. In exploring these factors, we recognised that some were imposed while others resulted from individual, empowered agency and exercised choice. Thus, we could organise an individual's perception of the influence of reported factors on a spectrum with a y-axis representing the perceived connection and the x-axis showing the relative reported agency. While such spectra are specific to individuals the four quadrants of the spectrum correspond to common reported feelings of dynamic belonging. A generalised example of such a spectrum with commonly experienced factors is illustrated below.

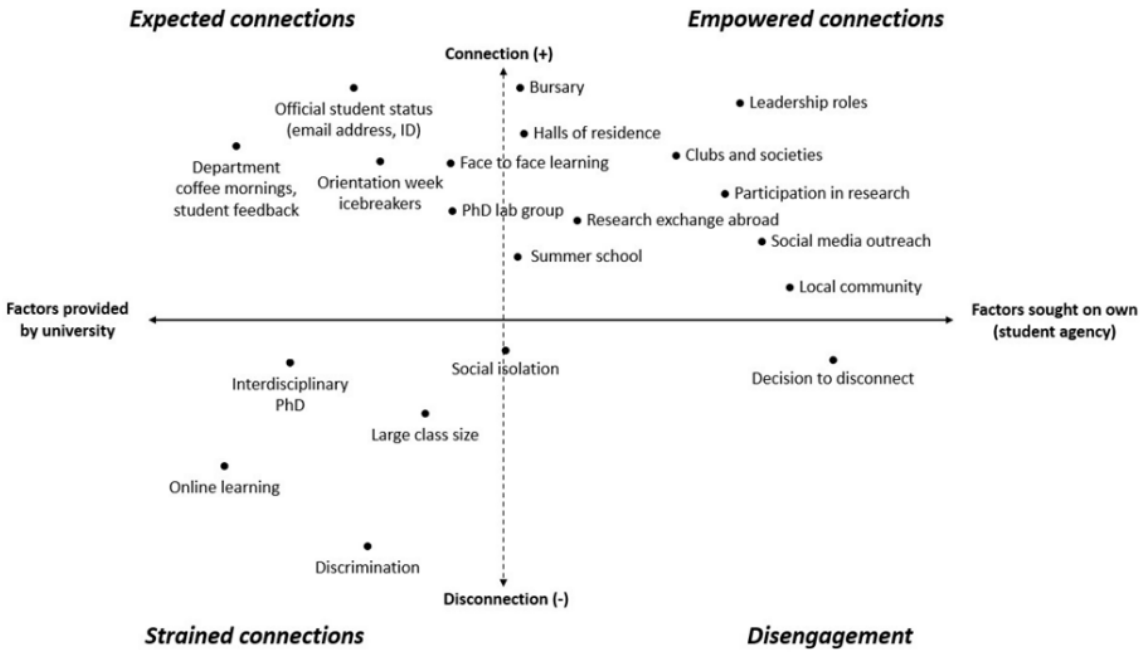


Figure 2: Belonging Spectra

We distinguish between four connection states, that highlight the importance of choice and agency in how students experience factors and perceive there impact upon their experience and sense of belonging.

- Expected connections: in the top-left quadrant, are factors that broadly facilitate connection and are typically established by the institution or academic program.
- Strained connections: in the bottom-left quadrant, are factors that are provided, but where students lack agency and as such feel imposed and are reported as reducing belonging.
- Empowered connections: in the top-right quadrant, are connecting factors that students choose for themselves, based on their own motivations and interests. Students actively make decisions to be connected via these factors and they are often perceived as empowering belonging.
- Disengagement: Depicted as the bottom-right quadrant, there are a few factors reported where students use their agency to choose to stop connecting, to disengage.

Our findings echo Strayhorn's (2018) definition of belonging as a student's feeling of being accepted, valued, and connected, and as a continual process of negotiation and validation. We argue that belonging is not stable or uniform, but rather dynamic, shaped by evolving interactions, identities, and contexts. Our data suggest that student agency in actively constructing their own connections and belonging enables them to create connections that are meaningful to them. We argue therefore that dynamic, empowered agentic connection is transformational both for those connecting and for the contexts they connect to.

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Fostering Self-Regulation and Agency in First-Year Engineering Students

Maria José Canet Subiela, Ana Díaz Rubio

Abstract

This two-year institutional project addresses the challenge of high dropout rates and poor academic performance (up to 74.63% yield below 35%) among first-year students in two demanding engineering programs at Universitat Politècnica de València (Campus de Gandia). The central aim is to integrate the development of student self-regulation (SRL)—a core component of learner agency—into institutional practice. The intervention leverages the existing tutoring program (PIAE+) to deliver targeted, data-driven SRL strategies (behavioral, metacognitive, and motivational). Concurrently, faculty teaching first and second-year courses receive training aligned with the MDAD framework, enabling them to design curriculum activities that promote SRL. The methodology employs a rigorous mixed-methods pre/post-test design using the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), faculty self-evaluation guides, and qualitative portfolio analysis. This research contributes an evidence-informed model for academic development centers, seeking to empower learners and transform curricula to enhance student persistence and success.

Keywords: Self-Regulation, Student Agency, Academic Development, Learning Strategies

Extended Summary

Introduction and Aim

Academic success in demanding higher education fields depends on students' ability to engage in self-regulated learning (SRL). SRL is a dynamic, self-directed process where learners transform capabilities into strategic, goal-oriented actions, exercising conscious control and responsibility over outcomes. This concept is closely linked to student agency, defined as the capacity to influence one's life and environment through responsible decision-making and reflective action. When students perceive learning goals as self-imposed, engagement and concentration increase, fostering deeper learning (Zimmermann, 1991). This institutional project addresses critical academic indicators in two engineering programs, where up to 74.63% of first-year students achieved yields below 35% (first quarter of academic year 2023-2024), and dropout rates reached 40%. The strategy focuses on promoting SRL through systemic interventions over two academic years (2025–2027), with two objectives: (1) Foster SRL in first-year students via PIAE+ program and portfolio use; (2) Enhance faculty development for teaching SRL and metacognition. PIAE+ is a UPV's institutional tutoring program designed to support first-year students in adapting to university life and improving academic performance It offers structured group sessions led by faculty tutors, focusing on study strategies, time management, and motivation. Within this project, PIAE+ serves as the primary platform for implementing SRL strategies, ensuring continuity between tutoring and classroom practices.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

The project treats SRL holistically, recognizing that it encompasses cognitive, metacognitive, behavioural, motivational, and emotional aspects. Effective intervention requires sustained training over time to ensure students practice, automate, and transfer strategies to new contexts.

Intervention design

The project is structured around two parallel interventions: student support and faculty development (see Fig. 1):

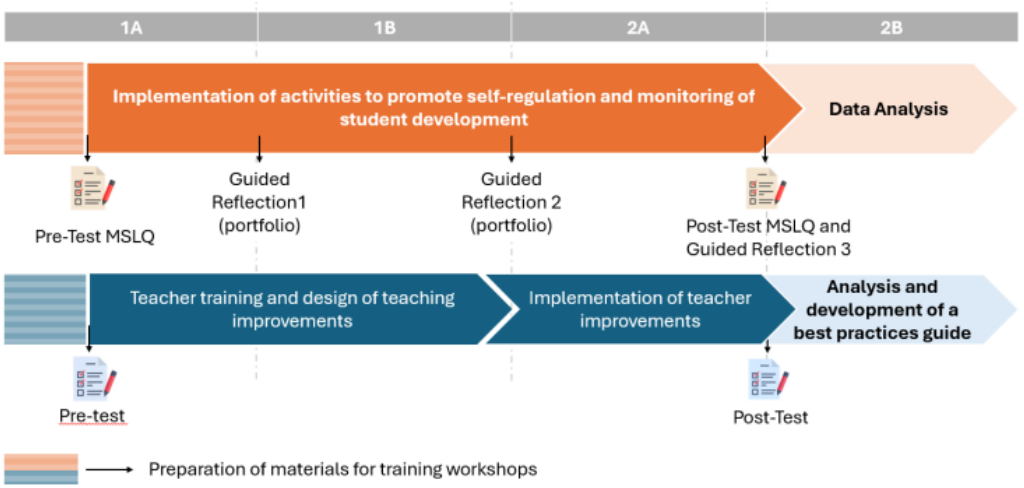


Fig. 1. Project design

Student Intervention (PIAE+): The existing group tutorial sessions (PIAE+) serve as the optimal setting to implement targeted SRL training. The sessions focus on the three main components of SRL as measured by the evaluation instrument. A core element is the use of the portfolio to facilitate continuous monitoring and self-evaluation.

Faculty Development (MDAD): The role of faculty in promoting SRL is crucial. The project includes comprehensive training for all first and second-year faculty and PIAE+ tutors. This formation is scaffolded according to the first three levels of the Marco de Desarrollo Académico Docente (MDAD) (Paricio, 2019). Faculty are required to generate and implement proposals for activities in their own courses, that promote SRL (e.g., involving students in complex tasks, promoting self-evaluation), thereby contributing directly to curriculum transformation. The crucial role of faculty in promoting SRL is recognized. The project includes comprehensive training for all first and second-year faculty and PIAE+ tutors. This formation is scaffolded according to the first three levels of the Marco de Desarrollo Académico Docente (MDAD). Faculty are required to generate and implement proposals for activities in their own courses, that promote SRL (e.g., involving students in complex tasks, promoting self-evaluation), thereby contributing directly to curriculum transformation.

Methodology

The study uses mixed-methods, pre-test/post-test design, meeting the criterion for methodological rigor and evidence:

• Quantitative Student Data: The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich, 1991) is administered as a pre-test (Sept 2025) and post-test (Feb 2027). Paired sample analysis will quantify the evolution of students across the three key dimensions:

1. Strengthening study habits (Behavioral/Contextual dimension).
2. Establishing monitoring and self-evaluation (Metacognitive dimension).
3. Consolidating motivation and involvement (Motivation dimension).

Current Status: The MSLQ pre-test results (sample size = 37, 35% 1st-year students) have been analyzed (See Fig. 2), providing empirical data that is currently being used to tailor the design of the PIAE+ sessions, specifically targeting the dimensions with lower scores. Feedback and recommendations have been sent to students for the dimensions marked in bold on Fig. 2.

• Quantitative Faculty Data: Faculty complete the "Self-evaluation guide to improve university teaching" (pre/post-test) to measure the evolution of their professional development, especially in Dimension 3: Teaching for autonomy and self-regulation.

• Qualitative Data: Qualitative analysis of the student portfolios, and analysis of faculty proposals and their implementation, provide crucial contextual evidence and triangulation.

Contribution and Significance

This project will provide significant, evidence-informed insights into how Academic Development can fulfill its role as a change agent by fostering student agency through systemic, integrated intervention.

Theoretical and Educational Significance: The project's efficacy lies in its integrated nature, directly connecting student support (PIAE+) with faculty training to ensure that students not only receive training on SRL but also find that their classroom experiences reinforce those skills. This moves beyond siloed support services to institutional collaboration, which is a key component of Sub-theme 3. The expectation is that the project will significantly reduce the low academic yield and high dropout rates by increasing student intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and the ability to transfer knowledge.

Implications for Practice and Policy (Transferability): The core contribution is the design of a rigorously tested model for transforming academic culture by addressing SRL deficits. If the efficacy of integrating SRL promotion into PIAE+, coupled with MDAD-based faculty training, is demonstrated, the PIME model will be transferred to all other degrees and double degrees on the Campus and is highly transferable to other university schools facing similar retention challenges. Furthermore, the project will generate a manual of good teaching practices, integrating the faculty's best proposals, ensuring the findings are shared institutionally.

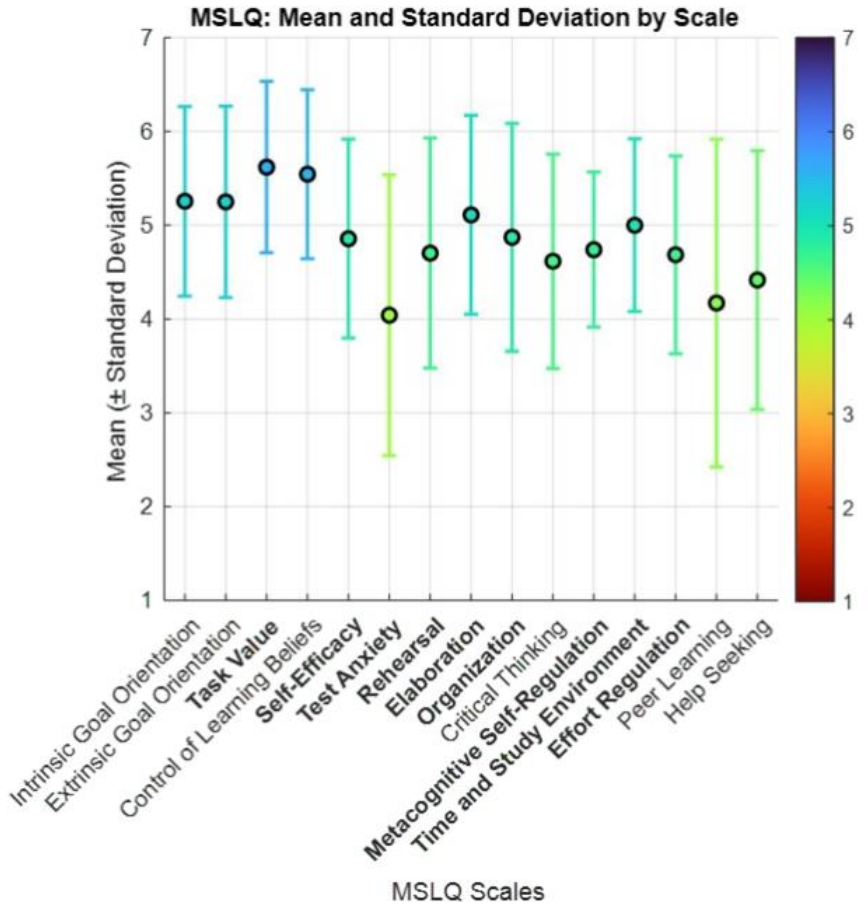


Fig. 2. Mean and standard deviation of MSLQ dimensions for 37 1st-year engineering students.

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Understanding Expert-Novice Mental Models in Biochemistry: A Preliminary Exploration of Systems Thinking

Elisa Fernandez, Begoña Ballester-Lurbe, Ignacio Pérez-Roger, Noemi Valtueña-Gimeno, Elisa Lledó-Feijoó, Enric Poch-Jiménez

Abstract

This work presents a preliminary investigation into how university students conceptualize complex metabolic systems, focusing on the cognitive structures that differentiate novice from expert reasoning. The study aims to characterise expert–novice differences in metabolic reasoning and to establish a cognitively grounded framework for analysing how students interpret causal, systemic, and multilevel biological processes.The theoretical foundation integrates three complementary perspectives: expert–novice cognition, which distinguishes surface-level from structurally deep explanations; mechanistic reasoning, centred on causal chains and regulatory logic; and systems thinking, which requires coordinating molecular, cellular, and systemic levels of metabolic activity.The qualitative phase employed three elicitation tools: a metabolic reasoning task ("the crocodile case"), expert and student think-aloud protocols, and decoding sessions designed to analyse expert cognitive strategies. These activities revealed that students' difficulties stem primarily from the underlying mental-model structures shaping their reasoning—typically linear, reaction-focused, and weak in regulatory or multilevel integration. In contrast, expert reasoning demonstrated causal depth, feedback awareness, and multilevel coordination.This preliminary work provides the conceptual basis for developing diagnostic indices and analytic tools to study students' reasoning in future phases. It also offers a foundation for designing instructional approaches that explicitly promote mechanistic, causal, and systems-level thinking in Biochemistry.

Keywords: Biochemistry Education; Mechanistic Reasoning; Systems Thinking; Expert–Novice Cognition

Extended Summary

Aim of the Research

This project seeks to understand how undergraduate students conceptualize complex metabolic systems and how structured cognitive scaffolding can guide them toward expert-like. A preliminary exploration revealed that students' difficulties stemmed from the cognitive structures they used to reason about metabolic systems. The research aims toward understanding expert–novice differences in metabolic reasoning. As illustrated in Figure 1, the exploratory evidence pointed toward a cognitively grounded analysis of expert–novice reasoning.

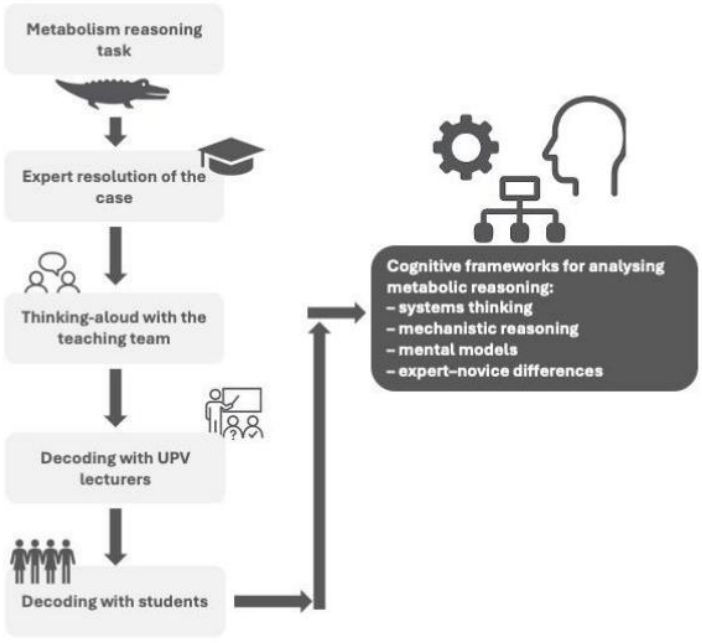


Figure 1. Exploratory Activities Used to Elicit Expert–Novice Mental Models in Metabolic Reasoning.

Theoretical Framework

Our conceptual frame is based on three levels of understanding: (1) expert–novice cognition, which distinguishes surface-level from structurally deep reasoning; (2) mechanistic reasoning frameworks, emphasizing causal chains and regulatory logic; and (3) systemic thinking in metabolism, where expertise requires integrating molecular, cellular, and

system-level processes. Together, these models explain why students' linear, reaction-focused interpretations fail to capture metabolic complexity.

3. Methodological Approach The qualitative phase used three elicitation tools: (a) a metabolic reasoning task—the "crocodile case"—which students analyzed individually and submitted in written form; (b) expert resolution of the same case together with think-aloud sessions with the teaching team and (c) expert and novice decoding sessions in which instructors collaboratively analyzed the cognitive strategies underlying expert reasoning. Together, these activities revealed that the main barrier to learning was not procedural but cognitive, rooted in the underlying mental-model structures shaping students' reasoning about metabolic systems. Building on these insights, the next stage of the project will involve designing and refining analytic tools to characterize students' reasoning in a systematic way. These tools will include preliminary versions of the CSMM (Complex Systems Mechanistic Model) and PMC (Profiling Multilevel Causality) frameworks, together with three diagnostic indices currently under development:

➔ Clockwork Index (linearity and centralized control), ➔ Mechanistic Index (causal depth and regulatory logic), ➔ Multilevel Depth Index (coordination across molecular, cellular and systemic levels). Figure 2 summarizes the three diagnostic indices currently under development, which structure the planned quantitative phase.



Figure 2. Analytic Indices (Clockwork, Mechanistic, Multilevel)

Key Findings and Arguments

Early findings, derived from the three elicitation tools, reveal distinct reasoning patterns. Analysis of students' written responses to 'the crocodile case' showed a reliance on linear, segmented, and visible features of metabolic pathways. Think-aloud sessions further confirmed that novices tend to construct centralized and static interpretations, whereas expert protocols highlighted regulation, feedback, mechanistic detail, and multilevel coordination. Table 1 outlines the differences between the reasoning of experts and novices.

Table 1. Conceptual Differences between Novice and Expert Reasoning

Dimension	Novices	Experts
Structure of reasoning	Linear, fragmented reasoning	Integrated regulation and feedback
Focus of attention	Visible elements, surface features	Components, processes, functions
Causality model	Clockwork reasoning (linear, centralized)	Complex dynamics (feedback, decentralization)
Level coordination	Confusion across levels	Multilevel integration
Mechanistic depth	Limited mechanism identification	Identification of underlying mechanisms

Theoretical and Educational Significance

This research presents a study model for determining the differences between expert and novice reasoning as the central determinant of learning in metabolic problems. Preliminary results provide a foundation for the development of new diagnostic indices. The purpose of these indices is to capture characteristics of linear, mechanical, and multilevel reasoning, thus providing tools for future empirical validation. From an educational standpoint, it will provide a basis for designing activities that promote causal, systemic, and multilevel reasoning as central learning objectives.

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Integrating self-awareness and critical thinking into higher education

Elisabeth Moyano, María Paula Paragis, Marc Talló

Abstract

During the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years, workshops focused on developing self-awareness and critical thinking skills were designed and implemented for biomedical science students. This initiative stemmed from needs identified in a questionnaire sent to all students and faculty members of the department, in which participants (n=223) requested formal training for the development of generic competencies. While critical thinking is fostered through methodologies such as Problem-Based Learning, self-awareness is rarely an explicit learning objective in course syllabi. Following the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) approach and action research methodology, the objective of this study was to analyze the impact of implementing two cycles of workshops focused on developing these skills with fourth-year students. Results showed that the perceived usefulness of the workshops was high in both courses, with an average of 3.69 ± 0.75 in 2024-25 and 4.07 ± 0.55 (5-point Likert scale) in 2025-26. Participants highlighted that the activity fostered reflection upon themselves and their professional and personal futures. These findings underscore the importance of integrating holistic training into the university curriculum, enabling students to address complex problems in their future careers. By equipping students with cognitive, socio-emotional, and ethical skills, the aim is to help them reach their full professional and personal potential.

Keywords: Self-awareness, Critical Thinking, Generic Competencies, Higher Education

Extended summary

Workshops focused on developing self-awareness and critical thinking skills were designed and implemented for biomedical science students during the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years. This initiative arose in response to a need expressed in a survey sent to all students and faculty members (n=223), in which they requested formal training for the development of generic competencies.

While critical thinking is often fostered in our faculty through active learning methodologies such as Problem-Based Learning, case-based learning, and the flipped classroom model, self-awareness is rarely an explicit didactic objective in undergraduate courses. We consider the development of autonomy and self-awareness to be key to the development of other generic competencies, as they involve learning about the self-regulation of internal processes, which is necessary for acquiring knowledge at a deeper and more meaningful level (Rosário, 2014). The objective of this study was to analyze the implementation of workshops focused on developing autonomy skills. These workshops were conducted within a fourth-year course over two academic years. Participation was voluntary in the first year (n=13), and mandatory in the second year (n=43).

The workshop format was selected because it encourages students to participate actively and construct their learning collaboratively. A two-hour session was designed, organized into two work blocks. First, students worked on identifying biased newspaper headlines and data manipulation, with the aim of promoting self-observation regarding how information is analyzed and how this affects problem-solving, argument formation, and decision-making. Then, students were presented with various job offers as a starting point for reflecting on their skills and interests and areas for improvement. Afterwards, they participated in a group activity selecting job offers for which they could apply.

This study was based on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) approach, seeking to enhance inquiry and research on educational practice in order to improve both student learning and teaching practice (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999). The study design followed the guidelines of action research methodology, structuring its development in two work cycles. This allowed each stage of the research to provide empirical evidence to understand which educational practices and processes could be improved (Sandín Esteban, 2010). Evidence was collected through a satisfaction survey, non-participant observation of the sessions, and focus groups with students and education experts.

Regarding the satisfaction questionnaire, the results were very positive in both intervention cycles. The perceived usefulness of the workshops was high, with an average of 3.69 ± 0.75 in the 2024-25 academic year and 4.07 ± 0.55 (5-point Likert scale) in 2025-26. In the open comments, participants highlighted that the activity was dynamic and motivating; that it encouraged reflection on themselves and their professional and personal future; and that it allowed participants to get to know themselves and the group better.

Participants of the first intervention (2024-25) highlighted the facilitator's intervention and the perception of a comfortable and trusting working environment among the participants. Suggestions for improvement included placing more emphasis on self-awareness and better integrating this activity with the course content.

Based on non-participant observations and the focus group with experts, the following improvement actions were proposed:

- To conduct the workshops during the mid-morning period to encourage active student participation and greater benefit from the activity.

- The trainer should encourage active participation and full engagement among all students.
- Time should be allocated for peer feedback.
- The trainer should provide concluding feedback after each activity.

For the first time, specific training in generic competencies has been offered within our faculty. The results obtained support the value of considering self-awareness and critical thinking as explicit learning content in the higher education curriculum. These findings emphasize the importance of holistic training that enables students to address complex problems in their future careers. These brief workshops are expected to spark students' interest in developing their professional skills holistically. By going beyond the transmission of disciplinary knowledge and equipping students with cognitive, socio-emotional, and ethical tools, the aim is to help them reach their full professional and personal potential.

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Bridging the Gap: Alternative Conceptions in Chemical Equilibrium Among Pre-service Teachers

Lorena Atarés Huerta, Marta Ribes Català, Maria José Canet Subiela

Abstract

This paper analyzes the mastery of Chemical Equilibrium (CE), a recognized threshold concept (TC), among Master's pre-service secondary teachers. While TCs are fundamental for transformative disciplinary thinking, their acquisition requires overcoming persistent Alternative Conceptions (ACs) and transitioning past the "liminal space" of partial understanding. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, Master's students (N=9-13) completed two conceptual tests, namely the Test to Identify Students' Alternative Conceptions. (TISAC) and the Chemical Equilibrium Basic Test (CEBT) and their performance was contrasted with expert reasoning. Quantitative results showed high overall integrated comprehension, but revealed critical, persistent ACs, especially concerning the effects of temperature variation and the treatment of heterogeneous equilibrium. Moreover, almost 50% of students struggled to recognize situations where equilibrium evolution is unpredictable. This persistent compartmentalization highlights a significant pedagogical challenge for academic development, emphasizing the need to move future teachers beyond mechanical problem-solving toward the integrated, relational reasoning demonstrated by experts.

Keywords: Threshold Concepts, Chemical Equilibrium, Alternative Conceptions, Pre-service Teacher Education.

Extended Summary

Aim of the study

The objective of this research was to analyze the comprehension of the chemical equilibrium (CE) threshold concept among Master's pre-service teachers, focusing on the persistence of Alternative Conceptions (ACs). By contrasting the pre-service teachers' reasoning patterns with those of expert faculty, the study aimed to identify precise areas where academic development interventions are needed to ensure future educators possess deep understanding to teach effectively.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

The study is grounded in the Threshold Concepts (TCs) Framework, which posits that concepts like CE act as "portals" to new ways of thinking—a transformation that is typically irreversible and highly integrative. CE is defined as a TC due to its abstract nature, the necessity of coherently interlinking multiple prior concepts and the non-intuitive shift from static to dynamic thinking. The challenge for educators lies in the irreversibility of TCs; experts find it difficult to recall the perspective of the learner. Students often inhabit a liminal space where they rely on superficial strategies or consolidate ACs rather than achieving transformative understanding. The methodology employed a mixed-methods design focused on a Master's pre-service teacher group. Data was collected using two conceptual diagnostic instruments: 1. TISAC (Test to Identify Students' Alternative Conceptions): A 13-question two-tier test assessing integrated comprehension (requiring both correct answer and correct justification). (N=9). 2. CEBT (Chemical Equilibrium Basic Test): A test assessing reasoning about the evolution of concentrations when the system is not yet at equilibrium, providing insight into basic dynamic understanding. (N=13). Data was supplemented by interviews with expert faculty to characterize the relational and integrated nature of expert scientific reasoning.

Key Findings and Outcomes

The students generally achieved high scores (Table 1). This high performance, however, masked the persistence of critical conceptual barriers, evidenced by specific ACs: 1.3.1. Persistence of ACs related to Equilibrium Perturbation:

- Temperature Effects: The highest frequency AC observed was the belief that the exothermic or endothermic nature of a reaction does not affect the direction of equilibrium when temperature varies (44%).
- Heterogeneous Equilibrium: Over half of the students (56%) believed that increasing the amount of a solid substance causes more ions to be produced.

Weakness in Dynamic Reasoning: The CEBT results revealed that fundamental reasoning challenges persisted regarding the evolution of the system. Notably, 46% of the students struggled with recognizing when the equilibrium evolution cannot be predicted based solely on initial concentrations. This suggests a gap in the crucial ability to critically assess the sufficiency of information—a key element of expert reasoning. Furthermore, 46% of the group still manifested the belief that equal concentrations signify equilibrium.

Contrast with Expert Reasoning: Expert faculty demonstrated a qualitative difference in their approach, characterized by integrating concepts systemically before attempting a solution. They explicitly criticized the mechanical application of Le Châtelier's principle, suggesting that the use of the reaction quotient is a more reliable conceptual tool.

Table 1. Quantitative results of the tests administration

	TISAC		CEBT	
	Score (1)	**Score (2)**	**Score (1)**	**Score (2)**
Mean	7,95	7,26	7,72	7,12
Median	8,46	7,69	7,50	7,50
Mode	9,23	9,23	10,00	10,00
St. deviation	1,49	1,89	2,30	2,72
Variance	2,22	3,57	5,30	7,39

(1) Each item in the question was considered correct if answered correctly, independently to the answers given to interrelated items.

(2) The answer was considered correct only if the answer of all interrelated items was correct

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(2) The answer was considered correct only if the answer of all interrelated items was correct

Theoretical and educational significance

These findings provide crucial empirical evidence for academic developers, confirming the persistence of critical ACs and the need for targeted academic development strategies related to known student difficulties. The data supports:

- Prioritizing the teaching of the reaction quotient over the singular reliance on Le Châtelier's principle to foster a more integrated conceptual understanding.
- Developing faculty's awareness of the CE threshold and the specific, persistent ACs held by advanced students
- Assessment Reform: Utilizing comprehensive instruments (like TISAC and CEBT) that test integrated comprehension rather than just rote calculation or rote responses, ensuring deep mastery in future educators.

The persistence of conceptual obstacles in highly educated individuals suggests that if ACs are not successfully transformed, these future teachers may inadvertently perpetuate the same difficulties in their own students, highlighting the urgent relevance of this research to the advancement of educational quality and academic development.

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Papers 14

Supervising the journey to doctorateness: A conceptual framework

Flip Schutte, Emetia Swart

Abstract

Doctoral supervision is increasingly seen as a space for academic growth, focusing on developing "doctorateness"—scholarly identity, independence, and confidence—which remains under-theorised. This study offers a framework for transformative supervision, exploring experiences and strategies that foster these qualities. Through literature review and focus groups, it identifies six supportive supervisory dimensions—relational, dialogic, reflective, structured, adaptive, and collaborative—that promote development. The framework emphasises supervision as an intentional practice balancing support and challenge to foster scholarly agency. It also guides training supervisors and designing doctoral programs.

Keywords: Doctoral supervision; doctorateness; Doctoral journey; Student transformation; Supervisory mentorship

Extended Summary

Introduction

Doctoral supervision is increasingly recognised as an academic development activity rather than only compliance-driven. Yet while institutional policies regulate outputs, the developmental process through which a candidate becomes a "doctor" remains insufficiently theorised in relation to supervisory practice. Doctorateness extends beyond thesis completion. It encompasses scholarly identity formation, intellectual independence, epistemic positioning, and professional confidence (Lee, 2008; McAlpine & Norton, 2006). Although the literature acknowledges the importance of relational and dialogic supervision (Bryan & Guccione, 2018; Gravett, 2021), there is limited clarity about how these dimensions integrate into a developmental framework. This study addresses two research questions:

• What supervisory experiences contribute to the development of doctorateness?

• What pedagogical strategies enable supervisors to facilitate transformative doctoral development? By integrating literature-based analysis with empirical insight, this paper proposes a framework for transformative supervision.

Traditional views of doctoral supervision often frame it as oversight of research progress, emphasising compliance, timelines, and methodological correctness. However, contemporary scholarship positions supervision as a pedagogical and developmental relationship shaping identity and epistemic agency (Lee, 2008; Halse, 2011). Doctoral study involves identity reconstruction, movement through threshold concepts, navigation uncertainty, impostor experiences, and intellectual vulnerability (Johnson, 2014; Wang & Li, 2023). Supervisors serve as mediators of scholarly socialisation, modelling standards and scaffolding independence. Transformative learning theory suggests that development occurs through structured reflection, dialogic engagement, and critical challenge (Kurnia, 2021). In this light, supervision becomes a partnership in which support enables candidates to move from dependence towards intellectual autonomy. This study, therefore, conceptualises doctorateness as a developmental outcome shaped by supervisory design.

Methodolody

A two-phase qualitative design was employed. Phase 1 consisted of a semisystematic review of ten empirical studies on supervision and identity development. The review informed a draft conceptual framework. Phase 2 explored the applicability of this framework through a focus group comprising doctoral candidates and supervisors. Data were integrated with Phase 1 findings.

Findings

Analysis across both phases revealed six interrelated supervisory dimensions that support the journey to doctorateness:

- Relational Dimension: Trust, respect, and psychological safety emerged as foundational. Participants emphasised that communication and empathetic engagement enabled intellectual risk-taking. Without relational 4 security, candidates prioritise compliance over scholarly exploration
- Dialogic Dimension: Structured dialogue — rather than instruction — fostered critical thinking and epistemic positioning. Supervisors who invited argumentation, co-construction of meaning, and reflexive questioning enabled candidates to articulate their scholarly voice.
- Reflective Dimension: Supervisory practices that encouraged structured reflection on feedback, positionality, and conceptual development supported movement from novice to independent scholar.

- Structured Dimension: Expectation alignment, milestone planning, and scaffolding of research tasks provided developmental containment. Structure reduced anxiety while transferring responsibility to the candidate.
- Adaptive Dimension: Flexibility is important. Effective supervisors calibrate guidance based on developmental stage, emotional state, and disciplinary demands.
- Collaborative Dimension: Engagement in scholarly communities — including peer learning and group supervision — enhanced confidence and strengthened scholarly identity formation.

The Conceptual Framework

The framework positions supervision as the intersection of relational, dialogic, reflective, structured, adaptive, and collaborative dimensions. These operate within pedagogical strategies, including expectation alignment, mentorship, critical dialogue, concept scaffolding, and structured feedback loops.

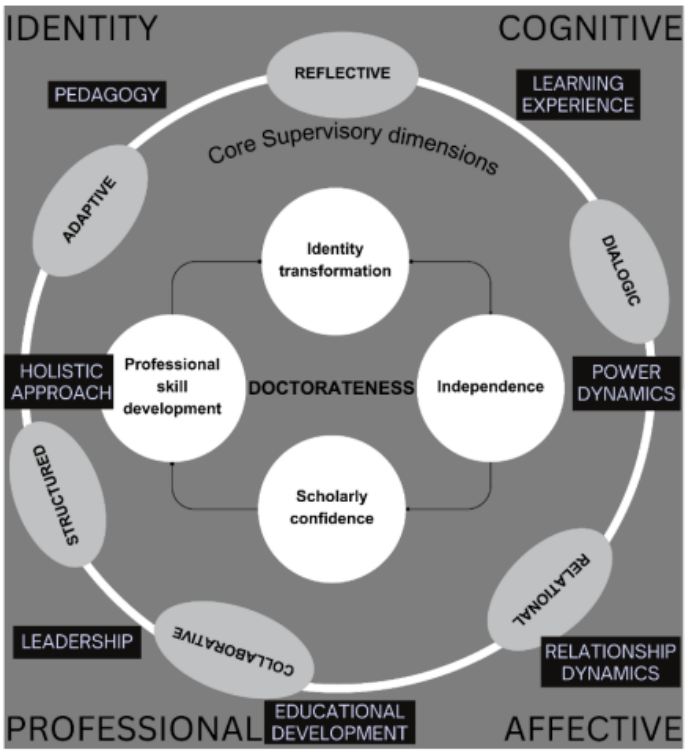


Figure 1: The journey to doctorateness framework

Doctorateness is conceptualised not as a linear endpoint but as a developmental transformation characterised by: Intellectual independence; Scholarly identity; Epistemic confidence; and Professional maturity. This transformation occurs when 6 supervisors intentionally integrate relational care with epistemic challenge.

Contribution to Academic Development

This study advances doctoral education scholarship by conceptualising doctorateness as a multi-dimensional developmental construct instead of just thesis submission; reframing supervision as an intentional pedagogical practice rather than personality-dependent mentorship; and providing a practical framework for educational developers to implement at programme and institutional levels

Implications for Educational Developers

The framework guides supervisor training focused on relational skills, supports reflective doctoral academies, aids institutional evaluation of supervisory culture, and promotes group supervision to build communities. To strengthen doctoral resilience and identity, institutions should integrate supervision into academic development, moving beyond mere procedural compliance.

Conclusion

This study rejects reducing doctoral supervision to mere procedure, viewing it as a transformative pedagogical practice. It offers a framework showing how supervision shapes doctorateness. Transformative supervision is

intentionally designed, not accidental. Supervising for doctorateness involves shaping scholars, not just guiding research. Future research should explore how institutional supervisory cultures affect this development and examine longitudinal doctoral identity formation.

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STEM PhD students doing and writing SoTL: what matters for academic development?

Jennifer Lofgreen, Lene Nordrum

Abstract

A key part of academic development work involves helping academic teachers develop a scholarly approach to teaching. One way to do this is to engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), which Felten and Chick (2018) have suggested is a signature pedagogy of academic development. For PhD students who are aspiring academic teachers, being exposed to SoTL while they are also developing as scholars in their own disciplines has the potential to support their epistemic growth. As novices in scholarship, teaching, and academic writing, PhD students doing SoTL could be advantaged by being less entrenched in conceptions of epistemology and what scholarship can, or should, be. At the same time, because of their limited experience, any dissonance that may exist between SoTL and their disciplinary conceptions of scholarship might present a significant challenge.

In this presentation, we will explore what matters when asking STEM PhD students, in our case in the Faculty of Engineering at our university, to write a team-based, SoTL-style project report as part of a compulsory pedagogical course. Combining content analysis and discourse analysis, we analyzed 50 reports from the past decade to answer the broad question: How do these novices in scholarship, academic writing, and teaching navigate this inherently interdisciplinary space of knowledge, inquiry, and writing? We will present some of our findings, invite discussion about them and related observations from their context, and explore some thoughts about what these findings mean for our context and academic development more broadly.

Keywords: Epistemic performance, scholarship of teaching and learning, disciplinary discourse, PhD education, academic agency

Extended summary

Felten and Chick (2018) have suggested that the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) could be a signature pedagogy of academic development because we can see it as "both enacting and illuminating the foundational assumptions and structures of our work" (p. 6). One assumption is that academic teaching improves if academic teachers develop a scholarly approach to teaching. We share this assumption and see SoTL as potentially emancipatory because it can promote academic teachers' agency and epistemic growth. By doing SoTL, you would move beyond a reliance on personal experience and anecdotes to inform your decisions, and gain a vocabulary for academic teaching that would help you reflect on, articulate, and improve what you're doing. Academic developers have an important role in facilitating this.

Using SoTL for academic development in a STEM context

In the Faculty of Engineering at our university, we use small-scale SoTL projects in pedagogical courses to help our course participants develop a scholarly approach to teaching. In the compulsory pedagogical course we offer for PhD students, the main form of assessment is a team SoTL project on a topic of the team's choosing, which they explore using scholarly literature related to teaching and learning in higher education. The project does not need to gather empirical data or produce any positive novel result; it simply needs to demonstrate a meaningful scholarly exploration of the topic. The final team-written project report is published in a password-protected database that all staff in our faculty can access. In this way, all participants in the course contribute to our faculty's locally developed scholarly knowledge about teaching and learning.

Our assumption is that when we expose these engineering PhD students to SoTL early in their academic careers, when they are also developing as scholars in their own fields, they have the potential to develop greater agility as scholarly academic teachers. But we are also aware that SoTL's ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies can be very different from those of many STEM fields. This can create challenges if our participants' disciplinary training in their respective STEM fields conflicts with the needs of SoTL. For example, Borrego (2007) has noted that engineers experience substantial conceptual challenges when they try to learn to do educational research in their own context, and Deekens et al (2024) found that teachers with a background in the natural sciences were quick to dismiss pedagogical research that used methods of inquiry they were not accustomed to. STEM PhD students might be tempted to use approaches that are more familiar but less suitable for their chosen SoTL project.

Challenges of doing and/or writing SoTL?

When they do a SoTL project in our course, our course participants, who are novice scholars in their own disciplines, are faced with two intertwined challenges: 1) engaging in collaborative interdisciplinary inquiry that may be different from the process(es) of inquiry they are learning as novice disciplinary scholars, and 2) producing a piece of academic writing that may be very different from the disciplinary writing they are learning as novice scholarly writers. We teach the pedagogical course in question and have regularly observed these challenges and attitudes. We are also both long-time instructors of a PhD course on academic writing for research publications in our faculty, which means we also

support these PhD students in developing as scholarly writers in their respective fields. Taking our experience of these two courses together, we recognize a potential epistemological dissonance of what counts as reliable processes of inquiry to produce knowledge, as well as how to express new knowledge in writing.

In this study, we have looked for evidence of these challenges in the team project reports. We aimed to interrogate our assumptions and to explore what might better support epistemic growth and academic agency. Drawing on Barzilai & Chinn's (2018) Aims, Ideals and Reliable processes (AIR) framework for analysis of epistemic performance, which is the ability to "individually and socially engage with epistemic ideals and reliable processes that can lead to achievement of epistemic aims, across diverse contexts" (Mor-Hagani & Barzilai, 2022, p. 1), we analyzed 50 reports from previous runs of the course (2021-2025) for:

- the aim of the report
- the process of inquiry
- the justification (or not) of the process of inquiry
- the structure of the report
- the way the findings are communicated

Using a combination of content analysis and discourse analysis, we found that most teams are able to do meaningful SoTL work, but some articulate their work according to the conventions of their home disciplines, which may not be ideal for writing about SoTL. Specifically, our findings show that participants use a wide range of processes of inquiry, often mixing quantitative and qualitative methods, and the report structures are typically adapted to the type of inquiry and storyline of the project. However, clearly articulated epistemological thinking is less common. Many reports lack metalanguage for justifying their process of inquiry, and conclusions are often presented as generalizable, mirroring conventions in high-consensus fields (Storer, 1967; Biglan, 1974), even though the project is not required to produce generalizable results. Thus, many reports come across as overselling claims rather than displaying careful, critical evaluation of the knowledge contribution of the project.

What matters?

Our findings suggest that there is value in addressing tacit conceptualizations about how research is communicated and reasoned about, as this might influence our use of SoTL as a signature pedagogy of academic development. From writing studies, we know that writing artifacts are shaped by the epistemology of specific disciplines, giving rise to socially negotiated, discipline-specific genres and discourses (see e.g. Bazerman, 1981; Swales, 1990; Halliday & Martin, 1993; Hyland, 2024). Exercising agency thus necessarily involves making sense of discourse and adapting it to the type of knowledge being communicated.

We call for more discussion of what matters when we use SoTL in academic development, to support both academic teachers' agency through better SoTL, and academic developers' agency through more effective use of good SoTL as a teaching tool.

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Practices to foster PhD student agency during their milestone

Ghada Challah

Abstract

This paper focuses on the results of our dissertation on PhD supervision in Education and Training Sciences in France. Many research tackled the quality of PhD supervisor-supervisee relationship, challenges and factors affecting PhD student success. While other studies focus on the doctoral process as a ritual and consider it as a component of PhD student socialization, few ones focus on how PhD students, coming from different professional paths are active learners, engaged to construct their success. This study focuses on how different supervision practices foster PhD student agency and success. Fifteen interviews were carried out with supervisors specialized in Education and Training Sciences in 3 doctoral schools to answer the following questions: 1) How do supervisors conceive supervision ?; 2) What are the practices that foster PhD student agency?; 3) What are the main contextual and/or professional factors that enable PhD student agency ? A survey questionnaire was also conducted to PhD students (N=128) in 4 doctoral schools, in France, to detect what makes student embark on a PhD. Findings reveal five supervision conceptions, three PhD students' profile and different practices to foster doctoral students agency.

Supervisors and PhD students consider that doctoral schools are invited to go beyond actual practices to foster PhD students' agency in terms of training. Last but not least, integrating PhD students in research with supervisors within their doctoral school or in partnership with other doctoral schools could be an important practice to foster PhD students' agency.

Keywords: PhD supervisor, Agency, Supervision, PhD student First

Extended Summary

The aim of our paper is to provide a better understanding of practices that foster PhD student's success. It presents the results of our dissertation on PhD supervision (Challah, 2022). Many interests were raised in research tackling effective doctoral supervision (Masek & Alias, 2020), the quality of supervisor-supervisee relationship (Madan, 2021) as well as factors affecting PhD student success (Young, Vanwye, Schafer, Robertson & Poore, 2019). However, few studies focus on how PhD students, coming from different professional paths, are active learners, engaged to construct their success. This study focuses on supervision conceptions, how PhD students are active learners, seeking their success, and how different practices foster doctoral students' professional agency during their milestone.

Theoretical Framework

According to Lee (2008), the author identified thesis supervisors' perceptions of supervision. These perceptions are based on the supervisor's own experience as a PhD supervisor and on his own experience as a student. Table 1 reflects the framework for research supervision.

Table 1. A framework for concepts of research supervision (Lee, 2008)

	Functional	**Enculturation**	**Critical Thinking**	**Emancipation**	**Relationship Development**
Supervisors Activity	Rational progression through tasks	Gatekeeping	Evaluation Challenge	Mentoring, supporting constructivism	Supervising by experience, developing a relationship
Supervisors knowledge & skills	Directing, project management	Diagnosis of deficiencies, coaching	Argument, analysis	Facilitation, Reflection	Emotional intelligence
Possible student reaction	Obedience Organised	Role modelling	Constant inquiry, fight or flight	Personal growth, reframing	Emotional intelligence

Five main approaches to thesis supervision are identified by the author (Lee, 2008), all related to a tension between the academic self and the personal self. These approaches are not independent of each other: 1) Functional: where the issue is project management; 2) Enculturation: the student is encouraged to become as they reflect the link between the nature of the supervisor's work and the skills they should have in order to provide guidance. These concepts are intrinsically linked. The 'functional' concept reflects a concept of progression through tasks. The supervisor should lead the management of the research project. The PhD student should demonstrate the organisational skills that will enable him to make progress in his project. As for the "enculturation" concept, the PhD supervisor, who is familiar with the research environment, should be able to identify the doctoral student's weaknesses in order to offer them appropriate

coaching. The doctoral student relies on a model provided by the supervisor to integrate into this environment. The third concept, 'critical thinking', represents an assessment challenge for the thesis supervisor, who must have argumentation and analysis skills. This concept would lead the student to question themselves, analyse their research work, problematise, make connections and consider solutions. 'Emancipation' illustrates the concept of supporting the doctoral student. Supervisor is considered as a facilitator having the skills that encourage PhD students to reflect and question themselves. This approach allows doctoral students to develop and take ownership of a specific framework, that of their research project. In addition, this approach contributes to their development towards autonomy, as they become responsible for their own research project. The last concept illustrates the development of a quality relationship between the supervisor and their doctoral student. In this context, the supervisor, based on his experience, establishes and maintains a collaborative relationship with his doctoral student. Lee's study sheds light on the supervisor's own lived experience as a student and recommend supervisors to take into consideration both positive and negative aspects of these conceptual approaches.

The research questions are the following:

1) How do supervisors conceive supervision ?

2) What are the practices that foster PhD student agency?

3) What are the main contextual and/or professional factors that enable PhD student agency ?

Methodological approach

As we focused to gain in-depth insight into PhD supervision and PhD students' success, we carried out a mixed-method research design involving the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Such type of research design enables us to answer research questions and better understand research problem. Mixing two types of data is considered as a powerful mix enabling the researcher to develop an intricate picture of societal phenomenon (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Greene& Caracelli, 1997). To collect data, two tools are used : semi-structured interviews with PhD supervisors and a survey questionnaire for PhD students. Our aims are to better understand how PhD supervisors conceive supervisions, the practices which foster PhD student agency and to shed light on how PhD students become active learners during their milestone. In this paper, we will present the results of the qualitative approach issued from the semi-structured interviews carried out with PhD supervisors. We carried out semi-structured interviews in order to understand, explore and analyze how PhD supervisors conceive supervision and adopted content analysis which is considered as "a set of communication analysis techniques aimed, through systematic and objective procedures for describing the content of statements, at obtaining indicators (qualitative or not) that enable the inference of knowledge relating to the conditions of production/reception (inferred variables) of these statements' (Bardin, 1977, p.43).

Key Findings:

Supervision conceptions

Supervisors consider that PhD students are the ones who are held responsible for their success and are supposed to work independently according to their professional goals and their PhD project. Their roles rely on providing guidance and support to PhD students.

Table 2. Conceptions of supervision

Conceptions of supervision	Verbatim excerpts of interview data
Socialization of PhD students - (5/15) supervisors *Inter-personal socialization (supervisor-supervisee); *Level of belonging to a group of doctoral students, a collective that promotes continuous exchange and the promotion of research; *Event-based socialization, through scientific events, which enable doctoral students to familiarize themselves with a multitude of scientific events, to confront different points of view and to promote their work. *Professional socialization, given the nature of doctoral training, which refers to initial professional experience in the field of research.	***S1:** *''becoming a member of a group of PhD students [...] working with peers [...] in doctoral schools''* ***S2:**‘*''discovering scientific environment/atmosphere''* ***S5:** *"attending conferences, seminars, and being able to communicate/present and shed light on his work and being appreciated''* ***S13:** *"I encourage PhD student to have a network or research community''* ***S15:** *''identity based-socialization, becoming a PhD student [...] a research trainee [...] and a professional socialization [...] research experience is considered as a first professional experience in the research field''*
‘Atypical’ thesis topics – (1/15) supervisor *The nature of the ‘atypical’ object refers to its constitutive quality, which makes it incomparable to any other (characteristics of PhD with a unique personality, but with exceptional cognitive abilities that make them unique).	***S14:** "*as a PhD supervisor I supervise PhD students to a specific research topic [..] such PhD students are also ‘atypical’ ones and they find unconventional workspaces [...] and they aren’t shaped by obedience and submission"*
Evolutionary dimension of support – (1/15) supervisor	***S11:** *"we’re all in the same boat and the boat has to more forward and everyone in the boat has to do things. So in fact you have to manoeuvre the boat called the dissertation, we’re going to build the boat, and I’m the director and there are scientific guarantee responsibilities and accompanying responsibilities"*

Co-supervision - (1/15) supervisor *Doctoral student benefits from two points of view.	***S12:** *"co-supervision, with an MCF, enables him to have a better visibility of the practice of supervision [...] possible co-supervision is with a director from another specialty"*
Professional versus developmental supervision – (8/15) supervisors *Product-focused supervision. *Ensuring the conditions that promote the doctoral student's success.	***S1:** *"the role of the PhD supervisor is to provide support and to monitor the work as closely as possible [...] supporting doctoral students to the best of their abilities"* ***S2:** *"a role in setting the frame"* ***S3:"**supporting doctoral students in their research work"* ***S5:** *"is also to ensure that the student can produce a piece of writing with a methodological conceptual framework [...] professionalize students in the teaching-research profession"* ***S8:** *"reflect on the posture of the researcher in relation to the posture of the practitioner"* ***S6:** *"professionalize students in the teaching-research profession"* ***S11:** *"to succeed have a good PhD"*

Profiles of PhD students

Table 3. Profiles of PhD students

Profile 1	The first profile is capable to self-design his project and has various strategies to achieve his goal.
Profile 2	The second profile has different strategies but is unable to achieve his goal.
Profile 3	The third profile has different strategies but he does not intend to start his work and need special support.

Practices to foster students' agency

Table 4. Practices to foster students' agency

Collective meetings (seminars, workshops)	*Engaging PhD students in different themes conversations/variety of aspects *Developing their knowledge construction and reconstruction
Writing scientific articles	*Providing a training for academic writing
Review (peer-review)	*Becoming a peer-reviewer in a review in the doctoral school
Financial support (doctoral school)	*Providing financial support to participate to conferences and/or workshops

Strength and Limitations of the study

The strengths of this study rely on the volume and richness of qualitative collected data via the semi-structured interviews carried-out with PhD supervisors. The collected data provided deeper insights into PhD supervision practices, conceptions and beliefs. The collected data enabled us to identify other issues that were not initially thought of and gave us the opportunity to interact with PhD supervisors to understand their lived experiences and conceptions of supervision. The type of collected data could not be collected via a questionnaire. Since the interviews were carried out with only fifteen PhD supervisors in the field of Education and Training Sciences, the collected data could not be generalized. Moreover, in order to have a deeper insight into how PhD supervision is practiced and experienced in other disciplines, additional data should be collected with other PhD supervisors practicing supervision in humanities and others supervising in scientific fields.

Perspectives of further practices to foster agency

The collected data is an added-value for administrators. Integrating PhD students in research with supervisors within their doctoral school or in partnership with other doctoral schools could be an important practice to foster PhD students' agency.

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Agency in compilation theses – the kappa as a vessel for independent, critical thinking

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Abstract

In this paper, we study agency as expressed in the introductory text in the compilation thesis, the kappa, a topic not often addressed in academic development work. Based on an analysis of a mix of sources – a course on kappa writing; focus groups discussions with doctoral students, examiners and supervisors; and a survey sent out to examiners and opponents of doctoral theses in our faculty – we argue that the kappa holds great potential for developing both the doctoral students' independent, critical thinking and their identities as academics, but that this potential is often not brought to fruition.

Using Ashwin's (2009) lens of agency as a dynamic process involving limiting and enabling factors at the structural and agentic level, we isolate a lack of articulated expectations as a structural limiting factor for making the most of the kappa, and propose that this limitation can be balanced by offering conversations about what the kappa can be. In our presentation, we call for a discussion of what academic developers can do to facilitate such conversations, which we view as agentic spaces. Such work is important, we argue, not only for maintaining independent, critical thinking as a core competence in doctoral education, but also for safe-guarding democratic values.

Keywords: academic agency, compilation theses, critical thinking, doctoral education, kappa, Thesis by Publication

Extended Summary

An area often overlooked in academic development work concerns academic agency as expressed in doctoral theses, especially in the kappa, the text introducing, synthesizing or summarizing the articles in a compilation thesis. In this paper, we argue that the kappa holds great potential as a vessel for independent, critical thinking and for their development as academics, but that this potential lies largely untapped. We therefore encourage academic developers to seek ways of promoting doctoral students' agency in their kappa writing, which we see as crucial for ensuring quality doctoral education, and by extension for safe-guarding competences and democratic values underpinning a robust and informed society.

Academic agency in kappa writing

The compilation thesis, a collection of research articles accompanied by an independently authored text (also known as Thesis by Publication (TBL), Solli & Nygaard, 2023) is standard in STEM doctoral education in Scandinavia today and is picking up across disciplines globally. With the kappa, the independently authored text – also referred to as a general introduction, synopsis, summary, commentary and narrative (Nygaard & Solli, 2021, p. 7) – we introduce a Swedish loanword fitting for the part. Kappa corresponds to English coat or cloak, and like a coat, the kappa should embrace the articles in the compilation thesis, offering something more than the sum of the articles.

Here, we explore the kappa as an expression of critical thinking and an extension of academic agency, using data from three sources originating in a research intensive faculty of engineering: two runs of a course on kappa writing involving 40 doctoral students; three focus groups discussions, one with examinators and supervisors and two with doctoral students; and a survey sent out to all the examiners and opponents in doctoral examinations at our faculty during the first half of 2025 (187 answers).

We view this data through Ashwin's (2009) concept of agency as structural-agentic process, a process involving enabling and limiting factors at the structural and the individual, agentic level. The two levels interact in dynamic ways so that agency is never static, but relational and situational. This lens is useful for us as academic developers since it provides tools to reflect on what might limit or enable doctoral students' agency in writing their kappas.

A lack of clear expectations limiting agency

In our data, we found a limiting factor for agency at the structural level in a lack of articulated expectations on the kappa. Many of the doctoral students in our kappa courses were frustrated when they did not find clear expectations, which they perceived as an absence of guidelines telling them what to do. In contrast, the supervisors and examiners in our focus group saw the lack of articulated guidelines as a possibility for their doctoral students to showcase independent, critical thinking, but they also noted that they rarely address these questions with their doctoral students.

Extending Ashwin's concept of agency, we interpret this situation as the absence of an agentic space where the doctoral students can negotiate what the kappa is. The result can be a missed learning opportunity where they chase a convention that does not exist rather than independently contextualize their doctoral project. We saw some indication of this in our kappa course, where many students articulated an intention to copy the structure of a recent kappa in their field, and in the survey sent out to the assessors of doctoral theses at our faculty, where a third of the respondents defined the kappa in the thesis they assessed as a summary of key contributions already articulated in the research articles. 1.3 Agentic spaces to negotiate kappa boundaries and academic identity.

To ensure doctoral students' agency in writing a kappa fitting their experiences as becoming academics, which we believe it should, we therefore invite a discussion of how academic developers can open up useful agentic spaces, both by way of doctoral education policy development and in our practices. Importantly, we agree with the supervisors and examiners that the answer is not to introduce strict guidelines, but to encourage reflection.

The stakes are high. Without agentic spaces, many doctoral students might downplay the value of their kappas and avoid questions important for their academic identity and the doctoral degree: the context of their research, the strengths, limitations and alternatives to the methods they use, and the long-term implications of the doctoral project for academia and for society. What is more, they might outsource their kappa to generative AI. The assumption here is that if the kappa is perceived as a low-value task to be completed quickly, outsourcing is tempting.

For us, the kappa course seemed to provide an agentic space. All the participants in the focus groups with doctoral students from our kappa course stated that the course had helped them in crafting their own stories simply by making it explicit that they did not have to follow a template. In Ashwin's terms (2009), the teaching and learning situations in the kappa course negotiated perceived limiting factors at the structural level (lack of explicit expectations) and the agentic level (vague supervision), allowing the emergence of a contextually adapted interpretation of the kappa. 1.4 Next steps: strengthening the kappa as a carrier of academic values

Our findings highlight the importance of promoting doctoral students' agency in the kappa for their own development and for the doctoral degree, but we also see implications for academia and for society. Research on academic organizations suggests that a lack of shared values makes organizations vulnerable to external pressure, as there is a risk of specialization into isolated disciplinary communities (Hounsell & Andersson, 2009) or microcultures (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2011) where local practices cause communication problems across clusters of members. In such contexts, external agendas can find it easier to divide and conquer, further relativizing both academia's and society's views on knowledge, facts, and scientific methods. Our vision is that by introducing agentic spaces for negotiation of the kappa, important boundary work (Lee, 2007; Elmgren et al, 2024) around academic culture and knowledge production becomes possible, strengthening democratic resilience in the process.

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Artificial Intelligence and Scientific Writing in a Health Sciences Program: A Mixed-Methods Study

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Abstract

We described the perceptions of Nutrition students and instructors regarding skills related to scientific writing and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and evaluate the accuracy of detection tools through a mixed-methods study. First, two focus groups (9 students and 9 instructors), selected through convenience sampling and moderated by an external researcher, were conducted. Second, 50 original abstracts (published in a Chilean scientific journal during 2019) and a similar 50 AI-generated abstracts were analyzed using GPTZero Premium and by nutrition instructors. Transcriptions of focus groups were analyzed through thematic analysis, using NVivo, and ROC curves were built to determine the accuracy of AI-use detection of instructors and GPTZero in different scenarios. Qualitative findings highlighted the need for clear guidance on AI use, particularly regarding transparency, ethics, and academic integrity. Students mainly described AI as a practical aid for writing tasks, whereas instructors were more cautious and questioned its contribution to critical and reflective thinking. In the quantitative analysis, GPTZero detected with 100% accuracy AI-generated texts (sensitivity=1.00), whereas 4% of original texts were classified as AI-generated ("False Positives", specificity=0.96) with an AUC of 0.98 (95% CI: 0.95-1.00). Instructors had lower accuracy in detecting AI-generated texts (AUC=0.54; 0.44-0.64, p

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, scientific writing, nutrition and dietetics students, higher education

Extended Summary

Aims: To describe the perceptions of Nutrition students and instructors from a Chilean University regarding the skills developed through scientific writing and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this context, and to estimate the accuracy of an AIdetection tool with texts written in Spanish.

Methodology: This mixed-methods study included two focus groups of students (n=9) and instructors (n=9) of Nutrition, and a comparative quantitative analysis between GPTZero (an AIdetection tool) and instructors' (n=14) ability to detect AI-misuse. Participants were selected through convenience sampling, and sessions were moderated by an external researcher and fully transcribed following Kvale's (2011) recommendations (Kvale, 2011). The corpus was analyzed using thematic analysis supported by NVivo. Coding and categorization procedures followed Gibbs (2012), including peer debriefing (Gibbs, 2012). The quantitative methodology included 50 original abstracts (from 2019) and 50 similar AI-generated abstracts using ChatGPT. ROC curves were built to estimate accuracy of GPTZero and instructors´ AI-misuse detection using Stata 19 software. Additionally, we tested GPTZero in two different scenarios: 1) exclusion of English-written articles (n=12), and 2) when original texts used AI as a redaction tool. The study was approved by the University Ethics Committee (ID 241007012).

Findings: Tables 1 and 2 summarize the thematic axes, subcategories, and the main uses of AI, and identify four interconnected themes regarding AI use in scientific writing. First, norms for AI use emerged as the dominant theme, with both groups emphasizing transparency, ethical use, and academic integrity; however, participants described uneven implementation of institutional guidance across courses. Second, students mainly perceived AI as a practical support for idea generation, drafting, revision, translation, and bibliographic assistance, while instructors expressed greater caution and questioned its role in fostering critical and reflective thinking. Third, AI was perceived as offering important benefits, particularly timesaving and support for synthesis and text improvement, but also raised concerns related to factual inaccuracies, overreliance, and misuse. Finally, both groups referred to a range of AI tools used in scientific writing, with students focusing more on writing support and instructors on literature search. ROC curves comparing detection tools are summarized in Figure 1. GPTZero detected with 100% accuracy AI-generated texts (sensitivity=1.00), whereas 4% of original texts were classified as AI-generated ("False Positives", specificity=0.96) with an AUC=0.98 (0.96-1.00). Perfect accuracy was achieved when excluding abstracts from full texts in English (AUC=1.00) but decreased when original texts' redaction had been previously improved by ChatGPT (AUC=0.67; 0.60-0.70, p<0.001), leading to an increase in false positives up to 40%. Lecturers had a low accuracy for detecting AIgenerated texts (AUC=0.54; 0.44-0.64, p<0.001 vs. GPTZero).

Theoretical and educational Significance:

AI use in scientific writing revolves around academic integrity, underscoring the need for clear policies and frameworks to regulate its use. On the other hand, AI-detection tools may be useful for detecting misuse only when AI is completely restricted, and with caution for non-native Spanish speakers. These findings contribute to academic and pedagogical discussions on the responsible integration of AI in health sciences education, providing contextualized empirical evidence for the Latin American setting and offering insights for developing institutional policies and curricular guidelines. Scientific writing is essential for producing and disseminating knowledge in health sciences. Its primary function is to communicate research findings clearly, precisely, and in a structured manner, contributing to the development of evidence-based clinical practice and critical thinking skills in health-related

programs (Hall, 2017). In recent years, generative AI has rapidly entered scientific writing processes: it facilitates idea generation, initial drafting, summarization, and translation, but it also introduces technical risks (hallucinations, academic integrity, and dependency). Chilean and international institutions have published practical guidelines for citing and using generative models (MIT, 2025; OECD, 2023; Oyarzun, 2026; UNESCO, 2022), but their use requires critical thinking and ethics training to prevent misuse. A lack of scientific writing skills and AI-use policies may lead to ethical breaches and academic integrity violations, as evidenced by a surge in low-quality scientific publications (Suchak et al., 2025). Currently, there is no standard policy regarding the use of AI in the university curriculum. Prohibiting its use without providing adequate opportunities to develop the aforementioned skills may increase academic integrity violations (Gruenhagen et al., 2024; Suchak et al., 2025). This is particularly relevant given that AI-generated text is not detected as plagiarism, while false positive rates of detection tools limit their usefulness in the academic setting (Chechitelli, 2023; Gao et al., 2023; Liang et al., 2023).

Tables and Figures:

Table 1: Thematic Map

Axes	Categories	Subcategories	Focus groups	References
Norms	Norms for the use of AI in scientific writing		2	52
Skills and use	**Skills developed and Uses of AI**	**Total**	**2**	**23**
		Critical reading	2	22
		Reflective thinking	2	5
		Revision and corrections of AI proposals	1	7
		Creation of title and keywords	1	3
		Redaction and improvement of redaction	2	12
		Translation	2	2
		Topics research and bibliography suggestions	1	4
		Answers for domestic, day-to-day or dietary challenges	1	19
		Reading comprehension	1	3
		Studying, evaluations and reading controls	2	5
Advantages and Disadvantages	**Advantages**	**Total**	**2**	**11**
		Time saving	2	10
		Synthesis	2	6
	Disadvantages		2	32
AI tools	**Students**		1	16
	Instructors		1	9

Table 2: Thematic map of skills and AI use

Use	Students	Instructors
Creation of Sections/Titles	✓	✓
Redaction and style improvement	✓	✓
Synthesis/Articles summaries	✓ (ChatPDF)	(not frequent)
Traslation	✓	—
Organization/Documents edition	✓ (SIDER)	—
Search/Bibliographic curation	✓ (support)	✓ (Perplexity, Elicit, Research Rabbit)

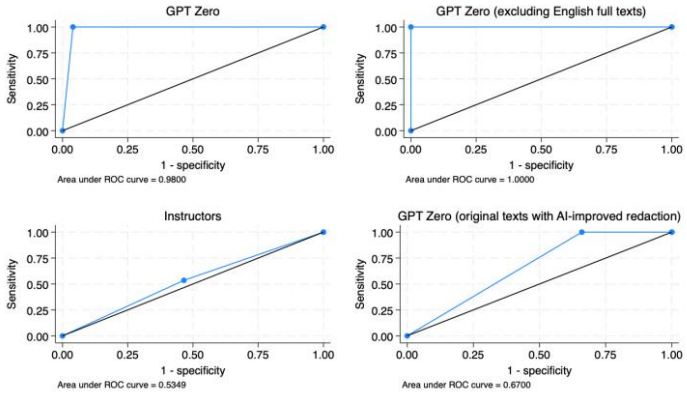


Figure 1: Prediction accuracy for AI-generated texts of GPTZero and Instructors.

Papers 15

Illumination or Illusion: The Role of Self-Reflection on Student Wellbeing and Lifelong Learning

Pamsy Hui, Juley Xiao

Abstract

With the rapid development of technologies, students will graduate into a future that is highly uncertain and ambiguous. To thrive in such a future, it is critical that to be able to maintain psychological wellbeing, through which one sustains a sense of hope, competence, and meaningfulness in life to move forward despite challenges and setbacks; it is also crucial to be able to learn and adapt continuously as the environment shifts. Individuals who have higher perceived leadership skills (i.e., ability to influence others) are more likely to feel optimistic and competent, as well as to sense progress and continuously learning in both work and life. However, whether these tendencies persist depends on whether one engages in self-reflection to obtain a realistic assessment of their true leadership capabilities. In a study of 236 master students in a university in Hong Kong, we found that one's perceived leadership skills were indeed associated with higher sense of psychological wellbeing and engagement in lifelong learning. Engagement in self-reflection was also linked positively to lifelong learning. More importantly, engagement in self-reflection positively moderated the relationships between perceived leadership skills, and both sense of psychological wellbeing and engagement in lifelong learning. Our findings suggest that the ability to illuminate on rather than relying on an illusion of one's leadership capabilities can be the key to whether one will thrive in the future. Leadership development programs can benefit by integrating self-reflection as an essential component.

Extended Summary

With the rapid development of technologies, students from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will graduate into a future that is highly uncertain and ambiguous. To thrive in such a future, it is critical to be able to maintain psychological wellbeing, through which one sustains a sense of hope, competence, and meaningfulness in life to move forward despite challenges and setbacks (Diener et al., 2009); it is also crucial to be able to learn and adapt continuously as the environment shifts (Kirby et al., 2010; Mei, Feng & Cavallaro, 2023; World Economic Forum, 2025). As collaborating with people with diverse backgrounds becomes a norm rather than an exception, it is fair to argue that one's perceived leadership skills (i.e., perceived ability to influence others) would be positively associated with psychological wellbeing and lifelong learning capacity. Specifically, individuals who perceive themselves to be more capable of influencing others and getting others to collaborate are also more likely to receive feedback that they are competent at what they do, maintain a sense of hope and purpose in both work and life. At the same time, it is also conceivable that those who feel more capable of influencing others would experience more learning and adapting while working with others, having been able to see progress in their endeavors. This would nurture their lifelong learning capacity. However, one's own perceived leadership skills may not be always accurate. Without accurate assessment, the illusion that one is competent and progressing may not sustain for long. We contend that individuals who tend to engage in self-reflection are those who are more capable of assessing their leadership skills accurately and receiving feedback of progress from people around them. These individuals are more likely to have more realistic sense of their strengths and weaknesses, and how they can improve, thereby achieving better psychological wellbeing and lifelong learning.

We tested the above hypotheses with a cohort of master students in a university in Hong Kong. These students enrolled in three different business programs that included a leadership development component. As part of that component, we administered two waves of surveys (i.e., before the beginning and in the middle of their programs) to assess their self-reflection tendencies (Grant, Franklin & Langford, 2002), leadership and interpersonal skills (Padhy & Hariharan, 2023), engagement in lifelong learning (Kirby et al., 2010), and psychological wellbeing (Diener et al., 2009) with established measurements; we also asked for their perception of different activities in the leadership development component. In these programs, collaborating in groups in the coursework was a common requirement across many projects. Therefore, students' sense of psychological wellbeing and capability to continuously learn were likely to be a function of how well they felt they led their group projects. Altogether, we obtained 335 usable responses in the first wave and 236 in the second wave. As we predicted, perceived leadership skills were associated with higher sense of psychological wellbeing and engagement in lifelong learning. In addition, engagement in self-reflection was also linked positively to lifelong learning. More importantly, engagement in self-reflection positively moderated the relationships between perceived leadership skills and both sense of psychological wellbeing and engagement in lifelong learning.

Taken together, our findings suggest that how we feel about our influence over other people may be associated with how competent and optimistic we feel about ourselves, and with how we experience continuous learning and adaptation in work and in life. However, being able to engage in self-reflection allows us to gain clarity and get a realistic idea about our own competence and areas for improvement. Engagement in self-reflection is the lynchpin of the process. In an environment that calls for constant learning, adaptation, and resilience, this ability to illuminate on rather

than relying on an illusion of one's leadership capabilities can be the key to whether one will thrive. Therefore, self-reflection is an integral element if HEIs are to implement leadership development programs that are fit-for-purpose.

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The Missing Ingredient: Using Art Therapy in Academic Development and Practice to Enhance Wellbeing

Conor West

Abstract

This proposed collaborative space aims to demonstrate how reflection and innovation drive advancements in teaching, learning, and institutional practices by exploring arts-based professional development to enhance wellbeing and resilience in tertiary education. It will explore the use of art therapy to support and develop educators in response to the poor psychological outcomes and high attrition rates experienced by this group. Attendees will be invited to create their own reflective response artwork during the workshop using materials provided, offering a unique and immersive conference experience. First, literature demonstrating the individual and contextual stress factors that contribute to burnout and attrition in tertiary education, establishing the need for therapeutic support and development of educators. A brief examination of neuro principles from emerging research will establish the case for arts-based interventions to supplement existing wellbeing initiatives, before explorations of current and future directions are outlined and experienced. Attendees will participate in active reflection using their artworks to discuss specific applications in attendees' educational settings, gather feedback around arts-based application in tertiary education and explore potential partnerships. Attendees will take away practical arts-based activities suitable to tertiary settings that may be applied to academic development and practice to enhance wellbeing and resilience amongst academic developers, teaching staff and their students as a non-traditional form of co-created learning.

Keywords: Teacher Wellbeing, Teacher Resilience, Art Therapy, Academic Development

Extended Summary

This summary details key information for the proposed collaborative space.

Background

Drawing upon over a decade work as an Australian teacher educator and academic, academic developer and now registered art therapist, this proposal emerged from the clear synergy between these domains. The holistic wellbeing of educators and students serves as a non-negotiable criterion that must be met before further educational interventions can be successful. Thus, exploration of how to efficiently ensure the wellbeing of both educators and students is at the heart of an academic development. Art therapy is a therapeutic approach that uses creative processes such as drawing, painting, sculpting, or other forms of artistic expression to help individuals explore emotions, reduce stress, and improve wellbeing (Barnett & Vasiu, 2024). This field aligns to current research in neuroscience in its belief that creating art can be a non-verbal way to process feelings and experiences, making it especially useful for bridging mind-body dissonance and including those who may find verbal expression challenging (Chilton & Scotti, 2014). Even in tertiary education settings, learning can be a stressful and traumatic experience for both academic and student (Harrison, Burke & Clarke, 2023), additionally so where traumatic content is embedded within the curriculum (e.g., teaching, nursing, social work) (Manning et al, 2016). Globally, the wellbeing programs promoted to early childhood, primary and secondary educators are mostly aligned to mindfulness (AITSL, 2022; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020) with tertiary educators receiving limited wellbeing support as part of induction programs (Carroll et al., 2021). Other popular wellbeing programs use relational emotive behaviour therapy (REBT) model (Huk & Berstein, 2020). These programs focus on the personal factors of workplace stress and burnout, taking a psychoeducational lens focused mostly on equipping educators with strategies to manage stress without necessarily addressing the contextual causes (Terjesen & Kurasaki, 2009). A shift toward expressive arts therapies has begun to address this need for a holistic approach to employee wellbeing, including art therapy techniques applied with and without the presence of a registered art therapist.

Rationale

Trauma-informed teaching practices are increasingly being applied in these fields Miller & Flint-Stipp, 2019), favouring cognitive behavioural therapies of logical appraisal of emotions. These represent top-down responses, where cognitive evaluation occurs within the medial prefrontal cortex. This is often contrasted with bottom-up responses, which arise quickly from sensory-affective processing within the amygdala and are less responsive to rational deconstruction (Ochsner et al., 2009; McRae et al., 2011). As emotional regulation is anchored in subcortical structures like the amygdala and hippocampus that activate faster than the prefrontal cortex (Barnett & Vasiu, 2024), timely and considered wellbeing interventions are required to ensure both students' and educators' brains are in a place for teaching and learning. As both types of response are present in educator stress and burnout, wellbeing interventions that address both are required (Rosas et al., 2025). Embedding art therapy within wellbeing initiatives thus provides one such path to achieve this by using mind-body connections and facilitated reflection. These arts-based approaches address polyvagal theory, addressing automatic nervous system responses to shape emotion, social engagement and safety (Haeyen, 2024). The neuroplasticity activated through arts-based interventions is brought within both the medial prefrontal cortex and amygdala; these are key areas for emotional regulation (Barnett & Vasiu, 2024). This collaborative

space will advocate for unique experiential and arts-based interventions in educational settings to enhance wellbeing, agency and co-construction. A collaborative format thus is the most appropriate for attendees to experience the impact of arts-based professional development in their teaching practice.

Intended Goals and Outcomes

Attendees will take away practical arts-based activities suitable to tertiary settings that may be applied to academic development and practice to enhance wellbeing and resilience amongst academic developers, teaching staff and their students as a non-traditional form of co-created learning.

Structure Overview

Leveraging the continuum presented by Van Lith and Fenner (2011), this can be seen as reflecting the "flexible and adaptive ways" (p. 21) that art therapy can be integrated within existing academic practice from art as therapy to art therapy (requiring a registered art therapist). This collaborative space will open with a welcome and framing, serving as a brief introduction and conduct briefing to emphasise opt-in participation and non-judgmental approach. This will be followed by an overview of stress, burnout and neuro principles required to position art therapy interventions as a promising wellbeing strategy in tertiary education. Attendees will be invited to make a reflective response to the prompt 'create a visual response to a stressor or tension in your current role, focusing on colour, texture and shape' from which a reflective circle will be created to discuss the themes which emerged. Reflective prompts will also be used to facilitate discussion, including 'what did you notice while making' and 'what does this piece tell you about your experience?' with an emphasis on description rather thank artistic critique. An overview of potential arts-based micro-practices will then be shared, followed by a discussion of how these could fit within audiences' current practice. Audience reflects on one thing they could try and writes it on the back of their first artwork.

Target Audience

Attendance is recommended for early career academics, academic developers (particularly those working in education, nursing or social work), curriculum designers or those interested in trauma-informed educational practice.

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Undoing Performativity. A Critical Praxis of Care, Compassion, Community and Inclusion in a UK Academic Development Programme

Vanessa Mar-Molinero, Erika Corradini

Abstract

Higher Education's intensifying culture of performativity, speed, and accountability continues to shape academic identities and constrain pedagogical agency. This empirical paper examines a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) at a UK university that intentionally embeds relational, compassionate, and inclusive pedagogies to counter these structural pressures. Embracing the 'compassion turn' (Dickson & Summerville, 2018; Waddington, 2018 in Waddington & Bonaparte, 2023), relational and compassionate pedagogies support inclusive, reflective, and community-centred teaching, making space for the programme to foster belonging and critical development. Drawing on relational and inclusive pedagogy (Gravett, 2022; Bovill, 2020; Rossi 2023), compassionate academic practice (Waddington & Bonaparte, 2021, 2024a, 2024b), and critical analyses of neoliberal performativity (Ball, 2012; Burke, 2017), the study explores how academic developers foster safe, dialogic, community-centred spaces that support new educators' sense of mattering, pedagogical confidence including in inclusion and compassion, and professional agency.

Data were collected from participants' reflective assignments, Action Learning Set (ALS), post-session reflections, feedback, and external examiner reports. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) identified three core findings: (1) relational teaching and modelling of compassion generated embodied practices and enabled participants to feel "seen," supported, and academically stretched; (2) ALS created rare, trusting spaces for vulnerability, critical inquiry, and non-hierarchical collegiality; and (3) flexible, personalised feedback practices mitigated performative pressures and enabled deeper engagement with inclusive pedagogy.

The study demonstrates that compassion-forward academic development is both pedagogical and political, reshaping teaching cultures, challenging deficit narratives, and strengthening institutional capacity for inclusive practice. The conclusion outlines a five-year longitudinal evaluation strategy to track sustained impact on academic identities, pedagogical practices, and departmental cultures across the institution.

Keywords: Compassionate Academic Development, Relational Pedagogy, Performativity and Agency, Inclusive Professional Learning, Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper

This empirical paper examines how a redesigned Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) supports academic staff in resisting performative pressures and fostering inclusive, relational pedagogical cultures. It investigates how relational and compassionate pedagogies, embedded structurally into the programme and embodied, enable educators to develop critical agency, inclusive, reflective pedagogical practices, collegial trust, and a deeper sense of mattering. The paper asks:

- How do participants experience and respond to compassion-forward academic development?
- What role do dialogic pedagogies and inclusive practices (Action Learning Sets, flexible assessment, personalised feedback) play in shaping educator identity and confidence?
- How might academic developers reimagine academic development and teacher training to build pedagogical communities aligned with values of care, connection, and justice?

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within the broader turn toward relational and values-led academic development. At its heart lies what Waddington and others have called the "compassion turn" in higher education (Waddington, 2021; Waddington & Bonaparte, 2024a), a growing scholarly and institutional movement to reposition compassion not as sentimentality, but as an ethically necessary and rigorously embodied pedagogical stance. The "compassion turn" responds directly to the erosion of care in Higher Education brought about by neoliberal logics of performativity, acceleration, and individualism (Ball, 2012; Burke, 2017). Within these marketised conditions, educators often experience isolation, emotional depletion, and shame, particularly those new to academia, who must navigate competing demands around compliance, research productivity, pedagogical disruptions and complex multifaceted identity formation. This paper takes seriously the claim that academic development must actively resist these forces by rehumanising staff learning and explicitly modelling practices of trust, inclusion, and care (Zembylas, 2015; Waddington & Bonaparte, 2024). Relational pedagogy provides one such theoretical grounding. Gravett (2023) argues that mattering, belonging, and reciprocal recognition are not ancillary to academic learning but constitutive of it. Building on this, Bovill (2020) positions co-creation and dialogic pedagogies as transformative tools for reshaping hierarchical teaching cultures and enhancing the agency of both students and staff. These principles underpin the PGCAP's use of Action Learning Sets (ALS) and reflective practice, where educators critically engage in structured, collegial spaces of meaning-making.

Alongside this, compassionate pedagogy (Waddington & Bonaparte, 2024; Spaeth, 2024; Worline & Dutton, 2017) is framed not as "niceness" or accommodation, but as a deeply political and epistemological commitment. Compassion,

in this frame, becomes a way of knowing and acting in response to suffering and struggle, particularly when embedded structurally into feedback practices (Ajjawi and Boud 2018), assessment flexibility, and the design of learning environments. The pedagogical imperative is not simply to feel for others, but to create institutional conditions that foster mutual trust, responsiveness, and ethical attentiveness. This study thus explores how such conditions are enacted through a PGCAP programme, and how they are experienced and internalised by staff. Together, these traditions, relational pedagogy, care ethics, and critical resistance to performativity form the foundation for a compassionate academic development praxis that seeks not only to support new educators but to reshape institutional teaching cultures. 3. Methodology This empirical study uses a qualitative methodology grounded in practice-based inquiry (Cousin, 2009) and action research principles (Kemmis et al., 2014), with academic developers positioned as both facilitators and co-inquirers.

The study draws on data from two cohorts of a redesigned PGCAP programme, engaging 150+ academic staff from a diverse range of disciplines and roles. Data sources include:

- Participants' reflective assignments (written case studies and final reflections)
- Notes and reflections from Action Learning Sets (ALS)
- Whiteboard discussions and post-session reflections
- Structured programme-level feedback (Student-Staff Liaison Committee minutes)
- Written feedback from participants (unsolicited and solicited)
- External examiner reports, anonymised for confidentiality

These materials were analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase model. An inductive approach was used initially to allow salient participant themes to emerge organically. In a second phase, data were mapped to theoretical constructs such as relationality, care, performativity, and pedagogical agency. Reflexivity was integral throughout, and the team engaged in regular peer-debriefing and analytic reflective notes to acknowledge their dual roles as designers and researchers.

Key Findings and Discussion

The study found that participants significantly developed their relational pedagogical practices through the PGCAP and sustained them in subsequent years. By the end of the programme, participants articulated a new or strengthened belief that good teaching is fundamentally about building relationships with students and among students in the classroom. They reported concrete changes in practice, for example, many adopted more dialogic teaching methods, allotting class time for building rapport and two-way feedback with students. Many participants redesigned aspects of their modules to be more inclusive and student-centered. One participant, for instance, introduced co-creation elements in an assignment after being inspired by Bovill's (2020) work on partnership, students were invited to contribute to the design of assessment criteria, which the participant noted increased the students' sense of belonging and ownership in the class. Another participant focused on compassionate adjustments in their teaching, such as offering flexibility with deadlines and creating space in lectures to discuss well-being, influenced by discussions of critically compassionate pedagogy on the PGCAP. These early-career academics thus began to see their role not just as content experts but as empathetic facilitators of learning, concerned with the whole student experience. Importantly, participants credited the PGCAP's learning community and pedagogy as catalysts for these changes. The Action Learning Sets were repeatedly mentioned as a "safe space" where colleagues could voice struggles (like a class that went poorly or a dilemma about a distressed student) and receive non-judgmental support. This relational space among peers fostered a habit of reflective, compassionate problem-solving. Participants noted that experiencing care and collegiality first-hand in the PGCAP made them more mindful of cultivating the same in their own classrooms. These findings echo Gravett's (2023) observation that developing meaningful connections in contemporary academia, which often feels fragmented by competition, requires intentional effort. Our participants' experiences suggest that academic development programmes can indeed create a microcosm of the relational, caring culture we wish to see in the wider higher education sector. By modelling practices of empathy, active listening, and mutual respect, the PGCAP community of practice gave participants a template for relational pedagogy in action. A second key finding is that the PGCAP fostered a more critical awareness of neoliberal influences on teaching, and a sense of empowerment to resist purely performative norms. Early in the programme, many participants expressed anxiety about meeting metrics, such as concerns over student evaluation scores, pressure to adopt trendy tech solutions, or the need to demonstrate "excellence" for probation. Through the curriculum (which included critical discussions on the marketisation of education) and the supportive peer dialogue, participants increasingly questioned these pressures. By the later stages of the study, numerous participants described consciously prioritising pedagogical values over box-checking. One lecturer recounted how they challenged their department's practice of overloading students with assessments, using evidence from their PGCAP project on authentic assessment to argue for a more learning-focused approach. Another mentioned that after experiencing feedback as dialogue on the PGCAP, they became an advocate in their department

for replacing single high-stakes exams with staged assessments that include formative feedback cycles. Such acts illustrate how academic development can be subtly political, empowering educators to push back against what Ball terms the "terrors of performativity". In line with this, participants came to recognise that being a compassionate, inclusive educator might sometimes conflict with institutional expectations, but they felt better equipped to navigate this. They developed what one called a "language to defend my pedagogy", drawing on theory and evidence to justify relational approaches as enhancing (rather than hindering) student success. Gravett (2023) writes that in marketised institutions, it's easy for individual voices to be drowned out, but that people matter, their perspectives, lived experiences, choices, and relationships, even when dominant institutional narratives overlook or silence them. We saw our participants asserting their voices in small yet significant ways to prioritise relationships and equity. For example, a few new lecturers used their PGCAP action research projects to spark departmental conversations on inclusive curriculum design, referencing scholars like Rossi (2023) (to argue that inclusion should be built into design, not tacked on later) and Burke (2017) (to highlight how seemingly neutral practices can perpetuate inequities). These are nascent forms of agency, but meaningful in that they show academic developers not only training individuals, but also equipping them as change agents who can question status quos. However, the study also surfaced challenges and tensions. Not all participants found it easy to implement relational and compassionate pedagogy in their contexts. Common barriers included large class sizes, lack of time (for extended feedback conversations), and unsupportive departmental cultures. Furthermore, there were instances of emotional labour and burnout risk, some educators, in striving to be continually available and caring, began to overwork themselves, especially in unsupportive environments. This points to the importance of coupling individual development with wider cultural and policy change (discussed below). Several participants formed informal peer networks after completing the programme, continuing to share compassionate teaching strategies, effectively extending the community of practice. This outcome underscores the value of academic developers cultivating lasting networks, not just one-off training.

Theoretical and Educational Significance

This merged work carries significant implications at both theoretical and practical levels. Theoretically, it contributes to an emerging narrative in academic development that foregrounds humanising pedagogies as a counterforce to the neoliberal university. By explicitly drawing from relational pedagogy and compassionate pedagogy literatures, and by empirically illustrating their interplay in a longitudinal context, the paper enriches our understanding of how these concepts can be operationalised in academic staff development. It affirms the arguments of key thinkers who view education as a relational, values-based endeavour (Su and Wood, 2023).

We demonstrate concretely what relational academic development can look like in practice, highlighting elements like communities of practice, co-creation, and dialogic feedback, thereby adding depth to predominantly conceptual discussions. Moreover, the study expands on critical perspectives (Gravett, Zembylas, Burke) by showing the on-the-ground political potential of academic development. It positions the PGCAP as not just a skills course, but a site of critical pedagogy where norms can be questioned, and new narratives (teaching as care rather than performance) can be constructed. This aligns with the idea of academic development as a form of praxis that integrates personal and pedagogical growth with critical consciousness. Educationally, the significance lies in how these insights can inform practice, policy, and future research in academic development and higher education. First, for practice: Academic developers and programme leaders can intentionally embed relational and compassionate approaches into faculty development curricula. The success of the PGCAP case suggests that strategies like facilitated peer dialogue (ALS groups), reflective practice assignments, and opportunities for educators to experience being learners in a compassionate environment are powerful. These strategies help academics internalise the importance of relationships and inclusion. Additionally, academic development initiatives should encourage participants to experiment with co-creation and inclusive design in their teaching, as these can serve as vehicles for relational pedagogy. In terms of policy, institutions and leaders should recognise the strategic importance of relational pedagogy and staff wellbeing, and reflect this in policy and resourcing. It means protecting time for relationship-building, for instance, policies might formally allocate workload for mentorship, tutoring, or community-engaged teaching that often gets devalued in metric-centric environments. Crucially, universities ought to be wary of co-opting compassion and relationships into shallow "initiatives" that simply tick boxes. Waddington and Bonaparte (2024a) caution against treating compassionate pedagogy as a fad or creating a "compassion excellence framework" for branding. Instead, institutions should foster authentic dialogue with staff and students about what a caring campus looks like, even if that means confronting uncomfortable truths about current practices. This paper aligns with the views that academic development is not a neutral training ground but a potent pedagogical and political arena. By merging relational, compassionate, and inclusive pedagogy principles with a critical stance on the neoliberal university, academic development initiatives can empower educators to rehumanise higher education from within. They do so by equipping academics with the mindset and practices to place relationships, empathy, and equity at the core of their teaching, and by emboldening them to challenge institutional norms that undermine those values. In an era when efficiency and quantification often eclipse the human dimensions of education, such work is both urgent and transformative. As one participant reflected, "I have

learned that changing the system starts in small moments, a genuine conversation, a compassionate gesture, a collaborative project with students. The PGCAP helped me see that those 'small' pedagogical choices are actually political acts of rehumanising our university."

Finally, this work is embedded in a five-year longitudinal monitoring project, with areas of long-term impact and strategic transformation integrated into the study. Participants' evolving pedagogical approaches will be tracked through follow-up interviews, course evaluations, and institutional data. Critically, the study will also examine the departmental diffusion of relational and inclusive practices and assess correlations with student feedback measures, including NSS teaching and learning scores. This evaluative strand will explore whether embedding compassionate academic development can have systemic effects beyond individual staff identity formation, contributing to more inclusive, effective, and values-aligned teaching cultures across the institution.

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The Hidden Curriculum of Care: Designing Online Faculty Development to Model Student Belonging

Karen Skibba

Abstract

While the expansion of online and blended learning has increased access to higher education, access alone does not guarantee inclusion. Students, particularly those navigating the "hidden curriculum" of academic norms, often interpret instructor silence as indifference. This paper posits that active facilitation—characterized by high-touch "Social Presence" and "Teaching Presence"—is the critical variable in fostering student belonging and agency. Findings are presented from a mixed-methods case study of two faculty learning communities designed as a "meta-experience," where instructors participated as online students. Drawing on the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework, the analysis demonstrates how faculty learning community facilitators intentionally modeled care through consistent reminders, proactive check-ins, and "supportive consistency." Quantitative results indicate that 97% of the instructor participants perceived the student experience as essential to their learning. Qualitative data, including longitudinal instructor interviews, reveals that experiencing this "pedagogy of care" encouraged instructors to adopt similar behaviors—such as "checking up" on students and holding "confidence-building" availability—resulting in improved student evaluations and a profound shift in more understanding and caring teaching approaches.

Keywords: Belonging, Faculty Development, Social Presence, Teaching Presence

Extended Summary

The expansion of digital learning environments necessitates a shift from content-centric to student-centric pedagogy. However, many instructors struggle to translate the abstract concept of "caring" into actionable online behaviors. The Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison, 2017) provides a lens to understand this challenge, particularly through Social Presence (the ability to project oneself socially and emotionally) and Teaching Presence (the design and facilitation of the educational experience). This study examines a "meta-experience" professional development model where instructors were immersed as students to demonstrate the emotional impact of the "hidden curriculum." It is argued that by experiencing the anxiety of the learner and the relief of active facilitation, instructors gain the agency to dismantle invisible barriers (e.g., unspoken deadlines, assumed help-seeking behaviors) and replace them with explicit, high-touch support.

Methodology: This research utilizes a mixed-methods approach to analyze the impact of two learning communities at a large research university in the United States. The dataset draws on post-course surveys from 516 unique participants, thematic analysis of discussion forums, and semi-structured interviews with alumni instructors. Data were coded for indicators of the three CoI presences, with a specific focus on how facilitator behaviors—such as the frequency of announcements, supportive reminders, and the tone and frequency of feedback—influenced participants' subsequent teaching practices (Author, 2021).

Findings: The Transformative Power of Active Facilitation The data suggests that the "meta-experience" of instructors experiencing being an online student was the primary driver of pedagogical transformation, with 98% of participants reporting improved teaching evaluations subsequent to the program (Author, 2021). The findings highlight two specific mechanisms of change: modeling Social Presence through proactive outreach and modeling Teaching Presence through supportive consistency. Participants consistently cited the facilitators' proactive outreach as a model for "humanizing" the learning environment. Qualitative data from the study indicates that personalized messages sent to participants who were "falling behind" were perceived not as punitive, but as "supportive nudges" that created a sense of belonging (Author, 2021). One interview participant operationalized this by adopting a protocol of emailing struggling students, reporting that students were often "surprised" by this intervention. She shared how she successfully implemented a simple yet human strategy: assuring students, "My main concern is for you to learn." This practice "opened an open channel of communication" and led to students consistently mentioning in evaluations, "I feel that my professor cares about me." This finding suggests that active "checking in" on students and providing positive messages and reminders validates the student's presence in the course. Similarly, one instructor participant noted that the facilitators' consistent presence inspired him to hold daily office hours. One instructor observed that this availability was "very confidence building for the students"—even for those who did not attend—as it signaled a reliable safety net, reducing the anxiety often associated with the hidden curriculum.

Furthermore, the study establishes that Teaching Presence is most effective when it functions as a mechanism for cognitive offloading. Survey respondents highlighted that regular announcements (e.g., every three days) and deadline reminders helped them manage their time and reduce anxiety. Having experienced the cognitive load of being a "student," instructors realized that reminders are not "hand-holding" but essential scaffolds for success (Author, 2021). A "Canvas outage" incident highlighted the critical nature of communication during stress points. One instructor noted that his immediate reassurance to students during the outage modeled how to handle crisis with empathy. This led him to adopt a philosophy of "checking in" during high-stress periods, recognizing that silence from an instructor exacerbates student anxiety. Modeling "humane ways of dealing with deadlines" demonstrated that flexibility does not

compromise rigor (Author, 2021). Faculty learned that extending grace during personal crises—a practice modeled by the learning community facilitators—preserved student agency and motivation.

Conclusion and Implications: This study demonstrates that high-touch facilitation—characterized by active check-ins, consistent reminders, and visible care—is essential for student success. When instructor experience this support themselves, they report that their "bias against online learning being characterized as not personal is gone" and achieve measurable improvements in student satisfaction, including their "highest teaching evaluations ever" as noted by many of the instructor participants. This study concluded that institutions should prioritize faculty development models that immerse instructors in the affective experience of the learner, thereby empowering them to foster genuine belonging through active, visible, and supportive presence.

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From Exposure to Commitment: Building Trust for Lasting Teaching Change

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Abstract

Since the early 1980s, reports by prominent organizations and work done by educational developers have promoted evidence-based and equity-minded teaching practices. Yet instructors frequently struggle to move from awareness of the need to change to sustained implementation of those changes in their teaching. Drawing from the EPIC adoption model (Exposure–Persuasion–Identification–Commitment; Aragón, 2017), a framework to understand the process faculty go through to adopt new teaching practices, in this session we present the model as well as an additional key element that underpins successful adoption of new teaching practices: trusting and supportive relationships. We discuss how we cultivated trust and support among faculty participating in a year-long community of practice focused on evidence-based and equity-minded teaching.

Keywords: Professional learning community; Professional development adoption model, Equity minded teaching, Evidence based teaching

Extended Summary

Although educational development efforts frequently introduce compelling evidence and research-supported strategies to instructors, faculty do not always translate these strategies into their practice (Stains, et. al 2018). Aragón (2015) proposed a model that offers a useful framework for understanding this adoption process. The four-stage model (EPIC), posits that instructors must first be Exposed (E) to new teaching ideas, allowing them to understand the practices independently. Then, they can be Persuaded (P) that the new approaches are a valuable way of teaching. The next step is for them to see themselves implementing those strategies by identifying with the practices—Identification (I). Lastly, Commitment (C) demonstrates the extent to which educators are determined to implement these new teaching strategies long term. While exposure is generally built into most educational development programs, the later stages, sometimes called "buy-in," cannot be assumed. Persuasion, identification, and commitment require intentional design and support, yet are often less of a focus in educational development. One additional element that can further support these later stages of the EPIC adoption model, but that has not been previously examined, is the role of trusting and supportive relationships. In this session, we delve into our efforts to build trusting and supportive relationships with instructors who participated in a year-long community of practice focused on equity-minded teaching. In particular, we focus on how these components strengthen the later stages of this adoption model. In this yearlong program we brought together nine postsecondary instructors teaching foundational mathematics. The community of practice started with a two-week summer teaching institute, followed by bi-weekly meetings throughout the academic year. The summer institute aimed to build instructors' exposure and buy-in for evidence-based and equity-minded teaching while cultivating trusting and supportive relationships among the participants and leads. The ongoing meetings continued this work by sustaining a collaborative community and supporting instructors' teaching improvement efforts.

Exposure: Many instructors in this study entered the project with limited knowledge of equity-minded teaching, and many were not aware of systemic oppression of marginalized students and the challenges in their learning journey. On the other hand, many were familiar with evidence-based teaching strategies but did not feel it necessary to include those strategies in their teaching. These pre-program perspectives align with research showing that instructors often acknowledge evidence-based pedagogies but fail to view them as integral to their teaching identity (Henderson et al., 2011). In addition, many of the faculty, though they work in the same department, either did not know each other or did not have existing collaborations. As such, our initial efforts focused on exposure in terms of equity-minded teaching practices and building trusting and supportive relationships with each other and with their students.

Persuasion: The persuasion stage involves developing genuine conviction that new practices matter (Aragón et al., 2015). Building trust was essential for instructors to be vulnerable in examining their course outcome data. Activities such as sharing personal learning journey maps, listening to student partners, and examining their own classroom data allowed the participants to humanize the math learning journey (including their own) while also confronting disciplinary assumptions and examining who is served, or excluded, by current teaching norms. One participant's reflection shows how the summer institute persuaded her that these practices matter: "What resonated with me the most was there a lot of small things we can change or we can do in the classroom to make students feel more of a sense of belonging and feel less intimidated by approaching the instructor or being more welcoming, encouraging students to come to office hours." Personalized entry into this community of practice allowed instructors to connect with each other and with students on a deeper and more personal level. The community context strengthened the persuasion, as one instructor noted "The sense of community built among faculty, staff, and undergrad learners was powerful."

Identification: In the EPIC model, Identification is seeing a practice as "for me" (Aragón et al., 2017). When reflecting and sharing their own personal learning journey, participants noticed the emerging theme of compassionate teaching. One instructor reflected, "The program reshaped how I thought about equity-minded teaching — not as an add-on, but as the foundation." This shift represents more than acceptance of evidence. Faculty began to see practice change

personally and ethically, rather than merely pedagogically. We observed evidence of the identification phase during the summer institute and are continuing to study how reflective, collective sharing supports this stage. Additional findings will be shared in our presentation.

Commitment: Classroom observations and student focus groups showed that many instructors are making notable progress in their teaching practices. Instructors revised syllabi to be more inclusive and consistently incorporated active learning strategies. Although commitment can fade in a yearlong program, participants have remained committed to each other and to their teaching change efforts including engaging in peer classroom observations, brainstorming solutions with each other, and sharing resources. In our forthcoming program activities, we will further examine how these trusting relationships support sustained commitment toward teaching change. Our effort highlighted the importance of relationship building within a community of practice. Our data suggests that equity-minded evidence-based pedagogy is best nurtured as identity-shaping work that grows through community trust, support, and inquiry. Based on our learning from this experience, we offer tangible strategies for educational developers to foster relationship building within their own programming in order to support instructors' adoption process.

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Papers 16

Evaluating effectiveness and impacts of Faculty Development for junior faculties: a case study

Arianna Marci

Abstract

Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of Academic–Faculty Development (AFD) programmes remain a critical challenge in higher education, given the complexity of academic contexts and the limited availability context-sensitive evaluation models. This paper presents an ongoing evaluative doctoral research project focused on a longitudinal AFD programme designed for junior faculty members (n = 18) from different disciplinary fields at an Italian university, delivered by its Teaching and Learning Centre. The study pursues a twofold aim: to investigate how the programme supports the development of teaching competencies and the transformation of teaching conceptions and practices, and to pilot a participatory and transformative evaluation approach that fosters continuous improvement, innovation, and sustainability. Drawing on a Developmental Evaluation (DE) logic integrated with the impact framework proposed by Stes et al. (2010), the study adopts a participatory mixed-methods case-study design articulated across ex-ante, in-progress, follow-up, and ex-post phases. Data collection includes surveys, reflective practices, questionnaires, focus groups, and the inclusion of the student perspective. Although the study is ongoing, it argues that integrating DE with established impact models enables a shift from linear, summative evaluation towards a systemic, process-oriented understanding of change. The paper highlights implications for academic development practice, particularly regarding participatory evaluation, professional reflexivity, and the formative use of evaluation data to enhance AFD programme design and impact.

Keywords: Faculty Development, Junior Faculties, Effectiveness Evaluation; Impact Evaluation

Extended Summary

This paper presents an evaluative research doctoral project aimed at assessing the effectiveness and impact of a longitudinal Faculty-Academic Development (FAD) programme designed for junior faculties (JFs) (n=18) from different disciplinary fields at an italian university, delivered by its Teaching and Learning Centre. This study pursues a twofold aim: first, to investigate the extent to which the programme supports the development of teaching competencies and the transformation of JFs' teaching conceptions and practices; second, to pilot a participatory and transformative evaluation approach capable of fostering continuous improvement, innovation, and long-term sustainability of the programme. The study also seeks to explore potential indirect effects on students' teaching and learning perceptions.

This study is situated within the international debate on the evaluation of FAD programmes, where the literature highlights a persistent lack of robust empirical evidence and consolidated evaluation models capable of combining methodological rigour, contextual sensitivity, and qualitative-quantitative triangulation. Kirkpatrick's model remains one of the most widely adopted frameworks for analysing training impact, structured around participant reactions, learning, behavioural change, and organisational results. However, several studies underline the difficulties in reconstructing causal links between faculty training, changes in teaching practices, and student learning outcomes, even when considering subsequent developments of the model (Lotti & Serbati, 2025). In response to these limitations, the study adopts a development evaluation' logic with elements of the Developmental Evaluation (DE) (Patton, 2011) as its evaluative approach. DE is conceptualised as a critical, reflective, and transformative evaluation approach oriented towards continuous learning and innovation, characterised by methodological flexibility, the integration of qualitative and quantitative data, and a cyclical process linking design, evaluation, and shared redesign. According to this, the study is designed as a participatory evaluative case study adopting a mixed-methods approach, grounded in the principles of DE integrated with the impact evaluation model proposed by Stes et al. (2010) (Benini, 2025), which extends Kirkpatrick's model by including multiple levels of analysis related to changes in faculty members, institutional impact, and perceived changes in students. This integration enables a multi-level analysis of impact while maintaining a cyclical, adaptive, and use-oriented evaluation process.

The study is articulated into four main phases, each associated with specific evaluative purposes and data collection tools:

1) Ex-ante: the preliminary phase aims to explore JFs' initial teaching conceptions, perceived training needs, and expectations prior to the implementation of the programme. Data collection tools include an exploratory survey and the Approaches to Teaching Inventory (ATI) (Trigwell & Prosser, 2004), used to identify JFs' teaching orientations (student or teacher-centred);

2) In itinere: it focuses on monitoring learning processes and emerging dynamics during programme implementation. Tools include: digital reflective practices, aimed at documenting learning, challenges, and early transfer into teaching

practice; SWOT Analysis administered both JFs and instructional designers, to identify strenghts and weakenesses of the programme;

3) Follow-up: it aims to collect evidences related to perceived programme effectiveness and initial changes in teaching. Tools and activities include: a focus group with JFs and the adiministration of a satisfaction questionnaire at the end of the programme;

4) Ex-post: it focuses on medium-term impact analysis and co-ridesign of the programme. It includes: the re-administration of ATI; interview or focus group with junior faculties; and, in agreement with junior faculties, the student perspective will be included through the adiministration of Experiences of Teaching and Learning Questionnaire (ETLQ) (Entwistle, 2005).

As the study is currently ongoing, the study primarily presents expected outcomes and emerging methodological and conceptual insights. The central argument is that integrating DE with the Stes et al. framework enables a shift away from linear and summative approaches to impact evaluation towards a systemic and process-oriented understanding of change. Specifically, the proposed approach allows researchers to: conceptualise faculty learning not only in terms of knowledge and skill acquisition but also as a transformation of teaching conceptions; investigate the transfer of learning into teaching practice by triangulating faculty self-reports with student perceptions; value the reflective contributions of faculty members, instructional designers, and students as core sources of evaluative knowledge.

From a theoretical perspective, the study could contribute to the field of FAD evaluation by proposing and testing a hybrid evaluation model that integrates an established impact framework with the transformative principles of DE. This integration responds to the critical issues identified in the literature regarding the evaluation of complex educational programmes; from an educational perspective, it aims to offer practical implications for the design, evaluation, and FAD programmes, highlighting the value of co-participation, professional reflexivity, and the formative use of evaluation data.

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Long-term impacts of Academic Development in Australian Higher Education: a narrative approach

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Abstract

Recent workplace trends in Australian Higher Education have seen shifts that are impacting the nature and status of academic work. Most recently there has been the emergence of disciplinary 'education-focused' positions, which can attract up to 80% time allocation to teaching and associated activities. The argument supporting the implementation of 'education-focused' positions lies in universities intending to champion the value of "education" to the same degree as "research". In addition to carrying elevated face-to-face contact, those in education-focused roles are expected to be leaders of scholarly initiatives and research in the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching. Considering these positions are mostly offered at junior levels, we wonder at the level of agency of those in these positions. Juxtaposed with our assessment of the recent "education-focused" position implementation, and catalysed by the call to understand the long-term impacts of academic development programs (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015; Wright et al., 2025), we undertook a reflective dialogic approach to the surface ways formal tertiary education qualifications, including those offered by central academic development units, have proved valuable to our individual career trajectories and to enhancing student learning within our respective disciplines.

Keywords: academic development, scholarship of teaching and learning, academic agency, higher education

Background

As in every country, the Australian Higher Education (HE) landscape is dynamic. Major changes to how universities operate and how they are managed came into play from the late 1990s. Federal legislation mandated that universities and technical colleges were to come under a unified federal regulatory system. Throughout the early 2000s, additional decisions at the federal level resulted in increased student class sizes and demographic diversity but no change in funding support. These changes were consistent with the global trend in "massification of HE" (Caldetonk, 2018). The consequential introduction of fees for domestic students, saw the majority of domestic students needing to take out government loans alongside increases in full-fee paying international students. In Australia, international education is a leading contributor to its gross domestic product. Similar changes were evident in UK HE resulting in the general decline in organisational agency of academic staff (Locke & Bennion, 2011) and exacerbating the conception that universities more readily promoted those who were excellent researchers than those who were excellent educators.

Recent trends in Australian HE include the emergence of disciplinary 'education-focused' (EF) positions attracting up to 80% of academic time commitment to teaching and associated activities. The argument supporting the implementation of EF positions was intended to champion 'education' to the same degree as 'research'. In addition to carrying elevated face-to-face contact, those in EF roles are expected to lead scholarly initiatives and research in Scholarship of Learning and Teaching (SOTL).

Formal SOTL qualifications (e.g., graduate certificates, masters, PhD) delivered by centralised academic development units gained popularity in the late 1990s. Investment in offering these programs was seen as a way to elevate the status of university teaching, particularly at research-intensive institutions. In Australia, completing formal SOTL qualifications is often mandated for those undertaking EF roles to secure employment positions. Although the short-term impacts of gaining SOTL qualifications, and /or participating in higher education support programs, have been evaluated, it is the long-term impacts that remain of interest (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015, Wright et al., 2025).

As three academics with three different profiles, we offer our insights on the long-term value of gaining formal qualifications in higher education to our own careers (e.g., job security, promotion), where our disciplinary research sits across higher education studies and SOTL, as well as biology and psychology.

Approach

Reflecting on our lived experiences and uniquely individualised career narratives, we generated a counter point to high-level, metricised approaches. Through several rounds of dialogic reflection, we surfaced points of crystallisation common across our unique career pathways, where academic development programs were found to have impacted our longer-term sense of identity, agency and career choices.

Findings and Recommendations

For all of us, holding formal qualifications in higher education has been critical to secure our current academic positions. The primary career value has been in affording opportunities for deep engagement in SOTL which, has opened up pathways of scholarly enquiry focused to improve teaching praxes and student learning outcomes, and capacity to contribute to HE discourse via dissemination of our own SOTL research. It is still unclear whether holding these qualifications in HE has systemically impacted the reward and recognition of teaching, curriculum change, student experience, individual career progression via promotion, or in securing institutional leadership roles to directly influence policy. Our findings resonate with a UK study focused on those in EF roles (Bull, et al., 2025).

To better enable career progression and to enhance academic agency, we call for greater consultation with academic staff, particularly those in EF roles, as to what support is required to secure promotion within disciplinary contexts. Potentially this will entail reinterpreting promotion frameworks to increase the emphasis on SOTL leadership enacted via contributions to communities of practice and research dissemination external to our home universities.

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Towards a multi-level model for impact evaluation in Teaching and Learning Centres

Giorgia Pasquali, Giovanna Del Gobbo, Kiruthika Ragupathi

Abstract

Evaluating the impact of Academic Development actions is now a crucial but methodologically fragmented area within Teaching and Learning Centres (TLCs). We present the results and interpretations of a systematic review of the literature aimed at mapping models, methodologies and tools used in Academic Development, highlighting their critical issues and potential. Our review is based on a solid theoretical framework that integrates classical approaches to evaluation with contemporary perspectives on continuous improvement and organisational learning. The methodology we adopted follows the PRISMA criteria and explores studies published between 2020 and 2025 in international databases (EBSCO, ERIC, Scopus, Google Scholar) and in specialist journals in the field. Our findings highlight a growing shift from accountability approaches to a systemic and reflective view of evaluation, where evaluation in itself becomes a process of reflection for continuous improvement. Current evaluation practices remain largely focused on outputs and perceptions, with limited attention to policy and governance, organisational structure and capacities of TLCs, programme design, training course and activities and institutional culture. This contribution offers a multi-level model that links policy, structures, planning and training activities, and outlines operational implications and future research directions for developing integrated, adaptive and longitudinal evaluation models.

Keywords: academic development, evaluation, teaching and learning centres, higher education

Aim of the paper

Teaching and Learning Centres (TLCs) are now recognised as key players in supporting the quality of university teaching, pedagogical innovation and the professional development of educators (Gibbs, 2004). Despite their significant growth over the last decade, evaluating the impact of academic development activities remains a poorly systematised field of research, characterised by inconsistent methodological approaches, terminological heterogeneity, and fragmented evaluation models (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015).

This paper addresses this gap through a systematic review and a critical analysis of the evaluation models and methodologies used in TLCs, to identify the key elements needed to build a truly holistic and multi-level evaluation model.

Theoretical framework and methodological approach

Recent literature points to a clear paradigm shift: evaluation is no longer interpreted solely as a measurement of outcomes, but as a systemic process of investigation, reflection and organisational learning (Stufflebeam & Coryn, 2014). Approaches such as developmental evaluation (Patton, 2011), constructivist evaluation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) and continuous improvement models (Hendricks, et al., 2023) emphasise evaluation to inform decision-making and educational innovation processes, rather than merely verifying outcomes. This complexity underscores the need for a methodological approach that captures the multidimensionality of the phenomenon (Miller-Young & Poth, 2022).

We conducted the systematic review according to standards outlined by Petticrew and Roberts (2006) and documented using PRISMA protocol. Using thematic coding, we identified conceptual repetitions and interpretative differences across the models, a phase essential to reconstructing the key areas that form a multi-level evaluation system.

Results

The literature centres almost exclusively on evaluation of training activities using short-term indicators (e.g., satisfaction, perception or self-reported changes in practice) and linear input-output models (e.g., Kirkpatrick, Guskey, Logic Models) that do not capture the complexity of TLCs. A comparative analysis of the studies identified five centrals, recurring and conceptually interdependent areas necessary for understanding the impact of TLCs in a systemic way.

• Policy and governance: Few studies examine how policies influence the effectiveness of TLCs, despite evidence that strategic alignment with broader higher education priorities is essential (Kells, 1992). Governance must

recognise evaluation as a tool for reflection and improvement (Linse & Hood, 2022).

- Organisational structure and capacity of TLC: Adequate resources, qualified staff, administrative autonomy and clear vision are key elements in sustaining high-quality TLC programmes (Hines & Ford, 2024; Beach et al., 2023), yet these dimensions are often absent from evaluation models, despite directly influencing the centre's ability to respond to emerging needs, monitor activities and ensure quality.
- Programme design: Effective programming requires an accurate needs analysis (Steinert et al., 2006), consistent with the institutional vision and grounded in the centre's available resources, yet few studies evaluate whether such programming generates educational and social value or aligns with departmental and university strategies.
- Training courses and activities: This level is widely discussed, but often in a reductionist approach with studies focusing on participant satisfaction rather than investigating the transferability of content to professional

practice (Parsons et al., 2012; Charlier & Lambert, 2020), impact on students (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004), or alignment with specific disciplinary contexts.

- Institutional culture: Least measured but most crucial dimension for sustainable change. Elements such as the construction of communities of practice, the dissemination of a shared pedagogical language, or a collective orientation towards continuous improvement emerging as deep but difficult-to-measure indirect effects (Mihai et al., 2025; Lewis et al., 2025).

Conclusion

This review theoretically and conceptually establishes the need for a multi-level approach to evaluating TLCs, moving beyond linear and siloed models to embrace the complexity of contemporary university systems. Our findings point to the importance of developing customised, longitudinal evaluation models that can overcome the current fragmentation. Overall, the review provides a solid conceptual foundation for building an integrated evaluation framework capable of capturing the institutional and educational complexity generated by the TLCs.

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Bridging the Transfer Gap: How Faculty Developers Foster Agency and Application in Diverse Teaching Communities

Karin Brown, Sara Petchey

Abstract

Academic development has shifted from centralised, discipline-neutral approaches towards more discipline-sensitive models, yet the mechanisms through which faculty developers facilitate this transition remain underexplored. Drawing on focus group data from faculty developers and employing the Integrative Transfer of Learning (ITL) model, this study examines how faculty developers navigate the tension between generic pedagogical principles and discipline-specific teaching practices while supporting diverse academic staff. Faculty developers emerge as designers of learning environments (agency architects) who strategically bridge generic and specific approaches. The analysis identifies four key dimensions shaping transfer: task, personal, context and pedagogical. Findings suggest that effective faculty development requires moving beyond toward contextualised approaches that acknowledge disciplinary epistemologies while maintaining pedagogical coherence. This research contributes to understanding faculty development as a sophisticated practice of balancing standardisation with customization, offering implications for program design and professional development strategies in higher education.

Extended Summary

Academic development has shifted from centralised, discipline-neutral approaches towards more discipline-sensitive models (Gibbs, 2013). Simultaneously, contextual factors such as team environment (Bolander Laksov et al., 2022) and departmental culture (Brown et al., 2025) influence university teaching staff's ability to implement pedagogical innovations in practice. Transfer of learning remains a complex phenomenon, shaped by both influencing variables and moderating factors (De Rijdt et al., 2013). Therefore university teacher development programs face a persistent challenge: ensuring that diverse participants, ranging from novice to experienced lecturers across disciplines and departments, successfully transfer learning from professional development programmes to their own teaching contexts. This research examines how faculty developers navigate this complexity to foster epistemic agency and practical application among heterogeneous course participants. Drawing on the literature related to transfer of learning, in particular the intergrative transfer of learning model (Galoyan & Betts, 2021), this study investigated the strategies faculty developers employ to bridge the transfer gap in mixed-cohort professional development programs.

The research addresses critical questions: Which approaches do developers use to accommodate varying disciplinary backgrounds and institutional contexts? What mechanisms support participants in exercising agency to translate generic pedagogical principles into discipline-specific understanding and practical application? Data was gathered through focus group interviews with nine faculty developers at different higher education institutions. The focus groups were conducted in participants' working languages (English and German) to capture nuanced perspectives. Participants represented both technical universities and comprehensive institutions across the country. Using a thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) findings reveal that faculty developers' engage in specific behaviours across all four dimensions of the integrative transfer of learning model by Galoyan and Betts (2021) in order to increase the likelihood that participants adapt pedagogical knowledge to their own contexts. This presentation will provide examples of these strategies and present a case for a generic, but discipline-sensitive approach to professional development programmes for university teaching staff.

Several key strategies emerged, including:

Task Dimension: Faculty developers create tasks that require participants to work on their own courses both during their workshop and following the workshop, enabling the application of theoretical concepts immediately. They maximise intrinsic motivation by offering choices before and during the programmes.

Personal Dimension: Faculty developers encourage participants to reflect on own experiences as learners and teachers in order to identify elements that contribute to success and validate existing knowledge. They work to discover more about the world view that their participants bring and contexts in which they work and adapt generic teaching competencies for different disciplines.

Context Dimension: Faculty developers create iterative exercises that encourage progressive application of theoretical learning to practical activities. They consider the physical teaching environments within which participants teach and adapt theoretical concepts accordingly. Participants are actively referred to previous participants from similar backgrounds or with similar teaching challenges in order to ‘normalise’ the new approaches.

Pedagogical Dimension: Faculty developers explicitly adapt language (for example referencing more STEM specific terminology) and examples according to departmental and disciplinary cultures. They progressive scaffold the difficulty of tasks and strategically use both intra- and interdisciplinary peer discussions to maximise exposure and as a feedback mechanism. This research positions faculty developers not as content deliverers but as designers of adaptive learning environments that acknowledge and leverage participant diversity and agency as a resource rather than a challenge.

These findings have immediate practical implications for faculty development programs seeking to balance efficiency with effectiveness. Rather than creating separate discipline-specific programs, developers can employ these agency-fostering strategies to enable meaningful transfer across diverse participant groups.

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Shifting Conceptions and Stretching Practice: The Impact of the Facilitator Development Workshop (FDW)

Monica Vesely, Hannah Celinski

Abstract

Our session will share emerging themes from our qualitative study on the impact of the Facilitator Development Workshop (FDW) on instructor development, and we will engage participants in critical reflection on the signature pedagogical approaches included in the FDW; namely the high impact nature of: (a) peer-based development, (b) learner-focused instruction, (c) experiential learning, and (d) reflective practice (Vesely, 2022).

The FDW curriculum encourages participants to experiment with ideas, to connect with one another, and to expand conceptions of teaching and learning. In our session, we will share the perceived impact of such aspects of the workshop and our thematic analysis of the shared accounts. We will also consider the broader applicability of reflection on professional practice to the global community in times of change.

Through critical dialogue, we will aim to create a generative space for sharing ideas and feedback regarding the themes emerging from our study in the spirit of continued enhancement and refinement.

Keywords: Epistemological Growth, Professional Development, Reflective Practice, Transformation

Extended Summary

The Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) is an internationally recognized instructor development program developed in Canada and offered at post-secondary institutions world-wide since 1979. It is an intensive, experiential, and collaborative learning opportunity designed to enhance the teaching effectiveness of both new and experienced educators. Underlying the workshop are the principles of participatory learning, diversity of learning, adult learning, intentionality of lesson planning, and the building of community.

Participants move through Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning, from active experimentation to concrete experience, reflective observation, and abstract conceptualization, as they are guided to deepen their own reflective practice as teachers. After completing the ISW, participants may choose to participate in the Facilitator Development Workshop (FDW), which prepares them to deliver the ISW. The FDW requires that participants rotate through three roles: learner, instructor, facilitator - with facilitation skill development as the primary focus.

The FDW curriculum encourages participants to: (a) experiment with facilitation strategies with a view to extracting meaningful feedback, (b) adopt and model a reflective approach to instructional practice and nurture it in others, (c) connect and collaborate with a variety of peers, and (d) expand conceptions of teaching and learning.

At the University of Waterloo, the intended learning outcomes that are emphasized for the FDW include the ability to:

- Co-run an ISW
- Model a reflective approach to instructional practice, and encourage it in others
- Create an environment for others' experimentation with participatory, learner-centered, teaching
- Guide others in giving, receiving, and using feedback
- Present teaching and learning concepts using diverse approaches
- Build community with colleagues from a range of disciplines within the workshop

Many FDW participants find facilitating to be the most challenging and rewarding work they have done in a teaching-related workshop context. Successful completion of the workshop requires a willingness to lead by example – modeling the behaviours and attitudes that will allow their (future) ISW participants the space to develop their teaching and learning expertise. Despite the considerable spread of the ISW program and, consequently, FDW, almost no research has been undertaken to investigate the impacts of the FDW. The aim of our study was to begin uncovering what changes in teaching practices are associated with participation in the FDW, how the experience of the FDW shapes participants' conceptions of teaching and learning, and in what ways, if any, the FDW experience might have permeated into other contexts. The FDW (like the ISW) draws on individual experience and authentic practice, offering opportunities for critical reflection, and dialogue with the self and others all with a focus on student-centered teaching. Many of these elements are key components of transformative learning (Mezirow & Taylor, 2009) while other elements lead towards conceptual change models (which seek to shift instructors' conceptions about teaching and the strategies they employ). Prosser, Rickinson, Bence, Hanbury, & Kulej (2006) report that conceptual change models and student learning models have positively influenced the more methodical and intensive instructor development programs created in the UK in the last decade. They conclude that programs focusing on these models can lead to improvement in the quality of teaching. The conceptual change model and the student learning model both underlie the ISW. Additionally, Prosser et al's (2006) research into 32 accredited teaching programs concluded that the most important element of the programs studied was the opportunity to develop skills as a reflective practitioner. Developing reflective practice is another key component of the ISW program that is emphasized in the

FDW. This research study is important as it will address a gap that currently exists in scholarly literature. There have been several studies conducted to date on the impact of the ISW experience but none that currently focus on the FDW experience. Our research study qualitatively examines participant FDW experiences of Canadian participants from the last decade to identify shifts and influences on teaching and learning perspectives and practice as well as the opportunities and challenges inherent in this professional development experience.

Our research study posed the following questions:

- What are the most influential experiences from the FDW for participants?
- In what ways, if any, do participants connect and extend their FDW experience into other contexts?
- What changes in teaching and learning conceptions and practices are associated with participation in the FDW

Our data collection strategies and approaches include:

- a document analysis of artefacts from the FDW sessions,
- survey questions to capture participant perspectives and demographic data.

We recruited our participants using purposeful sampling with an invitation to all educational development community listservs and Centers for Teaching and Learning at both universities and colleges in Canada. Our analysis was completed using NVivo software to help facilitate the process of coding and categorization in our identification and prioritization of themes. Our session is well suited to all academic, educational and faculty developers who support educators in shaping their instructional praxis and in developing their reflective practice to promote professional growth.

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Papers 17

Audio Diaries as a Tool for Early Career Academics' Reflective Teacher Identity Work

Emil Ammitzbøll Weissmann, Mette Krogh Christensen

Abstract

Early-Career Academics (ECAs) are typically prepared for research rather than teaching, yet they are expected to provide high-quality education in research-intensive universities. Opportunities to reflect systematically on everyday pedagogical interactions and to develop a teacher identity that genuinely values teaching are often informal, context-dependent, and scarce. This qualitative feasibility study aimed to explore how audio diaries could be utilized as a tool for researching teacher identity formation among ECAs and for supporting their pedagogical reflections on interactions with students and colleagues. Six ECAs recorded weekly audio diary entries over two months and participated in a follow-up focus group interview. Using a narrative approach and cross-case thematic analysis informed by Kelchtermans' conceptualization of teachers' Personal Interpretive Framework, we identified three central themes: (1) organizational arrangements and research priorities set boundaries for how ECAs construct and negotiate their professional self-understanding as teachers; (2) views on student behavior and beliefs about students strongly shape task perception, job motivation, and ideas of "good" teaching; and (3) narrating pedagogical interactions through an audio diary provides a feasible and meaningful space for reflection. The audio diary functioned as a "proxy colleague" and safe space for articulating doubts, values, and possible future selves as teachers. We argue that audio diaries offer a low-threshold, scalable strategy for academic developers seeking to foster reflective agency and support teacher identity work, especially when combined with collective activities such as focus groups, peer dialogue, or mentoring.

Keywords: Teacher identity, Audio diary, Early-career academics, Pedagogical reflections

Extended Summary

While early-career academics (ECAs) are typically trained as researchers, they are less prepared for teaching, even though they are expected to provide high-quality teaching. Developing a teacher identity in this context is constrained by the prioritization of research over teaching. However, teacher identity, that is, "who am I as a teacher," is a constituting element in effective teaching and therefore needs careful attention Yet ECAs' opportunities to reflect systematically on their everyday pedagogical interactions with students and colleagues typical relies on context-specific traditions and activities as well as characterized by random informal relationship dependent on personal agency (Remmik et al., 2011). Many are left to think about teaching in an unstructured, incidental way, and these reflections can easily be lost in the busy everyday life of academia. Audio diaries, which involve solicited audio recordings of participants' reflections on a specific theme over time, may serve as a pedagogical tool to support practitioners' reflections (Verma, 2021). Furthermore, the audio diary has been suggested as a promising, participant-driven method that can support personal and professional development and help individuals make sense of their identities and lived experiences (Káplár-Kodácsy & Dorner, 2020). However, their potential in supporting university teachers' identity work has rarely been explored.

Aim

This qualitative feasibility study aimed to explore how audio diaries could be utilized as a tool for researching teacher identity formation among ECAs and for supporting their pedagogical reflections on interactions with students and colleagues.

Theoretical Framework

We draw on Kelchtermans' (2009) Personal Interpretive Framework, which describes how teachers make sense of, interpret, and make decisions in their work. It comprises the dynamic interplay between teachers' professional self-understanding—that is, their self-image, self-esteem, job motivation, task perception, and future perspective—and their subjective educational theory, which holds both the person's formal and informal ideas about teaching and learning.

Methodological Approach

The study was conducted within a constructivist paradigm. Six ECAs from different disciplines were recruited via self-selection at the start of a 5 ECTS University Pedagogical Program. Over two months, participants recorded weekly audio diary entries on a smartphone in response to prompts about recent pedagogical interactions and their experiences of themselves as teachers. Each produced 6–8 entries (43 in total). Two weeks after the audio diary period, five out of six participants attended a two-hour focus group interview that both provided a collective debrief and generated data on their experiences of using the audio diary for reflection. The data analysis consisted of two cycles: a narrative approach and the identification of common themes across participants.

Key Findings

The analysis generated three central insights.

First, ECAs' reflections highlighted how organizational arrangements—such as meetings with leaders, institutional requirements, involvement in research projects, and immersion in the culture of a research-intensive university—acted as boundaries for constructing and negotiating their professional self-understanding as teachers. These organizational arrangements set the stage for negotiating one's self-understanding and were highly impacted by the prioritization of research over teaching.

Second, ECAs' views on student behavior and their beliefs about students' intentions strongly influenced their task perception, job motivation, and subjective educational theory. Participants expressed joy and affirmation when students were active and engaged, and frustration or self-doubt when students were passive or resistant. These experiences prompted ongoing negotiations about what counts as "good" teaching and the role they wished to take in the classroom.

Third, narrating pedagogical interactions through the audio diary proved to be a feasible and meaningful reflective practice. Participants experienced the audio diary as a "proxy colleague" and a safe space in which they could honestly reflect on their teaching and on how their approach fits into the larger context of a research-intensive university. For some, the audio format facilitated spontaneous, in-the-moment reflection; others combined spoken reflections with brief written notes. We found that the audio diary was a more practical method than focus group interviews for exploring ECAs' personal and context-dependent reflections—essentially, the 'backstage' of becoming a university teacher. Thus, the audio diary functioned as a personal reflection tool, allowing teachers to express thoughts about their teacher identity formation that they were unable to share with colleagues.

Conclusion: The Audio Diary can Generate Rich Data and Function as an Academic Development Tool

The study demonstrates that the audio diary method can both generate rich qualitative data on ECAs' teacher identity formation and function as a simple, scalable academic development tool for fostering reflective agency.

By structuring regular, near-event reflection on everyday pedagogical interactions, audio diaries help ECAs articulate elements of their professional self-understanding and subjective educational theory that often remain tacit. This, in turn, supports the development of possible future selves as teachers and makes visible the tensions ECAs navigate between institutional priorities and their own commitments to teaching.

For academic development practice, audio diaries should not stand alone as a pedagogical reflection tool. Rather, the findings suggest that audio diaries may complement existing initiatives by providing a low-threshold, participant-driven space for reflection that respects privacy while maintaining a connection to academic developers as attentive listeners. When combined with collective spaces such as focus groups, peer dialogue, or mentoring, audio diaries may strengthen communities of practice around teaching in research-intensive settings and offer a strategic way to support identities that value teaching.

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Reimagining Teaching Portfolios Through Personal Knowledge Management with Digital Tools for Thought

Stefan T. Siegel, David Lohner, Maik Arnold

Abstract

Teaching portfolios are widely used in academic development yet too often become static compilations assembled for evaluation rather than living systems that structure reflection and teaching competence development. This paper frames academic teaching explicitly as knowledge work and argues that portfolio development should be driven by personal knowledge management (PKM) practices. We examine how digital Tools for Thought (TfTs)—markdown-based, networked note-making environments—support PKM by enabling educators to externalize, interlink, and revisit teaching-related knowledge, feedback, and design decisions. Building on research in educational psychology, knowledge management, and higher education, we outline a conceptual model that integrates PKM and TfTs to transform portfolios from document repositories into dynamic architectures. The paper synthesizes theory and practice, illustrates use cases, and discusses institutional implications, including recognition structures and developer support. The contribution is relevant for academic developers, faculty, and programme leaders seeking sustainable, evidence-informed pathways to professionalization and teaching competence development.

Keywords: academic development; teaching portfolio; personal knowledge management; digital tools for thought

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper

We reconceptualize teaching portfolios as dynamic, knowledge-centered systems rather than static dossiers by integrating personal knowledge management (PKM) practices with digital Tools for Thought (TfTs). Guiding question: How can PKM and TfTs help faculty document, reflect on, and improve teaching competencies in sustainable ways?

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

Academic teaching can be understood as knowledge work: a complex, intellectually demanding activity requiring systematic acquisition, integration, and application of among other diverse types of knowledge (Reinmann, 2008; Siegel et al., 2021). Teaching portfolios, while conceptually designed for reflection and competence development (Seldin et al., 2010; Bräuer, 2016), often remain static artifacts, primarily serving evaluative purposes. We argue that PKM provides a process-oriented framework to address this gap. PKM practices—structuring, linking, and reflecting on teaching-related knowledge—help lecturers make tacit knowledge explicit, transferable, and improvable (Probst et al., 2012). Digital TfTs, such as markdown-based note-making tools (e.g., Obsidian.md), enhance this process by enabling networked, iterative, and multimodal forms of reflection and synthesis (Paul, 2021; Piwek & Walker, 2020). The paper follows a conceptual and practice-oriented approach, synthesizing theoretical insights from educational psychology, knowledge management, and higher education research with practical use cases.

Key Findings and Arguments

Teaching portfolios often remain static: compiled for promotion or tenure and rarely revisited. However, teaching is knowledge work. Effective teaching (competence development) requires intentional management of among others disciplinary, pedagogical, and organisationsational knowledge (Reinmann, 2008). PKM practices allow lecturers to capture, connect, and critically reflect on teaching-related insights, preventing knowledge fragmentation (Siegel & Lohner, 2024). Digital TfTs enable lecturers to externalize and interlink knowledge, turning portfolios into evolving, dynamic systems that support structured reflection and competence development (Siegel, 2025). When embedded in academic development programs, TfT-supported teaching portfolios foster professional growth at both individual and institutional levels.

Theoretical and Educational Significance

This paper contributes to the evidence-informed professional development by reframing teaching portfolios as dynamic knowledge systems rather than evaluative checklists. The integration of PKM and TfTs strengthens reflection, self-regulated learning, and evidence-informed teaching competence.

For lecturers and academic developers, the approach highlights:

- strategies for embedding PKM in professionalization programs,
- opportunities to recognize reflective practices in evaluation criteria, and
- pathways for fostering teaching cultures that value systematic reflection and evidence-informed improvement.

Implications

The proposed framework bridges theory and practice by providing faculty with practical strategies for sustainable portfolio development, demonstrating how digital TfTs can support metacognition and reflective practice, and offering institutions insights into fostering reflective teaching cultures that go beyond compliance-driven portfolio

use. The findings are transferable across diverse higher education contexts, particularly where teaching quality, accountability, and professionalization are critical concerns.

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Enhancing Instructor Agency With Reflective Portfolio Practices in Academic Development

Svenja Kaduk, Anja Pawelleck

Abstract

Portfolio work is widely used in academic development programs to support critical reflection on teaching practice. However, process portfolios often fail to realize their potential because participants do not engage in sustained, iterative writing. As a result, reflection remains superficial and disconnected from ongoing teaching development. This paper presents the design and implementation of a process portfolio in a 7-ECTS fully online academic development program that intentionally integrates writing-didactic strategies, iterative reflection cycles, a critical incidents approach, and structured scaffolding to strengthen process-orientation.

Participants engage with three complementary portfolio formats: a collection portfolio for continuously capturing teaching–learning moments; a submission portfolio for analyzing selected incidents in relation to competency development; and a teaching philosophy for synthesizing experiences into articulated principles of teaching. The design emphasizes how iterative writing and structured reflection strengthen teachers' sense of agency in interpreting, shaping, and transforming their own teaching practices. Preliminary findings indicate that participants perceive the reflective writing prompts as highly valuable. Many report surprise at the depth of thinking facilitated by iterative writing, the emergence of concrete pedagogical actions, and the realization that such reflective processes could also benefit their own students.

The paper argues that systematically embedding iterative writing and critical reflection into portfolio work enhances the quality of academic development by fostering conceptual thinking, greater professional agency, self-directed learning, and reflective teaching identities. The approach contributes to strengthening portfolio-based learning as a meaningful tool for professional growth in higher education.

Keywords: Teaching Portfolios, Agency, Reflection, Teaching Competence Development

Extended Summary

The aim of this paper is to present and analyze a redesigned approach to portfolio work within a 7-ECTS online academic development program for university teachers. While portfolio assignments are common in academic development, they often fall short of their potential because participants write retrospectively and with limited reflective depth. This contribution demonstrates how integrating iterative writing, a critical incidents approach, and scaffolding can promote deeper reflection, enhance teaching competence development, and strengthen teachers' agency as reflective practitioners who actively shape their pedagogical choices, thus positioning portfolios as genuinely developmental tools rather than mere assessment artefacts.

The portfolio design draws on the following theoretical foundations:

1. Reflective Writing and Writing-to-Learn

Research on writing-to-learn (e.g., Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Kellogg, 2008) suggests that iterative, low-stakes writing can deepen understanding, support metacognition, and foster knowledge transformation. In academic development, reflective writing can scaffold conceptualizing teaching as a complex, theory-informed practice, empowering teachers to articulate and enact informed decisions about their practice.

2. Critical Incidents Theory

Critical incidents (Flanagan, 1954; Tripp, 2012) anchor reflection in concrete events. Analyzing such moments helps participants move from experience to conceptual insight and abstract pedagogical principles.

3. Scaffolding and Self-Regulated Learning

Drawing on Vygotskian perspectives (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005), scaffolding supports the transition from guided to autonomous reflection and participants ability to link practice with theoretical frameworks. This cultivates a stronger sense of agency as participants gain confidence in directing their own learning and development. The methodological approach can be described as design-based and practice-oriented.

Data informing preliminary findings include participant reflections within the portfolios, and feedback surveys.

1.3 Key Features of the Portfolio Design

The program introduces participants to three interconnected portfolio formats that operationalize the theoretical principles:

1. Collection Portfolio: Captures continuous observations and teaching-learning moments, building a habit of process writing.

2. Submission Portfolio: Provides guided analysis of selected incidents in relation to teaching competencies and conceptual frameworks.

3. Teaching Philosophy: Synthesizes experiences, incidents, and theoretical insights into articulated principles of teaching, supporting teachers in claiming ownership of their professional identity.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes.

Although systematic evaluation is ongoing, early findings show clear and recurring patterns:

- Participants value the reflective writing prompts and describe them as guiding deeper analysis.
- Many are surprised by the depth and conceptual clarity that emerge through iterative writing.
- The process often produces concrete pedagogical actions, not just abstract reflection.
- Participants report realizing that these reflective processes – especially the development of students' agency through reflective writing – might also enrich their own teaching.

These findings support the claim that the combination of iterative writing, critical incidents, and scaffolding meaningfully enhances the developmental function of portfolios, strengthening reflection, conceptual understanding, and professional agency in teaching practice.

This work contributes to academic development by:

1. Reconceptualizing Portfolio Work as Process, Not Product

By embedding writing-to-learn strategies, the program reframes the portfolio as an ongoing reflective companion rather than a retrospective deliverable. This shift supports instructors' agency in shaping practice over time, aligning portfolio work with broader scholarship on reflective practice and professional learning.

2. Strengthening Reflective Teaching Competence

The structured approach helps participants articulate tacit knowledge, connect experience with pedagogy, and develop more coherent teaching identities – all central outcomes of academic development.

3. Supporting Self-Regulated and Conceptual Learning

Scaffolding helps participants transition to independent reflective reasoning. Participants learn not only to reflect, but how to sustain reflective habit, thus enhancing instructors' agency in navigating professional challenges.

4. Extending Impact into Classroom Practice

Participants' recognition that reflective writing fosters learners' agency suggests a multiplier effect: academic development influences not only teachers' learning but also their students' capacity for self-directed engagement.

5. Implications for Program Design

The findings strongly suggest and encourage including the following to build academic development programs that aim to promote depth, autonomy, and a stronger sense of instructors' agency:

- integrate iterative, low stakes writing tasks,
- use critical incidents to anchor reflection,
- scaffold reflective processes intentionally,
- view the teaching philosophy as a synthesis rather than a standalone task.

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Pedagogic Portfolios: Reflections on the Transatlantic Transplant of an Educational Innovation

Robert Fleisig, Katarina Winka

Abstract

Teaching portfolios are widely used in academia as a tool for documenting and reflecting on teaching practices and accomplishments. They can serve multiple purposes, depending on the context of where and when they are used. Common uses are as the basis of assessment for job applications, promotion and tenure reviews, or for professional development purposes. Canadian institutions employ teaching portfolios mainly for the assessment of teaching. These portfolios capture a description of an instructor's teaching practice and act as a highlight reel of teaching performance and accomplishments. In contrast, teaching portfolios in Sweden are the means of both pedagogical development and assessment. To mark the difference in content and use of these portfolios, the Swedish model is referred to as a "pedagogic portfolio". Pedagogic portfolios stand in stark contrast to teaching portfolios. Pedagogic portfolios are more scholarly. They demonstrate professional competence through reflective practice, a focus on learning, and pedagogical reasoning. This presentation will share the reflections of disruptors, participants, and academic leaders on a collaboration between Swedish and Canadian scholars to adopt, adapt, and experiment with pedagogic portfolios in Canada.

Keywords: Pedagogic Portfolio, Teaching Portfolio, Reflective Practice, Educational Innovation

Extended summary

This presentation reports on a transatlantic partnership between scholars in Canada and Sweden that investigated how to raise the level of scholarliness in teaching portfolio writing by adopting and adapting a Swedish "pedagogic portfolio" model (Olsson & Roxå, 2013; Pelger & Larsson, 2018; Winka & Ryegård, 2024).

Theoretical framework and methodological approach

The scholarly literature presents teaching portfolios as tools for professional development through reflection on and documentation of assumptions, actions, and outcomes (Laksov et al., 2023; Seldin et al., 2010). In practice, this formative intent is often replaced by summative use for recruitment, promotion, and teaching awards, resulting in highlight reels of achievements where reflection plays little or no role (Sebolao, 2019; Trevitt et al., 2012). These overlapping uses can limit portfolio practice, create misunderstandings, and hinder pedagogical development for both portfolio authors and assessors.

Interpretations and implementations of teaching portfolios are highly context dependent. In Sweden, portfolios are used for both pedagogical development and assessment; they are scholarly documents that demonstrate professional competence through reflective practice, a focus on learning, and pedagogical reasoning, and are therefore referred to as "pedagogic portfolios", in contrast to more summative Canadian teaching portfolios.

Over the past two years, X faculty members from both research and teaching streams, and at varying career stages, have engaged in a pilot of pedagogic portfolio practices. In year one, participants wrote pedagogic reflections using the Swedish model, discussed their teaching with Swedish scholars, and integrated these reflections into policy-mandated teaching portfolios. In year two, returning participants wrote a new pedagogic reflection and acted as assessors for newcomers' reflections. After the pilot, we obtained research ethics approval to interview reflection writers, assessors (including a department chair), and Swedish partners; transcripts were analysed thematically.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes

The analysis revealed that the pedagogic portfolio practice differs fundamentally from X University's policy-mandated teaching portfolio practice. The latter is modelled on continuous process improvement, whereas the former is framed as professional development. Core differences lie in the sources of feedback on teaching, the aims of data analysis, and the nature of resulting interventions (Table 1), reflecting different underlying values and beliefs about teaching. We argue that the two approaches are not mutually exclusive and that a combined model may be stronger than either alone.

Table 1. Comparison of teaching portfolio and pedagogic portfolio practices

	Teaching portfolio practice	Pedagogic portfolio practice
Model	Continuous improvement of teaching practice	Professional development of instructor
Focus	Teaching and learning experiences in general	Specific learning problems and pedagogical challenges
Sources if evidence	Student feedback and peer feedback	Student feedback, peer feedback, learning artifacts, learning data, experiences, pedagogic literature
Analysis	Actions chosen and motivated based on student and peer feedback	Actions focussed on learning problems and motivated by analysis of broad range of data
Nature of interventions	Broad in scope aimed at most or all learners	Focused on identified learning problems
Role of reflection	Reflection is limited and not central to the portfolio's evaluative function	Reflection is central to inquiry into teaching and iterative development of pedagogical judgement

Taken together, these differences show a shift from a portfolio practice centred on documenting and improving teaching performance in general to one centred on investigating particular learning problems through reflective and evidence-informed pedagogical reasoning (March, 2004).

Significance and implications

This work shows how re-framing teaching portfolios as pedagogic portfolios can shift academic practice from summative performance documentation toward a more scholarly, inquiry-oriented engagement with teaching, in line with calls for richer, multi-source frameworks for assessing teaching effectiveness (Simonson et al., 2022). By tracing how instructors socialized into highlight-reel, policy-mandated portfolios respond to a Swedish pedagogic portfolio model, the study illustrates both the difficulty of disrupting entrenched traditions and the generative potential of an educational "innovation" that foregrounds learning problems, pedagogical reasoning, and critical reflection (Pelger & Larsson, 2018; Sebolao, 2019). At the level of institutional practice and policy, the findings suggest that revising portfolio guidelines, criteria, and assessor development can enable evidence of teaching excellence to support both individual career progression and institutional pedagogical development, addressing tensions identified in work on rewarding teaching excellence and assessing pedagogical skill (Laksov et al., 2023; Olsson, 2019; Olsson & Roxå, 2013; Roxå & Olsson, 2018; Seldin et al., 2010; Simonson et al., 2022; Winka & Ryegård, 2024). Future research could examine longer-term impacts of such practices on teachers' engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning, students' learning experiences, and institutional cultures of teaching.

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Quality of metacognition in the reflective writing of early-career academics

Kirsten From, Elizabeth Rees Chin

Abstract

Reflective activities are becoming more visible in engineering education, and may be especially important in the AI era, where students need stronger judgment, critical awareness, and sense-making. This study explores the quality of metacognition made visible in the repeated reflective writing of eight early-career STEM academics during a teacher training course on how to teach human-centred innovation. The study used an interpretive, theory-informed qualitative analysis grounded in Flavell's theory of metacognition and drawing on document analysis. AI-assisted identification of metacognitive dimensions was combined with iterative human refinement of examples and quality judgments. Three dimensions of quality were identified: analytic sophistication, judgmental soundness, and dispositional traces. The findings show clear variation in the quality of visible metacognition across the reflections. Stronger texts moved beyond description by making difficulty, uncertainty, and change in understanding visible, and by using these experiences to derive proportionate pedagogical implications. Weaker texts remained largely procedural or descriptive. The study points to the value of addressing metacognition more explicitly in teacher training. Funding: This work was partly funded by EIT Higher Education Initiative (COPILOT project).

Keywords: Metacognition, reflective writing, engineering education, teacher training

Extended Summary

Recent literature suggests that reflective activities are becoming more visible in engineering curricula, as seen in ASEE (Sepp et al., 2015) discussions of reflection, its uptake in CDIO-related work (Thompson & Kövesi, 2023), and institutional initiatives such as TU Delft (Hermsen et al., 2022). Reflection also appears more important in the AI era, where it may support deeper understanding, critical thinking, and more reflective engagement with AI-supported learning. This raises a practical question: are university teachers well prepared to incorporate more reflective activities in their teaching? The aim of this study is to explore the quality of metacognition visible in the repeated reflective writing of early-career academics during a teacher training course. The research question is: To what extent can early-career academics demonstrate metacognitive quality in reflective writing?

Methodology: This study is grounded in J.H. Flavell's theory of metacognition and focuses on metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive regulation, and metacognitive experiences (Flavell, 1979, 1987). E. Murphy (Murphy, 2008) supported the assumption that reflective texts can be analysed for visible traces of metacognitive activity. P.A. Facione (Facione, 1990) was used more selectively and mainly later in the process to support the role of visible openness, willingness to reconsider assumptions, and similar dispositions in stronger metacognitive writing.

Units of analysis: The study analyses repeated written reflections produced by eight early-career STEM academics, mostly postdocs, during a teacher training course on how to teach human-centred innovation. The texts were treated not as direct evidence of what participants "really" think or are able to do, but as situated written accounts through which metacognition becomes more or less visible.

Method: The study used an interpretive, theory-informed qualitative analysis of the reflections, drawing on document analysis (Bowen, 2009). More specifically, it combined deductive, AI-assisted identification of metacognitive dimensions with iterative, human interpretive refinement of examples and quality judgments. Although the study is not framed as a thematic analysis, Braun and Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2009) help justify the interpretive and reflexive character of the analytic refinement. Through repeated comparison of reflections that were similar in topic but differed in depth, three dimensions of quality were identified: analytic sophistication, judgmental soundness, and dispositional traces. Analytic sophistication refers to whether the text moves beyond description and makes sense of relevant aspects of the situation. Judgmental soundness refers to whether conclusions or implications follow reasonably from what is made visible in the text. Dispositional traces refer to visible signs of openness, selfquestioning, or willingness to revise one's view. Performativity was treated cautiously, not as something that could be identified with certainty, but as an interpretive warning when texts appeared polished, generic, or weakly grounded in concrete experience.

Findings: The analysis showed clear variation in the quality of visible metacognition across the reflections. Stronger texts made difficulty, uncertainty, and change in understanding visible and used these experiences to derive pedagogical implications. Weaker texts remained largely procedural, describing what had been done without making uncertainty, interpretation, or reflective stance visible. In higher-quality cases, writers moved from uncertainty in qualitative analysis to broader understandings of problem definition and scaffolding. In lower-quality cases, writers described gathering and sorting interview data but showed little visible metacognitive depth.

Contributors: The stronger texts suggest that some participants were better able to make metacognition visible in writing. At the same time, lower performance in a particular text should not be taken as evidence of reduced metacognitive capability. It indicates only that stronger metacognitive quality was not made sufficiently visible in that piece of writing. The broader variation, however, raises questions about possible contributors such as familiarity with

reflective writing, perceived value of reflection, stress, tiredness, instructors' scaffolding, incentives, and prompt, activity, or course design. The relatively high frequency of reflective tasks during the course may also have mattered. None of these factors were examined directly here, but the results clearly warrant further study.

Implications for Practice: A practical implication is that teacher training may need to address metacognition more explicitly: both how to engage in it, and how to facilitate and assess it in students. Even in this small study, some texts showed very little visible metacognition and others were uneven. Furthermore, the three quality dimensions identified in this study, analytical sophistication, judgmental soundness, and dispositional traces, may also be useful in teachers' recognition and assessment of metacognition.

Funding: This work has received partial funding from the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union, through the EIT Higher Education Initiative under the COPILOT project.

Papers 18

Putting theory into practice – designing a justice-oriented engaged learning module to foster global citizenship skills among students

Amber Mers, Manon Gerber, Sarju Sing Rai

Abstract

Service-learning has become a central strategy in engaged education, integrating teaching and community engagement to foster societal change. However, traditional approaches have been criticized for lacking an explicit focus on justice, equity, and advocacy, often overlooking the systemic roots of social issues and limiting transformative potential. In response, scholars advocate for critical, justice-oriented models emphasizing social change, power redistribution and authentic community-university partnerships. Yet, operationalizing these principles remains challenging. This study explores how a critical and justice-oriented approach to service-learning can be translated to practice, focusing on the development and implementation of such an approach in a community-engaged global health module. It showcases how students engage in advocacy and develop civic and global competencies, shedding light on the transformative potential of justice-oriented service-learning. A qualitatively driven mixed-methods design was employed, combining a global citizenship framework-informed survey (quantitative) and focus group discussions and reflections (qualitative) to capture the multidimensional nature of student learning and influencing factors.

Findings reveal strong student support for the program's justice-oriented design. Through engaged projects, students explored social justice issues locally and globally, fostering the development of civic and global competencies and engagement in advocacy efforts. The findings also offer practical guidance for researchers and educators seeking to create justice-oriented educational modules. Ultimately, this study illustrates how theoretical calls for justice in service-learning can be translated into practice, enabling students to evolve as active, engaged global citizens.

Keywords: Critical service-learning, Global health, Social justice, Global citizenship competencies, Advocacy

Extended Summary

Service-learning (SL) has emerged as a prominent pedagogical strategy within higher education institutions (HEIs), aligning with the broader movement for engaged scholarship and education. SL integrates research, teaching, and activism to drive change at individual, institutional, and community levels (Butin, 2011; Harkavy, 2006). It combines academic learning with community engagement through structured reflection, fostering cognitive and emotional growth, civic responsibility, and collaboration with societal stakeholders (Bringle, 2016; Bringle & Hatcher 1996, Butin, 2011). Students, educators, and community members act as co-learners, engaging in service activities, ranging from volunteer efforts to community-based research initiatives (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). Despite its growing prominence, SL has been critiqued for lacking an explicit focus on social justice. Scholars argue that many practices overlook systemic causes of social issues, limiting SL to student development rather than broader social change. Without addressing systemic inequities, SL can inadvertently reinforce hierarchies, uphold systems of privilege, and sustain unjust social structures (Mitchell, 2008; Butin, 2011; Compare & Albanesi, 2023; Gordon da Cruz, 2017). These critiques highlight the need to integrate equity, critical consciousness, and advocacy into SL to challenge existing power structures (Mitchell, 2008; Butin, 2007, 2015; Compare & Albanesi, 2023). In response, SL pedagogy has shifted toward critical, justice-oriented approaches. Mitchell's (2008) concept of critical service-learning emphasizes three domains: social change orientation, redistribution of power and authentic community partnerships. The social change orientation targets roots cause of inequality; redistribution of power challenges institutional dominance and the server/served dichotomy; authentic relationships foster genuine collaboration. The goal is to empower students as agents of change, equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and experiences to critically engage with and transform communities (Mitchell, 2008).

While these foundational ideas offer valuable principles for embedding a critical, justice-oriented approach to SL, translating these principles into practice remains a significant challenge. Empirical studies highlight persistent constraints, such as limited course durations, underscoring the difficulty of achieving meaningful systemic social change within the confines of a typical academic course (Latte et al., 2018). To explore how a critical, justice-oriented approach can be implemented in practice, this study examines the design and implementation of a community-engaged global health module at [Name university]. The module was grounded in the three tenets of critical SL and complemented by the concept of global citizenship. Mitchell's (2008) framework offers essential principles for embedding a critical lens into SL, yet there remains a need to articulate specific skills, knowledge, and competencies aligned with the student profile critical SL seeks to cultivate. This includes designing learning activities and pedagogical strategies that operationalize these principles. To address this gap, we integrated Morais and Ogden's (2011) global citizenship framework. We adopted a qualitatively driven mixed-methods approach (Morse, 2016) using a concurrent nested design, in which a smaller quantitative component - a survey – was embedded within a broader qualitative framework comprising focus group discussions and student reflect essays (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Both the survey and in the

focus group discussions were informed by the Global Citizenship Scale (Morais & Ogden, 2011). Data were collected across two student cohorts and included six focus group discussions as well as pre- and post-program surveys. This design allowed us to capture the multidimensional nature of students' learning experiences and the factors influencing them (Mason, 2006). Our findings reveal that students developed civic and global competencies and engaged in advocacy efforts. They learned to understand and apply social justice principles, critically examine systemic inequalities, and strengthen intercultural communication and positionality awareness through collaboration. Projects exposed unequal power dynamics, prompting reflection and fostering critical consciousness. Although many students expressed feelings of conflict and powerlessness in addressing global challenges, they cultivated a sense of responsibility toward partner communities and valued small-scale change as a meaningful contribution. As our iterative process unfolded, we identified additional factors essential to justice-oriented learning that extend beyond the frameworks we relied on. These include the pivotal role of educators and the need to embed social justice principles in teacher training, sustainable engagement with partner organizations requiring institutional structures and intentional strategies for critical collaboration, and the influence of students' personal identities and background, which shaped their receptivity to social justice concepts. Looking forwards, our study raises critical questions about the responsibilities of universities in addressing societal challenges. We argue that social justice should become an explicit and widely practiced institutional value, guiding both teaching and scholarship.

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Transformative Academic Development through Student–Staff Partnerships: Designing for Social Justice Across Institutional Contexts in South Africa

Daniela Gachago, Xena Cupido, Subethra Pather

Abstract

Student–staff partnerships (SSPs) are increasingly positioned as a means of advancing decolonisation, pedagogies of care, and social justice in higher education. However, when uncritically implemented, SSPs risk reinforcing consumerist logics rather than disrupting neoliberal academic structures. This presentation explores how academic staff development can function as a transformative practice when students are positioned as co-creators and partners in curriculum and pedagogical design. Drawing on critical collective autoethnography, three academic development practitioners from three South African universities reflect on a three-year staff development programme codesigned and facilitated with student partners. The programme created shared learning spaces in which staff and students engaged critically with power, partnership, and co-creation in teaching and learning. Framed by social justice– oriented academic development, ubuntu, and critical hope, the study highlights both the transformative potential of co-created spaces and the persistence of entrenched institutional power dynamics shaped by apartheid legacies.

Keywords: transformative academic development, student–staff partnership, social justice, co-creation, student agency, higher education transformation, critical hope, South Africa

Extended Summary

Student-staff partnerships (SSPs) can be a powerful mechanism for addressing decolonisation of curricula and pedagogies, as well as for enabling pedagogies of care that can contribute to social justice in higher education (Fraser and Usman, 2021). Student-staff partnerships (SSPs), is a relatively new pedagogical approach in higher education, and is viewed as an enabler for transformative curricula (Bovill, et al., 2011; Cook-Sather, 2010). However, Cornelius-Bell and Bell (2020) contend that SSPs, if not authentically and critically implemented, can result in a consumerist approach to students, rather than challenging neoliberal academia, rather than disrupting dominant systems. This presentation focuses on the intersection of the literature on academic staff development and student-staff partnerships as it explores the opportunities and challenges for academic development to serve as a transformative practice when students are positioned as co-creators and partners in learning and curriculum design. Based on reflection of three academic development practitioners from three distinct South African higher education institutions, situated in one of the most inequitable countries globally, we are shedding light on the inequalities, power dynamics, and complexities of our SSP work as a microcosm that mirrors the broader institutional power structures, rather than claiming to level the playing field. Together with a team of student partners, we collaboratively designed and facilitated a three-year academic staff development programme aimed at exploring context-sensitive approaches to student-staff partnerships for the Global South. In this programme, academic staff participate alongside a student partner, creating a shared learning space to engage critically with concepts of co-creation, power, and partnership in teaching and learning. Through critical collective autoethnography, which is interested in the study of society through "the study of ourselves" (Roy and Uekasa, 2020; Gant et al., 2020), allowing for the study of "complex relations between identity, emotions, agency and investment in professional lives" (Yazanet al., 2022: 3), we reflect on how we reimagined academic development not merely as professional enhancement for staff but as a intensely relational and potentially transformative process that challenges traditional academic hierarchies and centres equity, reciprocity, and shared agency. The programme encouraged staff to reflect on their pedagogical assumptions, engage in dialogue with students as partners, and experiment with practices that promote social justice and belonging within their institutional contexts.

Framed by the principles of social justice-oriented academic development, ubuntu and critical hope (Zembylas, 2022), our reflections highlight how co-created spaces can lead to both meaningful pedagogical transformation but also shed a spotlight on deeply entrenched power differentials and unresponsive institutional cultures. The project demonstrates that positioning students as partners within academic development in South African universities, where the legacies of apartheid continue to shape access, representation, and epistemology, can 'theorize a mode of hope that is explicitly anti-colonial, namely, an understanding of hope that not only recognizes the legacy of colonialism, domination and exploitation, but also finds ways to resist to this'. (Zembylas , 2022: 30). We will end our talk with positioning student-staff partnerships as a powerful tool towards a more sustainable, relational academic staff development.

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EXPAND: A multiple-entry curriculum development model for expansive educational change

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Abstract

Community-engaged teaching and learning (CET&L) is increasingly recognised as a powerful approach for higher education institutions aiming to foster societal relevance, significant learning experiences, student and staff agency, and collaborative curriculum optimisation. Yet many institutions struggle with its design, implementation, and sustainable institutional embedding. This paper presents the EXPAND model: a flexible, multiple-entry curriculum development framework grounded in expansive learning theory and reflective professional practice. Piloted across four European universities in disciplines spanning Teacher Education to Environmental Sciences, the model demonstrated adaptability and relevance across contexts. Through its collaborative and iterative nature, EXPAND promotes distributed curriculum agency and enables thoughtful, context-sensitive design of CET&L opportunities. This paper outlines its theoretical foundations, key components, illustrative examples, and implications for academic development, practice, and policy.

Keywords: Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning (CET&L), Curriculum Agency, Expansive Learning, Academic Development

Extended Summary

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are increasingly expected to prepare students for the complexities of contemporary societies. Rapid technological change—particularly the integration of artificial intelligence—raises fundamental questions about the purpose and practice of teaching and learning. As routine cognitive tasks become automated, HEIs must prioritise educational formats that cultivate critical judgement, ethical awareness, civic responsibility, and collaborative problem-solving—capacities that cannot be outsourced to AI.

Community-engaged teaching and learning (CET&L) offers a powerful response to these demands. By situating learning in authentic social contexts, CET&L requires students to navigate complexity, relationships, and real-world consequences. It links academic knowledge to societal needs through reciprocal partnerships (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). Yet despite policy interest, CET&L often remains fragmented, dependent on individual champions, and challenging to embed sustainably within curricula (Furco, 2002; Holland, 1997; Farnell, 2020). Moreover, community-engaged activities are not self-evidently beneficial (Moriau et al., 2022).

This paper presents the EXPAND model, developed to address these gaps. The model provides a theoretically grounded, adaptable framework that supports collaborative design, professional learning, and institutional embedding of well-considered CET&L practices.

Theoretical Background

CET&L connects academic content with authentic engagement activities through reciprocal partnerships between students, educators, and community actors (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002). Research demonstrates its potential to enhance student learning, civic development, and universities' societal impact (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). Experiential (Kolb, 1984) and transformative learning theories (Mezirow, 2000) emphasise reflection as essential for sense-making. Accordingly, reflection is positioned as a structural mechanism throughout the EXPAND model.

Drawing on socio-critical curriculum theory (Annala et al., 2021), the model views curriculum as a dynamic, negotiated process shaped by diverse actors. This framing foregrounds an ecological view on curriculum agency, understood as 'intentional choices, actions and interactions aimed at realising shared educational goals'(Biesta et al., 2015).

EXPAND also incorporates Engeström's theory of expansive learning (1987, 2010), which describes how groups confront contradictions within activity systems and develop new practices. Rather than treating tensions as obstacles, the model recognises them as disorienting moments that fuel purposeful curriculum optimisation.

Study Context and Methodological Approach

The EXPAND model was developed as part of a three-years project (2023–2026) involving four European universities, an educational development institute, and three community-based partner organisations. The project aimed to strengthen institutional capacities for community engagement through facilitated professional learning and collaborative curriculum (re)design. Academic and professional staff (N=45) participated in reflective peer-learning sessions, co-design workshops, and consultancy meetings. These activities supported the (re)design of CET&L initiatives across disciplines.

A multi-case study design (Yin, 2018) examined how facilitated processes generated expansive learning events that reshaped participants' practices and curricular designs. Data included workshop artefacts, participant reflections, and curricular outputs. Using a "thinking with theory" approach (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013), the analysis iteratively connected

empirical data with theoretical frameworks. Cross-case analysis enabled identification of shared patterns and context-specific variations.

Key Findings and Implications

Across cases, participants encountered pedagogical, structural, and relational dilemmas—such as balancing academic objectives with community needs, managing limited time, and navigating power relations. Engaging with these dilemmas collectively fostered professional learning and supported systemic innovation. Three overarching patterns emerged.

First, participants valued context-sensitive flexibility. EXPAND's multiple-entry design allowed curriculum-makers to begin with the elements most pressing in their context—such as partnerships, learning design, assessment, or institutional alignment. This adaptability increased relevance and usability. As one participant noted: "The theoretical models, as well as practical examples from colleagues abroad, are inspiring and eye-opening."

Second, the model supported expansive engagement with dilemmas. Reflection cycles encouraged treating challenges as learning opportunities. One participant explained: "Seeing how colleagues deal with these questions gives me not only tools but also confidence that it can work out."

Third, continuous reflection acted as a developmental engine. This transversal mechanism scaffolded shared sense-making and strengthened alignment between pedagogical intentions and curricular designs. As a result, educational formats shifted from teacher- to student-led, and from institution- to community-oriented, thereby enhancing student agency alongside staff professional development.

Conclusion

The EXPAND model offers a theoretically grounded, empirically informed framework for embedding CET&L in higher education curricula. Its iterative, multi-entry design fosters expansive learning, distributed curriculum agency, and sustained reflection across diverse institutional settings. By positioning academic development centres as facilitators of civic-minded, partnership-oriented curriculum innovation, the model contributes to building resilient institutional capacity to address complex societal challenges. As HEIs align academic work with societal needs, EXPAND provides as a scaffold for collaborative curriculum transformation—repositioning community engagement as core academic practice rather than an add-on.

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Assessing the impact of a student-faculty pedagogical partnership to infuse equity and agency at a minority serving institution

Adriana Signorini

Abstract

This study examined the impact of a student-faculty pedagogical partnership by collecting evidence on whether enrolled students at a minority-serving institution observed faculty-implemented changes in response to their needs. Undergraduate student partners gathered feedback in three introductory humanities courses and discussed student perspectives with their respective course faculty partners to inform instruction. Near the end of the term, SATAL student partners administered a 6-question impact survey to collect the class reactions to the faculty's interventions. Qualitative and quantitative findings indicated that most enrolled students observed the implemented changes and expressed satisfaction with the faculty's response to their feedback. This impact assessment article, co-authored by staff, students, and instructors, presents a strong, novel case for assessing the impact of pedagogical partnership on enrolled students and has implications for adoption at other institutions.

Keywords: student-faculty partnership, pedagogical support, assessment, impact, student learning, equity, minority-serving institution.

Extended summary

This study presents a novel perspective on the assessment of student-faculty pedagogical partnership programs by examining whether faculty-initiated changes were implemented, observed, and perceived as beneficial by students enrolled in their courses. It contributes a new approach to collecting evidence in support of student-faculty partnership programs that can effectively inform and support instructional change at a minority-serving institution.

The new assessment tool (impact survey) allowed us to collect data to address this research question: To what extent did students observe their perspectives incorporated into the practices of the faculty member teaching the course?

Methodological Approach

The authors are Students Assessing Teaching and Learning (SATAL) program partners—diverse students, faculty, and staff—who are consulting on pedagogical support (Bovill et al., 2015). The SATAL team does not approach pedagogical consultation from a neutral stance. Instead, our work actively seeks to bridge the gap between educational research and instructional practice by supporting faculty as they implement inclusive, evidence-based strategies—particularly those grounded in student feedback and experience. SATAL student partners play an integral role throughout the research process, including project design, data collection, analysis, and co-authorship of results. This collaborative model exemplifies the principles of partnership by embodying mutuality, trust, and reciprocity. Contributions are co-negotiated, and decisions regarding research methods and coding are co-determined in ways that align with Dearden et al. 's (2003) model of 'cooperation partnership' (as referenced in Varwell, 2021). This approach is not only methodologically robust but also pedagogically transformative for all involved.

Our study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (UCM 2022-8) at UCM, and all faculty and students provided informed consent to participate anonymously in the survey.

Key Findings

The impact survey results demonstrate that the enrolled students observed the faculty's implemented changes in their courses, providing a clear and affirmative answer to the research question. While the entry survey helped establish a foundation of trust between students and faculty, the mid-term feedback identified actionable information for the faculty to adjust their teaching practices effectively. Results from the three courses involved demonstrated that over half of the students who completed the survey observed that their faculty implemented changes to the course. Additionally, 73% to 80% of respondents expressed satisfaction with how their faculty responded to the students' feedback. Results revealed consensus that the data from each assessment tool contributed to the understanding of the student perspective and experience. Students reported an increased sense of belonging, greater engagement, and a more positive and inclusive classroom environment as results were drawn directly from the experiences and perspectives of students (Cook-Sather et al., 2021).

Based on the findings, both faculty implemented engagement activities described as active learning activities in the literature, such as group work, class discussions, and increased student-student interaction. Student-centered pedagogies, like active learning, are more effective than teacher-centered, traditional lecturing for improving the student learning experience (Prince, 2004; Knight and Wood, 2005; Haak et al., 2011; Freeman et al., 2014) and narrowing the achievement gap for underrepresented students in STEM fields (Gavassa et al., 2019; Theobald et al., 2020). Both faculty partners implemented data-informed, student-centered changes that were well-received by students, as confirmed in the group survey results. The fact that enrolled students recommended the courses to others motivated us to look into each course's pedagogical changes and share the implications in the relevant sections.

The Theoretical and educational significance of the work: This article fills a critical gap in the literature by exploring how a student-faculty partnership program impacted not just the participating SATAL students and faculty partners, but also the students enrolled in the Sociology 01 and Spark 10 courses. These experiences show the importance of assessing, acting on the data, and reassessing to close the assessment cycle within the student-faculty partnership. The faculty in their courses implemented data-informed decisions, and enrolled students identified the changes as favorable. This work contributes to broader conversations about equity-minded assessment in higher education through which students feel empowered to voice their experiences and insights, which in turn enhances their engagement, agency, and sense of belonging. This approach fosters a collaborative and equitable learning environment, which is particularly critical at UCM, where 65% of the student population is first-generation. Incorporating formative assessment is vital to understanding and meeting students' needs and can also lead to improved retention and graduation rates.

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A networked approach in educational development as a catalyst for sustainable policy implementation

Lien Castelein, Annelies Gilis, Ine Rens, Hanne Tollenaere, Karen Van Eylen, Ana Paklons

Abstract

Higher education institutions are navigating increasing complexity due to technological change, diverse learner needs and evolving institutional priorities. Responding to these challenges requires not only pedagogical innovation but also governance structures that align local initiatives with institutional strategy. Educational developers operate at this interface, exercising agency across organisational layers through networked collaboration and strategic coordination.

This paper examines how such networked agency has been operationalised at KU Leuven (a comprehensive university with over 60,000 students) through the KU Leuven Learning Lab network. The case of IT-supported assessment demonstrates how digital assessment evolved from scattered faculty pilots into a coherent institutional strategy. Rather than emphasising technological rollout, this case foregrounded structured collaboration, cross-service alignment and evidence-informed decision-making. Through the creation of seed projects, institutional design scenarios and boundary spaces for negotiation, educational development shifted from facilitating innovation to shaping institutional conditions for readiness.

The paper argues that when embedded within networked governance structures, educational development can function as institutional design—enabling IT-supported assessmen to move beyond fragmented initiatives toward sustainable and strategic transformation. In this trajectory, “going digital, staying human” operated not as a slogan, but as a guiding principle for designing human-centred digital assessment in higher education.

Keywords: educational development, digital assessment, networked governance, policy alignment

Extended Summary

Higher education institutions are navigating increasingly complex environments characterised by technological change, diverse learner needs and evolving societal expectations. These demands require not only pedagogical innovation but also governance structures that align local initiatives with institutional strategy. Educational developers operate at this interface, exercising agency across organisational layers, making alignment and collaboration essential.

Taylor et al. (2022) argue that networks emerge through the interplay off microcultures—small, trusted groups of colleagues—and hubs, which act as connectors and amplifiers of knowledge flow. While microcultures foster deep, local engagement, hubs play a crucial role in scaling insights and connecting practice to institutional decision-making. This aligns with Kezar and Gehrke’s (2015) view that networked approaches, where actors are connected through formal and informal structures, can serve as catalysts for organisational learning and sustainable change through collective agency and distributed leadership. Rather than relying on top-down directives or isolated initiatives, networked governance integrates diverse perspectives into shared decision-making processes, balancing faculty autonomy with institutional strategy.

This conceptual lens foregrounds two dimensions: agency—the capacity of educational developers and other actors to influence decisions—and strategy—the mechanisms through which institutional priorities are negotiated and enacted. Systems leadership literature similarly stresses the need for combining facilitation, strategic foresight and brokerage skills to align actions across complex structures (Cairney & Toomey, 2025).

This paper adopts an analytical case study approach with design-based elements, exploring how these principles were operationalised at KU Leuven through the KU Leuven Learning Lab network. IT-supported assessment is presented as an illustrative case of how digital assessment evolved from isolated pilots into a coordinated institutional strategy.

A networked structure: KU Leuven Learning Lab

The KU Leuven Learning Lab network, established in 2017, connects the central Teaching & Learning Services with faculty-based educational developers and other KU Leuven services (IT, student affairs, learning spaces...). Its structure enables agile collaboration and alignment across institutional layers. A governance framework—steering committee, coordination team, faculty liaisons—anchors this network and reflects Taylor et al.'s (2022) notion of hubs and what Cairney and Toomey (2025) call a supportive environment for systems leadership.

The central Teaching & Learning Services played a key role in shaping this governance approach. This is consistent with Kezar and Gehrke’s (2015) finding that networks enhance capacity for change and foster resilience in higher education systems when educational developers are embedded across institutional boundaries. The KU Leuven Learning Lab networkis a catalyst for sustainable policy implementation.

A case: IT-Supported Assessment

The implementation of IT-supported assessment illustrates how networked governance enabled institutional learning. Rather than presenting digital assessment as a technological rollout, the KU Leuven Learning Lab principles of shared governance and evidence-informed decision-making were adopted.

Early pilots emerged organically within faculties—often accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their limitations revealed that sustainable integration required cross-faculty coordination and infrastructure-based feasibility analysis. To move beyond fragmentation, faculties were invited to connect earlier pilots—now developing into seed projects—to four predefined tracks (BYOD exams; PC-lab exams; digitally processed paper exams; formative assessment). This structure created comparability across cases and allowed strategic learning at institutional level.

Through structured intake consultations, fourteen seed projects were examined through nine supporting scenarios designed to surface infrastructural dependencies, capacity needs and governance requirements. Cross-service meetings evolved into what Seddon (2014) calls boundary spaces—zones where diverse logics and priorities interact. These spaces enabled the negotiation of feasibility, institutional conditions and pedagogical aims. As Taylor et al. (2022) observe, hubs function to bridge microcultures with broader institutional pathways; in XXXXX, they enabled the translation of local experimentation into shared strategic vocabulary. In this sense, the seed projects became sites of governance learning rather than endpoints of implementation.

Educational developers as strategic interpreters

During this trajectory, the role of educational developers shifted from supporting pilots to synthesising institutional insights. They began to map dependencies, identify governance needs and translate practice-based findings into policy language. This shift required analytical, relational and anticipatory capacities—reflecting Kezar and Gehrke's (2015) claim that agency develops through situated participation in network structures.

As Taylor et al. (2022) suggest, networked architectures allow educational developers to enact brokerage roles. Within this case, developers combined findings from seed projects and the nine supporting scenarios into an institutional vocabulary—ultimately informing policy-making and steering committee decisions. Support work evolved into

boundary-spanning practice (Seddon, 2014), where strategic coordination became integral to educational development.

Collaboration thus functioned not as implementation support, but as the mechanism through which strategy emerged. Rather than applying policy, educational developers helped shape the conditions through which policy could form—aligning with systems leadership insights from Cairney and Toomey (2025).

Conclusion: from innovation to institutional strategy

The IT-supported assessment initiative demonstrates how networked educational development can operate as institutional design. Through the KU Leuven Learning Lab network, collaboration became a governance mechanism that shaped readiness and strategic direction, enabling digital assessments to move from fragmented experimentation toward a coherent strategy. Educational developers emerged as system actors, helping articulate the institutional conditions under which change could take shape.

By aligning faculty autonomy with policy ambitions, this case exemplified how agency in academic development can be exercised collectively through structures, relationships and evidence. The principle "Going digital, staying human", which framed the seed projects, captured the central lesson of this trajectory: that digital transformation in higher education is only strategic when it is designed to remain human.

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Papers 19

Educational leadership in educational development: evidence from a scoping review

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Abstract

This scoping review explores the evolving concept of educational leadership in higher education and its implications for educational development. While traditionally linked to individual teaching enhancement, recent literature highlights the need for a more systemic and collaborative approach. The review addresses two research questions: What are the conceptualisations of leadership in higher education? and What are the implications for practice? A structured search across ERIC, Web of Science, and Scopus identified 39 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2006 and 2025. Preliminary findings reveal a conceptual continuum of leadership models, ranging from individual and administrative to collective and transformative. The analysis highlights significant overlaps and ambiguities among leadership types, particularly between academic and educational leadership. These results underscore the need for clearer definitions and a deeper understanding of how leadership practices shape inclusive, innovative learning environments.

Keywords: Educational Leadership, Academic Leadership, Higher Education, Educational Development

Extended Summary

Introduction

In recent years, the concept of educational leadership has become increasingly important within the international academic landscape (Sugrue et al., 2017). In a constantly evolving university context, educational leadership is a strategic factor in supporting teaching quality, guiding organisational change processes and promoting pedagogical innovation (Bolander Laksov & Tomson, 2017; Steinert, 2011). Historically, Educational Development has focused on enhancing the individual teaching skills of university lecturers. However, more recent studies emphasise the need to adopt a more integrated and systemic perspective, capable of grasping the complexity of academic structures and their organisational dynamics (Hubbard & Atkins, 1995; Sutherland, 2018). In this context, educational leadership is not limited to the administrative management of educational contexts, but acts as a cultural lever for building academic environments geared towards continuous improvement and cooperation between teachers and students (Bolander Laksov, 2021). In fact, over the last two decades, the concept of leadership has undergone a profound transformation: from an individual-centred, hierarchical vision based on universal traits, it has shifted to a process-oriented, collaborative, contextualised and non-hierarchical model based on reciprocal dynamics of power and influence (Kezar, 2023). This evolution has also had a significant impact on the higher education sector, where structural transformations have accelerated the rethinking of leadership practices (Black, 2015). Today, academic leaders are called upon to create inclusive and meaningful learning environments, promoting values such as intercultural awareness, recognition of different forms of intelligence and knowledge, and pluralistic approaches to strategic problem solving. An effective educational leader can strengthen the sense of collective identity, act as a facilitator of interdisciplinary collaborations, support shared responsibility, foster cultural change, and stimulate commitment to the common good (Amey, 2006). Despite growing attention to educational leadership, the concept of Educational Leadership (Quinlan, 2014) sometimes remains ambiguous and subject to divergent interpretations. The literature highlights other leadership models, such as transformational (Basham, 2012), distributed (Jones et al., 2014) or academic leadership (Henkel, 2002), making it difficult to provide a single, operational definition of the term. This review aims to help fill this conceptual gap by exploring different interpretations of leadership in higher education and questioning the implications these have for the practice of educational development.

Methodology

The scoping review addresses the research questions What different understandings of leadership in higher education exist? and What does it mean for the practice of educational development? A search was conducted across three academic databases (ERIC, Web of Science, and Scopus) to identify relevant peer-reviewed journal articles. The search string was designed to capture literature at the intersection of leadership in higher education and educational development. Inclusion criteria were: peer-reviewed journal articles written in English, published between 2006 and 2025, and available in full text. Excluded were books, chapters, theses, conference proceedings, reports, non-peer-reviewed sources and articles outside the specified time frame or language. Abstracts were subsequently screened with content-specific criteria, which required a focus on the role and practice of educational leadership within higher education, while explicitly excluding school leadership and student-focused topics. The search resulted in 115 articles, reduced to 93 after removing duplicates. After screening and analysing the abstracts, 39 relevant articles were included.

Preliminary results

The articles included in the analysis are mostly qualitative studies (n=24), followed by mixed methods designs (n=7), quantitative studies (n=5) and finally theoretical contributions (n=3). The initial analysis reveals a conceptual continuum of leadership models in higher education, mapped along two axes: individual vs. collective orientation (X), and technical-administrative vs. inspirational-transformative focus (Y). Traditional and instructional leadership models tend to cluster in the lower-left quadrant, reflecting a more individual and managerial approach. In contrast, distributed, educational, and teacher leadership occupy the upper-right quadrant, indicating a shift toward collective, transformative practices. Preliminary results highlight the conceptual fluidity and overlaps between different leadership models in higher education, suggesting the existence of porous and sometimes ambiguous boundaries between the categories analysed. In particular, the differences between academic leadership and educational leadership will be explored in depth. The aim of further analysis is clarifying the meanings attributed to each concept and the implications for the practice of educational development.

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Change leadership as structural-agentic processes

Oddfrid Førland, Torgny Roxå, Lene Nordrum

Abstract

Educational development projects in higher education often struggle to document lasting impact, and the underlying processes of change remain poorly understood. This study investigates how change leaders navigate the dynamic interplay between agency and the structures that enable or constrain that action. Sixteen leaders from diverse projects shared narratives of critical decision-making moments, followed by in-depth interviews. Analysis revealed that successful change leaders use two main strategies: maintaining progress by adapting plans and sustaining stakeholder and team engagement. Leaders showed awareness of their agency in a given situation, adjusting actions across contexts and leveraging networks to overcome resistance. They actively identified enabling and constraining structures, such as institutional practices and disciplinary cultures, and sought to influence these structures to enable and build agency. Our findings highlight that educational change is not a linear process but a navigation of structural-agentic processes, where leaders continuously adapt to maintain progress. Building capacity to recognize and shape this interplay is important to support future change leaders.

Keywords: educational development, change agency, change leaders, structural-agentic processes

Extended Summary

Educational development projects unfolding - what don't we know?

The lack of convincing long-lasting effects of educational development projects in higher educations is a source of concern from funding agencies and institutions and there is a need to show not only that – but how - educational development projects reach their goals to improve impact and learning across projects. Evaluations of success in educational development projects often focus on the plan (e.g. project applications) and the outcomes (what the project have achieved). However, to understand educational change, there is a need to build knowledge of the complex and often hidden process towards the outcomes.

In this paper, our goal is to contribute to the understanding of the (social) processes that "are not directly known", i.e. the dynamic relationship between change agency and the structures that enable or constrain individual or group agency (Annala et al., 2023; Ashwin, 2009). Specifically, we focus on those individuals that lead change - people involved in educational development projects who have the ability to facilitate and create change (Kezar, 2018), and have both interest and assigned time to do so (McGrath et al., 2016). Based on their own narratives, we interviewed change leaders involved in educational development projects about their decision-making in critical moments of the change process – often within a limited time frame. These moments require change leaders to manage a novel situation that deviate from the planned or expected course of action. We suggest that by exploring how decision-making happens in these situations – from the perspective of the change leaders – we can create an understanding of the structural-agentic processes during change - building knowledge of the process that can support future change leaders.

Exploring change mechanisms - our questions and research design

We recruited and interviewed sixteen people involved in leading a variety of change efforts in higher education. The change leaders wrote a short narrative of a critical situation where a choice or decision had to be made in their projects. Although all the informants lead educational development, they did not frame their narrative from the perspective of an educational or academic developer. Instead, they describe their experiences as members of their disciplinary communities (e.g., law education) who are involved in educational development. Based on their narratives we conducted in-depth interviews, where they elaborated and reflected on the situation and decision-making process.

Two research questions provided the basis for our analysis: RQ 1 How do change leaders describe the decision-making process in times of disruption? and RQ 2 How do change leaders describe how they navigate structures to enable agency in educational development projects? For RQ1, we used thematic analysis and for RQ2, we used Ashwin's (2009) concept of structural-agentic processes, in which the interplay of agency and structure is viewed as an ongoing process. For this angle, interviews were analyzed from the perspective of leadership actions and strategies (agency) in relation to enabling and constraining structures (e.g. local cultures, practices and institutional design) (Annala et al., 2023).

Exercising agency - maintaining progress and ensuring continued support

The analysis identified two critical aspects across the interviews: Maintaining progress towards the main goal – even though this means adjusting the plan and abandoning some aspects of the project, and ensuring continued engagement and support from stakeholders and project members.

The ability to identify the level of agency in a certain situation and adjust actions accordingly is key to maintain progress in the change process (Kezar, 2018). Our informants overall demonstrated a strong awareness of their level of agency. They describe how they adapt their agentic approach when moving between different contexts (e.g. institutional level

vs. project team) or working with different groups of people (e.g. formal vs informal), identifying opportunities and navigating constraints in relation to different structures.

In addition, they identified enabling and constraining structures within their context. Responding to the dynamic interplay between agency and structure in the change process, they apply this knowledge to adapt their leadership strategy depending on how a situation developed to actively influence structures to enable progress in their projects. Stagnation and resistance are identified as critical threats by the change leaders, indicating constricted agency. They describe how disciplinary and pedagogical cultures can be both strong enablers and constrictors of change agency. Cultures and relationships are key structures, and the change leaders focus their effort on navigating, utilizing, influencing and shaping these structures to enable change agency.

The informal and formal (professional) networks of the change leaders played a significant role, especially in situations with high resistance and disruption. Informal networks and dialogue can become especially important when organizational structures are not supportive (Wang & Horta, 2025). Our results show the importance for leaders to maintain engagement among their team and leverage local knowledge and networks, and this importance increase when structures are constraining agency and thus preventing progress. A recurring statement in the interviews were “I know these people”, showing the change leaders understanding of networks and relationships.

With our approach to analyse change and change leadership as structural-agentic processes, we show the importance of building the capacity of change leaders to identify, navigate and influence structures to enable change agency.

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Becoming strategic: Informing Academic Developers' Identity, Agency and Practice for transformation

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Abstract

This paper critically examines a professional learning intervention designed for academic staff development practitioners at a South African public higher education institution, with a focus on its contribution to shifting individual and collective agency, as well as the transformation of professional identity and practice. In a higher education context characterised by supercomplexity and intensified transformation imperatives, recent developments, such as the updated QAF (CHE, 2021) and emerging Higher Education Practice Standards, require academic developers to move beyond service-oriented roles towards more strategic, adaptive, and innovative practice. Drawing on Archer's morphogenetic approach to agency, the study addresses the question: How does an educational consultancy professional learning programme contribute to the morphogenesis of agency and identity? The intervention, funded through a three-year grant, comprised four annual professional learning sessions focused on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, curriculum development, assessment, and teaching and learning. The sessions were deliberately co-designed by participants. Using a qualitative case study approach, the paper analyses programme documentation, reflective narratives, and artefacts of practice to appreciate morphogenetic change at individual, collective, and programme levels. Findings indicate evidence of morphogenesis in professional identity and enhanced agency, evidenced through changes in practice, emergent SoTL projects, and expanded professional networks, evaluated against Guskey's (2012) model. The paper argues that intentionally designed professional learning, which creates time, space, and collective responsibility, can support the repositioning of academic developers as strategic agents of educational innovation. This confirms the importance of designing developer-focused professional learning that explicitly attends to identity, agency, and institutional transformation.

Keywords: Academic Developers, agency, identity, professional learning,

Extended Summary

While the Higher Education space in general has been acknowledged for its continuous shifts and supercomplexity (Castrillon & Menon, 2025; Barnett, 2000). In South Africa (SA), several advancements have emerged that necessitate the reconceptualisation and repositioning of the work and identity of academic staff development practitioners. The updated QAF (CHE, 2021) and upcoming Higher Education Practice standards (CHE, 2024; 2025) require that academic developers be agile and positioned to influence the transformation process in and of higher education (CHE, 2022). South African academic developers operate within a context of intensified transformation demands, internal and external changes, and multilingual and multicultural imperatives that collectively disrupt traditional service-oriented professional identities. In some instances, academic staff development practitioners hold academic appointments; yet most are classified as professional support staff, with implications for opportunities for structured professional learning. Equipping academic developers to evolve and support the academic project more proactively has emerged as a significant need. This paper explores this gap and makes a case for a learning programme tailored to the needs of academic staff developers in the current higher education context.

With funding from a three-year grant, an academic developers' team participated in an intervention comprising four annual sessions focused on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), curriculum development, assessment, and teaching and learning. They were challenged to collaborate in pairs to design the sessions, presenting their ideas to the group for discussion and approval. Resulting sessions were facilitated by local and international experts, with post-session discussions aimed at identifying actionable insights and future directions.

The theoretical framework and/or methodological approach: The paper draws on Archer's morphogenetic approach (Archer, 1995; Nudelman, 2021) to explore agency, responding to the question: How does the academic developers' professional learning intervention contribute to the morphogenesis of agency and identity? Scholarship foregrounds that academic developers' identities are fluid and contested, and that critical-constructive identity positions are closely linked to the exercise of professional agency and the capacity to facilitate educational change. This study conceptualises how shifts in the professional identity of academic developers—catalysed through continuous professional development (CPD) sessions tailored for developers themselves—can enable more strategic, innovation-oriented roles in South African higher education. To address the question, the paper examines the distinctive design of the learning programme and the narratives of the ECs' experiences. It traces the nature of morphogenesis at the levels of the programme, individuals, and the collective. The changes to practice and resulting SOTL project reveal shifts in identity, agency and capacity to support innovation at the institution. Key findings, arguments, or outcome: To shift and reposition academic development work in the current context in SA requires that we are intentional about identifying and breaking structural conditions that could impede the work of academic developers. Emerging evidence of professional development change, evaluated against Guskey's (2002) model, was observed in how participants articulated and applied their learning. Requiring participants to organise a workshop reinforced their sense of agency and facilitated networking beyond the institution. The changes to practice and resulting SOTL project reveal shifts in

identity, agency and capacity to support innovation at the institution. The theoretical and educational significance of the work, including implications for practice, policy, or future research. The paper offers insights into the importance of deliberately reducing friction for professional learning by creating time and space for conversations, reflections, and actioning for ways of being and doing. When tasked with aligning learning with institutional and national imperatives for higher education, exploring the identity and agency of academic developers is necessary for the transformation of practice in South Africa. Further, it showcases the intersection of co-creation and social capital in professional learning, with implications for structured development programmes in similar contexts. By conceptualising the links between identity shifts, agency, and innovation, the study aims to reconceptualise South African academic developers as strategic agents of educational innovation within and across their institutions.

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The holistic approach to Faculty Development to face the age complexity: an operational model

Roberta Silva, Alessia Bevilacqua

Abstract

This proposal presents a holistic model of Faculty Development (FD) designed to address the increasing complexity and evolving demands of contemporary higher education. Moving beyond sectoral or fragmented approaches, the proposed framework envisions academic development as a multifocal and integrated process that connects the personal, professional, and institutional dimensions of university life. Drawing on Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, the model articulates FD across three interrelated organizational levels—micro (individual faculty), meso (collegial and departmental structures), and macro (institutional governance). Represented through the metaphor of a three-dimensional cone, the model emphasizes the dynamic and recursive nature of development processes, with heuristic evaluation positioned at its core as a transformative mechanism for continuous improvement. The proposal illustrates the operational translation of this framework through an organizational architecture capable of integrating multiple FD initiatives and incorporating systematic evaluation practices. Implementation of the model requires significant political, organizational, and operational investment, achievable only when Faculty Development Centers (FDCs) act in alignment with university governance and under a clear institutional mandate. Nevertheless, the model remains adaptable to resource-limited contexts, where faculty developers can assume multiple roles to ensure program sustainability, able to foster a systemic vision of academic growth that harmonizes individual and institutional development, strengthens academic culture, and enhances the university's capacity for innovation and change.

Keywords: Faculty Development, Holistic Approach, Operational Architecture

Extended Summary

The starting point

Our age is marked by ever-increasing complexity and a profound redefinition of the academic profession. In this context, how can Faculty Development (FD) initiatives effectively support faculty members, providing them with the tools to navigate new—and often unpredictable—challenges, while enhancing their personal and professional capacities? Moreover, how can FD be designed to support not only faculty but also students, administrative staff, and other institutional stakeholders? The holistic approach to FD emerges as a response to these questions. It envisions academic development as a multifocal yet integrated process, intrinsically linked to the evolution of the institution itself. Only through such interconnection can FD influence academic culture and foster meaningful, sustainable change in the actions and intentions that shape university practices.

The theoretical framework

The holistic approach begins from the fundamental assumption that an individual's development cannot be divided into separate or independent areas. The first implications of this view are evident in the diversification of faculty training, which addresses professional, personal, and institutional dimensions—the latter understood as the capacity to actively contribute to the growth and vitality of the academic institution to which one belongs [1]. Over time, this perspective has evolved into an integrated training approach, which recognizes and enhances the university teacher's "multiple" professional identity. It encourages investment in the diverse competencies that constitute this identity, while simultaneously emphasizing the systemic nature of the academic environment as a whole [2]. From this standpoint, the holistic approach contends that meaningful change in academic culture—an essential precondition for transforming university practices—can only occur through a set of interconnected and strategically coordinated actions. These actions must engage faculty members as a whole, encouraging them to perceive themselves as integral components of a complex ecosystem rather than as mere cogs in an impersonal machine. Faculty members should come to view themselves as living agents within a dynamic environment, where each action entails multiple causes and consequences, and where relationships unfold within a rhizomatic network of interconnections. Only through this awareness can they construct new, meaningful frameworks that give depth and coherence to their roles and activities within the institution [2][3]. Drawing inspiration from Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory [4], the holistic approach identifies three organizational levels: the micro, meso, and macro. While Faculty Development (FD) initiatives typically focus on one of these levels, their effectiveness depends on maintaining continuous interconnection among them—promoting the organic growth of the individual faculty member (micro), of collegial groups or departments (meso), and of the academic organization as a whole (macro). This multidimensional perspective provides valuable insights for planning FD activities that consciously align with the complex and multifocal nature of higher education institutions, reflecting the specific challenges and debates of the contemporary academic context. However, these theoretical orientations must be operationalized through deliberate design and sustained effort.

Give shape to an organizational model of holistic FD

The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how the holistic approach to Faculty Development (FD) can be operationally translated into an organizational architecture capable of articulating and integrating FD initiatives across higher

education. This structure also incorporates evaluative mechanisms to assess the model's effectiveness. The proposed model addresses the complex challenges facing contemporary universities by transcending sectoral approaches and promoting a connective, multifocal perspective. It draws inspiration from the holistic paradigm and from Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework [4], organizing FD across three interrelated levels—micro, meso, and macro—and within three complementary dimensions of development: professional, personal, and institutional [1].

The three-dimensional cone metaphor illustrates the interconnection among the various dimensions of the model: at its base lie the three developmental domains—professional, personal, and institutional—while along its vertical axis are positioned the organizational levels of micro, meso, and macro. The spiral encircling the cone symbolizes the dynamic and recursive nature of Faculty Development, emphasizing its continuous movement and interdependence across dimensions and levels. At the model's core lies heuristic evaluation, conceived as both a transformative process and a point of equilibrium within the system, as reflective inquiry and analysis serve to drive the ongoing improvement and redesign of development initiatives.

Putting the model into practice

In the final part of this proposal, the practical implementation of the model will be outlined, with particular attention to the conditions necessary for its realization. Given its inherent complexity, the model requires substantial political, organizational, and operational investment. It can only be effectively implemented when the Faculty Development Center (FDC) operates in close alignment with institutional University's governance. Such implementation underscores the importance of maintaining a balance between available resources and the scope of active projects, ensuring that the FDC remains sustainable through strategic annual planning. Even in resource-constrained environments, the holistic approach remains viable—provided that faculty developers demonstrate coordination, adaptability, and versatility, assuming multiple roles as needed. This situation may be likened to actors performing several roles within the same play, a metaphor that aptly captures the flexibility, collaboration, and creative organization required to secure the success of FDC activities.

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From individuals to institutions: operationalizing the holistic faculty development approach

Alessia Bevilacqua, Roberta Silva

Abstract

The holistic approach to Faculty Development adopted by the University of [OMISSIS]'s Teaching and Learning Center translates a systemic vision of academic growth into practice across multiple disciplinary domains. Rooted in an ecological framework, this model integrates professional, personal, and institutional dimensions of development, fostering coherence between teaching innovation and institutional transformation. In the Health area, Faculty Development supports educators and students through evidence-based active learning, flipped and team-based methodologies, and metacognitive strategies to enhance self-regulated learning. Within Law education, projects combine civic education with experiential learning, cultivating ethical awareness and social responsibility. In Economics promote reflective, internationalized, and service-oriented teaching practices. The Formarsi per Formare program provides continuous training for faculty members, while transversal skills initiatives engage both students and administrative staff in developing life and professional competences. Through these diverse yet interconnected initiatives, the holistic model demonstrates its adaptability and effectiveness in fostering innovation, collaboration, and sustainability across the entire academic ecosystem. Keywords: Faculty development, Holistic model, Teaching and Learning Center, Higher Education

Extended Summary

The relevance of holistic Faculty Development (FD)

The debate on FD has recently evolved from a focus on individual professional growth to a systemic vision that embraces the complexity of academic ecosystems. The holistic approach to FD, inspired by Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, interprets academic development as an interdependent process occurring at micro, meso, and macro levels—linking individual faculty, collegial structures, and institutional governance. Such an integrated perspective enables universities to align personal and professional development with institutional transformation. At the University of [OMISSIS], the Teaching and Learning Center (TaLC) has operationalized this model through the creation of multifaceted programs that connect faculty, students, and administrative staff, fostering a culture of reflection, innovation, and evidence-based improvement as essential conditions for sustainable academic change (Silva, 2022).

Faculty Development programs designed by the TaLC

FD programs in medical education

The Didactive project, addressed to medical educators, introduced active learning methodologies into medical education through evidence-based reflection and iterative design. Faculty were guided to integrate for example team-based and case-based learning approaches into traditional curricula, emphasizing student engagement, collaborative inquiry, and formative feedback. This process was grounded in reflective evaluation, encouraging instructors to connect pedagogical choices with learning evidence and clinical reasoning outcomes.

The TOP program targeted students in the nursing professions, focusing on "learning to learn" through structured study strategies. Drawing on metacognitive, cognitive, and organizational techniques, the initiative empowered students to develop autonomous and sustainable study habits. Together, these interventions have fostered active participation, enhanced self-regulation, and reinforced the link between educational practice and professional identity formation.

FD programs in law education

The TaLC has developed FD projects that merge civic engagement with innovative pedagogy. The Erasmus+ Service-Learning Migrants/Refugees project engaged both faculty and students in the exploration of service learning as a pedagogical tool that connects academic knowledge with civic competence. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, participants designed community-based projects addressing real social challenges, promoting a sense of responsibility and democratic participation.

The So.Di.Re. project, developed in partnership with primary schools, university departments, and local stakeholders, sought to integrate civic education into early schooling through experiential and cooperative learning. Teachers, jurists, and university experts co-designed activities structured around sustainability, rights, and responsibility. Employing storytelling, cooperative learning, and inquiry-based tasks, students were encouraged to "learn by doing" within a framework that cultivates ethical awareness and collective reflection.

FD programs in economical education

The TaLC has coordinated FD initiatives that promote quality enhancement intertwined with pedagogical innovation. The A Jump into Quality project emphasized continuous improvement in economic education by supporting teaching staff in rethinking traditional lecture formats. It promoted student-centered strategies, such as peer feedback, active participation, and formative assessment, to strengthen analytical thinking and collaborative problem-solving.

At the international level, the Erasmus Mundus – International Economics and Business Administration (IEBA) program, integrates service learning and project-based methodologies to connect students' learning with the complex realities of global markets. By linking theory and practice, the program cultivates employability skills, ethical awareness, and intercultural competence.

FD programs for faculty members

The Formarsi per Formare program represents the cornerstone of the institutional FD strategy. Addressed to academic staff at all career stages, it provides a structured pathway for continuous professional and pedagogical growth. Through an integrated calendar of webinars, workshops, and masterclasses, the program supports faculties in developing evidence-based teaching practices, assessment literacy, and inclusive design skills. Faculty participation is recognized through open digital badges that certify specific competences. Beyond individual upskilling, the program fosters a sense of professional community, creating a shared space for dialogue and peer support across disciplines.

FD programs focused on transversal skills

Recognizing that higher education must prepare students and staff for lifelong adaptability, the TaLC has implemented transversal skills programs addressing both students and technical-administrative personnel. For students, the Trasversal Skills program, aligned with the European "Life Skills for Europe" framework, develops personal, cognitive, and relational competences essential for active citizenship and employability. Through credit-bearing workshops and digital badges, students engage in experiential learning modules on communication, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence, fostering both self-awareness and social responsibility. For technical and administrative staff, the TaLC has launched a parallel program focusing on professional and interpersonal capabilities. Training modules on problem solving, time management, teamwork, assertive communication enhance efficiency, and inclusion within the workplace.

The expression of the holistic approach

Taken together, the initiatives implemented by the TaLC illustrate how a holistic FD model becomes operative when the micro, meso, and macro dimensions of academic life are deliberately interconnected. At the micro level, programs such as Didactive and TOP strengthen individual educators' and students' reflective capacities, metacognitive awareness, and autonomous teaching and learning strategies, thereby supporting both personal and professional development. At the meso level, interdisciplinary projects such as those in Law and Economics education promote collaborative pedagogical design, and the cultivation of communities of practice, reinforcing the collective dimension of academic work. At the macro level, institution-wide initiatives such as Formarsi per Formare and the transversal skills programs embed continuous professional learning, and competence recognition into the university's strategic orientation. By simultaneously nurturing personal growth, enhancing professional expertise, and advancing institutional coherence, these programs demonstrate how holistic FD can function as an integrated ecosystem, capable of sustaining educational innovation, fostering organisational well-being, and promoting shared responsibility for academic excellence across all levels of the institution (Lester et al., 2025; Dorner & Mårtensson, 2021; Wright. 2023).

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Papers 20

Towards an inclusive academic induction: Reflections from an online PG Dip: HE

Benita Bobo, Pinkie Ntola, Xolile Xaba

Abstract

This paper offers a collaborative autoethnographic reflection of three colleagues working in higher education who completed a fully online Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PG Dip: HE) over a two-year period at a South African University of Technology. This programme, as a form of academic induction, was designed to enhance teaching innovation, research skills, and an understanding of diverse learning environments. Drawing on decolonial and transformative learning theories we reflect on how design, delivery, and assessment practices in this programme shaped our evolving professional identities. Findings reveal tensions between the programme's transformative aspirations and structural constraints; the guest-lecturer model used in the programme broadened experiences but undermined continuity, assessment lacked iterative feedback and scaffolding, and the online delivery provided flexibility but limited dialogic engagement. We argue that without intentional design, such programmes risk perpetuating epistemic hierarchies and performativity. We recommend embedding epistemic plurality through co-teaching, ensuring coherence in the programme administration through active coordination, and adopting authentic and scaffolded assessments. These insights inform reimagined academic induction programmes that are responsive to the global South context.

Keywords: collaborative autoethnography, academic induction, pedagogical design, decoloniality

Extended Summary

This paper critically examines a fully online Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education

(PG Dip: HE) offered by a South African University of Technology as a form of academic induction and professional development. This programme is offered over a 2-year period. The three authors of this paper are academics and academic developers situated in 3 diverse higher education institutions in South Africa and were part of the same cohort of students completing this programme. Through collaborative autoethnography we reflect on how the programme's design, delivery, and assessment practices shaped our learning experiences and professional identities as academics and academic developers. The aim of our paper is to identify lessons and propose design principles for future academic induction programmes that are contextually relevant in the global South. Our analysis is guided by decolonial theory and transformative learning theory.

Decoloniality enabled us to interrogate whose knowledge and pedagogical practices were privileged and how epistemic access was addressed (Oyedemi, 2018). Transformative learning theory provided a lens for understanding moments of critical reflection and perspective change during the programme (Mezirow, 2003). Methodologically, we employed collaborative autoethnography (Blalock & Akehi, 2018), generating data through reflective journaling and dialogic conversations. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns in our experiences, situating them within broader debates on neoliberal restructuring in higher education. Three key findings emerged:

1. Guest-lecture model: the programme largely employed a guest lecture model, with most modules being solely taught by lecturers employed in other higher education institutions. While guest lecturers broadened exposure to diverse expertise, this model produced uneven teaching practices and fragile continuity. This also contributed to undermining scaffolded learning.

2. Assessment practices: assessments lacked iterative feedback and appropriate scaffolding, limiting opportunities for deep learning and authentic engagement.

3. Online modality: the fully online format afforded flexibility and access but risked relational thinness, reducing opportunities for dialogic peer learning and community building.

These findings reveal tensions between the programme's transformative aspirations and structural constraints imposed by neoliberal logics – such as outsourcing and performative assessment practices. This study contributes to debates on academic induction by foregrounding the need for context-sensitive design in the global South. Without deliberate design choices, online programmes risk epistemic hierarchies and performative practices rather than fostering inclusive, transformative learning (Bobo & Masango-Muzindutsi, 2022).

We therefore propose three design principles:

1. Epistemic plurality and reciprocity: embed co-teaching with lecturers and academic developers from the institution offering the programme.

2. Coherent reaching presence: appoint an active course coordinator to ensure

smooth continuity and the integration of guest lecturers effectively. This could be done with the support of an appointed course administrator who oversees the programme logistics.

3. Authentic, scaffolded assessment: align assessments with module and programme learning outcomes, provide iterative feedback, and prioritise authentic assessments. Institutions should critically evaluate the neoliberal tendencies shaping academic development programmes and adopt design strategies that promote relationality, inclusivity and epistemic justice. Future research could look at comparative studies of online academic induction programmes across diverse global South contexts, to deepen understanding of design principles that support transformative learning.

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Building Agency via a Train-the-Trainer Model for Student Assistants in First-Year Engineering

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Abstract

Our large first-year engineering courses employ several hundred student assistants who have got good grades themselves, but have little pedagogical understanding of how to support others to learn. We present a scalable train-the-trainer model that drills three evidence-informed teaching micro-routines for doctoral assistants (DAs) and student assistants (SAs):

1. Respond with questions: assistants use questing routines to support a high level of cognitive engagement from students.

2. Process-oriented feedback: assistants use a structured sequence to provide rich and contextual feedback that supports students' ability to solve similar problems(not just this one).

3. Problem solving method: a structured problem-solving method is used to frame interactions with students to support their developing skills and reflection.

DAs in the program participate in a 2 ECTS course (~7 h learning to teachproblem solving; ~3.5 h on facilitation skills), then deliver two practice-rich SAworkshops. The cascade (faculty developer → DAs → SAs) enables consistent,scalable, concurrent enactment across many parallel sessions supported by onefaculty developer. Evaluation of student perceptions over the past few yearsshows that the SAs trained in this method provide the students with the "advice,guidance or feedback they need to progress" and that they "behave in a professional manner". Implementing the teaching micro-routines training supports agency at several levels, enabling the DAs to step into their supervision of the SA, providing SA practical pedagogical tools to support learning, and creating an environment for students to develop their problem-solving skills.

Keywords: Scalable pedagogical training, Train-the-trainer, First-year, Engineering, Teaching Assistants, Learning Assistants

Extended Summary

Aim

Our large, first-year engineering courses depend on assistant-led exercise sessions to help students learn disciplinary problem solving. Each exercise session (~40–50 students) is staffed by one doctoral assistant (DA) and ~4–5 student assistants (SAs; senior bachelor/master's students). As SAs have often just completed the course themselves, they do not have a rich foundation in the subject (pedagogical content knowledge) nor much pedagogical training. Consequently, students' agency often erodes when this help focuses on giving the right answer to the current problem. This paper describes the theoretical groundings and practical implications for a train-the-trainer (TtT) model that scales three practical teaching micro-routines to enable both DAs and SAs to acquire a robust skills set and agency to actively support student learning. We argue this evidence-based routine oriented design strengthens student agency allowing them to become empowered learners, professionalises assistants, and offers a scalable institutional strategy.

Theoretical Frameworks

Our approach integrates three complementary strands of scholarship:

Evidence-based active learning:

Active learning strategies that focus on increasing the learner's cognitive engagement with the material increase student achievement and benefit diverse learners (Chi & Wylie, 2014, p. 2020; Theobald et al., 2020). Strategies such as teaching a problem-solving method and providing content-rich formative feedback have a higher-than-average impact on student learning (Hattie, 2023).

Developing trainer agency:

Providing doctoral and student assistants with relevant, timely and contextual pedagogical training that allows them to develop their agency and transfer their skills into their own contexts (Authors, 2022; Authors, 2020).

Building inclusive classrooms:

A warm classroom climate facilitates learning (Dewsbury, 2020; Seymour & Hunter, 2019), and teaching assistants can be valuable in building such inclusive environments (Authors., 2023, 2024)

Key Features

Training the trainers:

DAs enrol in a for-credit course (2 ECTS) that includes engaging asynchronously with resources on evidence-based teaching strategies and in person training on teaching problem solving, classroom management, and facilitating

trainings. The DAs are trained to use - and teach - behavioural micro-routines that focus on increasing students' cognitive engagement. The faculty developer first provides the SAs with 1.5 hours of theoretical training (basic pedagogy and inclusive educational practices), after which the DAs facilitate 3.5 hours (3 sessions) of practice-rich workshops using role-plays and case studies to help the SAs develop their behavioural micro-routines.

Behavioural micro-routines:

- Responding to questions with questions: Keeping the cognitive load with the students.
- Providing process-oriented feedback: using a structured routine – (clarify the goal → identify positives/negatives in current work → provide feedback that is process and future oriented –) to provide rich and contextual feedback that students can use on all similar problems (not just this one).
- Consistent use of a problem-solving method: Using the Polya's method (Analyse → List → Solve → Verify) for all problems.

Building agency:

After each workshop, DAs receive content-rich feedback from SAs and from the faculty developer. As a capstone, DAs submit a teaching statement, on which they also get feedback with the aim that they can then use it in their job applications.

Scalability:

The model scales via cascading expertise (faculty developer → DAs → SAs), focusing on few high-impact behavioural routines (feedback, questioning, problem solving) and multiple rounds of contextualised practice (teaching disciplinary problems with immediate feedback). Using this scalable model (fig.1) we were able to use limited human resources to provide pedagogical training to 382 student assistants who in turn provided support to >3000 students in Fall 2024.

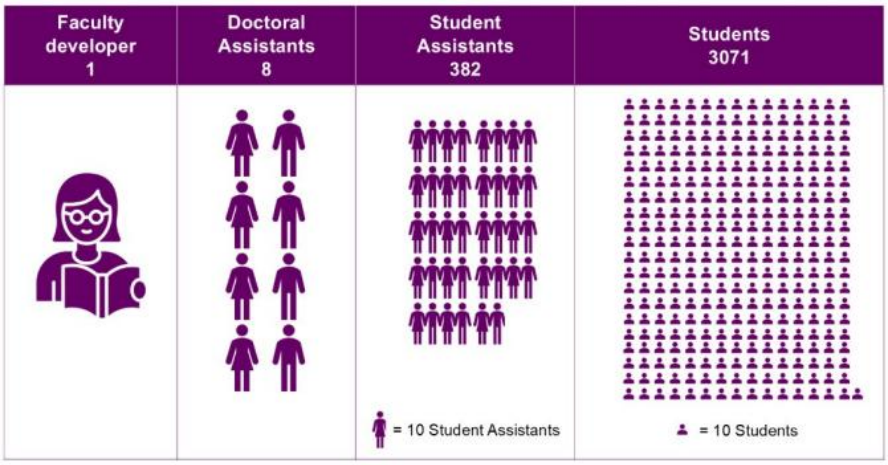


Fig. 1. Scalable distribution of pedagogical training and classroom support (Fall 2024)

Key Outcomes

In addition to developing doctoral student agency in their pedagogical skills (Authors, 2022), we found that similar gains were seen in student assistants' agency to implement evidence-based practices in their classroom (Fig. 2).

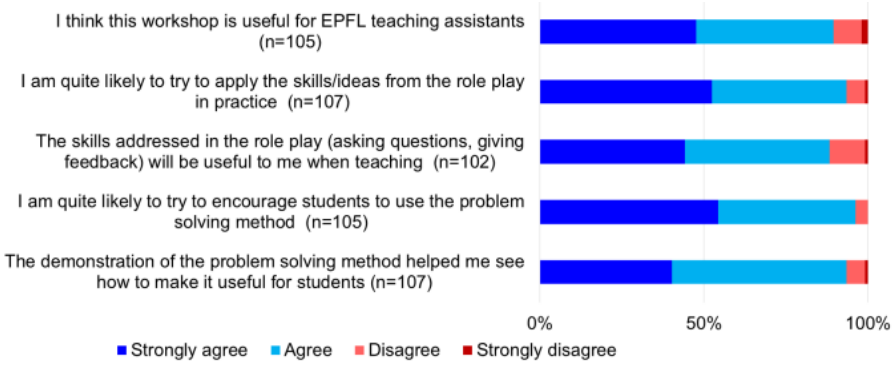


Fig. 2. Feedback from SAs after the workshops

Students taught by these SAs stated that the SAs helped their academic progress and contributed to developing inclusive learning environments (Fig 3)

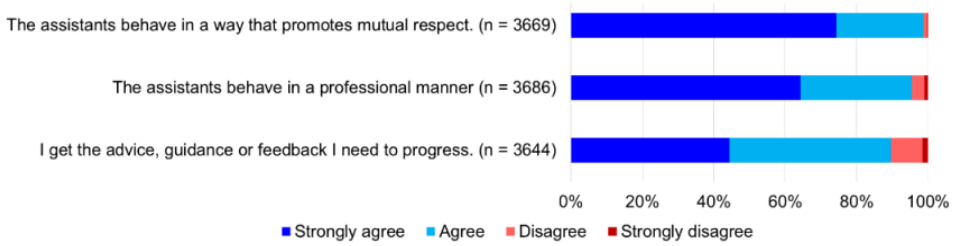


Fig. 3. End-semester feedback from first-year students enrolled in three core-courses. Students could respond once per course.

Significance

This evidence-based teaching micro-routine oriented model—scaled through train-the-trainer — can transform exercise sessions into environments where students do the cognitive work of engineering problem-solving. By shifting the assistants' role from 'providing answers' to 'facilitating learning', the interaction becomes an agency-building experience for students. Additionally, this model empowers DAs and SAs in performing their jobs and offers institutions with a scalable strategy aligned with ICED26's subtheme on Agency and Students.

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"I used to think…, now I think…": Capturing conceptual change in novice university teachers' beliefs

Sara Petchey

Abstract

PhD students often begin teaching with powerful but unexamined beliefs about "good" university teaching and little formal pedagogical training. This paper examines how a semester-long introductory course on teaching at a research-intensive university shapes participants' epistemic beliefs about teaching and specific teaching techniques. The course is deliberately designed as a conceptual change intervention that surfaces prior beliefs, confronts them with evidence and new experiences, and supports more learner-focused conceptions. We analyzed 149 post-course reflections collected over eight years in response to the prompt: "Please share how your thoughts of what good science teaching looks like have changed, using the format 'I used to think…, and/but now I think…'." Inductive qualitative content analysis focused on prior and revised conceptions of both teaching and of specific teaching practices. Findings cluster around three shifts: from "teach as you were taught" transmission models to views of teaching as facilitating student learning; from seeing good teaching as an innate talent to a learnable, improvable practice; and from generic awareness of techniques to understanding tools in terms of their pedagogical purposes. We suggest that development work should (disruptively) surface and examine prior teaching assumptions before focusing on new practices. We also share that simple, well-structured reflection prompts can both foster and document conceptual change and teaching agency in early-career academics.

Keywords: Conceptual Change, Teaching Beliefs, STEM, Evidence-based Teaching Practices, Early Career Instructor

Extended Summary

Aim

We examine how a semester-long introductory teaching course impacts participants epistemic beliefs about both teaching and specific teaching techniques. The aims are to characterize the epistemic shifts participants report directly after the course and to evaluate effectiveness of the course's conceptual change design.

Theoretical framework

Social cognitive theory and agency: Following Bandura (2001), we consider participants as emerging agents who can intentionally question and transform inherited models of teaching rather than merely reproduce them.

Conceptual change: The course is explicitly designed to move participants towards learner-focused conceptions. It surfaces prior beliefs, creates productive tension with course experiences and evidence, and helps participants articulate revised conceptions of teaching (Ho, 2000).

Conceptions of teaching: We draw on the well-established distinction between teacher-/content-focused and student-/learning-focused conceptions of teaching and their links to teaching approaches (e.g., Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008).

Methods

This work is a qualitative study of early career instructors' changes in epistemology after an introductory pedagogy course with a conceptual change design: Context and participants: This research focuses on a semester-long introduction to university science teaching for STEM PhD students at a Swiss research-intensive university. The course integrates disciplinary pedagogy (e.g., balancing inquiry and basic competencies in labs) with general pedagogy (e.g., active learning) and features structured tools to scaffold early career instructors' transfer of pedagogy to their own contexts.

Data collection: We use an online post course survey and ask, "Please share how your thoughts of what good science teaching looks like, using the format: 'I used to think…, and/but now I think…'.". The wording is deliberately constructed to elicit paired "before/after" conceptions, rather than general satisfaction statements in the interest of more accurate analysis of epistemological change. Our dataset comprises 149 post-course reflections collected from thirteen cohorts over eight years.

Analysis: We used inductive qualitative content analysis of the paired statements, focusing on prior conceptions, new conceptions, and the direction and nature of conceptual change. Coding was iterative and comparative across cohorts to identify stable patterns and variations and met standards of interrater reliability.

Key findings and significance

This study contributes to scholarship on teacher agency and the use of conceptual change in professional development with respect to conceptions of teaching. Our findings fall into three clusters: Moving beyond "teach as you were taught": Participants expressed shifts in their conceptions of teaching from a content transmission model with a focus on the expertise and skills of the teacher to a learning facilitator model with a focus on the prior knowledge and interests of the student. This finding supports studies which find disruptive, effective professional development helps teachers

make such a shift (Ho, 2000) and shows that participants have begun to view teaching as an intentional effort to shape learning environments (agency!) Increased awareness of tools and their pedagogical purposes: Many participants chose to focus upon specific teaching tools and strategies introduced in the course. For example, "(I used to think) that small group discussions/work in a large class were a waste of lecture time, but now I see that it can be very helpful for students to engage with and understand the work". The "now I think" statements linked tools to clear pedagogical purposes like checking understanding, disrupting misconceptions, or showing limits of analogies. This suggests that participants are not merely collecting techniques but are beginning to develop pedagogical reasoning about when and why to use them, consistent with work on effective pedagogical training in higher education (Kennedy, 2016). From innate talent to learnable practice: Participants also described shifts in their conceptions of what it takes to be a "good teacher." Initial beliefs often position good teaching as a fixed personal trait, something one is "naturally good at" or not. Post course beliefs posit effective teaching as a learnable, improvable practice, supported by deliberate experimentation, feedback from students, and engagement with evidence. This reconceptualization underpins teaching agency; if teaching is learnable, participants can take deliberate action to improve, rather than relying solely on personality or imitating role models (Bandura, 2001).

Implications for practice and research

For educational developers this study suggests several practical implications for how we design courses and conduct research on our impact:

Make inherited models of teaching explicit: Early in a course, invite participants to surface and examine their "teach as you were taught" assumptions; return to these periodically using structured prompts (e.g., how is this teaching different from what you have experienced as a student or a teacher?); end the course with reflection.

Design for conceptual change, not just skill acquisition: Trigger meaningful cognitive conflict at the start of a teaching course, for example, with concerning evidence about student learning or dropout rates. Preconceptions of appropriate university teaching are personal, deeply anchored, and resistant to change (Ilie et al., 2020). Productive disruption is a useful way to motivate instructors to see for themselves the value in adopting evidence-based teaching practices and student-centered epistemological beliefs (Ho, 2000).

Use simple, well-structured prompts: The "I used to think…, now I think…" format is easy to implement, deepens reflection, and yields useful evidence of the impact of educational development work impact beyond satisfaction surveys.

This research underscores the value of treating educational development courses as sites of conceptual change and agency-building, especially for early-career academics in STEM who are entering teaching with powerful but often unexamined inherited models.

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Rethinking support for novice academics: Evidence-informed principles for lasting change

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Abstract

Supporting novice academics has become an institutional priority amid generational transitions and growing expectations for research-informed university teaching. This paper examines how higher education institutions can design effective academic development. Drawing on findings from a qualitative case study at a large European university, the contribution synthesises perspectives from early-career academics and members of the institutional development unit to identify what makes support meaningful, transferable, and legitimate. Results highlight the importance of aligning formal training with disciplinary realities, fostering informal and collegial networks, and developing coherent, long-term pathways instead of isolated training activities. Crucially, the study shows that institutional culture and local leadership shape whether novice academics perceive development as valuable. Based on these insights, the paper proposes ten evidence-informed principles to strengthen institutional support strategies, emphasising contextualisation, cultural change, credible guidance, and opportunities for collaborative learning. These principles offer universities a research-informed foundation for enhancing academic development practices and responding to emerging policy requirements for novice academic training.

Keywords: Academic development, novice academics, institutional change, development support

Extended Summary

Aim of the paper

This paper explores how universities can create effective academic development (AD) strategies for novice academics by drawing on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). The aim is to provide research-informed, practical guidance for institutions facing generational renewal and increasing expectations regarding pedagogical competence. Many novice academics enter university roles with solid disciplinary training but limited preparation for teaching, mentoring or balancing multiple academic responsibilities (Sánchez & Mayor, 2006). When considering that European universities are undergoing a generational transition, the need to provide systematic training for novice academic staff becomes increasingly urgent (European Commission, 2018).

Theoretical framework

The theoretical foundation of this paper is grounded in SoTL and contemporary conceptualisations of academic development. Following Boyer (2016), SoTL frames academic practice as an integrated activity involving research, teaching, and scholarly engagement. This broad understanding of academic work underpins the need for support structures that enhance not only pedagogical knowledge but also academic identity.

Within the field of AD, the literature consistently highlights that effective development requires multi-level engagement (Williams et al., 2013). Individual change is necessary but insufficient; meaningful development also depends on departmental cultures, collegial networks, and institutional policies. Groccia (2010) emphasise that academic roles emerge from the interaction between personal trajectories and organisational expectations. Consequently, AD strategies must align institutional goals with the lived realities of academic work.

A second relevant theoretical dimension concerns the limits of generic pedagogical training. Healey and Jenkins (2003) argue that discipline-based development provides a more meaningful foundation for pedagogical transformation, as teaching is inevitably shaped by disciplinary practices. Numerous studies show that novice academics perceive training as valuable only when it is transferable to their contexts (Nowell et al., 2020). This supports the idea that AD strategies should balance foundational pedagogical principles with discipline-specific application.

The literature also highlights the importance of informal development. The work of Roxå and Mårtensson (2009) shows that significant conversations within trusted relationships profoundly shape teaching conceptions and practices. Informal collegial interactions often exert greater influence than formal workshops, especially in early-career stages. Nevertheless, fostering informal spaces for academic development requires effective leadership. Mårtensson and Roxå (2016) demonstrate that local leaders play a crucial role in legitimising development efforts, translating institutional expectations, and nurturing collaborative cultures.

Workload, time pressure, and competing demands are also central elements in AD theory. Webb (2019) argues that structural constraints often prevent academics from engaging meaningfully in development activities, reducing their perceived value. This indicates that AD strategies must address not only pedagogical content but also the organisational conditions that enable participation and recognition.

Findings and outcomes

The study draws on a qualitative case at a large public university, using interviews with novice academics and a discussion group with development staff to illuminate key challenges and support needs. Findings show that isolated

training activities do not lead to meaningful improvement. Novices valued formal courses only when the content was clearly applicable to their disciplinary and teaching contexts, while generic training was often perceived as disconnected from everyday practice. They also called for coherent developmental pathways instead of loosely connected workshops.

Informal support emerged as equally, if not more, important. Collegial networks, peer dialogue and interactions with experienced colleagues provided practical guidance and reassurance, helping novices interpret institutional expectations and navigate daily demands. Yet access to such networks was uneven, particularly for those without prior links to the institution.

Local leadership proved crucial. Respected departmental figures play a key role in legitimising development initiatives and translating institutional objectives into discipline-specific practices. Where such leadership was lacking, novices often felt isolated and uncertain about how to engage with development opportunities.

Finally, workload pressures significantly constrained participation in development. Heavy teaching duties, administrative tasks and research expectations limited novices' availability. Institutions must therefore design support strategies that recognise these structural barriers and offer mechanisms such as protected time, incentives or formal recognition for engagement.

Building on these results and on the theoretical framework presented, the paper proposes ten principles for strengthening academic development support for novice academics: fostering cultural change; engaging multiple institutional levels; ensuring accessible guidance; offering coherent developmental pathways; legitimising training through evidence; cultivating local leadership; emphasising contextual transferability; balancing general pedagogical principles with discipline-specific needs; providing incentives; and ensuring clear, accessible communication about support opportunities.

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Department-Driven Educational Development: Insights from Campus Listening Tours

Matthew Mahavongtrakul

Abstract

Universities increasingly recognize that effective educational development requires moving beyond one-size-fits-all approaches to address the diverse pedagogical needs of academic disciplines. We present a case study from the University of California, Irvine's Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation, which conducted a series of departmental listening tours across nearly twenty academic units to better understand localized teaching challenges and support needs. We provided a semi-structured mechanism through which departments engaged directly with educational developers to articulate various priorities such as artificial intelligence, large class instruction, instructional technology, peer evaluation of teaching, and accessibility. The resulting insights shaped a strategic shift toward department-centered faculty development, including the launch of new discipline-specific programming, expanded resource hubs, cross-campus collaborations, and low-to-high-touch initiatives such as the Peer Alliance for Classroom Excellence (PACE) which focuses on faculty community building and peer observation. We share the methods used in the listening tours, key thematic findings, and implications for academic developers seeking to deepen relationships with departments, highlighting our case as a collaborative model for change agency. Attendees will gain a practical framework for employing listening-driven approaches that foster departmental agency, align development initiatives with curricular design, and strengthen partnerships across campus.

Keywords: Curricular alignment, sustainable organizational learning, listening tours, department partnerships

Extended Summary

Aim: We demonstrate how a structured departmental listening tour process can strengthen the alignment between educational development offerings and the pedagogical needs of academic units. We encourage departments to serve as co-designers of faculty development initiatives instead of simply participants.

Theoretical/Methodological Framework

The work is informed by literature on discipline-specific teaching and learning, relational- and partnership-based academic development, and organizational change in higher education. For example:

- Academic development as partnership and relational practice
- Disciplinary variations in teaching and learning
- Change agency and localized pedagogical innovation Methodologically, we used a 4-step semi-structured departmental consultation model consisting of:

    1. A short program introduction 2. Guided prompts on teaching challenges and support needs 3. Documented themes shared back with departments 4. Analysis to inform strategic action

Key Findings / Outcomes

We identified the following themes and requests across nearly 20 departments:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Generative AI guidelines and training, course redesign support, discipline-specific assessment alternatives.
- Class Size and Instructional Support - Handling reduced teaching assistant capacity, facilitating active learning in large classes, and using undergraduate peer instruction.
- Learning Management Systems (LMS) - More LMS training, clarity on XXXX and campus instructional technology (IT) roles, consistent LMS templates.
- Peer Observations - Structured protocols, alternatives to student evaluations.
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Support - Accessible course design related to new laws and demographic awareness data.
- Additional Instructional Support - Flexible workshops, onboarding resources, drop-in instructional consultations, just-in-time resources, collaboration with Professors of Teaching.

To respond to these conversations, we:

- Supported and facilitated the XXXX IMPACT (Innovative Methods for Pedagogical AI Course Transformation) Program - a competitive course transformation program aimed at intentional incorporation of AI into course design. In addition, we hosted numerous discipline-specific AI teaching events based on the topics brought up in the listening tours. We are currently constructing a GenAI Faculty Resource Hub which will include syllabus templates, AI use cases, assessment alternatives, and updated policies and procedures.
- Created the first campus-wide training for graders, in collaboration with the [Writing Center]. This training introduces the position and specialized training in grading different assignment types, different learning and teaching technologies, communication, and professionalism. We are currently developing enhanced peer

learning resource guides and constructing toolkits for large classroom instruction with engagement strategies and campus showcases.

- Facilitated LMS workshops, expanded our partnership with our IT department, and developed and released updated LMS templates.
- Launched a peer observation community of practice with an updated observation protocol. This community of practice aims to promote student success, adapt to the ever-evolving educational landscape, connect faculty from across campus as well as within departments, and expand upon teaching practices by providing a space for structured peer feedback and pedagogical exploration.
- Developed a teaching accessibility guide to further support learners with disabilities. We also established the Digital Accessibility Support and Help team with the aim of supporting faculty through one-on-one consultations, monthly accessibility newsletter, and hands-on accessibility sessions to guide faculty and graduate students in making their digital material more accessible.
- Expanded pedagogical support by launching a quick start guide for new instructors, adding pedagogical programming to the summer schedule, and offering additional drop-in hours with our staff.

Significance & Implications

This work contributes to academic development by demonstrating a model that enhances departmental agency in faculty development decision-making, encourages discipline-aware educational support in addition to broad basic pedagogical programming, builds and sustains partnerships between educational developers and departments, and positions educational developers as collaborative change agents with departments.
The implications of this model extend to both practice and policy. In practice, this model demonstrates adaptive consultation protocols that can be extended to other centers for teaching and learning. In policy, this model recognizes the need to connect with departments to position priorities appropriately with strategic pedagogical initiatives.

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Papers 21

Evidence-informed pedagogical decision-making and epistemic agency in higher education.

Ángela Marcela Ríos Delgado

Abstract

Higher education has undergone transformations that require new skills from teachers, including evidence-based pedagogical decision-making and the development of epistemic agency that allows them to act with professional judgment. This paper, based on a documentary review, analyzes conceptual and empirical frameworks that allow us to understand the relationship between evidence-informed educational practice (EIP), teacher epistemic agency, research skills, and knowledge mobilization (KMb). The review shows that, although these approaches have been widely developed in European contexts, there are still few studies that address their articulation in Latin America. Furthermore, even in systems where EIP has made more progress, gaps between theory and its application in teaching persist. The findings indicate that EIP is an interpretive and situated process, whose appropriation depends both on the capacities of teachers and on the organizational conditions that allow for the critical use of evidence. These elements justify moving towards training models that integrate professional reflection, the use of evidence, and research skills to strengthen university teaching practice.

Keywords: Evidence-Informed Practice, Epistemic Agency, Teaching Competencies, Knowledge Mobilization.

Extended Summary

Introduction

Higher education has undergone transformations in which lifelong learning, intellectual capital, and the ability to identify, produce, transform, and use information have become central pillars of development. In this scenario, university teaching is no longer understood as a technical exercise but is recognized as a practice based on knowledge, evidence, and reflection.

The purpose of this study was to analyze how evidence-informed practice (EIP) contributes to teaching that integrates knowledge, judgment, and systematic reflection, shaping teaching as an epistemic practice in which evidence becomes a resource for interpreting, validating, and producing new knowledge. Within this framework, the following question was posed: How does the use of evidence relate to the ability of teachers to interpret, generate, and apply knowledge in the context of higher education?

Initially, the analysis focused on EIP as the central axis, but during the review, new complementary frameworks were integrated: epistemic agency, knowledge mobilization (KMb), and research skills. These frameworks broadened the study's understanding by offering a deeper insight into teacher training and professional development, proposing an integrated understanding of how these frameworks can guide both teacher professional development and policies to strengthen higher education.

Theoretical framework and methodological approach Teaching practice cannot be understood solely as the application of methods, but rather as a reflective, ethical, and situated process in which EIP represents a significant epistemological shift from understanding evidence as a universal formula to considering it an interpretive resource that guides professional deliberation and pedagogical judgment. In this way, EIP is consolidated as a path to teacher professionalization (Ion et al., 2024), promoting decisions based on the critical integration of scientific, practical, and contextual knowledge. This approach places research as an integral part of teaching and promotes the strengthening of research skills and professional autonomy (Diery et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2017).

In this process, epistemic agency acts as a bridge between EIP and these competencies, explaining how teachers interpret, generate, and mobilize knowledge in their practice, connecting evidence with professional judgment (Resnick & Yifat Ben, 2025). From this perspective, KMb broadens the understanding of EIP by analyzing how evidence is shared and transformed into useful knowledge within communities (Perines, 2017). The articulation between EIP, epistemic agency, and KMb forms a collaborative ecosystem that strengthens teacher professionalization and positions teaching as a reflective epistemic practice.

This review was conducted through an iterative process that combined conceptual expansion with the review of citations from consulted articles. Initially, terms such as Evidence-Based Practice (EBP), Evidence-Informed Practice (EIP), and epistemic agency were explored through Scopus, ERIC, and Google Scholar. Given the limited output associated with higher education, new words were used: Knowledge Mobilization (KMb), research skills, use of evidence, and Scholarship of Teaching and

Learning (SoTL), identifying conceptual frameworks transferable to the university setting. Twenty-eight studies published between 2017 and 2025 were analyzed, selected for their relationship to evidence, teaching agency, and professionalization, including some previous texts that provided important theoretical foundations.

Main findings The findings allowed us to understand university teaching as a reflective epistemic practice, based on the critical interpretation of evidence and the co-construction of knowledge. The integration of the approaches of EIP, epistemic agency, KMb, SoTL, and research skills forms a conceptual framework that drives the transition from a technical epistemology to evidence-based teaching.

This review highlights the need to develop faculty members' abilities to investigate, interpret, and mobilize knowledge as part of their professional development, and to promote institutional policies that encourage pedagogical research, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the sustainability of evidence-based initiatives.

Theoretical and educational relevance The results show that university teaching is oriented towards reflective professionalism, where decision-making requires the integration of multiple sources of evidence. However, tensions persist between institutional discourse and the actual use of evidence, conditioned by a lack of time, support, and structures for mobilizing knowledge EIP is reaffirmed as an interpretive and contextual process, mediated by professional judgment, while epistemic agency and KMb explain how evidence circulates and becomes meaningful to teachers (Perines, 2017). Overall, this review highlights the need to strengthen faculty research skills, consolidate institutional ecosystems that promote the circulation of knowledge, and foster collaborative cultures that legitimize the critical use of evidence in higher education. It also recognizes the importance of characterizing the conditions, practices, and mediations that enable university faculty to appropriate and use evidence, in order to understand how their epistemic agency is configured and how it contributes to the professionalization and transformation of teaching.

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Integrating to transform: University professors perceptions of teaching and research

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Abstract

This study analyzes how university teachers understand the integration between teaching and research, with an emphasis on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) approach, in the context of Chilean higher education. A qualitative methodology based on an interpretive phenomenological paradigm was used, through semi-structured interviews with twelve academics with experience in university teaching and participation in educational research. Content analysis and reflective thematic analysis identified two central dimensions: pedagogical practices and approaches, and teaching research and development. The findings reveal tensions between traditional models focused on knowledge transmission and innovative practices that promote critical reflection, active participation, and situated learning. Participants also recognize that researching their own teaching promotes the improvement of pedagogical practices, allows for the identification of emerging issues, and contributes to academic professional development. However, they note limited institutionalization of teaching research, low circulation of results, and little impact on curricular decision-making. The study concludes that integrating teaching and research strengthens the quality of teaching and contributes to the consolidation of more reflective academic communities. It highlights the need for institutional policies that recognize SoTL as a legitimate component of the academic career and promote conditions that allow for the systematic and sustainable linking of educational research with university training processes.

Keywords: University teaching; Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL); Academic development; Teaching practices

Extended Summary

The objective of this article is to analyze university teachers' perceptions of the integration between teaching and research, with special emphasis on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) approach, in the context of Chilean higher education. The study seeks to understand the meanings that teachers attribute to this relationship, how research on their own practice contributes to improving educational processes, and the institutional conditions that influence the articulation between both functions. Through this analysis, the aim is to generate relevant evidence to guide policies and practices that strengthen the academic development of university faculty and promote a teaching culture based on reflection and continuous improvement supported by evidence. International literature has highlighted that the integration of teaching and research is an essential component of contemporary university work, given its potential to improve student learning and strengthen the academic identity of faculty (Anderson et al., 2020; Galvis, 2018). Various strategies are recognized to achieve this integration, including the incorporation of research in the classroom, student participation in inquiry projects, and the expansion of the concept of academic specialization to include pedagogical research (Juuti et al., 2021).

The study was conducted using an interpretive phenomenological paradigm, aimed at exploring in depth the meanings that teachers attribute to the relationship between teaching and research (Flick, 2018). A qualitative methodology was used, based on semi-structured interviews with twelve university teachers from the faculties of education, health, and basic sciences. The participants had at least five years of teaching experience and participation in educational research processes. The interviews, each lasting approximately sixty minutes, were transcribed in full and subjected to content analysis (Bengtsson, 2016) and reflective thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The analytical procedure included open, axial, and selective coding processes, as well as the grouping of codes into units of meaning and thematic categories. Triangulation between reviewers strengthened interpretive reliability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). All procedures followed ethical principles of informed consent, confidentiality, and institutional approval.

Regarding the key findings of this study, the analysis revealed two main categories: Pedagogical practices and approaches, and Teaching research and development. The first category describes the coexistence of traditional practices focused on knowledge transfer and innovative approaches oriented toward active learning, critical reflection, and student autonomy. Some teachers report persistent resistance to participatory methodologies and the presence of hierarchical logics that maintain the teacher as the central figure in the educational process. Others describe practices based on problems, simulations, and applied projects that promote a more active student role. This diversity is also related to the teachers' educational background: teachers from non-pedagogical disciplines recognize the need to develop teaching skills, which coincides with studies that emphasize the importance of professional development for teachers in improving university teaching (Melo & Campos, 2019; Ödalen et al., 2019). The second category shows that teachers value research on their own practice as a mechanism for identifying educational problems, generating evidence-based improvement strategies, and better understanding learning processes. However, they note a weak institutionalization of teaching research, pointing to limited opportunities to disseminate findings, limited incorporation of these results into curricular decisions, and low institutional visibility of pedagogical work (Smith, 2019). This situation contrasts with the principles promoted by SoTL, which emphasize the public, community-based, and transformative nature of teaching scholarship (Chick, 2023; Trigwell, 2021).

The theoretical and educational importance and implications of this study lie in the fact that it provides significant evidence of the relevance of integrating teaching and research in order to strengthen educational quality and professionalize the academic role. Educationally, the results show that research in teaching allows for innovation in classroom practices, improves student learning, and consolidates more collaborative academic communities. In institutional terms, the importance of establishing policies that formally recognize teaching research as part of the academic career, promote continuous training in university pedagogy, and enable systematic spaces for sharing and discussing results is highlighted. To move in this direction, it is recommended to strengthen the structures that allow for the integration of research and pedagogical practice and to design academic development programs based on SoTL that promote teaching innovation. Future research should explore the institutional and student perspectives, as well as the factors that facilitate the transfer of pedagogical findings to curricular decision-making.

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Where Design-Based Research fosters Experience-Based Learning: rethinking learner agency in the AI era

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Abstract

Aim: This presentation appraises the development of student agency through the prism of two articulated theoretical and methodological approaches: Design-Based Research (DBR) and Experience-Based Learning (EBL). Whilst receiving individual attention in the research literature, few studies have investigated the combined benefits, or otherwise, of these approaches. More precisely, this study has two specific objectives: (1) to investigate the expectation of IT learners prior to taking internship and compare it with their perception after taking the internship and (2) to explore the evolution of learners' experience using both collective intelligence and AI to assess their competence acquisition. Theoretical Framework: Guided by the agentic engagement theory and Matusov et al. (2016) four conceptual frameworks of approaching student agency in educational studies, we propose the following research question: How do higher education learners manifest agency using both collective intelligence and AI-assisted learning environments? Methodology: This study combines qualitative and quantitative research methods to further our understanding of the evolution of agency. Findings: The findings suggest that the combination of DBR and EBL, enhanced by AI, complement each other to help embrace both student and teacher agency. Implications: This study highlights the importance for institutions to implement training programmes to help both teachers and staff to foster better use of AI in course design. Universities should issue AI policies to help faculty make informed decisions about how AI is introduced and used in teaching and assessment to foster student engagement and agency.

Keywords: Higher Education, Design-Based Research, Artificial Intelligence, Learning.

Extended Summary

AI-enhanced assessment is increasingly being used to scaffold learning activities (e.g., automated real-time feedback). While the prevailing view is that these technologies generally foster student learning, their impact on learners' agency is under-explored. This presentation appraises the development of a course through the prism of two articulated theoretical and methodological approaches: Design-Based Research (DBR) (Wang & Hannafin, 2005) and Experience-Based Learning (EBL) (Andresen, Boud & Cohen, 2000). Whilst receiving individual attention in the research literature, few studies have investigated the combined benefits, or otherwise, of these approaches. In their research, Matusov et al. (2016) mapped four conceptual frameworks of approaching student agency: instrumental agency which refers to human mastery of skills and dispositions to achieve predefined goals, effortful agency which reflects the ability to act and overcome internal and external resistance, emphasizing and engagement to achieve goals, dynamically emergent agency which emerges from complex, interconnected processes involving human and nonhuman elements, and authorial agency which reflects the individuals' ability to define their own path. Guided by Matusov et al. works (2016), we propose the following research question: How do higher education learners manifest agency using both collective intelligence (CI) and AI-assisted learning environments? In the context of AI-assisted learning, we adopt the instrumental agency perspective because it foregrounds the learner's capacity to develop and assess skills and knowledge developed despite the convenience offered by GenAI tools. We also adopt the dynamically emergent agency since it reflects the interconnected processes our experience captured during a CI activity we designed during this course.

Based on a pilot study involving combined qualitative and quantitative analysis, preliminary results indicate an evolution towards a transformation of professional posture and practice which helped provide student-centred content, thereby fostering further student agency in both reflection and learning through experience. Using both low-tech and high-tech environments, we chose to conduct this experiment in three iterations in a training course, working with 43 students who completed IT internships. A first group of students underwent to a CI session (Casebourne et al., 2025), then used genAI to produce the same assessment, to compare their findings. Another group of students was asked to conduct the converse approach (GenAI then CI). More precisely, the CI was ideal for experience-based learning because the learners were asked to reflect collectively on their expectations and learning experience. They were then asked to share it collectively through a poster. The GenAI was conducted individually for the students and were asked to prompt accurately to fill in their assessment.

The order to assess IT competencies, we designed a questionnaire adapted from Toader & Bard (2015) who found several factors of influence. They can be split into three competency categories: Methodical Factors, Personal-Social Factors and Strategic-Organizational Factors. There are 18 secondary indicators that are used to define the key performance indicators and that are needed to assess the IT competencies. In table 1 below, we present the factors of influence and the competency categories.

Table 1. Grouping factors of influence in competency categories

Main factors	Secondary factors
Methodical Factors	Knowledge of applied PM methods
	Technical analysis of information
	Automation and information of working process
	Evaluation, review and quality assurance of work
	Implementation of maintenance techniques
Personal-Social Factors	Teamwork
	Creativity
	Vigilance
	Efficiency
	Motivation
	Ethics
	Stress resistance
Strategic-Organizational Factors	Permanent organization
	Health, security, safety and environment
	Respect of work methods and procedures

We chose to conduct a thematic content analysis of AI assessment as well as the posters we collected after the CI session. The content analysis approach adopted is that of guided content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). In this type of content analysis, codes or categories are defined before and during data analysis. These codes/categories are identified based on theory and significant findings from the field survey. The preliminary results of this ongoing research summarized in table 2 below show that although AI offered immediate and personalized feedback enhanced learners' agency and helped them become actors of their own learning, it fails at skills assessment. For instance, for more than 20 students, it did not adequately reflect their experiences. The data gathered helped show that teachers often focus more on results rather than learning processes.

Table 2. Grouping factors of influence in competency categories

Iteration	**Key Findings**
Collective Intelligence (CI)	• CI provided room for collective knowledge-building • Collaborative environment made learners interact and identify skills they had not identified individually.
Questionnaire	• Learners identified the sources and resources of agency in throughout the questionnaire • Identifying the skills they acquired or developed during their internship • The questionnaire was designed to help learners reflect on their experiences, skills gained, and career goals, supporting self-awareness and agency.
Artificial Intelligence usage (AI)	• AI provided time-saving assessment as well as structured feedback tailored to the learners' needs • AI provided irrelevant responses which required critical reflection and analysis • The use of AI raises privacy and ethical concerns, especially regarding how personal data is used by AI: learners had to anonymize their work before submitting it to AI • Some challenges pertaining to human interaction cannot be assessed by AI and are, therefore, beyond the AI' s capability
The iterative process provided a great experience for students to learn how to reflect upon the skills they developed during their internship. The hybrid IC-IA design help them engage in assessment and reflection on their work, which enhanced their critical thinking and agency.	

The results show that the use of AI fostered collaborative processes during the CI activity. Also, the combination of DBR and EBL, enhanced by AI, complement each other to help embrace both student and teacher agency in higher education. Our study shows raises concerns about how AI can change teaching content and reflects the importance of

adapting teaching practice to foster learner agency. When embedded within carefully designed collaborative frameworks, AI can support teaching and learning.

Our study finally raises concerns about ethics and the preparedness of teachers and higher education institutions. It also highlights the importance for institutions to implement training programmes to help both teachers and staff to foster better use of AI in course design (OECD, 2025). Universities should issue AI policies to help faculty make informed decisions about how AI is introduced and used in teaching and assessment to foster student engagement and agency.

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University Teachers' Perceptions of Scholarly Teaching: Challenges and Enablers

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Abstract

Amid growing attention for teaching quality in higher education, academic development programs can play a pivotal role in strengthening academics' teaching. Yet the connection between educational research and everyday teaching practice remains limited. This study examines how university teachers perceive engagement with educational research, i.e. scholarly teaching, and identifies the factors that hinder and enable their engagement. University teachers' perception is conceptualized in terms of a 'researcherly disposition' structured around three dimensions: affective (attitude), cognitive (perceived challenges), and behavioural (engagement). We surveyed 126 teachers across six faculties at a Dutch research-intensive university using 28 validated items. Analyses comprised descriptive statistics, MANOVAs/ANOVAs with Tukey HSD, and factor analysis of 14 challenge items. Attitudes were positive, but engagement typically occurred less than 2–4 times per year, with competing priorities widely reported. Factor analysis replicated three challenge types: general, knowledge-related, and resource-related, with resource constraints (e.g., lack of time; overseeing the number of publications) most prevalent. Differences appeared by faculty, University Teaching Qualification status, and teaching experience. These findings suggest coordinated institutional measures to strengthen scholarly teaching by supporting teachers' engagement with educational research, thereby helping close the research–practice gap and improve teaching quality.

Keywords: Scholarly teaching, Evidence-informed teaching, Academic development, Teaching quality, University teaching

Extended Summary

Introduction and aim of the study

Amid growing attention for teaching quality in higher education, teaching development programs can play a pivotal role in strengthening academics' teaching (Patfield et al., 2025). Although the value of an evidence-informed approach to teaching, i.e. scholarly teaching, is increasingly acknowledged, the connection between educational research and everyday teaching practice remains limited (Geertsema, 2016). Scholarly teaching generally refers to university teachers engaging with educational research with the aim to influence both teaching activities and the resulting learning (Potter & Kustra, 2011). This study examines how university teachers perceive scholarly teaching and identifies the factors that hinder and enable their engagement with educational research.

Theoretical framework

Research in higher education has shown that integrating educational research into teaching practice enhances students' learning experience (Goradia et al., 2023). However, even when scholarly teaching practices are adopted by teachers, change is often not sustained (Jollands et al., 2023), which indicates attention is needed for practical barriers university teachers face. Hindering aspects may be explained by teachers' negative attitudes, a lack of relevant skills regarding understanding and evaluation of research, and a lack of time and institutional support (Georgiou et al., 2023; Shepard et al., 2020). If academic development aims to promote the use of educational research in higher education teaching to improve teaching quality, understanding teachers' perspectives is a crucial first step. To conceptualize teachers' perceptions of integrating educational research, we adopt Tack et al.'s (2023) method of 'researcherly disposition' focusing on three dimensions: affective (attitude), cognitive (perceived challenges), and behavioural (engagement). The research questions are:

1. What are university teachers' perceptions towards scholarly teaching?

2. What challenges and enablers do university teachers experience in engaging with educational research?

3. How do university teachers with different types of experience in higher education differ in their attitudes, challenges and uses of educational research?

Method

To explore these perceptions and group differences, we conducted an online survey among 126 university teachers from six faculties at a Dutch research-intensive university. The questionnaire contained 28 items across four validated constructs (Diery et al., 2020) measuring attitudes, challenges, engagement, and purpose of engagement, plus two open questions: on biggest challenges and enablers. Independent variables were faculty, function profile, years of higher-education teaching experience, and possession of a basic University Teaching Qualification (UTQ). Items were rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "I totally disagree", to 6, "I fully agree". The questionnaire was piloted with teachers, and expert review was conducted to assess and strengthen its construct validity. We computed descriptive statistics for attitudes, challenges, and engagement with educational research; and tested group differences using MANOVAs and follow-up ANOVAs with Tukey HSD post-hoc tests. Also, a factor analysis was conducted on the 14 'challenge' items.

Key findings

Overall attitudes were positive: 95% saw engaging with educational research as beneficial, 82% as indispensable, and 89% said their teacher knowledge should be based on educational research. Overall engagement was less than 2-4 times per year, although 96% agreed to engage with the purpose to improve teaching, and 90% to base decisions on empirical evidence. Yet 82% reported other priorities that limit integration. Descriptive statistics on 14 challenge items did not show whether these form distinct dimensions, so we ran a factor analysis to reveal the latent structure and determine how teachers cluster challenges. A factor analysis replicated the three-factor structure reported by Diery et al. (2020), yielding the factors general, knowledge-related, and resource-related. This cross-disciplinary replication suggests that these challenge types form an applicable framework for teacher support. 84% of the university teachers reported resource-related challenges, aligning with open-ended responses on “lack of time” and “overseeing the number of publications”. Also, differences emerged: Social & Behavioural Sciences respondents reported fewer knowledge-related and resource-related challenges than other faculties. UTQ-holders reported more general challenges than non-holders and university teachers with >10 years teaching experience more than with <10 years teaching experience.

Implications

These findings suggest coordinated institutional measures are needed to support university teachers’ engagement with educational research. To enable university teachers to engage with educational research, universities should foster cross-faculty communities of practice and journal clubs; train academics to find, appraise, and apply educational research and leverage digital libraries for accessible and reliable summaries on educational research; and reserve time and align promotion to value teaching as well as research. Implemented as coordinated teaching development, they help close the research-practice gap and improve teaching quality.

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Current developments in university teaching research in Chile: achievements and challenges

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Abstract

This article characterizes the level of development of Research in Teaching in Higher Education (IDES) in Chilean universities, with the aim of identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. A quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional approach is adopted, based on a survey conducted between October 2024 and April 2025 among managers and professionals from teaching development and educational innovation centers at 31 universities belonging to the Network of Teaching Support Centers (REDCAD), achieving 96.9% coverage.The results show significant progress in the institutionalization of IDES. Seventy-one percent of institutions have centralized units. Many have been in operation for more than five years. Approaches such as the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and action research predominate. The primary support actions include competitive funding, training opportunities, and academic evaluation mechanisms. However, challenges remain associated with a lack of time, resources, research skills, and institutional recognition.It is concluded that while favorable institutional conditions exist, it is key to strengthen the participation of academic and student actors, consolidating communities of practice, and positioning IDES as a strategic axis for improving learning and academic development.

Keywords: Research in University Teaching, Teaching Centers, Student Learning, Academic Development, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Extended Summary

The aim of the paper

The objective of this research is to characterize the level of development of teaching research in higher education (IDES) in Chilean universities in order to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in this area. The study seeks to understand how institutions have developed capacities and spaces for agency to promote IDES as an approach that enables academic development and improvement in student learning.

The theoretical framework and/or methodological approach

Research in Higher Education Teaching is understood as an approach to inquiry into teaching and learning that seeks to improve pedagogical practice and contribute to student learning. One of the most prominent approaches has been the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), characterized by its student orientation and methodological rigor (Felten, 2013; Chick et al., 2025; Jérez et al., 2025).

This research adopted a quantitative methodological approach through a descriptive cross-sectional design, appropriate for characterizing a known phenomenon, between October 2024 and April 2025 (Lim, 2025). The survey collected systematic information from institutions. Convenience sampling was implemented, targeting the 32 member institutions of the Network of Teaching Support Centers (REDCAD, n.d.), achieving 96.9% coverage (31 institutions). Respondents were directors, heads, or coordinators of teacher development centers, educational innovation centers, or equivalent units.

Outcomes

The results reveal significant progress in the institutionalization of IDES in Chile. Seventy-one percent of institutions (22 out of 31) have centralized teaching research units, and 64% have been in place for five or more years, demonstrating a sustained commitment. These units are mainly established by the Vice-Rector's Office for Academic and Undergraduate Affairs, reflecting their strategic importance. Thirty-nine percent develop initiatives in faculties such as Engineering, Sciences, and Medicine, indicating an expansion of the field.

HEIs have adopted various approaches, notably SoTL (32%) and action research (27%). Support actions include competitive research funds (86%), training workshops (77%), academic outreach events (64%), academic career assessment (59%), and publication incentives (55%). Forty-five percent offer diploma courses, and 36% have academic journals, creating a robust support ecosystem.

However, significant challenges remain. Teams emphasize the need to develop research skills among teaching staff (91%), the lack of time to implement IDES (82%), insufficient financial resources, and an imbalance of incentives between disciplinary research and IDES (both at 64%). Other challenges include a lack of awareness or coordination of initiatives (50%), the evaluation process in ethics committees (45.5%); and a lack of institutional recognition (45.5%).

Fifty-five percent of the units have four or more full-time staff, and 59% have permanent staff. However, 82% indicate that only between 1 and 3 people support or conduct teaching research, showing that there are few human resources for this task. Fifty-five percent do not have academics on their team, relying instead on administrative professionals (95% are between 1 and 7). This can limit research output and academic recognition.

Respondents are classified as Promoters, Passive, or Detractors. The results reveal a worrying gap, as only 32% are classified as Promoters who believe that IDES has been relevant to the institution, while 41% are classified as Detractors. With regard to “Research in university teaching has had practical value for the institution's professors,” Detractors reach 41% and, in the case of students, 50%. This perception deepens when asked if students have played a fundamental role in IDES (Detractors reach 59%). Fifty percent position themselves as detractors when all professors at the institution are expected to conduct teaching and research. These data reveal a gap between institutional development and team perceptions, indicating a disconnect between the existing nfrastructure and the perceived impact.

The theoretical and educational significance of the work

IDES faces the challenge of advancing its institutionalization with the involvement of teaching innovation and development centers, together with teachers and students, to improve teaching quality.

Institutions have demonstrated the capacity to incorporate conceptualizations such as SoTL. Communities of practice can create opportunities for research, peer training, and increase the number of staff involved. The results show that the absence of academics and the concentration of a few professionals can affect academic productivity.

It is crucial to strengthen the participation of key actors in the teaching-learning process and in IDES. Only 32% consider that research has practical value for the teaching staff, while 14% point to significant student participation. This low perception represents an opportunity to generate initiatives that promote the participation of the educational community in institutions. In this context, research collaboration will be essential, bringing together students and teachers, formally recognizing these contributions, and creating the necessary spaces.

In conclusion, Chilean institutions have made significant progress in IDES, highlighting research funding, training opportunities, the value of academic careers, and opportunities for dissemination. However, challenges remain in terms of people, time, financial resources, and skills. Addressing these gaps will enable IDES to be positioned as an important element for educational transformation.

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Papers 22

Students as 'Stormers': Taking action on the climate crisis during undergraduate studies

Jenny Scoles, Mark Huxham, Eilidh Robb, James Fawkes, Rory Sutherland, Bailea Will, Kira Pearson, Srinivasan Shanmugam

Abstract

In this paper, a group of staff and students present an account of co-research, which explores undergraduate students' experiences of interdisciplinary learning and teaching at programme level. Adopting a collaborative ethnographic lens helped this staff-student partnership create a collegial research space to make sense of qualitative data collected during the students' first and second years in a new undergraduate programme, MA Interdisciplinary Futures. The purpose of the paper is twofold: to offer insight into the student as co-researcher methodological process, detailing the steps taken to manage common tensions in achieving an authentic partnership; and, through a reflexive thematic analysis, to highlight three vignettes that show how students experienced an interdisciplinary curriculum design in practice, and how they began to 'trust the process' of nontraditional teaching methods. The findings highlight how academic developers can support student-staff co-researcher partnerships in which students gain agency and voice to influence curriculum design in interdisciplinary learning and teaching.

Keywords: interdisciplinary learning and teaching; co-research; student-staff partnership; collaborative ethnography

Extended Summary

Students as partners in co-research is a powerful, yet often under-utilised, approach to engage and empower students (and staff) in transformative learning experiences (Healy and Jenkins, 2009). In this paper, we present an account of students as co-researchers who joined a research project exploring undergraduate students' experiences of interdisciplinary learning and teaching (IDLT) at programme level. IDLT has been steadily growing as a pedagogical approach to address complex, real-world or wicked problems (Latucca et al, 2004; Power & Handley, 2019). However, the majority of IDLT is designed for a modular rather than programme level, and there is an extant gap in the literature about students' experiences of IDLT (Turner et al, 2024).

This paper was inspired by data collected from a funded research project, 'Crossing the Line' (Overend et al, 2024), which explored IDLT in a new MA Interdisciplinary Futures undergraduate programme. [Name redacted] - an academic developer - became part of this interdisciplinary research team in 2023-24 when she was seconded to design and teach on the programme, while [name redacted] was hired as the project research assistant. We became increasingly curious to explore if our academic ideals of IDLT that we had designed into the programme were being realised and experienced in their intended ways during the day-to-day practices in (and out) of the classroom. To explore this question, we designed a longitudinal study to follow the original cohort of undergraduate students (n=36) through their four-year programme and into employment (2023-2028). Nine students volunteered to participate and, with ethical consent, agreed to us recording their experiences, perspectives and potentially shifting conceptualisations around IDLT through qualitative data collection methods.

At the end of Year 2, [name redacted], a participant, expressed frustration that the students were being talked 'about' in this research project as subjects rather than being part of the research process themselves. Acknowledging the students' lack of empowerment and agency in the academic development process (Felten et al, 2019), Clair and I embraced a student-staff partnership model (Cook-Sather et al, 2014) and we invited all participants to become co-researchers. Three participating students volunteered, and [names redacted] joined us as participant-researchers.

We decided to analyse the first two years of data collection and publish our initial findings before the students moved into their Honours years. Adopting a collective autoethnographic lens (Chang et al, 2013), we revisited the data that collected so far, which included transcripts from three, in-depth focus groups and open-ended responses from two surveys. Through weekly meetings, online and in-person, we purposefully shifted to a collegial research collective, where we actively tried to empower each other through supportive dialogue, building trust, sharing responsibility and facing challenges together (Ali et al, 2021).

This paper presentation will offer two key insights from this co-researcher project. Firstly, it will present a brief insight into the student as co-researcher methodological process, detailing the steps taken to manage the tensions highlighted by Dollinger et al (2022) in participatory research: 1) ensuring a collaborative, reciprocal learning environment between staff and students while at the same time supporting students new to research; and 2) integrating student expertise, which is epistemically different from staff expertise, in a meaningfully way so that all project members contribute equally but in their own voice.

Secondly, it will offer insights into the students' experiences of the first two-years (pre-Honours) of an interdisciplinary programme. Through a reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019), we will share three vignettes which exemplify

the over-arching theme that emerged in the data - what we have framed as 'trusting the process' in IDLT, specifically at programme-level. These include: experiences of engaging with pass/fail assessment; a burgeoning appreciation of reflection as a teaching method; and acceptance of the unknowns ahead. We offer examples of teaching approaches that afforded this trust in the process, for example, creating a sense of mattering, as well as some that hindered it, such as the emotional burdens of untraditional teaching practices.

Finally, we will conclude by showing how involving students produces more authentic research (Dollinger et al. 2022) because students offer more epistemically relevant recommendations to improve students' experiences of IDLT than if the research had been conducted by staff alone. We also argue that academic developers should be encouraged to support co-researching opportunities because they demonstrably empower students to feel agency in influencing curriculum design.

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Trusting the process: Students as co-researchers in interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Jenny Scoles, Clare Cullen, Sora Choo, Sara Albakri, Polly Dipper

Abstract

In this paper, a group of staff and students present an account of co-research, which explores undergraduate students' experiences of interdisciplinary learning and teaching at programme level. Adopting a collaborative ethnographic lens helped this staff-student partnership create a collegial research space to make sense of qualitative data collected during the students' first and second years in a new undergraduate programme, MA Interdisciplinary Futures. The purpose of the paper is twofold: to offer insight into the student as co-researcher methodological process, detailing the steps taken to manage common tensions in achieving an authentic partnership; and, through a reflexive thematic analysis, to highlight three vignettes that show how students experienced an interdisciplinary curriculum design in practice, and how they began to 'trust the process' of nontraditional teaching methods. The findings highlight how academic developers can support student-staff co-researcher partnerships in which students gain agency and voice to influence curriculum design in interdisciplinary learning and teaching.

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When The Tables Are Turned: Utilizing Students as Partners in the Creation and Teaching of Faculty Development

Heather Rissler, Amanda Gray

Abstract

A dominant story circulating in higher education is that partnerships are difficult to forge, or if they exist, must take one form: faculty/staff leading students. However, when students are brought into the fold of curriculum creation, they become empowered to share their ideas and commit themselves to the work. In turn, faculty and staff are re-energized by the thoughtfulness and innovation of students. We know our students come to medical school with wide breadths of knowledge and experiences we can leverage to create partnerships across the academy and strengthen programs. Additionally, when we invite students to join us in curriculum development and implementation, we allow individuals to flex their strengths, and problem solve together. With this spirit, the University of Kansas School of Medicine (KUSM) has developed a working group of students, faculty, and staff to create and implement workshops designed for faculty development with an emphasis on student coaching.

Keywords: students as teachers faculty development for coaching coaching for flourishing

Extended Summary

At our school of medicine (SOM) we implemented Students as Partners (SaP) work to respond to an expressed need for reimagining our coaching program and student professional development curriculum for first- and second-year medical students. We hire physician faculty to serve as Assistant Directors and coaches within our learning community structure and across our three campuses, we have about fifty-four faculty coaches that meet with our students twice every nine weeks in the first two years of medical school. In years three and four, eight coaches meet with students at least once per semester. Faculty coaches are provided with coaching resources through coaching workshops along with worksheets designed to assist students in navigating their medical school experience. Students had expressed concern about lack of consistency in coaching sessions across faculty coaches. There were noted gaps in what students were receiving in their coaching based on which coach they were assigned.

Our SOM also conducts a student professional development curriculum called Medicine as Profession (MAP). MAP is built as a supplement to the academic curriculum, providing students with two hours of professional development every nine weeks in years one and two. Foci for these sessions have historically included topics like Distinguishing Yourself as a Medical Student, Engaging in Differences, and Preparation for Board Exams While Maintaining Your Well-Being. We determined through observation and student feedback that there was a need for more applicable discussion opportunities and small group coaching throughout MAP to enhance the building blocks for students as future physicians.

To respond to the needs and concerns of our coaching processes and MAP curricula and to build on the existing SaP success in colleges and universities, we chose to use a co-creation approach that engaged students, staff, and faculty in revising these curricula and processes. A selected group of students, faculty, and staff participated in virtual co-creation sessions called Build-a-Thons. Additionally, a group of students participated in co-facilitating coaching development workshops for faculty coaches. Our desire to implement strengths-based coaching and revise the MAP curriculum was situated within the Kern National Network (KNN) Framework for Flourishing, which aims to combine character, care, and practical wisdom to enhance human flourishing. The SaP activities we engaged in, including Build-a-Thons for curriculum development and utilizing students as co-facilitators of workshops for coaches, enabled us to enhance our coaching program and rebuild the MAP curriculum by focusing on strengths-based development for flourishing.

In our poster, we will outline the coaching program at our SOM: a model that longitudinally pairs a student and a physician faculty member in a coaching relationship over the course of two and four years. Coaching is critical for student learning in medical school as it enables students to reflect on their learning experiences. By engaging students in re-imagining our coaching program, we empowered students' metacognition. Students reflected on what was working and what could be improved in our coaching process. Based on their experiences they proposed modifications and co-lead training of faculty to promote a strengths-based coaching program. We will highlight the students' desire for a revitalized coaching program and the development of a faculty, staff, and student working group specifically focused on the development of coaching workshops for our faculty. The poster will also cover the foundations of SaP work, which included engaging students in co-creation of curricula. Participants will learn how our working group came together to develop and implement the coaching workshop curriculum on our campus during the 2024-2025 academic year. This case study sought to establish an effective approach to SaP work in health professions education by describing how SaP work unfolded at our institution and sharing results from our examination on the perspectives of students, faculty, and staff on SaP work at an academic medical center. We report on the design, implementation, and results of our SaP work while highlighting challenges and best practices.

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Students as Change Agents in addressing Complex Societal Issues? Exploring how universities shape and respond to diverse forms of student engagement

Laura de Groot, Frederique Demeijer, Eduardo Urias, Marjolein Zweekhorst

Abstract

Universities increasingly advocate for contributing to complex societal challenges in their missions and therefore implement educational initiatives that foster students' societal engagement. However, the forms this engagement takes vary considerably, ranging from more top-down, curriculum-embedded activities to more bottom-up, student-led expressions such as student-activism. These bottom-up activities also demonstrate that students exercise agency in choosing how, and on which societal issues, they wish to engage. The ways in which higher education institutions respond to these different forms of engagement also differ significantly. These variations reveal tensions rooted in conflicting institutional logics, underlying values, power dynamics, and the political nature of societal engagement in higher education. This raises a key question: which forms of societal engagement do universities deem legitimate, and which do they seek to foster? To explore this, this paper draws on examples at the Vrije Universiteit as a case, an institution that has a historically strong societal connection and actively promotes the cultivation of a "Broader Mind" among their students. We aim to critically examine diverse forms of student engagement that emerge on our campus, and how these are shaped, supported and/or constrained by the university. Rather than treating engagement as a top-down ambition, this paper highlights the importance of including students' voices in educational reforms and recognizing their (potential) role as change agents in the university's societal mission.

Keywords: Student Engagement; Change Agents; Institutional Complexity; Societal mission

Extended Summary

Universities increasingly advocate for contributing to complex societal challenges in their missions and therefore implement educational initiatives that foster students' societal engagement. However, the forms this engagement takes vary considerably, ranging from more top-down, curriculum-embedded activities to more bottom-up, student-led expressions such as student-activism. These bottom-up activities also demonstrate that students exercise agency in choosing how, and on which societal issues, they wish to engage. The ways in which higher education institutions respond to these different forms of engagement also differ significantly. These variations reveal tensions rooted in conflicting institutional logics, underlying values, power dynamics, and the political nature of societal engagement in higher education. This raises a key question: which forms of societal engagement do universities deem legitimate, and which do they seek to foster? To explore this, this paper draws on examples at the Vrije Universiteit as a case, an institution that has a historically strong societal connection and actively promotes the cultivation of a "Broader Mind" among their students. We aim to critically examine diverse forms of student engagement that emerge on our campus, and how these are shaped, supported and/or constrained by the university. Rather than treating engagement as a top-down ambition, this paper contributes to the literature on the importance of including students' voices in educational reforms (Cook-Sather, 2006; Levin, 2000) and recognizing their (potential) role as change agents in the university's societal mission.

This study draws on (elements of) institutional theory as a lens to explore societal engagement among students within the complex institutional context of universities. Although increasingly applied to organizational issues in higher education, its full potential in this field remains underexplored (Cai & Mehari, 2015). New institutional theory, in particular, emphasizes the role of actors and their agency in shaping institutions and driving change within their organizational environment (Battilana et al., 2009). As John Robinson highlights in his work, students occupy a unique position in the education system: they are part of it, yet not fully embedded as compared to academics, which gives them a distinctive perspective on its practices, cultures, and dynamics. This paper focuses on the unique position of students and their role and (level of) agency in the university's mission to engage meaningfully with societal issues. While universities emphasize the importance of societal engagement and the public good in their missions, a more in-depth exploration looking at the diverse forms of student engagement, and how these are shaped, supported and/or constrained, is needed to better understand how these values are enacted within the institution. The usage of institutional logics will help to gain insights into underlying values, beliefs and assumptions that guide how both students and the university as an institution think, act and navigate the complexity of the higher education context (Cai & Mountford, 2021; Friedland, 2012).

To explore this empirically, this study examines diverse forms of student engagement, ranging from participation in engaged education courses to more bottom-up student initiatives. In our first rounds of qualitative data collection, we conducted FGDs with students from diverse disciplines and study levels (Bachelor and Master) who had taken engaged education courses. We explored their experiences and lessons learned, their expectations of higher education, and the role of societal engagement within it. Although nuances and differences emerged, students generally described societal engagement in their education as a "nice accessory, but not per se a necessity". This set-up reflects a predominant 'market' logic, where universities act as providers and students as consumers (Bertelsen, 1998). In this framing,

engagement becomes a means to align student expectations with institutional goals and to attract students through promises of societal relevance.

Our follow-up rounds of data-collection will focus on other forms of student engagement on campus, such as sustainability initiatives, and protests around pressing societal and political issues, through key-informant interviews with students involved in these activities. By doing so, this paper moves beyond a monolithic view of student engagement by exploring its diverse forms within the higher education context. Ultimately, we aim to encourage reflection on which types of engagement universities consider legitimate and choose to support and foster. This, in turn, helps to better understand the values higher education institutions uphold in their efforts to contribute to societal challenges.

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Agency makes a peer: student-faculty partnerships in the pursuit of authentic curricula

Iro Ntonia

Abstract

In this practice paper, we present two exemplar student-faculty curriculum enhancement initiatives, each focusing on separate aspects of the neurodivergent STEMM student experience within a selective research-intensive Russell Group institution. The first exemplar aimed co-produced an innovative learning resource on the neuroscience of ADHD and its impact on higher education teaching and learning experience, which subsequently formed part of the learning resources for a module on the Science of Learning offered at Imperial College London. By harnessing the collective lived experience of faculty and students diagnosed with ADHD into informing the design, production and delivery of this resource, we explored the affordances of authentic curriculum development aimed at enhancing the educational experience not just for neurodivergent staff and students, but for all. The second exemplar established a research partnership between UG students and faculty on exploring the impact of misophonia across Imperial student cohorts and make recommendations for enhancing the educational experience for these students and beyond. This project brought together students from the Natural Science and Engineering students with faculty expertise on educational neuroscience and neurodivergence in a bid to derive evidence-based recommendations to inform institutional and operational policy. We report on the procedural pipeline of each initiative, highlighting the benefits and challenges met and overcome along the way. Finally, we identify next steps in ensuring the long-term impact and sustainability of both process and outcomes.

Extended Summary

Neurodivergence is certainly a 'hot topic' in both specialist neuroscientific literature and in the broader popular discourse. When considering the impact and real-life implications of being a neurodivergent student studying for a university degree, institutions often fall short of bridging the gap between learning, teaching and assessment policy, and real as well as perceived enhancement of one's educational experience. Although there are several projects across institutions looking at developing inclusive pedagogies and focusing on how neurodivergence might be accommodated efficiently and effectively within the university experience, such projects rarely make meaningful use of the increasingly visible numbers of neurodivergent students and faculty who are potentially better placed to offer insights on how their experiences have been affected. This was one of the key drivers behind developing an elective 10-week module on the Science of Learning. This module was designed to explore the multifaceted concept of 'learning' through three perspectives: as a biological function of the brain, as a psychological function of the mind, and as a socially situated activity. The educational goal is to equip students in critically evaluating the process of their own approaches to learning through these three angles, and in appreciating the granularity and individual variability of learning from student to student, with a particular focus on neurodivergence. In this paper, we present two projects that have resulted from students engaging with the Science of Learning module, and which were designed to incorporate an authentic perspective of how neurodivergence may be accommodated in the university environment.

The first project showcases the equal, collaborative procedural pipeline between a faculty member and an Undergraduate student, both with ADHD, in conceptualising, designing and developing learning resources on the neuroscience and behavioural impact of ADHD on learning within the HE context. In this project, we sought to (1) address individual learning inequities resulting from face-to-face to fully online/hybrid/blended learning modes, (2) enhance student self-efficacy and self-regulated learning in a credible, research-informed and research-led way, and (3) translate and share insights on ADHD as part of the Science of Learning curriculum, as part of ongoing, longitudinal efforts to enhance teaching and learning locally at Imperial, and potentially globally through suitable dissemination channels. We harnessed the lived experience of ADHD from the staff/student co-PIs to co-produce educational neuroscience resources for use as asynchronous learning materials in the iExplore STEMM module 'The Science of Learning'. The purpose of many SoL programs is to elaborate on pedagogical approaches that faculty and students can use to enhance teaching and learning (Horvath & Lodge, 2016). Currently, SoL students are expected to engage with 2hrs of independent, pre-sessional learning activities ahead of each of the two Neuroscience sessions. These learning segments are designed as asynchronous, and introduce concepts such as the biological underpinning of learning, understanding the research methods and data types that educational neuroscientists use to 'measure' cognitive domains associated with learning (i.e. selective attention and working memory), and introduction to neurodivergence (ASD, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia) as a lens through which to understand the important of individual variability in definitions of efficient (Bandura, 1977) and self-regulated (Zimmerman, 2002) learning. To the best of our knowledge, there is little evidence in the educational literature by way of highlighting the importance of lived experience in curriculum co-design – with the exception of some public health degree programmes– particularly when it comes to topics which both directly and indirectly have been thought to significantly impact one's aptitude for self-regulated (Zimmerman, 2002) and self-efficient learning (Bandura, 1977). In this project, the two PIs are navigating academia with ADHD and were motivated to capture what ADHD in the context of HE learning means in a personable, non-judgmental and engaging way. We will be presenting the outcomes and impact of this collaboration, as well as

explore the advantages and potential pitfalls of the design process including possible future scalable applications. Finally, we will conclude by revisiting our main aim of this resource acting as an instigator for students to engage with and explore the topic of neurodivergence and individual variability in learning. By communicating the real-world experience of navigating the HE context while managing ADHD to a captive audience of educational advocates that make up the typical Science of Learning cohort, we will offer fresh insight, inspiration and aspiration not just to the neurodivergent staff and student cohorts, but beyond.

The second project is an equal research partnership between faculty and students which was designed to build on the student team's pre-established proof of concept for a piece of software aiming to enhance the educational experience of students experiencing misophonia. Misophonia is a neurodivergent condition in which individuals experience strong emotional reactions to specific trigger noises, such as chewing, coughing, or sniffling. In the dynamic and often noisy environments of university life, students with misophonia are frequently exposed to such triggers creating significant barriers to their education and overall wellbeing. Neurodivergent conditions, including misophonia, are notably more prevalent within universities compared to the general population. This is partly due to the diverse student body and the increased likelihood of individuals with such conditions pursuing higher education. However, the lack of adequate accommodations often leaves neurodivergent students underserved, exacerbating the challenges they face in academic settings. This project's goal was therefore twofold: to uncover the extent of the issue at a research-intensive Russel Group university setting, and to gain an in-depth understanding of how these students navigate their learning environments. Ultimately, the project aimed to be able to suggest recommendations for enhancing practice that may be integrated into students' learning and present with a sustainable, impactful way forward. Although this project was not directly aimed at the programme or module level of curriculum design, the findings had a much wider reach across the institution in ensuring a more inclusive educational experience for all students. Drawing from the literature on Universal Design for Learning, individual variability in learning and our increased understanding of the complex and multi-layered presentation of neurodivergent conditions, outcomes were projected to be beneficial across the student body.

Taken together, these two exemplar projects offer fresh evidence in the magnitude of the impact of faculty-student partnerships, and the increased potential for long-lasting culture change for the benefit of all students.

Papers 23

Pandemic Preparedness Capabilities: Emergency Response Capabilities and Sustainability of Universities in Kenya

Kellen Kiambati

Abstract

Education plays a very important role in sustainable development. History has shown pandemics causes disruption and the pandemics continue to present themselves in different forms. Research by Bloomberg (2022) indicates pandemics magnitude of COVID-19 every ten years. We continue to witness misaligned in resource allocation and infrastructure alignment. Although existing literature has examined COVID 19 as a pandemic, focusing on health sector. The objectives was to examine the contribution emergency response capabilities on sustainability of Universities in Kenya. The study used mixed methods approach and the findings indicate average results which leaves universities at the risk of being unsustainable even with the prediction of another pandemic by 2030. Analysis showed vulnerabilities in various areas such as funding, capacity and infrastructure. The implications is that there is urgent need for policy makers to integrate pandemic preparedness capabilities in the HE sector planning. The limitations of the study is the inherent complexity of accurately modelling pandemics in a generalized manner. Further research can refine models to reduce uncertainties in modelling pandemics. In conclusion, the pandemic preparedness capabilities require immediate attention and proactive strategic responses.

Keywords: Pandemics, response, sustainability

Extended Summary

Introduction

Emergency response capabilities remains pivotal to organizational resilience and survival even in an increasingly volatile environment worldwide. COVID 19 pandemic exposed the unsustainable nature of the world social and economic order and sooner Russia and Ukraine war and Middle East war exposed the soft under belly of the world. Coaffee & Fussey (2015) in their study on constructing resilience through security and surveillance argues that relationship between security and resilience policy, and practice in its development has led to the dominance of security concerns and capacity to respond effectively to crises has emerged as a defining determinant of organizational survival in an increasingly volatile global environment. Boin,& Lodge (2016) found that quality of governance directly contributes to the quality of living and that crises and disasters have a deteriorating effect on the quality of living but also make it harder to maintain the quality of governance which, in turn, is related to the effectiveness of the response to crises and disasters. This suggests that with the expanding landscape of emergencies to include climate, weather, geopolitical conflicts and health there are limited studies on the precarious position that universities occupy now making emergency response a strategic imperative rather than an operation and administrative functions (Kimathi & Ntarangwi, 2020).

The aim of the paper is to examine the contribution of emergency response capabilities on sustainability among universities in Kenya.

The study utilized a mixed methods approach where quantaitive data data was collected using a cross sectional survey and qualitative using Key Informant Interviews. 34 universities were sample (Commission for University Education, 2020).

Findings, Arguments and Outcomes

These results suggest that, although students appear to report marginally higher emergency response capability than administrators, the variation within groups is sufficiently large that the difference could be attributed to chance. Therefore, no firm conclusion about a group-level difference can be drawn from these data.Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between emergency response capabilities and organizational sustainability. Among students, the correlation was strong and positive ($r = 0.761$, 95% CI: 0.733 to 0.786, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher emergency response capability scores were associated with higher perceptions of sustainability. Similarly, administrators exhibited an even stronger positive correlation ($r = 0.845$, 95% CI: 0.802 to 0.880, $p < 0.001$), suggesting a consistent relationship between these constructs across respondent groups. When combining both groups, the correlation remained strong ($r = 0.779$, 95% CI: 0.755 to 0.800, $p < 0.001$). Adjusted linear regression models were fitted to examine the association between emergency response capabilities and organizational sustainability across respondent groups. For students, emergency response was a significant positive predictor of sustainability ($\beta = 0.72$, 95% CI: 0.68 to 0.76, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher emergency response capability scores were associated with higher sustainability scores. Among administrators, the relationship was even stronger ($\beta = 0.81$, 95% CI: 0.74 to 0.87, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that administrators who rated their emergency response capabilities higher also reported higher sustainability. When both groups were combined in a single model, emergency response remained a strong positive predictor ($\beta = 0.74$, 95% CI: 0.70 to 0.77, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, the regression coefficient for respondent group

indicated that, after accounting for emergency response, administrators had lower sustainability scores than students (β = −0.15, 95% CI: −0.24 to −0.06, p = 0.001). For students, the model explained 58.5% of the variance in sustainability (R^2 = 0.585; Adjusted R^2 = 0.580) with a residual standard error of 0.609 and an overall F-statistic of 100.04 (p < 0.001). Among administrators, the model demonstrated slightly stronger explanatory power, accounting for 73.2% of the variance (R^2 = 0.732; Adjusted R^2 = 0.713) with a residual standard error of 0.558 and an Fstatistic of 38.46 (p < 0.001). In the combined sample, the model explained 61.4% of the variance (R^2 = 0.614; Adjusted R^2 = 0.609) with a residual standard error of 0.602 and a highly significant F-statistic of 127.32 (p < 0.001). These indices suggest that emergency response is a strong and consistent predictor of sustainability across respondent groups, with model performance slightly higher among administrators.

Theoretical Significance

The theoretical and educational significance of these findings is they validate that emergency response capability serves as a consistent and powerful predictor of organizational sustainability across different stakeholder groups, extending existing 4 crisis management literature by demonstrating this relationship within an educational setting. This theoretical insight challenges the assumption of uniform stakeholder perspectives and calls for more nuanced, multi-stakeholder models of organizational resilience. From an educational and practice standpoint, these results imply that higher education institutions seeking to enhance long-term sustainability should invest significantly in building emergency response capabilities For future research, the unexplained variance in both groups indicates that other mediating variables such as institutional trust, communication quality, prior crisis experience, or organizational culture warrant investigation.

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Matching Higher Education Curricula with Labor Market Needs: The Case of Georgia

Dimitri Japaridze, Shorena Maglakelidze, Davit Tutberidze, Ekaterine Shaverdashvili

Abstract

Higher education institutions (HEIs) are fundamentally assessed by their outcomes - specifically, graduate employability, lifelong learning, and community engagement. Despite major post-Soviet reforms aimed at system transformation, Georgia continues to face ongoing challenges with graduate employment. This study emerged from a broader research project titled "Over-education and Labor Market Mismatch in Georgia: Challenges and Ways to Reduce Them." It uses a qualitative approach to assess how well university curricula match labor market needs.

The methodology involved conducting and analyzing 40 focus groups across five selected universities (two in the capital, three regional). Focus group participants included faculty administration representatives and lecturers, final-year students from business and education faculties, and graduates from those same faculties.

The analysis revealed no notable differences in responses by faculty type.

Key Findings:

1. Literature: Heavy reliance on English-language literature, often supplemented by "readers" compiled by lecturers with materials translated into Georgian.

2. Curriculum structure: Students, especially during the first two years, noted substantial overlap between subjects. Some courses were perceived as excessive or unnecessary.

3. Practical components: Importantly, there's consensus among students, administration, and lecturers that mandatory internships at potential employment sites are either ineffective or don't exist at all.

4. Employer engagement: Very minimal, largely attributed to employer indifference.

Based on these findings, recommendations were developed to improve curriculum quality and ensure graduate competitiveness in the labor market.

Crisis Agency in Higher Education: How Uzbek Institutions Acted, Decided, and Transformed

Elena Khanzadyan

Abstract

Institutions in higher education are increasingly asked to demonstrate agency in navigating environments where crises are becoming regular, not exceptional. Although considerable research focuses on teaching innovation and policy change, little is known about how leaders, faculty, and staff wield agency in the midst of disruption. This study builds on 50 completed semi-structured interviews across nine universities and private training centers in Uzbekistan, with the broader study targeting 140–160 participants. The analysis investigates how actors within higher education engaged with crises ranging from the COVID-19 pandemic to leadership turnover, financial and infrastructural breakdowns. Using thematic analysis, three agency patterns were identified: (1) Acting before disruption - anticipatory strategies such as informal preparedness routines, early warning mechanisms, and faculty-led initiatives to protect continuity; (2) Deciding under uncertainty - leadership choices: transparent communication, ethical judgment, and decisive adaptation when information was incomplete/conflicting; (3) Adapting and transforming - emergent practices (collaborative curriculum redesign, resource improvisation, and codified peer support) converted disruption into long-term institutional learning. Rather than treating crisis management separately, the study illustrates how agency in higher education is enacted through ordinary academic work: small, local decisions that maintain teaching, protect students, and sustain staff morale. By emphasizing improvisation, ethical judgment, and collective problem-solving, the research situates agency not as resilience after the fact, but as the ability to act, decide, and during disruption. The Uzbek case contributes to global debate about educational development by showing how institutions in low-resource contexts transform disruption into opportunities for renewal.

Keywords: Crisis Agency, Higher Education, Decision-making, Organizational Transformation

Extended Summary

Introduction and Aim

Higher education institutions are increasingly challenged to demonstrate agency in environments where crises are recurring rather than exceptional. Beyond isolated emergencies, institutions now face overlapping disruptions: pandemics, leadership turnover, financial instability, and infrastructure breakdowns. Though the international literature typically researches teaching innovation or policy change, little consideration has been given to how agency is enacted (or not) by higher education leaders, teachers and professional staff in such an environment. Central Asia, and Uzbekistan in particular, remains almost invisible in this discourse. This study directly addresses that gap by analyzing how universities, colleges, and private training centers navigate disruption, drawing on 50 semi-structured interviews already completed across nine institutions. The larger doctoral research project aims to expand the dataset to 140–160 participants, enabling more robust comparative insights. The study is motivated by a dual aim: to enrich international debates about crisis governance in higher education and to provide actionable guidance for institutions in resource-constrained contexts.

Theoretical and Methodological Context

The study builds on theories of crisis management (Boin et al., 2017; Coombs, 2015) and organizational resilience (Duchek, 2020; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011), as well as the concept of psychological safety in learning organizations (Edmondson, 1999). Yet it applies these perspectives to higher education in an underrepresented region of Central Asia. Crises explored include COVID-19, leadership turnover, financial strain, and infrastructural breakdowns. Prior research in business contexts (e.g., Kaparov, 2023; Xie et al., 2023) has highlighted the role of leadership and resilience in maintaining continuity; and the studies in higher education (Watermeyer et al., 2021) have focused on digital disruption and emergency shift to online learning. However, no empirical research to date has investigated crisis agency in Central Asia's universities under disruptions. In terms of methodology, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017) was employed to code and interpret interview data. Participants in this research included university administrators, faculty, and support staff, allowing multiple perspectives on responses analysis. The dataset consists of 50 completed semi-structured interviews with representatives from nine educational organizations (local/private universities and learning centres). The dataset is still being expanded, with the aim of reaching 140–160 participants to enhance analytic robustness and to triangulate finding across different types of institutions. The use of qualitative methods allows for a rich understanding of how abstract principles of preparedness, leadership, and resilience are translated - or not - into everyday practices.

Key Findings

Three agency patterns were identified across educational institutions:

- Acting before disruption: Informal preparedness routines, early warning signals, and faculty-led initiatives to maintain continuity were reported. In some cases, these efforts acted as a compensation for having no working formal plans.
- Deciding under uncertainty: Leaders who combined the use of transparent communication, empathy and decisiveness showed to be most successful in maintaining trust and continuity during ambiguous contexts.
- Adapting and transforming: Faculty and staff members improvised in their teaching delivery, shared resources, and codified peer support into, building impressive emerging routines. Crisis conditions often went together with the accelerated digital adoption and collaborative redesign of curricula. Findings suggest that low-cost, high-trust practices - rather than expensive technical systems - were central in sustaining operations and morale. These findings resonate with international research on resilience in service and organizational contexts (Xie et al., 2023), but add new empirical evidence from Central Asia's education sector.

Significance

This research is the first to analyze crisis agency in Central Asia's higher education sector. It contributes to international debates in three ways:

1. Conceptual: It reframes agency not as post-crisis resilience, but as the capacity during disruption. By foregrounding improvisation, ethical judgment, and collective problem-solving, the study situates agency not as resilience after the fact, but as the ability to act, decide, and transform in and through disruption.

2. Empirical: It adds rare qualitative evidence from Uzbekistan to a literature dominated by Western case studies, thereby extending the geography of knowledge. By showing how institutions in low-resource environments turn disruption into opportunities for renewal, it offers valuable insights for future research in the field.

3. Practical: The results highlight practical implications for institutional leaders, policymakers, and development agencies seeking to strengthen crisis governance in education - particularly relevant for low-resource environments. The study situates agency as integral to ordinary academic work rather than as a specialized technical function. The Uzbek case demonstrates how institutions in constrained settings can transform disruption into opportunities for renewal and growth, offering lessons that resonate internationally.

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Agency and Strategy Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Organizational Transformation

Nizar Bitar, Nitza Davidovich

Abstract

Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) function as pivotal change agents in higher education, yet their transformative capabilities often remain underutilized. This paper examines how CTLs exercise agency as drivers of institutional transformation, introducing the empirically-validated CTL Change Implementation Framework (CCLIF). Based on qualitative data from 45 participants across diverse Israeli higher education institutions, the study reveals how CTLs orchestrate change through sophisticated 'middle-out' processes that bridge institutional leadership and faculty. Analysis demonstrates how these centers successfully navigate resistance, build multi-level stakeholder engagement, and create sustainable faculty learning communities despite lacking formal authority. The findings highlight variations across institutional types, with research universities emphasizing evidence-based approaches while teaching-focused institutions prioritize direct pedagogical impact. This research is particularly relevant to academic developers seeking to enhance their strategic positioning and institutional influence. The introduced framework provides practical guidance for CTL directors and academic developers to analyze their institutional contexts, develop sophisticated resistance management strategies, and design sustainable implementation approaches. By reconceptualizing CTLs as strategic change architects rather than merely service providers, this study empowers academic developers to more effectively exercise agency in transforming teaching and learning practices across higher education institutions. The findings directly address the conference theme by demonstrating how academic development units can function as powerful agents of change through sophisticated network-building, strategic positioning, and contextually-adaptive implementation approaches.

Keywords: Academic development agency, Centers for teaching and learning, higher education transformation, middle-out change processes

Extended Summary

This paper investigates the strategic role of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) as institutional change agents in higher education, focusing on their approaches to planning, implementation, and assessment of transformative initiatives. Through rigorous qualitative analysis of data from 45 participants—including 31 current CTL directors, nine former directors, and five national stakeholders—the study reveals sophisticated patterns of organizational change management that challenge conventional theories in academic contexts.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation integrates three complementary perspectives that collectively inform our understanding of academic agency in institutional transformation. First, we draw on Complex Adaptive Systems Theory to conceptualize higher education institutions as dynamic ecosystems where change emerges from complex interactions rather than linear mechanisms. Second, we incorporate Boundary Spanning Theory to examine how CTLs function as organizational bridge-builders, mediating between institutional priorities and faculty concerns. Third, we employ Institutional Change Theory, specifically focusing on the concept of 'institutional entrepreneurs' as agents who transform practices while operating within constraints. This integrated framework allows us to analyze how CTLs exercise agency despite lacking formal authority.

Methodological Approach

The study employed interpretive phenomenological analysis within a constructivist paradigm to examine CTL directors' experiences as change agents. The comprehensive recruitment process yielded participation from 31 current directors (77.5% response rate), representing institutional diversity across research universities, academic colleges, education colleges, and private institutions. Data collection involved in-depth interviews averaging 90 minutes each, supplemented by analysis of institutional documents including strategic plans and annual reports. The systematic analysis followed a three-stage process combining inductive and deductive approaches, resulting in the development of the CTL Change Implementation Framework (CCLIF).

Key Findings

The analysis reveals three key dimensions of CTL change agency:

- Strategic Positioning and Influence Mechanisms: CTLs develop sophisticated approaches to establishing their institutional influence despite limited formal authority. Directors build extensive stakeholder networks spanning multiple organizational levels, creating what we term 'networked legitimacy.' This strategic positioning enables them to influence institutional practices through relationship-based rather than authority-based mechanisms. As one university CTL director explained: "Working directly with faculty leadership creates opportunities for meaningful change. When we coordinate with the dean on pressing faculty issues, bringing our people to the faculty, conducting discourse in their language, it's completely different - they feel we're here for them".

- Cultural Navigation and Resistance Management: CTLs demonstrate nuanced understanding of academic resistance patterns and develop contextually-adapted strategies for managing organizational transformation. Directors build trust through discretion, faculty-centered approaches, and respect for disciplinary authenticity. Resistance management varies by institutional type, with research university CTLs emphasizing scholarly engagement and evidence-based approaches, while teaching-focused institutions develop more direct faculty support mechanisms. Most centers employ tiered engagement strategies, beginning with early adopters and gradually expanding through faculty peer networks.
- Transformation Sustainability: Successful CTLs employ three key mechanisms for sustaining change: (1) developing faculty learning communities that create organic dissemination networks, (2) institutional embedding of innovations through formal structures and policies, and (3) implementing value-based rather than compliance-based engagement strategies. As articulated by one CTL director: "When faculty members move from resistance to engagement, from anxiety to enthusiasm, we know we're making real progress. It's not just about participation numbers; it's about fundamental shifts in attitudes and approaches to teaching".

The CTL Change Implementation Framework

These findings inform the development of the CTL Change Implementation Framework (CCLIF), which conceptualizes how CTLs function as change agents through three interconnected layers:

- Environmental Forces Layer: Captures the external pressures and policy directives that create imperatives for institutional transformation, including technological advancements, demographic shifts, and national policies.
- Institutional Context Layer: Reflects how organizational structures, cultures, and priorities filter environmental pressures and shape implementation possibilities.
- Implementation Phases Layer: Encompasses three distinct phases (preparatory, implementation, and sustainability) through which CTLs orchestrate change, each with specific strategies and challenges.

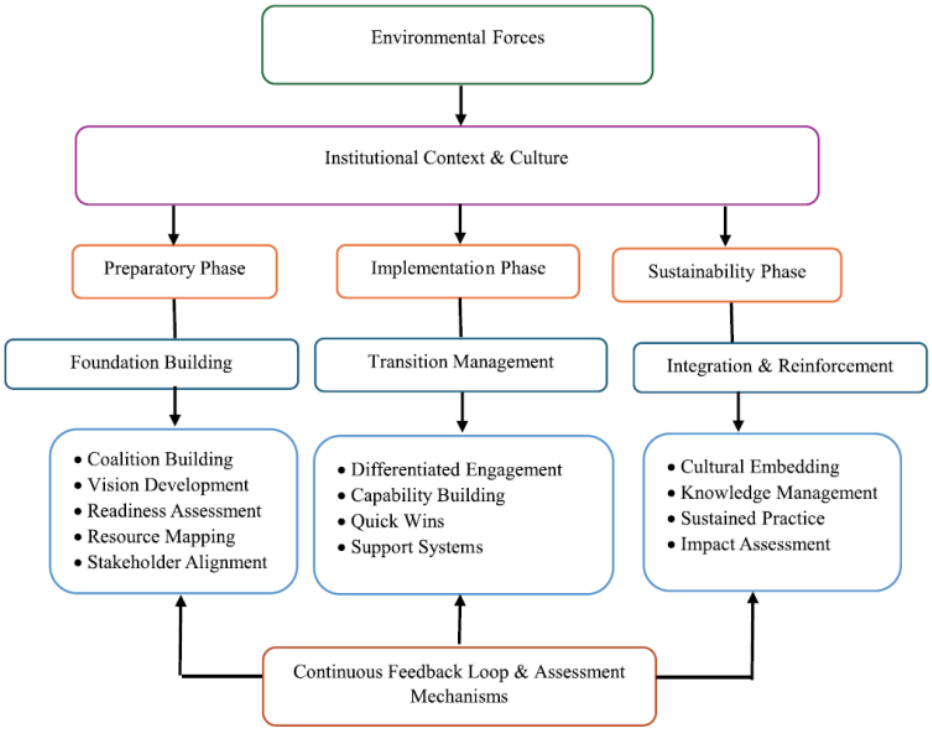


Fig. 1. The CTL Change Implementation Framework.

The framework's distinctive contribution lies in its conceptualization of 'middle-out' change processes, where CTLs leverage their intermediary positioning to facilitate bidirectional influence between institutional leadership and faculty. This approach challenges traditional top-down and bottom-up change paradigms by highlighting how units without formal authority can effectively drive institutional transformation.

Theoretical and Practical Significance

This research advances theoretical understanding of agency in academic development by demonstrating how CTLs function as strategic agents of change rather than merely service providers. The findings highlight the complex interplay

between structural positioning, relationship networks, and implementation strategies that enable effective change agency despite limited formal authority.

For academic developers and institutional leaders, the CCLIF framework provides practical guidance for analyzing institutional contexts, developing sophisticated resistance management strategies, and designing sustainable implementation approaches. By explicitly addressing the tensions between institutional priorities and faculty autonomy, the framework offers a roadmap for navigating the complexities of organizational change in academic settings.

The Israeli context provides particularly valuable insights into how CTLs establish effectiveness despite resource constraints, implement systematic transformation while maintaining quality, and adapt during periods of significant disruption. These patterns have broader international relevance for academic developers seeking to enhance their strategic positioning and institutional influence in diverse higher education contexts.

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Reimagining Professional Learning Communities for Equity and Sustainability in South African Higher Education

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Abstract

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are increasingly recognised as mechanisms for fostering equitable, collaborative, and sustainable professional learning in higher education. Grounded in Etienne Wenger's Communities of Practice and Jack Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory, this study conceptualises PLCs as dynamic, relational spaces where academics engage in shared inquiry, critical reflection, and the co-construction of pedagogical knowledge. This paper draws on a qualitative, interpretive reflective inquiry conducted by the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA) Professional Learning Project (PLP) team. Data were generated through a series of PLC-focused workshops at HELTASA (Un)Conference gatherings over multiple years, supported by cumulative team reflections on workshop artefacts. Using reflexive thematic analysis, the study identifies key 2 enablers, constraints, and sustainability conditions shaping PLCs across diverse South African higher education contexts. Findings highlight that PLCs function as inclusive and collaborative learning spaces that support collegial engagement, professional identity development, and pedagogical innovation. However, their sustainability is constrained by systemic challenges, including limited institutional recognition, workload pressures, and insufficient structural support. Despite these barriers, PLCs hold significant potential to advance reflective practice and collective professional growth.

The study contributes a conceptual framework that integrates relational, institutional, and reflective dimensions of PLCs, offering guiding principles for their design and sustainability. It argues that universities must move beyond ad hoc professional development initiatives towards systemic, institutionally embedded learning ecosystems. In doing so, PLCs can play a transformative role in advancing equity, resilience, and sustainable academic development in South African higher education.

Keywords: Professional Learning Communities; Communities of Practice; Transformative Learning; Academic Development

Extended Summary

Aim of Paper:

This paper aims to reimagine Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) as equitable, inclusive, and sustainable ecosystems for professional learning in South African higher education. While PLCs are widely recognised as valuable mechanisms for collaborative learning and pedagogical development, their implementation often remains fragmented and insufficiently embedded within institutional structures. This study moves beyond descriptive accounts by offering a conceptual and empirically informed framework that foregrounds relational engagement, institutional conditions, and reflective practice as central to PLC sustainability. The paper further seeks to contribute to debates on the professionalisation of learning and teaching by positioning PLCs as integral to institutional learning cultures rather than as peripheral or add-on activities. In doing so, it responds to broader concerns related to equity, access, and sustainability in higher education, particularly within Global South contexts.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach:

The study is theoretically grounded in Etienne Wenger's Communities of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, 2011) and Jack Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 2018), alongside sociocultural learning perspectives. These frameworks provide complementary lenses for understanding both the social nature of learning and the potential for transformation in professional practice. 3 Communities of Practice conceptualise learning as a socially situated process that emerges through participation in shared practices (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Within this perspective, PLCs function as relational spaces where academics engage in mutual learning, develop shared repertoires, and construct professional identities. Transformative Learning Theory extends this understanding by emphasising the role of critical reflection and dialogue in challenging assumptions and enabling shifts in meaning perspectives (Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2008). Together, these frameworks position PLCs as spaces of collaborative engagement and professional transformation. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative, interpretive approach using reflective inquiry conducted by the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA) Professional Learning Project (PLP) team. Data were generated through PLC-focused workshops at HELTASA (Un)Conference gatherings over multiple years. These workshops created dialogic spaces for academics to reflect on their experiences of PLCs, including enablers, constraints, and opportunities for strengthening practice. The dataset includes workshop artefacts (flipchart notes and digital summaries) and cumulative reflections from PLP team members. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), following an inductive approach while being theoretically sensitised by CoP and Transformative Learning constructs. This enabled the identification of patterns across datasets and the development of higher-order themes.

Key findings:

The analysis generated three overarching themes that illuminate the dynamics shaping PLC participation and sustainability. First, PLCs function as relational, inclusive, and collaborative learning spaces. Participants emphasised the importance of dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collective reflection in supporting professional learning. Diversity across disciplines, career stages, and experiences was identified as a key strength, enriching engagement and broadening perspectives. These findings align with CoP literature, which positions learning as emerging through interaction and shared practice (Wenger, 1998). Second, the effectiveness of PLCs is shaped by institutional enablers and constraints. While participants highlighted the importance of clear purpose, facilitative leadership, and intentional design, they also identified significant barriers, including heavy workloads, limited time, insufficient resources, and lack of institutional recognition. PLC participation is often perceived as additional labour rather than legitimate academic work. This reflects a tension between the collaborative ideals of PLCs and the structural realities of higher education institutions (Lieberman & Miller, 2008; Little, 1990). Third, the sustainability of PLCs depends on ongoing processes of reflection, engagement, and shared responsibility. Participants highlighted the importance of regular communication, collective ownership, and responsiveness to evolving needs. Sustained engagement was linked to meaningful dialogue and collaborative problemsolving. These findings resonate with Transformative Learning Theory, which emphasises reflection and dialogue as drivers of change in professional practice (Taylor, 2008). Building on these findings, the study proposes a conceptual framework integrating three interrelated dimensions: relational learning spaces, institutional conditions, and reflective engagement. This framework conceptualises PLCs as dynamic learning ecosystems embedded within institutional contexts rather than as isolated initiatives.

Theoretical and Educational Significance:

The study makes a significant theoretical contribution by integrating Communities of Practice, Transformative Learning, and sociocultural perspectives into a unified framework for understanding PLCs. It advances scholarship by highlighting the interconnectedness of relational, institutional, and reflective dimensions of professional learning. Rather than viewing PLCs as neutral structures, the framework positions them as socially mediated and contextually situated learning environments. From an educational perspective, the study challenges traditional models of academic development that rely on once-off workshops or compliance-driven approaches. Instead, it advocates for sustained, relational, and co-constructed professional learning processes. PLCs are positioned as critical sites for fostering reflective practice, pedagogical innovation, and professional identity development (Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008). The implications for practice include the need for intentional design of PLCs as inclusive, dialogic spaces that support collaboration across disciplines and career stages. Academic developers play a key role as facilitators of these spaces, enabling reflective dialogue and collaborative inquiry. PLCs should also be integrated within existing staff development structures to ensure continuity and relevance. At a policy level, the study highlights the importance of recognising PLC participation as legitimate academic work. Institutions should embed PLC engagement within workload models, promotion criteria, and performance frameworks. Without such recognition, PLCs risk remaining marginal and unsustainable. Additionally, institutional support in the form of time allocation, resources, and leadership is essential for sustaining engagement. The study also opens avenues for future research. Further empirical work is needed to explore how PLCs operate across diverse institutional contexts, particularly within resource-constrained environments. Longitudinal studies could examine the impact of sustained PLC participation on teaching practices, student learning, and institutional culture. Future research could also explore the role of digital and hybrid PLCs in extending collaborative learning beyond institutional boundaries (Wenger, White & Smith, 2009).

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Papers 24

Educating for Agency: AI and the Values of the Liberal Arts

Joseph Lampert

Abstract

Debates about the proper role of generative AI technology in the curriculum and pedagogy of higher education depend, implicitly or explicitly, on an account or set of assumptions about the values of higher education. This paper argues that reflection on the form of agency enjoyed by a liberally educated individual grounds a learner-centered response to the rise of AI. Drawing on philosophical accounts of the aims of higher education, this paper reconstructs a framework for the values of the liberal arts centered on learning for human flourishing, for democratic citizenship, and for work. Together, these values describe the kind of agency that the knowledge and skills of higher education should enable. Applying this framework to the issue of AI does not settle the challenges and opportunities the technology presents, but articulating a clear set of values offers a way for academic development to have a significant impact on the direction of higher education in the AI landscape. The framework also suggests the kinds of meaningful questions that future empirical academic development research might pursue to enhance our understanding of the teaching and learning consequences of AI.

Keywords: agency, liberal arts, artificial intelligence, philosophy of education

Extended Summary

Aim The challenges and opportunities posed by generative AI to teaching and learning are ultimately about the values of higher education. Debates over the impacts of LLMs on learning, proposals for AI-aware course design, frameworks for AI literacy, and other interventions in the discourse—all rely, implicitly or explicitly, on an account or set of assumptions about what higher education is for. Being clear about those values will not settle what the best course of action is, but clear values will ground approaches and experiments in a constructive, affirmative vision of the purposes of higher education. This theoretical paper proposes that a learner-centered response to the rise of generative AI is grounded in the specific form of agency represented in the values of a liberal arts education. The aim of the paper is to reconstruct a framework for those values and reflect on its implications for how to approach teaching and learning in the AI landscape. Framework and Approach The argument draws on conceptual frameworks from the philosophy of higher education. Scholars in this field have produced influential accounts of the values of liberal arts education in recent decades (Gutmann, 2015; Nussbaum, 2024).

Pursuing how these arguments lead us to understand the implications of AI for teaching and learning is both a fruitful area of scholarly inquiry and a promising approach for constructively responding to the AI landscape. The methodological approach, then, is theoretical reconstruction and application. The paper reconstructs a normative account of liberal arts education as aimed at equipping students with the knowledge and skills to be free agents in the contemporary world, and then applies that account to the issue of AI in higher education. Key Argument The argument begins with the premise that liberal arts education is aimed at developing learners as free agents in the world. On this view, education is liberating because it equips the learner with the knowledge, habits of mind, and analytical skills to exercise independent thought and judgment, to assess claims on the basis of evidence and sound reasoning, and to continue learning over time (AAC&U, 2020). The rise of AI does not change this aim, but it changes what it means to prepare students for agency in a landscape in which AI and its consequences shape the world politically, economically, and epistemologically. Three specific values of liberal arts education shape just what kind of agency it promises to produce: human flourishing, citizenship, and work. Each of these values suggests questions and principles for how to think about the implications of AI for teaching and learning:

Learning for a flourishing human life. While the precise areas of study that characterize the liberal arts have changed over time, what distinguishes liberal learning is not its content but that it develops the individual "of general competence" (Gray, 2011) with the intellectual capacity for informed, reflective decision-making and action. In this way, it enhances human agency by developing critical thinking and learning how to learn. This value suggests that pedagogical and curricular approaches to AI should 1) develop informed skepticism of the technology among learners, in order to foster independent thinking and the acumen to make discerning use of AI tools, and 2) be informed by empirical evidence on the effects of AI tools on learning. Learning for democratic citizenship. As Nussbaum (2024) argues, the independent thinking developed in the liberal arts is the central capacity of democratic citizens, because it equips learners not to defer to authority, tradition, or peers. Liberal learning also instills basic social and natural science competence—not to (only) create scientists, but rather individuals who can critically assess claims and information in a complex social and political world. This value grounds the importance of AI and information literacy, such that learners know how to question and verify AI outputs and are attuned to the ways AI tools may be used in public discourse. Learning for work. Employers value the capacities of creative and critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving

that characterize liberal arts education (Gutmann, 2015). Importantly, the kind of professional preparation provided by the liberal arts is not simply training in one disciplinary or technical area; rather, liberal arts education equips students with the flexibility and capacity for continued learning that empowers students for professional lives as the world and economy change over time (AAC&U, 2020). For this value, given the rapidly changing nature of AI tools and their unknown impact on the economy, professional preparation may mean developing AI skills, but in the context of the creative and analytical thinking that will allow future professionals to learn and adapt. Significance The significance of this framework for academic development is twofold. First, it suggests a way for academic developers to have a significant impact on their institutions and on the direction of higher education more generally. Framing the most important emergent teaching and learning issue (AI) through the lens of the basic values of higher education positions academic development as central to the mission of the institutions we serve. Second, this framework suggests the kinds of significant questions that future empirical research might pursue to enhance our understanding of the teaching and learning consequences of AI. For example: What instructional interventions promote independent thinking in the context of AI use? What forms of assessment will develop the information literacy necessary to assess and make reflective use of AI tools? How does a values-based framework affect faculty perception of the teaching and learning challenges posed by AI?

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Fostering "Agency" through Data and Dialogue: A Sustainable FD Model Linking Non-Cognitive Outcomes with Faculty Networks

Kunihiko Takamatsu, Yasuo Nakata, Kenya Bannaka, Kenichiro Mitsunari

Abstract

This paper proposes a sustainable Faculty Development (FD) model that fosters "Student Agency" by integrating data visualization with collaborative human networks. As higher education shifts focus from passive knowledge acquisition to the cultivation of non-cognitive abilities (e.g., GRIT, resilience), visualizing these invisible traits remains a significant challenge for instructors. We addressed this issue within a mandatory first-year experience course at Kobe Tokiwa University by utilizing an Eduinformatics approach. First, we analyzed Learning Management System (LMS) logs and found that the timing of assignment submissions significantly correlates with students' non-cognitive scores and academic grades. This establishes simple behavioral logs as an objective proxy for visualizing student agency. Second, to support these findings with effective instruction, we implemented a large-scale team-teaching system. Social network analysis revealed that this system functions as a sustainable On-the-Job Training (OJT) platform, creating a dense, cross-disciplinary faculty network. We conclude that this "Data-Informed FD" model—where objective data triggers early detection of student needs and a robust human network executes the necessary interventions—effectively enhances agency for both students and teachers, offering a scalable strategy for educational quality assurance.

Keywords: Data-Informed FD, Non-Cognitive Abilities, Student Agency, Learning Analytics, Team Teaching, Andragogy

Introduction

Extended Summary

In contemporary higher education, a fundamental paradigm shift is underway, moving from a focus solely on cognitive abilities—such as knowledge acquisition and technical skills—toward the cultivation of non-cognitive abilities. As highlighted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s emphasis on "21st-century skills," attributes such as perseverance, self-regulation, and collaborative attitudes are increasingly recognized as essential foundations for "Student Agency"—the capacity for students to act independently and make responsible decisions in an uncertain future (Hughson & Wood, 2022). In this context, we specifically define the core of such agency through four practical elements: Guts (courage to face difficulties), Resilience (ability to recover from failure), Initiative (proactive goal setting), and Tenacity (persistence to complete tasks)(Duckworth et al., 2007). Theoretically, this represents a necessary evolution from a pedagogical model, where learners are passive recipients, to an andragogical model, which views students as autonomous adults capable of self-directed learning based on their own "self-concept" and "readiness." However, implementing this shift in university settings faces two significant structural barriers. The first is the "visualization challenge": unlike cognitive skills, non-cognitive abilities are difficult to measure through traditional paper-based testing, making it hard for instructors to objectively grasp student conditions or progress. The second is the "Faculty Development (FD) challenge": many university instructors tend to replicate the lecture-based methods they experienced as students, and effective strategies for fostering non-cognitive skills are often tacit knowledge that is difficult to share across an organization. This study aims to propose a sustainable educational model that overcomes these barriers by fusing "data visualization" through educational digital transformation (DX) with a "human network" cultivated through large-scale team teaching. We define this approach as "Data-Informed FD," a strategy that enhances the agency of both students and teachers.

Methods

The field of this research is "Manaburu Tokiwabito," a mandatory first-year experience course offered institution-wide at Kobe Tokiwa University in Japan. This course is designed to instill learning habits and foster non-cognitive abilities in all new students across varying disciplines. A defining feature of this course is its operation through a large-scale team teaching system, where instructors from different faculties form pairs to conduct classes. Our research team adopted an Eduinformatics approach to analyze this educational practice from two perspectives: the objective behavioral data of students and the organizational activity data of the faculty. Specifically, we analyzed the relationship between students' "non-cognitive abilities" (measured via scales such as GRIT) and their "access logs and assignment submission behaviors" on the Learning Management System (LMS). Simultaneously, we visualized the collaboration status among instructors using Social Network Analysis (SNA) to evaluate the sustainability of the FD system.

Results and Discussion

First, we address the visualization of student agency. In our previous research (Mitsunari et al., 2024), we confirmed that academic performance in first-year education is significantly positively influenced not only by cognitive abilities but also by non-cognitive traits such as "GRIT" (perseverance) and diligence. While this underscores the importance of non-cognitive factors, frequently administering psychological questionnaires to monitor these traits is impractical for daily instruction. To solve this, we focused on behavioral logs accumulated in the LMS. Our latest analysis (Mitsunari

et al., 2025) revealed a significant correlation between the timing of assignment submissions and students' non-cognitive scores. Specifically, students who submitted assignments well before the deadline demonstrated significantly higher scores in GRIT and self-regulated learning strategies, as well as higher final academic grades.

Table 1. Correlation Coefficients between Report Submission Timing, Academic

Grades, and Non-cognitive Abilities from (Mitsunari et al., 2025)

Table 1 from Mitsunari et al. (2025) here.

This table demonstrates the significant positive correlations between report submission timing (LMS log data), academic grades, and non-cognitive scales such as GRIT and self-regulated learning strategies. This finding is crucial because it establishes that simple, automatically generated LMS logs can serve as an objective proxy for invisible non-cognitive abilities. By monitoring submission timing, instructors can identify students who may be losing motivation or struggling with self-regulation at an early stage, without relying on subjective surveys. This data visualization acts as a feedback mechanism that triggers timely educational interventions.

Next, we discuss the agency and strategy of the faculty organization that executes these interventions. Even with actionable data, educational effectiveness is limited if the faculty organization is fragmented. At our institution, the operation of the first-year course is explicitly positioned as On-the-Job Training (OJT) for FD, applying andragogical principles to faculty development by valuing their professional experience as a primary resource for learning. Roles such as class preparation, content creation, and assessment are distributed among faculty members, and pairs are intentionally formed between experienced and novice instructors to facilitate the natural transfer of pedagogical know-how. To verify the effectiveness of this system, we conducted a human network analysis of the faculty members involved in the course over several years.

The Network Visualization Figure from (Bannaka et al., 2024) here. This figure visualizes the dense, cross-disciplinary network of faculty pairs, illustrating that the educational system is supported by a robust community rather than isolated individuals.

The analysis revealed a highly dense network of faculty collaboration that transcends disciplinary boundaries. The network structure indicates that the educational system does not rely solely on a specific leader but is supported by a broad base of faculty members who actively participate in course operation. Furthermore, a Feasibility and Sustainability (FS) analysis indicated that this team-based operation has transitioned from a phase of high effort to a sustainable phase where the organizational culture supports continuous improvement. This strong human network functions as a "safety net" for the faculty themselves, allowing them to share challenges and solutions derived from the LMS data.

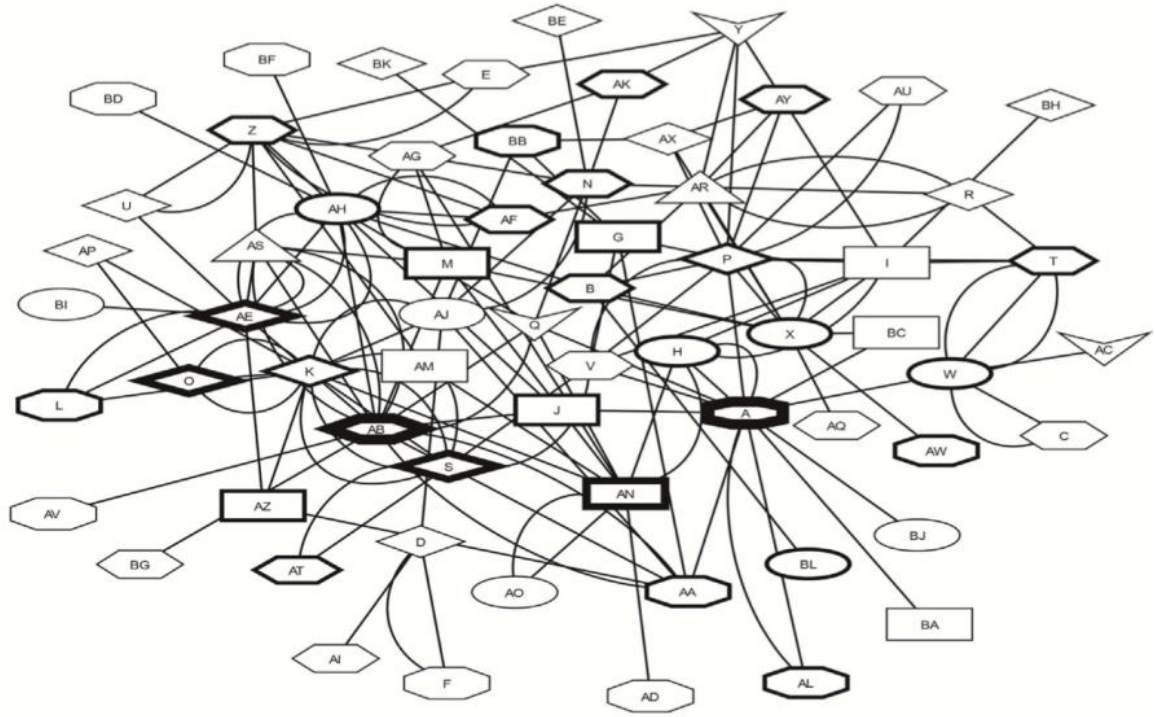


Fig. 1 Figure 1. Visualization of the Cross-Disciplinary Faculty Network Constructed through Team Teaching (2017–2023) from Bannaka et al. (2024). The nodes represent individual faculty members participating in the first-year experience course. Different node shapes correspond to different disciplinary departments (e.g., Nursing, Education, Medical Technology), highlighting the cross-functional nature of the team. The edges connect faculty members who have formed teaching pairs. The resulting dense cluster illustrates how the operation of the course functions as a sustainable "On-the-Job Training" system, creating a robust human network that supports educational quality across the institution.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study proposes a "Data-Informed FD" model where data and human dialogue mutually reinforce each other. The "data" (LMS logs) visualizes the invisible quality of student agency, providing instructors with objective insights. The "faculty network" (team teaching) transforms these insights into concrete instructional actions, functioning as a collective support system. When these two wheels turn together, instructors are empowered to exercise their agency in improving education without isolation, which in turn effectively fosters the student agency required for their future success. This model offers a concrete and practical strategy for universities to guarantee the quality of education sustainably in an era of rapid change, bridging the gap between digital innovation and human organizational development.

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Motivation, Identity, and Professional Development: Insights from a Study of University Teachers

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Abstract

This study investigates motivational drivers, professional identity, and development needs among faculty at the University of Iceland (UI) to inform strategies for improving teaching quality. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory and the systemic model of Mamites et al. (2022), an online survey was distributed to 2,087 faculty members, yielding a 27% response rate. The questionnaire measured motivation, identity, professional development, and collegial networks using validated scales (α = 0.76–0.86).

Results indicate strong intrinsic motivation (M = 5.15) and identified regulation (M = 5.50), reflecting teachers' enjoyment of teaching and sense of moral responsibility. Teacher identity was robust (M = 5.53), while external regulation was moderate (M = 4.35), suggesting limited influence of rewards or student evaluations. Both full-time and adjunct faculty reported minimal pedagogical training prior to teaching (M = 4.4 and 4.8) and expressed a desire for more preparation. Interest in professional development was high (M = 5.4), but time constraints posed significant barriers (M = 3.3). Full-time faculty reported stronger collegial networks than adjuncts (M = 4.1 vs. 3.4; $p < .0001$), highlighting disparities in access to peer support.

Findings underscore the need for institutional strategies that prioritize teaching development, allocate time for pedagogical growth, and foster collaborative cultures. Meeting teachers' psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness can strengthen motivation and improve learning outcomes. These insights offer actionable recommendations for universities seeking to enhance teaching quality through systemic and cultural change.

Keywords: motivation, professional identity, faculty development, institutional culture

Extended Summary

Introduction

The quality of university teaching is shaped by a complex interplay of individual, institutional, and contextual factors. This study explores the teaching environment, professional development needs, and motivational drivers among faculty at the University of Iceland (UI). The overarching aim was to identify elements that support and encourage teachers through targeted training and institutional strategies that enhance teaching quality. The presentation focuses on factors that motivate teachers and strengthen their professional identity.

Research emphasizes that institutional culture and teaching environment significantly influence teachers' motivation, values, and identity (Steinert et al., 2016). Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) provides a useful lens, positing that individuals seek three basic psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness which, when fulfilled, foster intrinsic motivation and well-being. Motivation is a key driver of teaching quality (Han & Yin, 2016), and collaborative cultures further enhance professional growth (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009).

Mamites et al. (2022) propose a systemic model distinguishing primary causal drivers (e.g., institutional resources, psychological factors) from secondary influencers (e.g., motivation, feedback, identity). These interconnected factors shape teaching practices and professional development. Contextual enablers such as student diversity and institutional support structures also play a critical role (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Gibbs, 2010).

Methods

An online survey was distributed in spring 2022 to 2,087 faculty members at UI, yielding a 27% response rate. The questionnaire, adapted from validated instruments (O'Sullivan & Irby, 2011; Steinert et al., 2016), included scales measuring motivation, identity, professional development, and collegial networks (α = 0.76–0.86). Responses were recorded on a six-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). Reliability analyses confirmed internal consistency (α values ranging from 0.76 to 0.86).

Key Findings

Motivation and Identity. Four dimensions were examined: intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, external regulation, and teacher identity. Intrinsic motivation was strong (M = 5.15), with 79% of respondents reporting high enjoyment in teaching. Identified regulation scored even higher (M = 5.50), reflecting a sense of moral responsibility to educate future generations. External regulation was moderate (M = 4.35), suggesting that rewards and recognition have limited motivational impact. Interestingly, improved student evaluations were not perceived as a strong incentive. Teacher identity was robust (M = 5.53), with 92% agreeing that being a good teacher is integral to their self-concept.

Professional Development, Preparation, and Collegial Connections. Both full-time and adjunct faculty reported minimal pedagogical training prior to assuming teaching roles (M = 4.4 and 4.8) and expressed a desire for more preparation. Teachers showed strong interest in enhancing their teaching skills (M = 5.4) but cited lack of time as a barrier (M = 3.3). Participation in development activities was modest, with adjuncts attending one to two events annually and full-time

faculty three to four. Both groups valued these events and applied what they learned in practice. Findings echo prior research indicating that adjuncts often feel unsupported and "thrown in at the deep end" (Jolley et al., 2014). Social and professional connections were assessed using a three-item scale ($\alpha = 0.78$). Full-time faculty reported stronger networks ($M = 4.1$) than adjuncts ($M = 3.4$; $p < .0001$), highlighting disparities in access to peer support.

Discussion

The study confirms that intrinsic motivation and professional identity are central to teaching quality. Teachers' commitment to their role is evident, yet structural barriers, particularly time constraints, limit engagement in professional development. International examples, such as Utrecht University, demonstrate the feasibility of embedding teaching development into formal workload models. Similarly, departmental initiatives like "teach-talk" and ambassador roles within departments could strengthen professional communities. Collaborative cultures characterized by trust and open dialogue are known to enhance teaching quality (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009), underscoring the need for institutional strategies to foster inclusive communities. A cultural shift is needed to value teaching on par with research and integrate teaching excellence into promotion criteria. Redesigning student evaluation systems to ensure reliability and usefulness is also critical for fostering constructive feedback as possible skepticism may exist toward their reliability.

Conclusion

Teachers at UI exhibit strong intrinsic motivation and a deep sense of responsibility toward students. However, limited preparation, time constraints, and uneven access to collegial support hinder teaching development. Addressing these challenges requires systemic interventions: prioritizing professional development, enhancing institutional recognition, and cultivating collaborative cultures. By meeting teachers' psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, universities can create fertile ground for high-quality teaching and improved student outcomes.

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Leading Academic development–navigating between service and academic pursuits

Linda Barman, Åse Nygren, Ulrike Schnaas

Abstract

In this study we investigated how formal leaders of Academic Development (AD) units in Nordic higher education understand their leadership role and mission in relation to autonomy, service and academisation. Based on interviews with twelve AD leaders from four different countries our analysis shows how leadership entails a delicate "act of balance" between strategic level work and management of operations. We discuss the AD leaders' enacted relational strategies—manifesting as the "Megaphone" (amplifying voices), "Spider" (weaving networks), or "Idealist" (visionary advocacy)—to sustain dialogue with university leaders, central administration, and faculty, with varying success. Our findings can inform the leadership of academic development units, sparking reflection and debate on successful strategies to enhance academic development capacity.

Keywords: Leading Academic Development, Academic leadership, Faculty development units

Extended Summary

Academic development (AD) units in higher education occupy a liminal "third space", balancing multifaceted agendas that often conflict, rendering their leadership highly complex. This study explores how formal leaders of AD units in Nordic universities understand their roles and missions amid tensions of autonomy, service provision, and academisation.

Drawing on established frameworks, academic leadership requires nurturing relations across university contexts while navigating AD's interstitial position—bridging academic departments, operational support, and evolving organizational structures (Little & Green, 2012; Mårtensson & Roxå, 2016). Key challenges include staff recruitment and retention, capacity building, trust-building, and securing sustainable funding (Hoppes & Holley, 2014; Little & Green, 2022; Nygren et al., 2024; Stigmar et al., 2025; Thoenig & Paradeise, 2016). Debates over AD's mission—ranging from service-oriented support for teaching and educational technology to strategic influence on university-wide teaching and learning, or even knowledge production and translation—exacerbate leadership tensions, particularly around autonomy, academic freedom, and transitions from external professional or research backgrounds (Nygren & Sjöberg, 2023; Sutherland, 2018).

To investigate these dynamics, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 12 AD leaders from universities in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Norway. This cross-Nordic design leverages shared features of higher education systems, such as robust traditions in academic development, while illuminating variations (Førland & Roxå, 2023).

Grounded in a view of leadership roles as socially constructed and shaped by internal and external expectations (Turner, 1968), our analysis reveals tentative findings: AD leadership entails a delicate "act of balance" among being strategic partners in decision-making, ensuring relevant course provision, and fostering democratic team leadership. Opportunities to integrate team research on student learning and faculty development further modulate these roles.

We discuss these insights through an interactive leadership lens, emphasizing communication as a social, discursive, and co-constructed process (Ruben & Gigliotti, 2016). AD leaders enact relational strategies—manifesting as the "Megaphone" (amplifying voices), "Spider" (weaving networks), or "Idealist" (visionary advocacy)—to sustain dialogue with university leaders, central administration, and faculty, with varying success. Notably, service-focused units afford leaders greater perceived autonomy, whereas those pursuing strategic or academic ambitions encounter heightened tensions tied to positional legitimacy, mission alignment, and expertise recognition. These findings underscore the need for tailored support to enhance AD leadership efficacy in hybrid academic-service contexts.

Our findings can inform leadership of academic development units, sparking reflection and debate on successful strategies for enhancing academic development capacity.

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How policy shapes agency in academic development. A reflection baed on a case analysis from Germany

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Abstract

Academic Development (AD) has been extensively discussed in the literature from various perspectives, often focusing on its roles, identities, and contributions to higher education. However, a closer analysis seems to be missing of how the setting and enactment of higher education policy affects agency, defines roles and allows space to navigate for academic developers. In a recent chapter, we examined academic development in Germany as a case to understand how academic developers' work and practices are being shaped by the policy framework and execution of a new national funding structure for innovation in higher education. Through a triangulated analysis, we explored the consequences and implications of this development in higher education policy setting. Based on this, in the present contribution we will extend this perspective by discussing how the self-perception and self-identification of AD and of academic developers intertwines with both policy setting and emerging practices. We aim to illuminate an underexplored aspect of AD work, share our reflections on the implications for the German case, and invite the session participants to discuss the relevance of policy, politics and governance of academic development in their respective local contexts.

Keywords: Academic development, policy, agency, Germany

Extended Summary

Academic development (AD) has been explored under the perspectives of the roles, identities and contributions of its actors – namely, academic developers within universities (e.g., Mori et al., 2024; Sutherland, 2015). What so far has not been explored largely, is how the setting and enactment of higher education policy influences the construction of agency and defines roles as well as space to navigate for academic developers. In a recent chapter, the authors of this contribution have explored how national policy decisions and resulting funding regimes in the German higher education landscape have affected academic development work and practice. In the current contribution, this founds the basis for a further exploration how such policy developments affect the agency of academic developers in Germany and beyond. Our focus on German AD as a case is based on recent policy developments, when in 2019, a new policy actor ---- the Foundation for Innovation in Higher Education (German: Stiftung Innovation in der Hochschullehre, from here on: StIL) --- was instated.

Within the federal German higher education ecosystem, the StiL presents a supra-structure intended to further innovation in German higher education through project-bound and competitive funding schemes. The StIL supersedes the regular funding model of German higher education attached to the federal states and therefore can be seen as a major actor in shaping higher education policy. These recent developments in Germany provide an excellent case to explore how policy shapes AD practices and agency.

We draw on an understanding of policy based on Prøitz et al. (2023), who emphasize policy as an active instrument for governance rather than a static framework – or, in other words, as a set of actions and positions adopted by the state with the purpose of shaping and directing the behaviours and decisions of individuals and institutions. Similarly, we draw on sociological understandings of agency, viewing it not as a fixed property that individuals possess, but as something enacted through practice. Agency, in this sense, involves choices and actions that can either reinforce or challenge existing socio-political structures (cf. Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). This dynamic view highlights the relational and contextual nature of agency, situating it within broader social and institutional arrangements. In our research, these two concepts—policy and agency—function as analytical lenses. They enable us to explore how policy shapes and becomes intertwined with the institutionalization of AD in universities, how it influences the professionalization of academic developers, and how it affects the ways in which AD is legitimized and exercised. By examining these interconnections, we aim to better understand the complex interplay between structural forces and individual or collective practices in higher education. The guiding question for our research therefore is: How is agency in German AD affected by the policy setting of the national funding actor StIL, and what consequences and implications does this bear for the future of AD work and practices in and beyond the German national context?

Our study is based on a qualitative triangulation approach in which we contrasted personal observations and first-hand accounts of academic developers collected over the last four years with data from a comprehensive document analysis on publicly accessible documents regarding the policy setting of the StIL. During the analysis, relevant passages from the documents were extracted in an iterative process (cf. Bowen, 2009). We identified key aspects of the StIL's policy focus through its intended objectives, measures, target groups, and stakeholders as expressed in the documents. We then complemented those with the observations and first-hand accounts to conclude how the StIL's policies came to define the roles and spaces to act for German AD.

The analysis revealed evidence for a continuous flux of German AD being positioned as either a legitimized vs. as a marginalized actor, based on evolving funding conditions and funding decisions. Moreover, it showed that the policy

developments enacted through the instatement of the StIL have positioned AD further in a zone of support work and thus impact academic developers' capacity to act as autonomous actors. This entails to be aware of their own agency and thus the possibilities for self-efficacious action as well as the expression of one's own agency through either acting or deliberately choosing not to act. Although or methodological approach does not claim to meet the demands of a comprehensive empirical study, we content that it can help to empirically substantiate conceptual arguments about the hitherto underexplored influence of policy developments on AD agency. It reveals how policy developments affect AD realities and that AD around the world can benefit from questioning and scrutinizing its own agency in relation to the policy set up in their own broader political contexts. Furthermore, our research demonstrates that academic developers continue to be relevant actors in shaping the higher education landscape, but that they would be well advised to reflect on their role in realizing policy goals, especially to be better equipped in negotiating their future recognition. Presenting our paper at the ICED 2026 therefore also intends to spark discussion amongst participants, to bring together varying perspectives in the room and to invite to a joint reflection on the interplay of policy, politics and governance of academic development and its agency.

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Papers 25

Updated Systematic Review on Lecturing in Contemporary University Teaching

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Abstract

Articles published in scientific journals on university face-to-face lectures reflect the tension between their educational value and the need to understand methodological complementarity in line with the academic policies of the EHEA. Two research questions debate the continuity of the lecture: Does interest in renovating the lecture remain among the international research community? And what improvements to the lecture do the reviewed articles suggest? A systematic review is conducted following the PRISMA protocol, focusing on theoretical and methodological commitment, prioritizing documents published in journals with an impact factor. The search strategy was applied consistently across three databases: ERIC, PsycInfo, and Web of Science. The results provide data on: a) the indicators framing the scientific visibility and institutional backing of articles selected, and b) the multidimensional classification of structural components: perspectives, guiding aim, type of study, and the formative, technical, and critical aspects of the articles. The discussion and conclusion will provide answers based on the evidence found in the research for the two research questions, and the results will be evaluated in line with the authors' concerns on the complexity of the oral communication through which teachers and students connect and collaborate in the construction of knowledge.

Keywords: Higher Education, Lecture, PRISMA, Systematic Review, University Teaching

Extended Summary

This paper aims to update the systematic review on lecturing in contemporary university teaching carried out by Tronchoni et al. (2022) and answer the two research questions that have arisen from articles that debate the continuity of this teaching modality and propose improvements of a different nature: (1) Does interest in renovating the lecture format remain among the international research community whose remit is university teaching methods? and (2) What improvements to the lecture format do the reviewed articles suggest, within the framework of the communicative matrix of interactive learning?

Within the framework based on the key directions for rethinking teaching methods derived from the academic policies of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), this study includes the communicative perspective on the research initiated on participatory interaction between teacher and students in university lectures (Tronchoni et al., 2018; Tronchoni, 2019), and the contemporary educational relevance of the presence of the lecture in university classrooms evidenced in multitude of recent publications (Cox and Higginbotham, 2025; Godsk and Møller, 2025; Kniffert et al., 2025; Nahar and Machado, 2025). Every year, articles are published in scientific journals about lectures that reflect the polarized tension between advocates and detractors of its educational value, which at times gives way to an understanding of methodological complementarity for teaching.

Regarding the methodological approach, a systematic review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA protocol, focusing on theoretical and methodological commitment, prioritizing documents published in journals with an impact factor. The search strategy applied is consistent across the three databases: ERIC, PsycInfo, and Web of Science, following the systematic process of inclusion/exclusion.

The key findings of this study inform the interest of the international research community on the face-to-face lecture and provide data on different aspects concerning: a) the indicators framing the scientific visibility and institutional backing of the articles selected, such as: i) the number of quotations, ii) the impact factor, iii) the geographical-academic distribution (countries and continents), and iv) the fields of knowledge (Medicine and Health Sciences, Social Sciences, Exact Sciences, Biological Sciences, Humanities, and Economic and Business Administration Sciences), and b) the multidimensional classification of structural components: 1) perspectives (communicative, cognitive, and active-practical), 2) guiding aim (performance, dispositional, and/or instructional), 3) type of study (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods), and 4) the aspects (formative, technical, and critical) of the considerations derived from the results. According to the previous research questions, the discussion reflects, on the one hand, the geographical channeling of institutional backing and the evaluation of the visibility and scientific reliability of the web of quotation and, on the other hand, the improvements achieved by the interventions carried out in lectures covering the following subjects: a) the information processing and performance, b) the prevalent thematic resonance, c) the communicative matrix of the educational system, and d) the geographical and institutional attempts to improve the lecture.

The practical and educational implications of this updated systematic review highlight the need to adopt a formative approach to the lecture format, recognizing both its continued relevance in contemporary classrooms and its potential for transformation with the participatory interactive learning framework. Future research should explore the results of the every five-year updated systematic reviews say on both research questions with a view to evolving the lecture by

motivated teachers and students committed to the teaching and learning process throughout the co-constructive knowledge process.

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From Local Practices to European Impact: Mapping and Scaling Challenge-Based Learning in Universities

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Abstract

Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) is a transformative pedagogical framework in higher education that promotes student-centered, interdisciplinary learning by engaging learners in real-world challenges. Within the Consortium, 12 partner institutions have adopted CBL as a shared educational model to connect learners, educators, and stakeholders in collaboratively addressing complex societal issues. Although diversity enriches learning ecosystems, it also raises questions about pedagogical coherence, comparability, and sustainability of the framework across different universities.

This paper examines how CBL can be scaled and aligned within a multi-institutional context by analyzing 17 challenges from Uni1, Uni2, and Uni3. Using an adapted version of the CBL Compass (van den Beemt et al., 2022), the study identifies a set of transferable dimensions that define mature CBL vision, teaching and learning practices, and stakeholder engagement, while acknowledging local contextualization. Research findings show strong adherence to core CBL principles such as authenticity, interdisciplinarity, and collaborative problem-solving, alongside variation in stakeholder involvement and assessment strategies. These differences reveal how institutional visions shape the implementation of shared pedagogical models. The study argues that the adapted CBL Compass can serve not only as an evaluation framework but also as a strategic tool for fostering dialogue, promoting alignment, and enhancing quality within European University alliances or other university consortia that adopt a shared pedagogical framework. By translating local experimentation into collective learning, the paper highlights pathways toward a coherent and sustainable European model for challenge-driven education and outlines trajectories for educational development within the Consortium.

Keywords: Challenge-Based Learning, EU Alliances, CBL implementation

Extended Summary

This paper examines how Challenge-Based Learning (CBL) can be scaled and aligned across diverse European universities through a shared evaluative framework. Within the Consortium, 12 partners have implemented CBL since 2019, developing a wide range of challenges that link academic learning to societal needs. By analyzing 17 challenges across three institutions, Uni1, Uni2, and Uni3, the study investigates how an adapted version of the CBL Compass (van den Beemt et al., 2022) can support strategic collaboration across universities, disciplines, faculties, and stakeholder groups such as academic developers and teachers. CBL is recognized as a transformative pedagogical framework that prepares learners to tackle complex societal problems through multidisciplinary collaboration and experiential learning (Helker et al., 2004; O'Sullivan et al., 2025; Leijon et al., 2021; Sukackė et al., 2022). Its relevance extends beyond the classroom, aligning with European policy objectives for higher education that emphasize innovation, inclusion, and sustainability (European Council, 2021-2030 Agenda).

Within the Consortium, CBL serves as the educational framework of a European University model that connects learners, teachers, and external stakeholders in a challenge-driven ecosystem. However, achieving coherence in adapting the same framework across autonomous institutions remains difficult, and empirical evidence on how alliances manage this diversity is still limited. Local variations in regulations, resources, and academic cultures require frameworks that support comparability without enforcing uniformity.

The adapted CBL Compass aims to provide this balance, offering a structured yet flexible tool for shared evaluation, reflection, and strategic alignment. Building on the CBL Compass's two central dimensions, "Vision" and "Teaching & Learning", the study operationalized 19 indicators that reflect the consortium definition of CBL. 17 challenges were selected as cases, and qualitative interviews with teachers and coordinators were conducted in three institutions to assess how each indicator was implemented. A rubric-based scoring system (0-3, where 0 means very low and 3 stands very high) enabled comparative analysis across institutions, while visual mapping (See Fig. 1) highlighted strengths and areas for improvement. The results reveal a strong collective commitment to authentic, real-world challenges and interdisciplinary collaboration. However, institutional focus areas differ: Uni3 emphasizes technical innovation and sustainability-driven challenges; Uni2 balances societal transformation and product-oriented outputs, and Uni1 focuses on regional and social innovation with deep stakeholders' integration. Despite differing approaches, all three institutions exhibit shared CBL pedagogical DNA: real-world relevance, team-based learning, and reflective assessment. The analysis confirms that CBL in the XX has reached a consolidated maturity stage where institutional practices are diverse but aligned through agreed values.

Differences in assessment practices and stakeholders' engagement highlight areas for strategic development. For example, some institutions rely more on product-based outcomes, while others prioritize formative evaluation of learning processes. These differences underline the importance of maintaining flexible, context-sensitive CBL models within a shared European framework. Based on these findings, the alliance is shaping a common strategy for

educational development, which includes collaborative sessions to understand CBL key principles, community of practices, best practices sharing, and open discussions. The findings demonstrate that a shared analytical tool can foster strategic coherence across autonomous institutions without constraining local innovation. The adapted CBL Compass supported not only evaluation but also peer dialogue, enabling teaching teams to exchange experiences and co-define quality standards. This iterative use transformed the CBL Compass from an assessment tool into an educational development tool. The implications extend beyond the intended Consortium. Other European alliances seeking sustainable models for challenge-driven education can use similar frameworks to monitor quality, coordinate support mechanisms, and inform recognition or accreditation processes.

Within the Consortium, the insights have already guided revisions of quality documents and inspired capacity-building initiatives, such as cross-partner teacher training and shared challenge repositories. By evidencing how shared frameworks can bridge institutional diversity, this study contributes to the broader European debate on the future of higher education. It demonstrates that scaling CBL is not merely a pedagogical endeavor but a systemic one, requiring alignment between local practices and transnational governance. Future research could extend the application of the Compass to additional partner institutions, explore longitudinal tracking of Compass indicators, integrate the stakeholder feedback, and the use of digital platforms for collective data gathering. These directions could consolidate CBL as a sustainable pillar for European higher education, capable of combining local engagement with transnational learning ecosystems. This study offers a transferable model for scaling challenge-based education across universities while maintaining pedagogical integrity. Through the adapted CBL Compass, the partners of the Consortium achieved a shared understanding of CBL quality and maturity, enabling strategic decisions grounded in evidence.

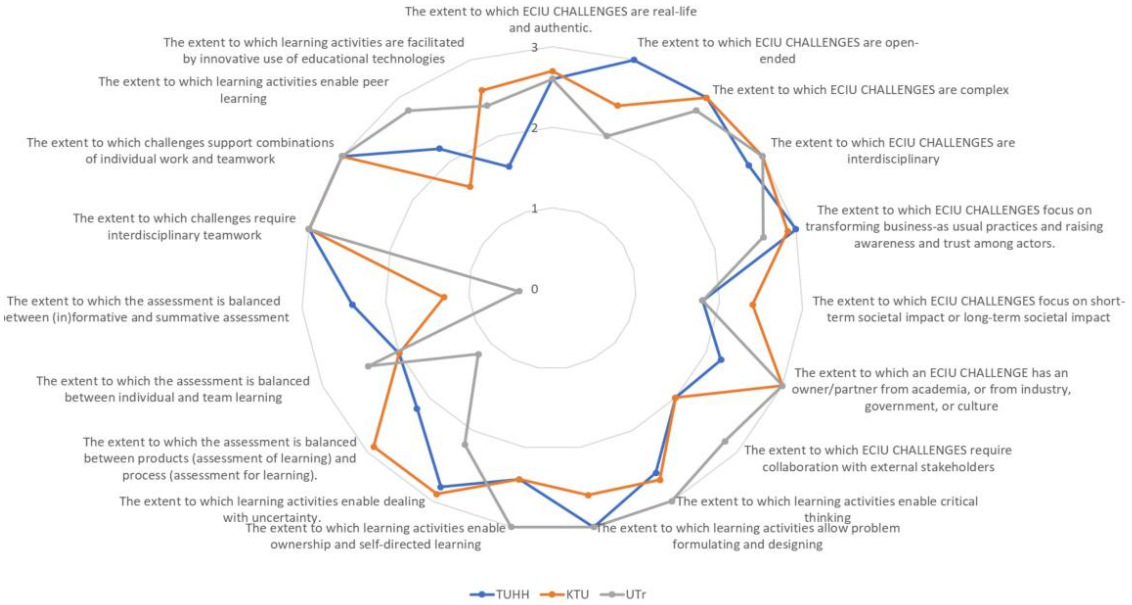


Fig. 1. Radar chart showing the average values for the CBL Compass indicators. The plotted lines represent three partner institutions (grey = Uni1; orange = Uni2; blue = Uni3). Adapted from van den Beemt et al. 2022.

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Investigating hybrid teaching for inclusion, flexibility and internationalization across Europe

Karen Louise Møller, Michael Detyna

Abstract

This talk will be an engaging journey of ideas on how hybrid teaching has been and can be used to support inclusion, flexibility and internationalization. Synchronous hybrid teaching (also known as hybrid flexible learning or hybrid learning) is a form of teaching and learning that has become more popular, especially since the pandemic, and addressed the challenge of students online and on campus being taught simultaneously. A number of institutions have adopted different approaches, and throughout 2025 a European-wide project has been in progress to share good practice and ideas. The central idea of the talk is that there are a number of ways this teaching and learning approach can be beneficial to educators and students if adopted appropriately. In terms of relevance to academic practice we would highlight how hybrid teaching could be adopted as part of practice to provide flexibility for students. We will also explain how this can also contribute to universities' internationalization agenda. There are also challenges with the approach and we will give guidance on how this can be mitigated. Overall, the talk will be of use to practitioners as we will give clear guidance advice and information on how this can be adopted successfully to benefit staff and student experience.

Keywords: Synchronous hybrid learning, hybrid, hyflex, pedagogy, inclusion, flexibility

Extended Summary

The main question the talk addresses is how hybrid teaching has and can be used to support inclusion, flexibility and internationalization. Synchronous hybrid or hybrid flexible learning is a form of teaching and learning that has become more popular, especially since the pandemic, and addressed the challenge of students online and on campus being taught simultaneously. A number of institutions have adopted different approaches to hybrid learning, and throughout 2025 a Europe-wide project (HybridCU) has been in progress to share good practice and ideas.

The context inspiring the talk is the increased use of hybrid teaching in the post-pandemic era, and how European HE institutions can deal with this challenge. The talk will touch on two sub-themes of the conference, around agency, knowledge and strategy to enhance teaching and learning. Specifically, the talk will give examples of how we have shared and used knowledge in the collaborative context of a Europe-wide project looking at hybrid teaching and how this can be applied further. The talk will also look at the importance of digital transformation and inclusivity in higher education. We will also review to what extent this approach can be used for teaching, learning, and curriculum enhancement, and we will look at strategies for building responsive academic development in this context.

We also have research on educator experiences and conducted an associated literature research. One of the key arguments that shapes the talk is the notion that we are on a journey of understanding around this topic, an expedition where we are uncovering and discovering knowledge and pedagogical approaches. There is also significance for academic development, as there have been several academics who have written on this topic already. For example van der Rijst et al (2023) have a detailed account of student engagement challenges and benefits arguing that the pedagogical approach is very important, and that technical challenges and student isolation can occur. Kohnke et al (2021) found that despite communication challenges between students who attended through different modes, students appreciated the flexibility of hybrid learning.

There is greater use of hybrid teaching over the last few years and we've also considered some major themes. There are several important areas to consider we will discuss in the talk. One of these is the use of technology and how it shapes educational experiences. Another key focus is the way teaching and learning practices are being redesigned to better suit modern needs. We also need to consider how students are engaging with their learning, as well as the impact of these changes on staff workload. In terms of what should be done moving forward, it is clear that providing staff with proper training and consistent support in the classroom is crucial. Encouraging more active and collaborative learning approaches is also seen as a valuable way to improve interactivity in hybrid teaching. While many of these findings are consistent with earlier research, we also recognise that research in this area is often poorly reported. As a result, there is a need for future studies to improve the quality of evidence available. This research project was coordinated as part of HybridCU which is an initiative to look at flexibility and internationalization within universities in Europe that are part of the group of universities known as Circle U. Circle U. is a research-intensive and interdisciplinary alliance working to provide outstanding education, research and innovation to contribute to more sustainable, democratic and healthier societies. The HybridCU project aimed to be a bottom-up initiative, launching potential long-term collaborative activities within the alliance. It had activities around the theme of hybrid teaching and aimed to stimulate educators to also develop cooperation within the European partners. Overall the talk will cover a rich and interesting area, with potential to positively impact practice for the attendees. There is also the potential to spark dialogue, inspire change, and offer fresh perspectives around European higher educational institutions.

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Time for a High-Impact-Practices (HIP) Realignment? Iterating Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) to Meet Evolving Student, Community, and University Needs

Elizabeth Dunens, Teresa Henderson Vazquez

Abstract

This session presents a case study of a public U.S. university's initiative to revisit, evaluate, and strategically update its undergraduate community-engaged learning (CEL) curriculum after more than a decade of implementation. The existing model, while effective in earlier contexts, has begun to present challenges related to student experience, faculty capacity, and institutional scalability. We will share the rationale for revisiting this approach, our evaluation design and key findings from stakeholder engagement, and lessons learned from the strategic revision process. Participants will gain practical frameworks and resources for assessing, adapting, and strengthening their own high-impact practices (HIPs) to better align with evolving student needs and institutional realities.

Keywords: High Impact Practices, Curriculum Revision, Evaluation, Strategic Planning, Community Engaged Learning

Extended Summary

Introduction & Background

Nearly two decades ago, George Kuh and the AAC&U identified ten practices as "unusually effective" in promoting undergraduate engagement and success (Kuh, 2008). Subsequent research has consistently demonstrated that High-Impact Educational Practices (HIPs) are associated with deeper learning, increased engagement, persistence, and degree completion, with particularly strong benefits for historically underserved students. HIPs include practices such as first-year seminars, community-engaged learning (CEL), internships, and capstone projects; since Kuh's initial work, institutions have increasingly incorporated HIPs into their offerings (NSSE, 2020).

Despite their promise, the impact of HIPs is not automatic. As Kuh emphasized, HIPs produce meaningful outcomes only "when done well" (2008, p. 14). Simply offering HIPs is insufficient; intentional design, adequate support, and equitably access are essential. More recently, Zilvinskis et al. (2022) cautioned against treating HIPs as a checklist of practices, which obscures persistent challenges related to equity, scale, fidelity, along with unique and evolving institutional contexts. A HIP considered "well done" in the aughts may no longer meet student and institutional realities of the 2020s. While robust literature exists on HIP best practices, along with tools for assessing HIP student outcomes (e.g., AAC&U VALUE rubrics), how institutions regularly assess, evaluate, and strategically iterate on HIPs over time is underexplored (AAC&U, n.d.; Finley, 2019; Zilvinskis et al., 2022).

Finley (2019) argues HIPs are most effective when assessed comprehensively, attending to quality of engagement, equity of access, and contextual conditions; simply labeling a practice as "high-impact" does not guarantee effectiveness; assessment must be intentional, evidence-informed, and attentive to variation across student populations and institutional settings. We contribute to this emerging literature through a practice-based case study of one university's current initiative to evaluate and realign their HIP, community-engaged learning (CEL). Our CEL model and requirement has existed for more than 13 years, but in recent years has exhibited signs of diminished impact. Enrollment growth, shifts in student populations, and broader societal challenges have raised questions about the purpose, scalability, and design of this HIP at our university. In response, this year we designed and initiated a strategic reevaluation process.

This case study examines the successes, challenges, and lessons learned from our ongoing evaluation process. We will address: how we knew it was time for reevaluation; assessment of our CEL model using a data-informed approach; identification and engagement of key stakeholders; and our strategic plan for realigning this HIP based on findings. Participants will gain practical frameworks for recognizing when their own HIPs require a "check-up" and recommendations for designing evaluation processes that support meaningful realignment.

Methods We employ a two-part methodological approach. First, we use a practice-based case study methodology (Yin, 2018) to document and analyze the university's year-long strategic evaluation of CEL. This approach enables examination of successes, challenges, and lessons learned within our institutional context to share this process as a model that may be useful to other university faculty and administrators. In our case study, we provide essential background on CEL at the institution, outline our HIP evaluation process and design, and summarize data and findings from our evaluation and also Ad Hoc Committee debrief reflections on the evaluation process. The second methodological approach utilized was that of the actual design of our HIP evaluation. Our process was guided by Finley's (2019) logic model approach to HIP assessment and Zilvinskis et al.'s (2022) Four Dimensions to Deliver on the Promise of HIPs. Recognizing the critical role of institutional culture in postsecondary organizational change (Kezar, 2018; Tierney, 2008), our institutional context and culture served as a third pillar for our approach. This included strategically engaging institutional "champions," employing targeted strategies to increase survey participation, and leveraging institutional and student context to guide the timing and structure of data collection. We are currently mid-way through our HIP evaluation (Figure 1), with data collection nearly complete. Data includes quantitative/qualitative survey

responses from 100+ undergraduates enrolled in Fall 2024, Spring 2025, and Fall 2025 CEL courses; this includes student reflections on the value of CEL and recommendations for improvement. Additional survey data were collected from nearly 50% of our faculty/staff, eliciting perspectives on the purpose of CEL, priority student outcomes, and curricular adjustments to align with ongoing university growth. We also review historic institutional documents outlining past CEL policies, goals, and planning.

Findings & Implications

Although our CEL strategic revaluation is ongoing, several insights have already emerged with implications for institutional revisiting of HIPs. One key success has been the intentional formation of an ad hoc committee dedicated to this work. Our experience suggests that comprehensive evaluation and strategic realignment of HIPs is unlikely to occur organically without a clearly defined structure, charge, and timeline. Equally important has been the committee's composition, which includes faculty and staff with varying tenure at the institution, interdisciplinary representation, and familiarity with CEL as a HIP. This combination strengthened both the credibility of the process and the quality of dialogue around purpose, design, and impact.

Another early insight concerns survey design. We began our data collection with a renewed articulation of why our current (and future) students should participate in CEL (which is one of multiple HIPs in our undergraduate offerings). This kept us from falling into the trap of "because we've always done it" or the other challenge of jumping ahead to think about design logistics without being grounded in a solid, value's based vision. This generated richer responses from students, faculty, and staff and surfaced questions about alignment, equity, and scalability that extend beyond traditional participation metrics and were tailored to our specific students, university, and community.

By May 2026, we will conclude our initiative and begin implementing our realignment strategy. At ICED, we will share our HIP evaluation findings and recommendations from our case study for other institutions and HIPs. Finley (2019) notes, the term "high-impact" itself can obscure the need for evaluation: "With a name like that, what is left to assess? The answer is plenty" (p. 4). We offer a practical model(ing) to ensure our HIPs remain meaningful, equitable, and effective amid our changing institutional conditions.

N.B. This is our first time submitting a proposal to ICED. Given the timeline of our work, if it is more appropriate for this to be a poster than a paper session, we are open to this. We anticipate having enough findings for a paper, but will gladly present as a poster if that is a better fit for this conference.

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Where Action Research promotes Researcher Agency via Work-Based Learning.

Rana Challah

Abstract

This presentation highlights the importance of combining Action-Research (AR) and Work-Based Learning (WBL). While WBL has not been often combined with AR it is, nevertheless, recognized as a methodology which helps foster researcher and university teacher agency. How does the practical inquiry and collaborative process of AR trigger paradigmatic shifts on how researchers approach research methodology? Based on a qualitative approach, we illustrate how the combination of both AR and WBL enhances the inquiry process of AR and makes researchers reflect upon their research methods and readjust their AR roadmap, a process which fosters researchers' practical knowledge and agency. The findings suggest that the combination of AR and WBL helped transform researchers' views and made them more aware of the systemic challenges faced by university teachers. Instead of focusing only on teaching practice, researchers adopted a more systematic approach, considering the institutional context that shapes teaching and learning within the university. For education and training policy, these perspectives advocate for more participatory, contextualized approaches that are co-constructed with actors in the field. AR, collaborative and contextualised methodologies capable of capturing both the dynamics of agency should be promoted to address the challenges faced by higher education professionals, stakeholders, and practitioners.

Keywords: Action-Research, Work-Based Learning, Teacher, Researcher

Extended Summary

1. Introduction and problem statement:

This presentation highlights the benefits of the combination of action research (AR) and Work-Based Learning (WBL). AR is often suggested as an empowering approach for bridging the theory-practice gap, reflecting on and learning from practice. It is often considered as a way for researchers to find answers to questions that bewilder them (West, 2011). It is specifically referred to an iterative, exploratory and cyclical process (Levin & Merritt, 2006). While WBL has not been often combined with AR it is, nevertheless, recognized as a methodology which helps foster researcher's and university teacher's agency. How does the practical inquiry and collaborative process of AR trigger paradigmatic shifts on how researchers approach research methodology? Our objective is to illustrate how AR exemplifies the main characteristics of WBK. We show how the combination of both AR and WBL enhances the inquiry process of AR and makes researchers reflect upon their research methods and readjust their AR roadmap, a process which fosters researchers practical knowledge and agency. We focus on the learning process using a work-based learning approach (Heyler and Kay, 2015) to illustrate how researcher knowledge evolves. Then, we show how a researcher not only uses action research methods to collect data, but also leads interviewees towards a greater awareness of their own practice in their own institutions (Robertson, 2000). This awareness triggers a process of collective theorising rooted in the experience of the interviewees who live the phenomenon that we want to shed light on and possibly the reality that we want to change (Campenhoudt et al., 2005).

2. Context:

Our research team (three researchers) conducted an AR project in a French university (2020-2023). Developed through our university strategic plan, the AR project seeks to provide a context and framework for scaffolding professional development through reflective practice.

3. Work-Based Learning and Action Research:

Like WBL, AR is practice-based. It helps practitioners merge theory and practice to address practice-based problems. It entails the collaboration between researchers and practitioners in "diagnosing problems, designing action plans and implementing these actions" (Holter & Schwartz-Barcott, 1993, p. 299). It is important to note that the "term 'practitioner' refers to an individualghada challa who knows the field or workplace 'from the inside'. In our university, the practitioners involved range from directors of studies to faculty staff. The researcher-practitioner collaboration aims at facilitating the implementation of the action research. During the process of collaboration both practitioners and researchers identify problems or potential problems to bring about efficient change in practice.

4. Methodological approach:

Based on a qualitative approach, we conducted 12 meetings with a panel of 12 teachers and practitioners representing the university departments to get to know the context of our research. Then, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 33 teachers and teacher-researchers from different departments of the university to understand their teaching practice. In this paper, we are primarily interested in studying the process that initially encouraged researchers to rethink their interview guide and modify their questions to better identify the issues and challenges faced by teachers. Our methodology is based on thematic content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of 12 meeting notes and 33 teacher interview transcripts and three researchers' logbooks.

5. Key Findings:

One of the key findings which we will detail in our oral presentation is that logbooks content analysis showed that researchers knew little about their own university. The meetings they conducted with teachers and practitioners made them aware of the several challenges that both stakeholders, teachers and students were facing. Instead of focusing on teacher practice, researchers became better equipped to tackle practical problems. Adjustments related to the pace of the change process and teacher professional development were identified. In our AR, the relevance of both researchers' and directors of studies' collaboration throughout the iterative process was just as important as the theoretical and methodological rigor (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012, Ford et al., 2017). Teachers' and practitioners' feedback helped transform researchers' views and made them more aware of the challenges faced by university teachers. Instead of focusing only on teaching practice, researchers adopted a more systematic approach, considering the institutional context that shapes teaching and learning within the university. By way of example, as shown in table 1 below, our revised interview guide which mainly focused on teacher practice was changed after the meetings we organized to encompass a more systematic view of the context in which teaching practice evolves.

Table 1. Semi-structured interview grid before and after meeting practitioners

Semi-structured interview grid 2021	**Semi-structured interview grid 2022**
1. Professional background.	1. Professional background
2. Education	2. The functioning of the institution
3. The organization of teachers' work	3. The organization of teachers' work
4. Teaching methods	4. Practices for assessing student learning
5. Practices for assessing student learning	5. Practices for supporting students
6. Practices for supporting students	6. Collaboration between teachers and practitioners
7. Valuing teacher's work	7. Prospects for enhancing the status of the teaching profession

Conclusion:

AR can be considered as a catalyst for WBL and an impetus for positive change since it can be a mechanism which promotes practice-based professional development. Professionals become practitioner-researchers, engaged in continuous cycles of observation, action, analysis, and readjustment. For education and training policy, these perspectives advocate for more participatory, contextualized approaches that are co-constructed with actors in the field. AR, collaborative and contextualised methodologies capable of capturing both the dynamics of agency should be promoted to address the challenges we are facing.

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Papers 26

Professional Growth Through the Change Lab: An Ecological View of Faculty Agency

Serhat Başar, Indira Day, Roeland van der Rijst

Abstract

We aim to investigate the experiences of faculty members and the affordances offered by a professional development (PD) program to foster and sustain agency. Utilizing the ecological framework for teacher agency as a theoretical lens, we conducted a qualitative case study and collected data through in-depth interviews with academic developers and faculty members who completed a two-year Change Lab (CL) program. Our analysis revealed three major findings addressing the PD takeaways and affordances for agentic behaviors. First, the program created opportunities for collaborative inquiry practices with various stakeholders. Through the CL, the faculty experienced responsive dialogic interactions with academic developers, collegial exchanges, and partnership with students. Second, collaborative inquiry practices led faculty to develop a reflective stance, through which they could transform their practices and perspectives and develop agency for continuous PD. Finally, the localized nature of the PD and institutional support created a larger sphere of influence and increased visibility beyond CL, which is embodied in the informal dissemination of CL outcomes through collegial interactions with non-participants, institutional changes, and new leadership roles. These takeaways resonate with the ecological dimensions of teacher agency (iterational, projective, and practical-evaluative) since the faculty could build upon their past experiences, envision new perspectives, and utilize institutional and CL-enabled affordances while making educational decisions. This research suggests new implications for academic development by foregrounding the role of faculty-led localized PD practices and institutional support in fostering and sustaining agency.

Keywords: Change Lab, Faculty Agency, Faculty Professional Development, Higher Education.

Extended Summary

Introduction

Professional development (PD) in higher education (HE) is essential for building pedagogical skills and competencies. It is imperative that academics participating in PD experience agency, leading them to act more purposefully and transform their teaching. This study explores the agency of academics participating in Change Lab (CL), a department-specific PD initiative designed to foster faculty agency at a Dutch university's Law School. CL, as an institutionally supported PD program bringing together faculty, academic developers, and students, supports course redesign through collaborative and reflective inquiry (Engeström et al., 1996). Considering the significant role of agency in PD and CL's goal to foster faculty agency, we investigate how the faculty experience CL, and how it fosters and sustains faculty agency from the lenses of the ecological framework for teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2015). By examining faculty and academic developers' takeaways, we analyze how these insights enable the faculty to develop and exert agency.

Theoretical and Methodological Framework

In Priestley et al.'s (2015) ecological framework, agency emerges from the interaction of three dimensions: iterational (how past experiences and knowledge shape current actions), projective (how teachers aspire toward long-term and short-term goals in their teaching), and practical-evaluative (how teachers make decisions and act within the affordances and constraints of their institutional and material environment). In line with Priestley et al. (2015), we define agency as an "emergent phenomenon as something that is achieved by individuals, through the interplay of personal capacities and the resources, affordances and constraints of the environment by means of which individuals act" (p.19). CL helps faculty analyze their course design, identify contradictions, and develop solutions through collaborative and reflective inquiry. We adopted an exploratory approach to examine a single case of CL, with particular interest in how teachers and academic developers work together analyzing and redesigning the curriculum, and how CL had an impact on participants' professional growth. We employed a qualitative case study, conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with CL-participants and CL-academic developers. To investigate PD-takeaways and affordances for agency, we used thematic analysis.

Key Findings and Themes

Collaborative Inquiry and Dialogic Practices

CL offered dialogic and inquiry-driven learning spaces, where faculty, academic developers, and students co-constructed knowledge to transform educational practices. Dialogic sessions between faculty and academic developers helped participants identify course contradictions and develop action plans. Besides, collegial exchanges exposed faculty to diverse perspectives, expanding their teaching repertoires. Faculty- student partnerships enabled faculty to integrate student voices into their professional learning trajectories in non-hierarchical ways. Ongoing dialogic interactions fostered a responsive learning culture, yielding affordances to support the iterational and projective

dimensions of agency since faculty could reconstruct their teaching repertoires and adopt new educational visions. Constant access to these collaborative practices also addresses CL's practical-evaluative affordances.

Reflective Thinking and Transformation in Practice and Perspective

Collaborative inquiry yielded evidence-based reflection. Reflective practice made faculty reposition themselves as facilitators of learning rather than mere knowledge transmitters. Experimenting with innovative approaches, like flipped learning and formative assessment, the faculty transformed their habitual instructional practices. Constant access to inquiry cycles and pedagogical experimentation opportunities enabled the participants to transform their reflective insights into sustained and continuous pedagogical actions. Gaining confidence to navigate pedagogical uncertainties, faculty adopted a sustained reflective stance that supported more agentic decision-making. While this reflective stance reshaped past beliefs (iterational dimension), new positionalities after reflection helped faculty articulate clearer future goals (projective dimension). Additionally, institutional affordances for constant collaboration and reflection (practical-evaluative dimension) contributed to the continuity of this reflective stance.

Institutional Support and Educational Change Beyond the Program

Faculty and CL academic developers stressed that the institutional support, through funding, time, and recognition, significantly encouraged participation and increased CL's visibility within the department. CL's impact also extended beyond participants since informal exchanges in faculty meetings created a "spillover effect" that encouraged non-participants to consider new pedagogies. Some participants gained formal educational leadership roles within their departments. Proposing new ideas and disseminating their changes, they became more visible, which was recognized and acknowledged by the department administration. Thus, CL expanded its sphere of influence and created possibilities of transformative agency beyond the program. It was also noted that cultural (creating an inquiry-based learning culture), structural (collaborative learning spaces), and material (physical and financial aids) affordances contributed to the practical-evaluative dimension of agency.

Theoretical and Educational Significance

Our findings show that agency thrives not only on individual efforts but also through collaborative spaces enabling faculty to align past experiences with new learning, envision transformative course designs, and utilize contextual affordances for a continuous cycle of reflection and learning. We employed an ecological approach to exploring an institutional PD program for the affordances and constraints regarding faculty agency, expanding on previous studies investigating PD and agency (e.g., McChesney & Aldridge, 2021). From an educational perspective, our analysis shows that alongside cross-department PD, universities should also consider long-term, department-specific PD that engages all stakeholders in collaborative and reflective inquiry. Regarding the limited availability of faculty PD and growing demands for improved HE pedagogies, fostering and sustaining faculty agency can complement cross-faculty PD takeaways and yield more continuous trajectories for professional growth.

Implications for Practice, Policy, and Future Research Practice

Our study shows that CL or similar department-specific PD models strengthen faculty agency through building a collaborative and continuous educational inquiry culture. As it requires time, funding, academic developers' support, volunteer participation, inclusion of students, and recognition, institutional policies should be revisited. Future studies focusing on longitudinal effects of PD on agentic behaviors across different or mixed disciplinary contexts could further expand our knowledge and bring relevant and localized insights.

Acknowledgment and Funding

This paper presents findings from the Change Lab component of a larger study examining institutional professional development programs and faculty agency across career stages. A broader analysis, including additional professional development pathways, is currently under review for journal publication.

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Fostering academic developers' agency through the change laboratory methodology.

James Garraway, Najwe Norodien-Fataar, Lauren Davids

Extended Summary

Aim

The aim of this research was to highlight how a type of formative intervention, the activity theory-inspired change laboratory, may assist staff in developing agency to resolve problematic issues in implementing a graduate attributes project. Through so doing staff were working towards balancing the strategic imperatives of the university with the understandings and needs of staff at the departmental level, thus contributing to the conference theme of 'Agency and Strategy'.

Theory and methodology

Most GA at universities can be grouped around 21st Century desirable workplace and societal competencies that universities hope their students will possess upon completing their studies, for example: Critical and analytical thinking; teamwork and communication; flexible and resourceful thinking and problem-solving; and self-management (Wong et al. 2022; Jones 2013; Barrie, 2006).

However, cross-university studies indicate that GA implementation into the curriculum has been at best patchy (Fallows and Stevens 2017) and often met with resistance from staff. Such resistance can be ascribed to university management's often uniform and top-down implementation approach without reference to different disciplinary cultures and knowledge bases (Wong et al., 2022). Furthermore, staff may struggle to understand the overall usefulness and purpose of GA (Bosanquet 2010).

In this research, even though GAs had been around for a number of years they had only recently been revised as an important strategic intervention by university management, and similar difficulties to those reported in the literature had arisen. The change laboratory formative workshop approach was selected as an appropriate intervention to assist development staff firstly because it recognises that problems emerge not in isolation but systemically within the complex ecosystem of the university. Secondly, the approach was selected because it specifically focuses on the development of staff's collective agency to change and improve practices.

In a change laboratory (CL) participants attend structured workshops in which they firstly question the situation they find themselves in and trace the historical origins of the current problems they experience (Engeström, Rantavuori and Kerosuo, 2013). Through grasping the essence of difficulties as systemic and historically rooted contradictions participants are prompted to collectively seek novel ideas or processes to resolve these contradictions. A key outcome of this learning process is the development of agency, or in activity theory terms, transformative agency. Transformative agency refers to CL participants' developing and progressive ability to challenge impediments to productive work and to actively seek ways to resolve these impediments (Sannino, 2022; Haapasaari and Kerosuo 2014).

Key findings

In this research a group of three dedicated academic development and six faculty staff engaged in eight CL sessions over approximately six months. The faculty staff predominantly held a dual role as disciplinary teachers and departmentally situated academic development officers. Data was gathered against the framework of a) Highlighting conflicts within the GA project b) Gaining understanding of the conflicts as systemic and historically-rooted contradictions c) The emergence of new concepts/processes to address the contradictions and the emergence of agency. The key finding was that the CL participants developed their agency to initiate a shift in focus in the GA project from a top-down quality management project to being a core university academic project which challenged faculty's current pedagogical and disciplinary cultures, while acknowledging the concomitant importance of students' lifeworld.

A new academic development tool was forwarded to address this new focus and highlight 'clashes' drawing in part from a previously published tool, the SEEN model (Kensington-Miller et al. 2018). The new tool referred to as the 'multi-pronged GA engagement framework' was then trialled and refined before being put into practice.

Implications

The CL provides a structured and theoretically-based formative intervention to promote academic development staff's transformative agency to challenge the status quo and seek new and improved ways of operating. Thus the suggestion put forward here is that the CL can provide a more scholarly approach for academic developers in working with systemic changes to university life, such as is evident with the introduction of GAs.

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Empowering Educators: PG Certs as Strategic Levers for Equity-Driven Transformation in Higher Education

Hardeep Basra, Dionne Barton

Abstract

This paper examines the strategic role of postgraduate certificates in academic practice as catalysts for higher education transformation, focusing on the development and delivery of Postgraduate Certificate in Empowering Education (PGCEE) at De Montfort University (DMU), UK. Designed in response to sector-wide and institutional demands, including the long-tail impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, persistent inequities in student outcomes, and DMU's 'Empowering University' strategy, the PGCEE seeks to enact a more radical, justice-centred approach to lecturer training. Comprising four modules grounded in active learning pedagogy, the programme places equity, accessibility, and critical reflexivity at its core. This paper foregrounds a module called, Reimagining Higher Education: Addressing Inequality & Justice in Educational Practice, which interrogates power, inequality and justice through multiple critical lenses. Participants are encouraged to examine their positionality, challenge normative assumptions about teaching and learning, and design interventions that address inequitable practices within their own institutional contexts. Drawing on evaluative data from the programme's completed cohorts, including participant feedback and examples of designed interventions, we explore how the PGCEE builds educator agency and institutional capacity for meaningful change. We argue that postgraduate certificates, when intentionally redesigned through an equity-driven framework, can operate as powerful strategic levers for organisational transformation, advancing more inclusive and socially just higher education environments.

Keywords: critical reflexivity; educator agency; equity and justice in higher education; postgraduate certificate.

Extended Summary

Introduction

In contemporary higher education, institutions are under increasing pressure to enhance equity, accessibility and responsiveness to diverse student bodies. The Covid-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated longstanding structural inequalities related to digital access, assessment formats, student support and wellbeing. Meanwhile, higher education institutions have been called to decolonise curricula, disrupt deficit models of student success, and embed inclusive pedagogies across disciplines. Staff development and lecturer training programmes are emerging as critical mechanisms for institutional reform, but their strategic potential remains under-examined.

This paper presents an evaluation of De Montfort University's Postgraduate Certificate in Empowering Education (PGCEE), a recently (2023) redesigned academic development programme positioned as a strategic instrument for institutional transformation. The PGCEE is situated within the university's broader 'Empowering University' strategy and responds to both the external disruptions of the pandemic and internal imperatives to promote representation, progression and success of staff and students from under-represented backgrounds. We argue that postgraduate certificates (PG Certs) in higher education can function not merely as credentialing mechanisms but as strategic levers to enhance educator agency, reshape institutional culture, and drive organisational change.

Programme Rationale and Strategic Purpose

The impetus for the PGCEE emerged from multiple converging demands: the pandemic's revealing of inequitable student experience, the institutional shift toward block teaching and flexible delivery, and DMU's commitment to social justice and equity. Against this backdrop, the PGCEE was designed to be ambitious, justice-centred and contextually responsive. The programme comprises four modules:

1. The Empowering Educator: Educational Practice in Higher Education

2. Digitally Enhanced Learning and Teaching

3. Reimagining Higher Education: Addressing Inequality & Justice in Educational Practice

4. Coaching Conversations in Learning & Teaching

Each module uses active learning, dialogic pedagogy and critical reflection as core methodologies, enabling participants to interrogate not just what they teach, but how and why they teach, and to examine the broader structures in which learning takes place.

Critical Reflexivity and Educator Agency

A central feature of the PGCEE is the development of educator agency through critical reflexivity. Participants are supported to examine their own positionality, values, behaviours and assumptions, and to recognise how teaching practices, curriculum design and assessment approaches may inadvertently reproduce inequities. This approach enables educators to shift from compliance-oriented practice to agentive, transformative behaviour.

Module 3 in Focus: Reimagining Higher Education Module 3 explicitly addresses issues of power, inequality and justice in higher education. Through theoretical frameworks from critical pedagogy, intersectionality and decolonial studies, participants interrogate the normative assumptions underpinning curricula and assessment. They explore how their identities and experiences shape their pedagogical stance, and they design an intervention within their own context as part of the assessment.

Interim Findings and Participant Innovations Initial feedback from the three cohorts reveals key outcomes: heightened awareness of structural inequality in teaching and learning, increased willingness to challenge exclusionary practices, and staff-led innovations such as redesigned assessments, inclusive curriculum mapping, and co-created learning spaces.

Challenges and Lessons Learned Despite early successes, challenges include discomfort engaging with topics of race and privilege, departmental workload pressures and barriers to implementing change. Sustaining change beyond the programme remains an ongoing challenge.

Conclusion

The PGCEE demonstrates how postgraduate certificates may be harnessed as strategic tools for organisational transformation. By embedding equity, justice and critical reflexivity into academic development, the programme empowers educators to become change agents, reshaping curricula, pedagogy and institutional culture.

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GEN-CREA. A case of co-creation of pedagogical tools for gender mainstreaming in higher education.

Gio Gonzales-Asunción, Toni Pérez-Portabella, Iolanda Tortajada, Cilia Willem

Abstract

GEN-CREA arises from the need to coordinate all institutional efforts at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili to develop a long-term teaching staff training strategy for awareness and prevention of gender-based violence in higher education. The project aimed at creating a toolbox available to all the teaching staff with the objective of introducing training on gender-based violence in an overarching way.

This teaching innovation project stands out for its co-creation with the university community, its transversality and the institutional alignment with a synergy between the Equality Unit (UI), the Institute of Education Sciences (ICE), the Educational Resources Service (SRED) and the Vice-rectorate for Academic Policy and Quality (VPAQ) at URV.

The toolbox has been tested in two training pilots (February and September 2025) and has received positive feedback from users after discussing its usefulness and applicability. The toolbox consists of different resources that contain information and examples of applying the gender perspective in assessment of students, in learning environments or in the classroom. One of the most innovative elements is the introduction of AI to support teaching staff in assessing the gender dimension in their teaching guides and suggest improvements.

The tools and its feedback (lessons learnt and good practices) have been disseminated among relevant networks and entities through a Multiplier Event and by means of papers presented at conferences or on fora such as the Inter-University Council of Catalonia, the Xarxa Vives, the RUIGEU and the Aurora International Alliance.

Keywords: gender dimension in teaching, innovation, gender-based violence, teacher training

Extended Summary

One of the trends detected in teacher training in recent years is the greater monitoring and success of specific courses on gender violence. This interest in deepening knowledge and skills to eradicate sexist violence at the university has prompted the URV to coordinate all efforts to develop a long-term strategy with the involvement of all teaching and research staff. Likewise, training to prevent and combat gender-based violence is a cross-cutting theme that is reflected in the URV's Strategic Teaching Plan. Therefore, it is necessary “a reflection about differents elements of teaching-learning process” (Xarxa Vives) and “observe the difference of academic results between men and women” (AQU).

Aim The GEN-CREA project has managed to develop and implement a toolkit, activities and effective teaching resources to include the prevention of gender-based violence in teacher training and to produce a guide to good practices. It is a synergy between the Equality Unit (UI), the Institute of Education Sciences (ICE), the Educational Resources Service (SRED) and the Vice-rectorate for Academic Policy and Quality (VPAQ) at URV.

Methodology

Our overall methdology was hands-on co-creation with the final users (teaching staff) and other stakeholders (students, management and administrative staff). The toolbox has already been implemented in two pilot tests, in February and September 2025, in the first two editions of the initial training (FID) and the in-depth teaching training (FAD) for early-career academics

The work unfolded in four phases:

1. Establishing a collaboration framework, with connections between the different stakeholders: teaching and research staff, administrative staff, students

2. Co-creation and design of the tools, involving student representatives, teaching staff, experts in gender and gender-based violence, and specialists in innovation,

3. Development of the tools, deploying the design ideas, and

4. Pilot implementation, followed by communication and dissemination of results.

The continuous involvement of the target groups and stakeholders at URV ensured that the tools were aligned with the competencies required for teaching and learning from a gender perspective.

Key results

A toolkit with eight different resources was developed as the main outcome of the co-creation process. Gender mainstreaming in the training of teaching staff was integrated in an overarching way: not as a separate training module but as a cross-cutting issue. The toolkit was tested in two training pilots in 2025 and has now been implemented in permanent teacher training. Table 1 is an overview of the different GEN-Crea tools, such as assessment (Carrasco et al., 2024; Azmat et al., 2016), learning environment or deep learning (Hoogervorst et al., 2024; Paricio et al., 2019; Bian et al., 2017):

Table 1. GEN-CREA tools.

Nº	Resource	Type
R1	**Gender perspective in assessment**	Information resource
R2	**Gender perspective in assessment**	ChatGPT model
R3	**Gender perspective in learning environment**	Information resource
R4	**Gender perspective in deep learning**	Information resource
R5	**Climate in the classroom and gender perspective**	Interactive resource
R6	**How to guarantee a safe space for everyone?**	Infographic
R7	**The sex-gender system**	Information resource
R8	**Glossary**	Web

A multiplier event was organised with different stakeholders and policy leaders assessing the usefulness and applicability of the tools. Notably, participants expressed a strong preference for the ChatGPT-based tool (R2), configured and guided by the project team, as a means to systematically review gender-related elements in teaching guides. Other resources (R1, R3, R4) were likewise highlighted as highly valuable tools in teaching practice. The results of the multiplier event showed needs and opportunities, such as improving the classroom climate, the creation of an experiential learning module, the adaptation/exportation of this toolbox to other universities, but also concerns regarding gaps between the training offered and the realities of classroom teaching.

Significance: All these aspects underline the significance of the project, which rests on three key pillars. (1) The overarching introduction of the gender perspective in teaching practices will allow an important shift to be made to promote a teaching role and a climate of constructive, positive and gender violence-free learning in the classrooms. (2) The co-creation methodology demonstrates the innovative dimension of the initiative, particularly in designing targeted actions for early-stage teacher development. (3) Finally, strong institutional backing, achieved through collaboration across multiple URV units, is essential for ensuring long-term sustainability. GEN-CREA not only guarantees better training for higher education teachers but will also benefit students. A possible extension of the project in the future could further strengthen its role as a driver of change, allowing for deeper engagement and continued progress in integrating gender perspectives into university teaching.

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Calm in the Information Storm: Mindfulness and Student Engagement

Hannah Celinski

Abstract

Universities can be recognized as life-long points of connection and growth, despite the current lack of certainty confounding many institutions. As a result, I argue that mindfulness practices act as tangible and accessible connection points for students to engage with their education in ways that support student success through critical growth, personal and technological integrity alongside artificial intelligence, and engagement with economic and environmental insecurities. This paper considers the potential of mindfulness practices in the classroom to promote student engagement, provide sufficient space and time consider personal contributions to class engagement and future submissions, and model practices that continue into a lifetime of grounded, contemplative, and engaged citizenship.

Keywords: mindfulness, focus, pedagogy, reflection

Extended Summary

What is the potential for mindfulness practices to positively impact student experiences and studies in higher education, our community, and our world? The future role of the academy is that of a tightly knit relationship with communities where students no longer attend in short spans to complete credentials but instead return several times across the span of their lifetime to receive continued education to suit the various seasons of their lives. Students are returning to university to retrain, upgrade, and revise their skillsets to suit their evolving focus, goals, and values. To engage learners with varied needs, we are developing pedagogical approaches to mindfulness that incorporate measurable, actionable, and self-bolstering support for student focus, thereby contributing to a student's ability to successfully engage in classroom activities such as active listening, framing personal questions, and participating in discussion.

Mindfulness practices offer students a rare opportunity to navigate their inner thoughts through an explicit reprieve from their technological accessories. It is also time to focus on the class itself, position themselves as present, or explore input for reflective assignments. In order to ensure such opportunities for students, instructors should be offered an opportunity to explore such practices for themselves. They can then choose to adopt mindfulness as part of their pedagogical approach, if they wish. In addition, tying mindfulness to assessed activities such as journal entries, reflective writing, and stressful situations such as presentations and exams, contributes to future minds and agents of change that successfully guide our communities in positive and effective directions. Through contemplative practices, educators can contribute to the evolution of the student as an ethical human by considering who they are, while acknowledging that they are in a state of becoming who they will be (Bai, Park, and Cohen, 2016). By aligning Higher Education's exploration of a future focus and the burgeoning scholarship dedicated to lifelong learning, this paper highlights the importance of reflective practice for students, instructors, institutions, and communities. My research stems from the book, Potlatch as Pedagogy: Learning Through Ceremony, written by Sarah and Robert Davidson. The book is grounded in the Haida ways of learning. The micro goal is to allow the scholarly community to explore the following:

- Include mindfulness as a regular pedagogical approach across departments
- Explicitly include mindfulness activities in classes. The macro goal is to allow the scholarly community to explore the following:
- The purpose of the university as an interwoven entity in communities meant to serve learners in early, mid, and late stages of life.
- Fortification of mindfulness practices as a personal conductor of critical thinking to navigate continued changes in the economy, environment, and society.
- Preparing future citizens who successfully consider the experiences of others, partly to assist with globalization and the ensuing changes to our communities across the globe.

I will introduce my own personal productivity kit, including: one set of Loop earbuds (meant to ease outside noise, promote focus and calm), Calm Strips to facilitate breathing exercises and focus (small stickers you run your fingers over), and a short breathing tutorial, meant to be used as often as needed. The potential of and mindfulness and its relationship to reflective practice brings my passion for student growth into conversation with effective planning for the future of higher education, which is exciting, tangible, and actionable. Reflective practice plays a vital role in personal development, critical thinking, and planning. For example, reflective practice will bolster student engagement with, and planning for, realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Filho, et al., 2018). By engaging the scholarly community in discussions about mindfulness, institutions can bolster student engagement with macro problems and promote development of pathways to addressing overwhelming issues. By considering how aids like Loop earplugs, Calm Strips, and self-guided mindfulness practices impact well-being and quality of life, a path to continued mindfulness practices is prepared. To frame the importance of examining potential tools: "In mental health counseling, the principle of relationship is often a primary focus for obtaining well-being. This translates to the

relationship … within oneself" (Fayed & Cummings, 2022, p. XV). Self-actualization through lifelong engagement with mindfulness practices, paves the way for successful reflection, development of personal agency, and transformative engagement within educational opportunities.

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Papers 27

Storytelling as Boundary Practice: Cross-Cultural Conceptions of Academic Development Work

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Abstract

This study explores how academic developers across China, Canada, and the United Kingdom understand and use storytelling in faculty professional development. Drawing on a phenomenographic approach, the research investigates variations in how storytelling is experienced and conceptualized across diverse contexts. Semi-structured interviews with seven academic developers revealed four interrelated dimensions of storytelling practice: as a pedagogical and professional skill, a medium for emotional engagement and safety, a catalyst for community and peer learning, and a tool for reflective practice and knowledge integration. While these functions are consistent, their enactments are culturally shaped: Chinese participants emphasized relational trust and harmony, whereas Western participants highlighted reflection and evidence-based reasoning. Transnational developers navigated hybrid practices, blending global pedagogical frameworks with local relational norms. The findings position storytelling as a strategic and transformative boundary practice that connects different cultural and institutional logics, reframing it as essential for building trust, navigating resistance, and fostering professional identity formation. The study contributes to a more nuanced, culturally attuned understanding of storytelling's potential in academic development and underscores its significance for fostering faculty learning, community, and reflective growth across diverse educational systems.

Keywords: Storytelling, Academic Development, Phenomenography, Cross-cultural Higher Education

Extended Summary

Aims. This paper examines how academic developers understand and employ storytelling in faculty professional learning across cultural and institutional contexts. While storytelling is widely acknowledged for its cognitive and emotional impact on learners, its role in academic development remains underexplored. The study aims to identify how academic developers conceptualize storytelling, how these conceptions differ across cultures, and how storytelling facilitates professional reflection, community building, and identity formation. Methodological Approach. Grounded in phenomenography (Marton, 1986), this study explores the variation in how storytelling is experienced in practice. Seven academic developers from China, Canada, and the United Kingdom participated in semi-structured interviews focusing on how they use storytelling in workshops, consultations, and faculty learning communities. Data analysis followed the phenomenographic logic of identifying qualitatively distinct categories of experience, culminating in an outcome space that represents the structural relationships among four interdependent dimensions of storytelling. This approach enabled the study to capture both the shared essence and the contextual diversity of storytelling practice. It also responded to Holliday's (2018) call to move beyond static "large culture" dichotomies toward more dynamic understandings of contextual relationalities, namely how individuals mobilize cultural resources in situated professional contexts. Key Findings. The findings identified four hierarchical and relational dimensions of storytelling practice:

1. Pedagogical Practice and Professional Skill

Storytelling served as a pedagogical tool to illustrate complex teaching concepts, bridge theory and practice, and model reflective learning. Participants used stories of "early mistakes" or breakthroughs to humanize professional learning and demonstrate good teaching. As Savvidou (2010) notes, storytelling enables educators to articulate tacit knowledge and transform experience into professional understanding.

2. Emotional Engagement and Safety

Storytelling fostered psychological safety and empathy, allowing faculty to reflect openly. However, cultural norms shaped its expression. Developers in Canada and the UK emphasized maintaining emotional restraint, while Chinese participants valued harmony and relational trust. Storytelling thus operated as both an affective and ethical practice that balanced vulnerability with professionalism.

3. Community and Peer Learning

Storytelling strengthened collegial connections by creating shared spaces for dialogue and recognition. Faculty stories encouraged horizontal exchange, where peers learned from one another's successes and struggles. This aligns with Wenger's (1998) notion of communities of practice, in which shared narratives sustain belonging and mutual learning.

4. Reflective Practice and Knowledge Integration

At its highest level, storytelling enabled reflective practice that integrated emotional, pedagogical, and relational insights. Participants described how stories allowed faculty to reframe assumptions, connect personal experiences with theory, and develop adaptive professional identities. Reflection extended beyond workshops, influencing long-term teaching practice.

Collectively, these four dimensions form a hierarchical-relational model of storytelling, where pedagogical clarity enables emotional safety, emotional trust fosters community, and community interaction leads to reflective transformation (see figure 1). The sequencing of these dimensions varied by context. Chinese developers often viewed relational trust as a prerequisite for emotional openness, whereas Western developers used emotional storytelling to build rapport before fostering community.

Educational Significance. Theoretically, this study advances understanding of storytelling as a boundary practice: a shared professional activity that connects people across disciplinary, institutional, and cultural boundaries. Storytelling enables academic developers to translate between global pedagogical discourses and local professional realities, creating hybrid forms of knowledge and identity.

Educationally, the study contributes to academic development practice in several ways:

- It reframes storytelling from a peripheral activity to a strategic mechanism for professional learning and trust-building.
- It underscores the need for intercultural competence, enabling academic developers to adapt storytelling to culturally specific expectations of emotion, hierarchy, and collaboration.
- It highlights storytelling's role in fostering faculty learning communities, where shared narratives build collegiality and reduce professional isolation.

Conclusion

By comparing storytelling practices across China, Canada, and the UK, this study demonstrates that storytelling is not merely a pedagogical device but a transformative professional process. It supports faculty in navigating complexity, negotiating cultural difference, and cultivating reflective, adaptive teaching identities. As a boundary practice, storytelling bridges emotion and cognition, personal and institutional learning, and local and global perspectives. These insights offer academic developers a culturally sensitive means of fostering meaningful and enduring educational change.

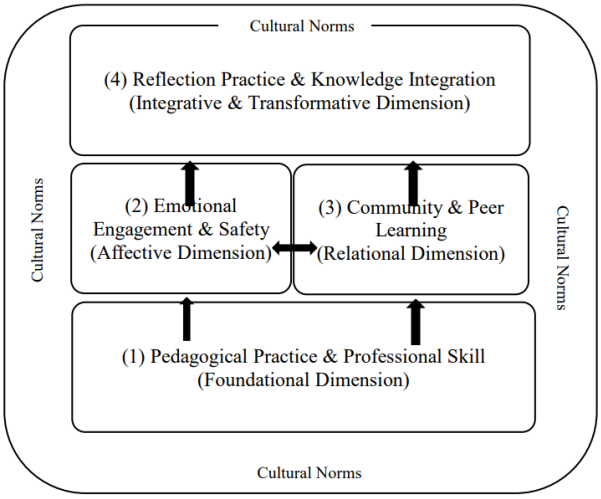


Fig 1. Map of Outcome Space

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Storytelling and narrative research: Holistic research methodologies to boost faculty agency in holistic academic development

Michele Di Pietro

Abstract

What happens when academic developers use storytelling as their main research methodology? This paper reports on a study that interviewed 50+ professors in various disciplines and at different types of institutions in the United States and simply asked them to recount a story that stands out from their career. The results from this simple prompt were surprising even to us researchers. The study used a holistic theory from yoga philosophy as the interpretive framework in order to develop an integrated understanding of the faculty experience. The paper will explain the framework and summarize the methods and results of the study, with particular emphasis on findings about faculty agency in post-pandemic burnout and under political attacks on the professoriate. This study has implications for academic developers who want to take a holistic approach to program development and promote well-being and fulfillment at the same time they develop competencies in their faculty.

Extended Summary

As educational developers, we are used to conducting research through surveys and Likert scales. Usually, our questions are aimed at assessing needs, and, once an intervention is deployed, at measuring the extent to which our faculty have adopted them. Space for qualitative comments allows for some context around the topic of investigation. Trained statistician, I am personally very comfortable and proficient in this mode of research. It provides empirical verification of the tools and techniques we devised based on our theoretical frameworks. But if this is our only mode of operation, deploying new processes to our faculty and then researching how effectively they jump through the hoops we place in front of them, it opens us up to teleological critiques that academic development is essentially a colonial enterprise designed to homogenize faculty into "best" practices they had no agency in creating (Roxå & Mårtensson 2017). What would happen if we turned more power over to the faculty and let them drive the topics of research?

This research project asked over 50 faculty to recount a story that stands out from their academic experience. Narrative theory gives research subjects the agency to construct their identity and to make sense of their experience (Riessman 2008). Over the course of hourlong interviews, they had the opportunity to speak to the topics that matter to them and to define themselves as they wish to be seen, as opposed to the narratives that others imposed on them. This is particularly important in the United States context, where narratives of suspicion about the professoriate have emerged, where university professors are seen as lazy moochers who get summers off or, worse, extremist ideologues who only wish to indoctrinate their students into dangerous gender and Marxist ideologies. Because the aim of the study was to go beyond pedagogy and examine the holistic experience of faculty in academia from a well-being, fulfillment, career development, and beyond, we used a theoretical framework popularized by the mindfulness community to interpret the collected narratives—the chakra framework from yoga philosophy.

This framework revolves around seven vectors for development and fulfillment, one of which is explicitly power/agency, in line with the conference theme. The research questions were twofold: Q1: Is this framework suitable to interpret the faculty experience? Q2: What themes emerge from the professors' narratives when this framework is applied? The chakra framework from yoga philosophy, as it arrived in the west filtered through moder psychology principes (Judith 1996; Erikson 1994), was found to be a very apt too to interpret the faculty experience. The picture that emerges from this study is that of a committed but burned-out professoriate, overwhelmed by unresolved pandemic stress, political attacks, as well as chronic isms in academia. Faculty are conscious of the impact they have in their teaching, research, service, and leadership, but are thwarted by bureaucracy and competing demands. In addition, the framework reveals which developmental rights are supported and which are challenged in academia (most importantly, the most challenged right is almost unanimously the right to speak), as well as the factors that hold faculty back (chief among them fear).

The paper presentation will briefly summarize the social and political context in the US for the study. It will then describe the study design and sampling scheme (purposive sampling from public and private schools; small and large; tenure-track, non-tenure-track and part-time; and oversampling faculty of color and LGBTQ+ faculty to ensure adequate coverage of marginalized experiences). It will add a brief explanation of the seven elements of the chakra framework (grounding/survival, passion, power/agency, love/balance, voice, vision, and transcendence/legacy). It will move to the results of the study, including the three kinds of stories faculty tell in response to the prompt; significant findings in each of the seven categories, particularly the almost ubiquitous struggle to find balance and the ways in which impostor syndrome and the inner critic reduce faculty's own sense of agency.

Findings are also forthcoming in an upcoming book by Routledge ([Redacted] 2026). This session will also discuss how the study itself increase agency in its subjects, using their own unsolicited comments. The research findings are significant in and of themselves as they add details to academic developers' understanding of the professorial experience, but they will also help academic developers design programs to feed all chakra energies in alignment,

supporting faculty as full humans and not only in terms of the metrics our institutions want them to meet (DiPietro 2018).

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Guiding Faculty Communities of Practice Centered on Anti-Racist Writing Pedagogy

Haivan Hoang

Abstract

How can educational development practitioners support faculty working to develop equity-minded, antiracist writing pedagogy? In this paper, I present and analyze a qualitative action research study on two faculty communities of practice at a public research university in the United States. These faculty (n=10) teach writing in their respective disciplines, and their purpose was to generate antiracist writing pedagogy. Through grounded analyses, I report on what faculty participants found most meaningful (students' affective experiences) and most challenging (translating individual narrative experience into antiracist pedagogical practices for a class). This paper invites scholars and practitioners in educational development to explore this action research study in two ways: (1) a SOTL project that brings student voices in to shape faculty development; (2) an example of a faculty CoP that works toward equity-centered teacher development.

Keywords: faculty community of practice, writing pedagogy, antiracism, equity

Overview

How can educational development practitioners support faculty working to develop equity-minded, antiracist writing pedagogy? This paper presents qualitative action research on two faculty communities of practice at a public research university in the United States. These faculty (n=10) teach writing in their respective disciplines, and their purpose was to generate antiracist writing pedagogy. Through grounded analyses of faculty CoP sessions plus faculty pre- and post-session interviews, I share insights about what faculty found most meaningful and most challenging as they developed antiracist approaches to their writing courses. Beyond contributing to educational development's longstanding inquiry into equity and inclusion, this presentation also argues for a CoP model that centers student voices to facilitate faculty development.

Theoretical Framework & Research Methods

This study's inquiry into fostering faculty development around antiracist writing pedagogy draws from two intersecting fields: professional educational development and writing studies. First, educational development scholarship has a core interest in practices that are responsive to diverse students and that foster equity, inclusion, and feelings of belonging. Writing for The Guide to Faculty Development, Mathew Ouellett traces concerns about diversity to the 1960s social movements for racially minoritized students in US universities (Ouellett, 2010). Indeed, equity-oriented educational development in the US landscape requires confronting how racism impacts teaching and learning. Second, this study is shaped by research in postsecondary writing education and literacy studies broadly. Within the US, racism has deep roots in literacy education. Research from literacy studies, sociolinguistic and translingual scholarship, and writing studies documents US literacy histories that are rife with exclusion, segregation, and denigration of marginalized groups' cultural rhetorics and language diversity (Ball, 2010; Hoang, 2015; Prendergast, 2003). This racial legacy has shaped postsecondary writing programs and assessment practices in the US (Condon & Young, 2016; Inoue & Poe, 2012). Both educational developers and writing studies scholars have found promise in cultivating equity-minded, antiracist pedagogy through faculty communities of practice (Hakkola et al., 2021; Thurber & Bossen, 2025; Wenger-Trayner, 2008). Accordingly, I created an action research study, facilitating two small faculty CoPs exploring antiracist writing pedagogy. Faculty participants met for five one-hour sessions in fall 2022, and each participated in two interviews, one before and one after the series. What is distinctive about these CoPs is that sessions centered student reflections about how race affected their experiences in discipline-relevant writing courses; these were insights distilled from an earlier stage of the study based on interviews with undergraduate students (n=49). Data included session transcripts, interview transcripts, participants' syllabi, and my own reflections as facilitator. To explore their textured meaning-making processes, I analyzed these texts via grounded theory.

Key Findings

Faculty participants expressed appreciation for the CoPs as dedicated, collaborative moments to reflect on antiracist pedagogy. The presentation will elaborate on what was most impactful for these teachers:

- Faculty participants stated that hearing students' share their stories and felt experiences (as audio excerpts) was impactful and even moving.
- Faculty participants found the cross-talk among faculty in the CoP generative.

• Most participants stated that they were most inspired by students' insights about writing not only to those with academic or professional authority, but also to write to advocate for or communicate with more marginalized audiences. What several found challenging, however, was moving from listening to individual students' stories to revising or generating new teaching practices. There is an opportunity here to scaffold for teachers this translation of grounded experience into future practice. When asked for thoughts on suggestions for their CoP or future professional

development wishes, there was a consensus that more space for focused conversations about antiracist writing pedagogy would be welcome.

Implications for Educational Development Programs & Research

This paper invites scholars and practitioners in educational development to explore this action research study in two ways: (1) a SOTL project that brings student voices in to shape faculty development; (2) an example of a faculty CoP that works toward equity-centered teacher development.

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Granting Agency: A Writerly Approach to Educational Development

Robert Gray, Laura Cruz

Abstract

In this session, we present findings from a study in which the "writerly" framework of teaching and learning is applied to faculty development programs provided by universities on two different continents. Based on the work of literary theorist Roland Barthes (1974), the writerly framework envisions learning as an interpretive process that empowers students (and teachers) by granting students the agency to become producers rather than consumers of their learning. By dividing the writerly framework into three dimensions—creating spaces, engaging in dialogue, and making meaning—the Writerly Protocol helps teachers, developers, and researchers both design and analyze exemplary moments in courses where the writerly might occur. The study examines two different modalities of faculty development using the writerly protocol. The first program, offered at a US research university, is a year-long experience in which 6-8 participants first identify an emerging teaching practice which they implement in their courses then design and develop a collaborative research project to assess the effectiveness of the new practice. The second is an optional module in the basic pedagogical certification program for university instructors at a Norwegian research university. This is a two-day course that focuses on student interaction with course content and other students that simultaneously aims to make the workshop a writerly experience while also enabling participants to employ a writerly approach in their courses. The findings have implications for how to articulate, assess, and adapt standards for faculty development as a writerly pedagogy.

Keywords: writerly pedagogy, educational development, Roland Barthes, literary theory

Extended Summary

The writerly framework of teaching and learning (Gray, 2025; Gray et al., 2025b) is a novel approach to teaching and learning based on the literary theory of Roland Barthes (1974). Barthes argued that there are two types of texts—readerly texts and writerly texts—where readerly texts are fairly straightforward and writerly texts transform the act of reading into an act of (re)writing), so that the meaning of a text is not provided by the author but rather through a process of negotiation between the author, text, and reader.

We contend that the relationship between teachers, content, and students is essentially analogous to that between authors, texts, and readers and, therefore, posit that learning is not about students recording what their teachers say, but rather about interpreting it, rewriting it into their own new understandings. In this way, students are not consumers of their learning but rather producers of it.

For Barthes, the writerly is the only value we can use for the evaluation of texts, and we contend that it can be fruitfully applied for both the evaluation and design of teaching and learning experiences. To this end, we have developed the Writerly Protocol for Teaching and Learning (Gray, Cruz, et al., 2025) as an evaluation tool that can be used by course reviewers, peer reviewers, or individual instructors (Haubrick et al., 2021; Mårtensson & Roxå, 2015; O'Leary & Savage, 2020). By dividing the writerly framework into three dimensions—creating spaces, engaging in dialogue, and making meaning—the Writerly Protocol helps reviewers and researchers identify exemplary moments in which the writerly is occurring in a course, as well as opportunities where it has the potential to occur.

While the writerly framework and protocol have primarily been applied to the education of students at university (Gray, Russell, et al., 2025; Gray, 2019), its values, tenets, and strategies are just as applicable to academic development, positioning the writerly as a potentially powerful change agent in teaching and learning cultures across universities (Stensaker, 2018). This particular study examines two different modalities of academic development where the Writerly Observation Protocol is employed to identify and analyze the writerliness of each program's design and implementation.

The first program, offered at a US research university, is a year-long experience in which 6-8 participants identify an emerging teaching practice to implement in their courses and then design and develop a collaborative research project to assess the effectiveness of the new practice. The second program is an optional module in the basic pedagogical certification program for university instructors at a Norwegian research university. This is a two-day course that focuses on student interaction with course content that simultaneously aims to make the workshop a writerly experience by shifting the agency of the workshop from the facilitator to the participants, while also enabling the participants to employ a more writerly approach in their courses. Our study uses a multimodal approach which includes an analysis of each program using the writerly protocol (Gray, Cruz, et al. 2025) as well as interview and focus group data from program participants about both their experience in their program and how that experience has played out in their own classrooms. Through this presentation, we hope to show how a writerly approach to academic development shifts the agency of both development programs and frontline teaching and learning from the teacher to the learner.

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Towards a Translanguaging Matrix framework for translanguaging pedagogies in an institution of higher education in South Africa

Tarisai Mpofu

Abstract

The value of translanguaging as a tool for enhancing epistemic access in multilingual societies, such as South Africa, is now commonly recognised. However, what has been a huge challenge has been the lack of a common framework to guide the implementation of translanguaging in a policy and constitutional environment that exists in the country. The paper proposes a pragmatic framework, the Translanguaging Matrix Framework, which prioritises strategic interventions such as language training for staff and students, development of multilingual learning resources, and enhanced awareness of language policies. The framework highlights the importance of institutional support through a supportive policy environment, as well as professional development opportunities for staff and students through short language learning programmes and translanguaging pedagogies training. Additionally, it emphasises the need for inclusive curriculum design and enhanced awareness of language use as a tool for promoting equality and social justice. The paper further recommends that universities allocate sufficient resources to enable the implementation of these interventions. The paper concludes that translanguaging has significant pedagogic value, which can effectively challenge colonial language hierarchies, create inclusive learning environments, and enhance academic success in multilingual contexts.

Keywords: Translanguaging, multilingual pedagogies, linguistic justice, decolonial pedagogy

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper

The paper proposes a practical and context-responsive Translanguaging Matrix Framework to guide the implementation of translanguaging pedagogies in South African higher education institutions. The paper addresses the persistent gap between multilingual language policies and classroom practice by presenting a structured set of interventions to support epistemic access, inclusivity, and social justice.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

The paper is informed by sociocultural theory, decolonial theory, and translanguaging pedagogy as conceptual foundations. Drawing on these frameworks, the Translanguaging Matrix is developed as a model that situates translanguaging within broader institutional, pedagogical, and ideological contexts.

Methodologically, the paper adopts a conceptual and analytical approach, synthesising literature on translanguaging, multilingualism, and higher education transformation to propose a pragmatic, implementable framework.

Key Findings, Arguments, or Outcomes

Translanguaging remains underused in higher education due to limited policy coherence, insufficient staff preparedness, and inadequate multilingual resources. The proposed Translanguaging Matrix Framework consists of interconnected components:

- Institutional support through clear multilingual language policies.
- Professional development for staff and students through short learning programmes, multilingual training, and awareness workshops.
- Pedagogical innovation, including translanguaging lesson design, multilingual assessments, and intentional classroom language practices.
- Resource development, such as multilingual glossaries, translated learning materials, and digital translanguaging tools.
- The framework emphasises the need for universities to allocate resources, prioritise multilingualism, and foster an enabling environment for translanguaging practices.

Theoretical and Educational Significance

This work contributes to ongoing debates on language, access, and transformation in South African higher education by offering a structured model that bridges theory, policy, and classroom practice. The Translanguaging Matrix Framework provides:

- A systematic guide for implementing translanguaging pedagogies across disciplines.
- A foundation for curriculum transformation aimed at disrupting colonial language hierarchies.
- Evidence of the pedagogical value of translanguaging in promoting epistemic access, student participation, and academic success.
- Implications for institutional leadership, including the need for policy alignment, staff development, and sustained investment in multilingual education.

The paper concludes that translanguaging is not merely a linguistic strategy but an essential tool for equity, social justice, and decolonial transformation in multilingual higher education contexts.

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From Assessment to Longitudinal Insights: Building a Data-Driven Learning Ecosystem for Competency-Based Education

Mario Valdebenito Rodas, Karie Niedzielski, Kolton Collins, Benjamin Dyer

Abstract

This paper presents the development of a data-driven ecosystem that integrates longitudinal assessments and reflection to support continuous evaluation of student competencies in a newly established American dental school. The system integrates three critical applications (Qualtrics, SharePoint, and Power BI) to collect, manage, and analyse thousands of evaluations generated from competency-based interactions performed by 60 dental students within a semester. Grounded in social constructivism, learner autonomy, and authentic learning theory, the system is designed to support student-centered, practice-oriented learning. By reconciling and organizing data into a dynamic dashboard that updates twice a week, the school enables longitudinal tracking of learner progress, provides faculty with evidence to guide curricular strategies, and enables senior leaders of the organization to make informed decisions. Through the shared interpretation of millions of data points, students, faculty, and academic leaders engage in ongoing conversations about curricular needs, curricular quality, expectations alignment, and learner's growth. This paper reflects on the impact this system has had on the academic organization and how the system has enabled a space for the student body to evaluate their skillsets as they prepare, through practice-oriented experiences within an integrated curriculum, to join a demanding workforce. As this system continues to evolve, the goal is to generate student performance foresight, anticipating knowledge gaps and providing early, personalized support to ensure timely competency acquisition from the student body. The paper concludes by discussing replicability in other academic contexts.

Keywords: curriculum-analytics, longitudinal evaluation, learning design, competencies, data-driven education

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper

The aim of this paper is to present the design, implementation, and impact of a data-driven learning ecosystem that supports competency-based education within a newly established American dental school. The system was developed to capture and analyse longitudinal assessment data from student clinical performance using integrated tools that support institutional feedback loops and promote learner self-awareness (metacognition). This paper examines how the system, informed by social constructivist learning theory, promotes learner autonomy and facilitates authentic learning experiences by providing actionable insights in a timely manner. Through the breakdown of this newly developed workflow, the paper aims to contribute a transferable model for institutions seeking to operationalize competency-based frameworks through scalable and sustainable data practices.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1980) serves as the foundational theory guiding the active and reflective nature of this project. This theory positions learning as a socially mediated process where understanding is developed through interaction, dialogue, and shared reflection (Phillips, 1995). Informed by this perspective, the system was built to promote ongoing engagement between students and evaluators, where real-time performance data acts as a shared reference point for curricular reflection and performance interpretation. Two additional frameworks support the system's design and function: learner autonomy (Little, 2007) and authentic learning (Herrington et al., 2005). On one hand, learner autonomy emphasizes the importance of students taking ownership of their learning trajectories. The dashboard enables students to monitor progress, interpret trends in evaluations, and engage in guided reflection. It also helps them advocate for opportunities to practice in areas needing targeted support. On the other hand, authentic learning informs the embedding of assessments within real-world contexts. Rather than relying on abstract metrics, the system visualizes data tied to tasks that reflect actual professional demands, such as infection control compliance, procedural execution, and narrative reflections from both evaluators and students. This structure ensures that feedback is timely, relevant to each student, situated in practice, and essential to demonstrate student readiness to join practice environments after graduation.

Methodologically, the system was developed using instructional design principles (ADDIE) for an iterative design with the goal of continuously improve the final product through stakeholder feedback and collaboration (Branch, 2009). Ensuring usability and contextual relevance within the academic program and the 10 practices where students interact with patients. The system was developed using three institutional tools: Qualtrics, SharePoint, and Power BI. These tools capture and analyse large volumes of data generated from clinical assessments, faculty comments, and self-reflections. Each semester, the system processes millions of data points from a cohort of sixty dental students.

Throughout the development of this system, feedback was regularly gathered from senior leaders, faculty, and students. This, with the goal to ensure the system remained relevant and responsive to diverse stakeholder expectations. Early prototypes were refined through collaborative review cycles that led to a more intuitive dashboard experience with clearer visualizations. The dashboard is expected to evolve into a longitudinal tool that encompasses the entire four-year program, enabling deeper insights into individual progression and institutional patterns. As a foundational concept, the system uses Entrustable Professional Activities (ten Cate et al., 2024), displaying tasks over time in red (needs complete support), yellow (needs direct supervision), and green (can perform with indirect supervision). This color-coded system assists in quickly communicating student proficiency to all stakeholders. Reflections on impact are drawn from stakeholder feedback, weekly participation rates, and examples of curricular adjustments driven by dashboard findings at both the experiential and practice level.

Key Findings and Outcomes

The implementation of this dashboard has resulted in improved faculty/student engagement on 1-to-1 interactions and an increased use of data to inform institutional decisions. Weekly dashboard metrics show an average of 200 evaluations being recorded by students and evaluators. To date, a total of 3,355 evaluations has been submitted this semester. These evaluations encompass more than 1,000 patient interactions performed by second year dental students. A milestone uncommon at this early stage in dental education. The system is also providing more than a million data points that are being cleaned and summarized for all relevant stakeholders. Usage logs show the dashboard has been viewed by users 785 times to date averaging 5m and 35 seconds per session this past month. Informal feedback and formal communications have highlighted this dashboard as a contributor to more purposeful conversations between students and faculty during clinical supervision and assessment reviews. Faculty and practice evaluators have used the aggregated data views to detect competency gaps across students based on their location (students are distributed in 10 practices) and the achieved competencies from each student. In several instances, persistent performance gaps have prompted faculty, evaluators, and practice managers to identify cases where the student could pursue practicing the desired procedure. Feedback from practitioners suggest these adjustments have been directly tied to insights found from the dashboard.

At the leadership level, the system has informed decision-makers about the need to calibrate all practices in evaluation practices and feedback techniques. It has also enabled the team to perform tasks related to program structure, clinical progression, and ultimately, accreditation readiness. Overall, the system is fostering a cultural shift toward greater data literacy and shared responsibility for learning, with students and faculty increasingly using evidence to guide performance conversations and curricular improvements.

Educational Significance

This work demonstrates how social constructivist principles can be operationalized in higher education environments through a real-time data ecosystem that fosters reflective learning and timely evaluations. By combining transparency, access, and contextualized performance data, the system supports learner autonomy and faculty development in authentic educational settings. It also creates space for leadership to make evidence-informed curricular and policy decisions at scale. As the system matures, it offers a foundation for exploring how educational institutions can utilize learner data to adapt and improve their curricular experience. Future research will explore how big data models like this one can drive foresight, support predictive analytics, and enhance equity by identifying hidden gaps in early stages of student skill development. The model presented is transferable and scalable, offering institutions a practical framework to embed data-informed decision-making into competency-based curricula.

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Revealing Knowledge Practices in UK Educational Development with Legitimation Code Theory

Jo Kukuczka

Abstract

Educational Developers (EDs) hold a central role in shaping teaching and learning, yet their knowledge practices remain underexplored. This paper investigates how EDs in the UK higher education conceptualise, value, and enact educational theory, and why. Drawing on qualitative survey responses from 30 EDs across diverse institutional contexts, the study combines thematic analysis with the Epistemic Plane from Legitimation Code Theory (LCT) to illuminate EDs' epistemic practices. Findings show that EDs conceptualise theory as explanatory ideas that strengthen judgement, coherence, and principled decision-making. Theory is strongly valued but enacted with considerable variability: many use it explicitly, while others draw on it tacitly, guided by audience, purpose, and institutional pressures. Approaches are predominantly flexible, reflecting a context-responsive stance shaped by disciplinary diversity, relational work, and institutional constraints. Mapping responses onto the Epistemic Plane reveals hybrid epistemic profiles grounded in both principled and situational considerations. The study demonstrates that EDs engage with theory more deeply and explicitly than often assumed, yet structural conditions moderate how openly it can be foregrounded. These insights highlight EDs' epistemic agency and underscore the need for institutional arrangements that recognise EDs as knowledge professionals capable of advancing socially just, conceptually informed Educational Development and the wider academia.

Keywords: Educational Development; Theory Enactment; Legitimation Code Theory; Knowledge Practices

Extended Summary

Introduction

Knowledge matters. For Educational Developers (EDs), educational theory is the key form of knowledge through which they exercise epistemic agency. This theoretical grounding serves a dual purpose: supporting higher education's social mission via conceptual tools for inclusion (Clarence, 2021; Vorster & Quinn, 2017) and providing the legitimacy and principled expertise that underpin ED practice (Carew et al., 2008; Gosling, 2009; Gordon & Smidt, 2025; Shay, 2012;). For theory to fulfil these purposes, it must be explicit and shareable so that knowledge-building in the field can be coherent and cumulative (Clarence, 2021; Laksov & Huijser, 2020; Wilson & Popovic, 2024).

These conditions align closely with the ICED26 Sub-theme 1 on Agency and Knowledge, which foregrounds the epistemic agency of EDs—their capacity to construct and mobilise knowledge that shapes teaching, learning, and institutional directions. Yet scholarship highlights persistent knowledge-blindness (Maton, 2014), where practice is said to be driven by context, institutional pressures, or relational work rather than explicit conceptual grounding - resulting in diffused or tacit theory enactments (Carew et al., 2008; Wilson & Popovic, 2024).

These issues become increasingly consequential as EDs respond to generative AI and greater student diversity while sustaining higher education's social purpose. Yet, despite these expanding demands, empirical research on how EDs use theory remains sparse.

This study addresses that gap by asking: How do Educational Developers in the UK higher education conceptualise, value, and use educational theory in their practice, and why? Using thematic analysis and Legitimation Code Theory's (LCT) explanatory tools, it illuminates EDs' epistemic practices and their role in enabling knowledgeable, agency-rich academic development in the UK context.

The Study

This study examined how EDs in UK higher education conceptualise, value, and use theory in their practice. A qualitative online survey was distributed through UK ED networks and completed by 30 EDs across diverse role types, with ethical approval and full anonymity assured for all participants, and included respondents with varied scholarship allowances across research- and teaching-focused institutions. Open-ended responses were thematically analysed and interpreted through LCT. LCT is a sociological framework for analysing knowledge practices and concerned with the organising principles that shape how knowledge is constructed, communicated, and legitimated (Maton, 2014). The study used LCT's Epistemic Plane (Wolff, 2021)—an analytical tool examining epistemic relations—to identify the explicitness of what counts as knowledge (Ontic Relations, OR) and the flexibility with which knowledge is applied (Discursive Relations, DR). OR and DR were coded on a four-point scale—from very explicit theory use (OR++) to very tacit (OR--) and from very fixed approaches (DR++) to very flexible (DR--)—and plotted to illuminate EDs' epistemic practices.

Findings show that EDs conceptualise theory as sets of ideas, principles, or explanatory models that guide interpretation and improvement of practice. Participants consistently emphasise theory's value, describing it as essential for shaping judgement, informing decisions, and offering coherence to pedagogical reasoning. While some view theory as abstract or distant, they still acknowledge its usefulness when meaningfully applied. EDs overwhelmingly report drawing on theory in practice, though with considerable variation: many use theory explicitly, while others rely on more tacit,

embedded forms. Approaches to theory are predominantly flexible, reflecting an adaptive stance that privileges contextual responsiveness over rigid application.

Explanations for this variability highlight the influence of audience, purpose, institutional culture, and time pressures. Explicit use is common in accredited programmes, when modelling practice, or when supporting colleagues' theoretical development. Tacit use emerges when colleagues seek practical solutions or when institutional norms discourage overt theoretical framing. Flexibility is driven by disciplinary differences, learner needs, and institutional constraints, echoing the elastic practice described by Carew et al. (2008).

Overall, EDs engage with theory more broadly and explicitly than some accounts suggest (Amundsen & Wilson, 2012; Gosling, 2009), yet their ability to foreground powerful theoretical ideas is moderated by institutional pressures toward proceduralism (Shay, 2012). The findings reveal a hybrid theoretical repertoire shaped by both principled and contextual considerations, underscoring the epistemic complexity of contemporary ED practice.

Conclusion

This study shows that the UK EDs view theory as valuable explanatory knowledge that informs practice, though its enactment shifts between explicit and tacit forms. These patterns underscore EDs' epistemic agency and its role in creating conceptually informed, socially just learning environments. When institutions enable EDs to foreground powerful theory, academics gain clearer tools for supporting students' cumulative learning and epistemic access (Clarence, 2021; Maton, 2014) while reducing knowledge-blindness and proceduralism. Creating conditions that recognise EDs as knowledge professionals strengthens cumulative field-building (Shay, 2012) and trust in ED expertise (Wilson & Popovic, 2024).

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Producing and using powerful knowledge in the field of Educational Development

Chrissie Boughey

Abstract

This paper draws on work on knowledge forms produced by social realists such as Bernstein (2000) to explore the production and use of knowledge in the field of Educational Development. According to Shay (2012) the tendency in the field is to use and produce a form of knowledge termed 'codified practice' (Gamble, 2006) which is heavily context bound and which, in contrast to the abstract, systemetised tehorised knowledge of Bernstein's 'vertical discourse' does not have the power to transform teaching and learning. This paper draws on Archer's (1995, 1996, 2000) social realism explore structural and cultural conditions in the field and identify reasons why more work drawing on Bernstein's (2000) vertical discourse is not produced. To do this, it uses interviews with researchers and researcher practitioners in universities in South Africa, the United Kingdom and Australia. In identifying what constrains the emergence of theorised knowledge, the paper has significance for the way Educational Development work is structured and located at institutional levels.

Keywords: Vertical discourse, Educational Development research, practice in Educational Development, social realism

Extended Summary

In recent years, the call to 'bring knowledge back' (Young, 2007) has led to an interest in the forms of knowledge produced and used to understand and inform practice in the field of Educational Development (Shay, 2012; Boughey, 2022). Shay identifies the tendency in the field to draw on 'codified practice' (Gamble, 2006), a form of horizontal discourse, or way of describing the world based on experience (Bernstein, 2000). Because of its context bound and localized nature, this form of knowledge is then understood to lack the power to eNect change in teaching and learning. Boughey (2022, 2024) picks up on Shay's work in exploring the conditions constraining the production of vertical discourse, or 'powerful knowledge' in the field of Educational Development in South Africa. For Boughey, although some powerful knowledge is produced by those interested in teaching and learning in higher education, its production (i) is limited to those located in entities with a strong research tradition and (ii) does not always extend to exploring its implications for practice. Even in institutions where powerful knowledge is produced in centres with responsibility for enhancing teaching and learning, insights from research are not always used to inform practice. In others, powerful knowledge is produced in a research centre or department while practitioners responsible for enhancing teaching and learning are located in another entity. This paper seeks to explore the way these structural arrangements enable and constrain the implementation of knowledge in practice intended to enhance teaching and learning. Theoretical framework The paper draws on Archer's (1995, 1996, 2000) understanding of the social world as stratified into three domains: structure, culture and agency. Agents are understood to possess the power to produce and use powerful knowledge. However, their agency will always be constrained by mechanisms in the domains of structure and culture. In the context of this paper, this means that researchers in research departments and researcher practitioners in teaching and learning centres are understood to possess the power to (i) produce 'powerful' knowledge and (ii) explore its implications for practice in the field Educational Development but that their ability to do both will always be constrained by mechanisms in the domains of structure and culture at institutional and national levels. The paper seeks to answer the following research question:

How do structural arrangements impact on the ability to produce and use powerful knowledge in practice intended to enhance teaching and learning?

The paper uses interviews with researchers and researcher practitioners at six universities located in South Africa, the United Kingdom and Australia. The study is realist in the sense that the experiences and observations described in interviews are understood to emerge from the interplay of relatively enduring mechanisms at a deeper layer of reality which lead to their emergence (Bhaskar, 1978).

The aim of the study was to explore the interplay of these mechanisms in order to answer the research question by using abductive and retroductive reasoning Abduction refers to 'placing and interpreting the original ideas about [a] phenomenon in the frame of a new set of ideas (Danermark et al, 2002:91) while retroduction involves asking the question ' What sort of process, mechanism, agency, and so on, if it existed, would have this phenomenon as its consequence? (Benton & Craib, 2001:185).

Key insights identify the status of Educational Development practitioners and their employment in professional or administrative as contributing to instability in the field and a concomitant failure to develop research expertise. This then contributed to a lack of legitimacy as practitioners worked with academics to enhance teaching. Other insights relate to the impact of understandings of knowledge as a commodity as researchers are driven by the need to publish as well as to understandings of areas of responsibility with researchers not seeing their roles as involving practice.

The paper has significance not only for research activities of Educational Development Practitioners but also for the way the responsibilities for producing and using research are located in institutions and also for the way entities responsibility for practice are positioned and managed.

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Exploring trends in research methods for Academic Development research: signature methodologies?

Elena Benini, Henk Huijser, Anna Serbati

Abstract

This study explores methodological trends in academic development research, with the aim of identifying specific characteristics of the field. An exploratory review of articles published in the International Journal for Academic Development between 2014 and 2023 was conducted. The analysis revealed a clear prevalence of qualitative approaches (75.5%), followed by mixed methods (17.6%) and quantitative methods (6.9%). Interviews, reflective journals, conversations and qualitative questionnaires emerge as the main research tools, reflecting the contextual and relational nature of the work of academic developers. The results suggest that these methodologies do not indicate epistemic closure, but rather a growing maturity of the field, capable of adapting to the complexities of academic contexts. The study therefore proposes that these methodologies can be considered "signature methodologies" of the sector, contributing to the epistemic development of the discipline.

Keywords: Academic Development, Qualitative Research, Signature Methodologies, Scoping Review

Extended Summary

Introduction

The field of Academic Development (AD) is undergoing a phase of critical reflection on its epistemological and methodological identity. Although recognised for its transformative impact on higher education, the field has recently been accused of "epistemic parochialism" (Evans, 2024), a self-referential tendency that limits the theoretical and methodological expansion of the discipline. This study started from an internal reflection within the editorial board of the International Journal for Academic Development (IJAD), in response to the perception of an increase in the use of qualitative and auto-ethnographic methodologies. The aim was to investigate what the most frequently used research methodologies, methods and samples in academic development scholarship and research have been in the last ten years. Through a scoping review of articles published in IJAD between 2014 and 2023, the work explores methodological trends in the field, questioning how they relate to the relational, contextual and transformative nature of the work of academic developers. Echoing the concept of signature pedagogies (Shulman, 2005), "signature methodologies" is proposed, which is used as an interpretative lens to understand whether recurring methodological choices represent a form of epistemic coherence or disciplinary closure.

The study thus aims to contribute to the definition of the methodological identity of AD, offering empirical evidence and critical insights for future research in the field. Methodology The study adopts a scoping review approach, considered particularly suitable for mapping methodological trends in an emerging field. Following the framework of Arksey and O'Malley (2005), all articles published in IJAD between 2014 and 2023 were analysed, excluding editorials, reflections on practice, reviews, invited essays, vignettes, comments, conversations, opinions and theoretical reviews. Only empirical research articles and reflections on research were included. The final corpus comprises 216 articles, selected through abstract screening and validated through preliminary presentations at international seminars. The variables analysed include: methodology, methods, sample type and size, and professional categories of research participants. The methodologies were classified into three main categories: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods, following Burke et al.'s (2007) model.

The methods were further categorised according to their specific nature and frequency of use. Results and discussion The analysis highlighted a clear prevalence of qualitative methodologies (75.5%), followed by mixed methods (17.6%) and quantitative methods (6.9%). This distribution remained stable over the decade analysed, with qualitative methods consistently predominating. Among qualitative methods, interviews were the most widely used tool (39.57%), followed by diaries, conversations and vignettes (21.93%), open questionnaires (14.44%) and auto-ethnographies (9.63%). Quantitative methods were based almost exclusively on structured questionnaires (93.33%), while in mixed methods, questionnaires (46.27%) and interviews (26.87%) dominated. The use of institutional documents was transversal but marginal, while observations and focus groups were less frequent. With regards to participants, the most represented category was academics (133), followed by academic developers (31), students (26), administrators (33), doctoral and post-doctoral students (12), and other stakeholders (36). Sample sizes varied significantly: interviews focused on samples of between 5 and 20 participants, while questionnaires often reached over 50 responses. Auto-ethnography was associated with individual samples (0–5), confirming the reflective and self-narrative nature of this method.

These findings suggest that qualitative methodologies, particularly interviews, diaries, and auto-ethnographies can be considered "signature methodologies" of academic development. They reflect the relational, contextual, and reflective nature of the work of academic developers, and the structural difficulty of conducting large-scale studies in a field that is often marginalised in institutional research contexts. Rather than indicating epistemic closure, this trend can be interpreted as a sign of growing epistemological maturity, reflecting the complexity and plurality of the field.

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University Capacity Development Grants and Their Enactment on the Ground: An Ethnographic Account of a University of Technology

Cephas Makwara, Violet Makwara

Abstract

The University Capacity Development Grants (UCDGs) are designed to strengthen teaching, learning and student support across South African universities. This paper offers an ethnographic account of how UCDG-funded initiatives were enacted within a nascent School of Education at a University of Technology, focusing on a tutor and supplemental instruction programme intended to enhance student access with success. Guided by Margaret Archer's Structure–Culture–Agency framework, the study examines how institutional structures, cultural norms and the agency of lecturers and students intersected to shape the implementation process.

The findings show that while tutors played a crucial role in supporting student learning, their recruitment and day-to-day coordination depended heavily on the agentic efforts of lecturers and students who sought to sustain the programme despite unstable institutional conditions. Structural constraints-including leadership turnover, unclear administrative procedures and inconsistent financial processes-created uncertainty around tutor remuneration. Culturally, discretionary decision-making norms meant that payment rested largely on the authority of the dean, resulting in significant delays and, ultimately, lump-sum disbursements with unintended receiver of tax revenue (SARS) implications for student tutors. These experiences eroded morale, diminished trust and weakened the value-for-money intentions of the UCDG, undermining the transformative aspirations of SDG 4: Quality Education.

The study argues that neither agency nor goodwill alone can compensate for fragile structures and ambiguous cultural expectations. For UCDGs to fulfil their developmental purpose, universities require coherent Standard Operating Procedures, stable leadership practices and transparent administrative systems. Such reforms would ensure that capacity development initiatives meaningfully enhance student success while honouring the labour of those who enact them on the ground.

Keywords: University Capacity Development Grants (UCDG); Ethnography; Structure-Culture-Agency; Student access with Success; Tutor Programme; Higher Education Governance

Extended Summary

Aim:

This paper examines how the University Capacity Development Grants (UCDGs) are enacted in practice within a University of Technology, drawing on an ethnographic study of a tutor and supplemental instruction programme implemented in a newly established School of Education. Although the UCDG policy framework aims to enhance teaching, learning, and student success, the study reveals that institutional misalignments, procedural ambiguities, and cultural tensions significantly undermine the programme's transformative intentions. The paper argues that successful capacity development requires coherent institutional structures, supportive cultural norms, and empowered agency across administrative and academic domains.

The theoretical framework:

The analysis is anchored in Margaret Archer's Structure–Culture–Agency (S–C–A) framework, which illuminates how institutional arrangements, cultural expectations, and human agency interact to shape organisational outcomes. Structures such as HR protocols, financial workflows, and signature hierarchies act as conditioning forces that shape what actors can or cannot do. Cultures—understood as the values, norms, and tacit assumptions guiding academic and administrative practice—mediate how structures are interpreted and enacted. Agency, expressed through individual and collective responses to these conditions, demonstrates how actors attempt either to reproduce or transform their environments. The framework is enriched by related scholarship, including Boughey and McKenna's work on inherited university systems, Manathunga's analysis of academic identity and invisible labour, Tinto's model of institutional responsibility for student success, Vorster and Quinn's notion of epistemic access, and Senge's systems view of organisational learning. Together, these perspectives highlight the systemic nature of capacity development work

Methodological Approach:

The study employs an ethnographic methodology, drawing on the author's insider position as Programme Coordinator responsible for initiating and managing the UCDG-funded tutor programme. Data were generated from email correspondence, WhatsApp communication, meetings with academic and administrative staff, reflective field notes, institutional documents, and interactions with tutors. This positionality enabled direct engagement with bureaucratic processes and everyday organisational practices, capturing the emotional labour, interpretive struggles, and interpersonal negotiations that shaped programme implementation. Reflexivity was central to the analysis, given the dual role of researcher and participant, and the data were interpreted through the lens of Archer's S–C–A framework to understand how structural, cultural, and agentic forces shaped the unfolding of events.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes.

Structural Constraints: Bureaucracy, Procedural Ambiguity, and Fragmented Systems

The study illustrates that the institutional structures governing the UCDG tutor programme were marked by procedural ambiguity and fragmented administrative systems. The approval process required for tutor appointments involved multiple layers of sign-off—Coordinator, HoD, UCDG Office, HR Business Partners, finance units, and the dean—resulting in repeated delays, outdated documents, and cyclical re-submissions. Ambiguity around the HR clause stipulating that tutors should work "less than 24 hours" contributed to confusion, as no unit provided a clear interpretation. Different HR offices disagreed about who held signing authority, and Faculty and UCDG finance units worked with inconsistent understandings of responsibility. These structural contradictions generated predictable bottlenecks that consumed significant time and energy and undermined the reliability of the programme.

Cultural Norms: Protocol, Authority, and Interpretive Flexibility

Cultural expectations within the institution further complicated implementation. The HoD's remark that he was "not a signature machine" reflected a broader cultural understanding that administrative work falls outside academic identity. The School secretary's refusal to forward documents—asserting that it was "not her responsibility"—revealed a cultural defensiveness that prioritised rigid role boundaries over collaborative problem-solving. Shifts in leadership identity also influenced cultural expectations: the dean, previously responsive and accessible, later insisted on strict observance of protocol, altering communication patterns and slowing approval processes. The UCDG Office itself contributed to cultural inconsistency by instructing tutors not to keep registers and later questioning the absence of such records. These contradictions illustrate how cultural norms shape the ways actors interpret rules, enact authority, and respond to uncertainty.

The theoretical and educational significance of the work:

The findings underscore the importance of understanding capacity development as a systemic endeavour rather than a technical exercise. They reveal how organisational architectures—comprising structures, cultures, and agentic practices—determine whether national interventions like the UCDG achieve their intended outcomes. The study reinforces Tinto's assertion that student success is shaped not by student characteristics alone but by the institutional environments that support or hinder learning. It also aligns with Vorster and Quinn's emphasis on epistemic access, showing how unreliable administrative systems compromise students' encounters with disciplinary knowledge. Furthermore, Senge's conception of learning organisations is instructive: where systems lack integration and reflexive adaptation, capacity development initiatives struggle to take hold.

Implications for practice, policy, or future research:

The study highlights the need for coherent institutional procedures, collaboratively developed Standard Operating Procedures, and integrated administrative systems that reduce reliance on individual brokers. Clear communication, predictable onboarding, and timely remuneration are essential to supporting tutors and sustaining supplementary instruction. Leadership development is required to foster cultures that value administrative labour as integral to academic work. At the policy level, universities and the DHET would benefit from establishing communities of practice to share lessons across institutions, monitor implementation challenges, and co-develop solutions. Together, these reforms would help institutions align their structures and cultures with national goals for equitable student success and sustainable capacity development.

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Disciplinary research to promote deep learning and self-regulation

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Abstract

The objective of this symposium is to underline the importance of research in teaching as a driving force to foster student self-regulation and help teachers to guide them toward a deep approach to learning. The interest in this proposal focuses on understanding the different pathways through which disciplinary research is promoted and carried out. Among the options for engaging with disciplinary research, two are developed. On one hand, there is what is known as Scholarly, which involves basing teaching in the discipline on existing research. And on the other hand, there is Scholarship, which additionally entails considering one's own teaching as a focus of research.

Keywords: students self-regulation, deep learning, scholarly, scholarship.

Extended Summary

The symposium is structured into a brief introduction conducted by the session chair, followed by two presentations, the discussion, and closing. The objective of the introduction is to center the topic on research within the disciplines and its importance in promoting students' self-regulated learning and achieving a deep approach to learning.

Presentation 1: Research in teaching disciplines: the ability to transform one's own teaching and contribute to the generation of expert knowledge

All learning begins with asking questions. This phrase, which we have taken for granted when talking about student training, takes on special relevance when we think about it in relation to teachers, because advancing in our understanding of teaching and learning also involves an evolution in the type of questions teachers ask themselves about their own teaching.

At first, there may not be many questions, which means that there is no development; with experience, spontaneous questions arise, based on common sense and not very systematic, they may begin to be based on existing (scholarly) literature, but undoubtedly, the qualitative leap is found when they immerse themselves in research processes.

The thesis put forward in this contribution is that research is fundamentally about asking questions, increasingly better questions, and that this learning process is a powerful strategy for contributing, on the one hand, to the individual transformation of teachers and, on the other, to the evolution of university teaching as a whole, as it generates academic communities of practice that produce knowledge and advance the training of our students in a much more solid way.

There are two main arguments to support this thesis: The first is that research tests a theoretical framework in a specific context, critically and openly and using accurate data, which allows us to think about teaching in a systematic way; and the second is that this production of knowledge takes place in a social context, in which peer deliberation and the academic community of reference take place. In short, we are talking here about the academic approach to teaching, or SoTL.

Presentation 2: Research-Informed Education: Initial pathways, obstacles, and warning signs

This work examines why educational misconceptions—ranging from neuromyths to inaccurate beliefs about motivation, assessment, feedback, and learning strategies—persist among teachers and what research-informed interventions can realistically achieve. Drawing on evidence from conceptual change, misinformation studies, and metacognition, the project maps the prevalence and structure of teacher misconceptions. The findings illustrate both promising pathways and critical obstacles for evidence-informed education, and highlights several “warning signs”—including overconfidence, cognitive load, and identity-protective reasoning—that can undermine research uptake, offering guidance for more effective and realistic routes toward research-informed practice.

Papers 29

Mapping Student Agency in STEM Higher Education: A Systematic Review to Guide Educational Design

Iris Capdevila, Joelyn de Lima, Anja Kranjc Horvat, Mahmoud Al-Subaihi

Abstract

This paper presents the first phase of a design-based research (DBR) project exploring how student agency is conceptualized and supported in STEM higher education. Recognized as a key competence for navigating complexity and change, student agency is increasingly prioritized in policy agendas but remains inconsistently defined and underexplored in STEM contexts. To address this gap, we conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) following PRISMA guidelines. A structured search across Scopus, Web of Science, and ERIC produced 138 studies; after screening, 34 were included for analysis based on predefined criteria: focus on student agency, STEM disciplines, and higher education settings. Preliminary findings suggest most studies are U.S.-based, focused on first-year students, and examine agency mainly at the course level, often linked to engagement and choice. Qualitative methods and small samples dominate, with limited theoretical grounding or validated instruments. The full synthesis will inform the next phases of this DBR project, which include stakeholder inquiry and the co-design and evaluation of a curriculum-parallel intervention. By analyzing how student agency is currently framed, understood, and enacted in STEM higher education, this work contributes to theoretical clarity and addresses gaps in underexplored disciplinary contexts. It also provides practical guidance for educators, academic developers, and institutional leaders, supporting curriculum design and institutional strategies to foster student agency in increasingly digital and interdisciplinary STEM environments.

Keywords: Student agency, STEM Higher education, Systematic literature review, Educational development.

Extended Summary

Rapid technological innovation, demographic shifts, and labor market volatility are reshaping how individuals live, work, and learn (UNESCO, 2021). In response, international organizations have launched ambitious educational agendas to help individuals and institutions adapt. These agendas call on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to broaden their mission, emphasizing lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling, while promoting collaboration across policy, education, business, and civil society. To meet these demands, HEIs are encouraged to redesign structures and pedagogies—offering flexible, personalized learning paths and fostering transversal competences such as critical thinking, collaboration, and resilience (Council of the European Commission, 2022; OECD, 2019; UNESCO, 2021). These shifts are particularly relevant in STEM, where education is shaped by and essential to technological and societal change (European Commission, 2025).

Within this context, student agency is increasingly recognized as a foundational competence, both as guiding principle and as key educational outcome. OECD (2019) defines it as "the capacity to set a goal, reflect, and act responsibly to effect change", a vision operationalized by the EU's Individual Learning Accounts (2022) through mechanisms that empower learners to direct their educational trajectories.

Scholarly interest in student agency has expanded in parallel with policy developments. Conceptually, agency has been studied through four key lenses. The psychological perspective, Bandura (2001), highlights core capacities such as intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, self-reflectiveness and self-efficacy. The social perspective (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) frames agency as a temporally embedded process integrating past habits, future projections, and present evaluations. The sociocultural lens (Eteläpelto et al., 2013) emphasizes the mediating role of tools, communities, and contexts. Lastly, educational perspectives (Jääskelä et al., 2020) focuses on how institutional structures and pedagogical practices shape agency in learning environments.

However, several gaps persist. First, definitions are inconsistent. Many studies treat agency as a vague concept, or reduce it to components like self-efficacy or motivation (Marín et al., 2020). Second, research is concentrated in teacher education and STEM fields are underexplored (Stenalt & Lassesen, 2022). Third, empirical work is predominantly qualitative, small-scale, and rarely longitudinal (Jääskelä et al., 2020). Finally, although AI and digital technologies are transforming learning, their role in shaping agency remains insufficiently examined (Marín et al., 2020).

This study presents the first phase of a broader design-based research (DBR) project on student agency in STEM higher education. We conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) to examine how agency is conceptualized and studied in these contexts. Although AI was included in the initial scope (21.09.2025), only five studies emerged, highlighting its novelty. The review thus focuses on student agency, STEM, and higher education.

Following PRISMA guidelines and Rayyan software, a systematic search was conducted in Scopus, Web of Science, and ERIC (Figure 1). After removing duplicates, 138 unique records were screened based on title and abstract, using predefined inclusion criteria: studies must substantively address student agency, focus on STEM, and be situated in higher education. 51 studies were retained for full-text review. Exclusions were due to: not in higher education (44), no

focus on student agency (18), agency treated as peripheral (43), and unrelated to STEM (12). Many studies met multiple exclusion criteria, hence the numbers exceed the total exclusions.

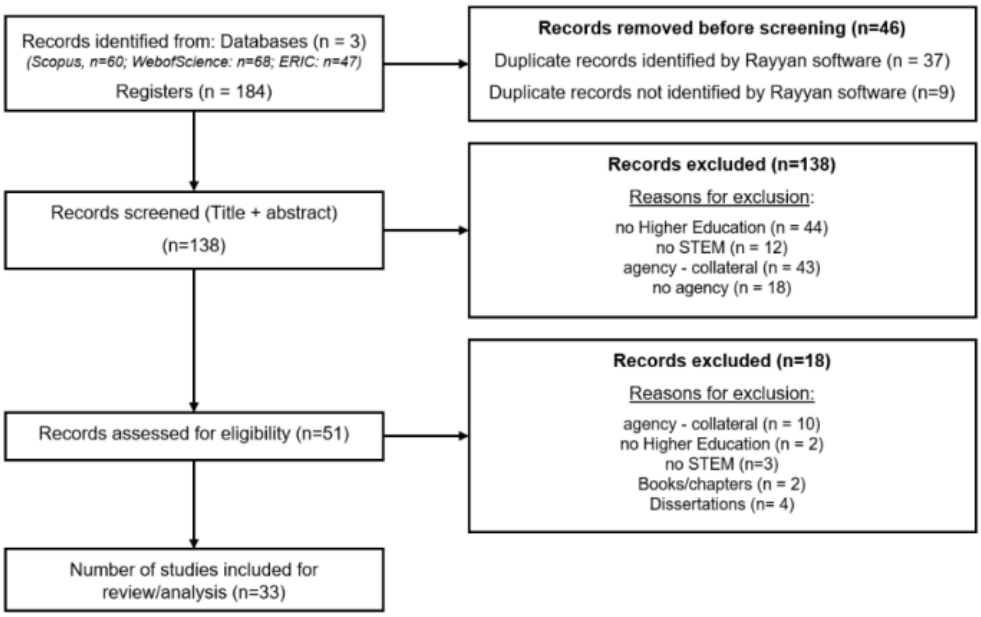


Fig. 1. PRISMA flow diagram.

Two challenges emerged in the screening process. First, it was often difficult to assess from abstracts whether agency was a central focus. Ambiguous cases were thus retained for full-text review. Second, several abstracts did not explicitly state the discipline or educational level, which led to exclusions given the importance of these aspects to our scope. These two challenges further affirm the importance of precise, informative abstracts in academic publishing.

In the second screening phase, authors collaboratively reviewed the full texts. This led to the exclusion of 17 additional studies, mainly for addressing agency only marginally (11), leaving a final set of 34 articles for analysis.

Preliminary findings show that most studies are U.S.-based, focus on first-year STEM students, and investigate agency mainly within the context of individual courses, often linked to engagement and perceived choice. Qualitative methods and small samples dominate, with agency typically measured through diverse and often intuitive approaches. Use of validated tools or theoretical grounding remains limited. These patterns mirror those reported in broader reviews of student agency in higher education, suggesting such trends extend beyond STEM.

The full synthesis, to be presented at ICED2026, will offer insights into how student agency is framed, researched, and fostered in STEM higher education, laying the foundation for future studies that will (i) explore how agency is understood and enacted by stakeholders in STEM, and (ii) inform the co-design of a curriculum-parallel intervention. Ultimately, this work aims to support institutional strategies for curriculum development that foster student agency in STEM higher education.

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Validation and development of learning agency in an interdisciplinary programme in Spain

Joana Jaureguizar, Weiwei Li, Igone Arostegui, Eneritz Jimenez, Alaitz Aizpurua, Nagore Guerra, Iratxe Redondo

Abstract

Addressing contemporary societal challenges, including sustainability and the creation of inclusive communities, requires interdisciplinary learning environments that nurture autonomy, collaboration, and active engagement. Learning agency—defined as the motivation, confidence, and capability to direct and sustain one's learning—is a critical higher-order competency in such settings. Despite its importance, higher education has few validated instruments for assessing agency and limited curriculum models that intentionally support its development in interdisciplinary programmes. This paper reports on the validation of a Learning Agency Scale and its application in an interdisciplinary, inclusion-focused programme at a Spanish university. Drawing on responses from 238 students, exploratory factor analysis confirmed a clear three-factor structure—seeking scaffolding, problem solving, and meaning making. Pre–post comparisons showed a statistically significant improvement in students' problem-solving agency, suggesting that the programme's curriculum design, which integrates authentic societal cases, reflective activities, and collaborative inquiry, effectively strengthens agentic learning behaviours. The study contributes a validated measurement tool for interdisciplinary higher education and demonstrates how intentional curriculum design can enhance student agency, offering actionable insights for academic developers seeking to empower learners and transform curricula toward inclusive, socially responsive education.

Keywords: Learning agency; interdisciplinary education; scale validation, agency development

Extended Summary

Aim: Higher education is increasingly called upon to prepare students to address complex societal issues such as disability, equity, sustainability, migration, and social participation—problems that require collaborative interdisciplinary approaches (DeZure, 2017). Furthermore, curriculum design can intentionally shape the contexts that enable or limit agency (Archer, 2003). The interdisciplinary environments, for example, with high cognitive and social call for not only cultivating learning skills but also learner's initiative and intentional effort, i.e., learning agency.

This paper aims to: (1) validate a theoretically grounded Learning Agency Scale for use in a Spanish interdisciplinary higher education programme, and (2) examine whether the programme's curriculum design supports measurable growth in learning agency across the academic period.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology: Interdisciplinary learning environments challenge students to address multifaceted problems that cannot be solved within a single discipline. Such settings introduce ambiguity, diverse disciplinary languages, and complex problem structures, requiring students to actively regulate their learning and engage collaboratively with peers and teachers.

Learning agency, defined as students' capacity to make sense of learning, take purposeful action, and seek appropriate support, provides a valuable lens for understanding how students navigate these demands of high order learning. Soini et al., (2023) conceptualise agency as motivation, self-efficacy, and strategies in terms of three dimensions: seeking scaffolding, problem solving, and meaning making.

Participants: The study took place in a second-year interdisciplinary programme at a Spanish university. Students from primary education, psychology, social education, and social work programs collaborated on cases involving disability, inclusion, and social participation for 3 months. The programme combined disciplinary and interdisciplinary team-based inquiry, reflective assignments, practitioner's talks and feedback.

A total of 289 students participated in the study. 138 students completed both the pre- and post-programme surveys.

Scale Adaptation and Validation: The Learning Agency Scale (Soini et al., 2023) was translated and adapted in interdisciplinary education context. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to examine the underlying structure relative to the original subscales with 19 items: Seeking Scaffolding (SC), Meaning Making (MM), and Problem Solving (PS).

Analysis Factor loadings and internal consistency were evaluated, and a paired-sample t-test assessed changes in agency dimensions from pre- to post-programme.

Findings 4.1 Validation of the Learning Agency Scale

The factor analysis revealed a clear three-factor solution aligned with the theoretical framework.

Dimension 1: Seeking Scaffolding Agency (McDonald's Omega= .86)

This factor reflects students' confidence and willingness to seek support.

Table 1. Items and factor loading of Dimension 1

Loading	Item Code Soini et al., 2023	Item Description
.899	SC3	I feel confident enough to ask for extra help if I experience difficulties in my studies.
.896	SC4	I ask for help if I am not able to complete the task we have been given.
.858	SC5	I can confidently ask about a topic I don't understand.

Dimension 2: Meaning Making Agency (McDonald's Omega= .75) This factor reflects students' ability to connect new knowledge to prior learning and personal experience.

Table 2. Items and factor loading of Dimension 2

Loading	Item Code Soini et al., 2023	Item Description
.602	MM2	I get interested in a subject when I realize how it connects to something I have previously learned about.
.914	MM4	I get interested in what I'm studying when I understand how it connects to things in my own life
.870	MM5	I learn better when I can find an example from my own life that relates to what I am studying
.581	MM6	I try to think back to what I have previously learned about a topic when I am learning something new

Dimension 3: Problem Solving Agency (McDonald's Omega = .77) Dimension 3 captures strategic engagement, persistence, and flexible thinking.

Although two of the items included in this factor were originally part of the meaning-making dimension in Soini et al. (2023), the empirical structure in our sample indicates that these items operate differently. Rather than describing how students construct conceptual understanding in relation to prior knowledge or personal relevance—the theoretical core of meaning-making in the original model—they functioned as indicators of students' strategic and agentic problem-solving processes.

Table 3. Items and factor loading of Dimension 3

Loading	Item Code Soini et al., 2023	Item Description
.617	MM7	I find it stimulating to think about school work outside of lesson time
.808	PS1	I want to finish even the most difficult homework assignments
.784	PS2	I enjoy tasks that require me to solve problems
.711	PS3	I often come up with alternative solutions to the tasks I've been given
.551	PS6	I am usually able to solve problems related to my studies
Loading	**Item Code** Soini et al., 2023	**Item Description**
.603	MM 3	I can independently work out problems that were unresolved during lesson time

Items with loadings lower than absolute 0.300 were omitted

Pre–Post Results

The analysis revealed a statistically significant increase in the Problem Solving dimension at the end of the programme (M = 31.01, SD = 4.81) comparing to the beginning (M = 29.56, SD = 4.50), t(104) = –2.46, p = .008, d = .24. Seeking Scaffolding and Meaning Making showed positive, though not statistically significant, directional changes (Seeking Scaffolding pretest M = 27.91, SD = 5.50; postets M = 29.56, SD = 4.50; Meaning Making pretest M = 42.76, DT = 5.61, postest M = 43.31, DT = 6.00).

Theoretical and Educational Significance: This study makes three contributions. First, it provides a validated measurement tool for assessing learning agency in interdisciplinary higher education. Second, it offers empirical evidence that curriculum design can meaningfully enhance agency, particularly students' problem-solving capacity, when learning is centred on authentic societal issues and collaborative inquiry. Third, it highlights the need for academic developers and programme designers to embed agency-supportive structures such as interdisciplinary group work, real-word case analysis and reflection, and practitioners' feedback into interdisciplinary curricula to prepare students for the complexities of future professional practice.

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Becoming a Critical Educational Developer: A Framework to Poise Educational Developers as Change Agents By Leveraging the Tenets of Critical Pedagogy

Sharon Ultsch, Stefanie Baier, Adriana Signorini

Abstract

Education is not neutral; it is a political act in an ecosystem that does not transparently acknowledge this truth (Giroux, 2017). In this paper, we maintain that a critical reflective stance questioning should be a central agentic move of educational developers. We argue that by adopting critical stance educational developers are positioned to be change agents who inspire the interrogation of taken-forgranted assumptions and unchallenged epistemologies. We further maintain that educational developers can advance the broader goal of equity and social justice in higher education when they adopt the tenets of critical pedagogy in their practices with academic staff. Thus, this paper introduces a Critical Educational Development (CED) conceptual framework undergirded by the principles of critical pedagogy. In accord with the principles of critical pedagogy, the CED framework identifies EDs as political actors who respond to the need for societal and systemic change within and beyond higher education. Our CED conceptual framework is a tool for EDs to empower faculty to interrogate their pedagogical and curriculum choices using a critical lens that examines power and hierarchical relationships. We further argue that by fostering a reflexive approach to their educational development endeavors, critical education developers adopt a strong professional identity as agents for advancing social justice in higher education. CED encourages academic staff to adopt actionable and concrete ways to disrupt the status quo by exploring and applying the principles of critical pedagogy.

Keywords: Critical pedagogy, Reflexivity, Social justice, Power

Extended Summary

Many educational and academic developers(1) identify as front-line advocates for teaching and learning practices aimed at dismantling systemic inequalities in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). However, as Evans (2023) suggests, there is tension regarding the conceptual and contextual scope of the educational development role in HEIs—specifically, the boundaries of the field and its priorities. This paper contributes by describing a Critical Educational Development (CED) framework and praxis that extends the boundaries of educational development. By reconceptualizing educational development as a critical praxis (Mahon, Heikkinen, Huttunen, 2019), our CED framework raises awareness of equity-minded conceptual issues beyond mainstream teaching and learning boundaries. Given the anti-diversity climate in the U.S., the resistance to systemic change in HEIs (Zembylas, 2021), and rising global anti-immigrant and authoritarian movements (Giroux & Paul, 2024), our framework offers a process to maintain a critical stance and invite questions about education's purpose, practices, and assumptions, reanimating core values to advance equity in educational development despite mounting contestations.

CED praxis explores how EDs can meaningfully involve academic staff in transformative instructional change. By adopting a critical praxis grounded in critical pedagogy (CP), Eds extend mainstream epistemic boundaries by focusing on change agency at the micro level. We argue that the micro level may be a more sustainable approach to advancing social justice (Kezar, Holcombe, Harper, Ueda, 2023). Our focus aligns with Foucault's view that classrooms regulate and control, where power and knowledge serve as mechanisms of social regulation (Ball, 2013).

CED praxis challenges classroom practices as deliberate equity and social justice actions taken by educational developers (Mahon et al., 2019) to question power, knowledge, and social relations in practices that seem inevitable or natural (Ball, 2013).

CED praxis is informed by five CP principles and operates within a neoliberal university to advance social justice. This paper explicates five critical pedagogy principles and shows how EDs can use them when interacting with academic staff. Additionally, our framework augments Kezar et al.'s (2023) assertion of personal reflection by emphasizing reflexivity—continuous self-critical examination of one's assumptions, actions, and positionality—throughout CED praxis. We distinguish between critical reflection and reflexivity, with the former being episodic and the latter ongoing, relational, and interrogating how beliefs and biases shape practice.

Reflexivity, as Sanjakdar and Premier (2023) note, is essential for equity-minded educators because it sustains a critical stance toward power, knowledge, and the self.

The paper describes in detail and provides a graphic illustration of the CED conceptual framework. The CED conceptual framework is a tool that can be adapted by EDs and academic developers globally, as such, it contributes to the project of disruption, dismantling and interrogation of the status quo. CED praxis acknowledges that academic disciplines can reify ontologies and epistemologies, thus reproducing dominant worldviews that hinder systemic change in higher education. In response, the CED framework offers a critical reflective inquiry tool to encourage academic staff to reflect critically on the relationship between their discipline, required knowledge, and pedagogical practices.

Our conceptualization of educational development calls EDs to shift priorities away from what they do and expand their epistemic focus. The new epistemic frontier explored in this paper is CP, which readdresses multiple forms of systemic oppression (Breunig, 2017). CP invites EDs to engage in a transformative questioning technique that draws on a critical perspective to advance equity and social justice. The CED framework adapts the idea of interrogation, but in a spirit of inquiry and dialogue to challenge unexamined understandings in academic disciplines.

(1)Internationally, academic developer is a commonly used term, but for the purposes of this paper we use education developer more commonly used in the U.S. context.

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Agency: lessons from a relational, trust-building approach to academic development

Lisa McDonagh, Emma Sanders

Abstract

In this paper we will explore the active, agentic role academic developers can play in shaping teaching cultures, rather than conceiving of them as passive facilitators or instrumentalist implementers of policy, promoting trust as a fundamental principle that enables agency. We will draw on recent work investigating how "trust in the academic development space can be engendered and sustained through consistent, intentional practice" (McDonagh, L and Sanders, E.C., 2025), presenting selected findings and practical applications that may be said to support agency and the creation and sharing of knowledge in teaching and learning. We will demonstrate ways in which a relational approach to academic development can influence the ways in which we construct individual and collective professional identities, and how these develop our own agency and the agency of the staff with whom we work.

Keywords: Relational, Trust, Confidence, Agency

Extended Summary

The study is grounded in a qualitative research design that emphasizes the lived experiences of academic developers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants across a range of disciplines and levels of experience institutions, providing rich narrative data about how they perceive and enact their work. A survey was also issued that enabled us to triangulate findings from the interviews with quantitative survey data, as well as further qualitative responses to open survey questions. The methodological approach centres on thematic analysis, which allowed the researchers to identify recurring patterns and themes in participants' accounts. This interpretive method was particularly well-suited to exploring the complexities of agency, as it enabled the authors to connect individual experiences to broader institutional and strategic contexts, identifying practices that build trust, confidence and thereby agency in the staff with whom we work. Although the original paper focuses on trust-building through relational approaches to academic development, the study lends itself to drawing conceptually on ideas of agency, identity and strategy in higher education. These concepts provide a scaffold for analysing how academic developers navigate tensions, build relationships and influence institutional priorities.

The findings empower Academic Developers by recognising their strategic contributions to shaping teaching and learning cultures. By examining their practices through qualitative analysis, the paper reframes academic development as relational, context-sensitive and strategically influential in developing individual agency across or in spite of structural barriers, with important implications for practice. The paper also focuses on the 'one-to-many' trust relationship between an individual and an academic development team, rather than only on 'one-to-one' trust with individual academic developers. This raises questions for further research around how trust in an academic development team contributes to its legitimacy within an institution, and whether this can lead to greater agency and influence in shaping policy or driving changes in teaching and learning culture.

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Supporting students and teachers to manage emotional challenges – a key issue for academic development?

Maria Weurlander

Abstract

For decades, research on student learning has focused primarily on factors influencing academic achievement and performance, with academic development initiatives similarly prioritising the enhancement of students' academic outcomes. A growing body of research now demonstrates that emotions play a crucial role in learning, and that students experience emotional challenging situations during their education. Emotional challenges in teaching can harm both student and teacher well-being, suggesting that such challenges are a significant concern for academic development. This contribution is based on a narrative review, synthesising 65 empirical studies. The review identifies four categories of emotionally challenging teaching situations: dissections, situations during work-based learning, anxiety in certain subjects, or sensitive topics like injustice, human suffering, and identity. These challenges can evoke strong emotional reactions, existential reflections, and professional dilemmas, all of which must be addressed to enable students to focus on academic content. Findings also reveal that supportive classroom environments help students adapt and find value in these challenges. Academic teachers may feel unprepared to address students' emotional needs, highlighting a gap in academic development and teacher training. This paper argues for broadening the view of a teacher's role to include emotional care alongside knowledge expertise and learning facilitation. As academic developers, we should integrate emotional awareness into teacher training through activities such as scenario-based discussions and reflective practices, equipping teachers to better support students in navigating the emotional challenges they encounter.

Keywords: Emotional challenges, student experiences, emotional support, teacher training

Extended Summary

For many years, research on student learning has primarily focused on the factors influencing academic achievement and performance. Accordingly, academic development initiatives have often prioritised the enhancement of students' academic outcomes. A growing body of research now demonstrates that emotions play a crucial role in learning (Mendzheritskaya & Hansen, 2019; Tyng et al., 2017). Moreover, research has highlighted that students may experience emotional challenges related to learning, challenges that they need to manage in order to learn (Weurlander, 2024). However, academic teachers may feel unprepared to address students' emotional reactions or may lack awareness of the specific struggles students face. Emotional challenges in university teaching contexts can negatively impact both student and teacher well-being, suggesting that such challenges are a significant concern for academic development and teacher training. The aim of this paper is to present findings from a narrative review of students' experiences in emotionally challenging teaching situations and to discuss how these findings can inform academic development.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study was a narrative review (Sukhera, 2022). The literature search was conducted across several databases: ERIC, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The review included 65 empirical studies, written in English, and published between 2010 and 2021. The focus was to analyse the results of these articles thematically. The analysis was carried out in two stages: first, a categorisation of the teaching situations and subject content that students found emotionally challenging; second, an interpretive analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) to explore the characteristics of the challenges students experience in connection with these situations.

Findings

The results demonstrate that the teaching situations and subject content perceived by students as emotionally challenging can be divided into four general categories: dissections of human or animal bodies or organs; experiences encountered during work-based education; anxiety associated with specific subjects, such as mathematics, statistics, and programming; and engagement with sensitive topics, including abuse, violence, human suffering, and injustice, as well as issues relating to gender, identity and sexuality. In these emotionally challenging situations, students subsequently face a range of difficulties. These include managing their own emotional and physical reactions, navigating the balance between academic and emotional engagement, addressing professional challenges, and grappling with existential reflections on human suffering and death, injustice, and the uncertain future of humanity. Strong negative emotions can be overwhelming and must be addressed to enable students to focus effectively on academic content. The review also revealed that, within a trusting and supportive classroom environment, students gradually became accustomed to these challenging situations and ultimately found them valuable.

Conclusions and suggestions for practice

During their education, students will inevitably encounter situations they may find challenging. Often, these situations involve content or contexts they are likely to face in their future professional lives—challenges they must learn to manage in roles such as engineers, teachers, veterinarians, nurses, social workers, environmentalists, political scientists, or psychologists. Simply protecting students from such situations or removing sensitive content is therefore

not always the most constructive approach. Instead, students require support and a trusting classroom environment to navigate these challenges constructively (Heath et al., 2017; Weurlander, 2024). By increasing academic teachers' awareness of what students may find emotionally challenging or distressing, we can provide better support and create space for students to process their experiences. This raises an important question: Is it time to broaden our view of the teacher's role? Should we recognise that, in addition to being a knowledge expert and learning facilitator, teachers also have a responsibility to care for their students' emotional well-being (Anderson et al., 2020; Blasco et al., 2021)? As academic developers, I suggest it is our responsibility to emphasise the importance of addressing emotional challenges in training of academic teachers. Doing so will better equip teachers to navigate these challenges and, ultimately, provide more support for their students. Engaging in scenario-based discussions and reflective exercises could be valuable approaches, enabling teachers to develop greater awareness of students' challenges and to manage such situations more confidently.

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Special Symposium 8: Welcome to the ICED Community

Gabriela Pleschová, Hiroaki Sato, Alev Elçi, Anna Serbati

Abstract

This session aims to provide support to individuals and groups who are in the early stages of creating a network of practitioners in Educational Development (ED) in countries where no network organisation exists yet. The session will start by sharing examples from several relatively new ICED networks to encourage learning from good practice as well as ways that did not lead to expected outcomes and to synergise to foster cross-organisational conversations and collaboration. We introduce it as a follow up of a similar session at previous ICED conference, which was highly appreciated by its participants.In this symposium we will strive to create environment conductive for informal learning that supports inclusivity, exchange of various perspectives, sharing of impactful initiatives but also revealing challenges in the process of ED network creation. The session is planned to be offered in a hybrid format to allow the colleagues not attending the conference in person to join and engage. It is a part of the project led by the ICED Council.

Keywords: New networks, collaboration, sharing of good practice

Extended Summary

During the session, we are going to emphasise the following topics and practices.

1.1 Educational Development

- Encourage discussion on how to best foster cooperation in educational development among various constituencies within a country or group of countries: educational developers, teachers, managers, students, support staff members and others
- Stimulate debate about competencies that educational developers need to engage meaningfully and successfully with teachers, students and other colleaguesExtended summary for symposium

1.2 ICED

- Provide more context and information about how ICED works and for which values it stands
- Uncover different types of ICED member network organisations
- Share some examples of established networks, which recently became an ICED member
- Provide an opportunity to establish contact with various representatives of ICED member networks, educational developers and other participants interested in issues of higher education from similar and different contexts

1.3 Emerging Networks

- Engage participants in an activity to recognise the potential of an emerging network and benefits stemming from collaboration with others across the region and the world
- Explain how a network – even if it is still emerging – can join ICED

1.4 Learning outcomes for participants

- Summarise the practice that led to establishing an educational development network in various countries and regions of the world.
- Identify key lessons learned for own emerging network
- Exchange and critically reflect on perspectives from colleagues across various networks.
- Identify one or more concrete, context-specific actions to foster collaboration with another network(s)

1.5 A description of interactive methods or activities with approximate timings

- Introductions and framing: 5 minutes
- Facilitator presentation of key lessons learnt by 4 different networks ; Slovakia, Japan, Turkey, Italy, that recently joined the ICED: 40 minutes
- Small group work: How does this inform practice in my network? How can we contribute to shared ICED know-how in fostering excellent collaboration in and beyond the network: 20 minutes
- Plenary sharing and discussion 20 minutes
- Key take-aways (facilitator summary & commitment to action) 5 minutes

1.6 The relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education

• In this session, we invite the participants to join us for sharing what works (and what does not) when initiating, strengthening and solidifying collaboration of individuals committed to enhance higher education and educational development.

1.7 Intended audience (e.g. early-career developers, senior leaders, teaching staff).

- Educational developers especially those engaged in an emerging or a new network, teaching staff members, support staff members, university managers, eventually also students

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Website of YOMEGA (Turky): https://yomega.org/

Papers 30

Unpacking student agency in peer feedback: Insights for university teachers and academic developers

Tatiana Ershova

Abstract

This session presents a qualitative study that examines how students enact agency while engaging in peer feedback during a collaborative writing assignment in an undergraduate-level science course. Drawing on the notion of feedback encounters as an analytical lens, the study adopts a process-level approach to trace how students make sense of and act on feedback across formal, elicited, and incidental feedback interactions over time. Analysis of rich, multi-sourced qualitative data from 18 students—consisting of stimulated recall interviews, students' drafts, written feedback given and received, and audio-recordings of in-class feedback interactions—revealed that much of students' self-feedback resulting in revisions originated during reviewing and shaped how later peer comments were interpreted. Beyond formal peer review, students actively elicited additional inputs to verify, calibrate and operationalise their ideas for improvement. Incidental feedback encounters, such as overheard feedback directed at someone else and informal peer talk, often became consequential resources for students' meaning making. These findings position peer feedback as a temporally distributed process, shaped by students' agency and the dynamics of the relational contexts in which it unfolds. For university teachers and academic developers, the findings point to the importance of aligning formal feedback designs with students' self-identified needs and dilemmas, as well as cultivating relational spaces that allow informal and student-initiated interactions to occur.

Keywords: Peer Review, Peer Feedback, Feedback Agency, Feedback Encounters

Extended abstract

Research has traditionally examined peer feedback by comparing the relative learning benefits of students' participation in this activity as reviewers and receivers, often focusing on learning outcomes (Double et al., 2020) or students' perceived gains (Gaynor, 2020; Nicol et al., 2014). While this body of literature has established that peer feedback can support students' learning, considerably less is known about students' meaning making in peer-feedback process as it unfolds over time, as well as how students exercise agency as they navigate different feedback opportunities. In particular, the dynamic, relational, and often unplanned ways in which students engage with feedback from various sources, including their peers, remain underexplored.

This paper addresses this gap by examining peer feedback as a process of students' ongoing meaning making rather than a set of discrete instructional acts. This study aims to understand how students generate self-feedback, refine their thinking, and revise their work through planned and emerging feedback opportunities, or feedback encounters, and how these encounters collectively and cumulatively shape students' agency in peer-feedback process.

Theoretical framework and analytical approach

This study draws on the framework of feedback encounters proposed by Jensen et al. (2023), which conceptualises feedback as a process consisting of students' interactions with performance-relevant information from various human and material sources. These interactions, or encounters, may be formally designed within courses by teachers (formal feedback encounters), deliberately elicited by students (elicited feedback encounters), or emerge incidentally in unplanned situations (incidental feedback encounters). Rather than treating feedback as information transmission from giver to receiver, this framework positions it as a student-driven process of sense-making that unfolds over time via interconnected sequences of feedback encounters. Tracing students' meaning-making trajectories within peer-feedback process gives a nuanced understanding of how reviewing peer texts and receiving peer comments contribute to students' thinking and revision. This approach also uncovers what additional information students deliberately seek beyond formal peer feedback, as well as how contextual conditions enable and constrain students' sense making and feedback use.

Methodologically, the study draws on an in-depth qualitative analysis of an extensive, multi-sourced dataset from 18 students enrolled in an undergraduate Science course at a large Norwegian university. Students participated in a structured peer-feedback activity embedded in a collaborative field report assignment. After submitting their first drafts, students first individually reviewed two reports produced by other groups and subsequently engaged in in-class, dialogic peer-feedback discussions with the groups who had reviewed their work to exchange, clarify, and negotiate feedback. Students then had five days to revise their drafts before final submission. All students provided written consent to participate in the study.

For each student (N=18), the dataset comprised the first and second drafts of their report, written peer feedback provided and received, audio-recordings of in-class peer-feedback interactions, and a stimulated recall interview. Analysis unfolded in two stages. First, interview data were triangulated with textual and interactional data to identify

feedback encounters and reconstruct their sequences. Through this process, we identified 154 encounters organised into 58 sequences, each corresponding to a distinct change in students' writing. Then, a reflexive thematic analysis (Braun et al., 2019) was conducted on the identified sequences, focusing on students' deliberations and actions as they navigated and created themselves different feedback opportunities.

Key findings and implications

The analysis showed that students' meaning making in peer feedback almost always unfolded through sequences of several interconnected feedback encounters rather than single acts of reviewing or receiving. Many of the insights that informed students' revisions originated at the reviewing stage where students compared peer texts with their own. These insights often revolved around students' lingering uncertainties or dilemmas that emerged while writing. Importantly, incoming peer comments were rarely received independently, but instead were interpreted through the lens of the internal feedback students had been generating while reviewing. Beyond formal reviewing and receiving, unplanned elicited and incidental feedback encounters accounted for one third of all feedback encounters in the dataset.

Students deliberately and recursively sought additional information from trusted peers, exemplars, and course materials to calibrate, verify, and operationalise their emergent ideas of how to improve their work. Incidental encounters, such as overheard feedback aimed at someone else or unplanned engagement with peers' work during joint study sessions, often triggered new dilemmas and redirected revision activity.

Our findings speak directly to academic developers and university teachers interested in designing learning environments and feedback opportunities for students in a way that would support their agency, self-regulation, and reflexivity. Firstly, because students' agentic engagement with peer texts and feedback is often guided by their own dilemmas, formal peer-feedback activities could be designed to elicit students' questions and uncertainties explicitly, for example by structuring feedback around student-generated requests rather than generic prompts. Secondly, since much of the feedback use is mediated by relational dynamics and informal interactions, educators should intentionally build opportunities for students' collaborative work, informal discussions, and joint study sessions, which can foster trust and create space for elicited and incidental feedback episodes. The field would benefit from further process-oriented empirical research into how students navigate, make sense of, and act on feedback opportunities in situ across different institutional and pedagogical contexts.

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Fostering agency through coherent feedback between universities and schools

Moeniera Moosa

Abstract

Feedback within initial teacher education plays a pivotal role in shaping the professional identity and pedagogical agency of preservice teachers. Yet feedback provided during work integrated learning often functions as a procedural task rather than a reflective and empowering developmental process. This study investigates the degree of alignment between the feedback offered by university tutors and mentor teachers, and how such alignment influences the development of agency among preservice teachers. Grounded in Sadler's philosophical perspectives on feedback and Shulman's model of pedagogical reasoning and action, the study employed qualitative document analysis of written feedback collected over three years from forty-two preservice teachers. The thematic analysis revealed areas of shared understanding, including learner engagement, classroom management, time management, lesson planning, assessment practices, voice projection and the integration of teaching strategies and learning resources. However, significant misalignments emerged in lesson presentation, subject knowledge and the ability to communicate concepts clearly and coherently. These inconsistencies constrain preservice teachers' ability to act with confidence and agency in the classroom. The study is significant as it highlights how fragmented feedback practices can undermine the coherence of teacher preparation and weaken the transformative potential of academic development. By promoting intentional alignment of feedback processes between 2 universities and schools, this research demonstrates how collaborative partnerships can strengthen professional learning communities, enhance reflective practice and advance organisational learning to improve teaching quality within higher education.

Keywords: feedback, teacher education, academic development, mentorship

Extended Summary

Teaching is a communal profession, as teachers interact daily with numerous stakeholders (Hudson & Hudson, 2014). Teachers' identities are socially constructed through these interactions (Vygotsky, 2012), making teaching a complex activity influenced by multiple factors. Teaching practice is widely recognised as the most integral experience in initial teacher education (ITE), offering preservice teachers the opportunity to engage in authentic classroom contexts before qualifying (Ezer, Gilat & Sagee, 2010). Central to teaching practice is mentorship, which provides guidance, support and feedback essential for preservice teachers' development (Mishra, 2024; Sadler, Reimann & Sambell, 2023). Feedback allows preservice teachers to reflect on their practice, identify areas for improvement, and enhance their teaching skills (Winstone et al., 2017). This study examines the alignment and content of feedback provided by tutors and teachers during teaching practice, aiming to inform strategies for improving feedback practices in ITE.

Mentoring is a multidimensional, interactive process where experienced educators support preservice teachers' professional and personal growth (Mishra, 2024). Teaching practice situates theoretical and practical knowledge in socially embedded contexts (Risan, 2020). Effective mentorship relies on shared goals and psychologically safe environments (Skjevik et al., 2020). However, conventional practices are often critiqued for lack of structure, with significant variation in feedback quality and style (Larsen et al., 2023). Feedback is no longer considered simply as information on performance but as a communicative event that can enhance learning and development (Winstone, Boud, Dawson & Heron, 2022). Effective feedback should inform students of strengths and weaknesses, guide improvement and motivate further learning (Sadler, 1989, 2010). Feedback quality is influenced by clarity, focus and actionable suggestions (Nel & Marais, 2021).

This study uses Sadler's (1989, 2010) philosophy of feedback and Shulman's (1987, 2004) model of teacher knowledge as analytical lenses. An interpretivist paradigm guided this qualitative study (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Data were collected from written feedback documents provided to 42 intermediate phase preservice teachers over three years, representing 51% of the cohort. Document analysis enabled investigation of the nature, content and alignment of feedback, applying both emergent and apriori coding (Stemler, 2000) and inductive and deductive reasoning (Goel & Waechter, 2017). Triangulation of feedback from tutors and teachers enhanced validity (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Analysis revealed feedback focused on lesson planning, teaching strategies, classroom management and assessment practices. Tutors emphasised alignment with curriculum objectives and theoretical underpinnings, while teachers prioritised classroom interaction and practical delivery. Some misalignment was evident: while tutors stressed lesson structure and content knowledge, teachers highlighted learner engagement and pacing.

Findings highlight the critical role of mentorship in bridging theory and practice. Tutors' emphasis on structured planning aligns with Shulman's content and pedagogical knowledge, while teachers' focus on learner engagement supports the application of PCK in real-world contexts. Misalignment between tutor and teacher feedback reflects the dual nature of teaching practice, requiring attention to both conceptual understanding and practical classroom management. Feedback was most effective when it provided clear, actionable steps and addressed both theoretical

and practical dimensions of teaching, supporting Sadler's (1989, 2010) principles of effective feedback. This underscores the need for coordinated mentorship frameworks in ITE programs to optimize preservice teachers' development.

This study demonstrates that feedback during teaching practice is multifaceted, involving both tutors and teachers with complementary roles. Effective feedback integrates theoretical guidance with practical classroom strategies, enabling preservice teachers to develop competence and confidence. Findings reinforce the importance of structured mentorship, clear communication and alignment of feedback practices in ITE programs. Future research should explore strategies to enhance coherence between tutor and teacher feedback, ensuring a holistic approach to preservice teacher development.

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From feedback to co-creation: Rethinking peer observation among experienced teachers

Oskar Gedda, Marcus Schmitt-Egenolf

Abstract

University teaching is often conducted in relative isolation, while it is simultaneously characterised by rapid change, including the impact of artificial intelligence and shifting student background and expectations. This paper presents and analyses the VIN concept—Voluntary, Interdisciplinary & Nonhierarchic—as a model for collegial pedagogical development through structured peer observation and dialogic engagement. VIN, initiated in 2022, was evaluated and refined and within the Pedagogically Rewarded Teachers (PRT) network at Umeå university over a three-year period. The model is based on interdisciplinary triads. Following an initial planning meeting, two colleagues observe a teaching session presented by the third colleague, after which the triad engages in a joint reflective dialogue. After three completed cycles, the process concludes with a summative reflective meeting. Empirical material was generated through participant observation, reflective dialogues, and semi-structured focus group interviews, informing successive adaptations of the model. Barriers to collegial auscultation described in the literature include time constraints, concerns about receiving feedback, top-down initiated activities, and the lack of participant stratification based on teaching experience. To overcome these challenges, we designed VIN as an emergent, horizontally organised practice of collegial inquiry rather than a delegated form of distributed leadership. Over time, the focus shifted from feedback on individual teaching performances towards the co-creation of shared teaching experiences. This shift reduced evaluative anxiety and supported the emergence of a shared pedagogical language oriented towards pedagogical challenges and possible courses of action. Participants consistently reported VIN as a highly valued approach for developing their own teaching practice.

Keywords: Collegial pedagogical development, Peer observation, Nonhierarchical professional development, Co-creation of teaching practice

Extended Summary

University teaching is often characterized by professional isolation, described as "pedagogical solitude" (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009). Despite evidence that peer observation can strengthen teaching identity and foster pedagogical dialogue (Wennerberg, Blomström & Nobel, 2019; O'Keeffe et al., 2021), challenges remain: fear of judgment and perceived loss of autonomy frequently hinder implementation (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2004).

The model introduced here addresses these challenges by creating an ideal environment for collegial observation and feedback. Our guiding question was: *What can collegial observation achieve if we design the optimal setting for all parameters?*

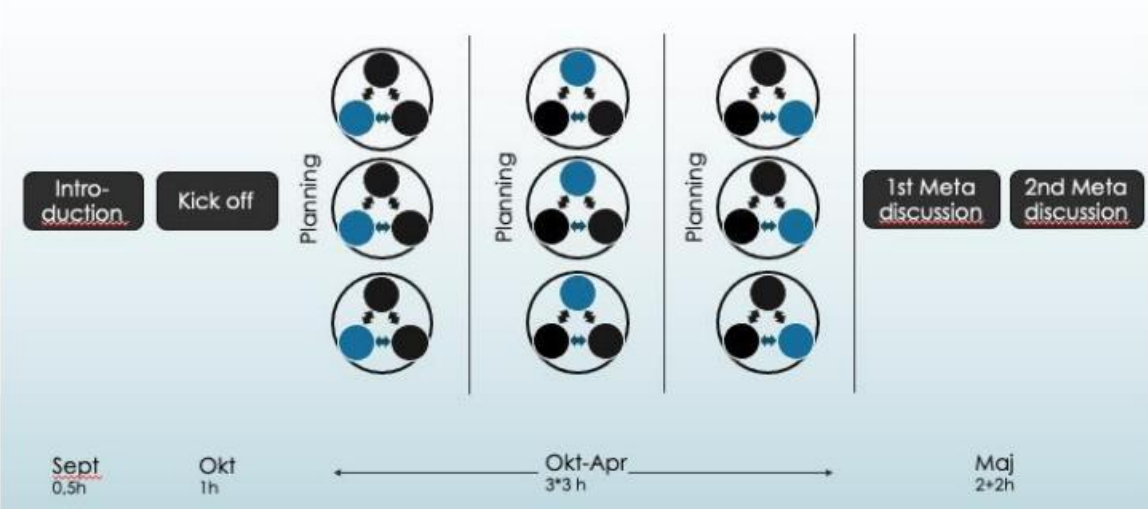


Fig. 1 Setting of the VIN concept

Several triplets of teachers, each representing different departments and faculties within Umeå university. After an initial planning meeting, two colleagues together perform an auscultation at a teaching event of and selected by the third teacher, followed by a joint discussion. After three of these rounds, the triplet would meet for a final discussion and reflection. Absolute freedom was given regarding implementation; each group decided the focus of the planning meetings before the auscultations, when and how the auscultations were carried out, which templates (if any) were used for observation and feedforward, and if group members wanted a holistic feedforward or preferred feedforward regarding specific question.

Development process

At Umeå University's Center for Educational Development (UPL), we developed and tested a preliminary concept within the Pedagogically Rewarded Teachers (PRT) network through three pilot rounds (2022–2024), analysed via participant observation, round-table meetings and focus group interviews. The basic VIN-concept proved robust and remained unchanged after evaluation.

We identified four main challenges in common collegial feedback setups:

• Time restraints

• Fear

• Top-down execution

• Lack of stratification for teaching experience

Consequently, we developed the VIN-concept (Voluntary, Interdisciplinary & Non-hierarchic) as a response.

Voluntariness is crucial because authentic reflection requires intrinsic motivation. Research confirms that voluntary participation fosters trust and deeper learning outcomes (Bell & Cooper, 2013).

Interdisciplinarity offers insights into different teaching traditions and prevents the tendency to focus on subject matter rather than pedagogy when observing "close to home" (O'Keeffe et al., 2021).

Non-hierarchic recruitment within the PRT network counteracts fear and preserves autonomy, avoiding the pitfalls of hierarchical top-down designs.

Key findings

Operating VIN within the PRT network—where all participants have been formally evaluated on pedagogical skills—created a unique opportunity. Participants appreciated the combination of planning, observation and subsequent discussion. There was a shared sense of ownership across the three auscultations, and the common teaching experiences established a functional language for discussing challenges and solutions rather than evaluating colleagues' general "teaching skills."

Our analysis revealed that the original framing—"get feedback on your teaching from two critical friends"—was suboptimal. Despite recruitment within the PRT network, considerable underlying anxiety about receiving feedback persisted. Many triplets independently unlocked the concept's full potential by reframing the emphasis as:

"Co-creating with students and two colleagues three unique teaching experiences, as a foundation for discussing meaningful challenges and possible solutions."

By redirecting focus from observing colleagues to exploring the co-created teaching events, we facilitated more holistic and inclusive discussions. This shift mitigated the discomfort that can accompany feedback processes (Molloy, 2012) and enabled participants not only to see teaching situations but also to see themselves within them.

Contribution to the field

VIN contributes to a growing body of work seeking to move peer observation from the performative to the developmental (O'Leary & Savage, 2020). By anchoring itself in voluntariness, interdisciplinarity and non-hierarchy, VIN aligns with international evidence on effective professional development: relevance, agency and trust (Smith & Wyness, 2024). Simultaneously, VIN is rooted in Nordic traditions of collegiality and auscultation (Wennerberg, Blomström & Nobel, 2019), providing a model that is both contextually grounded and internationally relevant. VIN strengthens academic development not by centralising expertise but by distributing it across the teaching community.

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Student Feedback as a Mechanism for Strategic Alignment and Reflection in a Mandatory First-Year Experience Programme

Sharmla Rama, Ruth Hoskins

Abstract

This paper examines how student feedback and evaluations function as mechanisms of student agency and inform strategic alignment in the University of KwaZulu-Natal's (UKZN) mandatory First-Year Experience Programme (FYEP). First-year students, particularly those who are first-generation, from historically marginalised communities, or from under-resourced schools, face heightened risks of attrition and delayed progression. UKZN enrols approximately 9,000 students annually, prioritising these groups. The FYEP comprises four structured units delivered through a HyFlex model, integrating assessments, peer mentoring, and mechanisms for student voice. Drawing on survey data from student evaluations across the four units, the study explores how feedback informs programme design, enhances coherence, and aligns with institutional goals for excellent teaching, learning, and student experiences. Analysis is framed through Nancy Fraser's social justice lens, assessing recognition, representation, and redistribution, complemented by ubuntu pedagogy, and Alf Lizzio's Five Senses of Student Success, capturing students' capability, connectedness, purpose, resourcefulness, and engagement with academic culture. Findings indicate that embedding structured feedback strengthens programme relevance, fosters student agency, and supports equitable access to support, while highlighting challenges with digital literacy, connectivity, and participation. The paper concludes with recommendations for using student feedback to drive evidence-informed academic development and continuous improvement in student support.

Extended Summary

The aim of this paper is to explore how student feedback and evaluations can serve as mechanisms of student agency and inform strategic alignment in the University of KwaZulu-Natal's (UKZN) mandatory First-Year Experience Programme (FYEP). First-year students, particularly those who are first-generation, from historically marginalised communities, or from under-resourced schools, face heightened risks of attrition and delayed progression (Tinto, 2014; Kuh, 2008). Intentional, equity-focused interventions such as FYE programmes are therefore critical for facilitating early engagement, supporting students' academic and social integration, and enhancing readiness for university study (Greenfield, Keup, & Gardner, 2013). This paper examines how systematic feedback ((Strydom & Loots, 2020; Shah & Nair, 2009) from students across the four units of the FYEP can enhance programme coherence and quality assurance, strengthen alignment with institutional strategic goals, and foster student agency in co-constructing their learning experiences. Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach The study is informed by two complementary frameworks. First, Nancy Fraser's (Hölscher & Bozalek, 2020) social justice framework provides a lens for assessing whether institutional interventions address recognition, representation, and redistribution, ensuring that historically marginalised students are fully included in shaping their learning environments. Second, Alf Lizzio's (2006) Five Senses of Student Success framework captures students' experiences across five domains: capability, connectedness, purpose, resourcefulness, and engagement with academic culture. These frameworks together allow for a nuanced analysis of how feedback mechanisms support both institutional strategy and student learning outcomes.

The study draws primarily on survey data collected from first-year students evaluating the four structured units of the FYEP, which are delivered through a HyFlex pedagogical model. The programme integrates assessments, peer mentoring, and student voice mechanisms, and became mandatory under UKZN's BR10 rule in 2024. The surveys included both quantitative Likert-scale items and open-ended qualitative questions, providing rich data on student perceptions of peer support, relevance of content, navigation of the online learning environment, and overall experience. Analysis combined descriptive statistics with thematic coding of qualitative responses to identify patterns and actionable insights for programme improvement.

The findings reveal that embedding structured student feedback across the four units strengthens programme coherence, ensures alignment with institutional priorities, and enhances student agency. Students reported that the FYEP helped them develop a stronger sense of capability and resourcefulness, fostered connectedness with peers and academic staff, clarified their purpose in higher education, and improved engagement with the academic culture. These outcomes suggest that integrating student feedback into programme design not only improves the relevance and accessibility of support interventions but also actively empowers students to shape their learning environment. The study also identified challenges, including digital literacy gaps, connectivity issues, and delays in data collection and dissemination, which limited participation and highlighted barriers to achieving participatory parity. These findings point to the need for ongoing refinement of feedback processes and supportive infrastructure to ensure all students can contribute meaningfully to programme evaluation.

The paper makes several contributions to the fields of academic development, student success, and higher education strategy. First, it demonstrates how student feedback can operate simultaneously as a tool of institutional strategy and a mechanism for student agency, bridging the often separate domains of administrative planning and student

experience It can support institutions to better align their interventions with broader strategic goals, such as equity, retention, and quality of teaching and learning. Second, by applying Fraser's social justice framework and Lizzio's Five Senses of Student Success, the study provides a theoretically informed lens for understanding how feedback contributes to students' holistic development. It shows that well-structured FYEP can enhance not only academic outcomes but also social and emotional dimensions of student engagement, supporting more inclusive and equitable practices. Third, the paper offers practical implications for policy and practice. Institutions seeking to improve first-year student outcomes can adopt structured, unit-level evaluations as part of their continuous improvement strategies. Feedback mechanisms can inform curriculum design, advising practices, peer mentoring, and co-curricular support, while also fostering student voice and participatory equity.

In summary, this paper highlights the dual role of student feedback as a mechanism for strategic alignment and student agency within a mandatory First-Year Experience Programme. By systematically collecting and analysing student evaluations across four units, the UKZN FYEP demonstrates how feedback can inform programme design and quality, enhance equity, and foster reflective academic practice. The study underscores the importance of embedding feedback into institutional strategy and academic development, offering actionable recommendations for higher education institutions seeking to strengthen student support, engagement, and success.

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Holding Space for Agency. Inclusive Academic Development and the Emotional Architecture of Feedback

Vanessa Mar-Molinero, Erika Corradini

Abstract

This empirical paper explores the role of dialogic, personalised feedback in fostering epistemic agency, professional mattering, and inclusive pedagogy within academic development. Drawing on a case study of a redesigned Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) programme at a UK university, we examine how feedback practices, written comments, audio recordings, video feedback, and in-person feedforward sessions contribute to institutional transformation and the emotional architecture of learning for staff.

Through thematic analysis of external examiner reports, participant reflections, Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) feedback, and module evaluations, we identify feedback as a central mechanism for creating relational trust and pedagogical courage. Participants frequently described the feedback as "thoughtful," "personalised," and "encouraging experimentation." Feedback was experienced as a dialogic infrastructure, providing emotional validation and scaffolding for academic identity development, particularly for new and precariously positioned educators.

Our theoretical framing draws on the "compassion turn" in academic development (Waddington & Bonaparte, 202, 2024a, 2024b), sociomaterial perspectives on feedback (Ajjawi & Boud, 2018), and scholarship on mattering and relational pedagogy (Spaeth, 2024; Gravett, 2022). Rather than viewing feedback as an isolated teaching act, we position it as a strategic practice of inclusion, retention, and agency.

We discuss the institutional significance of feedback cultures in staff development and conclude by outlining our ongoing, five-year longitudinal study, which tracks the influence of this programme on educator confidence, peer relationships, and student outcomes, including its potential impact on the UK National Student Survey (NSS) teaching and learning scores.

Keywords: Compassionate Pedagogy, Dialogic Feedback, Educator Agency, Inclusive Academic Development

Extended Summary

This paper explores how personalised and dialogic feedback practices within a UK Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) programme scaffold educator agency, wellbeing, and professional identity development. It positions feedback not as a static outcome or product, but as a sociomaterial, emotionally resonant process that fosters resilience, experimentation, and a sense of mattering among new and diverse university teachers. Through empirical and reflective analysis, we investigate how feedback, in its various modes (written, audio, video, synchronous), serves as a critical infrastructure for inclusive academic development. We aim to demonstrate how feedback practices are not only pedagogically significant but strategically vital, especially during periods of institutional change, staff fatigue, and sectoral uncertainty. By examining this programme, we seek to understand how intentionally enhanced feedback practices can create a supportive learning environment for staff.

This paper draws on an entangled theoretical framing rooted in the "compassion turn" in academic development (Waddington, 2021; Waddington and Bonaparte, 2024a, 2024b). This perspective calls for greater emphasis on compassion, care, and relationality in higher education. We approach feedback not simply as transmission of information, but as a relational practice imbued with care and empathy. We also draw on sociomaterial perspectives on feedback (Ajjawi and Boud, 2018; Carless and Boud, 2018), which highlight feedback as a dynamic, interactive process rather than a one-way transmission from teacher to learner. Additionally, concepts of mattering and relational pedagogy inform our approach (Gravett, Taylor, and Fairchild, 2024; Spaeth, 2024; Gravett, 2022). Scholarship on mattering suggests that when people feel they matter to their institution and experience learning as a relational process, their engagement and development improve. Compassion, here, is not sentimentality but a pedagogical stance. It reframes academic development as a space where staff are recognised as whole people whose lives intersect with wider demands, responsibilities, and identities. Waddington and Bonaparte (2024a, b) argue that compassion should be built into educational systems structurally, rather than added as pastoral support. Within this framing, feedback emerges not as delivery of judgment, but as the architecture through which we create scaffolds of care and possibility. Ajjawi and Boud (2018) conceptualise feedback as a sociomaterial practice, shaped not only by the content but by the mode, timing, relational context, and institutional framing. Their work on feedback literacy highlights the importance of preparing learners (in this case, educators) to interpret and respond to feedback in a dialogic and developmental manner. Gravett (2022) extends this view through a relational pedagogy lens, arguing that mattering, the sense that one's presence, voice, and learning journey are acknowledged and valued, is central to inclusive education. Spaeth (2024) similarly frames mattering as a prerequisite for engagement, agency, and perseverance. In the PGCAP context, feedback becomes a vital mechanism for mattering, the place where identity, values, and growth are named and made visible. We thus position feedback as a relational, strategic, and emotionally significant pedagogical infrastructure that enables inclusive academic development.

This study draws on a mixed-methods case study of a PGCAP module taught at a UK research-intensive university over a two-year period. The programme serves educators across various disciplines and career stages, including those who balance teaching with PhDs, clinical work, or research contracts. The programme was redesigned in 2023 to embed inclusive and compassionate pedagogies, with feedback as a central lever. Data sources include written reflections from participants on their experiences of receiving feedback, Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) minutes and qualitative quotes, external examiner reports from 2023 and 2024, internal programme reflections and annotations on submitted work, as well as solicited and unsolicited feedback. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to identify recurring patterns across participant accounts. Participant quotes are anonymised and paraphrased to protect identity. Ethical approval was granted under institutional educational evaluation guidelines.

Analysis of the qualitative data revealed that enhanced feedback practices played a central role in creating a more inclusive and empowering learning environment for academic staff. A dominant theme was that feedback acted as a catalyst for building relational trust between participants (as learners) and programme facilitators. Feedback was consistently described by participants as “thorough,” “thoughtful,” “personalised,” and “encouraging,” a perception echoed by external examiners who praised the programme’s personalised approach. This dialogic, supportive feedback helped establish trust, making participants feel safe to experiment and take risks in their learning. This cultivation of trust and psychological safety constituted the emotional architecture of learning in the program. For many, it was the first time they had experienced feedback that felt relational rather than evaluative. One educator remarked that they had never received comments so attuned to their disciplinary language, workload challenges, and pedagogical aspirations. Another key finding was the development of pedagogical courage among participants. Many participants noted that the encouragement and validation from feedback gave them confidence to try innovative teaching strategies. As one participant wrote, having such feedback "made me feel supported to step outside of my comfort zone" in teaching. This suggests that dialogic feedback can embolden educators to be more agentic, to make autonomous, informed changes to their practice (hence fostering epistemic agency).

Additionally, feedback was not a one-off event but an ongoing dialogue. Participants could respond to comments, discuss feedback in follow-up meetings, and apply suggestions in subsequent tasks. This two-way, iterative process made feedback a built-in part of their learning journey rather than a static, one-time evaluation. The delivery of feedback in multimodal forms, written, audio, video and synchronous dialogue, was cited as key. Audio and video feedback, in particular, was praised for conveying tone and emotional warmth, creating what participants called a “sense of dialogue even though asynchronous.” This aligns with Ajjawi and Boud’s (2018) findings on the materiality and relationality of feedback encounters. Several participants reported that feedback served as a form of validation, confirming they “belonged” in teaching, especially those new to the profession or navigating complex identities as doctoral researchers, clinicians, or hourly-paid staff. The act of being seen and responded to in detail became an epistemic invitation, a moment of mattering. External examiners echoed these themes, writing “feedback and feedforward: really positive”, and that the written and audio elements were much appreciated. Participants stated that they ‘Enjoyed the written and verbal feedback.’, ‘Thoughtful, thorough, and detailed productive feedback, ’ and that they were ‘Amazed by depth of feedback and attention to detail.’ Which made it, ‘Very helpful and felt as if personal’ [personalised?". The external mentioned that “Participants commented explicitly and positively on the context-specificity and depth of feedback… creating a sense of shared endeavour and safe spaces to trial approaches.” Importantly, the feedback was also reported to scaffold risk-taking and experimentation. Several participants noted they had “never made a poster” or “never been asked to reflect so critically,” but that the detailed and dialogic feedback helped them feel able to try. We read these accounts as evidence that feedback, when designed as a relational and compassionate practice, becomes part of the emotional and strategic architecture of academic development. It enables educators not only to perform competently but to feel secure enough to experiment, adapt, and grow.

The findings from this study carry significant theoretical and practical implications for academic development. Theoretically, this study underscores that feedback is not merely an isolated transaction but a strategic pedagogical practice for fostering inclusion and agency. It provides empirical support for calls to infuse compassion and care into academic development (Waddington & Bonaparte, 2024a, 2024b). This study highlights feedback as a lever for inclusive institutional change. In a moment where higher education is marked by precarity, rapid policy shifts, and digital disruption, feedback practices grounded in compassion and relational pedagogy offer a stabilising force. Our findings suggest that when academic development centres invest in personalised, values-driven feedback, they model pedagogical practices that cascade outward into classroom teaching. Participants reported integrating similar feedback principles into their own marking, tutorials, and curriculum design. Moreover, we argue that feedback functions as both a pedagogical act and a strategic tool. It supports retention, identity development, and the professional confidence of educators, especially those at the margins of academic legitimacy. We discuss a vision of academic development where agency is not only cultivated but institutionally scaffolded through compassionate feedback architectures. Practically, our findings suggest that investing in rich, dialogic feedback for faculty development can enhance educators’ confidence and reflective practice, with likely benefits for their students’ learning. This implies that universities should intentionally

cultivate robust feedback cultures among staff (for example, by training mentors in effective feedforward and allocating time for meaningful feedback conversations). The implications for leadership and programme design are significant. Investing time and training in dialogic, multimodal feedback practices is not merely a matter of assessment literacy, but of equity and inclusion. These practices support staff to engage in their own pedagogical development with confidence and care. As part of our commitment to evaluating and examining the long-term impact, we are launching a five-year longitudinal study that tracks the experiences and trajectories of PGCAP participants. This research will examine how feedback cultures impact broader institutional metrics, including student satisfaction (NSS), perceived teaching quality, and staff retention. Our hypothesis is that when staff receive meaningful and compassionate feedback, they are more likely to embed, embody and replicate these dynamics in their student-facing practice. In this way, feedback becomes not only a developmental moment but a strategy for systemic transformation and a site where agency is held, shared, and sustained. By reframing feedback as an emotionally aware, inclusive practice, academic development programmes can cultivate educators who not only develop strong pedagogical skills but also carry forward a culture of compassion and agency into their classrooms.

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Papers 31

Rethinking Inclusive Higher Education: Epistemic Violence and Muslim Women's Agency

Fahimeh Darchinian

Abstract

This paper examines how epistemic violence shapes the agency of Muslim female students of immigrant backgrounds in Canadian universities, challenging dominant narratives of higher education as an inclusive and equitable space. Drawing on qualitative research based on 54 semi-structured interviews, the study identifies two key configurations through which agency becomes constrained: constrained conformity and self-delegitimation. These patterns reveal how pressures of self-surveillance and internalized hegemonic norms operate beneath official discourses of diversity and inclusion. Academic success, often portrayed as a pathway to equality and belonging, emerges in participants' narratives as a burden of social survival rather than empowerment. By unpacking these subtle dynamics of epistemic violence, the paper highlights asymmetries in agency that shape students' possibilities for belonging and voice. The study contributes to the field of academic development by advancing a critical understanding of inclusion that goes beyond access and representation, urging universities to engage more deeply with the epistemic and affective dimensions of equity in higher education.

Keywords: Epistemic violence; Asymmetries in agency; Muslim female students; Higher education; Canada

Extended Summary

This empirical paper examines how epistemic violence shapes and constrains the agency of Muslim female students of immigrant backgrounds in Canadian universities, thereby challenging dominant narratives of higher education as an inclusive and equitable space (Tiflati, 2017; Al-Deen, 2019; Chaudry, 2021; Darchinian, 2023; Bensahli, 2024). It asks whether Muslim women can exist as fully recognized subjects in university settings marked by Islamophobia and the coloniality of power, and how these conditions generate asymmetries in agency in their everyday academic lives.

Conceptually, the paper mobilizes epistemic violence as a set of discursive and institutional mechanisms that invalidate, silence, or misrecognize the knowledge, experiences, and moral standing of minoritized groups. Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence and Fricker's work on testimonial and hermeneutical injustice (Bourdieu, 1990; Fricker, 2013), the analysis shows how credibility deficits, interpretive gaps, and processes of othering converge in higher education to delegitimize Muslim women's voices. This framework is informed by decolonial critiques of Western epistemic hegemony, which highlight how ideas of justice, reason, and moral rectitude are historically attached to the "Western subject" and implicitly denied to non-Western populations (Sen, 2010; Dotson, 2011; Bunch, 2015). Within this landscape, epistemic violence is approached as dynamic and often implicit, operating beneath progressive institutional discourses of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Methodologically, the study adopts a critical narrative epistemology and relies on biographical interviews to access the lived experiences and meaning-making processes of Muslim female students of immigrant backgrounds (Sierra-Catalán, 2020; CallCummings & Dazzo, 2023; Turner et al., 2024). The corpus consists of 54 in-depth biographical interviews with young Muslim women aged 19 to 24 enrolled in four Montreal universities—two francophone and two anglophone—who were either born in Canada or arrived during childhood or adolescence, and who had attended francophone public schools in Montreal. The sample reflects diversity in ethnic origin, migration trajectories, religious practice (including veiled and unveiled, practicing and non-practicing students), and institutional context, while focusing on a shared positioning as Muslim women in Quebec's sociopolitical environment. Interviews followed a life-history-inspired protocol on educational trajectories, everyday interactions in university, and strategies for negotiating belonging and difference (Clandinin et al., 2015; Paillé & Mucchielli, 2021). They were fully transcribed and analyzed using a semi-inductive thematic approach with open and axial coding, in line with standard qualitative procedures. Ethical approval, informed consent, and anonymization were ensured.

The analysis highlights a pervasive normalization of epistemic violence in academic spaces. Participants describe a continuum of experiences, from overt racist insults to subtle forms of misrecognition and hypervisibility related to religion, language, appearance, or presumed foreignness. These experiences cut across differences in religious practice or dress, suggesting that being positioned as a "Muslim subject" in Quebec's universities entails a shared vulnerability to suspicion, stereotyping, and silencing. University settings appear as spaces where broader media and political discourses on Islam and immigration are reproduced in classroom interactions, peer relations, and encounters with staff.

The study identifies two main configurations through which participants' agency is constrained: constrained conformity and self-delegitimation. Rather than discrete categories, they form a continuum of responses to epistemic violence. Constrained conformity refers to efforts to align with dominant norms—through academic overinvestment, emotional

labour, or carefully managed sociability—to manage stigma and secure a minimal sense of belonging. Academic excellence becomes a way to "compensate" for perceived otherness and to counter negative representations of Muslims, and students often adopt strategies such as being "extra nice," avoiding confrontation, or over-performing in their studies to show they do not fit prevailing stereotypes. Self-delegitimation designates situations in which internalized prejudice leads students to downplay, silence, or distance themselves from aspects of their identity, experience, or community to preserve a fragile sense of conditional belonging. It is characterized by heightened self-surveillance, fear of being seen as representing an entire community, and the feeling of carrying a disproportionate responsibility for preventing or correcting Islamophobic judgments. Students describe adjusting their language, clothing, religious practices, and even aspirations to pre-empt anticipated discrimination, or withdrawing from certain spaces and conversations.

Across these configurations, epistemic violence is experienced not as a series of isolated incidents but as a normalized feature of academic life that shapes what can be said, how it can be said, and by whom. Students navigate a constant tension between hypervisibility as Muslim and invisibility as legitimate knowers and contributors to academic knowledge, which generates asymmetries in agency: similar acts of selfassertion or critique do not carry the same risks for racialized Muslim women as for majority peers and thus restrict their capacity to act, speak, and dissent (Ibnouzahir, 2015; Chaudry, 2021; Darchinian & Doytcheva, 2023; Khan & Pushor, 2023). The paper advances the concept of constrained agency to capture how these students act, resist, and adapt within a horizon of possibilities structured by epistemic violence and the coloniality of power. Agency is approached as relational, situated, and unequally distributed, shaped by credibility deficits and interpretive injustices that Muslim women face in Canadian universities (Watson & Widin, 2015; Darchinian, & Magnan, 2020). By foregrounding constrained conformity and self-delegitimation, the study offers analytical tools to understand strategies that may appear as compliance or silence as complex negotiations under conditions of structural risk.

For international audiences at ICED 2026, the paper offers a contextually grounded yet widely relevant account of how Islamophobia, secularism, and colonial legacies intersect in higher education to constrain agency for Muslim women students. While 4 the study focuses on Canadian and Quebec universities, its conceptual framework and findings can inform reflection, staff development activities, and equity-oriented strategies in other contexts where racialized and religiously minoritized students face similar dynamics of hypervisibility, misrecognition, and silencing. By unpacking these subtle dynamics of epistemic violence, the paper highlights the asymmetries in agency that shape Muslim women students' possibilities for belonging and voice and calls on higher education institutions to confront the structural conditions that sustain these inequities.

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From Adversity to Agency: Understanding Roma Students' Pathways to Educational Success

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Abstract

This paper examines how student agency develops among Roma learners who succeed academically despite early adversity and discrimination. Drawing on findings from the EU-funded SCIREARLY project, we present a life-course analysis of four Roma students in Spain who completed higher education against the odds, in a context where 71% of Roma youth aged 18–24 leave the education system before finishing upper secondary schooling. Our conceptual framework integrates Appadurai's "capacity to aspire" and Dewey's notion of situated agency, and the analysis represents partial results of a broader study involving 53 interviews with young adults and 40 nominated significant persons across eight European countries.

Findings show that aspirations and agency operate in a mutually reinforcing cycle. Role models - family members, teachers, or peers who convey support and sustain high expectations - expand students' sense of what is possible and help translate aspirations into concrete action. A supportive academic environment, including peers, committed teachers, and opportunities for family involvement, nurtures their motivation and academic achievement. However, significant blind spots, such as the limited representation of Roma histories and cultural knowledge in the curriculum, still need to be addressed to further enhance educational participation and retention.

We discuss implications for practice, highlighting the importance of fostering role models, enabling teacher's supportive attitudes, strengthening family engagement, and embedding inclusive curricular content. The findings also contribute to theory by foregrounding the interplay of individual and collective agency in enhancing Roma participation in higher education.

Keywords: aspirations, agency, Roma, higher education

Extended Summary

Introduction and objectives

Roma learners remain one of the most structurally marginalised groups in European education systems, facing persistent discrimination and . Across Europe, approximately 71% of Roma youth aged 18–24 leave the education system before completing upper secondary schooling (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2021), highlighting the urgency of understanding how some learners progress into higher education despite systemic barriers. This article examines how student agency develops among Roma youth who enter higher education against the odds. Drawing on the EU-funded SCIREARLY project, it presents a life-course analysis of students from Roma backgrounds in Spain - Maiana, Paula, Antonio and Jasmin. These cases form part of a broader dataset of 53 interviews with young adults and 40 interviews with their nominated significant persons across eight European countries.

Theoretical and methodological framework

The conceptual framework integrates Appadurai's (2004) notion of the "capacity to aspire" and Dewey's (1981) understanding of situated agency, conceiving agency as relational and temporal. Appadurai frames aspirations as a 'navigational capacity' formed and shaped through interaction and embedded in broader cultural norms (p. 67). These capacities are unevenly distributed, shaped by social and demographic factors such as ethnicity. Dewey's situated agency situates experiences as lateral and longitudinal shaped by past, present, and anticipated futures (Zimmermann, 2024).

Drawing on these theoretical lenses, semi-structured interviews invited participants to narrate key educational transitions, influential relationships, and transformative drivers that led them to stay and thrive in education. Data were coded inductively and interpreted using this analytical framework to identify how aspirations and agency were co-constructed.

Findings

Across all narratives, aspirations and agency operated in a mutually reinforcing cycle. What students imagined as possible expanded through encounters with significant others - including family members, teachers and peers - who conveyed belief in their abilities and modeled aspirations for further education. These role models not only shaped the horizons of what participants aspired to but also helped translate those aspirations into concrete academic decisions, such as persisting through secondary school or enrolling in university programmes.

Family emerged as the earliest source of motivational support. In Maiana's case, she described her family as her "main driving force," noting that her grandmother - who could not read or write - sat beside her each afternoon until she finished her homework, demonstrating that presence itself could function as academic support. Paula similarly emphasised her mother's consistent message that she could "do the same as everyone else," countering deficit-based projections from school. Antonio recalled how his mother insisted he remain in an academically demanding track

despite a school counsellor's recommendations to transfer to a different program, while his brother, who he saw completing all his courses, served as a role model. Meanwhile, Jasmin grew up in a home where her mother would frequently attended school events and offer both direct support and a safe space for Jasmin to vent her frustrations.

Educators also played a critical role. Teachers who upheld high expectations expanded students' imagined futures. Paula credited a primary teacher who strengthened both her academic skills and self-worth, Antonio recalled a philosophy teacher who encouraged him to continue studying, and Maiana encountered university professors who promoted ambitious academic paths. These educators transmitted confidence, legitimised aspirations, and created spaces for students to see themselves as capable learners. Yet participants also experienced discriminatory attitudes embedded in institutional cultures. Antonio described being told to "sit at the back, don't bother me," and Jasmin recalled instructors asserting that Roma students should not be held to the same standards, reinforcing structural barriers.Peer networks and academic milieus further shaped students' trajectories. Supportive peers helped sustain motivation, especially during transitions. Paula explained that if her friends studied, she studied too, describing an academic milieu that normalised educational seriousness. Antonio highlighted after-school centres as environments that offered mentorship, stability and opportunities to develop confidence.

Identity negotiation emerged as a salient theme in Maiana's narrative. She recalled being told she was "not like other Roma," a comment she later reflected on as subtle discrimination. Maiana emphasized the importance of visible, successful role models, such as doctors, social workers, and lawyers - for young Roma learners. Despite her success in higher education, Maiana also noted persistent structural blind spots, such as the absence of Roma histories and cultural perspectives in curricula, which contributed to a pervasive sense of invisibility. 1.4. Discussion and implications Our findings demonstrate the usefulness of Appadurai's and Dewey's works in revealing the relationships between aspirations and agency at the individual and collective levels. They show that collective aspirations - manifested in families, teachers, and peer networks - can reinforce individual agency. Agency is therefore not only a property of the individual but also a social achievement, contingent upon supportive environments and culturally responsive opportunities. In return, individual agency by role models and the students themselves can feed back into strengthening collective aspirations for continuing education. These findings have direct implications for practice. Supporting meaningful role models in both home and school environments, embedding inclusive curricula, and creating spaces for identity negotiation are essential for sustaining the aspiration-agency connection. When educational involvement and high aspirations are modeled, and supportive social structures exist, Roma students not only imagine alternative futures but also develop the agency to pursue them. Strengthening these conditions is key to expanding collective agency and participation of the Roma community across Europe.

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Universal Design for Learning in Field Based Teaching: Addressing barriers and developing disciplinary skills

Marie van der Kloet, Ellen Lien

Abstract

This paper critically examines field-based teaching in Norwegian higher education focusing on how instructors grapple with how to contribute to inclusive and accessible teaching. As part of a larger development project, we interviewed 27 academic and professional staff and psychologists from a university in Norway. Our analysis of these interviews focuses on three thematic areas: barriers in field-based teaching, inclusive teaching practice, and disciplinary skill development. This work builds existing international scholarship where barriers to field-based teaching is well documented, and offers a specific, local analysis of inclusive field-based teaching in Norwegian higher education where we draw linkages between Universal Design for Learning principles and the development of disciplinary skills. For academic developers working on accessibility/inclusion this paper is particularly valuable for deepening understanding of the specificity and nuances of field-based teaching (and the unique challenges and possibilities it presents for inclusive teaching).

Keywords: Universal Design for Learning, Field-based Teaching, Inclusion, Accessibility, Norwegian higher education

Extended Summary

Field-based teaching is integral to learning in many disciplines. It is perceived to be highly motivating for students, to provide opportunities for deep learning, and to be key to the formation of disciplinary identities and competencies. However, despite its clear importance to the disciplines, it is also identified as exclusive and inaccessible, in particular for people with disabilities, women, LGBTQ+ and BIPOC people (Heimann & Johansson, 2024; John & Khan, 2018; Philips & Gilchrist, 2012; Stokes et al., 2019). Instructors, scholars and students grapple with and have advocated for inclusion in field-based teaching (Feig et al, 2019, Marshall et al, 2025; Race et al, 2021; Rodari & Miesen, 2022a, 2022b), yet many obstacles persist. Importantly, inaccessibility has often been addressed by offering poor quality alternatives, lacking the experiential elements of field-based learning (Carabajal et al, 2017)).

This paper is part of a larger project focused on developing resources focused on Universal Design for Learning and field-based teaching. The project was developed because of institutional need (for resources) and scholarly research on barriers to inclusion. Part of this project included interviews with academic and professional staff involved in field teaching and psychologists who work with students with disabilities. Field-based teaching includes activities from many disciplines across the arts, humanities, social sciences and sciences and may include day trips, multiday or longer instructional activities. We describe this as field-based teaching – thinking expansively about the field, which might include a seafloor, an artist's studio, natural urban spaces, museums, alpine meadows or religious sites – but instructors in this study used varied terms to discuss their work. In addition to staff interviews, we conducted both interviews and focus groups with students with disabilities who have or desired to participate in field-based learning in their disciplines (n=17). This paper focuses on the interviews with academic and professional staff (n=25), as well as psychologists (n=2). Interviews ranged in length from 45 to 60 minutes, were conducted mostly individually with a small number done in groups. Group interviews were arranged upon the recommendation of interviewees who wished to be interviewed with peers who shared teaching duties. All interviews were transcribed using AI tools contained within/hosted by a Norwegian institution. Corrections to transcripts were made subsequently by the authors. Interviews were conducted both in English and Norwegian. Prior to in depth coding, approximately 80% of interviews were read and preliminarily coded by the Authors. In the initial reading of the interviews, 5 core codes were used to identify themes used in the development of the resources (handbook, university pedagogy course). These core codes (barriers in field-based teaching; inclusive practices; disciplinary skill building; planning & information and conflicts), were then revisited and re-examined by the Authors to strengthen descriptions of the codes and to identify possible subcodes. In this paper, we focus on three of the initial core codes (barriers in field-based teaching, inclusive practices, and disciplinary skill building).

These three core codes allow us to critically analyze how instructors perceive and navigate barriers in their teaching, work to implement inclusive practices, and balance disciplinary needs for field teaching. Our analysis offers three contributions to research on inclusion in field-based teaching. First, we consider and discuss barriers in field-based teaching in western Norway – offering analysis that highlight the specificity of place in thinking through inclusion. Second, we consider how an emphasis on disciplinary skill development offers an important linkage between instructors' practices and Universal Design for Learning principles. For many participants, accessible teaching may not be seen as familiar, however through their description of disciplinary skill development, they often emphasize UDL principles including the importance of opportunity for failure, formative feedback and repetition and the development of multi-modal resources to support students' learning. Finally, we consider how many of the barriers in field-based teaching stem from both a lack of clarity or understanding about how accommodations processes work and how to talk about accessibility and disability with students and colleagues. Scholarship on inclusive teaching in field teaching in Norway is extremely limited. This paper is the first study of instructors' understanding and approaches to accessibility

in field-based teaching in Norway. This work builds existing international scholarship, while offering a specific, local analysis of field-based teaching. For academic developers working on accessibility/inclusion this paper is particularly valuable for deepening understanding of the specificity and nuances of field-based teaching (and the unique challenges and possibilities it presents for inclusive teaching).

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Rethinking Student Agency Through Mobility: How first-generation commuter students navigate space, time and higher education

Lauren Olivia Davids

Abstract

Universities increasingly enrol students who live far from campus, yet institutional support structures continue to assume spatial proximity and temporal flexibility. As accommodation shortages persist, commuting has become the norm for low-income students, whose mobility is shaped by geography, class and ethnicity. This paper rethinks commuter students not as marginal or time-poor, but as agentic educational subjects who establish productive educational lives in motion. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's spatial triad (1991) and rhythmanalysis (2004), this study explores how first-generation commuter graduates navigated the demands of an uneven mobility landscape, inflexible institutional time, and the pressures of everyday life. The research forms part of a doctoral study at a and adopts a flexible, retrospective ethnographic approach—ethnography on the move (Fataar, 2010, 2015, 2019). Data were generated through multiple in-depth interviews over 24 months and were analysed thematically. Findings show that commuting functioned as a demanding form of academic labour through which students developed spatial literacy, bodily endurance and temporal coordination. By refunctioning buses into mobile study and recovery spaces; adapting to volatile and unsafe transport systems; and enacting micro-tactics such as pre-emptive planning, route recalibration and alignment with rigid university timetables. Additionally, affirming and flexible peer networks redistributed academic, emotional and material resources to sustain their participation across fragmented spaces and times. These findings demonstrate that educational becoming is a spatial, temporal, bodily and relational endeavour. The study argues for mobility-attuned AD research that recognises the differentiated and often overlooked typologies of agency enacted by commuter students.

Keywords: Academic labour; first-generation commuter students; spatial–temporal agency; student mobility

Extended Summary

Aim of the paper: This paper examines the daily commutes of five first-generation working-class graduates from [city hidden], highlighting the navigational strategies they developed to negotiate the city's public transport system in pursuit of higher education. Using a spatial–temporal lens, the paper analyses how these students synchronised their educational trajectories with fragmented mobility infrastructures and inflexible institutional time. In doing so, the paper challenges deficit views that portray commuter students as passive, time-poor, or marginal, instead foregrounding their inventive practices as forms of agency that sustain participation in higher education.

The theoretical framework: Drawing on Henri Lefebvre's (1991, 2004) spatial and temporal analytics, the paper illuminates how space and time shape the everyday movements and educational trajectories of first-generation commuter students. Lefebvre conceptualises social space as produced through material infrastructures and routines (perceived space), institutional and policy imaginaries (conceived space), and embodied spatial practices (lived space). His rhythmanalysis extends this thinking by showing how everyday life is organised through multiple, intersecting rhythms—from transport schedules to domestic routines and university timetables—that structure how individuals navigate their worlds.

Within this framework, commuting is understood not as a logistical inconvenience but as a rhythmic field through which students negotiate bodily, institutional, and mobility tempos. These rhythms are frequently disrupted by volatile transport systems, fragmented urban infrastructures, or rigid class schedules. Students must therefore engage in ongoing labour to restore synchrony and recalibrate their routines to sustain their academic engagement. A spatial-rhythmic optic provides the vocabulary for capturing these negotiations, revealing how these students navigate an uneven city and carve out educational possibilities from the margins whilst in motion.

The methodological approach: The paper draws on a broader doctoral study that traced how five working-class first-generation graduates navigated the spatial–temporal ordering of their lives to pursue higher education at a South African university of technology. Situated within an interpretivist paradigm, the study employed ethnography on the move (Fataar, 2010, 2015, 2019), a South African educational ethnographic design attentive to mobility, marginalisation, and aspiration in materially constrained contexts. The approach drew on person-centred (LeVine, 1982), mobile (Ingold & Vergunst, 2008), multi-sited (Marcus, 1999), and critical (Palmer & Caldas, 2015) ethnographic traditions, making it well suited to capturing the experiences of participants from geographically peripheral communities marked by chronic unemployment, violence, and low university participation. As participants had already moved away from their towns of origin, a conventional site-bound ethnography was not feasible; instead, the method traced their movements across home, community, transit, and campus spaces to align with their mobile realities. Data were generated over 24 months (May 2023–May 2025) through multiple in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, site visits, and reflective field notes. Each participant completed approximately eight interviews exploring commuting routines and the effects of mobility on academic participation. Additional interviews with significant others and school principals provided contextual depth.

Data were transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase process, guided by Lefebvre's spatial trialectics and rhythmanalysis. Trustworthiness was strengthened through member checking, triangulation across data sources, and ongoing reflexive journaling to document analytic decisions and positional influences.

Key findings: The findings show that participants lived highly polyrhythmic educational lives, requiring continual negotiation across home, transit, and campus spaces. Their ability to realise their educational aspirations within structurally unequal contexts depended not on institutional support—which they had limited time to access—but on their capacity to exercise spatial, temporal, embodied, and relational agency. Spatial agency emerged as participants learned to read and reinterpret constraining environments such as unsafe walking routes, overcrowded buses, and disorienting campus spaces. Over time, through observation and trial and error, they transformed these uneven terrains into workable spaces that supported academic participation.

Embodied agency developed through the ongoing physical adjustments enabled them to withstand lengthy and exhausting commutes, which included exposure to weather and gendered safety threats.

Temporal agency was crucial. Participants synchronised their routines with unreliable transport rhythms and rigid institutional timetables through early rising, contingency planning, and constant recalibration of movement. Their educational lives were shaped by the labour of aligning personal, domestic, and institutional tempos.

Relational agency was equally central. Supportive networks of peers, mentors, classroom friends, and family members provided emotional support and material assistance, enabling participants to maintain academic momentum despite precarity. Collectively, these forms of agency demonstrate that educational persistence for first-generation commuter students was driven by their rhythmic labour rather than institutional structures. Their commutes significantly limited participation in campus-based academic support and social activities, making their achievements all the more notable.

The theoretical and educational significance of the work, including implications for practice, policy, or future research: This paper argues that commuting is not simply a logistical burden but constitutive of commuter students' educational lives, shaping how they access, experience, and sustain participation in higher education. By framing commuting as a rhythmic practice of educational becoming, the study extends dominant conceptions of student agency to reveal forms of spatial, temporal, embodied, and relational agency that remain largely overlooked in AD literature.

The findings underscore the need for mobility-attuned academic development practices and policies that address the lived realities of commuter students. This includes flexible pedagogies and expanded remote-access opportunities that recognise off-campus environments—buses and homes—as legitimate learning spaces.

Finally, the study opens pathways for future research, including comparative analyses of commuter typologies to examine how diverse transport infrastructures shape educational access, experiences and outcomes.

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Field Testing the CLEAR Reflection Process: Establishing a Reflective WIL Practice to Support Lifelong Learning

Monica Vesely

Abstract

Reflective practice is an essential, durable skill required by students in higher education to anchor learning and tailor outcomes to their goals. Reflection is the aspect of any experience (whether in an academic course, work setting or personal pursuit) that has the most potential to contribute to an individual's growth and life-long learning. This session shares the results of field-testing the newly developed CLEAR WIL (Work-Integrated Learning) Reflection Process.

Work-integrated learning (WIL) is a form of curricular experiential education that formally integrates a student's academic studies with quality experiences within a workplace or practice setting. Reflection is widely recognized as an important component of work-integrated learning fostering deeper understanding and enhancing personal and professional growth. Reflection serves an essential role in facilitating knowledge transformation in WIL.

The CLEAR approach aims to mobilize reflection for the learner and support the development of a life-long reflective practice by moving purposefully through sequential stages, each building upon the last with a view to maximizing learning.

Keywords: reflection, work-integrated learning, life-long learning, maximizing learning

Extended Summary

Within WIL pedagogy, Stirling, A. et al (2016) underscore the value of reflection "to assist students in thinking critically about their work experiences by contemplating the influence an experience has on their life; to generate an awareness of the origins and importance of particular learning experiences; and to create new meanings regarding previous experiences". Helyer (2015) notes the potential of reflection to support the development of valuable life skills including decision making, goalsetting, problem-solving and the ability to integrate multiple concepts as well as to deepen understanding of oneself and one's identity.

With this central importance of reflection in WIL in mind, the researchers conducted an environmental scan of common reflection models and frameworks used across a diversity of sectors (business, education, healthcare, etc.) and identified a weakness in the ability of existing models to make transparent the process of reflection. While valuable as conceptual tools in their respective sectors, the examined models fell short when it came to mobilizing reflection for the learner. The CLEAR WIL Reflection Process was developed to address the need for an actionable guiding structure that supports deep, multifaceted, impactful reflection by focusing on the transformation of direct experience into knowledge, emphasizing the role of experience in learning in the tradition of Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984). By moving the learner through well-defined sequential stages, each building upon the last, the CLEAR WIL Reflection Process aims to maximizing learning and harness the full potential of reflection to support development of future-ready life skills (e.g. decision making, problem-solving, etc.)

The key elements of reflection are represented by the acronym CLEAR – capture, link, examine, assemble and respond. Each stage serves a specific function in the reflection process culminating in a reconstruction of the original experience which incorporates new perspectives and considerations and leads to an expanded understanding. The ultimate stage situates the experience within the broader continuum of life experiences and the interconnectedness of self to community to help guide future action.

This presentation will share the results of field testing the CLEAR Reflection Process with students engaged in work-integrated learning (WIL) and with student advisors at the University of Waterloo. This project used an exploratory research approach alongside developmental action research methods (Creswell, 2014; Cardno, 2003). The exploratory aspect allowed for experimentation with small samples and tentative findings (Creswell, 2014). Meanwhile, the developmental action research methods encourage practical interventions and problem-solving.

Qualitative data analysis was used to process the data collected in one-on-one interviews (via transcripts) and in post-reflection activity survey responses. The coding (of interview transcripts and survey responses) and identification of patterns followed Saldaña's eclectic coding approach which combined Structural, Descriptive, and Theme Coding in the initial pass, and pattern coding in the second pass to identify overarching themes (2013).

The qualitative data gathered in this study focused on

- Ease of use/how well it guides the reflective process
- Efficacy at supporting deep(er), multifaceted, impactful reflection and lifelong learning
- Applicability across contexts

Given the underlying connection of reflection to successful life-long learning and personal development, there is potential for the CLEAR WIL Reflection Process to be adopted as part of developmental opportunities for both students and instructors, across diverse contexts (work-integrated learning, academic learning and advising) both in-person and online.

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Workshop 19

A Service Model in Higher Education? Reclaiming a Business Concept.

Anneleen Claassen, Nicole Totté, Elke Van der Stappen

Abstract

Higher education institutions face increasing demands for innovation, quality assurance, and strategic agility. Traditional, ad hoc support models often fail to meet these challenges on scale. This workshop explores how service models, commonly associated with business logics, can be reclaimed as value-driven frameworks for educational development. Drawing on our institution's recent restructuring of Teaching and Learning Services, we present a layered model combining broad-access offerings with specialized, tailored services. Participants will critically examine tensions around resource allocation, equity, and the role of educational developers, using interactive activities and case-based discussions. Through practical examples and collaborative exercises, attendees will identify strategies to design coherent, scalable support systems without eroding academic values. The session equips participants with conceptual clarity and actionable tools to strengthen educational development capacity in their own contexts.

Keywords: Teaching & learning services, layered service models, course level and program level support, role of educational developers

Extended Summary

In recent years, our institution's central Teaching and Learning Services has undergone a substantial change process that resulted in a new organizational structure. Guided by the building blocks of the organizational canvas (Maenen, 2018), the unit deliberately adopted a quality-driven approach to educational support.

At the heart of these changes is a sharpened focus on designing and delivering teaching and learning support. Whereas teams previously consisted of experts within the same domain (e.g., education policy), they are now composed of experts from different domains (educational, policy, procedural, process-related). This interdisciplinary composition enables the design of integrated offerings.

Given the scale of the university, individualized one-to-one support is neither feasible nor efficient. The unit therefore chose to develop a service model in which teams design and deliver services within their respective domains of expertise. These services are coordinated through a service catalog and aligned across teams, enabling scalable, coherent, and strategically positioned support that addresses institutional needs as a whole rather than responding ad hoc to individual requests.

A service model originates from the business world and describes how services are delivered, managed, and improved. Although the notion may sound foreign—or even suspicious—within higher education, as it is often associated with business logics, marketisation, and neoliberal governance (Eren, 2023), it can be reclaimed as a productive organizational approach for academic development. Universities increasingly face complex expectations related to innovation, quality assurance, and curricular agility. These pressures demand flexible, coherent, and strategically positioned educational development efforts. This raises a central question: how can service models be mobilized responsibly to strengthen educational development?

Rather than importing service models as business tools, our unit examined how they can be redesigned to support educational quality, faculty agency, and institutional strategy—without succumbing to market logics. This reconceptualization aligns with scholarship on the "third space", where educational developers act as bridging professionals integrating pedagogical expertise, organizational insight, and strategic facilitation (Berman & Cheng, 2021). In practice, this approach has taken shape in a layered model that combines a) free, broad-access services that establish shared educational language and empower faculty and b) specialized, tailored services, sometimes fee-based, designed to address complex needs and support institutional priorities. Importantly, the introduction of fee-based components is not driven by revenue generation but by agility and differentiation. It allows the unit to provide more intensive guidance where required, while preserving universal access to foundational support. This distinction is crucial in countering neoliberal interpretations and ensuring that the service model remains firmly anchored in educational values.

In this workshop we will share lessons learned from our unit's service-based model, illustrated through practical insights from two specialized teams. The first team provides free offerings such as automated knowledge-clip studios and educational bootcamps where participants acquire didactic, technical, and multimedia skills to design their own online courses. Alongside these open services, the team also offers specialized paid options, ranging from on-demand multimedia training to support from a professional video team. The second team has developed a layered support model for programme development and reform. When programmes seek guidance on embedding transversal themes into curricula, the team provides an online, sequenced framework that combines reflective questions with inspiration

for implementation. In addition, they organize short, targeted consultation hours for programme leaders and developers preparing for upcoming reforms. This layered approach creates capacity for more intensive—sometimes fee-based—guidance of programmes undergoing reform or faculties facing strategic challenges.

Participants will critically engage with these two examples in the context of our institution's service model and reflect on their own institutional choices. The session addresses the tensions surrounding service models in higher education and equips attendees with transferable tools, conceptual clarity, and strategies for responsible, value-driven educational development.

In this workshop, participants will:

1. Analyze the model of our institution as an example of value-driven, pedagogically grounded service design.
2. Critically examine how the role of the educational developer may shift—or remain stable—within the context of a service model and explore the implications of adopting such a model.
3. Learn about and discuss different strategies and examples of support offerings on the course and program level.
4. Identify tensions, opportunities and institutional conditions that shape service-based approaches.
5. Develop actionable strategies to strengthen educational development capacity without eroding academic values.

Workshop Structure and Interactive Activities

(10 min) Provocative Opening: "A Service Model in Higher Education?!" We begin by surfacing assumptions and anxieties surrounding service models. In pairs, participants discuss what the term evokes in their institution (e.g., efficiency, marketisation, professionalisation, bureaucracy). This frames the workshop's critical stance.

(15 min) Presentation of our institution's Teaching & Learning Services Model with examples We introduce the layered model with explicit attention to countering neoliberal interpretations: free, broad-access services, that establish shared educational language and empower faculty and specialized, tailored services, sometimes fee-based, designed to address complex needs and support institutional priorities. It will be illustrated through practical insights from two specialized teams.

(15 min) Interactive discussion: Service models – threat, opportunity or necessity? Through an exercise where participants are asked to physically take a position in relation to a statement, they discuss different aspects regarding service models (e.g. resource allocation, power dynamics, equity and politics of offering paid vs. free services, the role of the educational developer). In the discussion afterwards where they must explain their position, they are encouraged to compare across institutions.

(30 min) Roundtables: Confronting Tensions and Exploring Alternatives Participants are divided into two tables. At each table there will be one workshop leader who specializes in this topic and who can elaborate about our institution's choices and services. This expert serves as the facilitator of the table and synthesizes common patterns and contrasts across institutions.

Table A: *Supporting course creation*

Participants analyze one existing service from their institution to support education on course level using a simplified 'service design canvas. They identify the target group, the goal(s) of this service, delivery mode, required resources and position (broad access vs. specialized). They work on a large canvas where different columns represent the different categories. After completing the canvas, participants share insights at the table: where do tensions arise? How does this service reflect or challenge the role of educational developers? What would they keep, change or add to make the services more coherent and value-driven?

Table B: *Supporting programme change*

Using excerpts of the step-by-step framework for embedding transversal themes into curricula, participants analyse how to support programmes. They translate elements of the framework to their own context and compare this approach to their own educational support services. Discussions focus on academic workload, disciplinary identity and reflections on the role of educational developers.

(10 min) Plenary integration Groups share insights, revealing cross-institutional patterns. We synthesise themes such as resisting marketisation while embracing strategic clarity and leveraging third-space roles for institutional good.

(10 min) Closing and Takeaways Participants are encouraged to share their main takeaway(s) regarding the workshop.

This workshop addresses a timely and contested issue: how academic development can remain value-driven while responding to institutional complexity. By critically rethinking service models, not as neoliberal intrusions but as

strategic, pedagogically grounded tools, the session contributes to ongoing debates about the future positioning of educational development units.

Intended Audience: Educational developers, academic developers, curriculum leaders, teaching staff engaged in programme reform, and policy or strategy professionals in higher education.

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Workshop 20

Photo~currere~voice: visualising academic developers' strategic agency in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous times in higher education

Amrita Narang

Abstract

Academic developers are increasingly called upon to act as strategic change agents, shaping teaching cultures, curriculum enhancement and organisational learning while navigating volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) conditions. Yet much day-to-day academic development still takes the form of reactive, short-term responses to staff development needs, leaving limited room for reflective, values driven strategy work. This workshop introduces photo~currere~voice, a creative, posthuman, arts based methodology (author, 2024) that combines autobiographical currere (Pinar, 1975) with participatory visual inquiry (Wang and Burris, 1997), as a way for academic developers to (re)examine and reimagine their strategic agency. Working with their own images, and recognising the entangled roles of people, places, policies and material artefacts, participants will trace past, present and possible futures of their work and identify micropolitical "becoming minor" moves within existing institutional structures. The session is highly interactive and grounded in research with academic developers engaged in decolonial curriculum work. It will provide a flexible 4 step process and adaptable tools that participants can take back to their own centres or institutions for use in team retreats, strategic planning and leadership development. In line with Subtheme 2, the workshop foregrounds agency, strategy and organisational transformation, supporting participants to cultivate agile, resilient and values aligned academic development practices.

Keywords: Academic development, Agency and strategy, Arts-based methods, Photo~currere~voice

Extended Summary

ICED26 focuses on Agency and Academic Development, emphasising academic developers' roles as change agents who influence teaching, learning, curriculum design and organisational learning across institutional and systemic levels. Within this frame, Sub-theme 2 highlights Agency and Strategy: Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Organizational Transformation, inviting contributions that address intentional, strategic action, alignment with institutional policies and the cultivation of agile, responsive academic development units.

In many higher education contexts, academic developers describe their work as dominated by urgent, short-term requests for workshops, compliance-oriented initiatives and fragmented projects. Time and resource constraints, policy cycles and competing demands create a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environment that can render strategic agency difficult to enact and even to recognise. Against this backdrop, there is a need for reflective, imaginative and values-based approaches that help academic developers see themselves as strategically positioned actors and identify practical ways to influence institutional cultures and structures over time.

This workshop is grounded in research that combines four key strands:

- Agency and strategy in academic development. Agency is understood as relational and distributed, emerging through interactions among people, policies, histories, spaces, technologies and material conditions, rather than as purely individual autonomy. Strategy is conceptualised not only as formal plans but also as situated, iterative and micro-political action aligned with institutional aims.
- Becoming minor. Drawing on Deleuzo-Guattarian philosophy, "becoming minor" refers to small, inventive, often subtle gestures that "make strange" dominant languages and practices from within major structures. Rather than seeking only grand, top-down reforms, becoming minor foregrounds micro-political moves that open "lines of flight" and create new possibilities for more just, inclusive and decolonial practices inside existing governance systems.
- Posthuman orientation. A posthuman approach foregrounds the entanglement of human and more-than-human actors in academic development—spaces, artefacts, digital systems, evaluative tools and institutional texts all play a role in shaping what can be thought and done. Photo~currere~voice attends to these material-discursive relations, inviting participants to notice how non-human elements participate in their strategic agency, rather than treating them as neutral backdrops.
- • Photo~currere~voice. This creative arts-based praxis combines currere (autobiographical work structured as regressive–progressive–analytic–synthetic movements) with visual methods, inspired by photovoice (photographs and images) and collective dialogue. Developed in doctoral research with academic developers working on decolonial curriculum imaginations, it enabled participants to surface tacit values, interrogate their roles and imagine alternative futures for academic development, whilst challenging its colonial logics and human-centred assumptions.

The workshop adapts this creative, posthuman research-based methodology into a practical, accessible format for ICED participants who wish to explore their own strategic agency and consider how similar processes could support organisational transformation in their contexts, challenge sedimented thinking around academic development, and visualise what might emerge differently.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Comprehend how their everyday academic development practices already enact strategic agency and organisational influence, even when framed as reactive or service-oriented work.
- Use photo~currere~voice praxis (photo + currere + collective voice) to reflect on past, present and possible futures of their academic development roles in their own context, attending to human and more-than-human entanglements.
- Identify at least one concrete "becoming minor" micro-political move they can make in their own institution (e.g., a reframing, alliance, or initiative) to support teaching, learning or organisational transformation.

The workshop is fully participant-centred and uses individual reflection, small-group dialogue and whole-group synthesis. Participants will be asked in advance to bring 3–5 digital or printed images that, for them, represent:

- a moment of influence or frustration in their academic development work
- a space, object or relationship that symbolises their unit's position in the institution
- an image that hints at a possible future for academic development where they work

Workshop Structure

Opening and framing (10 minutes)

- Welcome and brief goals and purpose aligned to conference theme
- Short introduction to photo~currere~voice, its posthuman foundations and the notion of becoming minor, using one anonymised example image to illustrate how spaces, objects and policies co-produce agency.
- Explanation of workshop flow and what to expect.

Photo-regressive: Mapping the past (15 minutes)

- In small groups of 3–4, participants select one–two images that connect to their earlier experiences as academic developers.
- Each person shares (around 2 minutes each): what is happening or symbolised here? How did they understand their role, their strategic influence and the more-than-human elements at that time?
- Group members respond with curious questions rather than advice, to support reflective listening.

Photo-progressive: Imagining futures (15 minutes)

- Continuing in small groups, participants choose or quickly sketch an image that represents a desired future for academic development in their context (e.g., new partnerships, reshaped roles, renewed teaching cultures, different relationships with technologies or spaces)
- They briefly share what future is being imagined and how their agency and strategy would look in that image

Photo-analytic: Making strategic assemblages (20 minutes)

- Groups create a visual "assemblage" on the large paper, juxtaposing past and future images
- They draw lines or annotations linking images to institutional policies, governance structures, stakeholders, technologies and teaching/learning priorities
- Prompt questions: Where do you see strategic leverage points? What constraints and opportunities are visible? Which "becoming minor" moves might be possible here?

Photo-synthetic: From images to micro-movements (20 minutes)

- Whole-group gallery walk: each group briefly presents their assemblage and offers one key insight about their current strategic position and one micro-political move they could make (e.g., new alliances, re-framing of an initiative, using data or tools for dialogue rather than compliance)
- The facilitator visually clusters emergent strategies (e.g., working through committees, co-creating with students, re-configuring digital platforms, embedding evaluation for learning) on a shared surface.

Meta-reflection and take-away framework (10 minutes)

- • How did working visually and materially change how participants saw their strategic agency?
- • Where could they adapt this process (e.g., within their units, with programme leaders, in leadership programmes)?

This workshop directly addresses ICED26's call to explore how academic developers enact agency and strategy to enhance teaching, learning and organisational transformation. It does so by:

- Offering a concrete, research-informed, posthuman methodology that helps participants move beyond reactive provision towards reflective, values-aligned and strategically oriented practice.
- Showing how minor, micro-political moves within existing structures can gradually shift cultures and policies, rather than relying solely on top-down reforms.
- Providing tools for academic development units to work with complexity and VUCA conditions in ways that acknowledge constraints while opening space for hope, creativity and decolonial commitments.

Intended audience:

- Academic developers at all career stages who are interested in exploring their strategic agency and learning new reflective tools.
- Heads and members of academic development units, teaching and learning centres, or similar structures.
- Educational leaders (e.g., programme directors, deans, associate deans for education) who wish to use arts-based, participatory and posthuman approaches in strategic and organisational development.

No prior experience with arts-based or posthuman research is required. Participants need only a willingness to experiment with visual thinking and to engage in reflective dialogue.

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Workshop 21

The future of Academic Development: A speculative fiction workshop

Cormac McGrath, Elisa Bone

Abstract

As universities undergo significant change, upheaval and disruption, the role of academic development in guiding teaching and learning becomes a critical, and potentially stabilising, force. However, the work of academic developers themselves is increasingly threatened, including through funding cuts and the adoption of technological tools such as genAI that may purport to replace academic development activities. Within this turbulent environment, assessing and responding to risk can be challenging. In this workshop we invite participants to engage with the methodology of speculative social science fictions to explore possibilities for the future of academic development. During the workshop, participants will examine existing fictions and consider issues within their recent practice and that of their peers to draft their own fictional scenarios within small groups. The workshop will provide a safe space to creatively explore challenges, impacts and possibilities for academic development practices, processes and supports within the future university, and empower participants to utilise similar methods within their own practice.

Keywords: Speculative Fictions, Future of Practice, Creative Methods

Extended Summary

Higher education stands amid a profound transformation. As Stein et al. (2025) suggest, "higher education as we know it will be unrecognizable within a generation." We identify external changes, and challenges, and we recognize that the Higher Education sector faces intersecting crises; financial instability, calls for decolonization, the accelerating impact of AI, and widespread well-being challenges. Academic developers, positioned at the intersection of these forces, are tasked with navigating volatile and resource-constrained environments (Kolomitro et al., 2020; McGrath, 2020) whilst also facing precarious work conditions themselves (Cassidy, 2025; Klein, 2024). But academic developer work is often in a state of flux, and we identify challenges from within also. We discern structural changes in how AD work is organized, where AD centres sometimes are hosted in independent university departments and are afforded the intellectual scope to research and develops AD practices. In other institutions AD centres are part of centralized administrative units and concerns of the chancellor's office, where AD work is relegated to providing human resources and credit. So we ask; what does the future entail for academic development work? We aim to use this workshop to explore the potential futures of AD work.

Our goal is to generate ideas and understandings from a range of vignettes about the future of AD work, that engage the participants in emotional conversations and allow participants to confront what Tanenbaum (2014) calls questions of "ethics, values, social perspectives, causality, politics, psychology, and emotions" within a safe and creative space. The workshop is influenced by social science fiction (Abbott 2007; Selwyn et al. 2020), which highlights and illuminates many aspects of social life and work practice. We believe that our Academic Development fiction workshop can illuminate the many complicated and confusing relationships that make up our practice – between people, expectations, changing structures and other things. Social science fiction treats imagined futures as tools for examining present realities. Academic developer fictions may be unsettling, dystopian, or also utopian. Our workshop will engage participants with social science fiction as a method for critical reflection. Through this process, we envision that academic developers might build capacity to foresee and anticipate more desirable futures (Gümüsay & Reinecke, 2024) while simultaneously building resilience for what may be more challenging times ahead (Bone et al., 2025).

Workshop timeline:

Activity	Task	Time
Introduction	The workshop will begin by a shorter presentation outlining the changing landscape of AD work and engage participants with possible scenarios	10 minutes

Individual ideation	Participants are invited to think creatively around and propose a number of potential scenarios related to their own experiences	10 minutes
Co-creating speculative fictions	Participants are divided into working groups to develop further 3-4 (different) plots for the future of AD work	30 minutes
Discussion	Working groups present their ideas in turn for discussion and exploration with the broader group	30 minutes
Summary	Overview of outcomes and possible outputs Sharing ideas, information and contacts, preparation for next steps in fiction development	10 minutes

Participants at this workshop will meet the following learning goals:

- Examine and reflect on challenges faced by academic developers across a range of contexts
- Explore a range of possible scenarios within their own academic development context
- Reflect on and create fictional vignettes to describe possible futures for academic development

The workshop material will also provide the basis for an article on the future of AD work, prepared for the International Journal for Academic Development.

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Workshop 22

Beyond Written Work: Designing Interactive Oral Assessment

Eszter Kalman, Samantha Clarke, Cassie Violet Lowe

Abstract

This hands-on workshop guides participants through designing Interactive Oral Assessments (IOAs)—scenario-based conversations that assess students' capacity to articulate, defend, and extend disciplinary knowledge in real time. IOAs have increased in popularity because of the emergence of generative AI. Drawing on established frameworks (Logan-Fleming & Sotiriadou, 2020; Ward et al., 2024), participants will develop practical IOA components ready for implementation. The workshop follows the IOA design process: defining characteristics that distinguish IOAs from traditional oral exams, identifying authentic professional conversations specific to participants' disciplines, developing assessment scenarios aligned to learning outcomes, creating rubrics and conversation prompts, and planning for student preparation and teaching team calibration. Through structured activities and peer collaboration, participants will draft IOA elements including scenarios, rubric criteria, and implementation strategies. The session will present a sample workshop for supporting IOAs, and then participants will discuss how this work might be adapted to their own contexts. Critical considerations addressed include equity for multilingual learners, workload management, operational logistics, and marker/grading consistency.

Participants will leave with draft IOA materials, practical tools, and connections to ongoing community support. Designed for academic developers, educational designers, and educators seeking to implement oral assessment. No prior IOA experience required. Participants are encouraged (but not required) to bring learning outcomes from their teaching or from educators they support.

Keywords: Interactive Oral Assessment, Assessment, Educational Development

Extended Summary

Workshops should be participant-centred and designed to foster practical takeaways that attendees can apply in their own institutions or contexts. The landscape of assessment in higher education is undergoing fundamental transformation. This workshop explores the role of Interactive Oral Assessments, guiding participants through considerations for designing meaningful oral assessments connected to their contexts and offering opportunities to discuss the value of oral assessment as part of an assessment ecosystem. Since the emergence of increasingly powerful generative AI tools, the long-held assumption that written work reliably demonstrates student understanding has seen significant challenges. While these tools have crystallised concerns for many in higher education, educators have long recognised that writing alone cannot fully capture students' intellectual capacity or their ability to think, speak, and defend ideas in real time (Mulder and French, 2023).

This assessment inflection point presents both challenge and opportunity. Academic developers are uniquely positioned to support institutions through this transition, helping educators rethink assessment design and move beyond over-reliance on written work. Critically, this moment offers an unprecedented opportunity to build new professional relationships with colleagues across disciplines who may not have previously engaged with Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) services or academic development units. Interactive Oral Assessments (IOAs) have emerged as a compelling response, offering a mode of assessment with student engagement that is less susceptible to AI assistance (Fenton, 2025; Logan-Fleming & Sotiriadou, 2020; Ward et al., 2024). By foregrounding students' capacity to articulate, defend, and respond to ideas in conversation, oral assessment validates authorship and intellectual agency while cultivating essential communication skills. For academic developers, IOAs represent a pathway to engage educators—and through them, entire disciplinary communities—who are actively searching for assessment alternatives.

Learning Goals and Outcomes for participants:

- The workshop will introduce participants to the theoretical foundations for IOAs
- The workshop will support participants in beginning to develop an IOA
- The workshop will support academic developers in supporting IOAs on their own campuses

The workshop will leverage the group's experience in educational development to consider the challenges and benefits of IOA as a viable form of assessment

The first 60 minutes of this session will offer a model workshop for learning about IOAs. The last 30 minutes will allow participants to debrief the approach and consider context and adaptations needed for transfer.

0 - 10 min - An introduction to Interactive Oral Assessment (IOA), what is it (and what is it not) and what are the characteristics that define an IOA?

- We are going to open the session with a brief summary of the theoretical foundations for IOA.

- Using Mentimeter we are going to ask our participants to share their experience of and current understanding of IOA.

10 - 20 min - what is a professional conversation? In your context, in your discipline, for your students?

- IoA are based in professional conversations aligned to the discipline.

- In this section we will ask participants to consider the kind of conversations that are unique and authentic for their disciplines.

20 - 30min - how might we assess a conversation? Rubrics, prompts and rigour

- We will consider how your learning objectives can be assessed through scenarios using a rubric.

- In this section of the workshop we will begin to develop (the beginnings of) a rubric and align these to your learning outcomes.

30 - 40min - Getting our students ready

- What are the considerations for our students and how do we get them ready for IOA.

40 - 50min - Getting our teaching teams ready

- How do we ensure that our teaching teams are well calibrated, consistent and confident assessing IOA?

50 -60min - Operational considerations

- While these are very much embedded in context, we will share some prompts to help participants consider the factors for operationalising their IOA.

60 - 85min - General discussion about IOAs as an academic development strategy

- We will open up the discussion to take a step back and consider how participants might foster IOAs on their own campuses.

What might be concerns that educators would have about IOAs? How might this workshop need to be tailored to work in various contexts? What are ways that participants have found it helpful to support IOAs, or other alternative assessments?

85 - 90min - We will wrap up with a quick summary of the discussion and an invitation for further work.

Intended Audience: We welcome anyone interested in discussing forms of assessment beyond written work. Specifically:

- Academic developers seeking to expand their toolkit for supporting faculty with assessment innovation

- Teaching center directors navigating institutional conversations about assessment in the age of AI

- Educators in disciplines experimenting with oral assessment

No prior experience with IOAs required. Participants are encouraged to bring examples of learning outcomes from their own teaching or from educators they support.

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Workshop 23

Addressing Courses Bottlenecks Across the Curriculum with Art-and Museum-infused Faculty Development

Anna Flaming, Kimberly Datchuk

Abstract

This session provides participants with strategies to address course bottlenecks by incorporating artwork and art museums into teaching across disciplines. Led by an academic developer and an art museum curator of learning & engagement who have worked together for more than five years, we will explore how we support university teachers to include art-based strategies in classes to help students build and reinforce essential skills, such as observation, communication, and problem solving. Session leaders will guide participants through several museum-based activities. We will explore evidence for the effectiveness of the exercises drawing from a collaboration with higher ed instructors across a wide range of fields (from Economics to Audiology) and contextualized by higher education literature. Though the activities will be rooted in art and focused on the art museum context, they have broad applicability. The workshop leaders will share how participants can apply the principles discussed to their unique situations in classrooms or as academic developers, whether or not they have an art museum or other type of museum at their institution.

Keywords: Slow Looking, Course Bottlenecks, Art-based Academic Development, Museum-based Academic Development, University Museum

Extended Summary

Based upon a multi-year collaboration between a Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) and a university art museum, this session explores how art and art museum-based strategies can enhance student learning. The art museum hoped to expand the educational use of its collection and share with teachers impactful learning strategies commonly used in the museum world. The CTL hoped to build on existing programming in course design, instructor learning communities, and the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL). Through two teaching communities of practice (COPs) convened over the past five years, teachers from disciplines as varied as Biomedical Engineering, Dance, Swahili, and Economics have explored how engagement with art could enhance their courses. Teachers worked closely with a curator and an academic developer to identify course bottlenecks (Middendorf, 2018), explore close looking strategies (Tishman, 2017), and design art-inspired approaches to help students learn. In this session, we will explore strategies for incorporating art across the curriculum and offer advice about building cross-campus collaborations to enhance student learning and energize faculty.

Theoretical and research-based foundations: Liliana Milkova and Stephen S. Volk (2014) laid the foundation for effective collaboration between university art museums and CFTs to facilitate learning across disciplines. By adding in slow looking strategies (Tishman, 2017) and participatory museum activities, we guided teachers to investigate artworks more deeply with their students. Spending dedicated time studying and contemplating artworks allowed teachers to generate questions relevant to their areas of study and work with students. We applied Yenawine's (2013) findings that museum visitors who feel empowered to observe and analyze artworks retain more about the artworks they saw in the galleries to our work with faculty and by extension their students to develop activities that connect to course learning objectives and provide opportunities for students to apply course content in novel and memorable ways. Furthermore, as conveners and collaborators, academic development benefits from considering the potentials of art and art-based strategies like close looking. Ndlovu and colleagues described how visual metaphors were important for meaningmaking and development as academics (Ndlovu, Mbatha, & Msiza, 2024). Similar approaches have been impactful in development curriculum among health professions teachers (Gaufberg et al, 2023). Learning goals and outcomes: At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Explain art-based strategies instructors can apply to help students meet learning objectives across a variety of disciplines.
- Discuss how collaborations between academic developers and art

museum staff can enhance academic development efforts.

Description of interactive activities with approximate timings:

I. Welcome and introduction (25 minutes):

- Participants will engage in a close looking exercise with artwork and debrief.
- Session leaders will share the context and goals of their collaboration
- Participants will discuss common course bottlenecks and challenges for instructors II. Sample activities, debriefs, and evidence of outcomes from specific case studies (35 minutes):

- Facilitators will invite participants to engage in several sample activities including drawing and embodied movement.
- Participants will discuss the transferrable skills used in each and how they might support student learning in an array of disciplines.
- Session leaders will share case studies that describe how similar activities have been leveraged in course designs and how the academic development program supported college instructors' incorporating these exercises into their classes.

III. Planning (20 minutes)

- Facilitators will share details of their academic development program.
- Participants will reflect on questions to explore opportunities for similar work in their own contexts. IV. Wrap-up and final reflection (10 minutes):
- Facilitators will preview additional resources, including a list of further reading.
- Participants will brainstorm opportunities for collaboratively supporting each other in similar work across their varied contexts.

Relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education:

This discussion builds on Sutherland's (2018) call for a "holistic academic development" that includes considering "the whole institution." Although literature increasingly addresses collaborations between academic developers and other campus units, including IT and library professionals (Cherrington et. al., 2018; Wright, 2023), opportunities exist for greater discussion about collaboration between academic developers and university museum to promote epistemic agency. This session also engages with questions that are evergreen for academic developers and aligned with the conference theme: What strategies can be used to empower students to learn? How can interdisciplinary communities enhance teaching practices? Intended Audience: We invite any academic developer with an interest in cross-campus collaborations, faculty communities, course design, or arts-based learning. This interactive workshop explores a project that engaged higher ed teachers and students, most of whom had little to no previous experience with museums or visual arts. The session leaders, therefore, have built an ethics of welcoming all levels of experience with and perspectives on visual art into the session. Session activities are adaptable to those with different needs, and we will offer audio descriptions or tactile guides for participants who would prefer to use

Fig. 1. Macroeconomic students working with museum staff during a museum visit.

Fig. 2. Student analyzing an artwork during a museum visit.

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Workshop 24

Collaborative hospitality in academic development

Molly Sutphen, Ragnhild Sandvoll, Tone Dyrdal Solbrekke, Velda McCune, Lina Markauskaite

Abstract

(word count: 250) We propose a workshop on the use of collaborative hospitality, both in our day-to-day work (courses and consultations) as academic developers and as agents for change in university cultures (Stensaker, 2018). By exploring the research base of collaborative hospitality in interdisciplinary education and how we can use this type of hospitality for organizational change, the workshop speaks to both conference sub themes 1 and 2. The workshop's purpose is to provide opportunities for participants to consider how the concept of hospitable collaboration informs their academic development work, and how they might use it (Sutphen et al., 2024) with colleagues, administrators, leaders, and students for institutional change. The workshop has three parts, starting inductively with an activity on 'statements' about collaboration and hospitality in higher education. The activity is designed to spark dialogue and reflection among participants on university cultures, collaboration, and the purposes of academic development. In part two, we draw on our research project Academic Hospitality in Interdisciplinary Education (Norwegian Research Council: 326088) as well as discourses on academic hospitality (Imperiale et al., 2021; Phipps & Barnett, 2007) and collaboration (Thomson et al., 2009) to demonstrate the potential of collaboration and reciprocal hospitality in universities. In the third part of the workshop, we engage in a plenary discussion about how participants may already enact some forms of academic hospitality (Imperiale et al., 2021; Phipps & Barnett, 2007). We then turn to the future and ask participants how they might use collaborative hospitality for organizational transformation in their respective universities.

Keywords

Collaboration, academic hospitality, organizational transformation

Extended Summary for Workshop (word count: 992) Theoretical and research-based foundation

Through the project Academic Hospitality in Interdisciplinary Education (AHIE), funded by the Norwegian Research Council (NFR 326088), we study practices of collaboration in interdisciplinary education in six universities (Örebro University, University College Dublin, UiT -- The Arctic University of Norway, University of Edinburgh, University of Oslo, and University of Sydney). We address a striking gap in the current research literature: while the importance of collaboration in interdisciplinary education is widely acknowledged, there is limited understanding of how it is done, who participates, when and where it happens, and what kinds of institutional support make it possible. Our research on collaboration in interdisciplinary education has direct implications for academic development, because as

academic developers, we collaborate routinely role in our work, whether by way of courses, workshops, or consultations with students, academics, administrators, and leaders.

In the proposed workshop, we will explore with participants how collaboration is supported by the concept of academic hospitality as developed by Phipps and Barnett (2007). We will explore together how those from different disciplines take on the roles of guests and hosts as they work out what and how to collaborate in teaching and learning. We will also weave into the workshop Derrida's work (2000) on how guests and hosts show reciprocal hospitality, as well as Zembylas' (2019) notion of affective hospitality. Finally, we will show how the research of Thomson et al (2009) on collaboration in organizations can be of much use academic development in higher education. In the workshop, we will highlight examples from our empirical research of when academic hospitality is lacking in collaboration, as well as many examples of its presence, showing how the concept helps to clarify the dynamics of collaboration across disciplinary boundaries and university cultures.

The workshop also addresses the invisibility of hospitality in higher education and why many who engage in hospitality do so without recognising it as such (Sutphen et al., 2024). Part of the purpose of this workshop is to make visible the work of hospitality that academic developers draw on as they collaborate with others. We ask participants to reflect on how and why they collaborate in academia, and we present our analysis of practices of academic hospitality, along with the concrete mechanics of collaboration.

Central to the workshop is an activity that two out of the four authors have used in our academic development practices. This activity invites participants to consider statements designed to elicit reflection on their assumptions, values, and attitudes they have about collaboration and hospitality. We use this activity in part to demonstrate a possible pedagogy academic developers might consider using in their courses. We also draw on the practices and rich resources developed by O'Rourke et al (2024) in their Toolbox Dialogue Initiative and will point participants to their work for ideas on how to use dialogue to elicit reflection.

Learning goals for participants The learning goals for participants are that, by the end of the workshop, they will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of five types of academic hospitality (epistemological,

material, linguistic, material, touristic, and affective) and how they act in concert with each other in academic development 2. Articulate the attitudes, behaviours, and values inherent to collaborative hospitality 3. Articulate at least two examples of when they use collaborative hospitality Interactive methods and activities with approximate timings Interactive methods and activities will be used in the following order:

1. Modelling hospitality: Welcome participants to the workshop (5 minutes) 2. Reflection on collaboration and hospitality using the 'statements' activity part 1: (10

minutes)

a. Introduce the activity and explain its purpose

b. Distribute a set of statements on collaboration and hospitality and ask

participants to give their first reaction to them

3. Continued reflection using 'statements' activity part 2 (35 minutes)

a. Participants are divided into groups of two or three to discuss their responses

and to try to arrive at consensus on each statement 4. Break (5 minutes) 5. Mini-lecture on concepts of collaboration, working together, and academic hospitality

(15 minutes) 6. Return to the 'statements' activity and engage in a plenary discussion on how

participants currently use collaborative hospitality or might use it in the future (20 minutes) Relevance of workshop for academic development in higher education This workshop is relevant to academic developers because so much of our work is collaborative. We collaborate with academics, leaders, students, and colleagues in both our day-to-day activities of courses, workshops, and consultations, as well as in leadership activities, such as developing education that is in line with strategic plans. Intended audience We have designed this workshop for academic developers at any stage of their careers. We also welcome academics interested in the mechanics of collaboration and hospitality in higher education.

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Workshop 25

Measuring What Matters: Evaluating Teaching Development Programs

Anna Rowe, Kristin Turnbull, Chien Gooi, Marina Harvey

Abstract

This workshop provides an opportunity for participants to engage with the outcomes of a longitudinal research project that evaluated a teaching development program in a large Australian research-intensive university. The purpose of the workshop is to foster critical dialogue about meaningful and sustainable evaluation in academic development. The value of the session lies in its combination of research insights and peer exchange. Participants will leave with practical ideas for designing and implementing evaluations that go beyond compliance and accountability, towards authentic learning and institutional enhancement. By engaging with an authentic case example, the workshop aims to strengthen evaluation in academic development and inspire evidence-informed approaches that recognise the nuanced, long-term nature of educational change.

Keywords

Evaluation, Teacher Development, Impact, Professional Development

Extended Summary

Across higher education institutions globally, teacher development programs are acknowledged as essential to sustaining high-quality teaching and learning (1). The underlying assumption is that these initiatives positively influence participants' professional growth (2). However, robust evaluation is needed to ensure accountability, demonstrate impact, and guide continuous improvement, and this area is under-researched (3). Evaluating such programs is complex - the outcomes of professional learning are diffuse, context-dependent, and unfold over time, with limited longitudinal studies (4).

Theoretical/research-based foundations:

Drawing on a longitudinal study of a university-wide teacher preparation program at a research-intensive Australian university, this workshop explores the methodological and practical dimensions of evaluating teacher development programs. We used a mixed-method approach to investigate the impact of a foundational teacher development program on participants' conceptions of learning and teaching, confidence, and teaching practice. To examine participants' agency in applying learning beyond the program, we also explored the transferability of acquired skills and knowledge to future professional practice, guided by the Questionnaire on the Transfer Potential of Academic Development (QTPAD) (5).

During the study, our team faced challenges such as tracing long-term impact and negotiating data access and ethics. From these experiences, we distilled insights into what works, what doesn't, and what we would change in future evaluations.

This 90-minute interactive workshop engages participants in critically examining their own evaluation contexts, sharing approaches, and co-creating guidance for effective and contextually responsive evaluation of teacher development programs.

Our evaluation draws on Biggs' 3P model of learning (Presage, Process, and Product) as a framework for conceptualising evaluation within academic development (6). In this model, evaluation is an ecological system where contextual factors (presage) interact with program processes and outcomes (product).

The workshop also concurs with work emphasising that academic development operates within complex institutional ecosystems (7). Participants will reflect on their own contexts, exploring how local conditions shape evaluation goals, methods, and interpretations of impact. By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify a range of contextual factors that influence evaluation in their own educational settings, particularly within academic development programs.
2. Explore different practical approaches to evaluating impact in teacher development programs.
3. Critique a real-life case study illustrating one university's longitudinal approach to evaluation, identifying key enablers and barriers.
4. Collaboratively generate a set of guidance notes - a practical resource summarising effective strategies and considerations for evaluating academic development initiatives.
5. Recognise opportunities for ongoing collaboration and potential joint research into evaluation practices across institutions.

The workshop will produce a collaboratively developed 'repository of practice' - a set of synthesised guidance notes summarising effective strategies for evaluating the impact of teacher development programs. Participants will receive these by email post-workshop as a reference and stimulus for future evaluation planning.

Workshop structure and interactive methods (90 minutes)

Below is a summary of the proposed workshop schedule.

Opening Poll [where, why]: Participants complete a brief poll to identify their institutional roles and current evaluation practices, establishing a shared snapshot of experience and expectations. 5 mins

Setting the scene: Facilitators provide an overview of the case study evaluating a foundational teacher development program at a research-intensive university, highlighting its theoretical framing, methodological insights, and longitudinal findings. 15 mins

Case study critique: Facilitators outline key challenges and lessons learned (e.g., longitudinal follow-up, mixed-method design, ethical and institutional issues), followed by a structured discussion for participants to extend these insights. 15 mins

Sharing Practice [what, how]: In groups, participants share how they have evaluated teacher development programs—what they examined, what worked, what didn't, and what they learned—identifying common themes and contextual influences. 15 mins

Building a shared repository [where to]: Using collaborative tools, participants brainstorm practical guidance and examples. 30 mins

Reflection and next steps: The session concludes with a whole-group reflection on future directions and possibilities for cross-institutional research. 10 mins

Relevance of the topic for academic development

Evaluation of academic development sits at the intersection of institutional accountability and professional agency. By foregrounding agency - of developers, teachers, and institutions - this workshop directly contributes to ICED 2026's theme 'Agency and Academic Development'. Participants will gain conceptual tools, practical insights, and collaborative strategies for designing evaluations that empower rather than constrain.

Intended audience

This workshop is designed for:

- Academic developers responsible for designing or evaluating professional learning;
- Learning and teaching leaders and support staff engaged in program evaluation;
- Educators and researchers interested in measuring program impact and effectiveness.

It is relevant for both early-career and experienced academic developers, as well as senior leaders seeking evidence-informed strategies for evaluating professional development programs.

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Workshop 26

Fostering Student Agency through a Challenge-Based Education Sprint

Mansi Sharma, Lobke Van Damme

Abstract

This interactive workshop introduces educational developers to Challenge-Based Education (CBE) as a powerful approach to foster student agency in higher education. Agency - the capacity to act intentionally and influence one's environment - is essential for preparing students as active, responsible learners. Challenge-Based Education (CBE) operationalizes this concept by creating learning environments where students actively define problems, make decisions, and co-create solutions. Through its structured yet flexible framework, CBE empowers students to exercise agency by taking ownership of authentic, complex challenges and engaging in collaborative inquiry and solution design.

Participants will experience a fast-paced CBE-Sprint, simulating the process students undergo when tackling real-world problems in Challenge-based Education. During this CBE-sprint participants will work collaboratively on the theme of enhancing student agency in higher education. Through this hands-on activity, participants will explore how CBE principles - essential questioning, guided research, and modelling solutions - empower learners to take ownership of their learning.

The workshop combines practice with reflection: participants will explore ideas on how to enhance student agency and reflect on CBE-integration in their contexts. Alongside they will leave with a practical toolkit for running CBE-Sprints at their institutions.

Keywords: Challenge-based Education, Student-Agency, Co-creative Sprint, Experiential learning

Extended Summary

Introduction

Challenge Based Education (CBE) is a pedagogical approach that strongly promotes student agency by positioning learners as active problem-solvers in authentic, real-world contexts (Nichols, Cator, & Torres, 2016). CBE engages students in identifying meaningful challenges, co-creating solutions, and reflecting on their impact. CBE empowers learners to take ownership of both the process and outcomes of their education. Such empowerment nurtures a sense of responsibility and self-efficacy - key components of agency as conceptualized by Bandura (2001). Consequently, CBE not only enhances academic competencies but also cultivates proactive, adaptable individuals prepared to navigate complex global challenges.

The CBE-sprint was designed by us, inspired by the design dash (a super fast introduction to design thinking), to be a fast-paced experiential introduction to Challenge-Based Education that is easy to adapt and implement.

Learning Goals By the end of the workshop, participants will:

1. Experience the core principles of Challenge-based education through a hands-on CBE-sprint.

2. Generate ideas on how to foster student agency in higher education.

3. Reflect on integrating CBE into their own institutional contexts and how it can enhance student agency

4. Acquire a practical toolkit for organizing CBE-Sprints to student agency

Workshop Structure & Activities

In this workshop, we translate the Challenge-based Education learning cycle in a fast paced hands-on and experiential learning activity: the CBE-sprint. In this CBE-sprint, we expect participants to go through all phases of CBE through a condensed learning cycle enabling them to experience the approach in practice rather than only engage with it conceptually. The format is designed to lower the threshold for educators who may be interested in CBE yet hesitant to implement it. At the same time, the sprint provides a ready-to-use format that teachers can adopt as an introductory lesson to a full-fledged CBE course.

Adopting the CBE framework boosts student agency by putting learners in the drivers seat. Additionally, by having participants work on the central theme of 'Fostering Student Agency' during the CBE-sprint, we also explore more ways on how to enhance student agency together.

This workshop is aimed at educational developers and teachers interested in innovative educational formats and are seeking practical methods to promote student agency.

By experiencing CBE firsthand and leaving with an actionable tool of a CBE-sprint, participants can drive institutional innovation and support faculty in implementing agency-enhancing practices.

• Introduction & Expectations (10 min)

o Quick round: participants introduce themselves and share expectations.

o Divide the group in smaller heterogeneous groups for the sprint-activity.

CBE-Sprint Activity (60 min)

o Step 1: Get to know each other (5 min)

Participants connect informally to build trust and collaborative energy.

o Step 2: Essential questioning to define a challenge (9 min)

The group explores the broad theme of student agency. They discuss how they individually connect to the theme, what questions they personally have regarding student agency and what questions they share. At the end of this phase they articulate a meaningful shared challenge.

o Step 3: Formulate guiding questions (5 min)

The group formulates questions they would need answers to in order to tackle their challenge in a meaningful way.

o Step 4: Desk research (10 min)

The group conducts quick research to find answers to their guiding questions to gain relevant background knowledge. This is necessary to be able to ideate on meaningful solutions in the next phase.

o Step 5: Brainstorm solutions (15 min)

The group brainstorms on many possible solutions for their central challenge.

o Step 6: Select and model a solution (10 min)

In this next phase the group selects one promising idea. They concretise the idea further by visualising their proposed solution.

o Step 7: Presenting solutions (6 min)

Each group shares their challenge and proposed solution to the entire group.

• Debrief & plenary reflection (20 min)

o We share the Challenge-Based Education framework and its link to student agency and connect the sprint activities to core CBE principles and agency development

o We discuss experiences:

▪ Participants reflect on how they experienced the CBE-sprint.

▪ The group explores how Challenge-Based Education could enable student agency.

▪ The group discusses how they could integrate these concepts and insights in their local contexts.

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Workshop 27

Building Collaborative Agency through Case Based Peer Dialogue, known as Collegial Intervision

Dagmar Engfer, Sidsel Winther

Abstract

This workshop builds on findings from the international project CiVR – Collegial InterVision Research, conducted across three universities in three countries. The project explored how structured peer-dialogue formats—such as intervision, peer observation, and practice demonstrations—support critical reflection and mutual learning in higher education development programmes. Interviews with participants highlight the value of structured dialogue for analysing teaching cases, generating fresh perspectives, and fostering interdisciplinary exchange. They also underscore the importance of communicative clarity and conceptual translation when collaborating across national and institutional contexts.

The workshop invites conference participants to actively explore and practice collegial intervision and to share experiences with dialogic formats in higher education. To create an open environment for diverse viewpoints and establish common ground a Deep-Democracy–inspired dialogue serves as an entry point for shared reflection. Participants will engage in a facilitated dialogue and collaboratively develop ideas for future applications, including how structured formats like intervision and adapted coaching approaches can enhance reflective practice in higher education.

The workshop offers a practical, co-creative experience and generates concrete impulses for strengthening peer-based critical reflection. It aims to support the collaborative development of approaches that can enrich faculty development and higher education programmes.

Guiding questions for the workshop:

- What kinds of dialogue support reciprocal learning and enable deeper critical reflection?
- What cultures and conditions encourage openness, non-judgmental engagement, and mutual exchange that facilitates development and critical thinking
- And what relationships underpin such cultures?

Keywords: dialogic formats in higher education, peer coaching and collegial intervision, critical reflection through structured case-based peer dialogue, building collaborative agency for meaningful dialogue

Extended Summary

Theoretical and Research Based Foundations In the international cooperation project CiVR “Collegial InterVision Research”, representatives from three universities in three countries have been working together since 2022. The project explores how structured dialogic formats—originating from counselling, mentoring, and supervision—can foster critical dialogue and critical reflection within academic development programmes.

The concept of “collegial intervision” serves as the theoretical and practical foundation of the project derived from collegial counselling (Lippmann, 2013) and peer mentoring (de Lange & Wittek, 2023). It denotes structured, peer-based counselling within groups of peers, participating in academic development programmes, who collaboratively examine specific cases from teaching practice, mainly challenging situations. Although the participating institutions apply different models, such as peer observation, practice demonstrations with peer feedback, and intervision (Lippmann, 2013), they share a core principle: learning emerges through structured dialogue, collective meaning-making, and critical engagement with real teaching experiences. Across the three institutions, peer groups (referred to as peer mentoring groups and learning groups) typically consist of five to eight members who collaboratively explore teaching challenges. These structured conversations support participants in expanding their pedagogical thinking, generating alternative perspectives, and developing actionable solutions for their teaching (Mezirow, 1991).

To investigate the perceived value of these formats, interviews were conducted with participants in the academic development programmes at all three universities. The interviews focused on the following questions: To what extent did participants experience any significant changes after taking part in Collegial intervision (1) how they teach, (2) how they think about their teaching (3) how they talk about their teaching with colleagues. Key insights include:

- A careful introduction to collegial intervision and clear guidelines were identified as essential foundations for productive peer group work.

- A respectful and open attitude and the absence of unsolicited advice was considered a prerequisite for meaningful reciprocal learning.

- Structured peer dialogues offer considerable value for supporting critical reflection on teaching and for generating new perspectives (Engfer & Heller-Andrist, 2025; de Lange & Wittek, 2023).

- Interdisciplinary exchange was perceived across all three countries as particularly enriching, expanding participants' understanding of teaching beyond their own disciplinary norms. These findings provide the foundation for the proposed workshop.

Learning outcomes of the workshop: The workshop aims to apply and further develop the co-creative and co-constructive dimensions of collegial intervision identified as especially valuable in the CiVR study. Participants will:

- experience structured, co-creative dialogue formats relevant to academic development,

- explore how collegial intervision can enhance reflective practice,

- share experiences with peer learning to co-create ideas for faculty development, and

- gain practical impulses for applying structured dialogues in their own practice.

Goals of the workshop and relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education:

Two goals guide the workshop and highlight the relevance of the topic: Exploring the potential of collaborative agency (Gergen, 2009) for academic development settings, with particular attention to how adapted coaching approaches like collegial intervision may enhance reflective practice, peer learning, and collaborative problem-solving. Co-creating new ideas for the future of academic development, informed by both the CiVR findings and the diverse expertise of conference participants. The session aims to demonstrate how structured peer-dialogue formats can serve as generative spaces for innovation, not only for individual teaching challenges but also for organisational development. Description of interactive methods To support this, the workshop offers participants the opportunity to experience dialogic formats: (1) a short Deep Democracy–inspired opening round (Mindell, 2008) to establish a shared foundation and (2) collegial intervision based on the CiVR project. Participants choose and practice one intervision format and engage in a structured, facilitated dialogue addressing the guiding question: Which forms of dialogue support reciprocal learning and critical reflection, and under which conditions? The intervision dialogues follow a structured sequence of steps to collect and connect shared experiences and ideas. Both approaches align with current discourses in academic development that emphasise relationality and the co-construction of pedagogical knowledge to foster critical reflection (Pleschová, Roxå, Thomson & Felten, 2021).

Workshop Structure

- Introduction to the programme and the CiVR project, highlighting its relevance for academic development (10').
- Deep Democracy–inspired opening round to establish common ground, followed by small-group sharing of interests and priorities (15').
- Short presentation of key findings from CiVR project and the role of structured peer dialogue in fostering critical reflection (10').
- Introduction to collegial intervision and presentation of two formats for selection (10').
- Facilitated collegial intervision activity to share peer learning experiences and co-develop ideas for reflective practice in higher education (25').
- Plenary synthesis connecting insights of the practiced collegial intervision with CiVR findings (10').
- Closing collective reflection on the value of co-constructive dialogue for academic development (5'). Target Audience This workshop is designed for faculty developers, programme leaders, lecturers engaged in teaching and learning development, supervisors, researchers, and professionals involved in peer-based or cross-institutional academic development.

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Workshop 28

How can Academic Developers strengthen educational leaders´ agency in the face of AI?

Ester Fremstad, Anja Møgelvang Jacobsen, Anna Therese Steen-Utheim, Camilla Bjelland

Abstract

This workshop targets academic developers (ADs) concerned with how higher education can respond to the rapid advance of AI. However, the workshop is relevant for academic teachers and leaders as well. Conceptually, the workshop draws on Bandura's notion of agency and task-specific self-efficacy, and on Emirbayer and Mische's temporal–relational understanding of agency, supplemented by the distinction between accountability and responsibility in professional work. As a springboard for shared inquiry and ideation, we present findings from a multi-institutional and mixed methods study of educational leaders' approaches to and agency amid AI in four universities in a Norwegian context. In the workshop, participants are guided through structured group activities designed for co-learning and co-creation of ideas for practices that can strengthen educational leaders' agency amid AI. The intended purpose and value for participants are: 1) research-informed insights into how agency in the face of AI can be supported in higher education, with particular attention to the role of educational leaders and academic developers; and 2) concrete, adaptable ideas for developmental activities and partnerships that can be transferred to participants' own institutions

Keywords: Academic Development, Educational Leadership, Agency, Artificial Intelligence

Extended Summary

Theoretical and research-based foundations Educational leadership requires courage to engage in change and unforeseen responsibilities, yet many leaders experience limited support and limited room-to-manoeuvre (Solbrekke & Helstad 2025). Thus, strengthening their agency seem pivotal, and in this workshop, we explore and model how academic developers can contribute to that process.

In general, agency denotes the capacity of human beings to shape their circumstances. We draw on both a psychological and a temporal–relational conceptualization of agency. According to Bandura (2001), the most central mechanism of agency, is perceived self-efficacy, which "refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). A key idea in Bandura's definition is that self-efficacy is specific to task and situation. In this workshop it is educational leaders' self-efficacy related to leading educational development amid the disruptions, challenges, and possibilities of AI that we seek to understand and strengthen. Here, we draw on Bandura's four sources of

self-efficacy (1997): mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states, and facilitate activities related to these.

Emirbayer & Misches (1998) temporal and relational conceptualization of agency adds important aspects to this psychological approach. According to Emirbyer & Mische, agency is constituted in the intersection between past, present, and future. Agency, they argue, relies on selective reactivation of past patterns of thought and action'; creative and value-based projection of the future; and based on these, deciding how to act in the present (Emirbayer and Mische (1998). In this workshop, we combine these conceptualisations of agency, with the distinction between accountability and responsibility (Solbrekke & Englund, 2011), and together with our multi-institutional mixed-methods study of educational leaders' approaches and agency amid AI (authors, in preparation), they serve as a springboard for shared inquiry and ideation on how ADs can understand and support educational leaders' agency in the context of AI. Some preliminary key-findings from this research are that leaders see a need to address privatisation and polarisation, and to contribute to competence building and shared understanding and approaches to AI among their teaching staff, but that they struggle to approach these challenges, and experience being left to their own devise. Intended outcomes for both the facilitators and participants are

1. research-informed insights into how agency in the face of AI can be supported in higher education, with particular attention to the role of educational leaders and academic developers; and

2. concrete, adaptable ideas for developmental activities and partnerships that can be transferred to participants' own institutions.

Activities and timings

Time	Activity
30 min	Welcome and introduction Introduction to research foundation and conceptual framework
10 min	Ice breaker • Groups: discuss how the introduction resonates with their own context, and what they have in common in this regard. • Plenary: brief presentation of the groups
5 min	Individual reflection on challenges and opportunities in one's own institution, and possible/important aims to pursue
30 min	Group work: Ideation supported by template based on conceptual frameworks: • Activities/approaches to stop – start – continue, related to supporting educational leaders in: ⇒ Building communities ⇒ Building competence ⇒ Nurturing self-efficacy ⇒ Strengthening agency through purpose and projective capacities
15 min	Plenary: sharing ideas from the groups Through a QR-code, the groups can share their products from the workshop, and individual participant can add further reflections, and sign up for 1) receiving via e-mail the material from the groups and our summary of and comments to the plenary, and 2) for sharing their e-mail for further contact and collaboration among the participants.

Participants will be placed in groups of four.

The relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education. Academic Development (AD) has become more demanding as artificial intelligence (AI) challenges higher education in disruptive and complex ways (Tillmanns et al. 2025). In this landscape, a collective (Stensaker 2017) and holistic (Sutherland 2018) approach to AD is required. Educational leaders are key to collegial communities and educational development, and thus essential partners for academic developers in the current context (authors in preparation).

Intended audience: This workshop is primarily designed for academic developers, both early career and more senior, and particularly those engaged in or curious about the implications of AI for higher education, and how this may affect the role and responsibility of academic developers, and educational leadership. However, we also welcome academic staff and leaders.

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Workshop 29

Curriculum Mapping for Quality Assurance and Program Design: An Interactive Workshop

Jaclyn Carter, Kimberley Grant, Patti Dyjur

Abstract

Curriculum mapping is defined as "the process of associating course outcomes with program-level learning outcomes and aligning teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods for courses so the relationships between the components of the program can be identified" (Author A, 2019, p. 44). As part of our institutional mandate to conduct cyclical reviews of course-based program curricula at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and in partnership with new program development initiatives that are required to communicate central aspects of a program's curriculum, our teaching and learning centre has developed a free, open-access curriculum mapping tool that simplifies the mapping process and produces customizable program reports from the aggregate data entered. This workshop will a) define curriculum mapping; b) explain its value for curriculum design and review processes; c) provide a demonstration of our mapping tool's functionalities and reports; and d) explore the benefits of this open-access tool for participants' own educational and curricular development projects.

Keywords: Curriculum Mapping, Curriculum Design, Program Learning Outcomes, Constructive Alignment

Extended Summary

Our institution defines curriculum mapping as "the process of associating course outcomes with program-level learning outcomes and aligning teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods for courses so the relationships between the components of the program can be identified" (Author A, 2019, p. 44). As part of

institution-wide quality assurance and program development processes, academic units are tasked with creating or reviewing their program learning outcomes (PLOs), as well as associated courses and course outcomes (where applicable), and mapping their programs' curricula onto these learning outcomes to ensure a high-quality program is not only designed but also delivered.

Rooted in inquiry into the potential differences between what is declared (or assumed) and what is delivered (Al-Eyd, et al., 2018), curriculum mapping allows stakeholders to critically examine the extent to which key elements of a curriculum—such as the learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessments—are aligned to deliver the curriculum as declared. As a contemporary quality assurance and program design tool, curriculum mapping provides ample data to measure the extent to which the courses in a program of study meet or do not meet the intended PLOs or learning goals of a program of study (Anderson, McLaren, and Mio, 2025). Al-Eyd et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of continuous monitoring for developing and maintaining quality curriculum and see curriculum mapping as "the key to making the curriculum transparent and easily communicable" (p. 2). They argue that regular review of the curriculum helps to clarify "gaps and redundancies" in the content (p. 2), ensure content is well-integrated both disciplinarily and in terms of time (p. 4), and maintain links between learning outcomes from session to course to program levels (p. 2). There are advantages to curriculum mapping from a program development perspective as well. When putting one's course in conversation with the program that surrounds it, instructors are able to mobilize learning without making pedagogical decisions "in a vacuum" (Holycross, 2006, p. 61). Mapping makes sequencing visible, while at the same time highlighting "the need for instructional strategy decisions based upon the functions being served" by the PLOs (Wager, 1976, p. 2; see also Harden, 2002).

Proponents of curriculum mapping agree that learning outcomes are integral to evaluating other components of the curriculum (see Ervin, Carter, & Robinson, 2013; Harden, 2002; Lam & Tsui, 2013; Plaza et al., 2007; and Veltri et al., 2011). And while the complexity of curriculum maps and the data included will vary across disciplines and approaches, at minimum, constructive alignment between outcomes, teaching and learning activities, and assessments (Biggs, 1996), is central to the data produced by curriculum maps.

As part of our institutional mandate to conduct cyclical reviews of course-based program curricula at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and in partnership with new program development initiatives that are required to communicate central aspects of a program's curriculum, our teaching and learning centre has developed a free, open-access curriculum mapping tool that simplifies the mapping process and produces customizable program reports from the aggregate data entered. The tool is straightforward, easy to use, and offers step-by-step guidance as users set up their maps and customize their reports (Author A, 2019, p. 52).

Those engaged in educational development efforts in varying roles and at all stages of career can benefit from a clearer understanding of curriculum mapping and a practical demonstration of the data tools like ours can produce. By the end of this 90-minute workshop, participants will be able to a) define curriculum mapping; b) understand its value for curriculum design and review processes; c) view a demonstration of the mapping tool's functionalities and reports; and

d) explore this open-access curriculum mapping tool for participants' own educational and curricular development projects with the support of workshop leaders.

We will close the workshop with a discussion on how users' mapping "results are instrumental in identifying patterns, trends, gaps, and overlaps to ensure that the program [or course] is structured in a strategic, thoughtful way that enhances student learning" (Author, 2019, p. 4).

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Workshop 30

Transforming Feedback Practice: A Scalable Model for Academic Development Workshops

Breana Bayraktar, Kiruthika Ragupathi, Katherine Troyer

Abstract

This interactive workshop session introduces academic developers to a proven “Feedback Literacy” workshop designed to strengthen instructors’ capacity to provide feedback that fosters learning, trust, and student agency. Participants will experience condensed versions of core workshop activities, including vignette-based discussions and the development of personalized feedback plans, to surface assumptions about feedback, examine relational dynamics, and explore inclusive strategies that support diverse learners. Through these hands-on activities, attendees will deepen their understanding of feedback as a relational and contextual practice rather than a purely technical skill. The session highlights approaches for helping instructors navigate the emotional labor of feedback, build trust with students, and design processes that promote student ownership of learning. A central focus of the session is transferability, and participants will receive facilitation insights, adaptable materials, and design rationales that enable them to tailor the workshop to their own institutional contexts. We will discuss strategies for customizing vignettes and activities, aligning the workshop with local teaching cultures, and creating communities of practice that sustain growth in feedback literacy over time. By the end of the session, academic developers will leave with a ready-to-adapt model for offering meaningful feedback literacy programming on their campuses, along with practical tools, facilitation guidance, and a clear sense of how to integrate this work into broader academic development initiatives.

Keywords: feedback literacy, instructor-student relationships, student agency, relational pedagogy

Extended Summary

Theoretical foundations

Feedback literacy is the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable individuals to engage meaningfully in feedback processes as relational, dialogic, and emotionally responsive practices (Carless & Winstone, 2023). For instructors, feedback literacy involves designing feedback as a social and contextual process that supports student agency, fosters trust, and cultivates learner self-regulation. It requires an awareness of how feedback is interpreted and acted upon, as well as an ability to communicate in ways that are transparent, affirming, and sensitive to the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning. The workshop is founded on a conceptual framework (Bayraktar, Ragupathi & Troyer, 2025) that guides educators in establishing trust-building pedagogies to enhance student engagement and learning. Participants will use this framework to craft their individual feedback plan by articulating the specific instructor practices and learning environment conditions that facilitate relationship-building feedback processes. Using carefully crafted vignettes, participants will have an opportunity to explore how feedback is a social and contextual process (Jensen et al., 2021), necessitating dialogic and relational (Nicol, 2010; Heron et al., 2023) approaches.

Learning outcomes

For participants attending this session with the goal of replicating this workshop at their respective institutions, the key outcomes are: (1) A comprehensive understanding of the workshop structure; (2) Strategies for contextualizing workshop content and activities to align with the unique needs and characteristics of their institution and audience; (3) Insights into effective facilitation techniques to engage instructors in developing inclusive feedback practices that promote student growth, and (4) Access to the workshop materials and resources (vignettes, facilitator guides, supplementary materials) that can be adapted for their own use.

Interactive Activities

This interactive workshop session will provide participants with an in-depth look at our successful "Feedback Literacy" workshop. It is designed to be dialogic and collaborative through small and large group activities fostering knowledge-sharing and community-building. Our workshop content is grounded in research on feedback literacy while also emphasizing on inclusive teaching strategies and their application to feedback practices. Participants will experience condensed versions of the activities while gaining insights into facilitating their own workshops tailored to their institutional contexts. The session begins with an overview (15 minutes) of feedback literacy concepts foundational to the workshop that sets the stage for a collaborative exploration of feedback literacy concepts and strategies. During the first activity (30 minutes), small-group discussion of carefully crafted vignettes from the workshop explore three key themes: building relationships through feedback, promoting student ownership of the process, and incorporating inclusive practices. Attendees will also be

guided through the process of developing a vignette tailored to their audience and context, with attention to developing their facilitation skills while unpacking effective feedback strategies. In the second activity (25 minutes), facilitators will demonstrate a hands-on activity from the workshop, where participants draft a feedback plan for a course or

assignment they teach. This activity integrates the concepts and ideas discussed throughout the session, allowing participants to develop actionable strategies for implementing inclusive feedback cycles that foster student growth and learning. This models an approach for empowering instructors to apply their new learning in practical, contextual ways. The workshop conclusion (20 minutes) will focus on strategies for adapting the workshop facilitation guide and materials to each individual context and provide time to "workshop" their developing facilitation plans with peers.

Relevance of the Topic

The process of providing meaningful and actionable feedback to students is key not only to student learning but also to building relationships in the classroom; yet we too often treats feedback as a set of techniques rather than a relational interaction. In practice, instructors are urged to use evidence-based feedback practices but are less frequently supported in examining how students experience feedback or considering the relational and contextual dynamics that shape those interactions.

As academic developers, we understand that lasting pedagogical change grows out of the relationships that nurture and sustain the work. Academic development activities centred around reflective conversations, community, and collaboration amongst participants (Cook-Sather et al., 2021; Marcelo et al., 2025; Ragupathi, 2022). Our workshop intentionally creates a community space where instructors can interrogate their assumptions about feedback, explore the emotional labour embedded in giving and receiving feedback, and develop practical approaches that strengthen student trust and agency.

Intended audience

The intended audience for this workshop includes all academic developers who support faculty in developing evidence-based best practices in teaching. In particular, our workshop offers a workshop-in-a-box framework so that participating academic developers can leave with the resources needed to run a version of this workshop at their own institutions.

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Workshop 31

Beyond books - a game of life for first year students' academic, social, and emotional development

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Abstract

The transition into university life presents first-year students with complex academic, social, and emotional challenges that traditional transition programs often struggle to address fully. While such curricula commonly support study skills and awareness of institutional resources, they seldom offer safe spaces to practice navigating socially nuanced situations or to experience the real-life consequences of everyday decisions. This workshop introduces Beyond Books, an innovative game of life board game developed through collaboration between Universities in the USA and Northen Europe. Designed to surface the hidden and alternative curriculum of higher education, the game enables students to explore academic pressures, interpersonal dynamics, and the emotional demands of their first year in an engaging, interactive, and collaborative format. Participants will experience the prototype gameplay, examine its theoretical foundations in game-based learning and social-emotional development, and reflect on preliminary findings from testing with over 100 students. The session will also include guided discussion on how such a tool can be adapted to local institutional contexts to foster empathy, communication skills, self-advocacy, and decision-making among new undergraduates. This workshop offers academic developers, faculty, and professional staff a practical and creative strategy for supporting students' holistic transition into university life.

Keywords: First-year experience, game-based learning, alternative curriculum, evidence-based practices.

Extended Summary

The transition from high school to university can be a daunting experience for many first-year students. Factors impacting their success range from new academic experiences in the classroom, navigating interpersonal relationships, being away from home for the first time, and learning how to self-navigate the responsibilities of life (e.g., time management, financial planning). These transitional challenges impact student mental health, with over 35% reporting symptoms of depression and anxiety, leading to a reduction in student success and retention. While first-year transition curriculum often supports students in their engagement with university resources (e.g., counselling, advising, library) and academic support (e.g., study skills, time management), these often do not provide insight into navigating socially complex situations with peers or experiencing the impact of day-to-day decisions on their academic success.

One potential innovative strategy to address this gap is to use board games to support the development of the emotional and affective skills students will need during their time at university. Game-based learning offers a dynamic, interactive, and self-directed way to engage first-year students while equipping them with essential skills for navigating social, academic, emotional transitional challenges that they will experience. For example, games incorporating teamwork allow students to practice communication, self-advocacy, and even form friendships - skills that translate to environments beyond the classroom. Critical thinking and organizational skills gained from game mechanics such as decision making and strategy prepare students for the demands of university academics. Most importantly, games that utilize differing perspectives nurture emotional adeptness such as empathy, enabling students to better understand the issues that their peers might face in the transition to university, directly building their emotional capacities. By using a board game to simulate the first-year experience students can be prepared for social, academic, and emotional issues they will encounter and develop the skills and confidence needed to solve them. Through collaboration between Elon University (United States) and the University of Iceland (Iceland), a life-simulation game based on the above concepts was developed and tested with over 100 students during fall 2025.

Participants in the Beyond Books board game workshop will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the concepts of the gameplay by: (1) Explore an alternative and active approach to supporting first-year students with engaging in the hidden and alternative curriculum of higher education; (2) Experience, through playing a prototype of "Beyond the Books" a collaborative life simulation of the first year of college/university, and engage in a debrief around its construction for learning and application within their own institutional context; and (3) Reflect on their play experience and preliminary findings of the impacts of a first-year life simulation boardgame on the academic, social and emotional facets of first-year students. Specifically, the workshop will include:

- (15 minutes) Introduce literature, framework for constructing the game, and Menti-meter/polling activity that encourages participants to reflect on their past experiences as a first-year student and/or the context of the first-year experience at their own institution

- (40 minutes) Description of the game, overview of rules, gameplay with the prototype of the board game in small groups - facilitators will create moments of guided reflection and discussion will occur during play

- (20 minutes) Reflection and debrief of participant's experience, the content of the game and its applicability to their own context, brainstorming how they might adapt for their own institution [this will be done in small groups with large group summary]

- (10 minutes) Preliminary findings

- (5 minutes) Summary and Next steps

This workshop is relevant to faculty/academic developers, faculty/instructors, and administrator/staff who have been struggling with articulating the hidden and alternative curriculum of students' first year in higher education, in particular non-academic aspects of learning such as social and emotional aspects of learning. Individuals teaching first-year students, or supporting those who teach first-year students, would benefit from this session by experiencing the game, reflecting on the first-year experience and the institutional context that impacts that. The engagement and discussions will continue to inform the development and application of this game for students.

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Workshop 32

Re-imagining Roles: Students as Teaching and Learning Partners

Lydia Watson, Bettina Boyle

Abstract

This interactive session will share insights into how a Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) in a small teaching-focused undergraduate university developed a Students as Teaching and Learning Partners (SaTLP) initiative that gave students opportunities to participate in two Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs), one being focused on the topic of reimagining grading, the other, on open educational practices. By encouraging student voice and co-designing a space where educational developers, faculty, and students were able to challenge assumptions about traditional roles and power dynamics, we were rewarded with unexpected learning opportunities and meaningful conversations. Through interactive activities, participants in this workshop will identify, question, imagine, and reflect on opportunities to partner with students and be inspired by insights gained from participants and presenters through these initiatives.

Keywords: students as partners, co-creation, faculty learning community

Extended Summary

What opportunities for shared growth, learning, and connection can we create by intentionally inviting student voices and experiences into our work as faculty members and educational developers?

During the 2023–24 academic year, our Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) hosted two Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs), each of which included Students as Teaching and Learning Partners (SaTLP), with a goal of exploring this question. The purpose of an FLC is to support professional growth, strengthen peer connections, and foster collegial engagement in teaching and learning (Glowacki-Dudka & Brown, 2007). Traditionally, FLC membership at our institution consisted only of faculty.

However, building on Healey, Flint, and Harrington's (2014) call for student–staff co-creation of learning communities to encourage critical reflection and transformative learning, we sought to challenge this model. Hence, we invited students to participate as active collaborators in the FLC's design and leadership alongside faculty and educational developers (Cook-Sather, Bovill, & Felten, 2014). While we initially envisioned a partnership where each group contributed distinct expertise, the collaboration evolved into true co-facilitation and co-creation. While this process proved challenging at times due to power differences, comfort, knowledge, and facilitation experience (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017), the value of questioning our assumptions, and of learning, growing and creating together quickly became apparent (Felton, 2021).

These FLCs were offered at a time when faculty and students were continuing to navigate the complexities around Gen AI (GAI) in education. As educational developers supporting faculty with a wide range of pedagogical philosophies related to the banning or implementation of GAI tools, the need for open discussion and transparency in teaching emerged as necessary focal points in our FLC conversations. The collaboration with students enabled these open and transparent conversations in a way that might not have been otherwise possible, resulting in increased reflection and transformative learning for all FLC members. This possibility for transformational learning and reflection is supported in the literature on Students as Partners (SaPs). The SAP movement as an umbrella term including SaTLPs "makes an authentic effort to unravel the power dynamics between academic faculty and students" (Yeo, Miller-Young, & Manarin, 2024, p.175) by bringing students fully into the work of educational developers and faculty, whether through curricular co-creation, faculty development, or the scholarship of teaching and learning. Involving students as teaching and learning partners in an authentic way is thus part of a transformative approach to faculty development that seeks to disrupt, transform or change teaching existing systems (Cook-Sather, Bovill, & Felten, 2014). For students, partnering with academic developers may feel less intimidating than working directly with faculty because it avoids the need to renegotiate pre-existing hierarchical power dynamics (Johnston & Ryan, 2022). For educational developers, adopting this SaP model may provide valuable insight into the challenges disciplinary academics and other colleagues may encounter as they implement partnership approaches within their own teaching and learning contexts (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017; Healey, Flint, & Harrington, 2014). Finally, pedagogical partnerships can cultivate a sense of belonging among students, encourage faculty to engage in reflective and generative practices, and help transform institutions into communities where all members feel deeply connected (Cook-Sather, Bati, & Ntem, 2019). This interactive session will share experiences from the SaTLP initiative at a small teaching-focused undergraduate institution. A variety of engaging whole group, pair, and triad activities will provide opportunities for participants to discuss and identify teaching and learning activities where they could partner with students. Participants will leave the session with strategies for actioning their ideas for an SaP initiative or a new student/faculty/educational developer collaboration at their institution.

Workshop Outline Learning Outcomes

1. Reflect on the value of including student voices in the design and implementation of teaching and learning activities.

2. Identify at least one idea for partnering with students in your teaching or your educational development work.

3. Imagine one strategy for overcoming challenges in student-faculty/educational developer partnerships.

4. Question assumptions and re-imagine roles when partnering with students.

Outline

1. Land acknowledgment and positionality. Invite participants to share. (5 mins)

2. Opening, Check-in: Experiences of participants with SAP (10 mins).

    o By a show of hands, how many of you have partnered with students?

    o Among those who say yes, ask for a few examples.

3. Background: Development of the SaTLP project, the three initiatives, our insights, surprises, and challenges (10 mins).

4. Think-Pair-Share: (12 mins)

o Given what you have heard, what value do you see in partnering with students in your teaching and learning work? (Think broad, expansive) o Which challenges do you foresee?

o Which assumptions would you and others need to test? (Facilitators whiteboard and/or collect information via Padlet)

5. Troika Consulting in Triads: (https://www.liberatingstructures.com/8-troika-consulting/) 20 - 30 mins

- Individuals pick one teaching and learning activity/idea that they could partner with students (if students attend session, pick one activity where they could partner with faculty or educational developers) and consult with each other.
- Triads consult with each other. First participant starts by explaining their idea along with potential challenges for implementation/actioning the idea. The other participants ask clarifying questions, challenge assumptions, and generate ideas/suggestions. The first participant listens, takes notes, and then shares what suggestions/ideas were most helpful. Switch to the next participant and repeat.

6. Whole group debrief: 6-word story on the value of partnering with students. (10 mins)

Intended Audience:

- Early to mid-career academic developers
- Teaching faculty
- Senior educational leaders

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Workshop 33

Micro-experiential approach for teaching professional skills in higher education (STEM focus)

Siara Isaac, Joelyn de Lima

Abstract

Higher education students report insufficient opportunities to develop transversal skills during their programs, a perspective that aligns with the concerns of educators, industry, and accreditation bodies. This hands-on workshop provides academic developers with an evidence-informed approach for designing micro-experiential learning activities that develop students' professional skills. Developed through a multi-year research project, the [ANONIMISED] framework comprises three elements: knowing (strategies and models that operationalise a skill), experiencing (opportunities to practise the skill and encounter authentic challenges), and learning by experience (guided reflection that supports transfer). Workshop participants will engage in a specific example of the implementation of the framework that focuses on behaviours that support groups to develop psychological safety, a key dimension of constructive teamwork. The activity recreates common collaboration challenges and introduces evidence-based behaviours, specifically inquiry and active listening, that strengthen team climates. In addition to open-access [ANONIMISED] activity guides, academic developers will find the framework a useful conceptual tool when discussing the development of professional skills with instructors and how principles from learning-science principles (low-stakes experimentation, cognitive load reduction, rapid feedback, structured reflection) can support robust and transferable learning.

Keywords: transversal skills, professional skills, STEM, psychological safety, teamwork

Extended Summary

Evidence base informing our approach

Despite agreement among teachers, industry partners, and accreditation bodies on the importance of professional skills (1), engineering (2) and other students (3-5) report persistent gaps. A likely contributor to this is the common but unfounded assumption that students develop these skills by encountering situations in which the skills are required (6). Research shows that transversal skills must be explicitly supported for students to reliably acquire them (7-8). This workshop introduces educational developers to an evidence-informed framework for designing experiential learning activities for fostering students' transversal skills. Participants will experience a learning activity focused on behaviours that contribute to constructive team climates and reflect on the pedagogical conditions required for teaching such skills. At the core of this workshop is the [ANONIMISED] framework (6), which was developed through a multi-year research project (6):

1. Knowing – strategies, concepts, and models that operationalise skills; 2. Experiencing – structured opportunities to practise and encounter authentic challenges; 3. Learning by experience – metacognitive and emotional reflection to support transfer. The workshop demonstration provides an experiential introduction to the framework, prompting reflection on the conditions that enable transversal skill development, including learning-science principles such as low-stakes experimentation, cognitive load reduction, rapid feedback, and guided reflection to support transfer. A hands-on building activity creates a context for collaboration while embedding constraints that simulate authentic teamwork challenges to constructive and psychologically safe team environments. Psychological safety refers to a climate in which people feel comfortable sharing ideas, asking questions, and offering feedback without fear of negative consequences (9). Teams with high psychological safety consistently outperform those with low psychological safety (10). It is therefore essential for students not only to understand the concept but also to develop teachable behaviours that strengthen psychological safety in any new team, specifically inquiry (seeking information) and listening (demonstrating care for others)(11).

Learning outcomes for participants and activity outline

The learning outcomes for this workshop are at 2 levels. For the hands-on demonstration: Describe and implement strategies that promote psychological safety in a team. For the meta-reflection: Apply the conditions that support the development of transversal skills to the design of learning experiences.

Table 1. Workshop activities for 90-minute session

Timing	Instructor activity	Participant activity
5+5'	Welcome, workshop objectives and structure (experience student workshop, then meta reflection)	Small groups (3-5 people): List benefits and challenges of teamwork Individual: Structured reflection.
10+15'	Review literature on the benefits of open, safe teams and describe strategies to support (asking genuine questions, effective listening)	Small groups: Each person shares 1 thing that supports/detracts from their perception of an open, safe team climate
15'		Small groups: Collaborative construction task using LEGO bricks, with restrictions on the elements that each person can manipulate
10+5'	Conclude workshop demonstration with short debriefing, focusing on transfer of skills to future teamwork	Individual: Structured reflection and transfer task Small groups: Each person has 1 minute uninterrupted to share their experience with the collaborative building task.
10+5+ 10'	Meta-reflection: Describe conditions that support skill development, structured by the 3T PLAY trident framework. Conclude with invitation to collaborate.	Individual: Structured activity connecting demonstration workshop to the 3T PLAY trident framework Individual: transfer to their own context

The relevance of the [ANONIMISED] framework for academic development

Higher education often assumes that students' professional skills will develop implicitly through coursework and experience. Under intense content and time pressures, however, both instructors and students frequently overlook the deliberate practice necessary for skill development. The [ANONIMISED] framework helps instructors and students identify and use existing opportunities, such as team projects, to foster skills through structured practice and reflection.

Educational developers can deploy the framework in two key ways:

1. As a ready-to-use set of activity guides that instructors can integrate into their courses—for example, introductory modules that precede team-based work and prepare students to collaborate effectively.

2. As a conceptual tool for consultation, helping instructors recognise opportunities for transversal skill development within their own courses and ensure that these opportunities support robust and transferable learning.

This workshop is appropriate for all audiences: teaching staff will discover activity guides ready to integrate directly into courses, senior leaders will acquire a robust framework for evaluating skill development opportunities, and educational developers will find a useful framework to structure their discussions with teachers.

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Workshop 34

How, where & when? – University pedagogical training for faculty: Implementation strategies and future directions

Jenni Koponen, Jukka Välimäki

Abstract

Formal pedagogical training enables the development and implementation of teaching that addresses students' needs and the current challenges of higher education. Pedagogical training affects, for example, teachers' and educational developers' competencies, conceptual understanding, approach, and well-being. Therefore, it is essential to organize formal pedagogical training in a way that is accessible and responsive to the needs of as many educators in higher education as possible. In this workshop, the participants will engage in examining different forms of formal university pedagogical training and work together to build a vision of how pedagogical training should be provided in the future. After the workshop, the participants will have become familiar with a concrete example of how flexible university pedagogical training is arranged, evaluated the strengths of different implementation forms of formal pedagogical training, and reflected on the future of university pedagogical training in a structured way. Participants will also gain hands-on experience with the workshop method, which they can use as a foresight tool in pedagogical development actions within their discipline and own context.

Keywords: Teacher Development, University Pedagogical Training, Future of Pedagogical Training, Educational Development

Extended Summary

Theoretical or research-based foundations Formal pedagogical training for faculty has a long tradition in higher education staff development. Many universities have pedagogical training programmes aiming at developing faculty teaching competence and enhancing the quality of teaching. Pedagogical training has been shown to have many advantages for university teachers. Training effects, for example, on teaching competence development (Pekkarinen, 2024), conceptual change and self-efficacy beliefs (Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne & Nevgi, 2007) and promotes general psychological wellbeing (Civil, Kosenkranius, Hailikari, Virtanen & Postareff, 2025). University pedagogical training is usually based on voluntary participation. Due to several practical reasons, such as heavy teaching load, intensive research duties, and increasing administrative tasks, teaching staff have difficulty in participating in training, which is typically offered as long-lasting contact teaching mode (Vilppu, Södervik, Postareff, & Murtonen, 2019). This is why universities need new ways of organising formal pedagogical training in the future. Clear learning goals or outcomes for participants By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Receive examples of flexible arrangements for formal university pedagogical training.
- Compare the strengths of different forms of training.
- Evaluate the potential impacts of different training formats in various contexts or within their own higher education context.
- Have reflected with peers on the needs and options for future formal university pedagogical training.

A description of interactive methods or activities with approximate timings:
Firstly, the workshop presents a case example (15 minutes) of experiences from an intensive implementation of an introductory university pedagogical training course at University X. This introductory university pedagogical training course has had different pedagogical implementations during recent years, while the learning outcomes of the course have remained the same. Secondly, the workshop includes a two-phase hands-on group work which aims at examining the future of pedagogical training and working together to build an image of how pedagogical training should be provided to teaching staff in the future. The workshop first reflects on the current challenges of pedagogical training (30 minutes) and envisions the future of pedagogical training in universities (30 minutes). The workshop then discusses solutions to achieve this future vision (15 minutes). After the workshop, the participants have discussed the future of university pedagogical training and considered the possibilities for new implementations. The workshop uses the 3 Horizon Method by Sharpe (2013). The participant will gain hands-on experience on the workshop method and can use it as a predictive tool in pedagogical development actions in their discipline.

The Relevance of the Topic for Academic Development in Higher Education: The current higher education context challenges educators' competencies. For example, digital transformation and artificial intelligence, the pace of development, student expectations, and student well-being provide a setting in which quality education cannot be achieved simply by doing things the way they have been done before. Formal pedagogical training enhances teachers', educational developers' and educational leaders' pedagogical competencies and research-based approaches, enabling the development of teaching that addresses these challenges. Additionally, formal pedagogical training is also about

educators' well-being. Without the suitable competencies and tools, the chances of success and fulfilment in the work are insufficient, and the ability to enjoy work and sustain well-being is weakened. Therefore, also in order to enhance educators' wellbeing, it is important to organize pedagogical training in such way that it is accessible and responsive to the needs of as many educators in higher education as possible. The challenges regarding higher education in general also affect the organisation of formal university pedagogical training. Its implementation must consider rapid pace of change and the diverse needs of participants. In this workshop, different forms of formal university pedagogical training are critically examined to determine the best options. The workshop will showcase University X's university pedagogical training model, which has been praised in an external audit, stating that "In particular, the support of pedagogical competence is excellent" (reference anonymized). However, the workshop will not focus solely on this model; it will also reflect on the strengths of different forms of training and the future of formal pedagogical education.

Intended audience: This workshop is designed for academic developers, teachers, and educational leaders who are interested in pedagogical development through formal training and would like to reflect options for how these training can be organised. The workshop is particularly relevant for those wanting to explore how pedagogical training can be planned in different ways in order to be efficient for academics with different needs, or those who are trying to find the best way to organize university pedagogical training in their own context. The session welcomes anyone interested in the development of pedagogical competencies or future forms of pedagogical training.

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Workshop 35

Teaching Students to Teach Themselves: Designing Curriculum That Sparks Self-Regulated Learning

Katrien De Bruyn, Sabine Lamote

Abstract

Self-regulated learning (SRL) is a critical competency for academic success and lifelong learning, yet it does not develop automatically. Students need structured opportunities to acquire and practice SRL skills, which requires intentional curriculum design. We view the development of SRL as a shared responsibility among students, teachers, programme coordinators, and student counsellors. This workshop introduces a collaborative approach for working with programme teams to embed SRL into curricula in a systematic and sustainable way. Participants will explore two practical resources:

1) A workshop format designed to engage programme teams in identifying opportunities for SRL integration.

2) A spectrum of teaching methods illustrating how teacher teams can foster SRL development across courses.

The session will be interactive, combining a concise introduction on our vision of SRL with practical tools and hands-on activities. Participants will reflect on their own contexts and take actionable strategies home to support SRL at programme level.

Keywords: self-regulated learning, curriculum design, academic development, institutional collaboration

Extended Summary

Self-regulated learning (SRL) is widely recognized as a cornerstone of academic success and lifelong learning. It refers to students' ability to actively plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning processes, supported by metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral strategies (Zimmerman, 2002; Pintrich, 2004). Research consistently shows that SRL enhances academic performance, persistence, and adaptability in complex learning environments. However, SRL does not develop automatically; it requires intentional support through curriculum design and teaching practices (Sins, 2023). Importantly, fostering SRL is not the sole responsibility of students. It is a shared responsibility among multiple stakeholders: students, teaching staff, programme coordinators, and student counsellors. Students need structured opportunities to practice SRL skills, while teaching staff and programme teams must design learning environments that encourage autonomy and reflection. Student counsellors and study support services play a complementary role by guiding students in applying these strategies effectively. This systemic approach ensures that SRL is embedded at the programme level rather than addressed through isolated interventions. Our institutional approach addresses this issue by working collaboratively with different stakeholders to integrate SRL into curricula in a systematic and sustainable way. This aligns with global trends in higher education that emphasise student autonomy, lifelong learning, and resilience.

The workshop aims to equip academic developers and teaching support professionals with practical tools and strategies to promote SRL at the programme level. Participants will explore a framework for embedding SRL in curricula and engage with resources designed to facilitate this process. The session emphasises collaboration, reflection, and adaptation to diverse institutional contexts.

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Get acquainted with the institutional vision and framework for SRL.
- Recognize SRL as a shared responsibility among students, teaching staff, programme coordinators, and student counsellors.
- Identify key principles for integrating SRL into curriculum design.
- Gain hands-on experience with two practical resources:
    - A structured workshop format for programme teams.
    - A spectrum of didactic methods that support SRL development.
    - Develop actionable ideas for applying these tools in their own contexts.

The 90-minute workshop will be highly interactive and will be structured as follows:

- Introduction (15 min): institutional vision on SRL and exploring the framework. We will give a brief overview of SRL theory and why it requires intentional support and a collaborative approach for curriculum integration.
- Hands-on Activity 1 (30 min): Participants work with the workshop format, simulating a session with a programme team. They identify opportunities for SRL integration in a sample curriculum and consider roles of different stakeholders.
- Hands-on Activity 2 (30 min): Small-group exploration of the spectrum of didactic methods. Participants map strategies to their own contexts and share examples of how teaching staff and advisors can support SRL.

- Reflection and Discussion (15 min): Collective discussion on challenges, opportunities, and next steps. Participants formulate concrete actions for their institutions, emphasizing collaboration across roles.

Embedding SRL in curricula aligns with global trends in higher education that emphasize student autonomy, lifelong learning, and resilience. Academic developers play a crucial role in supporting faculty and programme teams to design learning environments that foster these competencies. This workshop provides evidence-based tools and collaborative strategies that can be adapted across disciplines and institutions. It also addresses a common challenge: moving beyond isolated interventions toward programme-level integration, while recognizing the need for shared responsibility among all stakeholders.

The session is designed for:

- Academic developers and educational support staff.
- Faculty staff with responsibilities for curriculum design.
- Programme coordinators and study advisors seeking to enhance student learning outcomes through programme level interventions. It is particularly relevant for those working in higher education contexts where student autonomy and transferable skills are institutional priorities.

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Workshop 36

Stellar Rescue: Experiential Problem-Based Learning to Build Instructor Agency in Active Learning Classrooms

John Cheeseman, Luciano da Rosa dos Santos

Abstract

Institutions increasingly invest in Active Learning Classrooms (ALCs) as part of broader efforts to enhance student engagement and transform teaching practice. Yet research consistently shows that without coordinated educational development, the pedagogical potential of these spaces remains underrealized. This workshop presents Stellar Rescue, a problem-based learning (PBL) activity designed as a component of a larger institutional initiative supporting ALC adoption. Rather than introducing instructors to the room through technical orientation alone, this activity positions experiential learning as the primary mechanism for helping instructors understand how pedagogy and space interact. Participants in the workshop will engage with an adapted version of Stellar Rescue, followed by a structured debrief that examines the activity's design, its theoretical foundations, and its role within a multi-layered approach to educational development. Through this experience, participants consider how PBL can function not only as an instructional method, but also as a versatile educational development tool for facilitating instructor learning around complex topics, including but not limited to learning space transitions. The workshop will equip participants with a transferable framework for using experiential, problem-based activities to support pedagogical change across diverse institutional contexts.

Keywords: Experiential educational development, Problem-based learning, Active learning classrooms

Extended Summary

Introduction

Active Learning Classrooms (ALCs) have become increasingly prominent as institutions attempt to shift teaching practices toward collaborative, learning-centred approaches (Beichner et al, 2007). However, research consistently demonstrates that spaces by themselves do not meaningfully alter pedagogy. Studies of ALC adoption show that initial conceptual "knowing" rarely translates into embodied "learning" without intentional educational development grounded in practice, reflection, and iterative sensemaking (Phillipson, Riel and Leger, 2018). Stover and Ziswiler's (2017) work on teaching presence and spatial affordances reinforces that instructors must not only understand active learning cognitively but must develop new orientations toward facilitation, authority, and interaction.

A growing body of literature also argues that learning spaces function within sociomaterial assemblages in which space, practice, tools, norms, and relationships mutually shape one another. Acton (2017) and Mulcahy, Cleveland and Aberton (2015) critique deterministic assumptions about space and emphasize that pedagogical change arises from relational entanglements rather than architectural intent. Systematic reviews echo these concerns, noting that the learning-spaces field remains conceptually fractured and under-theorized, with limited guidance for practitioners seeking to mobilize space to support durable pedagogical transformation (Ellis and Goodyear, 2016; Leijon et al., 2022).

Within educational development more broadly, experiential learning has long been recognized as a catalyst for change. Problem-based learning (PBL) offers a theoretically robust and empirically grounded method for such experiential development by positioning learners within ill-structured problems that demand collaborative reasoning, distributed information processing, and iterative hypothesis building (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). These constructs align strongly with the kinds of professional learning instructors require when transitioning to ALCs, where teaching becomes unpredictable, collaborative, and responsive to emergent student inquiry. PBL also functions as a generative educational development method because it situates instructors in the learner role and models precisely the design moves and cognitive processes that support high-quality facilitation.

The educational development initiative from which this workshop emerges integrates PBL as its experiential anchor. Alongside consultations, active learning workshop series, and an ongoing community of practice, the initiative introduces instructors to ALCs through a structured, immersive PBL scenario called Stellar Rescue. Rather than explaining the room through technical orientation, Stellar Rescue enables instructors to feel the pedagogical, spatial, and interpersonal dynamics of active learning as they unfold.

Description of Interactive Methods and Approximate Timings

The session models the principles it advocates. Participants first engage in an adapted version of Stellar Rescue, a time-sensitive problem scenario in which information is distributed across groups, new constraints emerge unpredictably, and collaborative interpretation is required to reach a decision. This immersive portion occupies approximately forty minutes and positions participants as learners negotiating cognitive load, emergent roles, and spatial affordances such as pod-based collaboration, writable surfaces, and shared displays.

A structured analytic debrief follows for approximately twenty minutes. During this phase, participants articulate their experience, reconstruct the problem structure, and examine how the activity's affordances shaped interaction. Connections are made to research on PBL design, sociomaterial learning-space theory, and instructor sensemaking in ALCs. The debrief explicitly surfaces the disorienting dilemmas and identity tensions instructors often face when transitioning from lecture-based to facilitative pedagogies, situating these insights within the broader literature on transformative learning.

In the final segment of the workshop, participants work collaboratively to reinterpret the core structure of Stellar Rescue for their own institutional contexts. This portion lasts fifteen to twenty minutes and allows participants to explore how experiential PBL can be used not only for ALC onboarding but also for development programs addressing inclusive teaching, assessment redesign, academic integrity, interdisciplinary collaboration, and program transformation. Through this reflective design work, participants produce concrete, locally relevant takeaways.

Learning Outcomes for Participants: By the end of the session, participants will have:

- developed a nuanced understanding of how PBL can be used to foster faculty agency in learning spaces,
- examined the interplay between problem structure and spatial affordances, and identified principles for translating experiential PBL design into their own educational development contexts,
- gained insight into how experiential ED activities can help instructors navigate uncertainty, build facilitation confidence, and develop the reflective dispositions necessary for teaching in flexible environments.

This workshop is deeply aligned with the ICED 2026 theme, particularly the strand focused on agency and knowledge. Faculty agency in learning spaces depends not on architectural investment but on instructors' capacity to interpret affordances, design meaningful learning activities, respond adaptively to student thinking, and negotiate new forms of authority. Research across multiple traditions confirms that such agency emerges when instructors participate in authentic, practice-based, and reflective learning experiences. In this sense, agency is not a trait but an ongoing accomplishment achieved through relational, cognitive, and material engagement.

Knowledge, in the context of the conference theme, must also be understood expansively. Learning spaces research has shown that knowing how to teach in ALCs involves forms of tacit, embodied, and situated knowledge that cannot be conveyed through technical explanation alone. Stellar Rescue addresses this by creating conditions for instructors to develop experiential knowledge of active learning, allowing them to draw connections between theory and practice. It simultaneously positions educational developers as designers of experiential learning environments, reinforcing the field's leadership role in shaping institutional pedagogical cultures.

The workshop also responds to calls within the literature to bridge the longstanding gaps between research, theory, and institutional practice. By weaving PBL, sociomaterial perspectives, and transformative learning theory into an applied educational development model, the session exemplifies how academic developers can integrate diverse knowledge systems to support change. It contributes to the field's shared agenda by offering an approach that is theoretically grounded, empirically informed, and directly applicable to emerging institutional challenges.

Intended Audience: The session is designed for educational developers at all career stages, learning designers, instructors who support active learning initiatives, and institutional leaders responsible for learning-space and educational development strategies. It will be of particular interest to those seeking research-informed and practice-oriented methods for cultivating instructor agency, designing experiential workshops, and connecting spatial innovation with pedagogical development.

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Collaborative Space 21

Empowering Academic Developers: Decoding and Reimagining the Discipline

Kiruthika Ragupathi, Kerry Dobbins

Abstract

Questions about whether Academic Development (AD) constitutes a profession, a field, or a discipline continue to persist, even after more than five decades of its establishment. These debates directly impact upon the agency of academic developers to facilitate change and strategically influence learning, teaching, and institutional practices. As a field, much of academic developers' expertise in how knowledge is constructed, shared, and applied in interdisciplinary and collaborative contexts remains tacit. For new or transitioning academic developers, this can lead to challenges in understanding what it truly means to think, know, and act as an academic developer. As academic development grows globally and takes on increasing institutional significance, the need to articulate the epistemic foundations that shape knowledge development and professional practice of the field is more urgent than ever. This collaborative session explores whether the Decoding the Disciplines (DtD) framework might serve as a productive lens for surfacing the implicit cognitive and practical dimensions of academic development work. Traditionally used to identify bottlenecks in student learning, DtD may help us interrogate how knowledge in academic development is constructed, shared and applied. Could this exploration support academic developers in becoming stewards of the field? We see our work contributing to ongoing questions about whether academic development is a profession or a discipline. Additionally, in this collaborative space we will examine how identifying bottlenecks might empower us with agency and knowledge to reimagine academic development and respond to these longstanding debates.

Keywords: Scholarship of Academic Development, Decoding the Discipline, Epistemic Agency, Stewardship

Extended Summary

Background/Context

Questions about whether Academic Development (AD) constitutes a profession, a field, or a discipline continue to persist, even after more than five decades of its establishment. As a field, it is shaped by diverse epistemologies—pedagogy, psychology, sociology, design thinking, and organisational change. Yet much of its expertise remains tacit, making it difficult for new or transitioning academic developers to understand what it truly means to think, know, and act as an academic developer. The current discourse on AD still identifies challenges that are threshold to any field (e.g., knowledge base). As AD grows globally and takes on increasing institutional significance, the need to articulate how ADs construct, share and apply knowledge is more urgent than ever.

This collaborative session explores whether the Decoding the Disciplines (DtD) framework might serve as a productive lens for surfacing the implicit cognitive and practical dimensions of AD work. Traditionally used to identify bottlenecks in student learning, DtD may help us interrogate how knowledge in AD is constructed, shared and applied. Could this exploration support academic developers in becoming stewards of the field? We see our work contributing to ongoing questions about whether AD is a profession or a discipline, and how identifying bottlenecks might empower us with agency and knowledge to reimagine AD and respond to these longstanding debates.

Session Focus

In this session, we will share our early-stage conceptual work, which is underpinned by questions of how academic developers construct, share, and apply knowledge in interdisciplinary and collaborative contexts. We have used the Decoding the Disciplines (DtD) framework as an organising frame to provide us with a language and structure to reflect on our agency, knowledge and practice as academic developers. The process for our work involved drawing on our own knowledge and expertise initially to identify key papers in the field, which we expanded through a snowballing approach following references and connections.

We will explain how we used the DtD framework as an organising frame and a conceptual lens to:

- Re-read the selected papers to gather new insights, recurring patterns, and emerging relationships informed by the key ideas and themes surfaced in the papers.
- Identify the potential bottlenecks—the conceptual tensions, contextual complexities, challenges and moments where AD work becomes "stuck."
- Surface tacit practitioner knowledge—uncover the distinctive ways of thinking, knowing, and acting in AD—through reflective decoding conversations. This surfaces the mental models, strategies, and values underpinning AD work.
- Map emerging bottlenecks onto broader themes using a two-stage categorisation process.

We will then share our analysis on how we used existing frameworks to illuminate the epistemic structures of AD from different perspectives. The frameworks we considered include Shulman's Signature Pedagogy, "Grand Challenges", and Ronald Barnett's idea of Ecological Professionalism.

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- The sharing of our work to date will provide a foundation to then actively engage participants in shaping the next stage of the project. It is through collaboration with and contribution from the wider community that we will be able to advance the project from the exploratory activities we have conducted so far, to one that has the potential to reach and impact upon the field globally. Specifically, participants will be central in determining the project's next steps through: Identifying and recommending key AD papers from their own expertise, contexts and regions.
- Validating, critiquing, and refining the emerging bottlenecks and themes.
- Examining if the shared frameworks are appropriate.
- Exploring alternative frameworks that may better illuminate the epistemic structures.

Academic Development remains a relatively young field and one that is not universally viewed as a profession. Many practitioners enter as "accidental developers," navigating implicit expectations without a clear map of the field's epistemologies. By collaboratively decoding AD, we can advance epistemologies and scholarship by building a shared scholarly knowledge base, strengthen epistemic agency, advance and make visible the intellectual foundations that underlie our practice, and support intentional, sustainable professional identities. This will form the foundation for ADs becoming the stewards of the field to continually grow the knowledge base, reimagine and advance the field and preserve the best practices of the discipline.

Proposed Structure:

1. Background and context (5 min)

   Brief overview of our work and the motivation for decoding AD.

2. Identifying key papers (10 min)

   In groups, participants suggest 1-2 important papers from their contexts or regions.

3. Methodology and Process (5 min)

   Explanation of how we applied the 'Decoding the Disciplines' framework to the literature

4. Sharing emerging bottlenecks as themes (10 min)

   Presentation of preliminary bottlenecks, thematic groups, and a brief description of the themes.

5. Collaborative refinement of themes (10 min)

   Participants critique, validate, expand, and/or challenge the proposed themes.

6. Collaborative exploration of interpretive frameworks (10 min)

   Discussion on two or three possible approaches (e.g., Shulman's Signature Pedagogy; Grand Challenges; Barnett's ecological professionalism) and group discussion of whether other frameworks might be more suited.

7. What's next (5 min)

Intended audience: Academic Developers—new, experienced, or transitioning—who are interested in strengthening the scholarly foundations of AD, contributing to the conceptual work in the field, challenging the dominant discourse, and exploring international perspectives on epistemic agency and knowledge creation. This session will empower ADs to think of themselves as stewards of the field, with agency to continue the advancement of the discipline whilst preserving the best of the past.

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Collaborative Space 22

International Perspectives on the Equity- Excellence Imperative

Mary Wright, Christina Hancock, Karen McCrindle, Susan Lewis

Abstract

In 2022, a commission of 16 U.S. higher education leaders issued The equity/excellence imperative: A 2030 blueprint for undergraduate education at research universities (Snyder et al.). The widely utilized report calls for 11 "provocations" to advance high-quality and equitable tertiary education. Examples include: 'How will we ensure that our students—all of them, without exception—are educated using evidence-informed pedagogies in intentionally inclusive and empathy-based environments?' and 'How can we urgently support belonging and wellness in the university community?' Similarly, higher education systems around the world are increasingly being called to better address equity and access as necessary–and complementary–to tertiary education. How can we stitch together our efforts across national borders and systems? The ambition for this collaborative space is to generate a research agenda around international perspectives on the "equity-excellence imperative," defined as "a belief that excellence and equity are inextricably entwined, such that excellence without equity (privilege reproducing privilege) is not true excellence, and equity (mere access) without excellence is unfulfilled promise" (Snyder et al., 2022, p. 3). The session will help shape a forthcoming edited volume from Routledge on the topic. It also offers an important opportunity to understand international approaches to equity and access, and to develop common change efforts across borders and systems. Presenters join from three national contexts and four campuses.

Keywords: equity, excellence, comparative education

Extended Summary

In 2022, guided by several professional associations, a commission of 16 U.S. higher education leaders issued The equity/excellence imperative: A 2030 blueprint for undergraduate education at research universities (Snyder et al.). The document is often termed the "Boyer 2030 Report" because of its call for educational reform, similar to Reinventing Undergraduate Education (Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, 1998), which presented ten recommendations for the "radical reconstruction" of undergraduate education. The white paper calls for 11 "provocations" to advance high-quality and equitable tertiary education, including advancement of campus academic development infrastructures. Examples include:

- World Readiness: Will we prioritize transformative education for life, work, and citizenship in an age of daunting challenges in need of world-embracing solutions? Will we ensure such education for all students, not only those already privileged?
- Teaching: How will we ensure that our students—all of them, without exception—are educated using evidence-informed pedagogies in intentionally inclusive and empathy-based environments?
- Nurturing Mental Health and Well-Being: How can we urgently support belonging and wellness in the university community?

In the U.S., Boyer 2030 has been widely distributed –downloaded to over 35,000 unique IP addresses—and utilized to shape strategic plans and initiatives at several major universities. Thus far, there also have been three international panel discussions around global perspectives on the work, drawing in administrators and academic developers from Canada, Australia, and the UK. In light of this activity, Routledge will be publishing a series on the equity-excellence imperative, Advancing Equity and Excellence in Undergraduate Education: A Focus on Research Universities. This series includes a proposed volume on international perspectives. This session will speak to the Agency and Strategy: Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Organizational Transformation theme. It examines academic development roles in researching high-level policymaking and strategic initiatives around equity-centred education. Presenters join from Australia, Canada, and the UK.

The rationale for this Collaborative Space session is to provide a high-level introduction to the Boyer 2030 report and to start generating a research agenda around international perspectives on "the equity-excellence imperative." This session will help to shape an upcoming edited volume for Routledge.

Participants in the session will:

1/ Engage with the 11 provocations of The equity/excellence imperative report

2/ Help to co-construct an upcoming Routledge volume on international perspectives on the equity-excellence imperative

3/ Be invited to submit proposals for inclusion in this edited volume and/or connect with other researchers who are investigating equity-minded tertiary education.

This 60-minute session will be structured as follows:

1/ The presenters will briefly introduce themselves and the topic (10 min)

2/ In small groups, located around the room, participants will engage in small breakouts around the ten provocations. Participants will be encouraged to brainstorm and scribe: What are the key implications of this topic for educational development and educational developers? What 1-3 research questions are most important to explore? (This process will be repeated twice, so that participants have a chance to explore two topics: 15 minutes each, for 30 minutes total)

3/ Large-group discussion and report outs will surface the most promising research ideas. (15 min)

4/ The session will end with next steps for attendees who wish to submit a proposal or manuscript to the special issue. (5 min)

The target audience includes senior leaders, as well as educational and academic developers, who are interested in research on and researching equity-minded education, across international contexts.

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Collaborative Space 23

Learning together: equipping academic developers, teaching staff, and students to enhance agency in learning

Robert Eaton, Abby Osborne

Abstract

From the need to address attainment gaps and foster inclusive learning environments, to calls to support wellbeing and prepare students for an increasingly uncertain future, Higher Education is currently facing a number of complex challenges.

Against this backdrop we propose two inter-related approaches to enhancing student agency in learning. Patterns beyond labels and From wellbeing to welldoing have emerged from a desire to practically equip teaching staff to bridge the gap between institutional policy and classroom practice, and are intended to be universal, highly- adaptable approaches to facilitating learner agency.

Through collaborative interaction with the underpinning conceptual basis and practical resources, this session will invite participants to contribute to developing and refining these approaches as part of a wider dialogue about the role of academic developers in supporting student learning agency.

By positioning agency as central to learning, we will consider how meaningful approaches to motivation, self-regulation, and engagement can reduce barriers and enable sustainable success across Higher Education. This collaborative space will enable us to draw on the rich and varied experiences of participants working across the sector and identify opportunities for further exploration and collaboration in this important area of work.

Keywords: inclusive education, student agency, welldoing, learning needs

Extended Summary

Background/context of the idea

From the need to address attainment gaps and foster inclusive learning environments, to calls to support wellbeing and prepare students for an increasingly uncertain future, Higher Education is currently facing a number of complex challenges. Consequently, institutions are grappling with shifting strategic priorities and educators are faced with a succession of new policies and initiatives.

Against this backdrop we propose two inter-related approaches to enhancing student agency in learning. Patterns beyond labels and From wellbeing to welldoing have emerged from a desire to practically equip teaching staff to bridge the gap between institutional policy and classroom practice, and are intended to be universal, highly- adaptable approaches to facilitating learner agency.

Learner motivation, self-regulation, and engagement are widely recognised as central to student success (Martincová et al, 2025; Popović et al., 2025). Yet agency, the foundation of these attributes (Code, 2020), is often conceptualised in a way that is intangible and elusive in terms of how this can be achieved in the classroom. It is commonly positioned beyond the classroom, as a bolt-on to the core business of education; a fragmented approach to enabling agency has ensued where students often access additional provision in dedicated spaces outside the classroom. With increasing numbers of students declaring additional support needs (Brunswick, 2024), many current services which facilitate student agency are overburdened, unable to cope with growing demand.

Patterns beyond labels framework (PBL)

Delegates will be introduced to the Patterns beyond labels framework [ANONYMISED 1], which identifies recurring patterns of student need that are central to agency, particularly for learners at risk of marginalisation. Using three lenses, Physical, Cultural, and Cognitive, PBL provides a practical tool for recognising barriers that undermine agency, belonging, and success. By moving beyond reactive, diagnosis dependent support, PBL highlights how challenges faced by marginalised students often mirror those of the wider cohort, albeit in amplified form. Addressing barriers in this way enables institutions to implement low risk, cost effective, and sustainable practices that also empower staff to draw on their disciplinary expertise and localised knowledge.

From wellbeing to welldoing toolkit (Welldoing)

Building on PBL, the concept of Welldoing [ANONYMISED 2] offers a highly adaptable toolkit to support agency and academic development within the classroom. Situated at the intersection of wellbeing and learning, Welldoing promotes autonomy by enabling students to adapt everyday learning tasks to suit their individual needs. This approach moves away from idealised, one-size fits all models of what “good learning” looks like and instead enables learners to foster concentration, motivation, and engagement in ways that are personalised and built on their needs. Used alongside PBL, Welldoing provides a sustainable strategy for busy academics, equipping learners to differentiate their

own experiences and cultivate flexible, personalised habits for lifelong learning. Its applications range from harnessing neurodivergence to supporting wellbeing, while also making learning visible (QAA, 2025), an increasingly critical practice in the era of Generative AI.

Contribution and Value

Together, we believe that PBL and Welldoing offer an adaptable, whole cohort approach that can be embedded across disciplines and levels of study. By positioning agency as central to learning, meaningful approaches to motivation, self-regulation, and engagement can reduce barriers and enable sustainable success across Higher Education. Given the strong connections to the ICED conference sub-theme, this collaborative space will be a valuable space for all participants, offering practical application as well as rich dialogue.

Rationale for the collaborative format

Whilst PBL has been used with staff at [ANONYMISED] and shared with other institutions, we have not had opportunity to formally investigate its impact on staff and student practice. Similarly, Welldoing has been shared primarily with school-level practitioners, but we wish to explore its relevance and contribution to student agency in higher education.

Both the conceptual basis and practical resources for each approach have arisen directly from academic development activity in higher education. We are therefore particularly keen to draw on the experience and expertise of academic developers from a wide range of institutional contexts as a means to interrogate and ultimately strengthen these approaches We would be delighted to establish links and partnerships with others interested in formal empirical investigation.

As part of a wider discussion drawing on participant experience, we also see this as a valuable opportunity to highlight the range of ways in which the international academic development community is thinking about, and practically addressing, issues of student agency and to champion the role of academic development as key change agents in ongoing staff and student success.

Intended goals and outcomes:

• Explore the relevance of the two related approaches to supporting student agency in higher education.

• Consider how international perspectives can further enhance both the conceptual basis and practical application of the two approaches.

• Reflect on how the needs of staff and students regarding learning agency relate to context.

• Establish ongoing partnerships leading to empirical investigation of the conceptual and practical approaches in a range of contexts.

The session will be structured to maximise collaborative engagement and contribution.

- Part 1: Patterns beyond labels
  - • Brief introduction to the conceptual basis and practical resource.
  - • Interactive group activity that enables participants to explore the resource.
- Part 2: From wellbeing to welldoing
  - • Brief introduction to the conceptual basis and practical resource.
  - • Interactive group activity that enables participants to explore the resource.
- Part 3: Discussion, reflection, and next steps
  - • Structured opportunity for all participants to share their reflections of exploring the concepts and practical resources, and to identify ways in which ongoing investigative partnerships could be established.

The session is designed to ensure that participants' experience and expertise will actively contribute to collaborative activity and outcomes. It is intended to be of particular relevance and provide practical resources for:

• Academic/educational developers with an interest in supporting teaching staff to practically meet the diverse needs of their students and enhance students' agency in their learning.

• Teaching practitioners or academic tutors interested in understanding how they can adapt institutional policies on inclusive education into practical and effective classroom practice.

• Colleagues interested in exploring ongoing collaborative activity in the area of enhancing agency in student learning, including empirical investigation.

Additionally, this session will be of value to educators, student support professionals, and institutional leaders seeking to address attainment gaps, promote inclusive practice, harness neurodiversity, and strengthen both staff and student resilience.

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Collaborative Space 24

Expanding Our Understanding of Student Trust Perceptions: A Trust Collaborative Project

Ted Murcray, Jill McSweeney, Kathryn Sutherland, Peter Felten, Rachel Forsyth, Debra Grantham, Laurel Schut, Nancy Chick, Kate Thompson, Saffie Hollingsworth, Neal Blank, Subin Kim

Student trust in university teachers plays a critical role in learning, motivation, and persistence. Using existing scholarship on instructor perspectives of trust (Felten et al., 2023), our team explored the student perspective of the value of the following four interrelated dimensions of trust: Cognition (trust grounded in perceived knowledge and teaching competence), Affect (trust based on interpersonal care and concern), Values (trust derived from perceived integrity and principled behavior), and Identity (trust connected to shared and/or respected identity characteristics). Existing research demonstrates how these dimensions function across diverse contexts, influencing student experiences and instructional relationships (Persson et al., 2023; Sutherland et al., 2024; Glessmer et al., 2025; Lee & Ragupathi, 2025; Pleschová et al., 2025; Sutherland-Harris et al., 2025).

This Collaborative Space invites participants from a wide range of roles in diverse cultural, linguistic, and institutional settings to help translate, contextualize, and adapt the trust moves model and methodological approach. Attendees will review the model, discuss contextual variables affecting trust, and explore opportunities to investigate trust in their own classrooms and educational development work. Our goal is to build further global partnerships, identify areas that may require adaptation, and co-develop next steps for comparative and cross-cultural research and practice on teacher-student trust relationships.

This session advances the conference theme of Agency and Knowledge. By refining and collaboratively adapting a research-based model of student trust, our work strengthens the epistemic agency of academic developers and teachers as they design relational, inclusive, and contextually responsive learning environments.

Background and Context

Trust is foundational to effective teaching and learning, influencing student motivation, classroom engagement, and willingness to take risks throughout their learning process. Our work explores whether and how student perspectives of trust are reflected by an existing model of trust in higher education (rooted in the teachers' perspectives) and compares the perspectives of students in multiple diverse contexts on how university teachers can develop trust in their classrooms. Replicating an existing study (Glessmer et al., 2025) and utilizing a model of trust in higher education (Felten et al., 2023), our work has explored student perspectives of the following four interrelated dimensions of trust:

1. Cognition – Trust grounded in perceived competence, including content expertise and pedagogical skill.

2. Affect – Trust based on relational factors such as warmth, approachability, and care.

3. Values – Trust rooted in perceptions of integrity, fairness, honesty, and principled behavior.

4. Identity – Trust connected to shared identity and/or to the professor's demonstrated respect for the student's identity and lived experience.

Over the past year, we have conducted research at four institutions in three countries (United States, Canada, and New Zealand), refining our instruments and identifying contextual influences that shape how students experience, understand, and describe trust. The initial findings show both strong cross-contextual consistency in the four dimensions and meaningful variations informed by cultural norms, disciplinary conventions, institutional structures, and sociopolitical environments.

This work continues to expand with an additional five institutions from four additional countries (Chile, Egypt, Australia, and England) already joining the effort. This Collaborative Space will develop our community substantially, adding depth and nuance to shared research and practice on trust. The importance of trust for equitable and inclusive learning environments, and the emerging evidence that trust may operate differently across cultural contexts, speaks to the urgent need to expand this work collaboratively across regions, institutions, and languages. Educational developers play a crucial role in cultivating trust through their work with university teachers and their strategic contributions to policies on education within their institutions.

Rationale for the Collaborative Format

A Collaborative Space provides the ideal environment because:

- We are moving from a completed, first phase multi-institutional study toward a broader international research network, which requires shared dialogue, diverse perspectives, and new partnerships.
- Trust is a culturally sensitive construct; therefore, translation, adaptation, and contextualization must be co-designed, not imposed.

- Many ICED attendees possess unique insights on relational dynamics, cultural expectations, and institutional conditions that can strengthen the applicability of this research.
- The collaborative format allows participants to explore involvement in joint research, co-authored scholarship, and future grant proposals as the project evolves.

This session is intentionally developmental and generative, providing space for participants to shape the next phase of this research.

Intended Goals and Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1.Describe the four-dimension trust model and its empirical grounding.

2. Identify potential cultural, linguistic, institutional, and disciplinary factors that may shape the experience or measurement of student trust.

3. Review and offer feedback on the current survey items, with a focus on clarity, cultural appropriateness, and opportunities for adaptation.

4. Explore the process for translating the survey into additional languages and discuss best practices for cross-cultural validation.

5. Form interest groups for future collaboration, including data collection, comparative studies, publication planning, and grant development. 6. Contribute to an evolving international research agenda on student trust in higher education.

Planned Structure of the Session (60 minutes, flexible)

1. Welcome and Brief Overview (10 minutes)

- Introduction to the current research team and partner institutions
- Overview of the four-dimension trust model
- Summary of findings across the completed studies in three countries

2. Interactive Model Review (10 minutes)

- Participants review the survey dimensions and sample items
- Small-group discussion: Where might cultural or institutional interpretation vary?

3. Collaborative Translation and Adaptation Dialogue (20 minutes)

• Participants break into groups based on interest (e.g., language translation, disciplinary context, institutional type) and generate: o Suggested adaptations or clarifications o New contextual items o Considerations for linguistic nuance o Ideas for ensuring accessibility and cultural resonance

4. Building the Network (15 minutes)

- Outline of collaboration pathways for future research
- Brainstorm shared research questions
- Discussion of future comparative and longitudinal design options

5. Closing and Next Steps (5 minutes)

- Summary of contributions
- Collection of participant contact information, from those who are interested
- Invitation to next steps

Target Audience: This session is designed for academic/educational developers, teachers, students, and scholars

- working in relational pedagogy, student experience, equity, or teacher-student interactions
- interested in cross-cultural research
- seeking opportunities for collaborative, multi-country research projects

Participants from a variety of linguistic, cultural, and national contexts are especially encouraged. The project will benefit most from individuals willing to translate instruments, test them in diverse environments, and contribute perspectives on how trust operates within their educational systems.

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Collaborative Space 25

Designing AI Literacy as a Transversal Competence: A Collaborative Approach Across European Universities

Gregor Ross Dørum Maxwell, Sara Håkansson, Rachel Forsyth, Marko Lukic, Kine Maridatter Dørum Maxwell

Abstract

Artificial intelligence is transforming higher education, challenging traditional models of teaching, learning, and assessment. Universities must move beyond technical adoption toward embedding AI literacy as a transversal competence, encompassing ethical reasoning, judgment, and creative collaboration. This collaborative space invites participants to explore design-based strategies for integrating AI literacy into curricula and institutional practices. Drawing on a comparative initiative between two universities within the EUGLOH alliance, we will share emerging approaches and invite dialogue on how alliances can accelerate innovation where institutional change is slow. Participants will engage in structured discussion to identify shared challenges, map opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration, and co-create ideas for future research and practice. The session aligns with ICED themes by addressing innovative formats to share knowledge, interdisciplinary partnerships to promote epistemic agency, and critical examination of AI disruptions on curriculum and learning.

Keywords: AI literacy, transversal skills, learning design, academic development

Extended Summary for Collaborative space

Artificial intelligence is reshaping knowledge creation and validation in higher education. While many institutions experiment with AI tools, few have developed systemic strategies for embedding AI literacy as a core competence. Although conceptual frameworks for integrating AI literacy into curricula exist (cf. Zhou & Schofield, 2024), instructors' knowledge and perception remain low (Salhab, 2024). AI literacy goes beyond technical skills—it includes ethical reasoning, critical judgment, and the ability to navigate complexity with AI as a partner. Tzirides et al. (2024) advocate combining Generative AI (GenAI) tools with cyber-social teaching methods to help students understand AI's strengths, limitations, and responsible applications. These capabilities align with transversal skills essential for graduates in a rapidly evolving world.

AI literacy represents a holistic competence enabling learners and educators to critically engage with AI as both resource and partner in knowledge creation. It involves understanding how AI systems work—their capabilities, limitations, and ethical implications—while cultivating judgment to evaluate outputs and recognize bias. Ethical reasoning ensures decisions about AI use consider fairness, privacy, and societal impact. Creative collaboration encourages integration of AI into problem -solving and innovation, empowering students to navigate an AI-driven world responsibly while fostering innovation and critical thinking (Hazari, 2024). This makes AI literacy a transversal competence, broader than digital literacy and requiring integration across disciplines and sustained attention in curriculum design.

Embedding AI in higher education cannot rely on superficial adoption or isolated experiments. It calls for design-based approaches that align technology with pedagogical purpose through iterative cycles of planning, testing, and refinement. These approaches promote co-creation, inviting students and educators to shape AI-enabled learning experiences, and prioritize systemic change beyond course-level tweaks toward program-level redesign. Design thinking pedagogy complements this by offering a human-centered, iterative methodology where students actively participate in problem-solving. GenAI combined with design thinking can enhance creativity, critical thinking, and ethical awareness, preparing students for complex, technology-driven environments (Rana, Verhoeven, & Sharma, 2025). In this way, design-based practice transforms AI from a disruptive force into a catalyst for meaningful learning, fostering environments where judgment, reflection, and creativity flourish alongside technological advancement.

This proposal directly addresses three key areas within Track 1: Agency and Knowledge:

- Innovative formats to generate, organise, and share knowledge: The collaborative space format itself fosters co-creation and knowledge exchange.
- Interdisciplinary communities of practice, partnerships, and networks to promote epistemic agency: The session builds on a collaboration within EUGLOH and invites broader partnerships.
- Critical examination on disruptions, such as artificial intelligence, and their impact on knowledge creation, curriculum development and student learning: AI literacy is framed as a sustainable and inclusive response to disruption.

Institutional responses to AI are often fragmented and slow. University alliances, such as EUGLOH, offer a unique opportunity to accelerate innovation through shared methodologies and capacity-building. This collaborative space provides a forum for academic developers, educators, and leaders to exchange ideas, identify synergies, and explore

joint initiatives. The format supports early-stage conceptual work and fosters partnerships for research, curriculum design, and policy development.

Intended Goals and Outcomes:

- Share insights from the two Universities on design-based approaches to AI literacy.
- Identify common challenges and opportunities across institutions.
- Co-create ideas for collaborative projects, including research, workshops, and curriculum frameworks.
- Build a network of practitioners committed to advancing AI literacy in higher education.

Session Structure (60 minutes):

- 0–10 min: Welcome and framing the challenge (AI literacy as transversal competence).
- 10–20 min: Short inputs from the two universities on emerging strategies.
- 20–50 min: Facilitated discussion in small groups, guided by key questions:
  - o What does AI literacy mean in your context?
  - o How can alliances accelerate institutional change?
  - o What collaborative actions are most urgent?
- 50–60 min: Plenary synthesis and next steps (shared document for ideas and contacts)

Target Audience: Academic developers, educational leaders, faculty, and alliance coordinators interested in digital transformation, curriculum innovation, and cross-institutional collaboration..

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Collaborative Space 26

Scaling SoTL Culture: Collaborative, Sustainable and Inclusive Approaches to Building Institutional Capability

Anna Rowe, Karin Watson

Abstract

Universities are seeking sustainable ways to build capacity for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), strengthen educator agency, and cultivate cultures of evidence-based teaching. Yet approaches to supporting SoTL vary widely, particularly in relation to how academic development structures enable or constrain educators' ability to engage meaningfully in inquiry and leadership around learning and teaching. This Collaborative Space session invites participants to explore models, challenges, and emerging practices for fostering SoTL engagement across diverse institutional contexts. Using the rapidly scaled SoTL support program at University X as an example, this session will facilitate dialogue about the principles, structures, and conditions that support educator agency, such as mentoring, recognition frameworks, peer networks, and dissemination pathways. Participants will share their own approaches, identify common needs, and generate strategies for addressing challenges within their respective contexts. The Collaborative Space aims to create a community of shared learning, inviting contributions from academic developers, education focussed academics, educational leaders, and researchers interested in strengthening SoTL capability building and advancing collective understanding of how institutions can enable agency in teaching and learning.

Keywords: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), Capability Building, Institutional Culture, Educator Agency, Distributed Leadership, Mentoring

Extended Summary

The ICED 2026 theme positions agency as central to how educators and academic developers influence learning, teaching, and institutional change. This 'Collaborative Space' session explores how agency can be intentionally cultivated through institutional SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) capability building, using a model from an Australian research-intensive university as a catalyst for shared reflection and cross-institutional learning.

Since 2022, University X has been developing a university-wide SoTL support program designed to increase educators' capability to engage in evidence-based teaching and build confidence and legitimacy in SoTL practice. The program emerged in response to the growth of Education-Focussed (EF) academics - now comprising of more than 500 staff - and aligns with scholarship emphasising the crucial role of SoTL in enhancing teaching capability and improving student outcomes (1). Over time, the program has expanded organically to include Teaching and Research (T&R) academics and third-space professionals, supporting a broader culture of professional agency in teaching and learning.

The program operates across four pillars: professional development, leadership, networking, and dissemination. Professional development activities include scaffolded workshops (e.g., targeted abstract writing for peak national and international higher education conferences) and a monthly SoTL Series. Leadership is developed through structured mentoring, peer-feedback processes, and opportunities aligned with the university's academic expectations framework. Networking is enhanced through a 'Find a SoTL Collaborator' database, and the 'SoTL Central' Teams space. Dissemination is supported through the SoTL series, institutional blogs and conference grants.

These activities reflect principles of experiential learning (2), inclusivity, sustainability, and evidence-based academic development (3). They also align with emerging frameworks that position academic careers as multidimensional and relational, shaped by institutional cultures and structures that enable or constrain agency (4).

Impact to date illustrates the potential of coordinated SoTL initiatives to foster both individual and collective agency. Examples include:

- An increase in accepted abstracts for two peak higher education conferences, Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) and International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL), from 6 (2022) to 67 (2025).
- Twenty-four academics completing the University X/Teaching Learning Inquiry (TLI) mentoring program, with two US universities adopting the model and interest from another journal.
- Over 300 participants engaged in 24 SoTL Series sessions delivered by 50 staff, with satisfaction averaging 4.8/5.
- Twelve external awards/grants received by SoTL-active staff.
- Strengthened institutional processes, including improved ethics review pathways and EF representation on ethics panels. These outcomes indicate a maturing SoTL culture that supports personal growth, distributed leadership, and institution-wide cultural change (5, 6).

The Collaborative Space format aligns with the ICED 2026 theme by creating conditions where participants can examine how their institutions enable or constrain educator agency in SoTL. The University X model is intended as a catalyst for

mutual inquiry, with the aim being to explore diverse contexts, structures, and challenges that shape academic development work internationally. This format is particularly suited to:

- Discussing early-stage or evolving SoTL support models
- Comparing institutional approaches to capability-building
- Articulating shared challenges and emerging needs
- Considering questions around agency, recognition, workload, and leadership The session's collaborative design positions participants as co-facilitators, recognising that agency emerges through dialogue, shared reflection, and collective sensemaking.

Participants will:

- Compare institutional SoTL support structures, identifying how they build capability through enabling educator agency
- Reflect on the structural conditions that shape SoTL participation
- Provide formative feedback on University X's SoTL support strategy
- Explore opportunities for future collaboration Expected outcomes include shared strategies for strengthening SoTL capability and educator agency across institutions, potential partnerships, and an emerging community for ongoing dialogue.

The proposed session structure is as follows:

1. Welcome and framing (5 min): Introduction to the theme of agency in SoTL capability building and outcomes of the session.

2. Showcase UNSW's model (10 min): A high-level overview highlighting structures, principles, and outcomes.

3. Small-group exchange (20 min): Participants to discuss:

    a. What structures in their institution enable or limit SoTL engagement?

    b. How is agency supported through recognition, mentoring, communities, and leadership?

    c. What emergent needs are they noticing?

4. Collective synthesis (20 min): The room works together to identify converging themes. Depending on attendee numbers, participants could self-select into interest clusters (e.g. mentorship models, recognition frameworks, cross institutional professional development). Each cluster to discuss and propose potential strategies to address emerging needs and challenges.

5. Debrief and next steps (10 min): Summary and invitation to join a follow-up digital space to continue collaboration.

The session is intended for:

- Academic developers
- SoTL program/Community of Practice (CoP) leaders
- EF academics
- Institutional learning and teaching leaders
- SoTL researchers Anyone working to build sustainable, high-impact SoTL cultures, or exploring how agency is fostered, constrained, or enacted within academic development, will benefit.

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Collaborative Space 27

Africa International Teaching Weeks: Collaborative Strategy to Foster Teaching Excellence, Internationalisation, and Organisational Transformation in African Higher Education

Marieta Jansen van Vuuren, Esmarie Strydom, Ntsoake Malebo, Anita Maurtin, Anne-Mart Olsen

Abstract

Despite the growing popularity of short international teaching interventions such as teaching weeks, empirical research on their design, outcomes, and educational value remains limited. Most internationalisation research still focuses on student mobility, with far fewer studies exploring faculty-led, intensive teaching formats (Lee et al., 2022). This ICED collaborative space will present initial reflections on the Africa International Teaching Week project as a national, multi-institutional, crosscontinental initiative advancing teaching excellence, academic staff development, and internationalisation aligned with national and institutional frameworks.

Presenters will reflect on how four South African universities collaboratively designed and implemented the project to support lecturers in establishing international collaborations, strengthening teaching cultures, and building academic development ecosystems responsive to systemic priorities. Key reflections include strategies to align with national frameworks, build institutional capacity, promote exposure to global perspectives, and develop agile academic development units capable of navigating disruptions in the global education space.

The Africa International Teaching Week initiative serves as an enabler for internationalisation through institutional mandates and academic development policies. The project strengthens collaborative teaching cultures and academic development capacity through lessons learnt in cross-institutional, intercontinental collaboration and professional development for staff involved in hosting and participating in international teaching activities. Presenters will demonstrate how the project creates equitable opportunities for university teachers to engage in internationalised teaching, SoTL research, and collaborative innovation. Sharing data-driven feedback, evaluation mechanisms, and sustainability planning will enable peer engagement and critical conversations, contributing to recommendations for institutionalising Africa International Teaching Weeks as a national staff enhancement mechanism.

Keywords: Africa Teaching Weeks, Teaching globalization, Internationalization for Africa, Global professional learning

Extended Summary

The Africa International Teaching Week is a national, collaborative initiative led by four South African universities (NWU, NMU, UWC, CUT), designed as a strategic academic development intervention that aligns with national frameworks and supports systemic transformation in teaching, learning, and internationalisation. At the core of the initiative is the commitment to teaching excellence and professional development to enhance academics as university teachers. Recent research confirms that teaching mobility is not yet considered as a core element of internationalisation strategies, even though it could have a significant qualitative impact on the teaching learning environment. It often forms part of an individual academic initiative and not necessarily an organised event. (European University Foundation, 2023).

The project creates opportunities for both novice and experienced lecturers to enhance their teaching skills, engage in scholarly teaching innovations, and broaden their pedagogical perspectives through exposure to diverse, international teaching methods.

The following pillars underpin the project goals:

- The Africa International Teaching Week is intentionally framed within the DHET's National Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers (2019) and the Policy Framework for Internationalisation of Higher Education (2019). The initiative is embedded into participating universities' teaching and learning strategies, ensuring alignment with national systemic goals and institutional teaching priorities.
- The project fosters cross-border collaboration by inviting university teachers and discipline experts from Africa and beyond to provide guest lectures and seminars to students during a structured on-campus event at the hosting university. This promotes cultural exchange, diversity, and global outlooks, enriching the experiences of both staff and students.
- The Africa International Teaching Week furthermore acts as a platform for building institutional and academic development capacity, enhancing the skills of professional and academic staff in organizing and hosting international events, and supporting lecturers in pursuing international teaching and SoTL opportunities. This layer strengthens institutions' abilities to manage collaborative projects and embed them into university culture in a sustainably.
- The establishment of data informed feedback, reflection, and evaluation practices as well as informed feedback will guide the refinement of the Africa International Teaching Week model and ensure its

sustainable continuation beyond the current project cycle, fostering resilient academic development units able to respond to systemic shifts and societal changes.

Intended Outcomes for the Collaborative Space:

- The collaborative space will provide the valuable opportunity to share a replicable strategic model aimed at using collaborative internationalisation initiatives as academic development interventions.
- Practical mechanisms for alignment, feedback, and sustainability in multi- institutional projects will be shared, creating space for discussion on resilient, agile academic development practices in the African context and beyond.
- Best practice suggestions from international colleagues with knowledge and experience in hosting and engaging in this type of initiative will provide valuable guidelines for the continuation of the collaborative project. Expansion of the project to include other partners from Africa and across the globe in the next cycle is an exciting possibility to explore.

The target audience in the collaborative space engagement will include both experienced and curious Academic Developers, teaching and learning leaders, Directors of Teaching and Learning Centres, internationalisation officers, faculty leaders, institutional planners, and policy makers. Those who want to share their experience, or who want to explore this initiative further will find the discussion engaging, participative and informative.

The purpose of the collaborative space is to engage with peers on similar global initiative through providing initial reflections on the project, engaging in insightful reflections and sharing of best practice, building inter-institutional connections and exploring interdisciplinary local and global collaboration opportunities.

The collaborative space session will be conducted in the format of a short world-café discussion to ensure fruitful discussion and engagement with all participants.

Welcome & Overview (15mins)

- Introduce the facilitators and leads of the participating institutions
    1. Workshop objectives and format
    2. Provide context of African International Teaching Week concept and link to international practices
    3. Brief introduction into Africa International Teaching Week project purpose and intended outcomes.
- World Café Discussions (2 rounds x 10mins = 20 mins)

1. Station 1: Theme 1Rationale for hosting teaching weeks
2. Station 2: Theme 2 Best practice for hosting teaching weeks
3. Station 3: Theme 3 possible suggestions and collaborations for national and international colleagues

• Summaries and Insights (15 mins)

1. Group sharing
2. Summary of key insights and practical takeaways
3. Intended framework

• Wrap-Up (10 mins) Thank participants, outline next steps and way forward

Conclusion: The Africa International Teaching Weeks project exemplifies how academic developers can act as strategic change agents, leveraging collaborative projects to enhance teaching cultures, build agile academic development ecosystems, and contribute to national and global institutional and systemic transformation.

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Posters 3

How to enhance sense of belonging in undergraduate STEM students: A scoping review

Zeljana Pavlovic, Anja Møgelvang Jacobsen, Monica Jordheim

Abstract

This poster presents findings from a scoping review, aimed at exploring research-based initiatives designed to foster a sense of belonging among undergraduate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) students. Increased belonging prevents student drop-out and increase retention rates, answering to the broader challenge of insufficient numbers of graduates qualified to work for STEM-related careers. Providing students with opportunities supporting the development of sense of belonging could be critical for institutions and educational agents to foster change and impact the learning environment. The review included 55 studies and identified five categories of effective initiatives: 1) undergraduate research experiences, 2) mentoring, 3) in-class pedagogical activities, 3) social initiatives, and 5) formal institutional programs. These initiatives can be implemented across various organizational contexts, both at institutional and course level, demonstrating that diverse educational agents can influence the learning environment and take actions in strengthening students' sense of belonging.

Keywords: Sense of belonging, STEM, Initiatives, Scoping review

Extended Summary

Aim of the poster: This poster presents the results of a scoping review, carried out to facilitate educational agents in STEM higher education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in exploring actions to influence their educational contexts and learning environments. The review explores research-based educational initiatives, fostering a sense of belonging in STEM undergraduate students. A current challenge in the field is students dropping out early in their studies, leading to low graduation rates and a shortage of people in STEM related work fields (Feng et al., 2024; Li et al., 2022). Sense of belonging, the experience of feeling included or accepted, is suggested to be highly relevant for retention, as increased experiences of sense of belonging reduces student withdrawal and promotes persistence (Nguyen et al., 2025). Implementing strategies to strengthen sense of belonging could therefore be crucial to increase graduation rates and provide enhanced knowledge to the STEM field (Kahu et al., 2022). However, there is currently no comprehensive, research-based overview of effective initiatives in increasing belonging in undergraduate STEM students. This knowledge is crucial for educational agents seeking to foster meaningful strategies at their own institutions.

Research question: Which research-based initiatives can educational agents implement to enhance undergraduate STEM students' sense of belonging?

Methodological approach: A scoping review was chosen as the review method due to the exploratory nature of the research question, following the framework of Peters et al. (2021). A university librarian helped designed the search strategy and the use of Web of Science, ProQuest, and PsycINFO as relevant databases for the search. Study selection was based on the inclusion criteria described in table 1.

Table 1. Inclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria

Domain	Inclusion criteria
Population	Undergraduate students enrolled in STEM degrees
Study focus	Initiatives enhancing sense of belonging
Date of study	The study is published between 01.01.15 and 01.01.25
Language	English or Scandinavian
Study type	The study is a primary study
Study method	Both quantitative and qualitative studies
Publication type	The study is peer reviewed

Screening occurred in two stages in the software Rayyan. All authors took part in the screening process, with the blind function in Rayyan turned on to prevent bias. After the second stage of screening, fifty-five studies were included in the review. An overview of the selection process is outlined in the Prisma in figure 1.

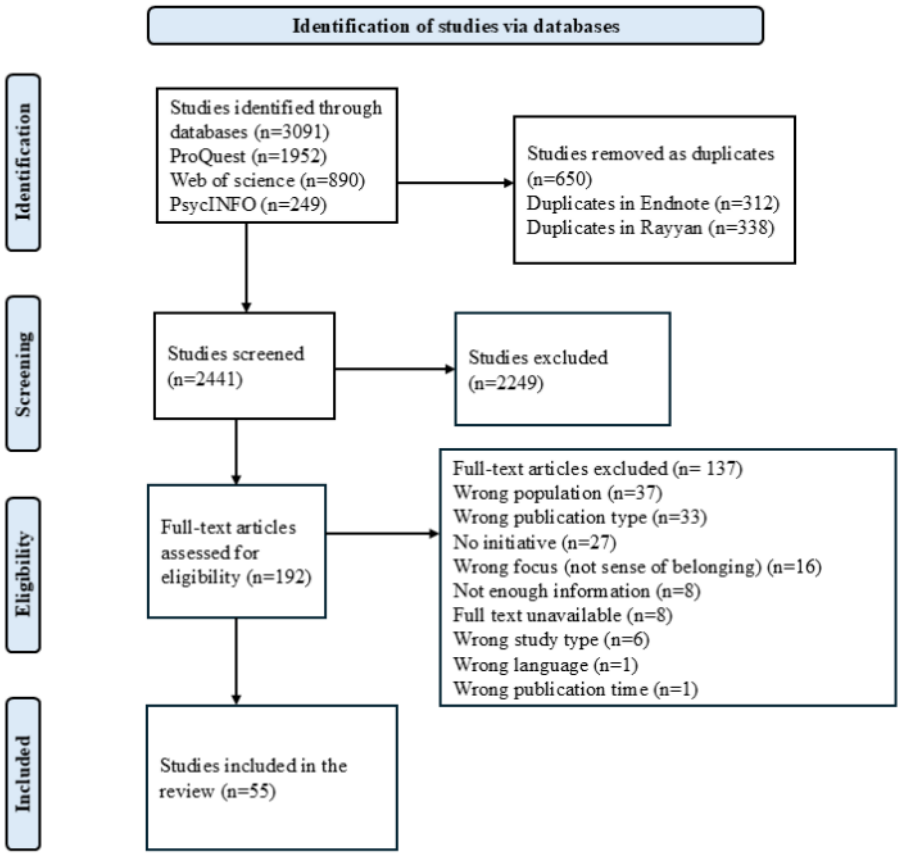


Fig 1. Prisma, adapted from Moher et al. (2009).

Key findings/arguments/outcomes: We found five categories of initiatives, summarized in figure 2. Some studies implemented multiple initiatives, reflecting how the initiatives are not mutually exclusive.

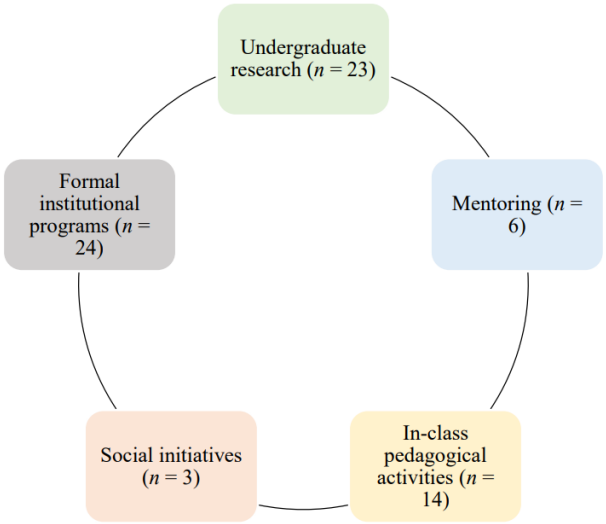


Fig 2. Overview of the initiatives found, and the number of articles implementing them.

In undergraduate research experience (1), students participate in research experiences, with collaborative projects addressing field-relevant problems and presenting their work to their peers. Mentoring (2), as an isolated initiative, provides both academic and social support, in an either formal or informal approach, offered by either peers, older students or members of the faculty or departments. In-class pedagogical activities (3) include a wide array of different activities, including active learning techniques, changes in formative assessment and verbal, supportive teacher feedback. Social initiatives (4) include a belonging or growth mindset intervention, and an intervention targeting common STEM stereotypes. One final category is formal institutional programs (5), where students are enrolled in programs offering several initiatives, including research experience, mentoring, and academic, social, and financial support. Most studies (n = 40) reported that these initiatives increased students' sense of belonging.

Theoretical and educational significance:

Supporting the development of sense of belonging in undergraduate STEM students is essential for institutions to increase retention (Shortlidge et al., 2024). Through support educational agents can implement actions and make decisions to bring positive change to the learning environment.

The aim is that the results from this scoping review can promote research-based initiatives to endorse educational agents in fostering learning environments supporting the development of belonging. Our results indicate how some initiatives, such as formal programs or mentoring, are commonly applied at the institutional level, whereas other initiatives, such as in-class pedagogical activities, are commonly implemented in specific courses. These insights suggest that educational agents can select and adapt initiatives to address their own situational challenges or their own students, thereby facilitating sustainable organizational practices enhancing belonging and promoting persistence.

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Develop university teaching for student engagement

Irene Douwes-van Ark, Marjon Fokkens-Bruinsma, Jan Folkert Deinum, Hanke Korpershoek

Abstract

In this study we give insight into university teaching for student engagement. With our results, we aim to support university teachers in their didactical development to effectively engage students. We interviewed 13 university teachers to understand what perspectives they have on student engagement (definition, teaching practices and influencing factors). With four case-studies, we further explored the interplay of teachers' perspectives (teacher interview), their teaching behaviour (classroom observation) and students' perceptions (student survey). Our interview data demonstrate that teachers have different perspectives on what student engagement is, though mostly focus on behavioural engagement. They adopt diverse teaching practices, such as interacting with students. Factors like teaching large student groups are of influence on their teaching. With our case-studies, we demonstrate (mis)alignments between the teachers' perspectives, teaching behaviour and students' perceptions. We discuss the amount of responsibility students can take for their engagement, the teacher and student interest for the subject matter, and the use of interactive activities in classes. Our results imply that, for effective student engagement, we need to support teachers in understanding what the concept exactly means. The (continuous) need for development seems most urgent for teaching in lectures or large classes. Our case studies furthermore highlight the importance of taking the teachers' specific context into account, for instance when the course content lacks the teachers' or students' interest.

Keywords: Student Engagement, Multiple Case Study, Active Learning, University Lecturers

Deconstructing the Research Paper: Fostering Student Agency and Engagement in an Introduction to Literature Classroom

Marcia Nichols, Jennifer Wacek

Abstract

This poster will explore creative alternatives to the term or research paper into an Introduction to Literature course for health science majors. Our aim is to embed meaningful research into a general education, writing-intensive setting by designing projects that provide student agency, emphasize synthesis and analysis, and mirror the collaborative practices of healthcare professions. To achieve this, we have implemented a series of multimodal research assignments requiring student engagement with primary and secondary sources, group writing, and multimodal end products, including the creation of digital "critical editions" of online literary texts, collaborative wiki entries that synthesize historical and cultural contexts of literary works, and research-informed creative projects. Collectively, these assignments foster authentic inquiry, contextual understanding, and the collaborative skills essential to students' future careers in health science.

Keywords: Research Paper, Term Paper, Alternative Assignments, Academic Dishonesty

Extended Summary

For decades, instructors have searched for creative alternatives to the term or research paper because of its boringness and its inauthenticity (Weiser 2022). The easy accessibility of paper mills, and more recently the rise of generative AI, has only intensified dissatisfaction with the traditional term paper and concerns about the growing prevalence of academic dishonesty (Sweeney 2023). However, undergraduate research is considered a high impact practice (HIP) by the AAC&U (AAC&U). Weiser lauds "real" undergraduate research as a solution to the artificiality of the research paper, and we believe research should be an integral part of general education classes rather than reserved for upper-level coursework. General education courses are cornerstone to a liberal education, yet students often treat them as onerous, tangential obstacles to be overcome. Additionally, writing-intensive undergraduate courses, such as introduction to literature, the course objectives focus on writing skills, including synthesis and analysis, more than "real research." This poster aims to detail our attempts to find creative and engaging alternative research projects for an Introduction to Literature course for health science students.

According to Eodice et al. (2016), meaningful writing projects give students agency and choice as well as "immersion in the processes of research and writing" (p. 24). We have sought ways to build research projects that give students both a sense of individual agency as well as mimicking the kind of group work and research expected of students in their future chosen field of healthcare. As an alternative to the traditional research paper, we have found ways to incorporate research into a variety of multimodal projects. All of our projects have in common a requirement that students consult primary and secondary sources and synthesize their findings into brief summaries. For example, one of the most successful projects has been to have students construct a digital critical edition of a variety of online texts. Students work in small groups to identify places in the text that need additional contextual information for the contemporary reader. They then conduct research and write brief annotations together; this assignment structure mimics the collaborative research they may have to do in their future health science careers. Similarly, we have students conduct research on the historical context of specific texts such as John Okada's No-No Boy and Tony Kushner's Angels in America. We have them work in small groups to research various topics and synthesize the information into a wiki entry that includes images. This research allows them to explore important historical context both textually and visually.

Most recently, we have taken students in a more creative direction by having students present their research and learning in a visual art format. After reading Tommy Orange's novel "There There" about the lives of urban Native Americans, students learned about local indigenous cultures and their traditional design work with the help of a guest scholar and artist. Students were tasked with painting one piece of a community mural that showcases upper midwest Native American designs. Together, the canvases form a collective work of art that mirrors the multivocal narrative structure of the novel. Students learned important context about local indigenous cultures and recognized the continued vitality of Native peoples. We continue to work to develop authentic research assignments that help our students develop the research and collaboration skills they will need in their future careers.

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Cinemeducation and case studies: enhancing critical thinking and socio-emotional competence

María Paula Paragis, Elisabeth Moyano

Abstract

One of the main purposes of health sciences education is to provide students with an excellent scientific and humanistic education, while also equipping them with skills that enable professional development in a changing environment. To promote critical thinking and foster the development of socio-emotional competence in fourth-year students, an activity combining cinemeducation and case-based learning was designed and implemented. Students (n=65) were challenged to analyze and apply knowledge to concrete situations of their future professional practice using excerpts from an episode of the medical drama House MD, an audiovisual testimony from a patient, and two clinical cases. A satisfaction survey (n=26) was administered to evaluate the aspects that were most well-received by the students and those that needed improvement. All items received positive ratings, with an average score between 4.42 and 4.92 out of 5 points. Students highlighted the dynamic and engaging nature of the activity and the value of the television series in integrating theoretical aspects with real-world professional practice situations. These results demonstrate that combining these methodologies is an innovative and engaging way to introduce students to the complexities of clinical practice. Integrating socio-emotional competence and critical thinking into the curriculum allows students to learn about professionalism, preparing them for real-world challenges.

Keywords: Cinemeducation, Case-based Learning, Critical Thinking, Socio-emotional Competence

Extended summary

The main goal of health sciences education is to provide students with high-quality scientific preparation while equipping them with the cognitive and behavioral skills necessary to face the challenges they will encounter in their future professional practice. To this end, an activity was designed and implemented for fourth-year students that combined two active learning methodologies—cinemeducation and case-based learning—to promote critical thinking and foster the development of socio-emotional skills. Instead of passively receiving information, students were challenged to analyze and apply knowledge in concrete situations of their future professional practice.

These active learning methodologies were selected with the aim of enabling students to learn meaningfully, incorporating new concepts and applying and generalizing them to other contexts (Villalobos-López, 2022). On the one hand, case-based learning promotes the development of analytical thinking and reflection in students, involving them in debates about complex real-life situations (Thistlethwaite et al., 2012). On the other hand, cinemeducation allows students to develop reflective and attitudinal skills regarding emotions through a film excerpt, based on the recognition of the affective aspects that impact the decision-making process (Blasco et al., 2010). These teaching methodologies seek to foster the integration of knowledge, procedures, and attitudes. Therefore, situations that implicitly presented the content were favored, so that students could derive concepts and generalizations on their own through interaction with their peers.

A seminar on primary immunodeficiencies and pulmonary pathology was conducted within the course "Thoracic Pathology: Respiratory Pathology," in which 65 students participated. Different teaching resources and strategies were used during the session. To introduce the content, a brief audiovisual testimonial from a patient was presented. Subsequently, a fragment of the "Whack-a-Mole" episode of the medical drama House MD was projected, with an approximate duration of 7 minutes. Based on questions from the professor and comments from the students, the theoretical concepts were explained and clarified. Finally, students were divided into four working groups, and each group worked on an integrative clinical case.

To evaluate which aspects were best received by the students and which needed reinforcement, a satisfaction survey was administered. The response rate was 40% (n=26). The questionnaire comprised 5 multiple-choice items (5-point Likert scale) and one open-ended question. All items received a positive rating, with an average between 4.42 and 4.92. The most highly rated aspect was "the use of audiovisual resources makes the teaching activities more motivating". In the open-ended question, students highlighted the dynamic and engaging nature of the activity and the value of the television series in integrating theoretical aspects with real-world professional practice situations. Suggestions for improvement focused on technical aspects related to audio and image quality during the audiovisual presentations.

The results obtained demonstrate that combining these methodologies is an innovative and attractive way to introduce students to the complexities of clinical practice. Boosting their motivation and interest creates better conditions for learning and gives purpose to their attendance, making the classroom experience a meaningful event. Furthermore, it is worth noting the value of encouraging students to reflect on their own emotional reactions, as this is an aspect generally under-addressed in undergraduate education. Ultimately, integrating socio-emotional competence and critical thinking as contents in the curriculum allows students to learn about professionalism, preparing them for the challenges of real life.

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In Rhythm and in Relation: Positioning Lecturers as Academic Advisors through Pedagogy of Mattering

Anthea H M Jacobs

Abstract

Academic advising has increasingly been recognised as a key strategy for enhancing student success within South African higher education. However, it is often positioned as a discrete institutional function, separate from the pedagogical work of lecturers. This chapter challenges such distinctions by exploring the interplay between academic advising and academic development as a relational and rhythmic pedagogical practice.

Drawing on a qualitative, reflective inquiry approach, the chapter is anchored in a critical incident arising from a professional academic development session. Data generated through a Padlet activity, where academics reflected on how they and their students learn, revealed an unanticipated shift from pedagogical concerns toward issues of student support, engagement, and care. These responses are analysed using a reflexive thematic approach and interpreted through Agamben's notion of rhythmic action and Pedagogies of Mattering.

The findings suggest that lecturers routinely engage in what is conceptualised as micro-advising moments—informal, often unrecognised practices of guidance, feedback, and relational engagement embedded within everyday teaching. From this perspective, academic advising is not an additional responsibility, but an integral dimension of pedagogical practice that unfolds through ongoing movements between teaching, reflection, and responsiveness.

The chapter contributes to theoretical debates on academic advising by reframing it as a relational and pedagogical practice enacted by lecturers, rather than solely by designated advisors. In doing so, it offers a new way of understanding how advising emerges within academic development contexts, with implications for more integrated, contextually responsive approaches to student success in South African higher education.

Keywords: Academic advising, Relational pedagogy, Rhythmic action, South African Higher Education

Extended Summary

The central argument is that academic advising is not peripheral to teaching, as Crookston (1994) suggests it is often assumed, but is instead embedded within pedagogical engagements and amplified in reflective academic development spaces.

Context and Critical Incident

The author writes from the vantage point of several years of experience as an academic developer in two South African universities, where the institutional positioning of academic advising varied dramatically - from marginal, fragmented, and misunderstood, to comparatively integrated, strategic, and collaborative. This professional trajectory reveals the tensions that arise when advising is separated from pedagogy and conceptualised purely as a student support service, with little recognition of its relational and pedagogical foundations. The critical incident anchoring this reflection emerged during a professional academic development session focused on learning theory, in which lecturers used a Padlet activity to reflect on how they learn best and how they believe their students learn best. Although the activity was not framed around advising, participants' responses revealed concerns and reflections characteristic of academic advising, such as the importance of emotional support, constructive feedback, relational engagement, personalised guidance, and safe learning environments.

Methodological & Theoretical Framework

The paper adopts a reflective methodology structured by Rolfe et al.'s (2001) model (What? So what? Now what?), positioning reflection as a rigorous meaning-making process rather than informal introspection. Reflection serves here as both method and object of inquiry.

Two theoretical lenses guide interpretation:

1. Agamben's notion of rhythmic action (1999) Agamben conceptualises rhythm as an oscillation between pause and flow, potential and enactment. The paper draws on this concept to illuminate how academic advising and academic development move in and out of focus in professional practice, each informing and shaping the other, often tacitly.

2. Pedagogies of Mattering (Gravett et al., 2024) This framework foregrounds care, attunement, relational connection, and the experience of "feeling seen." Through this lens, advising becomes visible as relational and affective labour embedded in pedagogy, rather than as technical guidance or academic administration. Together, these frameworks make space for a conceptualisation of advising as a pedagogical rhythm that is emergent, relational, affective, and contextually responsive.

Key Findings & Arguments

Lecturers' reflections revealed that academic advising is already embedded in teaching practice, evidenced in their emphasis of constructive feedback, personalised engagement, cultural responsiveness, and relational care. These

functions align closely with global advising frameworks, even if not explicitly named as such. The professional development space itself proved fertile for surfacing these advising logics, as reflective activities encouraged lecturers to articulate the student-support responsibilities they routinely assume informally and intuitively. What became clear is that advising is inherently relational and affective, reflected in lecturers' concern for students' wellbeing, confidence, and sense of belonging, particularly for those who may feel marginalised. At the core of this interplay lies a subtle rhythm: lecturers move fluidly between teaching and advising, sometimes intentionally, but often instinctively, in response to the relational and pedagogical needs that arise in their classrooms. Through these insights, the paper argues that academic advising must be understood not as peripheral labour, but as a rhythmic pedagogical practice embedded within academic development processes.

The paper contributes four key insights of international relevance:

- It challenges dominant structural divides between academic advising and development.
    - Institutions often separate staff development from student advising. This paper shows that such separations obscure pedagogical realities and weaken institutional approaches to student success.
- It advances a relational conceptualisation of advising.
    - Rather than procedural, informational, or transactional, advising is shown to be relational, pedagogical, and rhythmic.
- It positions professional development spaces as catalysts for advising capacity.
    - Professional learning programmes can intentionally cultivate advising literacies through reflection, dialogue, and recognition of hidden advisory labour.
- It foregrounds care as epistemically significant.
    - Using Pedagogies of Mattering, the paper reframes advising as a practice that attends to student dignity, identity, and belonging and not only their performance.

The paper argues that universities should more intentionally embed advising awareness and literacy within academic development curricula, rather than confining these practices to student support structures alone. This includes legitimising lecturers as active advising agents, strategically integrating advisory and academic development structures, and fostering institutional rhythms of interprofessional collaboration that move beyond entrenched functional silos.

Future research pathways emerging from this work include examining how advising literacies can be meaningfully integrated into academic development curricula, conducting cross-institutional comparative studies to better understand how advising and development intersect in different contexts, and embedding reflection-based advising research within longitudinal professional learning initiatives to trace how advising practices evolve over time.

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Rewarding reflection: a scheme to transform STEMM+B students' perception of holistic self-awareness.

Paulina Kristiansson, Louise Hanger, Martyn Kingsbury

Abstract

This study in a 'STEMM+B' (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine, and business) focused UK university where students are typically strategic and discipline-oriented, undervaluing broader experiences. Although graduate employability is good, students' can struggle to articulate their 'soft skills'. An Award was established to address this gap and promote holistic integration of STEMM+B and non-STEMM+B experiences and support construction of agentic integrated developmental narratives.

A questionnaire was used to capture participants' initial motivations, expectations and perceived barriers to engagement. Following this, semi-structured interviews with seven students who had partially submitted and eight students who completed the full Award. Each transcribed and thematically analysed.

Questionnaire and early interview data show initial expected benefits of engagement were strategic with the Award predominantly perceived as a route to formal recognition. However, as participants progressed, they began to appreciate the transformative nature of structured reflection evolving from performance-driven engagement to more agentic reflection.

Several principles emerged as critical to supporting student agency and meaningful engagement in development. Maintaining the perception of low barriers and high benefits maximises engagement. Resisting the impulse to eliminate barriers, recognising that appropriate challenge fosters resilience, adaptability, and long-term growth. Data show that what participants initially report as frustration with process and perceive as a means to a goal is often retrospectively considered as transformative and more valuable than those initial strategic goals.

Keywords

Agentic reflection, Self-awareness, Professional development, Student engagement

Extended Summary

This study is set in a UK university with a specialist 'STEMM+B' (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, medicine, and business) focus and a research-intensive, competitive culture. Within this context, students are typically strategic and performance-oriented, often placing disproportionate emphasis on their disciplinary expertise while undervaluing broader experiences and competencies such as communication, collaboration, and self-reflection (Howson & Kingsbury, 2024). Although employability outcomes for graduates are strong (86.5% employed or in further study or research; Graduate Outcomes Survey, 2024), feedback from employers highlights students' limited ability to articulate their so-called 'soft skills'.

An institutional Award was established as an initiative to address this gap and to promote agency, self-awareness, and holistic engagement with the wider student experience. It aimed at transforming their appreciation of the value of integrating their discipline expertise with their wider experience to create a more integrated account of their achievements. It has a low barrier to entry and high flexibility and supports students in taking ownership in co-creating meaning from their experiences. Staff and peers facilitate reflective dialogue, promoting agency through non-directive feedback to collaboratively encourage participants to draw together STEMM+B and non-STEMM+B experiences to construct agentic integrated developmental narratives. This poster presents data from evaluative research investigating the changing perceptions of participants engaging with the Award. Methodological approach A mixed-methods design was employed to capture participants perceptions at different stages of engagement with the scheme. Initially a questionnaire was used to capture twenty-one (of 80) participants' initial motivations, expectations and perceived barriers to engagement. Respondents had all engaged in the scheme but had not yet completed submissions towards the Award.

Following this, semi-structured group interviews were conducted with seven students who had already submitted at least one reflective piece. Mean interview duration was 31 minutes.

Lastly, eight students who completed the full Award engaged in individual semi-structured interviews (mean duration: 54 minutes). Interview questions explored shifting motivations, agency, and perceived value of the Award. Transcripts were anonymised and we employed abductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each author independently coded all transcripts; these codes were discussed and consolidated to form themes.

Key Findings: Questionnaire data showed that undergraduate and postgraduate participants from all faculties. All were happy with the Award and its processes with the main challenges reported as being time constraints and understanding the requirements to gain the award. Initial expected benefits of engagement were strategic with 75% ranking recognition and 69% ranking 'boosting their CV' as main benefits of engagement. Only 18% ranked 'learning to effectively communicate soft skills' as an expected benefit of engagement at this early stage.

Early interviews confirmed this strategic engagement, with the Award predominantly perceived as a route to formal recognition. At the outset, they perceived the Award as relatively straightforward, underestimating the reflective process. Processes were initially viewed as obstacles rather than developmental opportunities. However, as participants progressed, they began to appreciate the transformative nature of structured reflection.

'(…) it transitioned from something I thought was just very simple and you know, get it over and done with to something a little bit more complex and much more reflective than I expected.' (Participant 2)

Participants highlighted the impact of reflective dialogue, peer feedback, and the iterative nature of the process, which they described as fostering increased self-awareness, confidence, and an appreciation of their competencies beyond disciplinary knowledge.

'Initially (…) I was like, 'let me just get as much as I can out of [institution] in one year' … but then (…) it transitioned more into 'let me work on myself' (…) then as I started to write and then engage in the peer feedback… It's the way I'd reflect on myself has really changed and I think that's what motivates me to keep going further. '(Participant 2)

Feedback was gradually perceived as supportive rather than directive, enabling students to take ownership of their reflections and strengthen their agentive voice:

'I felt really heard… it was like having a conversation with someone who wanted to help you become a better person.' (Participant 1)

As they progressed, participants reported a shift: reflective practice evolved from a 'means to an end' into a valuable developmental process increasing their agency for integrating and broadening their sense of worth.

'So I realised how much the Award has helped me to like see how much I've accomplished since I've come here (…) I feel like I've learned a lot about myself from the Award, whereas I thought that it would just be an addition to my CV.' (Participant 5)

Data demonstrate a shift from performance-driven engagement to a more agentic mode of reflection. Participants began integrating diverse experiences, challenging narrow definitions of achievement, and recognising the value of personal growth within and beyond STEMM+B. Many participants transform their understanding of reflection and agency in articulating a more holistic view of their strengths and transferable skills aligned with workforce needs.

Key Recommendations Drawing on our research, several principles emerged as critical to supporting student agency and meaningful engagement in such development programmes. These recommendations highlight how institutional structures, incentives, and pedagogical choices can either foster or constrain students' capacity to take ownership of their professional development. Our experience suggests the following are key:

- Maintaining perception of low barriers and high benefits maximises engagement.
- Resisting the impulse to eliminate all barriers, recognising that appropriate challenge fosters resilience, adaptability, and long-term growth.
- Being mindful that what participants initially report as frustration with process and perceive as merely a means to a strategic goal is often retrospectively considered as transformative and more valuable than those initial goals.

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A Qualitative Inquiry into Graduation Research: Findings from a Focus Group of Graduates

Takero Nishino

Abstract

This study examines the educational significance of graduation research in Japan from the perspective of graduates, thereby addressing a deficiency in current quality assurance research that has predominantly concentrated on faculty viewpoints. Although nearly all Japanese universities require graduation research as a culminating learning experience, limited evidence exists on how graduates interpret its processes, outcomes, and challenges. A focus group interview with three graduates from the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences—each recommended for notable growth—was conducted to highlight these experiences. The findings highlight three key points relevant to educational development. First, the significance of the research topic and the chance to share findings outside of the university influenced motivation. Second, the process was characterized by autonomy-based supervision and peer dialogue, though the high level of autonomy created difficulties in defining research approaches and managing teamwork without explicit guidance. Third, these challenges fostered substantial development of transferable skills such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration—competencies central to contemporary notions of learning outcomes and graduate quality. Graduates viewed graduation research as crucial preparation for post-university life, yet identified ongoing challenges in communicating its significance and calibrating supervisory involvement. The study suggests the need for more intentional supervisory frameworks to enhance the educational effectiveness of graduation research within quality assurance systems.

Keywords: Graduation Research, Student Agency in Undergraduate Research, High-Impact Educational Practices, Graduate Perspectives

Introduction: Globally, there has been a growing focus on ensuring quality assurance in higher education and enhancing the visibility of learning outcomes. Assuring the quality of student achievement at the graduation point has received particular attention in Japan. One concrete mechanism is the evaluation of graduation research. According to national statistics, 97.8% of Japanese universities require students to complete some form of graduation research, and 91.2% designate it as compulsory (MEXT, 2025).

The United States recognizes concepts such as the senior capstone and undergraduate research as high-impact educational practices (Kuh, 2008). Figure 1 illustrates how these practices compare with the Japanese model of graduation research.

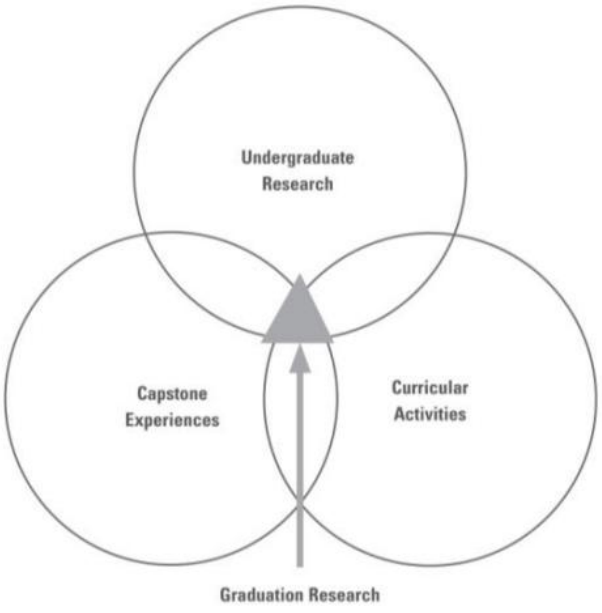


Fig. 1. Positioning of Graduation Research (Kushimoto, 2019)

Although faculty-focused surveys (e.g., Nishino, 2024) have clarified institutional practices surrounding graduation research, very little is known about how graduates themselves understand and experience this capstone activity. This study seeks to address that gap through a graduate-centered perspective.

This study clarifies the processes, significance, and challenges of graduation research from the perspective of graduates.

Specifically, it investigates:

(1) How graduates engaged in graduation research?

(2) How they experienced growth through the process?

(3) What significance and challenges they perceived regarding graduation research?

Methods: A 60-minute focus group interview was conducted with three graduates representing the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. The participants graduated 2–7 years ago and are currently working at companies. Each participant was recommended by their former graduation research supervisor as someone who "conducted excellent research and demonstrated notable growth through the process."

The interview explored multiple dimensions of their experiences, including motivation for engaging in graduation research; difficulties encountered; effective aspects of supervision; areas where they desired additional support; development experienced through the research process; connections between graduation research and post-graduation life; and their views on the significance and challenges of graduation research.

Results

Motivation for Engaging in Graduation Research

Graduates did not necessarily begin their research with strong initial motivation. However, they emphasized that the importance of the research topic significantly influenced their willingness to engage. Additionally, opportunities to disseminate research results to external audiences served as an important motivator and strengthened their sense of agency in the process.

Supervision that Fosters Agency and Dialogue: Although each student pursued an independent topic, the research environment encouraged active communication with peers. Students frequently connected elements of others' research to their own, creating a collaborative learning culture. Furthermore, supervisors generally fostered student agency by allowing students to make key decisions, though the degree of supervisory involvement varied across instructors.

Challenges Arising from Agency: The very emphasis on agency created significant difficulties. Students were expected to determine their research themes, decide on methodological approaches, and manage teamwork without prescriptive guidance. Since supervisors refrained from providing "correct answers," students had to navigate uncertainty, devise strategies, and take initiative—experiences that were often challenging.

Growth Through Confronting Challenges: The challenges associated with agency contributed to substantial growth. Graduates reported developing critical thinking, communication skills, and collaborative competencies by working through ambiguity and negotiating research decisions with peers and supervisors. These competencies represent transferable skills that transcend the academic context and hold relevance for broader social and professional life.

Significance and Challenges of Graduation Research: Graduates perceived graduation research as a valuable opportunity to confront themselves, generate outcomes within a limited time, and prepare for life beyond university. However, they identified key challenges: ensuring that students understand the significance of graduation research early in the process, and determining the appropriate degree of supervisory involvement while still promoting student agency.

Conclusions

Graduate narratives revealed three major insights:

(1) Motivation for graduation research is shaped by the initial stage of topic selection and by opportunities for the public dissemination of outcomes.

(2) Emphasizing agency throughout the research process fosters the development of transferable skills that are central to contemporary notions of graduate quality.

(3) A core challenge is determining how faculty can effectively support students while maintaining an environment that cultivates agency.

Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of creating intentional supervisory frameworks to improve the quality of graduation research and prioritize student agency in institutional quality assurance systems.

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Building Leadership Capacity through Distributed Leadership in Faculties of Education

Share Aiyed M. Aldosari

Abstract

This collaborative space focuses on how shared leadership, collective efficacy, and human-centered design can transform Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) into resilient, sustainable systems for organizational learning. Drawing on parallel redesign efforts at two secondary school sites in San Diego, the session highlights how PLCs grounded in social–emotional research, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can cultivate psychological safety, belonging, and teacher agency. These conditions enabled general education, English Language Development, and special education teachers to break down silos, develop shared literacy goals, and engage in collaborative inquiry that improved instructional practice and student outcomes. The purpose of this collaborative space is to create a reflective and generative environment where participants examine their own institutional contexts and co-design strategies for building capacity-centered PLCs that endure beyond individual leaders. Through guided discussion, case analysis, and co-creation, attendees will explore how distributed leadership and equity-driven professional learning structures can strengthen organizational resilience. Participants will leave with adaptable frameworks, practical tools, and actionable steps for cultivating sustainable, empowering professional cultures within their own educational settings.

Keywords: Shared Leadership, Professional Learning Communities, Organizational Learning, Teacher Agency

Extended Summary

Background and Context

Across our two secondary school sites in San Diego, we observed a persistent challenge common to many educational settings: professional learning structures were inconsistent, fragmented, and often reactive. Teachers were expected to navigate increasingly diverse student needs—linguistic, cultural, and academic—without cohesive systems to support collaboration or instructional growth. Department meetings frequently centered on logistical updates rather than meaningful inquiry, and siloed working patterns limited collective responsibility for student outcomes.

In response, we separately redesigned our English Department Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), drawing from a shared set of research-based principles to create coherent, equity-driven professional learning ecosystems. Although our sites differ in demographics, size, and organizational culture, our work converged around three common frameworks: social-emotional learning research, collective efficacy theory, and distributed/shared leadership models. These frameworks helped us shift PLC structures from compliance-based routines to human-centered professional communities capable of sustaining growth over time. Our redesigns were also guided by a parallel insight: the psychological needs of adult learners mirror those of students. Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs as an organizing lens, we focused intentionally on cultivating safety, belonging, autonomy, and purpose within teacher teams. When these foundational needs were met, teachers demonstrated increased willingness to take instructional risks, engage in honest reflection, and participate in shared problem-solving. This alignment between social-emotional needs and professional capacity became a cornerstone of our approach.

Rationale for the Collaborative Format

The collaborative space format is intentionally chosen because the work of building resilient, shared-leadership PLCs is inherently relational and context-dependent. Rather than delivering a static presentation, we aim to create a participatory environment where attendees can reflect on their own institutional conditions, compare experiences, and co-construct strategies tailored to their settings. Research on professional learning consistently shows that educators learn best through dialogue, modeling, and purposeful collaboration—conditions this format uniquely supports.

Moreover, our project emerged from two separate yet philosophically aligned sites, which allows us to offer dual perspectives on how common principles can be adapted to different contexts. A collaborative space enables participants to engage with this adaptability directly: analyzing tensions, identifying potential barriers, and generating solutions that reflect the complexity of their roles. Participants will not only learn from our experiences but also from one another, modeling the very conditions of shared leadership we aim to cultivate.

Intended Goals and Outcomes Participants will leave the collaborative space with:

1.A deeper understanding of how shared leadership, collective efficacy, and social-emotional research can inform the design of resilient PLCs. We will unpack the theoretical foundations that guided our redesigns, making these principles accessible and adaptable.

2.Practical tools and structures for fostering teacher agency and sustainable collaboration. These include strategies for building psychological safety, facilitating reflective dialogue, and developing cross-disciplinary partnerships.

3.An equity-centered framework for professional learning grounded in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Participants will explore how literacy-focused, universally accessible practices can unify teachers around shared instructional commitments.

4.Strategies for cultivating continuity and resilience in professional learning systems. Through discussing distributed leadership approaches, participants will identify ways to ensure that collaborative structures persist despite leadership changes, policy shifts, or fluctuating organizational conditions.

5.A personalized action plan aligned to their own institutional context. By the end of the session, attendees will articulate one or two concrete next steps for strengthening their professional learning ecosystems.

The collaborative space will be structured to balance reflection, discussion, and co-design:

1.Opening Provocation: “What Does Your PLC Make Possible?” (10 minutes) Participants reflect individually on their school’s current professional learning structures and identify both opportunities and constraints.

2.Mini-Framework: Shared Leadership + Maslow for Adults (15 minutes) We introduce the core theoretical principles guiding our redesigns, emphasizing how psychological safety, belonging, and distributed leadership shape teacher learning.

3.Dual Case Snapshots (15 minutes) We briefly present our two site-based models, highlighting similarities, contextual differences, and early impacts (e.g., literacy gains, cross-departmental collaboration, increased teacher confidence).

4.Collaborative Inquiry Groups (25 minutes) Participants form small groups to analyze their institutional contexts using a guided protocol. Prompts include: – What unmet “adult needs” are limiting instructional growth? – Where does shared leadership currently exist, and where could it be strengthened? – What silos might be disrupted through intentional design?

5.Design Sprint: Building a Resilient PLC Structure (20 minutes) Using templates provided, each group sketches a PLC redesign or enhancement tailored to their site, incorporating shared leadership, equity goals, literacy or disciplinary priorities, and sustainability strategies.

6.Collective Sharing + Next Steps (10 minutes) Participants share key insights, challenges, or innovations. Each attendee identifies one actionable step to implement upon return to their institution.

Target Audience:

•Academic developers focused on faculty learning and organizational capacity

•School or district leaders seeking sustainable professional learning models

•Teacher leaders and instructional coaches working to build collaborative staff cultures

•Higher education faculty engaged in educator preparation

•Anyone looking to strengthen collective agency, cross-disciplinary collaboration, or human-centered leadership within their institution

The session is particularly relevant for those navigating changing policies, staff turnover, or inconsistent professional learning systems—and for leaders seeking to cultivate resilient, equity-driven cultures capable of sustaining impact over time.

Posters 4

No need to reinvent the wheel. How to “transfer” good practices in Higher Education

Ivo van den Berk, Hovy Katrin

Abstract

Since 2011, large scale programs to foster Educational and Academic Development have existed in Germany (e.g., the Quality Pact for Teaching (QPL)). Nevertheless, the quality of teaching and learning is evolving slowly due to factors including the lack of structural professionalization – both of teaching stuff and their support systems (Jütte et al., 2017; Heublein et al., 2020,). A central but rarely addressed factor is the lack of systematically available knowledge on proven practices in Higer Education. This knowledge is often in hard-to-access formats without explicit quality assurance (Contributor 1, 2023; Schmid et al., 2020). As an answer, our national institution has developed a database, going online in spring 2026, based on a sociological knowledge approach, containing approximately 800 projects, several project-activities and -publications. Our goal is to make this database appealing to a broader audience, to incentivize contributions and to increase its discoverability in the Academic Development community. Not as an end in itself but to support competence development and facilitate the “transfer” of proven practices.

Therefore, this workshop focuses on community integration of the database, whose success depends on active use by contributors and recipients. During the workshop, participants will be introduced to the database, discuss use cases based on personas in small groups and reflect on how to apply the results. The benefit of participating in the workshop can consist of expanding one's own repertoire of actions for improving transfer and reflecting on one's own understanding of transfer.

Keywords: transfer, community, database, proven practices

Extended Summary

Since 2011, large scale programs to foster Educational and Academic Development have existed in Germany (e.g., QPL, the Funding programme of the Foundation for Innovation in Higher Education). Nevertheless, the quality of teaching and learning has improved only incrementally over the years. This is partly due to structural issues, such as the lack of professionalization among teaching staff and supporting institutions (Merkt et al., 2021; Jütte et al., 2017; Heublein et al., 2020). However, another key factor is rarely mentioned (e.g., Contributor 1, 2023): Knowledge about Educational and Academic Development is not centrally or systematically available, is rarely presented in easy-to-access formats or with clear quality assurance. As a result, actors in Educational and Academic Development find it difficult to access and use this knowledge (Contributor 1, 2023). As Schmid et al. (2020) note in their evaluation of the QPL initiative, this is especially true for knowledge generated through third party funded development projects. As a consequence, each new generation “reinvents the wheel”. One answer to this challenge we assumed that what could be missing was a widely accepted knowledge transfer management system – a readily accessible, high-quality database with reliable, empirically proven content. The goal of such a tool should be to enable educators, support and management staff at all levels to adopt proven solutions and replace outdated practices (Contributor 1, 2023). Similar initiatives exist in other countries (e.g., the Dutch NRO’s Teaching Knowledge Database).

In spring 2026, our national institution will launch a national database developed from a sociological knowledge perspective (Berger & Luckmann, 1969) and through scientific support and community involvement. The database will systematically present around 800 projects, publications, and measures. “Systematically” here means that measure descriptions follow a template and are categorized using a new and empirically validated system of categories (see other authors & Contributor 1, 2023). The measure descriptions provided by projects are understood as empirically derived findings and insights in the field of Higher Education, making implicit and experiential knowledge explicit (Neuweg, 2020).

The success of a database such as ours depends on its acceptance and use. Therefore, together with the experienced ICED community, we want to explore use cases, barriers, and success factors for its implementation in the Educational and Academic Development community in a workshop during the ICED 2026.

The workshop will focus on embedding the database in the community and increasing acceptance and use in a way that benefits all stakeholders in the joint enterprise of enhancing Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. In our perspective, the platform’s success depends on two groups of users, specifically, being contributors provide case material and good practice examples and searchers/recipients, using the database for knowledge building, for inspiration, and for adaption of good practices.

We see the willingness to provide content and the interest in this content as mutually dependent: Contributors only invest time and “fill” the database with their experiences if they perceive this as meaningful and as “added value” for

both themselves and the searchers; similarly, searchers will only use the database if they are convinced of the content's value for their own interests.

We invite workshop participants to think together about how to embed the platform in the community: How can we reach a larger group beyond those already invested? What are the requirements for the documentation of case material? What incentives are truly interesting for contributors? (see Krempkow et al., 2025)

Workshop Structure: The workshop hosts will present the database (20 min), explaining its basic functions and systematics. To critically address community embedding, already enacted or planned community activities will also be presented (see Henke, 2024). Participants will then work in small groups (50 min total): Each group will discuss the database and community formats from the perspective of an assigned persona (contributor, searcher etc.). They will challenge and refine the presented formats and develop a use case for their persona, either increasing interest in database content (searchers) or motivation to contribute (contributors). The working phase concludes with a plenary presentation of the use cases. In the final discussion (20 min), the focus is on the transferability of the results: What insights do participants take away for their own work? Can the personas and use cases be applied to their contexts?

Participant Benefits: We especially invite academic developers involved in the transfer or roll-out of good practices in Higher Education, as well as those who directly or indirectly develop university teaching. After the workshop, participants will be able to describe, critically discuss, and, if applicable, transfer the results to their own contexts. They will know measures to increase the acceptance and use of infrastructures, approaches to structuring (templates), and filtering large data sets (metadata). They will be familiar with our database as an example for a solution spanning the micro and the macro level and will have a repertoire of actions to contribute content to the community.

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Rating What Instructors Do: How Framing Impacts Bias in Student Feedback on Teaching

Claudia Cornejo Happel, Lauren Barbeau, Chad Rohrbacher

Abstract

The abstract should summarize the contents of the paper in short terms, i.e. 100-250 words. It must be a concise overview of the paper or poster, including its relevance to academic development or academic practice.

What happens when student evaluations focus on observable teaching behaviors rather than instructor characteristics? This poster shares findings from a study using the Critical Teaching Behaviors Midterm Feedback Instrument (CTB-MFI), a behavior-based feedback tool grounded in evidence-based instructional practices. We analyzed 967 midterm-feedback student responses from 27 faculty across diverse disciplines and institutions to examine whether framing questions around specific teaching actions can reduce expression of bias. Results revealed no significant gender differences in student ratings—a notable departure from prior research showing persistent gender bias in evaluations. Instead, instructor age and teaching experience were the strongest predictors of student feedback, with mid-career faculty receiving the highest ratings across all categories. Through visual data displays and opportunities for informal discussion, this poster highlights how framing of student evaluation of teaching questions can shape student responses and explores the promise of behaviorally anchored tools for producing fairer, more actionable feedback.

Keywords: Student evaluation of teaching, midterm student feedback, teaching effectiveness, teaching framework

Extended Summary

This research session shares findings from a multivariate analysis of student responses to a behaviorally anchored midterm feedback tool, the validated Critical Teaching Behaviors Midterm Feedback Instrument (CTB-MFI) (Cornejo Happel et al., 2024, Barbeau and Cornejo Happel, 2023). The research examined whether and how the design of student evaluation of teaching questions affects the expression of bias in student feedback. Specifically, it explored the following questions:

1. How do instructor characteristics (gender, teaching experience, age, and academic discipline) and contextual factors (institutional sector, instructors' perceived value of student feedback, and comfort level with soliciting feedback) interact to influence student evaluation responses?

2. To what extent does structuring student evaluation questions around concrete, observable teaching behaviors, compared to broad subjective judgments, reduce the expression of bias in student evaluations of teaching?

The poster session centers four key takeaways:

- Behaviorally anchored instruments offer more actionable and equitable insights that can support both formative feedback and faculty development.
- Framing evaluation questions around specific, observable behaviors may reduce the expression of gender bias in student evaluations.
- While prior research consistently identifies gender as a source of bias, this study found no statistically significant gender differences when behavior-based prompts were used.
- When using behavior-based prompts, instructor age and teaching experience, rather than gender, were the strongest predictors of student ratings, underscoring the importance of interpreting feedback within developmental and generational contexts.

The theoretical framework and/or methodological approach. This study is grounded in the Critical Teaching Behaviors (CTB) framework, which identifies observable, research-based instructional practices that support student learning and engagement (Barbeau & Cornejo Happel, 2023). The CTB framework served as the foundation for the development of the Critical Teaching Behaviors Midterm Feedback Instrument (CTB-MFI), a behaviorally anchored, validated survey tool used in this study (Cornejo Happel et al., 2024). Researchers conducted a multivariate analysis of 967 student responses to the CTB-MFI collected for 27 faculty member participants representing diverse disciplines and institutions. Unlike many existing studies that assess expression of bias in student feedback based on impressions or instructor traits, such as whether the instructor was “fair,” “caring,” or “challenging” (e.g., Boring et al., 2016; Buser et al., 2022, Kreitzer & Sweet-Cushman, 2021), this study focused on student ratings of specific, observable teaching practices, such as “The instructor shares course materials in a way that makes them easy to find and access.” The multivariate study design allowed us to investigate whether question framing influences the expression of bias in student feedback across multiple variables and to examine the relative impact of instructor demographics including gender, age, and teaching experience on student ratings.

Findings suggest that behaviorally focused evaluation questions may limit the influence of students’ implicit biases. In contrast to widely cited research that has found significant gender bias in student evaluations of teaching (e.g., Boring et al., 2016; MacNell et al., 2015), this study found that gender was not a statistically significant factor in student ratings across any of the five measured teaching domains: alignment, inclusion, engagement, assessment, and technology

integration. This outcome suggests that when students are prompted to assess specific instructional behaviors rather than subjective instructor characteristics, traditional patterns of gender bias may be attenuated. Instead, the most consistent differences in ratings were associated with instructor age and teaching experience. Mid-career faculty (ages 45–54 with 6–10 years of experience) received the highest ratings across all domains, while early-career and especially late-career faculty received lower scores.

This study contributes to ongoing efforts to improve the fairness and usefulness of student evaluations by examining how the framing of evaluation questions affects the expression of bias. Theoretically, it extends the literature on student evaluations of teaching by demonstrating that behavior-based instruments grounded in research-informed instructional frameworks, such as the Critical Teaching Behaviors (CTB), can shift rating patterns and reduce gender-based disparities. At the same time, findings reveal persistent differences related to age and teaching experience, emphasizing the need for student feedback to be interpreted within developmental and contextual frameworks. For educational developers and academic leaders, these results support the use of behaviorally anchored, formative tools to generate more equitable and more actionable insights for teaching improvement. At the policy level, this work encourages institutions to reconsider the design and use of SETs within a broader, holistic teaching evaluation system. Finally, future research should examine how behavior-based instruments function across different institutional types and student populations, and whether they produce sustained changes in instructional practice, faculty development, or student learning outcomes.

Tables, Images and equations format:

Table 1. MANOVA Significance Levels for Teaching Practices by Faculty

Teaching Practices	Age	Teaching Experience	Gender	Disciplinary Focus	Institutional Sector	Value	Comfort
AVGAL	p < .001*	p < .001*	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05
AVGIN	p < .001*	p < .001*	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05
AVGEN	p = .035*	p = .003*	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05
AVGAS	p = .024*	p < .001*	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05
AVGIT	p < .014*	p = 010*	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05	p > .05

Note. Align Behaviors (AVGAL), Include Behaviors (AVGIN), Engage Behaviors (AVGEN), Assess Behaviors (AVGAS), and Technology Integration Behaviors (AVGIT). Values represent significance levels from multivariate tests examining the relationship between faculty characteristics and student ratings across five teaching practice dimensions. Asterisks (*) indicate statistically significant relationships at $p \leq .05$.

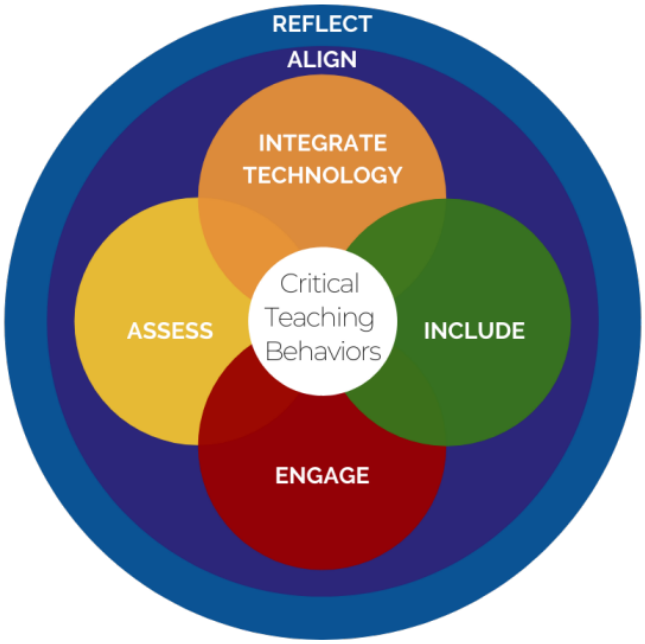


Figure 1. Critical Teaching Behaviors Diagram

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From compliance to organisational learning: How KU Leuven built a living quality culture

Niki Verschueren

Abstract

During the last two decades, the concept of quality culture has become increasingly prominent in the literature on higher education. Defined as an organisational climate that is self-critical and committed to continuous improvement, quality culture integrates human dynamics—such as shared values and trust—with managerial elements including visions, policies, and operational processes (EUA, 2006). Despite its relevance, the concept often remains abstract and difficult to translate into everyday practice.

This paper examines how structured reflection on quality culture can be used as a lever for institutional learning. KU Leuven outlined an approach and developed a reflection framework for mapping and strengthening quality culture in education (ICED 2022). Supported by tools such as a maturity-matrix and structured reflection guides, the approach was refined through in-depth interviews with 80 programmes. Since 2023, it has been implemented university-wide: Every programme committee, faculty and central body systematically reflects on their quality culture and translates insights into concrete action. This paper traces the pathway of our implementation and analyses the key enablers and challenges encountered throughout this process.

Based on feedback from the first implementation cycle, the approach effectively builds a common language and shared understanding of the educational context. Users report that working with a shared quality-culture canvas helps untangle and align priorities and resources, bridging the gap between daily teaching practice and policy making. Our work shows that when people can discuss how they work together, their agency in shaping education surfaces and strengthens their collective purpose.

Extended Summary

Introduction

Over the past two decades, higher education has shifted from compliance-driven quality assurance toward more holistic and context-sensitive understandings of quality (e.g., Bendermacher et al.,2017; Harvey & Stensaker, 2008). The concept of quality culture reflects this evolution by framing quality not as compliance with predefined standards but as a shared, continuous commitment to improving education. A quality culture integrates human dynamics—values, trust, shared ownership—with formal elements such as policies, processes, and resources (EUA, 2006).

Although widely appreciated in theory, quality culture often remains too abstract for institutions. Our work at KU Leuven aims to translate it into a hands-on approach that helps educational actors understand their context and supports meaningful improvements in how teaching and learning are organised.

Conceptual Framework and Instrumentation

Building on Sattler and Sonntag (2018), we developed an actionable and face-valid framework tailored to the KU Leuven context (first presented at ICED Aarhus, 2022). Our conceptual model highlights leadership, communication, and participation as connectors between the formal educational structures and everyday teaching practice. It is complemented by a maturity matrix that enables programmes to profile their current quality culture and identify steps toward becoming more mature and regenerative organisations (Verschueren et al., 2023).

Refined through interviews with eighty programmes, the approach now includes a concept map with descriptive indicators, reflection templates, discussion protocols, and guidance for mapping maturity profiles Our overall purpose is enhancing the understanding of educational contexts, installing a common language and canvas for dialogue and targeted action across functions within programmes, faculty, and institutional levels.

Pathway of implementation at KU Leuven

After the successful pilot described in Verschueren et al. (2023), we expanded the approach to eighty programmes across the university. During appreciative interview sessions, programme directors, lecturers, and support staff worked together to map out their existing quality culture (https://www.kuleuven.be/english/education/quality-assurance-portal/quality-culture). These conversations helped each programme identify what they do well, where they want to grow, and which actions could strengthen their educational practices.

Encouraged by positive user feedback, the framework was implemented university-wide in 2023. Since then, every programme committee, faculty, and central governance body engages in a structured reflection on their quality culture at least once every four years. For the first time at KU Leuven, this has created a shared “canvas” for understanding and discussing quality culture across all levels of the institution.

To make this possible, we trained facilitators, co-designed tools with internal stakeholders, and wove these reflection moments into existing governance cycles, such as programme reviews and faculty strategy processes. Our online learning community for educational developers plays a central role in connecting these efforts: it has become a space

where colleagues from across KU Leuven exchange insights and experiences. This shared learning environment taps into our collective knowledge and ensures that the approach remains flexible, well-supported, and sustainable.

Key Enablers and Challenges

Enablers, strong theoretical basis & executive support: A peer-reviewed publication co-authored by the Vice Rector established credibility and secured broad academic buy-in.

Iterative large-scale testing: Pilots and extensive testing created early positive experiences and a critical mass of with first-hand experience.

Inclusive co-creation: Involving programme directors, lecturers, support staff, and students in designing the tools and interviews fostered shared ownership, collective responsibility and a higher overall trust.

Challenges:

- Workload: Depending on faculty organisation, educational developers had varying amounts of time available to offer support.
- Resistance to change: Some initially viewed the reflection process as extra administration, but later recognised its value.
- Differences in maturity: Some programmes and faculties actively saw opportunities to strengthen their quality culture, while others preferred the status quo—shaping how much added value they perceived.

Reflection as Institutional Learning: Outcomes and Impact

Feedback from the first implementation shows that our structured-reflection approach is a powerful driver of institutional learning. It offered a safe, organised space for participants to examine their roles, relationships, and communication patterns. Many reported that the process helped them unpack complex issues, surface hidden assumptions, and better align systemic priorities—such as resources, policies, and governance—with everyday teaching and learning.

Consistent with recent literature (Kezar et al., 2024), our findings confirm that quality culture grows through dialogue, not compliance. Users at every organisational level described concrete improvements in how they organise education: faculties reshaped governance structures, programmes aligned evaluation policies with actual practice, and many participants experienced a renewed sense of shared purpose and responsibility.

Conclusion and Implications for Educational Developers

Our experience shows that structured reflection on quality culture can spark meaningful organisational learning. Giving people space to talk openly about how they work together builds awareness, share purpose, strengthens relationships, and supports constructive dialogue—even under pressure.

Educational developers play a key role in this process. They facilitate reflection, bridge the gap between policy and teaching practice, and help leaders level the playing field or ease tensions. By fostering dialogue, transparency, and trust, they lay the groundwork for a living, evolving quality culture.

At KU Leuven, we will continue to monitor the long-term impact, refine facilitation practices, and share lessons learned. We hope this work supports the wider shift in higher education from compliance-based assurance toward sustainable, agile, and context-sensitive approach to quality in education.

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From Strategy to Agency. Reimagining assessment and feedback for students learning

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Abstract

This paper reports on a research project conducted during the 2025–2026 academic year at the Faculty of Education of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain), aiming to map current assessment and feedback practices in university teaching and to explore students' perceptions of feedback effectiveness and their corresponding feedback uptake behaviours. The study is grounded in ongoing systemic transformations in higher education, characterized by post-pandemic shifts, the integration of artificial intelligence, and the expansion of active learning methodologies, all of which demand renewed approaches to assessment and feedback. Despite the recognized value of formative assessment as a driver of learning and self-regulation, evidence of its impact in specific institutional contexts remains limited.

To respond to these needs, a quantitative survey was administered to 292 students. The instrument explored three key dimensions: assessment strategies currently used, the perceived characteristics and usefulness of feedback practices, and students' uptake actions. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including means and frequency distributions for each dimension of the survey.

Results show a predominance of traditional assessment methods, while innovative and multimodal formats remain scarcely implemented. Feedback is perceived as constructive and formative, yet often infrequent and predominantly delivered at the end of tasks, limiting its potential to guide learning during the process. Students display a generally positive disposition toward using feedback but demonstrate limited proactivity in seeking or mobilizing it for long-term learning.

These findings underscore the need for assessment diversification, enhanced feedback quality and timeliness, and the promotion of a stronger feedback culture that empowers students as active agents in their learning.

Keywords: assessment, higher education, feedback, assessment uptake

Extended Summary

The aim of the paper/poster: In this paper, we present the findings of a research project conducted during the 2025–2026 academic year at the Faculty of Education of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. The aim is to map the assessment and feedback practices currently employed by academics and to explore students' perceptions of the most effective feedback strategies for learning, as well as their feedback uptake practices. The theoretical framework and/or methodological approach. Higher education is currently undergoing a period of profound transformation driven by multiple and interconnected challenges. Recent post-pandemic shifts, the rapid integration of artificial intelligence, emerging active learning methodologies such as challenge-based learning, require the rethinking of assessment and feedback practices (Grosseck, Ion & Sava, 2024). Additionally, increasing learner diversity necessitates inclusive approaches aligned with current curricular demands and wider societal expectations. Formative assessment has been widely recognized as a powerful driver of learning when accompanied by effective, evidence-informed feedback processes (Ion et al., 2023). However, solid data demonstrating the real impact of such practices in specific contexts remains limited, signaling the need for further applied research. To address the study objectives, we have designed a survey organized in the following dimensions: 1) current assessment practices, 2) the characteristics of feedback practices and 3) the students' feedback uptake. We have administered the survey to a sample of 292 students, with an average age of 25.4 years; 8% male, 88% female and 4% not answered.

Key findings: Students consider that traditional assessment methods predominate, such as development tests (M=4.37/6) and in-person oral presentations (M=4.33). Multiple-choice tests (M=3.67) and projects (M=3.65) are also common, but more innovative activities (posters, audio materials, infographics) have lower presence (M<2). Continuous assessment is the most frequent modality (M=5.09), ahead of individual and group assessment. Regarding the perception on feedback. Feedback is perceived primarily as constructive, individualized return with formative value, though several students consider it nonexistent or scarce. Received feedback mainly comes from faculty (M=3.89); self-assessment and automated evaluation have very low frequency (M=2.28 and 1.37, respectively). It is frequently received at the end of the task, almost never at the beginning. Feedback has a clear impact on identifying errors and immediate learning improvement (means 4.61 and 4.11), but less on transfer to new situations or deep content understanding (3.54 or lower). Students value its utility for self-regulation and task improvement but see its potential as a tool for long-term learning as limited. The most common actions related to the use of feedback are listening/reading comments attentively (M=5.00), considering the credibility of their source (M=4.78), and applying comments to new tasks (M=4.76). A reflective profile is observed, but there is little proactivity in requesting specific feedback (M=2.96) or seeking best practices (M=2.93). Disposition is good for receiving and constructively offering feedback, though autonomous strategies, such as saving comments or planning future use, are infrequent.

The theoretical and educational significance of the work, including implications for practice, policy, or future research:

Implication 1. Need for diversification in assessment: Assessment relies heavily on traditional methods such as written tests and oral presentations, while more innovative or multimodal activities are rarely used. This trend indicates an opportunity to diversify assessment formats to foster students engagement with learning, self-regulation and participation. Study programme and faculty should encourage the development and inclusion of more authentic and varied assessment types.

Implication 2: Enhancing feedback quality and uptake: Feedback is primarily seen as constructive and formative when present, but a substantial amount of students find it scarce or insufficient. There is a clear need to improve both the frequency and the personalization of feedback, ensuring it goes beyond assigning grades and provides actionable, timely, and motivating input for students at multiple stages of the learning process.

Implication 3: Promoting active engagement Most students are open to receiving and using feedback, yet show limited initiative in proactively seeking it or engaging in long-term use (e.g., retaining feedback, planning for future application). This highlights the value of fostering a feedback culture that empowers students to be more strategic, reflective, and self-regulated, through teaching and curriculum design that support peer feedback and self-assessment practices.

Implication 4: Academic development and assessment literacy Since faculty are the primary source of feedback, there is a corresponding need for staff development focused on feedback and more largely assessment literacy, including strategies to make feedback more timely, positive, specific, and linked to both success and error.

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Confronting the Long Shadow of Ableism: A Comparative Education and Higher Education Policy Analysis of Norway and Spain

Gagan Chhabra

Abstract

Globally, many governments have formulated education policies to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities, and combat disability-based discrimination within their education systems. Both Norway, a social-democratic welfare regime, and Spain, a conservative familial welfare regime, offer free and compulsory access to education for all students. Recently, both countries have formulated and implemented education policy reforms to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities. In 2024, the Norwegian government introduced a new education act. This legislation introduces new perspectives on inclusive language, individualized accommodation, and inclusive education. In a similar vein, in 2021, Spain introduced the Organic Law of Education. This legislation has put greater emphasis on themes such as equity, inclusion, and accessibility. This paper undertakes a qualitative comparative analysis to contrast the education policies across two diverse country-contexts. The paper will be informed by Mayring's qualitative content policy analysis to contrast the underlying discourse of disability-based discrimination, such as ableism. This study will be based on a comprehensive review of Norwegian and Spanish educational legislations, policy documents, white papers, and grey literature spanning two decades, from 2005 to 2025. The documents reviewed will be purposively sampled, and will cover themes related to ableism, inclusive language, accessibility, diversity, individualized accommodation, and inclusive education within the Norwegian and Spanish education systems. By critically employing qualitative content policy analysis on the selected policy documents, this paper will provide a culturally nuanced, context-specific, and contemporary understanding of the perspectives surrounding ableism and inclusion across both education systems.

Keywords: Comparative Education Policies, Ableism, Norway, Spain

Extended Summary

Globally, many governments have formulated education policies to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities, and combat disability-based discrimination within their education systems (EASNIE, 2024). Both Norway, a social-democratic welfare regime, and Spain, a conservative familial welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990), offer free and compulsory access to education for all students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, ability status, or other immutable characteristics. In recent years, both countries have formulated and implemented education policy reforms to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities (Haug, 2024; Alonso et al., 2018). In 2024, the Norwegian government introduced a new education act. This legislation introduces new perspectives on inclusive language, individualized accommodation, and inclusive education (Lovdata, 2024). This legislation is closely aligned with Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006) and builds on the legacy of the Salamanca Agreement (Haug, 2024). In a similar vein, in 2021, Spain introduced the Organic Law of Education. This legislation has put greater emphasis on themes such as equity, inclusion, and accessibility (BOE, 2020), that closely aligns with the European Commission guidelines and the 2030 Agenda Priorities (UN General Assembly, 2015). This paper undertakes a qualitative comparative analysis to contrast the education policies across two diverse country- contexts. This, in turn, will provide a better understanding of the framework around inclusive and special needs education within the Norwegian and Spanish education systems. The paper will be informed by Mayring's (2021) qualitative content policy analysis to contrast the underlying discourse of disability-based discrimination. This discrimination will be critically viewed through a theoretical lens of ableism that accentuates the prejudice and attitudinal barriers encountered by students with visible or invincible, physical or mental impairments (Nario-Redmond, 2019). This study will be based on a comprehensive review of Norwegian and Spanish educational legislations, policy documents, white papers, and grey literature spanning two decades, from 2005 to 2025. The documents reviewed will be purposively sampled, and will cover themes related to ableism, inclusive language, accessibility, diversity, individualized accommodation, inclusive education, and special needs education within the Norwegian and Spanish education systems. By critically employing qualitative content policy analysis on the selected policy documents, this paper will provide a culturally nuanced, context-specific, and contemporary understanding of the perspectives surrounding ableism and inclusion across both education systems. This paper will explore the phenomena of "funsjonssjåvinisme" and "funkofobi" in Norway by contrasting it with terms such as "discapacitado" and "minusválido" in Spain. The education policy reforms that have taken place in the two countries will be critically examined through a theoretical lens of ableism and contemporary welfare regime developments.

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Faculty Members and Conspiracy Theories: Responsibilities, Risks, and Strategies in Higher Education

Stefan T. Siegel, Eliane Troxler, Martin H. Daumiller

Abstract

Conspiracy theories (CTs) represent epistemically unwarranted set of beliefs that thrive on suspicion, self-sealing reasoning, and resistance to evidence. While most educational scholarship focuses on students' endorsement of CTs, the role of faculty members as potential disseminators of such beliefs remains underexplored. This paper addresses this neglected dimension, examining the paradox that highly educated faculty; entrusted with cultivating scientific literacy and critical thinking; may themselves propagate CTs within classrooms, on social media, or in broader public debates.

Drawing on a conceptual distinction between scientific and conspiratorial thinking, we present a heuristic model that displays predictors, consequences, and strategies related to faculty endorsement of CTs. We organize potential consequences across four levels of impact: students (loss of learning opportunities, weakened mental immunity), the academic community (erosion of professional standards and credibility), higher education institutions (reputational risks), and society (radicalization and harmful behavior). The paper concludes by proposing micro-, meso-, and macro-level strategies for prevention and intervention, ranging from prebunking and debunking in teaching to institutional policies balancing academic freedom with responsibility.

By integrating theory, illustrative cases, and practical strategies, the paper advances the debate on safeguarding higher education against misinformation while protecting academic integrity.

Keywords: Conspiracy theories, Faculty, Higher education, Critical thinking, Academic development

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper: The paper addresses the overlooked phenomenon of faculty members endorsing or disseminating conspiracy theories (CTs) within higher education. While prior research has predominantly examined student populations, we argue that faculty spreading CTs represents a particularly urgent and paradoxical challenge. Faculty are tasked with nurturing critical thinking, scientific reasoning, and academic integrity. When they propagate epistemically unwarranted beliefs, the consequences can extend from undermining students' intellectual development to eroding trust in higher education institutions and the academic community at large.

The paper develops a conceptual framework that:

1. Clarifies the distinction between scientific and conspiratorial thinking.
2. Synthesizes existing empirical and theoretical insights into the prevalence and causes of CTs (among faculty).
3. Maps the potential consequences of uncritical CT dissemination across multiple stakeholders.
4. Outlines strategies for prevention and intervention at individual, institutional, and systemic levels.

Theoretical Framework and Approach: The analysis is guided by three key lenses.

1. Demarcation between scientific and conspiratorial thinking: Drawing on Butter (2020), van der Linden (2023), and Popper's (1934), the paper delineates scientific theories as evidence-based, open to scrutiny, and falsifiable, while CTs rely on circular reasoning, distrust of institutions, and immunity to evidence (Bunge, 1982; Fasce, 2017).

2. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1992): This heuristic framework situates faculty engagement with CTs across micro (student–teacher interactions), meso (institutional and disciplinary contexts), and macro levels (societal discourses, academic norms).

3. Critical pedagogy and academic freedom: The paper balances the recognition of academic freedom with the responsibility of faculty to uphold standards of scholarly rigor, evidence, and non-indoctrination (Slavin, 2002; Tierney & Lechuga, 2010).

This conceptual approach integrates insights from psychology, education, and higher education studies to provide a multi-level analysis rather than empirical data.

Key Findings:

Prevalence and Causes:

- Surveys suggest 30–50% of general populations endorse at least one CT (Oliver & Wood, 2014; Jochen, 2020).
- Although systematic data on faculty are lacking, documented cases (e.g., Ganser, Andringa, Hayward) illustrate that academics across disciplines may publicly promote CTs.
- Factors include cognitive biases (e.g., confirmation bias, need for closure), psychosocial needs (e.g., alienation, desire for control), and professional contexts (e.g., social media platforms amplifying contrarian voices).

Consequences (Organized into four domains):

1. Students:
    - o Loss of valuable instructional time devoted to evidence-based theories.
    - o Impaired development of critical thinking and mental immunity against misinformation.
    - o Difficulty distinguishing credible from non-credible knowledge when trusted faculty present CTs.
2. Professional and Academic Community:
    - o Violation of teaching standards (indoctrination vs. plurality of perspectives).
    - o Erosion of credibility of research and scientific norms when faculty propagate unfounded claims.
3. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs):
    - o Reputational damage when CTs gain media attention, undermining public trust in universities.
4. Society at Large:
    - o Reinforcement of divisiveness, radicalization, and anti-democratic attitudes.
    - o Potentially harmful behaviors (e.g., resistance to vaccination, denial of climate change).

The paper proposes a multi-level response:

- Micro level (students, faculty):
    - o Encourage students to question and critically assess claims.
    - o Equip faculty with tools such as Sagan's (1997) "baloney detection kit."
    - o Promote awareness of biases and fallacies through professional development.
- Meso level (HEIs):
    - o Implement policies reviewing course content for evidence orientation.
    - o Provide continuous training in critical thinking and misinformation handling.
    - o Apply "prebunking" and "debunking" strategies (van der Linden, 2023; Lewandowsky et al., 2020).
- Macro level (academic communities, society):
    - o Strengthen norms linking academic freedom to scholarly responsibility.
    - o Foster collaboration across disciplines to research and address CT susceptibility.

Theoretical and Educational Significance: The paper advances academic development by addressing a neglected research gap: Faculty endorsement of CTs is rarely theorized, despite their pivotal role in shaping epistemic cultures. Additionally, it helps, proposes actionable strategies: The heuristic model offers practical entry points for interventions at individual, institutional, and policy levels. Furthermore, it may help balance academic freedom and responsibility: By conceptualizing academic freedom as contingent upon scholarly rigor, the paper contributes to debates on the ethical obligations of educators.

The implications span teaching practice (e.g., integrating prebunking into curricula), institutional policy (e.g., safeguarding reputation while respecting freedom of expression), and future research (e.g., systematic studies on faculty susceptibility to CTs).

In conclusion, faculty dissemination of CTs represents a paradox: those entrusted with fostering evidence-based thinking may inadvertently undermine it. This conceptual paper responds by providing a heuristic framework to understand the predictors, consequences, and strategies associated with faculty engagement in CTs. In doing so, it aims to stimulate dialogue, inform practice, and guide research within academic development. Ultimately, strengthening the mental immunity of both faculty and students is essential for safeguarding higher education against the corrosive effects of misinformation while upholding the values of openness, rigor, and responsibility.

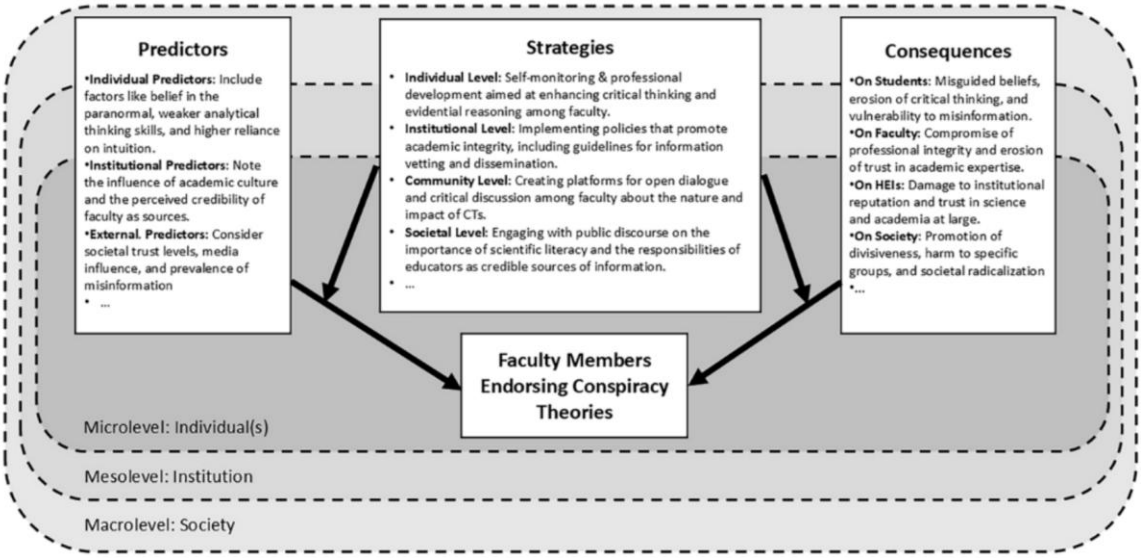


Fig. 1. Heuristic model of faculty members endorsing conspiracy theories: predictors, consequences, strategies, and implications (based on the design considerations for conceptual articles by Jaakola (2020), Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1992), etc.)

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Universitas: achieving a sustainable curricular transformation through collaborative reflection.

María Iserte, Lourdes Orejana, Guadalupe Pérez

Abstract

Engaging students, professors and academic leaders in transforming the curriculum requires models of institutional collaboration that go beyond the impositions prescribed at institutional (macro) level. The project Universitas: profesionales que suman, developed in the last five years, is defined as a process of improvement and in-depth revision of the training offered by our institution to its undergraduate students. In this participatory process, the promoters of the project are the Teaching Planning and Improvement Service (SPYMD), attached to the Vice-President's Office for Teaching, and the Core Curriculum Institute (ICC), which forms part of the Vice-President's Office for Students. They promote macro-level communication with the centres through their teaching committees (intermediate level), which include the advisory body to the centre's board of management for issues that affect teaching. Through these committees, spaces for reflection and dialogue have been created to define what it means to be good professionals in their specific field (professional identity). In addition, degree curricula have been mapped out to identify any inconsistencies between the expected professional identity and the curricula offered. Through this work, the learning outcomes of each degree have been redefined, as well as their learning model, based on deep reflection on how professors teach and how students learn in each discipline. In conclusion, Universitas values the involvement of actors at different institutional levels as an effective driving force to achieve a sustainable curricular transformation in which the University learns and transforms itself through reflection.

Extended Summary

The current context of higher education calls for a thorough review of how higher education institutions prepare their students and seek to produce not just competent technicians, but also well-rounded citizens. Curriculum renewal initiatives often face the challenge of effectively connecting the strategic vision of boards of management with the day-to-day practice of professors. The project Universitas: profesionales que suman was created at our institution in response to this challenge and framed within the Transformative Education area of the University's 2020-2025 strategic plan. The main goal is to harmoniously align institutional strategy with the reality of the classroom by facilitating active, shared participation of students, professors and academic leaders in the redesign of the curriculum. This project seeks to answer two fundamental questions: What does it mean to be a good professional in each degree programme? And How can we help students achieve this identity through formal and non-formal education? To do so, different actors at micro level were included in the dialogue to collectively outline the curriculum's learning outcomes by defining the professional identity of each degree programme and the methods used to achieve it, i.e. by specifying the learning model. Professional identity is thus kept from becoming an abstract or imposed concept. Instead, it is a roadmap based on the reflections of those involved in day-to-day teaching and learning processes.

The methodology adopted in Universitas is defined as a collaborative, multilevel action process.

- Macro level: (Institutional): Led by collaboration between the SPYMD and the ICC. This alliance unites and creates a synergy between specialized knowledge in the educational-technical area and the University's humanistic vision. Its role is not to impose, but to provide the different centres with tools, frameworks and advice.
- Intermediate level: (Teaching Committees): They are the project's operational drivers. In each faculty or school, these committees do not merely carry out instructions, but lead the internal reflection process. They are responsible for bringing micro-level actors (professors of specific subjects, coordinators, students and administrative and service staff members) into dialogue to jointly construct the professional identity and learning model, and ensure that change emerges from each discipline's specific characteristics.
- Micro level: The professors, students and administrative and service staff members involved in the teaching and learning processes act as co-creators of the educational strategy. Through spaces for reflection and dialogue, surveys and other participatory tools, they explicitly define the true professional identity of their degree programme, as well as the most appropriate learning model to achieve it.

After five years of development, the project has generated tangible results in both organizational structure and curriculum design. The main milestones, findings and products of this work include:

- Definition of professional identity: spaces for dialogue were established to define the ideal graduate profile. Each degree programme drew up a document with clear details of the identity of its graduates through traits (competences) that depend on being, knowing and knowing how to do. This made it possible to identify assessable features defined by the schools themselves.
- The sequence of learning: A mapping exercise was carried out to analyse current curricula in order to identify areas for improvement and ensure coherence between the desired professional identity and the actual curriculum provided.

- Specification of learning models: Details of the learning outcomes and training activities were prepared to ensure that each trait of professional identity was worked on and assessed at different levels of achievement throughout the curriculum.
- Personalized training: this process made it possible to identify specific teacher training needs for each degree programme. This resulted in tailor-made training and support plans for each school that were designed ad-hoc to help professors in each discipline.
- Cross-cutting traits: Despite disciplinary diversity, the process revealed a number of traits/competences that were common to all professional identities and also aligned with the institution's statement of core values.
- Coordination: it became clear that effective collaboration and integrated teaching were requirements of all the centres.

The project revitalizes the concept of Bildung (comprehensive education) at today's universities. In practice, it demonstrates that content acquisition, skills development and humanistic training are more strongly integrated when the academic actors themselves define the how and what through enriched dialogue. It also proposes an advanced model for teacher training. Traditionally, academic development in higher education has focused on providing generic courses. However, this project shows that training is more effective when it is contextualized. By working on the actual curriculum of their faculty, professors become more involved than in isolated training sessions. This also fosters an ecosystem of shared reflection. Key words: educational strategy, redesign of the curriculum, professional identity, shared reflection.

Building SoTL Agency in Norway Through a New National Journal: The Launch of NorSoTL and Its Format-Diverse Model

Mirey Alfarah, Anja Møgelvang Jacobsen, Camilla Bjelland, Robert Kordts, Kristine Ludvigsen

Abstract

The Norwegian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (NorSoTL) was established in 2025 as a national publication platform designed to strengthen SoTL capacity, visibility, and scholarly agency among university teachers and students in Norwegian and Scandinavian higher education. The journal serves as an academic development initiative by offering an accessible, peer-reviewed arena for disseminating systematic inquiry into teaching and learning practices, thereby contributing to evidence-informed pedagogical development and community knowledge exchange. A distinctive feature of NorSoTL is its format diversity, consisting of Inquiry Articles, Interactive Posters, Thinking Pieces, and Original Ideas, enabling participation from early-stage reflection to more mature research projects. Equally important is the journal's multilingual publishing policy, allowing authors to submit in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, or English. This approach lowers the threshold for scholarly publishing by enabling colleagues to write in familiar and comfortable settings using their native language, supports the development of national and regional SoTL dialog, and contributes to the expansion of Scandinavian-language pedagogical research. This poster presents the rationale behind NorSoTL, its format-diverse publishing model, and accessible entry routes work as strategic mechanisms to broaden participation and strengthen SoTL across Norway.

Keywords: Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, academic development, multilingual publishing, Norwegian higher education, SoTL capacity building

Extended Summary

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is increasingly recognised as a key mechanism for strengthening teaching quality and evidence-informed educational practice. In Norway, however, opportunities for publishing SoTL work have been limited and dispersed, often embedded in discipline-specific outlets and largely oriented toward experienced researchers. This has restricted visibility, participation, and the development of a shared national SoTL discourse, particularly for educators new to pedagogical inquiry or working primarily in Scandinavian languages.

The Norwegian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (NorSoTL), launched in 2025, was established to address this gap by creating a national, open access, peer-reviewed journal explicitly designed to support academic development. Rather than functioning solely as a dissemination channel, NorSoTL is intended to operate as a developmental infrastructure that enables educators to enter, sustain, and progress within SoTL practice. The aim of this poster is to present and critically describe how NorSoTL's format-diverse publication model, transparent review criteria, and multilingual publishing policy function together as strategic mechanisms for building scholarly agency and SoTL capacity in Norwegian higher education. By making these design choices visible, the poster invites dialogue about how scholarly publishing can be used intentionally as a tool for academic development in other national and institutional contexts. The theoretical framework and/or methodological approach The journal defines SoTL as systematic, inquiry-based work grounded in literature, ideally conducted in collaboration with students, and made public to contribute to a wider teaching commons. This emphasis places agency, professional identity, and knowledge-sharing at the core.

Agency in higher education concerns the capacity of educators to shape their practice, influence their environment, and contribute to meaningful change. Following Bandura, such agency is closely linked to self-efficacy, which develops through mastery experiences—successfully carrying out challenging tasks—and vicarious experiences—observing peers succeed (Bandura, 1997). Academic development initiatives that offer these experiences can therefore play a decisive role in enabling educators to act with greater confidence and impact.

We argue that NorSoTL can serve as such an initiative. Published collaboratively by two cross-institutional research groups, and supported by the Norwegian Educational Development Association, the journal is closely aligned with ongoing university pedagogy goals and activities in Norway. Through the process of designing, conducting, and publishing their SoTL work, contributors gain meaningful mastery experiences, while readers benefit from vicarious experiences as they encounter colleagues' approaches and successes across familiar contexts. This dual function strengthens educators' belief in their own capacity to engage in scholarly teaching and fosters broader participation in pedagogical inquiry.

By cultivating these complementary forms of experience, the journal becomes an important engine for academic development—supporting individual and collective agency and reinforcing a regional culture of evidence-informed teaching.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes:

- Format diversity as a developmental strategy: The early development of NorSoTL shows how a national journal can function as an academic development intervention rather than simply a publication outlet. Its format diverse model creates multiple, legitimate entry points into scholarly teaching and learning, allowing educators to engage at different stages of readiness. By accommodating work ranging from early reflection to systematic inquiry, the journal supports progression over time without positioning any single format as the normative endpoint.
- Transparent review as capacity building: This inclusivity is reinforced through a developmental review approach. For Inquiry Articles, review criteria emphasise clarity of purpose, engagement with relevant literature, coherence between questions, methods, and claims, and relevance for teaching and learning practice. Making these criteria explicit—and shareable as review rubrics—helps demystify scholarly expectations, supports author learning, and positions peer review as a formative process rather than a purely selective one.
- Multilingual publishing and scholarly agency: NorSoTL's multilingual policy further lowers barriers to participation by allowing authors to write in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, or English. Publishing in the language of teaching and reflection reduces cognitive load, supports confidence among first-time SoTL authors, and strengthens the legitimacy of pedagogical scholarship in Scandinavian languages. At the same time, it expands the availability of locally relevant educational literature and diversifies whose voices are represented in national SoTL conversations.
- Emerging outcomes: Early editorial experience suggests that the combination of format diversity, transparent review criteria, and linguistic accessibility attracts educators new to SoTL, encourages interdisciplinary exchange, and strengthens national networks around teaching and learning. While challenges remain—particularly in reviewer capacity and sustained developmental feedback—the journal provides a concrete model for how scholarly publishing can actively support academic agency and community building.

Even before publishing its first articles, the new journal has already begun to yield positive changes to the Norwegian SoTL landscape. The increasing interest in the journal, both by individual instructors and educational developers, indicates that our assumptions about the need for such an outlet journal were indeed founded.

In addition, and on a more general level, the work with creating NorSoTL illustrates how open-access journals can function as developmental interventions. First, our experience shows how a bottom-up, almost grassroot group at several higher-education institutions can create structural support for scholarly teaching. For instance, from the beginning of the work on, it has been crucial for us to see NorSoTL as a potential outlet for the SoTL projects that the participants in our educational development programs complete. Second, NorSoTL offers multiple publication opportunities, in addition to the more oral and potentially less valued publication outlets our institutions offer, such as teaching and learning conferences and the like. Third, NorSoTL strengthens identity and community, something we know is relevant for, e.g., building significant networks among instructors (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009, 2015). Fourth, through the variety in languages offered by the journal, we aim to make SoTL more accessible linguistically and culturally. NorSoTL will not only contribute to the national pedagogical literature, but also help to normalize "going written" as way of "going public" (e.g., Felten, 2013). As the journal evolves, further work will include building reviewer capacity, promotion, student co-authorship, and exploring collaborative special issues to stimulate thematic inquiry. Much of it is on its way, and we look forward to continuing to work with this initiative.

To conclude, NorSoTL represents a bottom-up, and at the same time, strategic effort to advance SoTL in Norway. Its format-diverse model and multilingual publishing policy work together to lower barriers, expand participation, and support the development of scholarly teaching. By providing an inclusive publishing arena, the journal contributes to stronger academic agency, richer Norwegian-language educational literature, and a more connected SoTL community. We would therefore like to encourage colleagues in other national contexts to share their experiences with similar initiatives and get into deeper conversation about how to advance SoTL worldwide.

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Strategies for Integrating Mediation Instruction into Czech Law Faculties

Lenka Holá, Kateřina Macigová

Abstract:

This paper focuses on the implementation of mediation curricula at Czech law faculties through innovative teaching methods that foster creative thinking, student autonomy, and organizational transformation. A key element is the inclusion of international cooperation with New York University School of Law, which serves as an inspiration for mediation-teaching models and joint academic activities. The paper introduces shared experiences, a collaborative teaching project, and the exchange of know-how that collectively enhance the quality and relevance of mediation education.

The text further elaborates on the concept of the university's third mission, namely its active engagement in addressing societal challenges through the operation of a Mediation Clinic. In this context, the university functions not only as an educational institution but also as a facilitator of dialogue and dispute resolution within the community and professional practice. The paper demonstrates how this approach broadens the impact of academic development and supports sustainable transformation processes within the faculty and the wider society.

Using the service-learning method, academic instruction is linked with voluntary community service, through which students acquire knowledge and skills by assisting community members in resolving conflicts while simultaneously reflecting on their experience. This supports participatory learning and creatively engages students in building competencies essential for modern legal practice. The integration of these elements illustrates the alignment of the curriculum with institutional and systemic objectives, including sustainable organizational learning.

Key words: Curriculum, mediation, third mission of the university, service-learning

Extended Summary:

The conceptual foundation for introducing mediation education at Czech law faculties lies in the 1development of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods within the field of law as an important instrument for ensuring access to justice, promoting social justice, and supporting restorative justice. A current objective of the European Union is to promote a more coherent framework for the application of mediation within judicial practice across the Member States. In this regard, Article 4(2) of the Mediation Directive obliges Member States to encourage both 2initial and ongoing professional training in mediation in order to ensure that parties are provided with effective and high-quality mediation services.

This framework highlights a strong need for the structured organization of mediation and its coherent systemic integration. Within the category of non-legislative measures, the introduction of mediation education programmes at higher education institutions is essential. European universities—particularly law faculties—have responded to the trend toward the legitimized use of mediation by introducing ADR-related courses and subsequently establishing Mediation Centres. Such centres may be understood as hubs of academic development aimed at the institutional integration of mediation teaching, research, and practice into law curricula at law faculties.

The paper focuses on three key areas in the implementation of mediation education at Czech law faculties:

(1) implementation strategy and international cooperation;

(2) innovative teaching methods; and (3) the university's third mission. These areas are examined through the example of the Faculty of Law, Palacký University Olomouc.

A key element of the implementation strategy was the inclusion of international cooperation with New York University School of Law, which served as an inspiration for models of mediation instruction and partner-based academic activities. The paper presents shared experiences, a joint teaching project involving the direct participation of doctoral students from the Faculty of Law, New York University, in the instruction of students at the Faculty of Law in Olomouc, as well as the exchange of know-how that contributed to the design of the curriculum for the newly introduced course Mediation Clinic.

For the purposes of this paper, the terms "mediation education", "mediation instruction", and "mediation curricula" are used interchangeably to refer to structured forms of academic education in mediation within legal education.

Directive 2008/52/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on certain aspects of mediation in civil and commercial matters. Hereinafter referred to as the „Mediation Directive".

According to studies conducted by the European Commission in 2013 and reiterated in 2016, the majority of Member States (17) require mediator training by law, i.e. beyond the minimum requirements laid down in the Directive. Some countries also impose an obligation of further professional training.

See Study for an Evaluation and Implementation of Directive 2008/52/EC – the "Mediation Directive", Final Report. Available at:///C:/Users/Mytlamaus/Downloads/DS0216335ENN_002.pdf

Original version: 17/10/2013 Updated version: 16/3/2016

The term “Mediation Centre” is used here in a general sense to denote the thematic focus of such centres. The specific titles of individual university-based centres vary depending on their conceptual approach, ranging from a broader orientation toward conflict resolution to a narrower focus on mediation and other ADR methods.

A further strategic step in the implementation of the mediation curriculum was the application of innovative teaching methods that support creative thinking, student autonomy, and organizational transformation. An open and flexible curriculum model was employed, characterized by the absence of directive elements; learning objectives emerged inductively through students’ interaction with prepared learning situations, the instructor, and the course objectives. The use of creative-thinking methods strengthened students’ ability to actively engage in the educational process as its co-creators (student agency), particularly through divergent thinking and innovative approaches to problem-solving. In the context of mediation education, creativity fosters the generation of alternative solutions and reflective decision-making, which corresponds to the requirements of complex academic learning. The development of creative thinking thus enhances students’ capacity to exercise their own professional agency in an environment of evolving legal—and broader professional—practice.

At the same time, this approach contributes to organizational transformation, understood as systematic changes in the faculty’s structure, culture, and pedagogical practices in response to new educational priorities. The integration of mediation into the law curriculum represents an 8example of so-called double-loop learning, as it transforms not only teaching methods but also the underlying value framework of legal education at the faculty.

The concept of the university’s third mission is fulfilled through active engagement in addressing societal challenges by means of the Mediation Clinic, which functions as a facilitator of dialogue and amicable dispute resolution within the community. The paper demonstrates how the university promotes the public good through knowledge transfer, community engagement, and service activities that extend beyond the traditional domains of teaching and research.

Through the application of the service-learning method, academic education is connected with voluntary community service, in which students address real-life conflicts and reflect on their mediation experience. In this way, theory is effectively linked with practice, and students’ work has a direct impact on both individuals and the community.

Particular attention is paid to the activating form of learning, in which students—supported by the instructor, a supervisor, and the course guarantor of the Mediation Clinic—plan, implement, and evaluate their mediation processes. This approach develops competencies in teamwork, responsibility, communication, and problem-solving. A key element is the continuous reflection on students’ procedures, conducted individually, collaboratively among peers, and in dialogue with the instructor.

By fostering student autonomy and creativity, with due regard to both community needs and students’ own educational objectives, the programme contributes to the development of civic responsibility. Through close cooperation with academic staff, students thus actively participate in the dynamic shaping of the system of higher education at the Faculty of Law, Palacký University Olomouc. Student interest in the course and its format has been steadily increasing and currently exceeds the teaching and institutional capacity of the faculty by approximately threefold.

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Posters 5

GENIAL: Cultivating Agency through a Transnational Academic Development Network

Mascha Gemein, Antonia Levy, Beate Brunow, Martina Rosenberg

Abstract

This poster presents the German-English Network for Instruction and Academic Learning (GENIAL), an emerging transnational network of 25+ educational developers who meet virtually to bridge German-speaking and Anglophone educational development communities. Founded in 2024, our network demonstrates how bilingual professional networks amplify epistemic and professional agency—our capacity to shape knowledge production and influence practices across borders. Through comparative discourse analysis, collaborative exploration of scholarship, and profession-specific language development, members actively shape scholarship by connecting communities that rarely interact. GENIAL has fostered its members' professional agency by increasing proficiency in profession-specific German, gaining familiarity with the German-language discourse, and extending personal connections and outreach within and between German-speaking and anglophone countries. The translanguaging experience also supports the cultivation of trust and belonging. The network also improved epistemic agency as a space for exploration across discourses and co-constructing cross-system knowledge. Aligning with Sub-theme 1, "Agency and Knowledge: Advancing Epistemologies, Innovation and Scholarship," this poster shares our approach, challenges, and outcomes to spark conversation about leveraging linguistic diversity as a resource for professional agency. We particularly welcome dialogue with colleagues interested in transnational, cross-system networks. How might intentional multilingual networks promote agency and transform academic development in your context?

Keywords: Multilingual epistemic agency, Transnational communities of practice, Professional identity development, Scholarship of academic development

Extended Summary

Aim: This poster presents the German-English Network for Instruction and Academic Learning (GENIAL) as a case study in how transnational networks amplify educational developers' professional and epistemic agency. The initiative emerged from recognition that individual positionality, linguistic identity, and transnational professional relationships are underexplored resources for enhancing educational developers' agency as change agents and knowledge creators. Language barriers between German-speaking and Anglophone communities create "epistemic silos" that restrict knowledge circulation and limit educational developers' capacity to influence their field transnationally. [NETWORK NAME] addresses this gap by fostering bilingual professional development and transnational collaboration.

History: Founded in January 2024 by German-speaking educational developers working at North American universities, our network has grown from an affinity group into a bilingual transatlantic network of 25+ educational developers, teaching and learning center professionals, and writing center experts. Members develop profession-specific German language competency, engage with German-language educational development discourse, and build collaborative relationships across national boundaries. The group has intentionally resisted formal affiliation with established national networks to preserve its distinctive focus on individual motivation, linguistic identity, and cross-system dialogue.

Iterative Program Design: As a practitioner-oriented initiative, we employ discourse inquiry and reflective practice informed by principles of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) and multilingual professional identity development. Based on member feedback and evolving needs, programming has expanded from language practice to systematic comparison of professional approaches, institutional integration models, and educational development discourse.

Network Development and Structure: An annual leadership team plans virtual meetings serving different purposes: affinity group gatherings for community-building, reading-based discussions comparing discourse across languages, and professional exchange meetings with European representatives. Meetings predominantly use German to align with North American members' learning goals and optimize the inclusion of European colleagues.

Challenges: Our experience reveals important challenges in building transnational networks: navigating differences in professional approaches and institutional integration across cultural contexts; reaching German colleagues whose professional self-identification differs due to variations in job security and career longevity; and managing the vulnerability accompanying translanguaging when members experience linguistic limitations. In addition, as an emerging network, we only have informal leadership, no budget, and no online presence yet. These challenges themselves provide learning opportunities about how language, positionality, and institutional context shape educational developers' agency, networking options, and professional identity formation.

Outcomes

Over its first two years, our network has demonstrated measurable outcomes related to multiple dimensions of professional and epistemic agency:

- Professional Agency: Many North American members have increased proficiency in profession-specific German, gained familiarity with the educational development discourse in German-language sources, and leveraged the network to enhance personal connections and outreach within Europe. Members connect on both professional and personal levels as educational developers, German speakers, and individuals often holding dual national identities. The network addresses isolation experienced by educational developers working across cultural and linguistic contexts, with members reporting that interactions provide joy and contribute to personal well-being. This affective dimension strengthens professional resilience and sustains engagement with the field. The translanguaging experience requires vulnerability and supports the cultivation of trust and belonging as members navigate professional identity across linguistic boundaries.
- Epistemic Agency: The network has become a space for collaborative exploration of the Scholarship of Academic Development and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, including comparative transnational articles that illuminate how educational development practices are shaped by national, linguistic, and institutional contexts. Members co-construct understanding rather than simply consuming existing knowledge.

Significance: Our network demonstrates how educational developers can exercise agency at systemic levels by bridging higher education systems and facilitating international knowledge circulation. Theoretically, the network contributes to understanding how transnational, multilingual communities enable educational developers to become knowledge producers who actively shape scholarship by connecting discourse communities that rarely interact. By prioritizing affinity, individual motivation, and linguistic identity over formal institutional affiliation, we offer an alternative model for professional community-building that effectively serves educational developers working across borders. This work directly addresses ICED 2026's central theme of agency in academic development, particularly Sub-theme 1's focus on advancing epistemologies, innovation, and scholarship through interdisciplinary communities of practice and networks.

The network model offers transferable insights: strategies for building transnational professional networks, approaches to leveraging linguistic diversity, and evidence that intentional community-building enhances professional and epistemic agency. As academic development increasingly recognizes the value of international collaboration, our network's experience provides both inspiration and practical guidance for similar initiatives across languages, regions, or professional contexts.

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Transnational Communities Supporting Academic Development: The Case of the Eurolecturer Academy

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Abstract

This paper examines how the ECTN Eurolecturer Academy (ELA) builds and sustains transnational communities of practice that function as strategic drivers of academic development in higher education. Operating within the European Chemistry Thematic Network, ELA connects chemistry lecturers and educational developers (Brouwer et al., 2022). Drawing on document analysis of ELA newsletters (2024–2025) and web materials, the study explores how international collaboration supports institutional transformation and enhances the agency of academic staff engaged in teaching enhancement. The analysis is informed by theories of transnational academic development, communities of practice, and organisational learning. These frameworks help explain how ELA facilitates collective knowledge building, cross-institutional reflection, and double-loop learning that contribute to sustainable improvements in STEM teaching and learning. ELA's activities—including international webinar series and immersive summer schools held in Aveiro (2023) and Palermo (2024)—provide opportunities for educators from Europe and other continents to exchange practices, design courses collaboratively, and integrate active learning and innovative assessment approaches. Graduates of the summer schools become CPD Ambassadors who disseminate new practices within their home institutions, creating cascading networks of local and international impact. The findings show that ELA strengthens both individual and institutional capacity, aligns local initiatives with broader European priorities. Brouwer, N., Maciejowska, I., McDonnell, C., Niemelä, M. E., Pirok, B. W. J., Grecea, Ş., Femoni, C., Ortiz-Bustos, J., Byers, W., & Wasser, I. (2022). Creating a common ground for professional development of university chemistry (STEM) lecturers in Europe. Education Policy, Management and Quality, 14(1), 45–57. https://doi.org/10.48127/spvk-epmq/22.14.45

Extended Summary

This paper examines how the ECTN Eurolecturer Academy (ELA) strengthens international collaboration and builds transnational communities of practice that act as strategic drivers of academic development in higher education. The analysis focuses on how ELA supports institutional transformation, enhances agency among academic developers, and contributes to sustainable improvements in teaching and learning through shared European activities in continuous professional development (CPD) of chemistry lecturers.

The Eurolecturer Academy operates within the European Chemistry Thematic Network (ECTN), a long-standing European organisation that brings together faculties of chemistry, national chemical societies, and industrial partners. ECTN aims to foster cross-border collaboration in chemistry education, promote innovative approaches to learning and teaching, develop and certify competencies, and provide a European framework for chemistry degrees at all three cycles. Within this structure, ELA serves as a specialised platform for professional development in higher STEM education (Brouwer et al., 2022). Its members are predominantly university chemistry lecturers, while the leadership consists of individuals who combine expertise in chemistry teaching with substantial experience as educational developers.

The study is grounded in three theoretical perspectives. First, the notion of transnational academic development highlights the importance of learning from diverse educational systems and engaging in cross-institutional collaboration to build sustainable, strategic approaches to teaching enhancement. Second, drawing on Wenger's theory of communities of practice, ELA is conceptualised as a mature international learning community where shared practice, joint activities, and sustained interaction lead to the development of a collective professional identity. Third, theories of organisational learning (Argyris & Schön; Senge) provide a framework for understanding how networks such as ELA enable multi-institutional reflection, double-loop learning, and the circulation of knowledge that supports institutional change.

The methodological approach is a document-based case study drawing on ELA newsletters from 2024–2025 and materials from the ECTN/ELA website as well as personal experience. These documents offer insight into the structure of ELA's international activities, patterns of collaboration, and the strategic outcomes of its initiatives.

Analysis of these materials shows that ELA creates a dynamic transnational community of practice for academic development. Regular online events—such as international webinar series on active learning, digital tools for laboratory teaching, questioning techniques, collaborative pedagogies such as POGIL and SCALE-UP, assessment strategies, and the use of AI in STEM education—bring together educators from Europe, North America, Africa, and Australia. These encounters facilitate exchange of ideas that would not emerge within a single national or institutional context, and they demonstrate how distributed professional networks can promote the diffusion of innovative teaching practices.

In addition to online activities, the ELA Summer Schools have been central to building a shared European culture of teaching and learning. The CPD-focused summer schools held in Aveiro (2023) and Palermo (2024) illustrate how immersive, international programmes can support the development of educational leadership. Participants attend intensive training that combines active-learning methodologies with hands-on course design and implementation

projects. After completing the programme, participants receive the title of CPD Ambassador, reflecting a commitment to advancing teaching quality and mentoring colleagues at their home institutions. The model is transnational not only in delivery but also in outcome: alumni create local initiatives that are later shared internationally, forming a cascading system of mutual learning and capacity building.

The newsletters confirm that ELA strengthens individual agency and institutional strategies simultaneously. Participants report that involvement in ELA activities enables them to redesign courses, introduce active learning techniques, and promote new assessment practices. Importantly, these changes are presented within the broader context of European educational priorities, helping institutions align their local strategies with wider developments in STEM education. The visibility of international examples and the legitimacy gained from participating in a recognised European network give educators stronger leverage when advocating for pedagogical innovation at their universities.

ELA also acts as a bridge between institutional policies and European expectations concerning the quality of teaching and learning. By maintaining a clear focus on CPD, active learning, sustainability, and the future of assessment, ELA supports institutions in aligning their educational strategies with key frameworks such as the Bologna Process, ESG 2015, and long-term goals for the European Higher Education Area. In this sense, the network facilitates organisational learning beyond borders, helping institutions position themselves within a shared European discourse on education.

The significance of this analysis is twofold. Theoretically, it demonstrates how international communities of practice contribute to academic development by creating space for shared reflection, experimentation, and exchange. It also shows how transnational networks encourage double-loop learning, where participants critically reassess underlying assumptions about teaching and curriculum design. Practically, the ELA model offers a scalable approach to enhancing teaching quality, particularly in countries where local CPD systems are fragmented or underdeveloped. Participation in an international learning community provides educators with access to expertise, tools, and professional recognition that may not be available locally.

Taken together, the activities of the ECTN Eurolecturer Academy illustrate how strategically structured international collaboration can empower educators, support institutional transformation, and strengthen European cohesion in higher education teaching and learning. ELA serves as a compelling example of how transnational communities of practice can act as catalysts for pedagogical innovation, demonstrating that sustainable academic development increasingly requires collaboration that transcends national boundaries.

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Advancing Recognition Collectively: Interinstitutional Development of the EPIC Teaching Framework

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Abstract

In Portugal, academic career pathways have traditionally prioritised research over teaching, limiting the recognition of pedagogical development and constraining sustained investment in teaching quality and student learning. This imbalance has contributed to weak incentives for academic engagement with teaching enhancement and to ongoing challenges in staff development. Although professional frameworks for teaching recognition have expanded across parts of the European Higher Education Area, adoption remains uneven, and Portugal has until recently lacked a nationally articulated framework for teaching competence. A significant transformation is now underway, catalysed by unprecedented national investment in 2024 through the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Plan. This investment has led most Portuguese higher education institutions to organise into seven interinstitutional consortia focused on teaching excellence, alongside the establishment of the National Council for Innovation in Higher Education (CNIPES). Together, these developments create a unique opportunity for systemic change and for advancing parity of esteem between teaching and research. Within this context, the EPIC consortium, comprising six university and polytechnic institutions, is developing a shared framework for teaching competence applicable across both subsystems. The framework has been developed through an interinstitutional benchmarking and consensus-building process and is informed by international reference models while adapted to national contexts. Conceptually, it is organised around expanding spheres of impact, framing teaching development as a progressive widening of influence from classroom practice to broader institutional engagement. This poster presents the framework's development process and early outcomes, illustrating how coordinated collaboration can strengthen teaching recognition and support cultural change in higher education.

Keywords: teaching recognition, academic development, teaching competence frameworks, interinstitutional collaboration, parity of esteem.

Extended Summary

The challenges associated with attracting academics to careers in higher education are increasingly pronounced, as the appeal of academic positions seems to be diminishing. Current academics recognize an imbalance in incentives that generally favors engagement in research over the development of teaching, learning, and student support. A significant challenge lies in the insufficient incentives for academics to enhance their teaching capabilities. Recent survey findings highlight that the lack of formal recognition for learning and teaching-related activities serves as a structural impediment to effective staff development. When teaching contributions are undervalued or inadequately acknowledged within institutional reward structures, academic staff lack the motivation to invest the time and effort necessary for enhancing their pedagogical practices. Over time, this dynamic fosters a culture where pedagogical development is viewed as peripheral rather than integral to academic work, limiting institutions' capacity for sustained improvement in teaching and learning quality. Consequently, this creates a self-reinforcing cycle in which teaching, despite being rhetorically positioned as a core institutional mission, struggles to attain strategic prioritization and long-term engagement.

Professional frameworks for teaching recognition play a critical role in rendering pedagogical work visible, providing structured and credible criteria for recognition, and enabling alignment between institutional practices and external systems. The 2024 edition of the European Universities Association "Trends" report (REF) indicates a gradual but uneven expansion of formal teaching competence frameworks in the European Higher Education Area, with about 31 percent of institutions utilizing these frameworks for academic staff development. While this represents a minority overall, some countries show significantly higher implementation (for example, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Ireland).

Countries have developed contextually adapted teaching frameworks to consider their national realities, as context is crucial for effective implementation. For instance, Swedish institutions adhere to guidelines established by their national university association, while German professionals have defined specific competence profiles for teaching roles. These developments underscore the necessity for nuanced interpretations of the adoption and impact of these frameworks. This is particularly important for countries still considering or in the process of developing their own frameworks.

In Portugal, academic career structures place comparatively more esteem for research success than for teaching and learning, which has historically limited opportunities for pedagogical recognition and constrained the professional development of educators related to teaching. Today, Portugal currently lacks a nationally articulated framework for the recognition and development of teaching competence in higher education.

Recent developments in Portugal, triggered by unprecedented national investment in 2024 through the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Plan, have led most higher education institutions to form seven interinstitutional consortia focused on teaching excellence. The establishment of the National Council for Innovation in Higher Education (CNIPES) has created a unique opportunity for systemic transformation. Currently, both the consortia and CNIPES recognize the need for teaching to be acknowledged as a scholarly, evidence-based practice deserving equal esteem with research in academic careers. EPIC, one of these consortia, comprises six institutions from the two national sub-systems: polytechnic and university. EPIC is undertaking a pioneering initiative to develop a comprehensive framework for teaching competence applicable across both subsystems, ensuring sectoral representation and enhancing the framework's perceived legitimacy.

The consensus exercise to develop a framework was conducted through a focus group coordinated by the consortium lead comprising panelists from each institution (one or two representatives for institution). To identify national frameworks as a basis for the exercise, members were invited to search and suggest frameworks, while the coordinator consulted colleagues involved in similar initiatives, yelding twenty one frameworks from around the world. The group agreed that all documents should be reviewed by four different panel members in the first stage, followed by a meeting to discuss the results. After collecting this information, a second meeting determined the two highest-scoring frameworks: the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) and Advancing Teaching. In a third meeting, the panel discussed the benefits and challenges of these frameworks for developing a framework for Portugal, leading to the identification of the "Career Framework for the Advancement of Teaching" as particularly promising. The group then collaboratively developed and refined a draft proposal through ongoing dialogue and thematic synthesis. Central to the selected framework is a shared conceptual architecture organised around expanding spheres of impact, which frame teaching development as a progressive widening of influence from classroom practice to institutional, national, and international engagement. This model moves beyond classroom-bound conceptions of teaching by making visible the diverse ways in which pedagogical expertise generates value within and beyond institutions. Within this architecture, the framework can potentially function simultaneously as a recognition mechanism, a developmental guide for scholarly teaching, an institutional alignment tool, and an emerging national reference point. The resulting framework reflects the collaborative interinstitutional effort and has now been submitted to the deans of each partner institution for feedback and revision.

This communication outlines the framework's development process and early outcomes, highlighting the coordinated agency, strategic alignment and interinstitutional collaboration by foregrounding both enablers and challenges, thereby it offers insights for academic developers and policymakers seeking to advance the recognition of teaching across institutional and systemic levels. In doing so, the framework contributes to strengthening institutional capacity for reflective teaching development and supports more coherent, evidence-informed approaches to recognising pedagogical work. It also offers a basis for dialogue between institutions and national bodies on the long-term integration of teaching recognition within academic cultures and policy frameworks.

Building a Faculty Learning Community in a new interdisciplinary MSc-programme in Biosolutions

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Abstract

How can academic developers, the Head of Study and teachers collaborate and support the didactic development of a new interdisciplinary, international and practice-integrated MSc-programme, Biosolutions, through the process of establishing a Faculty Learning Community? What change strategies should be taken into consideration? In this poster, we describe and debate how a Faculty Learning Community has been initiated through an iterative, circular process where teaching principles have been formulated and revised. This has been carried out through ongoing experiences from the teaching shared with colleagues in structured formats during common meetings every second month and through working in trios with peer mentoring as a part of problem sharing and problem solving. The teaching principles form the basis for the teachers' reflections on creating coherence between learning activities, learning objectives and assessment in addition to the curricular content of the individual courses in the programme – and how elements such as international and different disciplinary backgrounds along with practice integration play a role in the students' learning. We look at the challenges and opportunities applying a model of strategies developed for academic and educational development. In particular, we are interested in how we can address commitment over compliance and navigate the complexity of academic development.

Keywords: Faculty Learning Community (FLC), interdisciplinarity, peer mentoring, collaboration

Extended summary

What strategies and options do change agents, i.e. academic developers and Head of Study have and can make use of in academic and educational development? (Moving Beyond Peer Review of Teaching: A Conceptual Framework for Collegial Faculty Development, Review of Educational Research April 2021, Vol. 91, No. 2, pp. 237–27)

We describe and debate with you the complexity of supporting the teachers of a new interdisciplinary, international and practice-integrated MSc-programme, Biosolutions, in establishing a Faculty Learning Community (FLC). We operate within an externally funded three-year project on developing an interdisciplinary MSc-programme. In this project, the formulation and development of teaching principles and the establishment of an FLC is a delivery. The argument for working with FLC is that it promotes more sustainable pedagogical change (Tinnell, T.L., Ralston, P.A.S., Tretter, T.R. et al. Sustaining pedagogical change via faculty learning community. IJ STEM Ed 6, 26 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-019-0180-5)

In the present teaching principles, there is a particular focus on integrating methods from both discipline-based natural sciences and engineering didactics. The formulating and continuous revising of these principles becomes a part of the foundation for the FLC. In structured meetings, we aim to build a common understanding of shared values, i.e. teaching principles, so that the teachers and Head of Study in collaboration and through reflective dialogues can make the ground for a deprivatized teaching practice. This work implies trust that is hopefully created through two types of meetings where everyone shares experiences in a well-structured manner. To build trust in a new faculty group, the design of the meetings is carefully thought through, e.g. roles are fixed, rules for dialogue are set up to be respectful, and appreciative and power relations are intended to be diminished.

We define a FLC as a group of teachers who have:

- Shared values. The FLC is based on shared values and a shared understanding of the learning goals of the MSc-programme. The shared values take form as teaching principles in this concrete case.
- Deprivatisation of practice, i.e. making teaching visible to each other and inviting colleagues into the teaching by sharing experiences, reflections, or by observing each other's teaching.
- Collaboration about developing teaching together based on mutual commitment.
- Reflective dialogues i.e. talking in a structured and reflective way, focusing together on sharing experiences and reflections.
- Focus on student learning, working systematically with a focus on student learning.

The five core pillars above should be supported by time, context, decision making-authority and resources. The foundation is a prerequisite for the FLC to develop. (Inspired by Albrechtsen, T. and translated from https://viden.via.dk/evu/de-fem-soejler) Our facilitation of the establishment of the FLC is centered around two types of formal meetings: Joint meetings every second month where all teachers of the entire programme are invited and peer mentoring meetings in trios for the group of teachers who teach the current semester courses (see models). Besides these meeting formats, informal meetings might take place between teachers either within the same course, semester or across the programme. We do not facilitate the latter.

In the joint meetings, teachers share experiences from teaching and discuss common challenges across courses. Topics are teacher roles in problem-based teaching and how to scaffold problem-based teaching, how to facilitate group work

or how to practice-integrate in single courses and across courses. In an evaluation by the end of the first year, teachers also highlight a need to discuss how to take the students' different backgrounds and prerequisites even more into consideration, and how to improve the practice integration, e.g. by formulating clear learning goals for company visits.

The joint meetings are led by teachers, the Head of Study and academic developers in collaboration. Meetings consist of small reports from the Head of Study, presentations from teachers as well as workshops given by academic developers on didactic tools addressing e.g. group work or feedback. The second meeting format is a tight format for peer mentoring in trios, so far based on problems rather than on teaching observations. The meetings are scheduled with the support of an academic developer who strongly advises the trio group of teachers to follow the format where one is the problem-owner, and the peers ask and give advice in a respectful and acknowledging manner. Once the format is well known, the teachers can always create their own format for discussing their teaching (with inspiration from de Lange, Thomas and Wittek, Line ed. (2023) Faculty Peer Group Mentoring. Developing Collegiality through Organized Supportive Collaboration. Springer. Switzerland).

Our findings so far are that we in general do see that teachers begin to deprivatise their practice when they share both positive and troublesome experiences from teaching. We do hear them discuss how to integrate even better the different backgrounds of the international students. From a focus group interview with the students by the end of the first year, we find that the students experience a coherent interdisciplinary and practice-integrated MSc-programme. The students highlight problem-based teaching using a combination of engineering problem-solving methods and scientific research methods, team-based approaches, integration of real-world examples via cases and visits from industry and the contribution by different disciplines as a prerequisite for solving problems. However, we also see that attendance for joint meetings is rather low in numbers and often it is the same handful of teachers participating. This is an issue when building an FLC where teaching is seen as a common matter that includes collaborative work and mutual commitment. We also see that peer mentoring meetings are likely not to be prioritized if the teachers cannot see an immediate benefit from talking to peers, and if they are not supported by our attendance.

A question for further debate could be how we as change agents can support commitment over compliance (inspired by Borrego, Maura & Henderson, Charles. (2014). Increasing the Use of Evidence-Based Teaching in STEM Higher Education: A Comparison of Eight Change Strategies. Journal of Engineering Education. 103. 10.1002/jee.20040.)

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From Individual to Institutional: Catalyzing Undergraduate Research Through Strategic Partnership

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Abstract

Undergraduate research is a high-impact practice that remains inaccessible to most undergraduates. While extracurricular research opportunities exist, curriculum-embedded research experiences provide a scalable, equitable means to engage all students in authentic inquiry. Despite documented benefits, significant barriers like time constraints, workload concerns, and costs hinder widespread adoption of curricular research experiences. Consequently, integration of undergraduate research into curricula has relied on isolated faculty champions, resulting in fragmented opportunities that fail to reach all students.

To influence systemic change and advance institutional priorities around undergraduate research, this project positions an academic developer and a faculty member as strategic change agents co-leading curricular transformation. This collaborative leadership model develops a practical framework for systematically integrating research experiences within departmental curricula. By embedding research as a core curricular component, this initiative normalizes curricular undergraduate research and creates sustainable pathways for student engagement.

The project encompasses four interconnected strategies that shape teaching culture and build institutional capacity in teaching: establishing a scalable framework to systematically integrate research experiences within a program across academic units; supporting faculty in designing and implementing course-based research opportunities; creating a pedagogy course that builds teaching assistants' capacity for research mentorship; and developing an open resource repository that captures organizational learning and guides future implementation. Through communities of practice, this work creates institutional capacity that responds to evolving educational needs. This partnership exemplifies how academic developers can move beyond their support roles and function as strategic leaders driving policy-aligned curricular enhancement at an institutional level.

Keywords: Course-based research experience, Curricular transformation, Teaching Assistant Development, Academic Development

Extended Summary

Background Engaging in undergraduate research opportunities strengthens students' scientific thinking, builds their confidence, and increases their belief in their ability to succeed in complex tasks (Kuh, 2001). Despite the benefits, several barriers limit undergraduate students' access to research opportunities. One significant challenge is awareness, as many students, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds, are simply unaware of available research opportunities or their benefits. Faculty interactions further exacerbate this issue, as students may perceive faculty as unapproachable, making them less likely to seek guidance or research involvement. Finally, financial barriers is also a major obstacle, as many research positions are unpaid, making them inaccessible to students who need paid employment to support themselves. These factors collectively contribute to unequal access to undergraduate research experiences (Bangera & Brownell, 2014).

Course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs) offer an effective way to scale research experiences to many students at once. Govindan et al., 2020) emphasize that CUREs provide a structured, classroom-based means to involve large numbers of undergraduates in research, thereby preparing more students with analytical skills and research exposure for advanced studies or careers. CUREs democratize access to research by embedding authentic inquiry into coursework, thereby removing traditional barriers such as financial limitations or the need for faculty connections. This inclusive structure makes research more accessible to students from underrepresented groups as has been reported in STEM disciplines (Bangera & Brownell, 2014; Dewey et al., 2022). While CUREs effectively engage students in research, isolated implementation by individual faculty limit their impact. Studies demonstrate that sustained, progressively complex research experiences beginning early in undergraduate education yield the greatest impact (Thiry et al., 2012), with more intensive experiences producing stronger benefits (Jones et al., 2010). Hence, intentional scaffolding of research experience, including CUREs, throughout undergraduate curriculum is essential for maximizing student outcomes.

Aim: To address the call to improve the impacts of undergraduate research experiences at a research-intensive university, an academic developer and a faculty member engaged in a partnership to lead curricular transformations at a departmental level. We will describe the steps we have taken to scaffold research experiences across the curriculum within the home department of the faculty member through building faculty partnerships, developing pedagogical support, and enhancing teaching assistants' instructional capacity. By the time of the conference, we will have been working with the department chair and faculty on identifying courses for transformation. We will share our experience, feedback from the faculty, and lessons learned at this stage of the project.

Methodological approach and outcomes: Shortlidge et al., 2016) reported that many faculty view the time, workload, and costs involved in running a CURE as significant barriers. Developing a CURE requires extensive planning,

preparation, and coordination, especially in the early stages. Without institutional recognition or support, this extra work can become unsustainable. To address these challenges, one of the main outcomes of this project is to create a sustainable instructional support program for CUREs at the departmental level. In phase 1, we have created a micro-credential badge in Designing a CURE for all participating instructors, providing them with research-based strategies, curated resources, discipline specific exemplary course models, and connections with experienced peers. At the heart of this badge is a community of practice that transforms isolated course development into collaborative learning opportunities, enabling instructors to learn from shared experiences and support one another in creating meaningful undergraduate research opportunities.

The success of a CURE often depends on small-group collaboration and close mentoring, but many instructors lack sufficient assistance from teaching assistants (TAs) (Lopatto et al., 2014). Effective TAs take on the role of providing guidance and mentorship while creating a safe learning space. This demands a shift from traditional TA roles to more of a research mentorship role. Despite this shift, TAs rarely receive any specific pedagogical support for effective CURE facilitation (Kern & Olimpo, 2022; Lopatto et al., 2014). To address this need, the second outcome of this project is to build TA mentorship capacity within a department. In phase 2, we will develop a CURE specific pedagogy course for TAs to equip them with effective pedagogical strategies for facilitating CUREs and supporting instructors. The course is aimed at helping TAs identify the unique needs and challenges of mentoring within a CURE curriculum and will be developed in partnership with graduate students. The pedagogical materials resulting from this partnership with graduate students will be part of an online repository that will be available to the university community and beyond.

Finally, by investigating our process of working with an academic unit to create a scaffolded research pathway, we provide other departments with actionable strategies for creating meaningful research pathways within their programs. Our collaborative framework will provide a replicable model that other departments and faculties can adapt to systematically integrate and scaffold research experiences within their own curricula. Through the investigation of this process, we aim to answer:

- What are the best approaches to curricular redesign and faculty support for creating a meaningful research pathway for undergraduates within a department?
- What aspects of an academic discipline, culture, and department support the integration of research elements into the undergraduate curriculum?
- What should administrative leaders do to support curricular transformations and sustain institutional change?

Implications: This project addresses a critical gap in undergraduate education by transforming research from an extracurricular opportunity into an integrated curricular experience accessible to all students. The collaborative partnership model offers practical insights for catalyzing curricular transformation in higher education. Academic developers can function as strategic change agents by positioning themselves as essential partners in curriculum innovation rather than peripheral consultants. Successfully integrating research experiences throughout undergraduate curricula requires institutional investment in supporting infrastructure: TA development programs, accessible resource repositories, and faculty communities of practice. This emphasis on capacity-building rather than isolated interventions creates conditions for sustainable change that persists beyond individual champions. The framework is adaptable across diverse institutional contexts. The transferable principle is strategic collaboration that overcomes barriers individual faculty cannot address alone, ultimately building organizational capacity for ongoing curricular innovation and transformation.

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Reconceptualising Academic Development's strategic role and (re)direction in the postgraduate space

Catherine Hutchings

Abstract

Our Academic Development Unit has developed a set of offerings for postgraduate learners, called 'Writing Pathways', aimed at empowering postgraduate writers through the promotion of agency and communities of practice. These consist of three short courses, weekly writing circles and consultations with the Writing Centers. Traditionally, the postgraduate context is framed by the language of throughput and success through completion in specified time. This pipeline discourse of postgraduate study locates writing as a result of, and evidence of, student productivity and progress, and ignores the various investments in the knowledge making that characterize the postgraduate experiences, and the very different starting points that postgraduate have. Pathways thinking is a long-term effort to shift the language around existing writing offerings and influence activities to refine and create new offerings. In this presentation I propose a reconceptualization of Academic Development's role in the postgraduate space. It is important that we think through this considering the general movements in higher education and its changing postgraduate spaces. I offer insights into issues arising in students' postgraduate research journeys and how better to support them. I hope that these will contribute towards providing improved strategies for the teaching and resourcing of Academic Development courses, and to advance our social justice mission of widening access and success at this level of study. I hope to contribute to the advancement of epistemologies and pedagogies employed in Academic Development, establishing it as a strong centre which contributes to the motivation and agency of postgraduate learners.

Keywords: Postgraduate Agency, Research Writing, writing communities, Writing respondents/tutors

Extended Summary

Like most, our Academic Development unit (previously known as Academic Support Unit) was originally focussed on first year learners whose mother tongue was not English. Gradually we grew into the postgraduate space, offering support and promoting agency to students from all backgrounds and disciplines – both within the university and beyond. As part of our Academic Development Unit, we developed a set of offerings for postgraduate learners, which we called 'Writing Pathways', aimed at empowering postgraduate writers through the promotion of agency and communities of practice. These consist of three short courses, (Navigating Research Writing, Journeys in Research Writing and Research Writing in the Sciences), each with two or three iterations per year, in addition to weekly writing circles and consultations with the Writing Centers.

Traditionally, the postgraduate context is framed by the language of throughput and success through completion in specified time. I am concerned about the pipeline discourse of postgraduate study – which locates writing as a result of, and evidence of, student productivity and progress. But perhaps this focus on numbers ignores the various investments in the knowledge making that characterize the postgraduate experiences, and the very different starting points that postgraduate have. In a recent paper we offered a rhizomatic view of the journey (Samson et al, 2022). The focus of our Pathways offerings is on the ecology and dynamic interaction links. In this way the course becomes a living artefact, changing as a result of various movements on the part of participants, designers, facilitators, platforms and context. Pathways thinking is a long-term effort to shift the language around existing writing offerings and influence activities to refine and create new offerings. It focuses on multiplicity and diversity; an assemblage of a variety of writing courses and resources put to work at different points in research journeys and used in diverse ways.

By way of example, a brief history of the Journeys in Research Writing course will illustrate how pathways thinking has evolved in our case. We began to try out new pedagogic forms and practices when in a moment of national restructuring of higher education, our university was deemed to be research intensive. This brought postgraduate provision under the spotlight across the university: research writing was seen to be a major stumbling block to output and success in relation to how the university envisaged itself. The first new form to emerge was the multidisciplinary writers' circle (see Chihota and Thesen 2013; Thesen 2014). From the outset, these were envisaged as relational - as a complement to, rather than a substitute for, the supervisory relationship. If supervision took place in the discipline, with one person (or a small team) in a position of expertise, the circle was seen as a rehearsal space for the work that had to find a final form elsewhere. It was concerned with process, with trying out, in low-stakes environments where students always knew more about their research than anyone else in the room.

Building on the energy generated by facilitating circles, we were given funding to start a blended learning course, Navigating Research Writing, that would help students orient to postgraduate studies. To quote from the flyer, the course welcomes 'All prospective postgraduate students from any discipline [...] Current postgraduates may also attend with the approval of their supervisor(s). The course may appeal particularly to those who: are returning to study from the workplace or a long break from studies, feel underprepared for postgraduate studies, are transitioning between disciplines, countries, universities and languages, want to refresh their approach to research writing'. The course has been offered twice a year since 2012 with many participants having registered, most of whom were already registered for Honours, Masters or Doctorates.

Once it became a visible part of the research support landscape, we were tasked to design an online version of the Navigating course. In collaboration with the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching who have expertise in online learning, the Journeys in Research Writing course was developed over a year, for trial implementation in 2016. Our brief was to respond to the need to develop an open access online academic induction course which would help PhD applicants to prepare strong and 'decision-ready' applications. As with the Navigating course, the emphasis was on researchers starting out, to orient them to the journey ahead. However, we have not been able to limit registrations for either course to those starting out. We have had participants register at various stages – usually desperate for community and support.

In this presentation I would like to propose a reconceptualization of Academic Development's role in the postgraduate space. I believe that it is important that we think through this considering the general movements in our university and its changing postgraduate spaces. From an examination of our offerings and what participants have said, I offer some insights into issues arising in students' postgraduate research journeys and how better to support our university's postgraduate students. I hope that the insights will contribute towards providing improved strategies for the teaching and resourcing of Academic Development courses, and to advance our social justice mission of widening access and success at this level of study.

Based on my insights from my involvement in many of our Pathways offerings, I have posed a few questions which I would discuss: Regarding the role of ADP's short courses at the university:

· To what need do ADP's blended writing courses respond?

· What contributions do the courses make to student success and tutor development within ADP, our faculty and university, and beyond?

· What sets these courses apart from other research writing courses? Regarding the sustainability of the research writing courses

· Should ADP market its research writing courses as short courses?

· What is the best funding model for the courses?

In this discussion I hope to contribute to the advancement of epistemologies and pedagogies employed in Academic Development, establishing it as a strong and essential centre of the university which contributes to the motivation and agency of postgraduate learners.

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Iced Talks 3

Communities of Practice as a Balancing Act

Jillian Ives

Abstract

Academic developers are often responsible for establishing, supporting, or sustaining various faculty communities of practice (CoPs). While CoPs have been shown to foster faculty learning and institutional transformation, they can also flounder and fail to thrive. So, what are the key differences in structure and characteristics that impact the success of CoPs? Based on practitioner and research experience developing 16 CoPs across the United States, I offer insights on effective practices for building and sustaining effective CoPs. The audience will takeaway specific strategies for finding balance in CoP membership and practices.

Keywords: Communities of practice, faculty professional learning communities, institutional transformation

Extended Summary

Communities of Practice (CoPs) and their many offshoots are a well-established practice in higher education to support faculty teaching in specific disciplines and foster organizational change across departments and institutions [1, 2]. While CoP is generally a term referring to a group that comes together to engage on an issue or enterprise [3], CoPs in higher education can be made up of cross-departmental mid-level professionals [4], administrators, faculty, and staff [5], leadership teams [6], or faculty in specific disciplines [7, 8]. The literature indicates CoPs can support faculty learning and implementing inclusive and evidence-based teaching [9], curricular reform [10], and institutional change [6]. Yet, CoPs are often an ambiguous concept, and it remains unclear how to successfully establish and sustain a CoP, and how differences in structure and characteristics can impact their effectiveness. As academic developers are often responsible for developing, supporting, and/or sustaining CoPs across the institution, understanding the key structures and characteristics that make a CoP more or less effective is key for success.

As part of an U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)-funded study (Award #2142734, #2142516), I supported and studied a program that established and sustained cross-disciplinary, cross-functional CoPs made of faculty, administrators, and staff at 16 different postsecondary institutions across the United States. The focus of the CoPs were to improve STEM teaching and learning for Latin* students at two-year Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). Some CoP teams thrived and accomplished their goals in the 18-month program, while others had high member turnover, disengagement, and little accomplishment. In this ICED talk, I offer key insights from this experience on what made some teams effective, while others failed to thrive.

The key message here is: effective communities of practice are an act of balance. Specifically, I offer examples of balance in the membership and practices or activities of the CoPs. Teams were more effective when there was a balance of established and new relationships. The CoP members benefitted from the team being cross-disciplinary and cross-functional to get them out of their silo and learn from people who they did not normally interact with. The new relationships allowed them to learn through social interaction, by exposing them to new perspectives and areas of the institution. For example, one member said: “Often, we teach in a silo and rarely interact. Through these meetings I get the time to interact and ask the questions that have an impact on our students’ lives.” However, when the team was too diverse in membership type, there was a lack of commitment and engagement because there were no established relationships. One administrator spoke to the importance of team membership and trust for engagement. “So, we have some members that were technically on the team, but we never saw them. And we had some members that, because we tried to make it very diverse, we had some members that were very, very hesitant for what we were doing.”

The CoPs were able to accomplish more when there was a balance between prior working relationships and diverse team membership. The CoPs were also more effective when there was a balance of challenge and support in the activities or practice. Teams often struggled with ambiguous roles and activities and resisted some of the slower process of digging into data, addressing assumptions and biases, and engaging in critical self and institutional reflection. For example, one member noted the team “just brought in ideas they already had and suggested those without much apparent regard for or justification from the [data]” while another felt “having a gracious space to have those conversations [on data] probably made the biggest impact.” A balance needed to be struck to support members working through difficult ideas, challenging them to reflect while also supporting them in the process. Some teams just wanted to be told what to do and skip the process. One administrator noted: “the hardest thing, always, whenever we’re reflecting on our practice as educators, is our internal push to change what we do. To really be honestly reflective about what is really working and what isn’t working. . . It’s a slow process, right? Because people are all sort of in different places, but getting them to come together, being patient with the process of deep reflection and having them actually ask the hard question? I liked that.” Balance required CoP leaders or facilitators to support the team with clear communication and activities, while also challenging them to critically dig into the problem before jumping to solutions.

As the field of educational development aims to drive meaningful institutional transformation, one way that can be done is through increasing faculty agency and capacity for teaching improvement. CoPs are a proven way to support faculty educational development in a way that can lead to institutional transformation. However, as educational developers create, support, facilitate, and sustain CoPs, they require effective strategies to see a positive impact. Therefore, I offer the following suggestions for finding balance in CoPs: First, carefully choose members of the CoP, or if creating multiple CoPs try to arrange membership to balance new and established relationships on campus. Consider recruiting not just the key people who serve on every committee and are very involved in educational development efforts, but try to serve as a bridge and invite a few new people into the fold. CoP membership should involve both central and peripheral members. Lastly, treat faculty as adult learners by engaging in transformative adult learning theories and strategies [11, 12, 13]. Faculty, just like students, need a balance of support and challenge to thrive in their learning. Designing activities that allow for this balance will allow for deeper thinking and increased engagement.

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The Emotional Academic Developer

Roland Tormey

Abstract

Andy Hargreaves once wrote "Good teachers are not just well-oiled machines. They are emotional, passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy." Unfortunately, many of us work in university environments in which power dynamics can treat emotion and care as trivial. Bringing emotion into teaching and faculty development remains, in a sense, subversive. Over the course of the last three decades as a researcher and faculty developer, I have sought to understand the emotions of teaching and learning relationships. This led me to develop and empirically validate a three-dimensional model of the emotional geographies of teaching and learning in terms of warmth, trust and respect for each other. Over the last few years, my colleagues and I have been working on applying this model to our faculty development work. In this talk, I will share our insights.

Keywords: Emotion, Warmth, Trust, Respect

Extended Summary

Emotion in Teaching beyond Descartes Error: The teacher education researcher Andy Hargreaves once noted that "Good teachers are not just well-oiled machines. They are emotional, passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy" (1998, 855). Hargreaves remarks were part of an "emotional revolution" (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003, p. 328) in the 1990s in disciplines such as neuroscience, psychology, and teacher education.

Central to this emotional revolution was a growing recognition that emotion, cognition and the body were inherently interconnected. Prior to this time, the dominant way of thinking about emotion and cognition reflected a 'Cartesian' approach, building on the conception of the philosopher René Descartes that the mind and the physical body are distinct and separate. After the 1990s, emotion researchers came to see emotion, cognition and the body as being inherently intertwined: emotion includes cognitive, biophysical, motivational and subjective elements (see Shuman and Scherer, 2014, for example). While the Cartesian thinking of the 1950s gave us the Bloom's Taxonomy's clear separation between cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, from the 1990s on this view was seen - as the title of the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio's (1994) book suggests - as Descartes' Error.

An emotional career: As a researcher looking at equity and diversity in education in the 1990s, I was influenced by this emotional revolution, as I came to recognize the importance of emotion in how people built relationships with others, or built systems for excluding others. Recognizing the importance of teachers' emotional competence to effectively navigate this space, I therefore worked on how student teachers can develop their own emotional capacities (author 2012a; 2012b; 2013).

While the project was a success, I was unsatisfied, as the work focused on the emotional competence of an individual rather than on how emotions oriented us in relationship with others. Over the next decade, I continued working on trying to make sense of emotional relationships between students and teachers and between students and students. After several dead ends, this led me to develop a model for making sense of the emotional geographies of teaching and learning in terms of warmth, trust, and respect for each other (author 2021). Drawing on large scale survey data from engineering and science students, I was able to provide a good empirical base for this three-dimensional model.

But not only did the model help to explain what was happening in classrooms, it turned out that clearly distinguishing between relational emotions linked to warmth, trust and status was useful for faculty members in clarifying for themselves what aspects of their classroom relationships they wanted and needed to work on. As such, it allowed teachers to isolate and clarify relational challenges they were having, and strategies to address them. Hence, a model developed to understand classroom relationships turned out to be valuable for faculty development.

But even if the model was useful to them, it wasn't always easy for universities teachers to take on board this focus on emotional relationships. The Cartesian view of emotion and cognition may have changed for emotion researchers, but it remains dominant outside emotion research – including among many academics. And power dynamics in departments can treat emotion and care as trivial (see Mariskind 2014; Tunguz, 2016). So, this work remains, in a sense, subversive.

From relationships in teaching to relationships in faculty development: Of course, these emotional dynamics in the teacher – learner relationship don't stop at the classroom. The faculty developer – teacher relationship is also a learning relationship with an affective component. Over the last few years, my colleagues and I have worked on how this insight can help us to shape the work we do in one-to-one coaching of teachers, in workshops, and in educational development projects (Author, 2022). We have been working on how to generate the warmth, faculty developers need to communicate care (Timmermans et al., 2018) to teachers; to create relationships of trust within which teachers can

manage their sense of uncertainty or threat in their teaching life (see Bessette and McGowan [2020], for example); and to generate relationships in which authority is shared, so that the teacher feels a sense of agency and an internal locus of control over their work (author, 2019), while at the same time ensuring that the pedagogical expertise of the faculty developer is respected.

In this talk, I will explain the three-dimensional model of affective learning relationships that I have developed, and identify how, in practice, my colleagues and I apply it in our work with teachers.

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Academic selves in dialogue: Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Organizational Transformation

Markus Weil, Fernando Marhuenda Fluixá

Abstract

This talk explores dialoguing as a mode of reflecting on the academic self through a conversation between two scholars of education—one Swiss and mid-career, the other Spanish and nearing retirement. Both have navigated roles as researchers, lecturers, and academic leaders, and both deal with the accelerating transformations in higher education. Their dialogue becomes a space for examining how they interpret these changes, envision the future of their institutions, and negotiate their own professional relevance. Grounded in a biographical approach to professional learning, dialogue is conceived as a medium through which individual experiences are explicated, negotiated, and framed as an agency in institutional contexts. In higher education, often highly formalized yet unevenly supportive of reflective practice, the capacity to articulate one's professional narrative fosters multilayered reflexivity as part of professionalization. Professional learning thus emerges not only from policy structures but also from personal sense-making and bottom-up processes shaped by context and relational engagement. Drawing on the concept of meta-reflexivity (Cramer et al., 2023), the talk also includes a reflection on the method of dialoguing through the cultivation of multi-perspectivity. Meta-reflexivity is understood as a second-order reflection on how perspectives are constructed. Resonance theory (Rosa, 2000) further illuminates the emotional and relational dimensions of developing professionally, emphasizing the human need for responsive, meaningful connection. Attendants will be invited to join this conversation and engage in self-reflection about their agency of institutional and societal contexts.

Keywords: Higher education, management and accountability, professionalism, citizenship

Extended Summary

This talk examines dialoguing the academic selves by asking how academics make sense of their work in rapidly changing institutional environments, how biographical experience and dialogic engagement shape academic identity, and how these processes support meaningful academic development. Academic work is increasingly marked by tensions between autonomy and accountability, resonance and alienation, personal aspiration and institutional demand. Dialogue offers a way to understand how academics navigate these pressures while seeking agency and coherence.

In our talk we draw on experiences of two scholars of education—one Swiss and mid-career, the other Spanish and nearing retirement. Their exchange becomes a space to explore how academic selves are discussed, reflected and contextualized. The talk proceeds in three parts: 1) biographical identity construction, 2) dialoguing as methodological practice, and 3) reflections on resonance and reflexivity as lenses for understanding academic work and professional development:

1) Constructing and contextualizing the academic self

We consider biographical and institutional information as relevant components of academic dialoguing, as historical and contextual elements shape the narrative and time span.

Academic A studied Educational Science in Germany and Switzerland, where he works. He has been a visiting scholar abroad and has worked in several universities in Switzerland. His current position is mostly managerial. He is in mid-career and facing another 20 years within academia.

University A is young; a type of universities of teacher education created in Switzerland in the 2000s through the merge of eleven former institutions. It is the largest teacher training university in Switzerland, with around 3,800 students, 21,000 continuing education participants, and over 950 staff members. It offers Bachelor's and Master's programs for teachers at all school levels, though no PhD degrees.

Academic B studied Philosophy and Educational Science in Spain, where he works. He has been a visiting scholar in several universities abroad. His current position is mostly research and lecturing. Approaching the final decade of his career, he holds a professorship and coordinates a research group.

University B is one of the oldest in the country, enrolling more than 50,000 students and more than 6,000 lecturers and researchers, offering Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral programs in most scientific fields. It faces the increasing competition from private universities, a process accelerated by the rise of hybrid and online degrees after Covid-19.

2) Academic Dialoguing

The role of peer consultation and narrative approaches in academic contexts has been explored (Feixas & Flepp, 2024; Jögi, 2023; McAlpine & Akerlind, 2010). Nevertheless, gaining insight into dialoguing as a method remains difficult. What does Academic Dialoguing mean? In the talk we address conceptual and methodological considerations. Our "data" consist of written and oral dialogues collected during six months, as well as documentary material such as

publications, CVs or evaluations that become accessible to discussions. We draw connections to theoretical approaches on resonance (Rosa, 2019) and reflexivity (Cramer et al., 2013) to frame our analysis.

We struggle to make sense of work in university nowadays: The talk addresses the conflicts between managerial and research demands affecting our roles and identities as academics in a competitive landscape in higher education (HE), nationally and internationally. Garcés 2020, Zafra 2025, Riechmann 2024, or Weil et al. 2009 highlight these tensions in their attempt to achieve academic development and organizational transformation while still performing work of professional and scientific standards.

HE has relied on self-regulation and professional autonomy for most of its history, though nowadays experience external pressures requiring other ways to perform academic work, often assessed against criteria differing from those enacted in traditional universities. By dialoguing these conflicts, we have developed certain agency to articulate our concerns and take responsibility.

Methodologically, we follow Cramer et al. (2023) understanding meta-reflexivity as a second-order reflection. Its aim is to critically scrutinize underlying logics of action and thought, and to productively engage with the uncertainties inherent in professional practice. Meta-reflexivity involves knowing different theoretical perspectives, weighing them situationally, and making conscious, well-reasoned decisions. Professional action requires both justificatory and theoretical awareness.

3) Reflections on resonance and reflexivity

We align our reflections with the three levels proposed by Cramer et al. (2023):

− Reflection: We present examples of immediate reflection emerging from our dialogues. Despite different institutional contexts and professional biographies, we share concerns about the growing economization of the academic selves. Our early expectations of academic life no longer fully align with current university realities, prompting us to seek strategies for navigating these shifts.

− Multi-perspectivity: Dialoguing enables at least two perspectives to meet, allowing us to explore academic identity and agency from different angles. It also makes visible how economic and educational logics intersect and at times compete within HE.

− Meta-reflexivity: We further examine how our reflections are constructed—how we interpret our academic selves and agency in relation to strategic and institutional dynamics.

Contextualising these reflections moves beyond collegial conversation toward a structured inquiry that supports professionalization in teaching, learning, and organizational development. Conducted in a dialogical and collegial mode, this talk aims to illuminate the current landscape of HE. Drawing on examples from our careers, institutional development, and relevant reports and policies, we offer insights that may support both institutional contribution and the professional growth of academics across diverse contexts, offering a way to understand how academics construct agency and coherence by resonance to oneself, each other and the academic environment.

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From Liminality to Belonging: Rethinking the Role of the Academic Developer

Katja Hakel

Abstract

Academic developers (ADs) often occupy a liminal space within higher education, positioned between institutional leadership, faculty roles, and various support units. Rather than viewing this location as solely precarious or fragmented, this conceptual talk proposes that such positioning can function as a strength—enabling mobility across communities and contexts. Building on a synthesis of research literature and insights developed over more than a decade as a professional academic developer, this talk focuses on three central perspectives: the AD as 'The One Who Does Not Belong', the AD as a strategic 'Player in the System', and 'The Personal Dimension' of AD work. Through an emphasis on relational trust, authenticity, and building community, the talk suggests that liminality need not constrain identity but may instead support a shift toward roles marked by integrity and connection—toward becoming 'The One Who Belongs in Many Places'.

Keywords: Academic developer, Liminality, Belonging, Educational leadership

Extended Summary

This ICED talk re-conceptualizes academic developers' (ADs) liminal position, often called a 'fragmented tribe' (Land, 2001) or 'migrant workers' (Mori et al., 2022). Rather than a limitation, liminality is presented as a strength, allowing ADs to shift from non-belonging toward an identity rooted in connection and community. The talk argues AD leadership, grounded in belonging, relational trust, and integrity, enables them to become 'The One Who Belongs in Many Places'.

Drawing from a decade of personal AD practice and research synthesis, this talk explores the AD role. A review of approximately 40 articles highlights metaphors of marginality, like 'a family of strangers' (Harland & Staniforth, 2008), contrasting with ADs' broad responsibilities in educational leadership, training, and project support (Bath & Smith, 2004; Little, 2014). Liminality is redefined as a strategic vantage point for ADs, fostering insight and flexibility.

The presentation elaborates on three pivotal themes:

1. 'The One Who Does Not Belong':

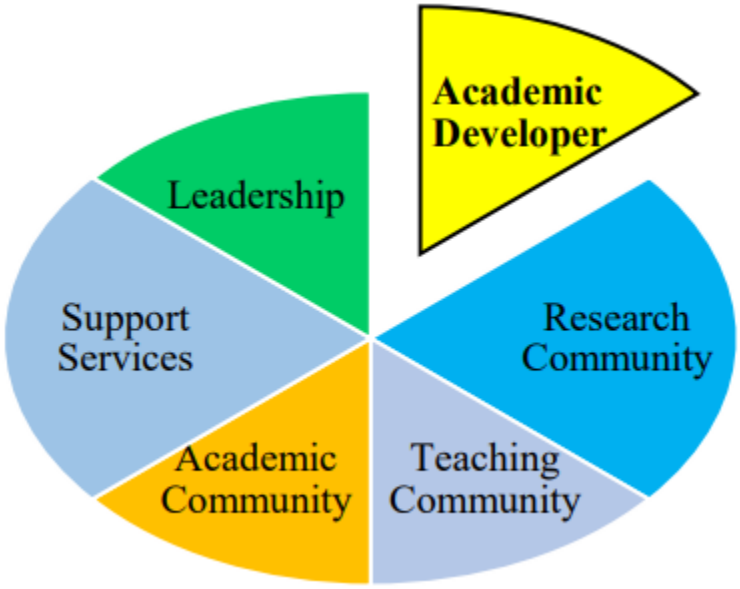


Figure 1. The One Who Does Not Belong

ADs are often portrayed as 'migrants' (Mori et al., 2022) or 'third space professionals' (Whitchurch, 2008), operating without full belonging. While this can lead to fragmented identity (Bovill & Mårtensson, 2014; Kensington-Miller et al., 2015; Sugrue et al., 2018) and a perceived need for 'influence, alliances, stealth, lobbying' (Debowski, 2014, p. 54), it offers unique flexibility for conceptual interdisciplinarity (Harland & Staniforth, 2008). An adaptable, people-focused identity (Carew et al., 2008; Kinash & Wood, 2013) transforms this 'in-between' status into a strength for boundary-spanning, creating 'the one who belongs in many places'.

2. «The Player in the System»:

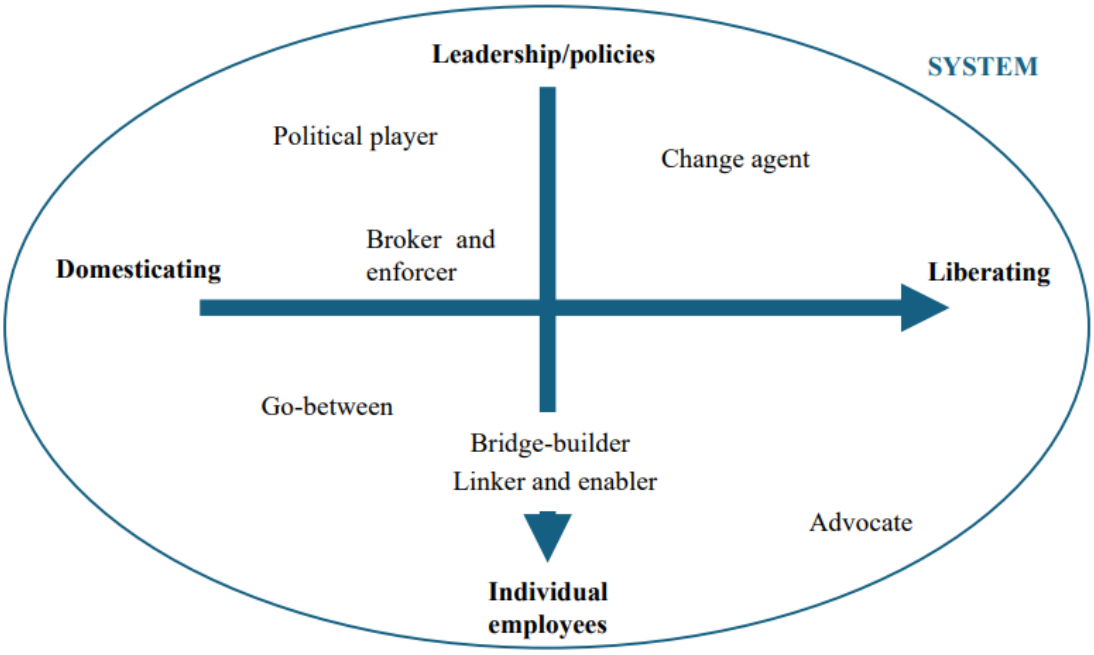


Figure 2. The Player in the System

This highlights ADs' systemic contributions to educational policy and practice (Bath & Smith, 2004). ADs act as 'political players' (Sugrue et al., 2018), 'change agents' (Gibbs, 2013), 'brokers and enforcers' (Sugrue et al., 2018), 'go-betweens' (Handal et al., 2014), 'bridge-builders' (Rathbun & Turner, 2012), 'linkers and enablers' (Little, 2014), and 'advocates' (Harland & Staniforth, 2003). These roles demand strategic leadership (Holt et al., 2011) to balance institutional goals and grassroots needs, showcasing ADs' capacity to strategically adapt and manoeuvre.

3. The Personal Dimension:



Figure 3. The One Who Belongs in Many Places

A human, values-based approach is fundamental. 'Walking the talk' builds trust (Bath & Smith, 2004; Willis & Strivens, 2015) and fosters a safe space for pedagogical transformation through reciprocal relationships (Gibbs, 2013; Kinash &

Wood, 2013; Rathbun & Turner, 2012). Network-building and positioning as co-learners enhance reflective practice (Holt et al., 2011; Willis & Strivens, 2015). Communities of Practice (Carew et al., 2008; Mori et al., 2022) are crucial, providing ADs with belonging, collegiality, and recognition.

Integrating these themes, the talk argues AD identity can shift from perpetual liminality to a stronger sense of belonging. This requires ADs to proactively build institutional networks and adopt academic leadership modeling authenticity, respecting faculty agency, and championing shared educational values. This leadership relies on relational trust. When ADs' values align with actions, their integrity is more persuasive than 'influence, alliances, stealth, lobbying' (Debowski, 2014, p. 54). Multi-layered belonging alleviates insecurities, transforming liminality into an asset for flexibility and movement. This empowers ADs to:

- Leverage supportive peer networks through communities of practice.
- Influence institutional policies via relationships with leadership/support units.
- Maintain anchored identity by integrating personal values and integrity.

Ultimately, AD leadership valuing relational commitment, personal values, and community is crucial for deeper impact. This demands reflection, self-awareness, institutional recognition, and courage for ADs to act as vulnerable learning partners, especially in a role 'constantly questioned' (Kensington-Miller et al., 2015, p. 280). The talk will inspire dialogue on navigating complexity with integrity and building strong communities.

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Iced Talks 4

An Academic Integrity Rescue Mission in the AI Era: Designing an AI-Enhanced Scenario-Based Gamified Course

Yiqun Sun, Yexiang Wu, Yezi Yang, Rebecca Wakelin

Abstract

As universities revise academic integrity policies to address Generative AI (GenAI), traditional, static self-paced courses struggle to engage students or capture the nuances of AI-era ethics. This talk presents the design and evaluation of an innovative, gamified, self-paced course co-created with students to address updated university policies. Moving beyond passive "click-and-read" formats, the instructional design team curated 57 real misconduct cases across the university and collaborated with students to create an "choose-your-adventure" rescue mission where learners travel back in time to save animal characters—neutral avatars designed to mitigate bias—from past ethical lapses. The course integrates GenAI in two novel ways: using AI tools to generate immersive multimedia assets and deploying a custom chatbot trained on university policy to facilitate Socratic, scenario-based coaching. This chatbot serves as a safe, judgment-free venue for sensitive inquiries. Evaluation data—including three rounds of expert review by seven faculty and staff, four faculty focus groups (faculty n= 10), and four interviews with students (n = 4)—indicate that this approach significantly enhances learner agency. Participants praised the interactive, decision-driven format and viewed the course as an engaging supplement to traditional learning. This talk will present the development and evaluation of the course and demonstrate how partnering with students and leveraging GenAI tools can transform academic integrity training into an empowering, agency-building learning experience.

Extended Summary

This talk addresses a critical pedagogical challenge facing higher education in the era of Generative AI (GenAI): How can institutions teach students about academic integrity in a rapidly evolving AI landscape, where policies themselves are being transformed, and how can this be done in a way that empowers learners and strengthens their agency? The central message is that “dry” policy instruction and traditional integrity training can be reimagined through gamified learning, student co-creation, and the creative use of GenAI technologies. We argue that shifting the narrative from preaching information to a gamified rescue mission requiring ethical decision-making can meaningfully foster student agency—a key element of sustained engagement in complex problem-solving (Whitton, 2011).

The talk also explores a unique meta-cognitive approach: using GenAI tools to build the very course that teaches students how to use GenAI ethically. We contend that incorporating AI-generated multimedia and chatbots does not undermine credibility; rather, it acts as a powerful modeling tool. This aligns with recent scholarship arguing that, to cultivate AI literacy, educators must move beyond prohibition and design learning experiences that work with the “black box” of AI (Bearman & Ajjawi, 2023).

This project emerged from a collision between outdated instructional practices and rapid technological change. Our university recently updated its academic integrity policy to include guidelines for AI tool usage, yet the existing dissemination mechanism of the policy to students—a traditional, text-heavy, self-paced online course—was widely perceived as a “tick-box” exercise. Beyond being primarily “click-and-read,” the old course did not draw on real academic integrity cases, lacked scenario-based learning, and offered few opportunities for students to engage with the nuanced ethical dilemmas introduced by AI.

Recognizing that a lecture on “what not to do” was insufficient, we adopted a student-centered co-creation model grounded in participatory action research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2004), which emphasizes iterative cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (see Figure 1). Students participated both as feedback-givers and as co-creators (Cook-Sather et al., 2014) through their Syntegrative Learning course, identifying gaps, refining scenarios, and shaping the course narrative. This collaborative process enabled us to build an AI-enhanced, gamified “choose-your-adventure” environment using animal avatars. Leveraging GenAI tools, the team transformed real misconduct cases into interactive narratives, immersive multimedia, and a custom Socratic chatbot aligned with university policy. The result is a shift from passive knowledge dissemination to an active, engaging, and agency-building learning experience that better prepares students for the complexities of academic integrity in the AI era.



Figure 1: An illustration of the stages of the case using the participatory action research model (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2004)

This talk walks the audience through the design, implementation, and evaluation of the "Rescue Mission" course, highlighting three particularly innovative moments:

1. Narrative Architecture: The Rescue Mission

In collaboration with students, we collected 57 real cases of academic misconduct and used GenAI tools to transform them into a "choose-your-adventure" graphic interactive story. Learners take on the role of a "hero" tasked with traveling back in time to prevent five animal characters (neutral by design) from making prior mistakes. This illustrates how engagement increases when learners exercise agency and experience consequences in a low-stakes environment—a core element of game engagement theory (Whitton, 2011).

2. The Socratic AI Chatbot

We demonstrate a custom-built chatbot trained on the university's integrity policy and real misconduct cases. Instead of providing direct answers, the bot uses Socratic questioning to guide students' reasoning. This feature shows how AI can scale dialogue-based, judgment-free learning support, addressing the need for "trusting relationships" in academic integrity education—even when mediated by technology (Bretag, 2016).

3. Student Perceptions of the AI-Generated Gamified Course

Evaluation included three rounds of expert reviews (n = 7), faculty focus groups (n = 10), and in-depth student interviews (n = 4). Staff and students responded positively to the AI-generated gamified design, explaining that the GenAI-created visuals, narratives, and interactive elements made the course more fun, relatable, and easier to follow. The AI-enhanced materials supported their engagement by presenting complex ideas in accessible and enjoyable ways. Students also reported that seeing AI integrated transparently into the course design helped them better understand how to use AI more appropriately and responsibly in their own academic work. This demonstrates the value of leveraging GenAI not only as a topic of instruction but also as a practical, pedagogical tool that models ethical and purposeful AI use, supporting our "fight fire with fire" approach to teaching AI ethics.

This work demonstrates how co-created, AI-generated gamified materials can support academic development by offering a fresh and engaging way to address academic integrity issues in the AI era. In addition, it demonstrates practical ways of working with students both as feedback providers and as co-creators, showing how their insights can meaningfully shape the design and refinement of learning experiences. The project also encourages educators to reflect on their own practices and consider how GenAI tools might be used responsibly and creatively in teaching. By presenting a concrete example of student–staff co-creation in an AI-rich environment, this work has the potential to spark dialogue, inspire change, and broaden perspectives on designing student-centred learning experiences.

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The Space Between the Notes: Designing Intentional Pauses for Reflective, Connected Learning

Ron Washburn, Constanza Bartholomae

Abstract

What happens in the pauses—between lectures, assignments, and the noise of the semester? This session explores these often-overlooked intervals as powerful pedagogical spaces. Drawing on the metaphor of the space between musical notes, the talk invites faculty to reconsider the role of intentional slowing, reflective practice, and mindful course design in fostering deeper student engagement. Research in learning sciences demonstrates that learning is distributed across time and enhanced by reflective pauses that support metacognition, longterm retention, and knowledge transfer. These insights align with cognitive load theory and contemplative pedagogy, both of which emphasize deliberate pacing, attention, and presence as essential to deep learning. Addressing contemporary challenges such as accelerated curricula, widespread AI use, fluctuating student confidence, and diminished attention, the session reframes pauses as generative rather than inefficient. Through brief musical prompts, guided reflection, and practical teaching strategies, participants will explore how structured moments of stillness—embedded within any course—can cultivate meaning, ethical engagement, relational learning, and pedagogical renewal.

Keywords: Reflective pauses, Metacognition, Contemplative pedagogy, Student engagement

Extended Summary

What happens in the pauses—between lectures, between assignments, between the noise of the semester? This session explores these often-overlooked intervals as powerful pedagogical spaces. Drawing on the metaphor of "the space between the notes," the workshop invites faculty to reconsider the role of intentional slowing, reflective practice, and mindful design in creating conditions for deeper student engagement. At a time when higher education is marked by accelerated pacing, widespread AI reliance, fluctuating student confidence, and substantial cognitive load, cultivating purposeful moments of stillness and reflection is both a pedagogical need and an opportunity for renewal.

Research in learning sciences demonstrates that learning does not occur solely during moments of instruction or assessment; rather, it is distributed across time, influenced by periods of quiet processing, self-explanation, and consolidation. Foundational work in cognitive psychology shows that reflective pauses enhance metacognitive awareness (Schraw, 1998), improve long-term retention (Roediger & Butler, 2011), and support the ability to transfer knowledge to new contexts (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). These findings align with contemporary research on cognitive load theory, which emphasizes the necessity of spacing and deliberate pacing to reduce extraneous load and facilitate deeper processing (Sweller, Ayres, & Kalyuga, 2011). In this session, participants will examine how their teaching practices might better harness these benefits by designing structured opportunities for students to pause, reflect, and connect concepts more meaningfully.

The metaphor of musical space—rests, breaths, and moments of resonance—serves as a conceptual anchor for the workshop. Just as musicians understand that silence shapes the emotional and structural quality of a composition, educators can view pauses as pedagogically generative. This framework connects closely with research in contemplative pedagogy, which posits that intentional slowing supports attention, presence, and emotional regulation, helping students cultivate deeper intellectual engagement (Barbezat & Bush, 2014). The workshop creates a space for faculty to explore these principles through multisensory activities involving short musical prompts, guided reflection, and collaborative dialogue.

In addition to grounding the practice in educational psychology, the workshop addresses pressing contemporary challenges in college teaching. One such challenge is the expanding presence of AI technologies in student work, which has reshaped expectations around drafting, information retrieval, and independent problem-solving. Rather than framing AI use primarily through a lens of academic integrity, this session explores how reflective structures—such as metacognitive journaling, transparency about process, and intentional pauses in assignment sequences—can guide students toward more mindful and ethical engagement with emerging tools (Lang, 2021). Research on self-regulated learning indicates that students who engage in reflective self-monitoring are less likely to rely on external aids in ways that compromise learning (Zimmerman, 2002), making reflective pauses especially relevant in an AI-saturated academic landscape.

Another challenge addressed in the session is the documented decline in student confidence, sense of belonging, and sustained attention. Studies in relationship-rich pedagogy show that structured opportunities for connection—peer dialogue, reflective listening, and moments of interpersonal presence—significantly enhance students' engagement and persistence (Felten & Lambert, 2020). This workshop integrates these findings by encouraging faculty to design reflective spaces not only for individual cognition but also for relational learning. Participants will experiment with interactional techniques that create community—brief dyad reflections, "quiet think time," and short, structured check-ins—that require minimal time yet yield substantial gains in social and academic engagement.

The constraints of classroom time and physical space, which often limit faculty creativity, are also central to the session's design. Drawing on research in embodied learning (Shapiro & Stolz, 2019) and active learning environments (Freeman et al., 2014), the workshop demonstrates how reflection does not require expansive time or redesigned classrooms. Instead, faculty can embed micro-pauses, brief movement-based resets, and low-stakes reflective writing into any course structure. These practices help students integrate conceptual material with emotional and physical experience, moving toward more holistic learning.

Throughout the session, participants will engage in hands-on redesign activities aimed at transforming one element of their teaching—whether a syllabus schedule, assignment sequence, classroom routine, or assessment strategy. They will leave with a concrete implementation plan supported by current scholarship, tailored to their specific disciplinary and pedagogical context. The workshop also emphasizes peer collaboration, recognizing that reflective teaching is not solely an individual endeavor but a communal practice enriched by shared insight and collegial support.

Ultimately, "the space between the notes" invites educators to shift their pedagogical stance: from covering content to cultivating meaning, from accelerating to attuning, from filling every moment to allowing room for resonance. By integrating research from cognitive psychology, contemplative pedagogy, relational teaching, and active learning, this session offers faculty a framework for navigating contemporary challenges with empathy, creativity, and scholarly grounding. Participants will leave with renewed clarity, practical strategies, and a deeper appreciation for how intentional pauses can transform both teaching and learning.

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"All that You Change Changes You": Student Artwork as Dialogue with the Institution

Ijeoma Njaka

Abstract

Octavia Butler's Parable of the Sower opens with the assertion that "all that you touch you change. All that you change changes you" (1993, p. 3). Though universities aspire to change and shape their students, it is less clear how institutions are positioned to be shaped in turn by their students. How might universities practice a stance of reciprocity or dialogue with students? How can students feel empowered by knowing that the university can change because of them? This lightning talk will highlight how a US-based campus a unit focused on curricular innovation and transformation aimed to facilitate a dialogic relationship between students and the institution by hosting an outdoor student art gallery. After positing the lack of relational reciprocal change between students and the university as an application of Freire's (1970/2005) banking model of education at the institutional level, the talk will focus on how the outdoor student art gallery fostered student dialogue with the institution by situating: student artwork as dialogue; an outdoor gallery as students literally changing the physical landscape of the university; and, a gallery space as an ongoing commitment to institutional receptivity. The talk will also include recommendations for how other academic developers can engage student artwork to cultivate participatory, inclusive, and mutually transformative learning experiences for academic developers and students alike.

Keywords: student artwork, curricular transformation, arts-based pedagogy, Freire

Extended Summary

Octavia Butler's Parable of the Sower opens with the assertion that "all that you touch you change. All that you change changes you" (1993, p. 3). Through their mission statements, institutional goals, and educational programs, universities aspire to change their students by equipping them with particular skills and experiences. We also know that universities (however slowly) do change, particularly in response to market pressures, external innovations, and social and political contexts. However, what is less clear is how the institution, with its aspirations to shape students, situates itself to be shaped in turn by students. How might universities practice a stance of reciprocity or dialogue with students? How can students feel empowered by knowing that the university can change because of them?

This lightning talk will highlight how academic developers at a US-based campus unit focused on curricular innovation and transformation aimed to facilitate a dialogic relationship between students and the institution by hosting an outdoor student art gallery. After applying Butler's (1993) prose to help illustrate how the lack of relational reciprocal change between students and the university reflects an application of Freire's (1970/2005) banking model of education at the institutional level, the talk will focus on how the outdoor student art gallery fostered student dialogue with the institution in three key ways:

- Student artwork is itself communication. Through various exhibits and calls for artwork, students are invited to share their perspectives and voices with the broader university community. Since the space is open to events, classes, and gatherings featuring faculty, staff, and students, the artwork is shared with various stakeholders across the institution. If the university has changed students, they can communicate their experiences through creative and non-prescriptive means while simultaneously having a guaranteed audience.
- The outdoor gallery of student artwork as a literal and ambient application of changing the institution. In addition to showcasing student artwork in a rotating exhibit on campus, thereby allowing student visions to literally shift the physical campus landscape, the gallery communicates an ongoing invitation for students to dialogue with institutional structures.
- The outdoor gallery is an investment in our sense of receptivity. In addition to the outdoor gallery as a feature in the unit's space, we hope to signal that we are willing to be shaped by student perspectives since we seek to feature them. Also, the exhibits, which have focused on themes such as wellbeing, mental health, and the role of play in learning, are fundamentally experimental; we never know what kind of artwork students will submit, and in order to ensure the broader community can engage with the work, we are agreeing to respond thoughtfully to what students create. Since we cannot be sure of the outcomes of any exhibit, we are ultimately committing to a learning process for academic staff and the institution.

The key points will be further illustrated through accompanying images from the gallery space. Photos will feature events such as outdoor class sessions, faculty development workshops, and an art exhibit opening during which student attendees contributed to a colourful and playful collaborative painting which reimagined a campus landmark. The talk will also include recommendations for how other academic developers can engage student artwork to cultivate participatory, inclusive, and mutually transformative learning experiences for academic developers and students alike.

In sum, the example of an outdoor gallery of student artwork will illustrate a creative yet dialogical and reciprocal relationship between students, the institution, and academic staff. This project asserts that the university, having been touched by students, can use creative and artistic means to embrace how it should be changed by the students it shapes.

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Doctoral Colloquium 1

Enhancing agency and enabling empowerment of first-year students at a rural university

Vanessa Rademeyer

Abstract

This paper focuses on enhancing agency and enabling the empowerment of first-year education students at a rural university in South Africa. It introduces a new approach to developing undergraduate students' academic vocabulary and phrasing. Building on research indicating that primary school learners experience reading and comprehension challenges, the paper highlights the necessity of acquiring a formal academic vocabulary at university, while acknowledging prior influences on language development - specifically limited exposure to formal English. The study aims to prepare students for the transition from school to university language by drawing on Tomasello's (2003) Usage-based theory of language acquisition, which suggests that present language abilities, particularly in relation to academic vocabulary, can be improved. The research adopted a qualitative approach, specifically Educational Action Research (EAR) as its methodology, and was informed by Bronfenbrenner's (1994) Bio-ecological model of human development. This theoretical framework emphasises the importance of an individual's environment in relation to language development. The concepts of "intention-reading" and "pattern-finding" from Tomasello's theory were applied in a language-learning intervention. The findings revealed that little expository (factual) writing is undertaken at school level to prepare students for tertiary education and that formal academic vocabulary is not sufficiently addressed to enable effective preparation for university-level language. Another finding indicated that students do not engage in sufficient reading to prepare them for formal university texts. It is therefore recommended that universities provide consistent learning experiences focused on academic vocabulary and phrasing to better support students' transition to university language.

Keywords: agency, academic development, academic vocabulary, Tomasello

Extended Summary

Background: The aim of this paper is to explore a new approach to language learning for second (or third language) speakers of English in higher education at a rural university in south Africa. Secondly, to examine the role of academic developers and teachers in fostering learner agency and engagement in undergraduate education programmes to drive curriculum innovation and transformation. This paper is framed by Tomasello's Usage- based theory of language acquisition (2003) and Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological model of human development (1994). Language development is influenced by a person's social environment. If a person does not receive sufficient exposure to a particular language, for instance, formal academic English, then that particular domain will be underdeveloped (Bronfenbrenner). On the other hand, when one uses a language, structure emerges from using that language (Tomasello). The majority of learners in rural South Africa speaks and learns in English as a First Additional Language. Learning in English as a second-language (or third-language) becomes problematic as code-switching occurs at school level which has an effect on language proficiency and not observing best practice. The effect of the Department of Basic Education's lack of preparation in schools relating to academic vocabulary has a negative impact on students entering university. Consequently, teacher-education students should be cognisant of these shortfalls and ensure that formal academic English vocabulary and phraseology are consistently included in their First Additional Language (FAL) lessons during Work-integrated lessons (WIL) and once they qualify as professional educators. At the core of this process of exploring a new approach to language learning in academic development, is the aspect of agency which is the capacity to exert control over actions that influence the environment and which brings change in the reality of undergraduate students. The change that is being brought about is the facilitation of access to epistemic justice by inclusivity and peer collaboration.

Research problem: Learners are not receiving exposure to academic English at school which creates an academic dilemma at tertiary level culminating in academic challenges.

Research aim: To examine the role of academic developers and teachers in fostering learner agency and engagement in undergraduate education programmes, to drive curriculum innovation and transformation. Secondly, to explore methods of incorporating the teaching of academic vocabulary and phraseology in the classroom to facilitate acquiring formal English learning at university.

Research questions:

1. How can student teachers be supported to facilitate the teaching of academic vocabulary in the classroom when presenting lessons?

2. How does the development of academic vocabulary and phraseology within a targeted academic literacy intervention enhance students' sense of agency in navigating university literacy demands?

3. In what ways can curriculum design in multilingual higher education settings be transformed to position students as active meaning-makers rather than passive recipients, particularly through pedagogies that foreground academic vocabulary development?

4. How do students perceive their role and agency in co-constructing academic literacy practices, and how might these perceptions inform more inclusive and empowering curriculum models aimed at addressing linguistic inequality and promoting epistemic access?

Key findings: In interpreting the findings, I engaged with literature on language learning in South African basic education, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS, 2011), the linguistic and cognitive skills required for success in higher education, and the transition from school-based language practices to the more demanding literacies of university. I also drew on scholarship that addresses the development of academic vocabulary and phraseology, as well as work on epistemic justice in education. Research consistently shows that students worldwide experience difficulties with academic literacy (Carstens, 2009:16; Hendricks, Andrew, Fowler, 2014:19; Nel, 2015: xii; Snow & Uccelli, 2009:130; Weideman, 2015). In the South African context specifically, Jansen (in Seligmann, 2013, foreword) highlights a significant knowledge and skills gap between basic and higher education. This gap leaves many students - particularly second- and third-language English speakers - insufficiently prepared for the linguistic demands of university, resulting in persistent academic language and literacy challenges. The findings indicate that many students' entering university have not engaged in sufficient reading to prepare them for the demands of formal academic English. Limited exposure to expository writing at school further constrains their ability to produce effective academic texts at university. Several students continue to experience challenges learning through English and comprehending academic readings. Opportunities to develop academic vocabulary at school are inadequate, which negatively affects their proficiency in formal academic English at tertiary level. The results highlight the need for intentional, structured development of academic writing, and show that students themselves recognise its importance for their academic success.

The theoretical and educational value of this study lies in demonstrating how concepts from Tomasello's Usage-based theory of language acquisition (2003) can inform the design of an intervention that strengthens students' academic vocabulary and phraseological competence. Tomasello's notions of "intention-reading" and "pattern-finding" help explain how linguistic structures emerge through use, enabling students to learn new words and apply them appropriately. As Nagy and Townsend (2012:98) note, effective vocabulary learning requires not only acquiring new terms, but also understanding the nuanced meanings associated with them. Vocabulary use differs across linguistic "domains," and Biber (2006:33) highlights that academic language is distinct from everyday spoken or written discourse. Sensitivity to these nuances is only possible when learners develop sufficient proficiency within a specific domain. Biber (2006:34) further emphasises the need for students to navigate multiple registers at university. According to Tomasello (2003), language acquisition relies on individuals' innate capacities for pattern-finding and intention-reading, which support the development of an understanding of how lexical constructions function in context. Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological model of human development (1994) underscores the crucial role of an individual's environment in shaping language development. Meaningful interaction with parents, teachers, peers, family members, and the broader community is essential; when such interactions are limited - as is often the case in many rural, under-resourced South African contexts - the consequences for language growth can be significant. As a result, students who grow up in environments with limited access to books and exposure to formal academic language enter higher education with compromised linguistic resources. Implications for future research are that academic literacy is an ongoing practice with purposeful and planned interventions to facilitate growth and enable agency to bring about change in a student's reality of teaching and learning.

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Navigating Accommodation Dilemmas: HE faculty experiences

Hanne Bjertnes

Abstract

This doctoral research project explores inclusion in Higher Education (HE). The main focus is on faculty members' perspectives on how to assess individual accommodations for students with disabilities, without lowering the academic requirements. The overarching research question of the study is thus: How do faculty members in higher education perceive and assess the relationship between academic requirements and quality, while striving for a more inclusive education environment? Norwegian legislation grants students with disabilities the legal right to individualized accommodations, as long as these do not impose disproportionate resource demands on the institution or compromise academic requirements of the course. Determining whether academic requirements are affected by the accommodations is largely a discretionary judgment made by individual faculty members. Although this promotes professional agency, it also results in incoherent practices and complex dilemmas. To meet the evolving needs of an increasingly diverse student body, robust collaboration between institutional leadership, administrative staff, and faculty is essential. This study applies a qualitative research design, including 13 semi-structured interviews with faculty from eight Norwegian universities and university colleges, in addition to document analysis. Preliminary findings indicate that ensuring students' individual accommodations is primarily considered an administrative responsibility, while limited attention has been given to developing coherent institutional frameworks for practical implementation. Strengthening inclusive pedagogical practices is crucial for providing faculty with strategies that support both legal compliance and academic integrity, making this research highly relevant for institutional policy and academic practice.

Keywords: Dilemmas, accommodations, learning outcomes, faculty

Extended Summary

This doctoral research project is situated in the broad field of inclusion in Higher Education (HE), with a focus on accommodations for students with disabilities from the perspective of academic staff (faculty). The overarching research question is:

How do faculty members in higher education perceive and assess the relationship between academic requirements and quality, while striving for a more inclusive education environment?

Research on inclusive higher education and students with disabilities' access to higher education has increased in recent years, however relatively few studies have focused on the academic faculty members' perspectives (but see for example Moriña & Orozco, 2021; Ryder & Norwich, 2019; Sandoval et al., 2021; Svendby, 2020; 2024). Some of the research that has been done, however, show examples of several dilemmas academic faculty face when it comes to inclusive teaching and accommodations while navigating within the framework of academic requirements in their field. Also, a new report on accessibility in Norwegian Higher Education show that students' need for accommodations are increasingly comprehensive and complex, and that more students request different kinds of pedagogical accommodations (Pedersen et al., 2025).

Norwegian law grants students with disabilities the right to individual accommodations in higher education, provided that such measures do not impose disproportionate resource demands or compromise the academic requirements of the course or program (Universities and University Colleges Act, 2025, § 10)

Whether or not accommodations affect academic requirements of a course, is by and large a discretionary assessment to be made by individual or teams of faculty members. Although ensuring the individual faculty member agency and independence of assessing possibilities for achieving the learning outcomes in their respective disciplines, this approach also results in incoherent practice and poses complex dilemmas for faculty members to navigate. To ensure meeting the evolving educational needs of an increasingly diverse student body requires robust cooperation between institutional strategy making, administrative staff, and academic faculty. To reinforce faculty members' sense of agency in these decisions, a broader toolbox of inclusive, pedagogical practices should be developed through this cooperation. So, what is the current state of affairs?

This study aims to highlight the situation from faculty members' perspective and applies a qualitative research design. Qualitative interviews are appropriate for research that seek to explore people's experiences and attitudes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015) and were hence deemed to be the best fit for this study. The interviews were semi-structured, with an interview guide containing several possible questions related to four broader topics. The aim of the interviews was to capture faculty members' experiences and reflections on assessing accommodations in relation to academic requirements. The questions addressed their teaching experience, professional training and organizational procedures, assessment approaches, and broader reflections on the topic. In addition, document analysis of curricula for university pedagogy courses and other relevant regulations and institutional practices will be conducted.

The data collection in this study consists of 13 semi-structured interviews with faculty members from eight different universities and university colleges across Norway. A purposeful sampling strategy was employed (Cohen et al., 2018), with the criterion that the participants hold a teaching position within a discipline study programme. All interviews lasted between one and two hours and yielded very rich data. The data is currently being analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis, inspired by Braun and Clarke (2022).

At present, the data analysis is not fully finalized. Nevertheless, several preliminary findings have emerged. For instance, ensuring students' legal rights to accommodations is largely perceived as an administrative responsibility at the organizational level. Yet, faculty members interact directly with students in the classroom, and the interview data reveal numerous dilemmas and considerations they encounter in these interactions. Preliminary results suggest that limited attention has been devoted at institutional level to developing a coherent framework for the practical implementation of accommodations. Instead, the emphasis on legal compliance appears to have outweighed efforts to establish organizational practices that equip faculty with a broader repertoire of inclusive pedagogical strategies.

I have not included any theoretical frameworks in this abstract, as their selection will largely depend on the direction I take in my articles after finalizing the analysis. This will be done by the time of my possible presentation at the Doctoral Colloquium and will be included there. More defined ideas and topics can be presented at the conference, where I would be very grateful if I got the opportunity to get feedback and suggestions from the panel.

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Exploring Holistic Academic Development for Professors of Practice in Japanese Higher Education

Hayato Sezaki

Abstract

This doctoral study examines the recruitment and development of Professors of Practice (Practitioner Faculty) in Japanese higher education and aims to construct a multilayered Academic Development model. In Japan, the demand for faculty who bring substantial professional expertise has grown rapidly, especially with the expansion of new professional universities, yet systematic frameworks for their development remain limited. Using Sutherland's (2018) Holistic Academic Development framework, the study addresses four interconnected questions. RQ1 (Macro) analyzes how Professors of Practice have been positioned within national higher education policies. RQ2 (Meso) investigates organizational conditions that enable universities to recruit and retain them sustainably. RQ3 (Micro) explores work-related challenges and capability development processes across career stages, comparing competencies with traditional academics. RQ4 (Academic Development) designs and evaluates holistic faculty development programs that integrate professional experience, research capability, and educational practice. This multilayered approach contributes to understanding faculty roles that combine academic and professional expertise. It also positions Professors of Practice as an emerging research area in higher education studies. Through the Doctoral Colloquium, the study seeks constructive feedback on its theoretical grounding and methodological design to further refine the proposed model.

Keywords: Professor of Practice, Practitioner Faculty, Holistic Academic Development, Faculty Development

Extended Summary

Background and Research Questions

This doctoral study examines the recruitment and development of Professors of Practice (Practitioner Faculty) in Japanese higher education. It analyzes structures and challenges at the levels of policy, organization, individual career, and academic development, aiming to build a multilayered model of academic development that connects education, research, and professional practice. Recently, many universities, including new professional universities, have hired professionals with practical experience as faculty. These Professors of Practice are expected to use their expertise to contribute to teaching, research, and social engagement, linking professional and academic knowledge. However, the institutional foundations for their recruitment and development remain weak, and systematic knowledge on quality assurance and capability building is limited. As a theoretical framework, Sutherland (2018) proposed Holistic Academic Development, emphasizing three perspectives: the whole of the academic role, the whole institution, and the whole person. Based on this, the study analyzes Professors of Practice across four levels: (1) macro (policy and system), (2) meso (university organization), (3) micro (individual career and capability formation), and (4) academic development (support systems and programs). The goal is to construct a multilayered model supporting their professional growth (Table 1).

Table 1. Research Questions in the Doctoral Study.

Analytical Level	Research Question (RQ)
(1) Macro: Policy and System	RQ1: How have Professors of Practice been positioned within Japanese higher education policies and systems?
(2) Meso: University Organization	RQ2: What organizational conditions enable universities to recruit and retain Professors of Practice as core faculty members?
(3) Micro: Individual and Career	RQ3: How are the work-related challenges and capability acquisition processes of Professors of Practice formed throughout their careers?
(4) Academic Development	RQ4: How can academic development systems and programs for Professors of Practice be effectively designed and implemented?

Research Progress and Partial Findings

This section outlines research methods and partial findings. Analyses have focused on the macro and meso levels, while the micro and academic development studies are ongoing.

RQ1: Policy and System (Macro Level)

- Sub-RQ1-1: How are Professors of Practice defined and categorized?

National higher education policies were analyzed. The Standards for the Establishment of Professional Graduate Schools define a Professor of Practice as “a person who has practical experience in the relevant field, generally for five years or more, and possesses advanced professional competence.” Initially limited to fields such as law, medicine, and business, the scope expanded after the establishment of professional universities in 2019 and national development initiatives by the Ministry of Education in Japan (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2024).

- Sub-RQ1-2: How have recruitment needs evolved?

Approximately 241,702 job postings (2001–2024) from JREC-IN, Japan's national academic job portal, were analyzed. The analysis revealed that postings for Professors of Practice have increased significantly since 2019, reflecting policy promotion and institutional initiatives.

RQ2: University Organization (Meso Level)

- Sub-RQ2-1: What is the financial foundation of institutions employing Professors of Practice?

Financial analysis of 17 educational corporations operating professional universities revealed that many face management difficulties, often due to high personnel cost ratios. This suggests challenges in sustaining long-term recruitment.

- Sub-RQ2-2: What roles and competencies are expected at recruitment?

Interviews are planned with HR administrators responsible for recruitment and promotion to understand their perspectives and connect organizational analysis with the upcoming micro-level investigation.

RQ3: Individual and Career (Micro Level)

- Sub-RQ3-1: What professional challenges arise along career paths?

Interviews will be conducted with more than ten current Professors of Practice, focusing on their professional anxieties and capability acquisition processes in education, research, and practice, analyzed using thematic analysis.

- Sub-RQ3-2: How do competencies differ from traditional academics?

A quantitative survey will target about 200 current Professors of Practice, 200 aspiring candidates, and 200 traditional academics. Using items developed from interviews, the study will compare competence structures across career stages.

RQ4: Academic Development

- Sub-RQ4-1: What are the characteristics of existing FD programs?

A review of development programs at four institutions supported by the Japanese government, namely Tohoku University, Nagoya City University, the Graduate School of Social Design, and the National Institute of Technology, Maizuru College, found that some programs emphasize not only teaching and learning but also reflection, practical expertise, and research development. Future work will include surveys of program coordinators and comparisons with similar overseas programs.

- Sub-RQ4-2: How can holistic FD programs be developed and evaluated?

A new FD program will be implemented with about 50 participants. Pre- and post-evaluations will use the competency scale developed in RQ3. The program includes a workshop based on the Structured Academic Portfolio Chart developed by Kayoko Kurita, a tool designed to support reflection on academic work. In this study, it is adapted to incorporate elements of professional experience to fit the role of Professors of Practice.

Conclusion and Future Directions

This study shows that a multilayered approach based on Holistic Academic Development, covering policy, organization, individual careers, and academic development programs, is necessary to understand the role of Professors of Practice in Japan. Their recruitment and development remain strongly influenced by national policy, and challenges appear at both the institutional and individual levels. Professors of Practice are expected to contribute not only to teaching and learning but also to professional practice and research, linking academic and societal needs. Future work will advance micro-level and academic development studies, expand qualitative data, and conduct long-term evaluations of new development programs. After completing the doctoral dissertation, international comparison will be considered to clarify broader issues and to examine how this study can inform wider discussions in academic development. Through the Doctoral Colloquium, I seek constructive feedback on the relevance and feasibility of this research.

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Doctoral Colloquium 2

Leadership of Boundary-Crossing Roles in Teacher Education

Ann-Therese Nomerstad

Abstract

Collaboration between schools and teacher education institutions is essential for developing relevant and research-informed teacher education. However, such collaboration does not emerge automatically. It is shaped by leadership, institutional practices, and professional expectations. This paper, which is part of an ongoing doctoral project, explores how leadership and institutional practices influence collaboration and developing work in teacher education, with particular attention to the organization and leadership of hybrid teacher educators - educators who work both in schools and in teacher education. The study is situated within the field of educational leadership and draws on theories of leadership as practice, institutional practices, and professional identity to examine how boundary-crossing roles are shaped, supported and negotiated. Empirically, the study is designed as a qualitative case study including observations and interviews with hybrid teacher educators, coordinators, a partnership project leader, and program leaders. Preliminary findings show that leadership unfolds in tensions between governance requirements and local organizational practices. Relational, negotiation-based leadership and teacher agency are crucial, while weak institutional anchoring and economic uncertainty pose challenges to long term sustainability. This study contributes to the knowledge base on educational leadership in school–university partnerships and discusses implications for organizing sustainable collaboration and professional development.

Keywords: Educational leadership, collaboration, institutional practices, hybrid teacher educators, boundary-crossing

Extended summary

Teacher education is increasingly organized through partnership models that aim to strengthen the relationship between educational research, professional knowledge, and school-based practice (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017; Lillejord & Børte, 2016). Such models place new demands on leadership, organization, and professional roles, as collaboration must be sustained across institutional systems with different mandates, accountability structures, and professional traditions. From a leadership perspective, this raises questions about how collaboration is made workable in everyday institutional practice (Hermansen, 2020, 2025).

Hybrid teacher educators represent a particularly demanding form of such collaboration, as they formally operate across school and university contexts. These roles are described as having strong potential for coherence, knowledge exchange, and professional learning (Andreasen, 2023; Risan, 2022), while simultaneously challenging established boundaries of expertise, authority, and responsibility (Noordegraaf, 2020). This makes hybrid roles analytically interesting as sites where leadership, institutional practices, and professional identities intersect and are negotiated (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011; Noordegraaf, 2020; Wenger, 1998). While Risan (2022) have documented the potential value of hybrid roles, less attention has been given to how they are led and embedded institutionally over time. There is limited empirical knowledge about how leadership and institutional practices shape sustainability in loosely coupled systems (Hermansen, 2020, 2025).

The aim of this paper is to investigate how leadership and institutional practices influence collaboration and development work in teacher education, with a specific focus on the organization and leadership of hybrid teacher educators. The studies research question is: How do leadership and institutional practices influence collaboration and development work in teacher education?

Theoretical framework: The study combines three perspectives. First, leadership is conceptualized as “leadership as practice”, understood as situated, distributed, and enacted through everyday interactions, rather than formal authority alone (Wenger, 1998). Second, the study draws on theories of institutional practices, particularly governance practices and organizational practices Hedegaard (2014) and Hermansen (2020, 2025). Governance practices refer to policy documents and national expectations, while organizational and leadership practices refer to local routines and institutional structures (Hermansen & Mausethagen, 2023). Third, the study applies perspectives on professional identity, with emphasis on Noordegraaf’s (2020) concept of connective professionalism. Hybrid teacher educators negotiate expertise, autonomy, and authority across institutional logics. The study also draws on Wittgenstein’s notion of language games (Fogelin, 1996).

Methodological approach: The paper is based on a qualitative case study of the leadership and organization of hybrid teacher educators in Norwegian teacher education. The material consists of observations and nine semi-structured interviews with four teachers in hybrid positions, two coordinators, one partnership project leader, and two program leaders. The data provide insight into how collaboration is led, enacted, negotiated, and supported across institutional boundaries. The analysis draws on reflexive thematic analysis inspired by Braun og Clarke (2022).

Key findings: Preliminary analysis shows that leadership unfolds in a complex environment shaped by governance requirements and informal expectations. Leaders balance national strategies with local practices that enable and constrain development work. Operating within loosely coupled structures, leaders face high levels of autonomy and uneven engagement in collaboration.

Hybrid teacher educators emerge as crucial sites for cross-institutional collaboration, fostering collegial learning, shared responsibility, and professional support. However, these roles require explicit leadership support through time allocation, trust-building, and arenas for joint work. The renegotiation of professional practices and identities generates uncertainty around expertise and authority. Leadership practices are largely relational and negotiation-based, focused on meaning-making, coordination, and protecting time and legitimacy. Yet they are weakly institutionalized and highly person dependent.

Finally, concerns about sustainability are evident, related to funding, institutional anchoring, and organizational responsibility. Theoretical and educational significance and implications: The study shows that leadership of collaboration in teacher education is largely enacted through everyday practices rather than formal structures. Leaders and hybrid teacher educators act as strategic change agents in loosely coupled systems were negotiation and relational work drive transformation. Hybrid roles have strong potential for improving teaching, coherence, and professional learning and identity, especially when supported by strategic leadership that secures time, legitimacy, and institutional anchoring. Without such anchoring, initiatives risk becoming fragile and dependent on individuals.

For academic development and policy, the study highlights leaders`need for strategic frameworks, strong cross level coordination, feedback structures, and resilient institutional arrangements to advance collaboration. The study also contributes to ongoing discussions of agency, strategy, professional identity and leadership in teacher education.

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Surviving and Thriving in Academic Development Work an exploratory study from Scotland

Susan Greig

Abstract

This paper reports on a small-scale qualitative research study exploring the research question: How do Academic Developers sustain themselves and thrive in Higher Education? The study undertook qualitative interviews with nine participants who worked as Academic Developers in Scotland. These were analysed using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Reflexive TA) and three themes were explored; ambiguities in Academic Development work, challenges, and strategies that help Academic Developers to thrive in this work. This paper offers strategies for individual academic developers to consider for their own wellbeing. However, it situates these strategies as individualized adaptations in response to the pressures of neoliberal university policies. It is aligned to conference sub-theme 2, questioning who is best placed to support the wellbeing of academic developers, themselves, their institutions or professional bodies and networks.

Keywords: Academic Development, Educational Development, Thriving, Wellbeing, Neoliberal, Challenges, Reflective TA.

Extended Summary

This paper reports on a small-scale research study, undertaken as part of a Doctor in Education (EdD), which asked: How do Academic Developers sustain themselves and thrive in Higher Education? This was explored via the research questions:

1. What are the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of Academic Development work in Scottish Higher Education?

2. How is Academic Development work recognised and supported within institutions, and what tensions or challenges, if any, do Academic Developers experience between institutional expectations and their personal and professional wellbeing?

3. What strategies and practices do Academic Developers use to sustain their wellbeing and manage the emotional and relational demands of their roles?

This project is informed by a subjectivist ontology, which recognises that knowledge is constructed through the interactions between the researcher and the participants. It also adopts a relativist epistemology, which assumes that individuals' lived experiences, and their interactions with others, shape and construct knowledge (Lincoln et al., 2023) . This research was conducted in line with the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2024) Ethical Guidelines for Ethical Research and ethical approval was given from the University of Stirling (General University Ethics Panel Ethics Approval Reference: 23754).

This study was inspired by my experience of working in Academic Development. The research approach took the position that Academic Development practice, having developed in response to the massification of Higher Education, with a focus on measurable outcomes (Olssen & Peters, 2007) is a product of neoliberalism. Where contemporary universities position themselves as profit making enterprises (Gurney & Grossi, 2021) they also, position staff as entrepreneurial idealised neoliberal employees.

The primary data collection method, qualitative interviews, was chosen to explore experiences in depth, enabling the researcher to capture nuanced insights into the challenges, strategies, and supports that shape Academic Developers' professional lives (Bryman et al., 2021) . Participants were recruited via a sector network in September 2025. Nine semi-structured interviews were held on MS Teams in September and October 2025. Participants were four women and five men who held Academic Development roles across 7 different HE institutions (of 19 HE's in Scotland). Participant experience ranged from 3 to 20 years. Data analysis used Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Reflexive TA) as defined by (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2022) to align to an interpretive/constructivist paradigm.

After interpreting the data as described above in response to my research questions, I identified three themes. The first around ambiguity of academic development work which is complex, can be poorly understood institutionally and is implemented differently in different institutions. The second exploring challenges in academic development work, identifying those intrinsic to the work itself, and those related to the institutional context. The third theme was around thriving as an Academic Developer and identified three pillars to success.

Theme one explored the ambiguities in the concept of academic development within the interview responses. There was a spectrum of views on if Academic Developer was a role and/or an identity and whether emotional labour, as suggested by Ogbonna and Harris (2004) , is (or should be) part of academic development work. There was also differing views on how Academic Developers relate to academics either as fellow academics or as a different role. Even within the small higher education sector in Scotland there was a wide range of experiences and views shared. The following excerpts from two interviewees show opposing views of the sense of Academic Developer as an identity:

"I always look forward to my work, and I feel really stimulated by it. ***So no, I love it.*** *And yeah, it didn't. I've always.* ***I've always been stimulated by jobs I've had before, but I wouldn't say I love them****." Participant from Institution 1*

"You know, being an Academic Developer is not my whole identity. ***It's not even one of the biggest parts of my identity by a long shot. And I know for some people it really is****. And that's not because I don't value and respect and think that that work is important because I do. I think I'm good at it, but it's also not the only job I would ever see myself in." Participant from Institution 2*

Theme two explored challenges that Academic Development work brings with it., Some were intrinsic to the role, and some came from the institutional context. Common "intrinsic" challenges to Academic Development work were, lack of participant engagement (in both accreditation schemes and curriculum development work), the weight of responsibility for participant welfare and dealing with resistance from participants. Common "institutional" challenges were institutional stability (re the financial context of universities in the UK), strategic and structural changes within the institution, working within institutional management structures (e.g. having an unsupportive line manager) and institutional positioning of the academic development work (e.g. being perceived to "take sides" with management).

But despite challenges, people do thrive in Academic Development work, and theme three suggest that there are three elements that support them to do so, having good self-awareness and boundaries, being part of a supportive team and being part of a community beyond their institution. While the immediate team mattered, the context of the wider institution was not raised as a supportive element in the wellbeing of Academic Developers, which was an interesting omission.

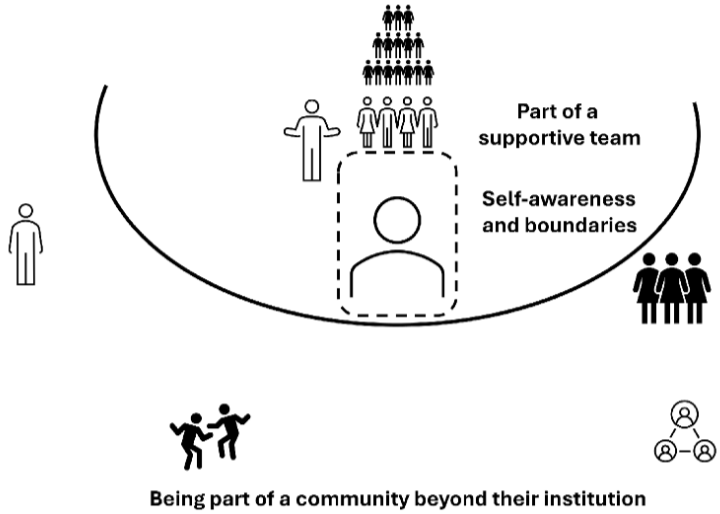


Fig 1: When does an Academic Developer thrive?

This papers contribution is to describe the context of academic development work in Scotland and to offers strategies for individual academic developers to be aware of when considering their own wellbeing. However, it situates these strategies as individualized adaptations in response to the pressures of neoliberal university policies. This raises questions about who is best placed to support the wellbeing of academic developers, themselves, their institutions or professional bodies and networks. It is aligned to the conference sub theme two in exploring the degree to which agency is possible within institutional structures and how these structures impact on individual effectiveness and wellbeing.

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Advancing academic development for teaching courses in English as and to non-native speakers

Alexandra Bergedick

Abstract

While academic development and practice have been confronted with increasing challenges in the context of internationalization processes, with dramatically rising numbers of study programmes and courses being taught to international students in English, often by and to non-native English speakers, research in the field of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) and affiliated fields, indicates that academic development, research and -practice regarding teacher professionalization in this context is limited, lacking insights and approaches from a pedagogical point of view in particular. In order to explore how teacher professionalization in the EMI-context may be stimulated by a didactic intervention, the here portrayed undergoing doctoral study in educational sciences therefore explores how EMI-teachers' self-efficacy experience may transform in the course of one semester, when participating in an EMI-targeted didactic intervention. With self-efficacy presumed central in advancing teaching competencies and -performance, teachers' self-efficacy experience regarding their teaching in the EMI-context will be explored through semi-structured interviews carried out before and after taking part in the didactic intervention and teaching in the winter semester of 2026/27. The findings of the doctoral study may indicate how pedagogical approaches of this kind may advance EMI-teacher development and inspire teaching practice, while highlighting further research needs.

Keywords: internationalization, EMI-teacher professionalization (EMI -English as a Medium of Instruction), self-efficacy, didactic intervention

Extended Summary

With an unprecedented rise of university courses for all subject-fields being established and taught in English by and to non-native English speakers worldwide (Macaro, et al (2018)), challenges increase for teachers and students when teaching and learning through a language that is not their first learned language, adding to the challenges these actors already face when teaching and studying in their native language (L1). Focusing on this context, the aim of this paper is to portray the author's ongoing research process in a doctoral study in educational sciences, in order to raise awareness, encourage debate, reflexion, feedback, as well as international cooperation in this research- and practice field, ultimately contributing to academic research, -development and -practice in the context of internationalization and EMI.

The research question in the doctoral study is, how the self-efficacy of teachers teaching through EMI may develop in their experience over the course of one semester, when participating in a didactic intervention designed to raise awareness and set the base for developing competencies central in the EMI-context, thus contributing to their professionalization as teachers in internationalized courses. The doctoral study is based on theories and studies in the fields of educational sciences, psychology, intercultural studies, as well as EMI, applied linguistics, and English language studies. It centres around the concept of self-efficacy and its role in teacher development (Beuße, M., Hartz, S., & Piep, J. (2015)), and a model on the structure of academic teaching competence in the university context (Trautwein & Merkt (2013)), as well as the competencies identified as essential in EMI- studies and affiliated fields (Sun, Y. (2023)).

In the qualitative methodological approach, there will be approximately 12 individual, semi-structured interviews with international university teachers from three universities, conducted before and after the teaching period of the winter semester 2026/27. Additionally, there will be a semi-structured group-interview carried out after the final individual interviews. In order to review the developed questions for these interviews, pre-interviews will be conducted in the winter term 2025/26 and summer term 2026 with international teachers taking part in didactic workshops carried out in English in that time frame. The didactic intervention will consist of various parts: First, there will be asynchronous online self-study units before the first workshop takes place, with tasks to complete, followed by peer-review and -feedback, then individual review of the tasks. After this phase, there will be a central synchronous online group workshop. After the workshop, further self-study units will be employed online, with tasks aimed at supporting teaching practice in the current teaching period, to be worked through asynchronously at teaches' own pace, available throughout the semester. Halfway through the teaching period, a short Q&A-workshop will be carried out to address the most pressing issues the teachers are experiencing in their practice.

The didactic intervention will focus on the promotion of five key competencies that have been identified as essential in the EMI-context in prior studies: EMI-awareness, pedagogic-, communicative-, multicultural-, and language competence. Expected findings in the current study, deriving from experience gathered within 15 years of conceptualizing, carrying out, and evaluating didactic workshops focusing on the named competencies for international university teachers in English as L2, as well as workshops in L1, at over 40 universities and various graduate centres, and based on competencies developed in two extensive trainings for university teacher professionalization as a participant, are: -self-efficacy experience plays a crucial role in teacher professionalization -by going through a learning process on teaching competences for EMI-teaching as individuals and peers, the participating teachers will experience an increase in self-efficacy regarding their teaching performance in EMI-courses -this may contribute to improved

teaching performance, professionalization in teaching in L1 and in L2 -thereby students' learning opportunities may be stimulated, with conceivably more didactic support, indirect or direct, to reach the intended learning outcomes through inspired ways of teaching.

Expected outcomes of the doctoral study are that the participating teachers will have experienced a transformation in their self-efficacy after going through the process of the didactic intervention and applied research methods, with awareness and reflexion through practice and communication on what they have learned, regarding teaching at universities in general and in the EMI-context in particular, resulting in higher teaching quality. The deducted insights from the interviews will be discussed, taking into account the differences of the overall system, institutions, and field-specifics of the included universities and teachers. The teachers' biographical background including experiences in academic and teaching development will also be looked at when interpreting the interview results. As portrayed above, research in EMI and affiliated fields indicates that more theoretical and practical approaches are required, specifically pedagogical approaches, to address challenges and demands deriving from globally rising numbers of EMI-taught university courses, supporting and advancing teaching and learning in the EMI-context. In order to advance practice, policy and future research regarding academic development in EMI-contexts, the ongoing doctoral study, introduced here, explores a pedagogical approach offered to university teachers through a didactic intervention, to inspire their self-efficacy and teaching performance, with the results of the individual interviews and a group interview to be evaluated and discussed The outcomes will indicate how this approach might serve as a future model for approaches in academic development and practice in the EMI-context, while considering contextual and practical variables, thus helping to further develop policies and structures fostering EMI-teacher education and professionalization, inviting rising numbers of teacher training and research in this area.

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Friday 26 June 2026

Symposium 10

Becoming agents for curriculum internationalisation. Research insights from four European countries

Angelika Thielsch, Pouneh Eftekhari, Becky Bergman, Eveke de Louw, Lucie Weissowa, Torgny Roxå

Abstract

For two decades now, higher education institutions aim at increasing global perspectives into their study programs by means of different approaches to curriculum internationalization (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Leask, 2015), nowadays especially by the so-called internationalisation of the curriculum at home (IoCaH) (Eftekhari, Yousefzadeh, & Coelen, 2025; Leask, 2025). Yet, the success of these endeavours is still fragile due to the missing support structures for academic teachers to engage in IoCaH and the lack of organisational embeddedness of educational developers (ED) in these processes (EQUiiP, 2019; Killick, 2015). The question is, how the institutional environment for both of these crucial stakeholders can be influenced for them to develop a sense of agency that makes them engage (more). It is this question that lies at the heart of our symposium. The three symposium papers offer focal points for EDs to use in order to increase their own involvement in IoCaH processes. The papers are underpinned by findings of two research groups and four doctoral theses. The first two papers share recent findings about what academic teachers as well as ED actually need to (be able to) get engaged in internationalisation. The third paper offers a comprehensive summary of the analysed factors that could support both stakeholders in increasing their agency as ambassadors of IoCaH. Each paper is grounded in the presenters' empirical research, drawing upon multiple, methodologically diverse projects in four European countries. All studies were externally funded and rigorously peer-reviewed.

Keywords: Internationalisation, continuing professional development, educational developers, academic teaching staff

Extended Summary

Our symposium shares empirically based and practically reflected insights into how institutional environments can be influenced in a way that educational developers and academic teachers identify themselves (more easily) as agents for IoCaH. The symposium begins with a brief opening lecture introducing the thematic field as well as the perspectives and key questions of the event. This is followed by three short paper presentations that, based on current research findings, address these questions, outline possible courses of action, and highlight related practical implications. Afterwards, the three contributions are discussed and further developed from the perspective of a discussant before an in-depth discussion with all participants of the symposium takes place.

Presentation 1: Teachers' role in facilitating internationalisation in HEI

This paper distinguishes between process-focused ("how") and content-focused ("what") approaches to educational development in internationalisation. One challenge for realising top-down institutional policies for IoCaH are the different rationales and practices within the disciplines, creating tensions between institutional priorities and departmental realities, and limiting meaningful engagement. We argue why EDs should not only engage with processes around IoCaH but also with the epistemological content of disciplines—the "what" and "why"—not just the "how."

The first half of the paper examines the theoretical foundations that shape IoCaH across disciplines. Synthesising findings across several empirical studies, we introduce a framework that highlights how disciplinary traditions influence awareness, beliefs, and strategies, showing that IoCaH is conceptualised and enacted in diverse, discipline-specific ways. This framework provides a lens for understanding disciplinary engagement and offers practical insights for rethinking the ED role in advancing IoCaH.

The second half presents an empirical case from engineering education—a highly internationalised yet under-supported discipline. A mixed-method study of intercultural group work (IGW) revealed that while institutional goals were present, workplace competencies were often prioritised, and increased diversity added complexity. A conceptual framework illustrates the interplay between structural context and teacher interventions in IGW planning. Drawing on this evidence, the session concludes with key considerations for EDs seeking to support IoCaH in discipline-specific contexts.

Presentation 2: What do educational developers need to get invested

IoCaH shifts the focus from mobility-driven practices to student-centred approaches and student learning outcomes. This means that new stakeholders beyond international offices need to become involved and for some time the focus of the field has been on engaging and equipping teachers. However, increasingly the attention is turning towards educational developers as they can potentially embed IoCaH in curricular and quality assurance processes, resulting in more robust IoCaH practices. This paper presents the outcomes of two studies aimed at bridging the gap between international office work and educational development.

The first study looked into enabling factors that encourage the agency of educational developers in IoCaH. By interviewing educational developers in four different Western-European countries who play an explicit role in IoCaH, the team found that the following fosters educational developers' agency in IoCaH: personal drive; scholarly knowledge of IoCaH, an enabling organisational environment and boundary-crossing network relations.

The second study complements the first one by focusing on educational developers who are not involved in IoCaH. Findings show that IoCaH and educational development both involve 'boundary work' and that it is their ability to zoom out from disciplinary content that can be leveraged to help teachers unpack the international/intercultural dimensions of their subject. However, the educational developers in this second study only initiate IoCaH discussions when invited to do so by curriculum development teams and the challenge is to identify who raises the issue of IoCaH at what stage of educational development.

Presentation 3: What continuing professional development works: Supporting teachers and educational developers in internationalisation

Internationalisation continues to reshape higher education and increases the need for relevant continuing professional development (CPD) for both teachers and educational developers. This paper brings together two complementary studies that examine what makes CPD effective for teachers and what educational developers themselves need in order to support IoCaH with confidence.

The first study shows that engagement with CPD follows six distinct pathways, captured through participant personas that differ in prior experience, expectations, motivation, and levels of departmental or institutional support. These pathways explain why the same CPD initiative can lead to different outcomes for different academics. Needs assessment, practical skills, learning alignment, and productive disruption were the most decisive features of effective CPD design. Job crafting and teaching conditions, including workload and autonomy, further shaped what changes could be implemented in practice.

The second study explores how educational developers make sense of their role in internationalising the curriculum. Little is known about how they conceptualise IoCaH, perceive its link to educational development, and the strategies they use to support IoCaH. Initial findings show that once they have conceptual clarity, educational developers see they add value to the IoCaH process by guiding the constructive alignment process and helping teachers explore local and global contexts through critical inquiry.

Together, the studies show that meaningful CPD for internationalisation requires varied pathways of engagement, practical and aligned learning opportunities, and strengthened capacity for both teachers and educational developers.

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Symposium 11

Advancing Student Agency through Technology-Enhanced Learning Environments: The Taiwan Experience

Wei Shun Chang, Sung-Hui Tseng, Chi-Jung Huang, Ju-Ying Chang, Tsung-Ren Huang, Ling-Chieh Kung

Abstract

This symposium explores how technology can meaningfully enhance student agency across diverse learning contexts in higher education. Three universities—University A, University B, and University C—will present special initiatives that integrate technology to empower learners as active, reflective, and creative agents in their educational journeys. University A will share innovations within its Learning Management System, which enhances student agency and learning effectiveness through purposeful feature design. University B will highlight its AI Literacy Lab, designed to build essential AI competencies through lectures, workshops, competitions, and self-directed learning activities. University C will demonstrate its Student Learning E-Portfolio System, an AI-driven, personalized navigation system that leverages competency diagnostics and data analytics to help students build individualized learning pathways and career identities. Together, these contributions demonstrate how universities can design technology-enabled ecosystems that promote student autonomy, competence development, and collaborative innovation. The symposium will share our vision and invite participants to reflect on how technological innovation and learning experiences can nurture motivation and empower learners.

Keywords: Student Agency, Learning Technology, AI Literacy, E-Portfolio

Presentation 1: Enhancing Student Agency and Learning Effectiveness through Feature Design on University A's Learning Management System X

This presentation will discuss the development of University A's Learning Management System X and present the findings from related UX research. Developed by University A, the X platform represents a dedicated effort to enhance student agency and learning effectiveness through strategic feature design. Currently, the platform's video learning module incorporates speech recognition technology to provide bilingual (Chinese-English) subtitles, supporting diverse learning needs. Furthermore, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research has confirmed that the PDF collaborative annotation feature not only boosts learning motivation and peer interaction but also significantly expands the breadth and depth of students' knowledge acquisition. To further deepen these benefits, the development team is integrating Large Language Models (LLMs) to introduce two new features. The first is "Video Summarization and Segmentation," which automatically generates segment titles and summaries for long lecture videos. This addresses the difficulty students face in locating key concepts, allowing them to quickly grasp the content structure and navigate to specific sections efficiently. The second is "Automatic Quiz Generation," which creates assessment items based on course materials (videos and documents). This establishes an immediate feedback mechanism, empowering students to self-assess their understanding. Through these AI applications, University A aims to support personalized learning paces, thereby realizing the goal of fostering student agency through technology.

Presentation 2: Building AI Literacy Through the University B's AI Literacy Lab.

This presentation examines the design, implementation, and emerging impact of University B's AI Literacy Lab as a strategic institutional initiative to foster students' AI literacy and strengthen their capacity for autonomous and creative learning. Established within the university library, the Lab is designed as an integrated space for learning, collaborative exploration, and public showcasing to address the growing need for students to navigate AI-rich academic and professional environments with confidence and critical judgement. To promote active, hands-on engagement, the Lab offers a semester-long series of AI-focused lectures, skill-building workshops, experiential competitions, and thematic exhibitions that introduce both students and faculty to practical AI tools while encouraging reflective use, ethical awareness, and innovative application. Complementing these on-site learning opportunities, the Lab is launching the "AI Tools Master Award" through the university's digital learning platform, enabling students to complete self-paced modules that build proficiency in ten widely used AI tools. Further evaluation will investigate whether students increasingly demonstrate the ability to identify relevant AI strategies, apply tools effectively in disciplinary contexts, and independently explore technological solutions to learning and research challenges. Through these coordinated efforts, the AI Literacy Lab aims to enhance student agency by empowering learners to take ownership of their AI skill development, make informed decisions about tool use, and apply AI creatively and responsibly in academic and professional tasks.

Presentation 3: Navigating Personalized Learning Journeys: AI-Driven Competency Mapping in University C's Student Learning E-Portfolio System

This presentation introduces the development and implementation of University C's Student Learning E-Portfolio System Z, a holistic, AI-enhanced platform designed to foster student agency through data-driven personalization.

Addressing the persistent challenge that students often struggle to integrate fragmented learning experiences, University C developed this cross-departmental system to synthesize academic records, co-curricular activities, and University Career and Competency Assessment Network competency diagnostics into a unified, interactive dashboard. The system's core innovation lies in transforming static data into personalized, actionable insights through an AI recommendation engine that visualizes each student's "Competency Radar," mapping current skills against career aspirations and recommending tailored courses, workshops, and career opportunities to bridge specific gaps. This approach shifts students from passive recipients of standardized curricula to active architects of individualized learning pathways. System Z further supports dynamic E-Portfolios and automated CV generation, encouraging continuous reflection on personal growth and the documentation of unique learning journeys. With lifelong accessibility extending beyond graduation, the platform enables students to align daily academic choices with long-term professional goals. University C is also pioneering the nation's first SDGs Talent Certification Mechanism, which will provide verifiable credentials embedded within the system. By making learning outcomes visible and personalized, E-Portfolio System Z cultivates stronger student agency and self-directed navigation of academic and career trajectories.

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Symposium 12

Ventures Near and Far: Place-based Knowledge and Transformational Learning in Study Abroad Courses

Ben Pack, Amanda Bloom, Brent Chappelow, Sean Cosgrove

Abstract

This symposium focuses on how place-based pedagogy fosters student agency, critical thinking and transformative learning. The speakers are four professors who create and teach writing courses that bring students from their home institution in the U.S.A to destinations abroad (Spain, Italy, France, and Australia). By learning in these destinations, the professors and students co-create experiences and develop insights which could not be replicated in classrooms at their home institution.

This place-based learning abroad re-configures the writing pedagogy in several innovative ways: by disorienting rigid/previous mindsets, by grounding writing and thinking in the body and physical action, by cultivating global thinking to reimagine local problems, and by centering creative labor in assessment and learning. In developing these practices, the instructors and students find meaningful ways to address societal challenges such as climate change and artificial intelligence, while also enriching student agency and motivation to explore further areas of interest.

Keywords: Place-based learning, Writing pedagogy, Critical thinking, Study-abroad courses. Global Education

Presentation 1: **Dis- and Re-orientation in Place-Based Learning as Context for Transformative Learning Experiences**

For many students, place-based, study abroad programs provide a learning environment premised on a curated experience of "disorientation." Jetlagged, physically dislocated, and culturally or linguistically unfamiliar, students are asked to embed themselves in their new social contexts. As Sara Ahmed argues, it is through this process of negotiating the familiar and the unfamiliar that it becomes "possible for the world to create new impressions."

In this presentation, the speaker argues that by attending to the disorienting experience of studying in unfamiliar places, instructors can re-frame and re-contextualise student writing practices as pillars of critical thinking and world-building that have the potential to lead to significant new learning experiences and ways of imagining social ills and their solutions. Using a Sydney-based study-abroad program as the basis of discussion, the speaker offers analysis of how journaling tools, critical essaying, and engagement with historically and culturally significant sites come together to allow students to construct an "archive of place" that not merely documents the processes of (re)orientation but constructs them through the act of writing. Writing, in other words, becomes the means not only of recording spatial integration but enacting it and, in so doing, offers up possibilities for new configurations (or orientations) in student entanglements with the worlds in which they inhabit.

Presentation 2: Walking to Write: Path-finding in Physical and Digital Spaces

As popularized by Charles Baudelaire in the 19th century, the "flaneur" is a rambler, exploring city streets and making meaning out of observations. Writing in Reading Landscapes and Walking the Streets , Nedra Reynolds offers that the flaneur is a kind of composer, or writer: "Strolling through the literature of modernity, geography, urban studies, and critical theory, the flaneur embodies the spatial practices of walking as writing, writing as walking."

In this presentation, the speaker expands upon this concept as applied to lessons and technology in experiential learning courses taught in Paris and Los Angeles. This presentation analyzes how these classes use group excursions and walking to enrich the curriculum and foster transformative learning. While exploring city streets, the class co-creates texts with the aid of group messaging apps – honing rhetorical skills related to observation, questioning, curiosity and invention. Simultaneously, this practice of walking as writing pushes back against (the now common) student temptation to use Large Language Models (LLMs). The physical act of walking is impossible for LLM's to do (and indeed is something that they mimic poorly). Walking grounds writing in the body, and as students explore, they generate further agency and motivation – choosing individual paths, selecting details that others miss, asking questions of themselves and their professor, while prompting engagement amongst their peers.

Presentation 3: Achieving Agency in a Warming World: Re-Imaginging the Collaborative Group Project

In recent years, the United Nations has foregrounded the importance of expanding opportunities for young people to embrace global citizenship, learn about sustainable lifestyles, and develop the anticipatory thinking necessary to meet its Sustainable Development Goals. This speaker sees place-based, short term study abroad writing courses as ideal incubators for realizing such outcomes. This speaker uses as a test case a writing course she taught, "Writing Sustainable Futures in Madrid & Sicily." Over four weeks, students visit a dozen NGOs and sustainable development projects that aim to render Mediterranean countries "future proof" - that is, resilient to the droughts, floods, and heat waves that dominate the news cycle.

For their culminating group projects, students craft proposals for adapting a project or initiative they encountered abroad to resolve or mitigate a climate-related issue back home in Los Angeles. Through their acts of collaboration, students are shaped into knowledgeable change-makers equipped with the rhetorical expertise to counter disinformation and achieve the felt sense of collective agency necessary to help their own communities anticipate and prepare for worsening climate disasters. In this context, the act of writing becomes a tool that promotes a cross-pollination of ideas across international borders and seeks to shape students into global, and local, change-makers.

Presentation 4: Embodied Labor and Discovery in Place-Based Learning

The use of labor-based grading contracts in writing classrooms has emerged to respond to a range of concerns related to writing assessment. By centering assessment on labor, this alternative form promises greater agency for students in determining their experience in the course. Furthermore, place-based experiential learning courses offer an opportune context to develop assessments that center students' embodied experiences. As Asao Inoue writes, "we pay attention to our bodies, what they are doing, how they feel as they move (or remain still), where they are in time and space" (119). The embodied learning experience centered in place-based approaches allows one's relation to place as the critical lens from which students investigate the curriculum.

In this presentation, the speaker breaks down the development of labor-based assessment practices developed for an experiential learning course that offered students the opportunity to reinforce and expand upon the instructor-led aspects of the course—readings, writing prompts, excursions, etc.—with their own creative labor through opportunities to create and participate in additional experiential opportunities in a range of settings and purposes. The speaker analyzes how the instructor- and student-led excursions complement course objectives and discusses how labor-based grading leads to a co-created transformative learning experience for instructor and students.

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Papers 32

Development and Implementation of the Thailand Professional Standards Framework (THPSF) to Enhance Teaching Quality

Arnuparp Lekhakula, Chanen Munkong, Benjamas Wongsatayanon

Abstract

Academic staff in universities are recognized as dual professionals: teachers in higher education (HE) and specialists in their disciplines. Teacher quality directly influences students' achievement and personal growth. This paper examines the development and implementation of THPSF in higher education, situating it within national and international efforts to enhance teaching quality and align academic practice with global benchmarks. Grounded in competency-based, evidence-informed pedagogy, reflective practice, and continuous professional growth, THPSF defines three domains—knowledge, competencies, and values—across four progressive levels of professional recognition, ranging from Level 1 (Fellow Teacher) to Level 4 (Mastery Teacher). Methodologically, the study employs qualitative policy analysis and case studies from pilot universities to illustrate how THPSF has been embedded into faculty development, promotion systems, and institutional quality assurance. Key milestones include the establishment of the Thailand Qualifications Framework for HE (2009), collaboration with the European Union (2015), endorsement of teaching standards (2016), and the development of national guidelines (2017), culminating in the official launch of THPSF in 2023. The Association of Professional and Organizational Development Network of Thailand Higher Education (Thailand POD) plays a pivotal role in certification, reviewer training, and nationwide implementation. Findings highlight THPSF's contribution to learner-centered, reflective teaching and professional recognition, while acknowledging challenges of institutional variability, reviewer capacity, and sustained engagement. Overall, the implementation of THPSF reflects Thailand's commitment to enhancing teaching quality, advancing educational equity, and positioning higher education institutions to meet evolving learner and societal needs.

Keywords: Thailand Professional Standards Framework, Thailand-PSF, THPSF, Thailand POD

Extended Summary

This paper aims to examine the development and implementation of THPSF in higher education and to analyze how a national initiative can enhance teaching quality, support the Thailand Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF-HE), and align Thai academic practice with international standards. It also explores the role of Thailand POD in operationalizing the framework and driving systemic change across universities.

THPSF is grounded in a competency-based, evidence-based teaching, reflective practice, and continuous professional growth, drawing on international professional standards models such as the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF), Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS) and similar initiatives worldwide. It emphasizes three core domains—knowledge (2 standards), competencies (4 standards), and values (2 standards)—which collectively guide academic staff in teaching, assessment, and learner support. These are categorized into four levels: Level 1 (Fellow Teacher, FT-THPSF) - a quality teacher; Level 2 (Professional Teacher, PT-THPSF) - supports peers in becoming quality educators; Level 3 (Scholarly Teacher, ST-THPSF) - cultivates quality educators within the organization; and Level 4 (Mastery Teacher, MT-THPSF) - leads the advancement of the teaching profession at the national or international level. Methodologically, the paper adopts a qualitative policy and implementation analysis, supplemented by case studies from pilot Thai universities. These cases illustrate how THPSF has been embedded into faculty development programs, promotion and evaluation systems, and institutional quality assurance mechanisms. Its development reflects broader efforts to align Thai higher education with global standards, while respecting national priorities and cultural contexts.

In 2009, TQF-HE was formally established as a national benchmark to ensure consistency and quality across academic programs. Building on this foundation, in 2015, Thailand entered into a collaborative initiative with the European Union under the project "TQF and the Development of Professional Standards Framework", which aimed to integrate global perspectives and strengthen professional teaching standards. Subsequently, in 2016, the Subcommittee on the Promotion and Monitoring of TQF implementation endorsed the principle of a Professional Standards Framework for

Teaching in Higher Education, marking a significant step toward formalizing expectations for academic staff. In 2017, the Guidelines for Promoting the Quality of Teaching in Higher Education Institutions was developed, providing practical measures to support faculty development and institutional improvement. Finally, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation announced THPSF in May 2023. Thailand POD plays role in certification process including submission, screening, peer review, amendment, final decision and certification. It also conducted the training to ensure reviewer standardization. To date, there have been 2,390 applicants with 281 certified as Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4 in 31 (11.0%), 153 (54.4%), 90 (32.0%) and 8 (2.8%), accordingly, and not certified in 7 (2.5%).

THPSF has contributed to a shift from viewing academics solely as content experts to recognizing them as reflective educators whose roles extend beyond lecturing.

Key outcomes include:

1. Integration of THPSF benchmarks into initial training and continuing professional development (CPD) for academic staff.
2. Promotion of dynamic, learner-centered, and evidence-based teaching and assessment practices.
3. Enhanced recognition and reward of high-quality teaching through clear descriptors of professional competence and excellence.
4. Increased use of reflective practice and peer mentoring to support continuous professional growth.
5. Improved curriculum design and interdisciplinary collaboration aligned with learning outcomes.

However, challenges remain, including variability in implementation across diverse institutions, tensions between standards and local contexts, difficulties in reflective writing to align with the standards framework, resource constraints, limited reviewer capacity, and sustaining long-term faculty engagement.

Educational Significance of the work:

Theoretically, this study contributes to the global discourse on academic professional development by illustrating how national professional standards frameworks can be contextualized without losing international credibility. It reinforces the concept of the "professional teacher" as one who integrates knowledge, skills, and values to support learning, rather than functioning solely as a lecturer. Educationally, the paper demonstrates how THPSF strengthens the linkage between professional standards, learning outcomes, and national qualifications frameworks, thereby supporting the effective implementation of TQF-HE. The framework acknowledges the diversity and quality of teaching, learning, and assessment practices, while fostering accountability and innovation in higher education. It also defines essential knowledge, skills and values for effective teaching, promote reflective practice, recognition of good practice in teaching and learner support, and strengthen teacher preparation and continuous professional development. Ultimately, it facilitates positive changes for both individuals and institutions. Future research should explore longitudinal impacts of THPSF on student learning outcomes, faculty career trajectories, and institutional performance.

A National Board for TLC: a collaborative educational research process in the Italian university system

Luisa Amenta, Barbara Bruschi, Giovanna Del Gobbo, Antonella Lotti, Anna Serbati, Ida Verna

Abstract

This document examines the work process that led to the establishment and characterises the work of the CRUI-TLC National Committee, an initiative recognised by the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI) to promote systemic coordination in the development of Teaching and Learning Centres (TLCs). The CRUI, a representative body of Italian universities, plays a strategic role in guiding national policies on teaching, quality and innovation. From 2024–2025, the Board operated through a collaborative educational research approach, based on thematic working groups, observation of institutional practices, triangulation between documentary sources and a national survey of the 85 member universities of the CRUI. The four thematic groups—dedicated to TLC structures, training models, enhancing teaching professionalism, and evaluating the impact of academic development—produced synergistic position papers, integrating literature analysis, collection of practices, operational models, and evaluation tools. The outcome of the process reflects strong consistency with the main European policies on teaching quality (EUA, Advance HE, ANECA) and with the guidelines on the professionalisation of teaching provided by the Italian National Agency for Universities Evaluation (ANVUR). The results seem to indicate the value of the CRUI-TLC Round Table as a national infrastructure for the coordination of TLCs, capable of guiding cultural change in Italian universities through shared actions, common criteria and a methodological framework based on empirical evidence and inter-institutional comparison.

Keywords: Teaching and Learning Centre; training models; academic development

Extended Summary

This paper critically analyses the participatory bottom-up research process developed within the CRUI-TLC National Board, an institutional initiative created to coordinate and guide the growth of Teaching and Learning Centres in Italian universities. The main objective is to highlight the methodological dimension of the work carried out, emphasising how the integration between thematic groups, inter-university discussions, data triangulation and a national survey has made it possible to generate shared knowledge and models applicable to the Italian context.

The board is part of a broader European context in which the professionalisation of university teaching is a strategic priority. The accreditation and quality systems promoted for example by Advance HE in the United Kingdom, ANECA in Spain and TEQSA in Australia—referred to in the position paper on the enhancement of teaching professionalism—provide a framework in which teaching is recognised as a professional practice with standards, skills and assessment tools.

In Italy, this perspective is reflected in the ANVUR (2023) guidelines on the enhancement of teaching skills, which emphasise the importance of institutional systems capable of integrating training, assessment and professional development.

The CRUI-TLC Committee was established by the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI), within the Teaching Committee, an organisation representing 85 Italian universities and coordinating national policies on teaching, research and third mission. The CRUI plays a strategic role: it ensures dialogue with the Ministry of University and Research, promotes the alignment of quality systems and supports the adaptation of Italian universities to European standards (ESG, 2015). In this context, the decision to set up a Board dedicated to TLCs responds to the growing awareness of the role that these centres play in supporting pedagogical and technological innovation (Cruz, et al.,, 2020; EUA, 2024) .

The Board has adopted a participatory research approach. This approach is characterised by:

- working in thematic groups, which operate as inter-institutional communities of practice;
- observation of existing practices, through the collection of qualitative and documentary data from TLCs already in operation;
- triangulation of sources, combining literature analysis, empirical evidence and expert reflections;
- a national survey administered to the 85 CRUI universities, useful for outlining the state of the art of TLC structures, training activities and assessment systems;
- interactive and shared writing, supported by a common digital archive, cross-reviews and public feedback sessions.

These elements form a solid methodological framework consistent with the tradition of practitioner research, in which institutional actors actively participate in the production of operational knowledge.

The analysis of the results produced by the four working groups shows the synergistic strength of the process adopted.

The group dedicated to TLC structures reconstructed a picture of the organisational models present in Italy, highlighting the variety of possible configurations: centralised centres, widespread models, multi-site units and hybrid forms (Cruz et al., 2020). The study highlighted how TLCs play a connecting role between governance, departments, quality services,

digital innovation and student services (Lotti, et al., 2025; Wright, 2023), in line with European transformations towards a stable and interdisciplinary “learning infrastructure”.

The group on training models analysed approaches to faculty development, integrating international literature (Steinert, 2010; 2014; 2016) with empirical data from Italian TLCs. The result is a structured typology that includes long programmes, communities of practice, mentoring, peer observation, intensive workshops and experience-based learning, with a strong focus on the need for longitudinal and reflective pathways.

The group on the enhancement of teaching professionalism recognition is developing an interpretative framework that connects national policy with international models of professional accreditation. The data collected show that the Italian university system is in a phase of transition towards full recognition of teaching as a complex professional activity that requires specific training tools, evaluation criteria and institutional mechanisms (EUA, 2024).

Finally, the impact assessment group developed a matrix that integrates Kirkpatrick's model (2006) with Steinert's (2016) classification of training activities. The matrix allows for the evaluation not only of the immediate effects on academic staff, but also of changes in faculty behaviour and systemic effects at the university level. The approach adopted is fully consistent with European recommendations on the use of evidence for institutional improvement (EUA, 2024).

Taken together, the four documents represent a coherent body of work, characterised by the methodological and conceptual convergence that the CRUI-TLC Working Groups has been able to generate.

Theoretical and educational significance, implications for practice, policy, and future research

The theoretical value of the work lies in the Board's ability to build a national model of collaborative educational research applied to university policies. This model demonstrates how it is possible to produce systemic knowledge through peer comparison processes, data triangulation and the integration of different institutional perspectives.

On an educational level, the Board contributes to consolidating the identity of TLCs as central players in the training of university teachers, in the promotion of educational innovation and in the definition of shared professional standards.

The practical implications are immediate: Italian universities now can have a comprehensive set of operational guidelines, organisational models, training repertoires and assessment tools that can guide the development and consolidation of their TLCs

From a policy perspective, the work of the Working Groups provide the Italian university system with a solid basis for aligning itself with European standards, contributing to the construction of an educational ecosystem capable of supporting the cultural change required by new demands for quality, inclusion and innovation.

Finally, the programme opens up new avenues for research: longitudinal studies on the effects of TLCs, international comparative analyses, in-depth studies on the professionalisation of teaching, and the development of additional evidence-based assessment tools. Furthermore, the experience can provide insights that can make it replicable in other international contexts.

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Shared Perspectives on Teaching Development Units: Reflections from the Red AVANZA Network (REDU_Spain)

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Abstract

This paper presents an inter-university reflection developed within the framework of the Red AVANZA, a collaborative initiative of the Spanish University Teaching Network (REDU) that brings together universities engaged in implementing the Academic Teaching Development Framework (MDAD). Based on the institutional reflection guides produced by each university, the study analyses shared learning and challenges through the four-dimensional framework proposed by Mihai, Dailey-Hebert and Beausaert (2025) 1, which conceptualizes teaching and learning centres through the dimensions of governance, identity, social capital, and activities. The analysis reveals a convergence towards active and reflective models of teaching development, progress in peer collaboration and evaluation cultures, and persistent structural challenges related to resources and institutional support. The experience demonstrates that reflection guides are effective tools for generating shared knowledge and strengthening the institutional identity of teaching and learning development units. Finally, the paper discusses transformative levers aimed at integrating evaluation, training, and teaching innovation within a sustainable ecosystem, emphasizing the value of networked collaboration for understanding the complexity and diversity of university teaching practices.

Keywords: Academic development; Reflective practice; SoTL; Peer evaluation; Institutional policy

Extended Summary

The Red AVANZA (Teaching Development Support Network) is a collaborative initiative recognized by the Spanish University Teaching Network (REDU) under the 2025 REDU Network Call. It brings together universities committed to improving teaching quality through training, innovation, and educational research. The network addresses shared challenges in implementing the Academic Teaching Development Framework (MDAD) and fosters an inter-institutional space for systematic analysis, reflection, and collective action. The network currently includes nine Spanish universities: University of Deusto, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Universitat Politècnica de València, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, University of the Basque Country (EHU/UPV), University of Alicante, University of Barcelona, University of Navarra, and University of Vic – Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC). This institutional diversity enriches the comparative perspective and allows the identification of both contextual particularities and shared challenges across regions and governance models. Its main objectives are to:

- Promote an integrated approach that links teacher training, innovation, and evaluation.
- Develop coherent strategies to strengthen teaching and learning quality in higher education.
- Evaluate and share good practices, consolidating sustainable models of academic development.
- Reinforce inter-university collaboration that connects structures, policies, and teaching communities.

This paper arises from a collective reflective process among the universities participating in Red AVANZA, based on their institutional reflection guides. The analysis follows the four-dimensional framework proposed by Mihai, Dailey-Hebert, and Beausaert (2025), which conceptualizes Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) as complex systems shaped by four interrelated dimensions: governance, identity, social capital, and activities. Building upon this model, the Red AVANZA study adapts the dimensions to the Spanish context of academic development as: a) the design of training and professional development programmes; b) organizational structures and governance; c) values, culture, and academic community; and d) institutional policies for support and recognition (Mihai et al., 2025).

This shared framework has strengthened the institutional and collective nature of reflection, integrating the diversity of local realities within a common analytical perspective.

The study aims to identify convergences, shared tensions, and transformation levers that help consolidate institutional ecosystems for academic development. A qualitative cross-case analysis was conducted using the reflection guides from the nine participating universities. Each institution conducted an internal reflection structured around the four adapted dimensions. The resulting narratives and evidence were coded and triangulated to extract cross-institutional patterns concerning:

a. design and implementation of teaching development programmes

b. governance and coordination mechanisms

c. professional identity, community, and academic culture

d. policy frameworks and institutional recognition systems.

This collaborative approach enabled a move from isolated institutional analyses toward a collective interpretation of the evolution and function of teaching development units within Spanish higher education.

Main findings by dimension:

Practices and activities: Participating universities converge towards active, reflective, and practice-based models of academic development. Initiatives increasingly incorporate the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and peer review of teaching as mechanisms for evidence-based professional learning. Programmes encourage the production of transferable outputs, such as revised syllabi, micro-designs, or teaching simulations, and promote constructive alignment between learning outcomes, methods, and assessment. However, the evaluation of training impact remains limited, often centred on satisfaction rather than longitudinal evidence of transfer to teaching practice (Mihai et al., 2025).

Structures and governance: Teaching and learning units are commonly embedded within strategic vice-rectorates, maintaining operational autonomy. Yet, a deficit of pedagogical and technical staff, combined with administrative overload, constrains systematic monitoring and evaluation.

Some universities highlight the emergence of coordination networks—such as innovation or teaching coordinators—that strengthen internal collaboration. Still, the absence of formal inter-service mechanisms (connecting quality assurance, technology, and evaluation) often leads to fragmented initiatives, revealing the need for integrated governance frameworks.

Cultures and social capital: A significant cultural transformation is taking place: teacher training is increasingly seen as an opportunity for professional growth rather than a bureaucratic obligation. This shift is supported by communities of practice, mentorship programmes, and innovation events that foster belonging and shared purpose. Core values such as collaboration, inclusion, sustainability, and interdisciplinarity guide Red AVANZA's initiatives, including programmes that integrate gender perspective, accessibility, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Yet, certain resistance to change and limited institutional legitimacy persist, highlighting the need to raise the status of teaching excellence within academic identity (Red AVANZA, 2025).

Policies and identity: All universities align their strategies with national frameworks—including LOSU, DOCENTIA, and MDAD—but share a key challenge: connecting evaluation, training, and innovation under a coherent system. The collective goal is to evolve toward a formative and integrative evaluation model that identifies developmental needs, promotes learning opportunities, and recognizes innovation as academic merit. However, the lack of structural support policies—in time allocation, funding, and specialized staff—remains a constraint. As a result, sustainability often depends on individual motivation and the commitment of teaching development units.

The analysis reveals a persistent structure–ambition gap: while institutional discourse increasingly values reflective and evidence-based teaching, structural and resource conditions remain insufficient to sustain these practices.

The study identifies several transformative levers emerging from the collective reflection:

1. Integrating evaluation, training, and innovation through inter-university pilot programmes that generate shared learning and evidence.

2. Establishing mandatory induction pathways for early-career academics, supported by mentorship, peer observation, and recognition systems.

3. Creating stable coordination networks connecting educational policy, quality assurance, technology, and academic development.

4. Enhancing structural support and incentives, including protected time, specialized staff, and recognition of teaching in academic careers.

These levers signal a shift from compliance-driven models to a culture of continuous professional growth, grounded in collaboration, evidence, and institutional trust.

Educational significance and implications: The Red AVANZA study provides a collective mapping of academic development across Spanish universities, demonstrating how the four-dimensional model of Mihai, Dailey-Hebert, and Beausaert (2025) offers a robust framework for understanding the organizational and cultural complexity of teaching and learning development units. It also shows that inter-university collaboration and comparative reflection are powerful drivers for generating shared knowledge, reinforcing institutional cohesion, and advancing a culture of formative evaluation and continuous improvement. By establishing common frameworks and methodologies, Red AVANZA (REDU) contributes to a sustainable ecosystem of academic development that enhances teaching quality and strengthens the collective identity of university educators.

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Shifting Grounds: How Global and National Actors Re-Define Quality in Digital Higher Education

Sabrina Gallner

Abstract

Across more than two decades of digitalisation—from early e-learning to emergency remote teaching and now the rapid diffusion of generative AI—the meaning of "quality" in higher education has undergone profound transformation. Yet two central questions remain insufficiently explored: Who defines what counts as quality in digital higher education, and how the very concept of quality has shifted as digital transformation has unfolded. In a first step, this study examined global and European political discourse (OECD, UNESCO, EU/EHEA, ENQA/EQAR; CH/DE/AT) and traced how quality was defined in the context of digitalisation in higher education and who the key players were. In a next step, DACH-specific (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) political discourses were analysed and examined to illustrate the effects that political discourses on quality in digital higher education teaching have had on higher education institutions and higher education didactics in these countries. Using the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD), the study reconstructs how different actor groups establish, legitimise, and contest definitions of quality in digital teaching and learning. Harvey's extended 2024 framework—linking classical conceptions of quality with standards, assurance, culture, and epistemology—provides the analytical lens for tracing how quality is conceptualised, operationalised, and politicised across arenas.

Preliminary findings show that global policy actors strongly anchor definitions through normative frames (e.g., accountability, comparability, digital readiness), national policy translates these into regulatory and strategic expectations, and scientific literature increasingly challenges or reframes these logics—particularly in response to generative AI. Emerging discursive elements such as ethical quality, epistemic integrity and digital sovereignty indicate a broadening of what quality means in digital contexts. The study contributes to academic development by revealing how shifting actor constellations and evolving quality concepts shape the structural conditions under which educators and academic developers can exercise agency in digital transformation.

Keywords: digitalisation, quality discourse, academic development, SKAD, Higher Education

Extended Summary

Digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped teaching and learning in higher education. From the early stages of e-learning in the 2000s to the expansion of digitally supported teaching in the 2010s, the pandemic-driven shift to emergency remote teaching, and the rapid diffusion of generative AI since 2023, digitalisation has repeatedly challenged established understandings of what constitutes "quality" in higher education. Despite this profound disruption, two central questions remain underexplored: (1) Which actors hold definitional power in determining what counts as quality in digital higher education? (2) How has the meaning of quality changed across successive waves of digitalisation? This study addresses these gaps by reconstructing the shifting discourse on quality in digital higher education across three interconnected discursive arenas:

- global policy actors (OECD, UNESCO, EU/EHEA, ENQA/EQAR),
- national policy actors in the DACH region (DE, AT, CH), and
- scientific literature (international and DACH-specific).

By analysing how these actor groups construct, legitimise and contest quality definitions over time, the study provides insights into the structural conditions under which educators and academic developers can exercise agency in digital transformation processes.

The analysis draws on Harvey's extended framework for defining quality (Harvey, 2024), which re-articulates the classical typology—excellence, perfection/consistency, fitness for purpose, value for money, and transformation—by integrating it with broader considerations such as:

- quality and standards,
- quality assurance rationales,
- quality cultures,
- epistemological underpinnings, and
- emerging debates on ethical quality and integrity.

This extended framework allows for a nuanced understanding of how quality is conceptualised and operationalised, how quality becomes politicised, and how technological and societal shifts (notably AI) destabilise traditional quality logics. The framework is complemented by a discourse-theoretical lens based on the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) (Keller), which focuses on how knowledge is produced, stabilised and contested within discursive arenas, and how actor groups establish authority through specific "speaking roles".

The study employs a three-level discourse analysis across the period from 1997 to 2024. (1) Global policy discourse Documents from OECD, UNESCO, the European Commission, ENQA/EQAR, and ICDE/EADTU were analysed to trace

how these organisations define quality in relation to digitalisation. These texts are particularly powerful in shaping global normative expectations. (2) National policy discourse (DACH region) National strategies for digitalisation, AI roadmaps, higher education legislation and quality frameworks from CH, DE, and AT were included. This level captures how global frames are translated into regionally specific governance logics. (3) Scientific discourse Peer-reviewed articles, systematic reviews, conceptual frameworks and reports from academic associations were analysed to identify how the scientific field interprets, challenges or reframes policy-driven definitions of quality. The sampling strategy follows SKAD's principle of contrasting discursive arenas and identifying shifts across time.

Actor Constellations and Definitional Power: The analysis reveals hierarchically layered but interconnected arenas of discursive influence:

- Global organisations such as OECD and UNESCO act as powerful norm-setters. They frame digital quality along governance-oriented logics such as accountability, digital readiness, data-informed decision-making, integrity, and comparability.
- National policy actors in the DACH region adopt these frames but reinterpret them through local governance traditions. Swiss policy emphasises institutional autonomy and capacity-building, while German and Austrian frameworks show a stronger regulatory orientation (e.g., AI strategies, digital higher education strategies, accreditation rules).
- Scientific literature increasingly problematises these dominant narratives and introduces alternative conceptualisations—especially concerning pedagogical transformation, epistemic quality in AI-supported learning, and the risks of marketisation.

Across arenas, the analysis shows that quality is not a neutral construct but an object of negotiation and contestation, reflecting power relations between policy, academia and institutional governance.

Shifting Concepts of Quality Across Digitalisation Waves: The meaning of "quality" in digital higher education has evolved markedly over time. Early e-learning (2000–2014) Quality was primarily framed through excellence, fitness for purpose, and consistency. The focus lay on technology integration, standardisation, and the reliability of digital infrastructures. Transformation was largely underdeveloped. Strategic digitalisation (2015–2019) Quality discourses began to emphasise student engagement, learning design, and evidence-informed teaching. Here, Harveys notion of transformation through enhancement gained relevance. Pandemic and Emergency Remote Teaching (2020–2022) "Quality" became politicised as systems moved online. Dominant narratives centred on:

- standards and comparability,
- minimum thresholds,
- equity and access,
- workload and assessment integrity.

Transformation became tied to crisis management, highlighting tensions between compliance and innovation. GenAI discourse (post-2023) The discourse introduces new quality dimensions, including:

- ethical quality,
- epistemic integrity,
- digital sovereignty,
- human–AI co-production of learning,
- transparency and accountability of algorithmic systems.

This stage marks a clear shift from operational to value-oriented discussions of quality, strongly influenced by scientific and ethical debates.

By clarifying how different actor groups shape and contest definitions of quality, the study highlights the structural constraints and opportunities that academic developers face. The findings show:

- Academic development operates within multi-level power structures that define what is considered legitimate teaching, innovation, and improvement.
- Shifting quality discourses influence how educators can exercise agency—for example, whether they are encouraged to experiment with AI-supported pedagogies or constrained by compliance-driven quality assurance.
- Understanding these discursive dynamics enables academic developers to strategically navigate and shape institutional responses to digitalisation.

Thus, the study contributes to the ICED theme of "Agency and Academic Development" by demonstrating that educator agency is deeply intertwined with discursive power and evolving quality regimes.

Quality in digital higher education is not a static construct. It is shaped by global and national actors, negotiated within scientific communities, and continually redefined in response to technological, political and societal transformations.

Understanding these dynamics is crucial for academic developers seeking to support educators and institutions in navigating the challenges and opportunities of the AI era.

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Papers 33

Sustaining Growth in Teaching: Mapping Development Approaches for Mid-Career Faculty

Gergana Vasileva, Roeland van der Rijst

Abstract

Mid-career university teachers constitute a significant proportion of the academic workforce, yet their professional development (PD) receives less focussed attention. While early-career academics benefit from structured induction and institutional support, those in mid-career often encounter fragmented opportunities, increased role complexity, and reduced clarity around developmental pathways. This narrative review synthesises international empirical research on teaching-related PD for academics beyond the early-career stage and develops a two-axis conceptual framework to interpret the diverse approaches identified in the literature. By organising PD initiatives according to their level of formality and collaboration, the framework offers a coherent structure for understanding how different activities contribute to sustained pedagogical vitality.

Analysis of 24 empirical studies reveals three overarching insights. First, mid-career growth emerges from the interplay of multiple forms of PD rather than any single activity. Second, the visibility, uptake, and impact of PD are shaped by institutional cultures and reward structures, while academics actively navigate and interpret these conditions, exercising agency in pursuing meaningful development. Third, informal collegial learning, reflective or inquiry-oriented practices, structured mentoring and network-building, and innovation-oriented approaches each support different dimensions of teaching vitality. The review contributes a conceptual map that can assist academic developers in designing intentional, stage-sensitive PD ecosystems. It highlights the importance of recognising informal learning, legitimising reflective practice, and creating enabling conditions that support mid-career academics as autonomous learners and influential contributors to academic development.

Keywords: mid-career academics, academic professional development, teacher agency, pedagogical development, informal learning

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper: This paper synthesises international empirical research on mid-career faculty members' professional development (PD) related to teaching, aiming to frame the landscape of available developmental approaches and explaining how these activities support teacher agency and sustained pedagogical vitality. Studies in the field describe a wide variety of learning approaches that differ in purpose, structure, and social organisation, making conceptual comparison difficult. To bring coherence to this body of work, the paper develops a two-axis conceptual model that distinguishes PD practices by their level of formality and collaboration. The model functions as an organising tool for the synthesis, highlighting underlying patterns in mid-career development and offering a clearer way to understand how different forms of PD collectively contribute to growth.

Context and Rationale: Mid-career faculty represent a substantial proportion of the university workforce and often combine teaching, service, and emerging leadership responsibilities. Despite their centrality to institutional teaching quality, their teaching-related PD remains comparatively fragmented and inconsistent. Early-career academics frequently benefit from structured induction programmes and coherent pathways, while mid-career faculty must navigate opportunities largely on their own at a stage when the demands on teaching are increasing (Baker & Manning, 2021; O'Meara et al., 2017). Although some national systems have established frameworks that recognise teaching as a career-long developmental trajectory, access routes and institutional support vary widely, leaving many mid-career academics uncertain about how to pursue deeper or more personalised development.

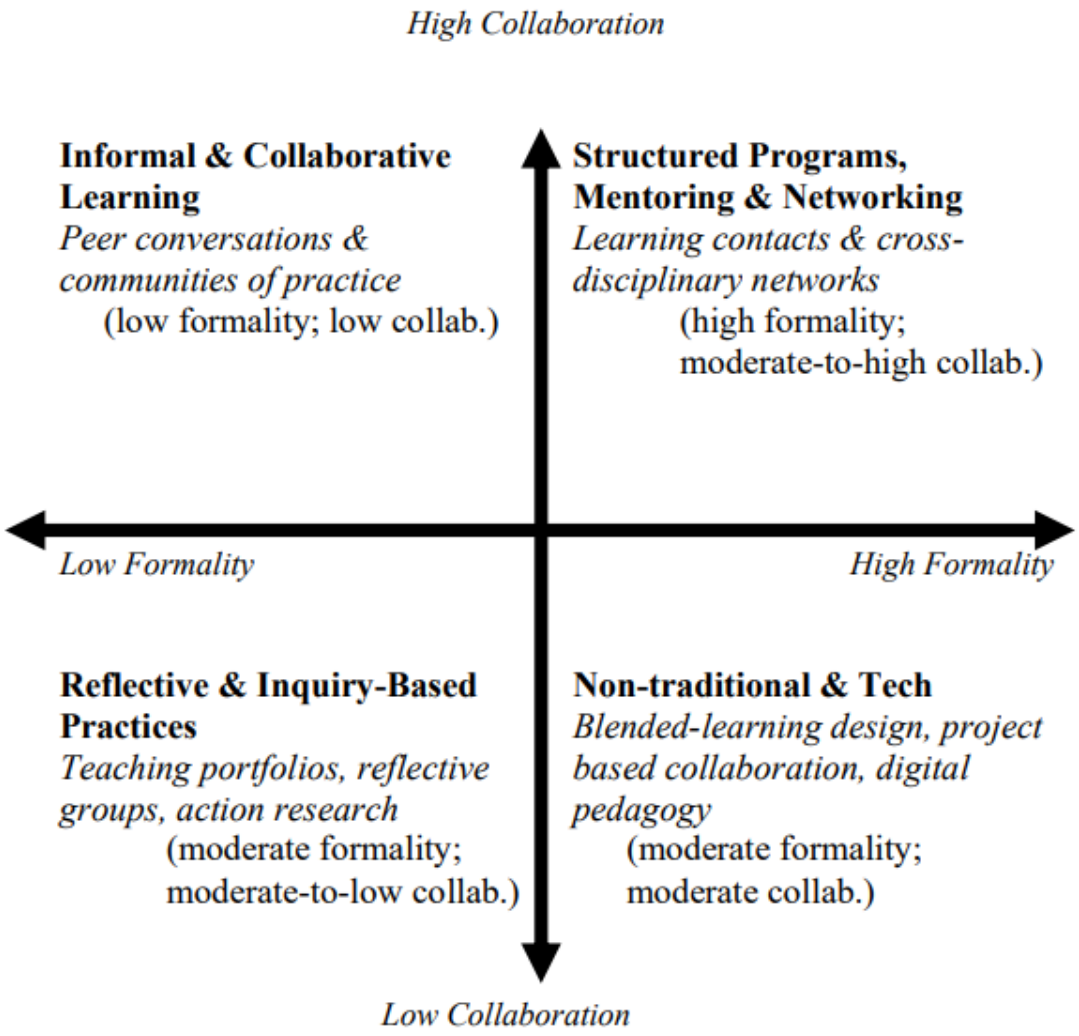
Addressing these challenges requires moving beyond deficit framings that position experienced faculty as needing "upskilling." A more productive lens is offered by the concept of teacher agency, understood as the capacity of academics to act purposefully and constructively to direct their professional growth and shape their working environments (Biesta et al., 2015). For mid-career faculty, agency functions both as a means, enabling autonomy, self-direction, and experimentation, and as an outcome, strengthening their ability to contribute to curriculum design, mentoring, and pedagogical innovation. This dual perspective informed the analysis of how different PD approaches support sustained growth on teaching at the mid-career stage.

A narrative review methodology was employed to synthesise dispersed and heterogeneous empirical work, resulting in a final dataset of 24 empirical studies. These studies, discussing the mid-career stage, were coded inductively for the developmental approaches they described, and the learning processes and outcomes reported. Four clusters of PD approaches emerged. As we compared these clusters, it became clear that they differed systematically in terms of how formally they were structured and how collaboratively they were enacted. These two dimensions therefore provided a

grounded basis for an additional interpretive step, leading to the development of a two-axis conceptual model designed to organise and clarify relationships among the clusters.

A Conceptual Model of Mid-Career PD Figure 1 presents the conceptual model used to interpret the findings. The model positions PD approaches along two axes: formality (low to high) and collaboration (low to high), and situates the identified clusters within this space. Rather than introducing new categories, the model provides a concise visual overview of how the diverse approaches relate to one another and highlights their underlying structural and social characteristics. This mapping reveals patterns that are hard to discern when examining individual studies in isolation. For instance, highly formal and collaborative activities (e.g., institutionally organized training programmes) differ from low-formality, low-collaboration practices such as independent portfolio development, yet both contribute to mid-career agency and teaching vitality.

Figure 1. Two-axis conceptual model of mid-career teaching-related PD.



Instead, development is cumulative and relational, arising from the interplay of informal collegial exchanges, reflective or inquiry-based practices, structured mentoring and network-building, and opportunities for innovation or technological experimentation. These approaches support different but complementary dimensions of teaching vitality: informal collegiality sustains identity and tacit knowledge sharing (Roxå, & Mårtensson, 2009; Thomson & Barrie, 2021; Thomson & Trigwell, 2018); reflective practices cultivate deeper pedagogical insight (Clegg, 2003); structured programmes offer legitimacy, guided reflection, and leadership pathways (Metzger et al., 201; Ruge et al., 2023); and innovation-oriented work provides opportunities for renewal and creative engagement (Kukulska-Hulme, 2010).

Second, the literature emphasises the role of institutional micro-cultures in shaping both the feasibility and perceived value of PD. Workload models, departmental norms, and recognition systems guide whether particular developmental activities are visible, supported, or rewarded (Efu, 2020). Informal learning, despite its importance, is often undervalued, and reflective or experimental practices may not be recognised in promotion criteria. Nonetheless, mid-career faculty members actively interpret and negotiate these conditions and some of them demonstrate agency in pursuing meaningful development even within constrained contexts (Kinchin, 2022).

This review advances understanding of mid-career teaching-related PD by synthesising a dispersed body of international evidence and identifying patterns in how faculty sustain growth. The conceptual model supports this contribution by offering a structured way to analyse how formal, informal, collaborative, and independent opportunities relate to one another and offers academic developers a practical tool for conceptualising and designing stage-sensitive PD ecosystems. Furthermore, the framework enables institutions to examine their own provision of developmental activities more systematically, showing which types of opportunities are emphasised and which are less represented. This diagnostic function supports intentional planning without implying that institutions should offer every possible type of PD; rather, it helps them recognise the breadth of approaches that can be made available for faculty to draw upon.

The model also reinforces the role of academic agency in mid-career development. By making visible the diversity of pathways through which faculty engage in growth, the framework highlights that meaningful development is not dependent solely on institutional programmes. Instead, it is shaped by how academics activate, navigate, and combine available opportunities in ways that align with their professional identities, environments, and aspirations. Recognising this interplay between institutional affordances and academic agency is essential for sustaining teaching vitality and supporting mid-career faculty as influential contributors to academic development.

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Beyond Voluntariness: Mandatory Reciprocal Peer Observation for Tenured Faculty

Rikke von Müllen

Abstract

Mandatory reciprocal peer observation can strengthen collegiality and pedagogical dialogue among tenured faculty when carefully designed and supported. This paper reports on a faculty-wide, mandatory, reciprocal peer observation of teaching programme implemented for approximately 140 tenured staff in the Faculty of Social Sciences at a research-intensive Danish university. The initiative was introduced to meet a national requirement for continuous educational development while accommodating local microcultures and departmental priorities.

Faculty were organised into department-based triads using a non-evaluative peer review model. Participants attended introductory meetings, engaged in pre-observation discussions, observed each other's teaching once, and provided confidential feedback. A mixed-methods evaluation combined survey data, field notes from educational developers, and written reflections from department heads, analysed through descriptive statistics and thematic coding.

Findings show high feasibility and compliance, with near-full participation over the first two-year cycle. Faculty reported increased motivation to engage colleagues in conversations about teaching and enhanced knowledge of peers' courses and pedagogical practices. Resistance was limited and overall experiences were predominantly positive. The study argues that, when aligned with local microcultures and built on trust, flexibility, and developmental intent, mandatory reciprocal peer observation can effectively support collegial and systematic educational development among senior academics.

Keywords: Reciprocal peer observation of teaching, Collaborative peer-supported review, Mandatory professional development, Collegial faculty development

Extended Summary

Aim: This paper investigates the outcomes and implications of implementing a mandatory reciprocal peer observation of teaching (RPO) (Corcelles-Seuba et al., 2025) programme in triads for all tenured faculty members at a Social Science Faculty in a research-intensive Danish university. The initiative emerged in response to a 2020 government mandate requiring tenured faculty to document continuous educational development. Tenured faculty are pivotal in shaping departmental teaching cultures, yet they can be difficult to engage. This study explores how a mandatory RPO programme can foster collegiality and pedagogical dialogue without generating excessive resistance. After a thorough process involving all study boards across five departments, alignment of aspirations among local microcultures, managerial priorities, minimal resource allocation, and compliance with the new national framework, the faculty decided to implement a purely formative RPO programme involving approximately 140 tenured faculty members. The benefits of RPO are well documented (Corcelles-Seuba et al., 2025), but most of the successful initiatives are based on voluntary participation. Among the 48 articles on Collegial Faculty Development reviewed in Esterhazy et al.'s meta-study (2021), only eight articles examined mandatory programmes, and many scholars argue that voluntary participation is essential for success (Ambler et al., 2014; Bell & Cooper, 2013; Byrne et al., 2010). Nevertheless, the first implementation round largely achieved its intended outcomes and was met with surprisingly limited resistance, prompting a reconsideration of the widespread assumption that voluntary participation is essential for RPO. So, the key questions asked in this study are:

- How does mandatory participation in RPO triads influence collegiality and teaching culture among tenured faculty?
- What challenges arise when RPO is mandatory rather than voluntary?

Methodology: The RPO programme followed what Gosling (2014) termed the 'collaborative peer review model'. The primary aims of the programme were: (1) strengthening departmental collegial communities and conversations about teaching and learning (inspired by the work of Roxå & Mårtensson, e.g. 2009) and (2) increasing shared knowledge of courses and pedagogical practices. All tenured faculty were organized into department-based triads. Introductory meetings were held, written guidelines distributed, and 15 norm hours allocated per participant. Ground rules emphasized confidentiality and excluded assessment. Introductory meetings emphasized faculty members' agency to turn the framework into meaningful practice. Each triad met to discuss teaching plans, observed each other's teaching once, provided feedback based on foci set by the observed, and reported back to their department on insights gained. This design was chosen to balance the aim of strengthening communities and conversations with a demand to limit the hours spent by participants.
Evaluation drew on a multi-source dataset: 1. Survey responses (quantitative and qualitative) from tenured faculty. The sample consists of 79 completed surveys, 90 partial out of 122 participants resulting in a response rate of 65–74%. 2. Field notes from educational advisors attending introductory and follow-up meetings at all departments. 3. Written

reflections from four of five department heads. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic coding to identify patterns in faculty experiences and perceptions.

Three key findings emerged:

1. Feasibility and compliance: The chosen format proved implementable at scale. 89% of faculty who taught during the first two-year cycle participated, with projections to reach 99% after one semester's delay.

2. Achievement of goals: The programme aimed to strengthen collegial conversations about teaching. While difficult to quantify, survey data indicate that 28% of respondents felt "a lot" more motivated to involve colleagues in teaching discussions, and 59% "a little"—a positive outcome given the modest intervention. Heads of department unanimously reported increased knowledge-sharing about courses and pedagogical practices.

3. Surprisingly limited resistance: Mandatory participation did not provoke significant opposition. Only 6% reported a negative overall experience, while 70% were positive (24% neutral). Observing colleagues' teaching was rated positively by 88% versus 2% negative (10% neutral). Comments from participants in meetings revealed that many faculty had long wanted such an initiative but lacked opportunity; others admitted initial hesitation but later described the experience as useful and collegial. Department heads and field notes from staff meetings confirmed a positive atmosphere and strong support for the programme.

Implications: The findings challenge the assumption that voluntary participation is a prerequisite for successful RPO. Systematic educational development for senior faculty need not depend solely on voluntariness. When designed with trust, flexibility, time compensation and clear developmental intent, a mandatory programme can foster collegiality and pedagogical dialogue without fostering excessive resistance. The findings affirm the importance for educational developers of meeting top-down policy frameworks by working bottom-up to design programmes aligned with educational development needs of departments or other microcultures.

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What Do Educators Value in Graduate Certificates? Evidence from 30 Years of Practice

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Abstract

This paper examines the experiences of 148 educators who completed Graduate Certificates or Postgraduate Certificates in Higher Education across Australian and New Zealand institutions between 1994 and 2024. Despite policy calls, such as the Accord, for intentional training of higher education teachers (Department of Education, 2023), only 42% of Australian universities currently offer formal teaching qualifications a significant decline over recent decades. This study addresses gaps in existing research by examining long-term participant perspectives on motivations, perceived value, and impacts on professional confidence and collegial relationships. Drawing on Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology (Davies & Dart, 2005), this survey research asked participants the perceived value of their qualification. Three key themes emerged from inductive analysis: key findings: First, while motivations varied (40% to improve teaching, 32% for career progression, 25% as requirement), 89% found the GradCert valuable. Second, the most frequently cited benefit (28% of participants) was gaining evidence-based understanding of pedagogy,the theoretical "why" behind practice, challenging deficit-based framings of these programs as remediation. Third, while 72% valued relationship-building with other educators, many described these communities as temporary, "falling away" after completion. The shift from predominantly face-to-face (69% of earlier cohorts) to majority online/hybrid delivery (75% of recent completers) may undermine this valued community benefit. These findings provide educational developers with evidence for program design, reveal a critical tension between accessibility and community-building in online formats, and highlight a troubling disconnect between policy rhetoric about teaching quality and declining institutional investment in formal teacher training.

Keywords: Graduate Certificate, Higher Education Studies, Professional Development

Extended Summary

Aim:

This paper examines the experiences of educators who have completed Graduate Certificates or Postgraduate Certificates (GradCerts) in Higher Education across Australian and New Zealand institutions. The Australian Universities Accord (Department of Education, 2023) calls for intentional training of higher education teachers to improve student experience and meet future skills needs, yet currently only 42% of Australian universities offer formal teaching qualifications, a significant decline over recent decades. This study examines participant survey data on: motivations for enrollment, perceived value of these programs, and specific impacts on professional confidence and collegial relationship building. Existing research documents that GradCert participants report positive outcomes including changes in teaching conceptions (Ginns et al., 2008), increased confidence (Butcher & Stoncel, 2011), and professional identity transformation (Trowler and Cooper, 2002). However, critics note the gap between self-reported value and measurable improvements in teaching quality or student outcomes (Parsons et al., 2012). Most studies rely on small samples and measure immediate impact, leaving questions about longer-term effects and whether perceived benefits translate to enhanced student experience. We distributed an online survey to Australian and New Zealand institutions offering GradCerts, recruiting participants who completed programs between 1994 and 2024. This 30-year timespan allowed us to examine whether the nature of experience changes with distance from program completion:do immediate perceptions of value persist over time? The survey captured demographic information, program characteristics (delivery mode, duration, workload allocation), and explored perceived value across multiple dimensions including but not limited to the development of confidence and professional networks as an outcomes to engaging with formal award bearing programs.

Theoretical framework and/or methodological approach:

To understand what participants themselves prioritise as outcomes, we employed Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology (Davies & Dart, 2005). This approach collects stories of change, asking participants to describe the most significant change to their practice and why it mattered to them. Rather than imposing researcher-defined metrics of success, MSC allows participant voice to shape what counts as valuable impact. In addition to the most significant impact, we specifically sought reflection on changes to confidence and professional networks as a consequence of participating in GradCert programs. In analysing these responses we used inductive coding, allowing themes to emerge from the data rather than applying predetermined categories.

Key findings, arguments, or outcomes:

1. Motivations are Diverse but Teaching Improvement Dominates Forty percent of participants were motivated to complete a GradCert primarily to improve their teaching, while 32% sought career progression and 25% enrolled out of genuine interest in pedagogy. Notably, 25% completed it as a requirement, and 11% were motivated by institutional incentives or the "why not?" factor when programs were offered at no personal cost. Despite this varied motivation,

89% agreed the GradCert was valuable, and 79% found it helpful for career progression, demonstrating broad satisfaction regardless of initial impetus.

2. Evidence-Based Practice and Theory Are Most Valued The most frequently cited benefit (42 participants, 28% of the sample) was gaining an evidence base, understanding of scholarship, and pedagogical theory - the "why" behind teaching practice. Participants described this as providing "entirely new lenses to understand how learning works" and enabling movement from "hunches" to "evidence-informed practice." This finding challenges deficit-based assumptions about academics needing remediation; instead, participants valued intellectual frameworks that enabled them to articulate and justify their pedagogical reasoning as scholarly work.

3. Community Benefits Are Valued But Temporary and Mode-Dependent While 72% agreed the GradCert helped build relationships with other educators, qualitative responses revealed significant limitations. Thirty participants described relationship-building within the study context but emphasised these were "temporary" and "fell away" after returning to disciplinary silos. Twenty-five participants reported neutral or no relationship-building, often associated with asynchronous online delivery where there was "little interaction with other educators." This reveals a critical concern: the shift from predominantly face-to-face delivery (69% for those completing 20+ years ago) to majority hybrid and asynchronous online formats (approximately 75% combined for recent completers) may be undermining what participants identify as a key benefit, namely cross-disciplinary community building.

This research provides educational developers with evidence-based insights for program design and institutional advocacy. The finding that participants most value theoretical grounding challenges deficit-based framings of GradCerts as remediation, suggesting these programs function best as intellectual communities that legitimise teaching as scholarly work. For practice, this indicates curriculum should prioritise research-informed pedagogy over skills-based training. While community is valued its outcome is often temporary and further undermined by online delivery. This presents critical design challenge. As institutions shift to digitally mediated formats for accessibility, educational developers must intentionally architect sustained cross-disciplinary communities that extend beyond program completion. The decline in GradCert offerings (from 60% to 42% of institutions) contradicts policy calls for intentional teacher training, suggesting a troubling disconnect between teaching quality rhetoric and institutional commitment. Future research must address the persistent gap between self-reported changes and measurable student outcomes, employing longitudinal designs that track teaching practice and student learning over time.

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CPD Trajectories of University Professors: An Institutional Case Study

Patricia Maria Escobar Cáceres

Abstract

This research analyzes the dialectical relationship between university professors' continuing professional development (CPD) trajectories and the construction of their professional teaching knowledge (CPD/PTK). Using a qualitative-interpretative approach and a multiple instrumental case study design, the formative experiences of ordinary professors in mid-to-late career stages were examined. The central finding is a typological proposal classifying trajectories into: sustained integral development, intermittent pragmatic, and discontinuous unidimensional. Results reveal a systemic prioritization of disciplinary knowledge over pedagogical knowledge and the critical role of self-education as an updating axis. It is concluded that teacher development is non-linear but a biographical framework mediated by individual agency and institutional structures, requiring more flexible and personalized training policies.

Keywords: continuing education trajectories, university teacher, teacher professional knowledge, professional development, typologies

Extended Summary

Professional teacher development is a continuous and multifaceted process that integrates formal and informal learning experiences throughout an educator's career, forming what is conceptualized as a "continuing professional development trajectory." This research aims to analyze how these trajectories shape and transform professional teaching knowledge within the university context. By moving beyond descriptive mapping, the study investigates the nexus between the "vital itinerary"—a longitudinal chain of experiential learning—and the evolution of disciplinary, pedagogical, and research-based expertise. Ultimately, the inquiry seeks to determine how these biographical routes act as mediators in the construction of professional identity and the substantive transformation of classroom practices.

The Theoretical Framework and/Methodological Approach

Theoretically, the study frames PTK/CPD as a multidimensional framework encompassing disciplinary, pedagogical, experiential, and tacit knowledge, built through practice and reflection. The continuing education trajectory is understood as the professor’s vital journey, involving the continuity and linkage of various experiences that enrich their professional development. Theoretical references for PTK include Shulman’s (2004) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK/CDC), Eraut’s (2009) knowledge dimensions, and Koehler & Mishra’s (2009) TPACK model (Technology, Pedagogy, and Content Knowledge).

The concept of trajectory from the life course perspective is defined not as a static attribute, but as an individual "career" consisting of a dynamic sequence of roles and experiences that a person undergoes over time. According to Elder's et al. (2003) framework, these trajectories are structured by two fundamental elements: transitions, which involve changes in status or professional identity, and durations, which refer to the time elapsed between such transitions. This approach captures movement through historical and biographical time, employing trajectory, transition, and turning points as basic analytical tools to reflect the temporal nature of human existence.

The construction of this biographical trajectory is the result of human agency, through which the individual makes strategic decisions within the opportunities and constraints provided by structural and institutional frameworks. Under the principle of linked lives, professional development is understood as a framework where education decisions are closely tied to work and family spheres, which may either support or conflict with each other. Furthermore, specific transitions can become turning points or inflection moments when they cause deep shifts that drastically deviate from the individual's previous path, impacting future life destinations. In this way, the life course integrates objective and subjective dimensions in an interdisciplinary approach that considers time, place, and the impact of specific events.

Methodologically, this study employed an interpretative qualitative approach, integrating the biographical method within a multiple instrumental case study design. Each case was defined as the individual Continuing Professional Development (CPD) trajectory of a professor, analyzed holistically within their specific institutional context. The research focused on tenured faculty members from the disciplines of Engineering, Humanities, and Law. To ensure a sufficiently robust trajectory for biographical analysis, participants were selected from mid-to-late career stages, requiring a minimum of six years of teaching experience. Initially, forty curricula vitae (CVs) were analyzed—selected based on availability and proportional departmental representation—to establish a baseline mapping of CPD intensity and knowledge domains. From this initial cohort, thirteen professors were selected for semi-structured interviews through theoretical-purposive sampling to adequately represent the diversity of the emerging typologies (Profiles A, B, and C).

Key Findings

The primary finding of this research is the development of a typology of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) trajectories, categorized by knowledge focus, intensity, continuity, and underlying motivation:

- Sustained Integral Development Trajectory: Characterized by high-intensity, uninterrupted engagement in professional development. Driven by intrinsic motivation, these professors seamlessly integrate disciplinary, pedagogical, and technological knowledge. They perceive ongoing training as a habitus and demonstrate strong proactivity in self-directed learning.
- Intermittent Pragmatic Trajectory: Exhibits fluctuating continuity marked by temporal gaps. The focus is bidimensional (incorporating both disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge), driven by an adaptive motivation to respond to systemic pressures, such as career promotions or institutional evaluations.
- Discontinuous Unidimensional Trajectory: Reflects the persistence of the "myth of disciplinary sufficiency." This trajectory is defined by low-intensity engagement with prolonged gaps, focusing almost exclusively on subject- matter expertise. Motivation is predominantly extrinsic, limited to fulfilling minimal institutional requirements.

Additional findings reveal a systemic prioritization of disciplinary knowledge over pedagogical skills across departments (78% in Law, 76% in Humanities). Furthermore, self-directed learning emerges as a critical mechanism for professional updating, highly valued for its immediacy and adaptability to individual needs. Finally, postgraduate degrees—specifically master's and doctoral programs—constitute defining formative milestones, with the doctorate acting as the most influential event for research specialization.

This dedication to ongoing learning, however, unfolds within an environment marked by recognized tensions among the academic roles of teaching, research, and management. Despite these conflicts, professors generally demonstrate a positive disposition toward future training, with projections primarily centered on disciplinary specialization and, to a lesser extent, pedagogical growth, all oriented toward sustained professional development. The research underscores the resulting complexity, suggesting that CE trajectories are highly individualized, constituting a non-linear path of accumulated experiences.

Theoretical and Educational Significance, and Implications

The primary contribution of this research lies in advocating a paradigm shift from a "deficit model" to a "comprehensive model" of university teaching. The findings demonstrate that faculty development is inherently a process of academic socialization, mediated by critical reflection and the continuous construction of professional identities within communities of practice.

Translating these insights into practice requires targeted changes in institutional policies and academic leadership. Universities must transition away from standardized training approaches to design flexible development pathways that recognize the diverse biographical profiles of their faculty. Consequently, recalibrating incentive structures to value pedagogical innovation equally with research productivity is crucial for alleviating ongoing role tensions. Beyond institutional reforms, future research must address systemic inequalities by investigating the impact of gender-based barriers and caregiving responsibilities, which actively create critical disruptions in the career trajectories of female academics.

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Papers 34

Developing Emotional and Reflective Agency in Teacher Education: A Pedagogical Model for Sustainable Professional Learning

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Abstract

This paper explores how affectivity and reflexivity can nurture agency and professional identity in teacher education. Within the framework of circular pedagogy, learning is conceived as a relational and transformative process where knowledge emerges from dialogue, emotion, and shared reflection. The study is grounded in the integration of reflective practice (Schön, 1983), transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), and psychoanalytic theories of intersubjectivity and play (Winnicott, 1971; Ogden, 2004). Through narrative and experiential methods implemented in teacher training programmes, future teachers are encouraged to reinterpret complex classroom situations, recognise emotional responses, and translate them into professional insight. Qualitative data from written reflections and group discussions suggest that this approach strengthens self-awareness, empathy, and intentional action, key components of emotional and epistemic agency. The contribution argues that academic development should embrace the affective and symbolic dimensions of teaching, as these constitute essential conditions for sustainable learning environments. By valuing emotion as a form of knowledge and reflection as a collective practice, teacher education can promote both individual and institutional transformation.

Keywords: agency; affectivity; reflexivity; teacher education

Extended Summary

Aim of the paper: This paper examines the role of emotional agency and reflective practice in redefining academic development and professional learning in teacher education. It argues that sustainable professional growth requires integrating affective, relational, and symbolic dimensions into pedagogical design. The contribution builds on previous research-based experiences in teacher education and reframes them within the ICED 2026 theme of Agency and Academic Development. It focuses on how affectivity and reflection interact to generate forms of emotional and epistemic agency that sustain teachers' capacity for innovation, care, and ethical responsibility.

Theoretical framework / methodological approach: The theoretical foundation integrates multiple perspectives that converge on the idea of the teacher as a reflective and emotionally competent professional:0

- Reflective Practice (Schön, 1983): professional learning as dialogical inquiry within action. - Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991): reflection as a means of reinterpreting assumptions and fostering autonomy.

- Psychoanalytic and Relational Theories (Winnicott, 1971; Ogden, 2004; Kaës, 2015): emotional resonance and intersubjectivity as sources of creative, ethical engagement.

- Sustainability in Education (Sterling, 2010; Tilbury, 2012): affective sustainability as the balance between emotional well-being and relational quality for long-term educational resilience.

Methodologically, the work draws on qualitative data from reflective laboratories conducted in teacher-education programmes. Activities included narrative writing, group dialogue, and symbolic analysis of classroom situations. Participants were invited to explore emotionally challenging encounters and to translate experiences into reflective insight. Data were analysed through thematic reflexive analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), identifying patterns related to emotional awareness, agency, and professional identity.

Key findings or arguments: Three main dimensions emerged:

1. Recognition and naming of emotions – Participants learned to identify affective dynamics as legitimate components of pedagogical understanding.

2. From reaction to reflection – Emotional responses became triggers for professional reasoning and intentional action.

3. Collective meaning-making – Group reflection fostered shared narratives of professional agency and ethical values.

Table 1 – Structure of the Reflective Laboratory.

Phase / Activity	Main Objective	Competences Developed
Narrative exploration of critical situations	Recognizing emotional responses in professional contexts	Emotional literacy and self-awareness
Reflective group dialogue	Transforming emotion into pedagogical insight through collective reflection	Empathy and dialogical competence
Symbolic and affective synthesis	Linking personal experiences to educational meanings	Professional identity and ethical awareness

These findings suggest that emotional literacy and reflexivity jointly enhance teachers' capacity to act with purpose and coherence, particularly in complex or uncertain educational contexts. Emotional agency, thus, operates at both individual and collective levels: individually, it enables regulation and understanding of affect; collectively, it sustains communities of practice grounded in empathy and dialogue.

Educational significance / implications for practice: The paper proposes that fostering emotional agency should become a strategic dimension of academic development. Teacher-education curricula can promote it through reflective laboratories, dialogical supervision, and narrative practices that connect affect, cognition, and ethics. By cultivating affective sustainability, academic-development centres can help teachers and institutions align personal purpose with collective transformation. Such alignment expands professional competence beyond technical expertise, incorporating the capacity to feel, reflect, and act responsibly within the human complexity of education.

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Re-thinking Teacher Education: Cultivating Pre-service Teacher Agency through Dialogue

Lisa Tafuro, Rocío García Carrión

Abstract

Teacher agency depends on more than general pedagogocal knowledge. It requires a deep understanding of how language works, how dialogue shapes learning opportunities, and how interactional norms distribute participation unevenly across children from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Yet most teacher education programs do not adequately prepare candidates to see these elements of the classroom. This paper introduces the DOLE framework (Dialogue, Opportunity, and Language Ecology) as a curricular and pedagogical tool for cultivating teacher agency in preservice teacher education. Drawing on research in dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2017; Mercer & Littleton, 2007), language ecology (Haugen, 1972), and linguistic anthropology (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986), the DOLE framework organizes four mediating capacities central to teacher agency: metalinguistic insight, metacognitive awareness, metacultural understanding, and an agentive orientation. Together, these capacities equip preservice teachers to analyze classroom talk, identify implicit participation norms, and intentionally redesign interactional routines to support all learners. Aligned with the ICED 2026 theme of Agency and Academic Development, this paper positions linguistically grounded, culturally responsive teacher education as essential to developing teachers who can influence their classroom environments and bring about meaningful change in early childhood classrooms.

Keywords: dialogic teaching, language ecology, teacher education, teacher agency, early childhood education.

Extended Summary

Aim

This paper examines how university teacher-education programs can cultivate agency in teacher candidates by embedding a focus on language and dialogue in the curriculum, arguing that teacher agency depends on a deep understanding of how language works, including its structures, uses, and varieties, and how dialogue shapes learning opportunities.

The paper introduces the DOLE framework (Dialogue, Opportunity, and Language Ecology) as a curricular and pedagogical tool for developing this understanding in preservice teachers, positioning teacher educators as having the potential to strengthen practitioners' agency by intentionally embedding knowledge about language, dialogue, and the linguistic ecology of classrooms into university coursework and practicum supervision.

Theoretical Framework

Dialogic teaching is not simply a pedagogical method but a stance that sees all learners as contributors to shared meaning-making (Alexander, 2017; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Because dialogue is shaped by norms for reasoning, turn-taking, and participation, teacher agency is essential to challenging inequitable patterns of talk and create conditions where every child's voice becomes a resource for collaborative, justice-oriented learning.

Also relevant to this work is the concept of language ecology (Haugen, 1972), foregrounding the role of cultural norms, institutional expectations, and power dynamics in shaping who speaks, how ideas are taken up, and whose ways of participating are recognized as legitimate. Also drawing from scholarship in linguistic anthropology (Heath, 1983; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986), we argue that language and culture cannot be meaningfully separated in classroom interaction and that every dialogic exchange is simultaneously a linguistic and a cultural act, jointly shaping children's access to participation, reasoning, and learning (Tafuro, .

Within this theoretical landscape, the DOLE framework organizes four mediating capacities that are central to teacher agency: metalinguistic insight (understanding how language structures, uses, and varieties operate in classroom interaction), metacognitive awareness (attending to how dialogue supports and reveals children's thinking and reasoning), metacultural understanding (recognizing cultural norms that shape participation and identifying whose discourse practices are centered or marginalized), and an agentive orientation (positioning oneself and students as active contributors to shared meaning-making). These four capacities are analytically distinct but closely interconnected in practice, and their development is what the DOLE framework is designed to support.

The paper makes three distinct but related arguments. First, most teacher-education programs do not adequately prepare candidates to understand the linguistic and cultural foundations of equitable dialogue. When preparation in dialogic pedagogy exists, it rarely addresses how implicit participation structures distribute opportunity unevenly 3 across children from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, leaving too many teachers without the knowledge or confidence to reshape interactional norms in ways that foster all children's participation and learning.

Second, teacher agency, or the capacity to influence environments and bring about meaningful change, requires more than general pedagogical knowledge. It requires a specific linguistic foundation (Fillmore & Snow, 2021) that allows preservice teachers to see how language structures and discourse practices can foster participation for some children

while marginalizing others and, in response, shape the language ecology of the classroom in ways that are both pedagogically effective and justice oriented.

Third, the DOLE framework becomes a practical tool for cultivating this form of agency in teacher-education programs (Tafuro et al., 2023). A focus on dialogue prepares candidates to analyze classroom talk and its linguistic foundations. A focus on opportunity ensures candidates can examine which repertoires are treated as legitimate and create meaningful entry points for all children across bilingual, bidialectal, and multicultural contexts (Paris & Alim, 2017). A focus on language ecology prepares candidates to map and critique classroom interactional norms, making implicit expectations visible and open to change.

This work contributes to scholarship on teacher agency by foregrounding language and dialogic practice as the medium through which agency is developed and enacted, extending existing accounts beyond general reflective practice toward a linguistically grounded, culturally responsive model for teacher preparation (Gay, 2018; Ladson Billings, 1995).

For practice and policy, the paper offers teacher educators a blueprint for embedding language and dialogue across the curriculum and calls for local, regional, state, and national standards to recognize linguistic and dialogic competencies as essential professional outcomes that are as fundamental to equitable teaching as content knowledge or general pedagogical skill.

For future research, this paper draws from work on collaborative and dialogic learning environments (García-Carrión et al., 2020) and opens new lines of inquiry into how teacher agency develops through shared inquiry, how the DOLE framework's four mediating capacities can be assessed and supported across a teacher-education program, and how a languaculture-focused practicum supervision (Agar, 1994) can shape preservice teachers' ability to recognize and respond to the interactional norms of their classrooms. In doing so, teacher education becomes a linguistically grounded and culturally responsive agentive practice.

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Engagement with research as a catalyst for in-service teachers' epistemic agency

Daniel Espinosa, Georgeta Ion

Abstract

This study explores how in-service teachers exercise their epistemic agency through the active use of educational research and professional collaboration inside and outside schools. As part of the REDU-CAT project, a questionnaire was designed that integrates research skills, informed teaching practices, and collaborative processes, and was administered to 480 teachers from an inter-institutional network of schools. Through exploratory factor analysis and latent profile analysis, differentiated configurations of epistemic agency were identified along three dimensions: critical inquiry, informed pedagogical practice, and professional collaboration (internal and external). The results show that commitment to research acts as a catalyst for teachers to question assumptions, regulate their professional learning, and collectively construct knowledge. These configurations are expressed in a situated manner, influenced by the organisational dynamics and collaborative spaces of each school. The study provides empirical evidence on the connections between epistemic agency, use of evidence, and professional networks, offering guidance for strengthening inter-institutional communities that promote informed pedagogical practices and sustainable professional development.

Keywords: Teachers' epistemic agency, Evidence-informed practice, In-service teachers, School-university partnership, Professional knowledge

Extended Summary

Introduction: Contemporary social, technological, and educational transformations require teachers who can act reflectively, make informed decisions, and actively participate in the construction of professional knowledge. In this context, epistemic agency, understood as the ability to inquire, interpret, and attribute meaning to knowledge to guide educational action (Damşa et al., 2010; Elgin, 2013), is an essential dimension of teaching professionalism in complex societies (Pantić, 2017). However, empirical gaps remain regarding how this agency is expressed among in-service teachers and how it relates to the active use of research and professional collaboration, particularly given that most previous studies have focused on pre-service teachers or Initial teacher education. These gaps make it necessary to promote a situated understanding of epistemic agency that considers research practices and collaborative spaces in which teachers construct and transform their professional knowledge. This study aims to analyse how teachers exercise their epistemic agency through research and the collaborative construction of professional knowledge.

Three research questions are posed: (Q1) What forms of epistemic agency were manifested in the use of research and the collaborative construction of professional knowledge? (Q2) How are these forms of epistemic agency characterised in terms of critical inquiry, informed pedagogical practice, and professional collaboration? (Q3) What do these ways of interacting with knowledge reveal about teachers' epistemic agency in their professional contexts?

Theoretical framework: This study examines in-service teachers' beliefs about their epistemic agency across three dimensions: critical inquiry, which refers to their willingness to question assumptions, seek valid sources, interpret results, and integrate evidence (Joram et al., 2020; Böttcher-Oschmann et al., 2021; Cacciamani et al., 2022; Groß Ophoff et al., 2023); informed pedagogical practice, linked to how teachers use evidence to make decisions and adapt teaching (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2021; Heikkilä et al., 2023; Hermansen & Mausethagen, 2023); and professional collaboration, which involves participation in dialogue, exchange and joint knowledge construction within internal and external communities (Damşa & Jornet, 2016; Brown et al., 2017; Godfrey & Brown, 2019; Cain, 2019). Epistemic agency thus emerges as a relational phenomenon fostered by professional communities, in which collaboration between schools and universities provides a key environment for strengthening autonomy, critical positioning, and collective knowledge generation.

Methodological approach: The study was conducted within the framework of the Research - Evidence-informed Schools Network: Design and validation of a model in Catalonia (REDUCAT) project, a network of schools committed to evidence-informed practices and collaboration with universities. A 34-item questionnaire, organised into three dimensions, validated by experts and reviewed by teachers, was administered. The final sample included 480 participants. The analysis combined: (a) descriptive analyses; (b) an AFE using ULS and polychoric correlations to identify the latent structure; (c) reliability estimates (ω and α); and (d) a latent profile analysis (LPA) to detect differentiated configurations of epistemic agency.

Key findings: For Q1, the AFE identified four forms of epistemic agency linked to research and collaboration: critical inquiry, informed pedagogical practice, internal collaboration, and external collaboration. For Q2, these forms were empirically characterised by their internal relationships: critical inquiry showed a moderate correlation with informed pedagogical practice ($r = .290$) and a weak relationship with internal collaboration ($r = .183$). In contrast, external collaboration showed minimal associations ($r \leq .080$). For Q3, latent profile analysis revealed two configurations—

high and moderate epistemic agency—with equal prevalence (50%), evidence that agency is expressed in a situated manner and depends on collaborative opportunities and the integration of evidence. networks.

Theoretical and educational significance: The findings show that participation in research activates epistemic processes that strengthen autonomy and professional judgement, confirming the existence of differentiated forms of teaching agency. The identification of dimensions associated with critical inquiry, informed practice and collaboration shows that internal professional communities are key spaces for exchanging evidence and regulating learning. Finally, the complementary role of external networks reveals that the expression of epistemic agency depends on inter-institutional opportunities that broaden the professional repertoire. These results guide the design of teacher development policies and programmes based on school-university collaboration and evidence-informed practices.

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Enhancing English-Speaking Skills through Mobile Applications: A Case Study at a Public University in Southern Ecuador

Karina Celi, Adriana Cango

Abstract

This paper presents an argument for integrating mobile applications into language instruction to enhance English-speaking skills in higher education. Conducted at a public university in southern Ecuador, the study investigates the effectiveness of mobile apps ELSA Speak, Duolingo, and BBC Learning English as tools to support oral language development among students of the Pedagogy of English Language career. A qualitative case study approach reveals that mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) not only improves pronunciation and fluency but also boosts learner motivation, autonomy, and engagement. The findings underscore the pedagogical value of mobile technologies in overcoming resource limitations and promoting continuous, self-directed learning. This study argues that incorporating these tools into teacher education curricula can enhance communicative competence and align language instruction with the digital habits of modern learners. The work contributes to academic development by offering a replicable model for integrating technology into language pedagogy, with broader implications for educational policy and digital inclusion.

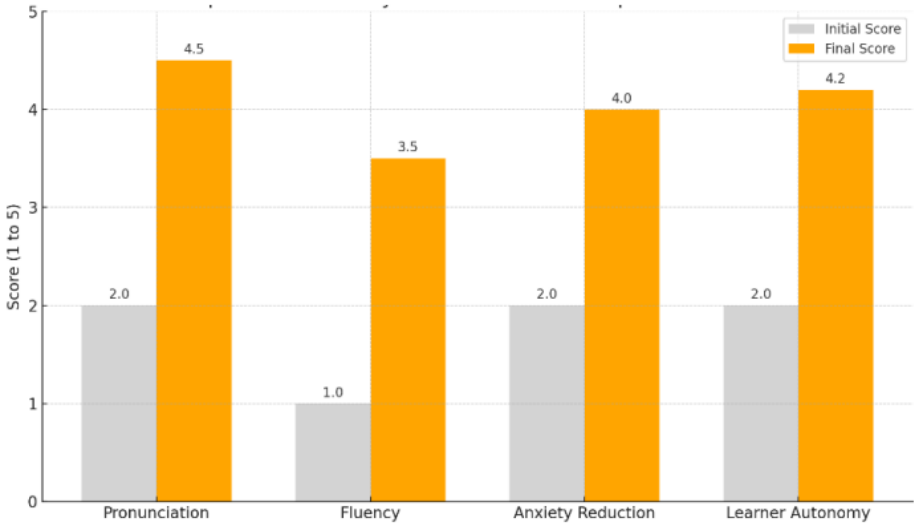
Keywords: Educational technology, Higher education, Language teaching

Extended Summary

Introduction: Developing English oral proficiency remains a challenge, especially in environments with limited exposure to authentic language use. Traditional, grammar-focused instruction often fails to cultivate real communicative competence. Theoretical frameworks like Communicative Language Teaching (Richards, 2006) and the Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982) highlight the importance of meaningful interaction and reduced anxiety to support speaking development. In this context, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) has emerged as a viable approach to apply these theories in practice, offering flexible, learner-centered opportunities for language engagement. Recent studies confirm the benefits of MALL for enhancing autonomy, motivation, and oral proficiency. Researchers such as Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008), Crompton and Burke (2018), and Valencia Arias et al. (2024) have shown that mobile applications extend learning beyond the classroom. Tools like ELSA Speak, Duolingo, and BBC Learning English offer structured, feedback-driven practice, reinforcing pronunciation and fluency while promoting self-regulation (Estrella, 2024; Liulishuo, 2025). Aligned with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), these apps support autonomy and competence, and foster sociocultural and adaptive learning strategies (Viberg & Kukulska-Hulme, 2021). This study builds on these insights by investigating how mobile tools can enhance English speaking skills at a public university in Loja, Ecuador.

Materials and Methods: This study used a qualitative case study approach to explore the role of mobile applications in developing English-speaking skills among students in the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages program at a public university in Loja, Ecuador (Yin, 2018). A purposive sample of 60 students was selected based on English proficiency and willingness to use mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) tools (Palinkas et al., 2015). Over 16 weeks, students engaged with ELSA Speak, Duolingo, and BBC Learning English—apps chosen for their accessibility, learner-focused design, and proven effectiveness in prior research (Burston, 2015; Godwin-Jones, 2011).

To ensure data triangulation and validity (Denzin, 1978), the study combined semi-structured interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015), weekly reflective journals (Moon, 2006), and app-generated usage logs to document learning behaviors and perceptions. These data sources provided both descriptive and behavioral insights into student engagement and skill development. Analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic framework, with manual coding and peer review to increase reliability. Despite its contributions, the study's generalizability is limited due to its single-institution focus, reliance on self-reported data, and the absence of direct measures of speaking proficiency.



Graph 1. Communicative competence constructs

The results revealed substantial improvements across all four targeted constructs, underscoring the effectiveness of mobile applications in enhancing English-speaking competence. Pronunciation demonstrated the most significant gain, increasing from 2.0 to 4.5, which validates the impact of individualized phonological training provided by tools like ELSA Speak. Learners benefited from tailored feedback and repeated practice opportunities that traditional classroom settings often lack. Fluency also showed a steady improvement, rising from 1.0 to 3.5, reflecting students' ongoing exposure to authentic language input and daily speaking practice enabled by applications such as Duolingo and BBC Learning English. In terms of affective outcomes, 4 anxiety levels decreased notably from 2.0 to 4.0 as learners expressed feeling more confident and relaxed when practicing in private, non-judgmental environments created by mobile platforms. Lastly, learner autonomy improved from 2.0 to 4.2, indicating that mobile tools empowered students to take charge of their learning by establishing personal goals, managing their schedules, and engaging with content at their own pace. These results collectively suggest that mobile-assisted language learning supports both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of oral language development.

The results of this study strongly support existing research on the benefits of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) in enhancing English-speaking competence. The significant improvement in pronunciation aligns with Teymouri (2024) and Li (2023), who demonstrated that mobile apps with speech recognition capabilities provide personalized phonological feedback that improves articulation and prosody. Similarly, the observed gains in fluency mirror the findings of Valencia et al. (2024), who reported that regular exposure to authentic input via mobile tools strengthens learners' spontaneous oral production. The study also found a notable reduction in speaking anxiety, a result that supports Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis and aligns with the research of Loewen et al. (2019) and Yeh and Lan (2022), who highlighted the importance of low-pressure environments in encouraging language practice. In terms of learner autonomy, the students' increased ability to self-regulate and personalize their learning mirrors conclusions drawn by Crompton and Burke (2018) and Viberg and Grönlund (2020), who emphasized how mobile learning enhances learner agency and motivation. The present study echoes Estrella (2024), whose Ecuadorian research found that mobile tools foster students' initiative, even when quantitative gains were modest. Overall, this study confirms that mobile apps, when pedagogically embedded, provide accessible, scalable solutions for improving oral language development, effectively bridging the gap between traditional instruction and real-world communication.

The study demonstrated that mobile applications significantly enhanced English-speaking competence among university students by improving both linguistic performance and affective factors. Pronunciation showed the greatest gain—from 2.0 to 4.5—highlighting the effectiveness of personalized feedback in apps like ELSA Speak. Fluency increased steadily from 1.0 to 3.5, supported by daily practice and exposure to authentic language through tools like Duolingo and BBC Learning English. Affective outcomes also improved: learners reported reduced anxiety (from 2.0 to 4.0) and increased confidence when practicing in private, low-pressure environments. Additionally, learner autonomy rose from 2.0 to 4.2, indicating that mobile apps empowered students to take ownership of their learning through self-paced, goal-oriented engagement. Collectively, these results affirm that mobile-assisted language learning supports the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions essential for developing oral proficiency in English.

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Advancing academic development for teaching courses in English as and to non-native speakers

Alexandra Bergedick

Abstract

While academic development and practice have been confronted with increasing challenges in the context of internationalization processes, with dramatically rising numbers of study programmes and courses being taught to international students in English, often by and to non-native English speakers, research in the field of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) and affiliated fields, indicates that academic development, research and -practice regarding teacher professionalization in this context is limited, lacking insights and approaches from a pedagogical point of view in particular. In order to explore how teacher professionalization in the EMI-context may be stimulated by a didactic intervention, the here portrayed undergoing doctoral study in educational sciences therefore explores how EMI-teachers' self-efficacy experience may transform in the course of one semester, when participating in an EMI-targeted didactic intervention. With self-efficacy presumed central in advancing teaching competencies and -performance, teachers' self-efficacy experience regarding their teaching in the EMI-context will be explored through semi-structured interviews carried out before and after taking part in the didactic intervention and teaching in the winter semester of 2026/27. The findings of the doctoral study may indicate how pedagogical approaches of this kind may advance EMI-teacher development and inspire teaching practice, while highlighting further research needs.

Keywords: internationalization, EMI-teacher professionalization (EMI -English as a Medium of Instruction), self-efficacy, didactic intervention

Extended Summary

With an unprecedented rise of university courses for all subject-fields being established and taught in English by and to non-native English speakers worldwide (Macaro, et al (2018)), challenges increase for teachers and students when teaching and learning through a language that is not their first learned language, adding to the challenges these actors already face when teaching and studying in their native language (L1).

Focusing on this context, the aim of this paper is to portray the author's ongoing research process in a doctoral study in educational sciences, in order to raise awareness, encourage debate, reflexion, feedback, as well as international cooperation in this research- and practice field, ultimately contributing to academic research, -development and -practice in the context of internationalization and EMI. The research question in the doctoral study is, how the self-efficacy of teachers teaching through EMI may develop in their experience over the course of one semester, when participating in a didactic intervention designed to raise awareness and set the base for developing competencies central in the EMI-context, thus contributing to their professionalization as teachers in internationalized courses.

The doctoral study is based on theories and studies in the fields of educational sciences, psychology, intercultural studies, as well as EMI, applied linguistics, and English language studies. It centres around the concept of self-efficacy and its role in teacher development (Beuße, M., Hartz, S., & Piep, J. (2015)), and a model on the structure of academic teaching competence in the university context (Trautwein & Merkt (2013)), as well as the competencies identified as essential in EMI- studies and affiliated fields (Sun, Y. (2023)). In the qualitative methodological approach, there will be approximately 12 individual, semi-structured interviews with international university teachers from three universities, conducted before and after the teaching period of the winter semester 2026/27. Additionally, there will be a semi-structured group-interview carried out after the final individual interviews. In order to review the developed questions for these interviews, pre-interviews will be conducted in the winter term 2025/26 and summer term 2026 with international teachers taking part in didactic workshops carried out in English in that time frame. The didactic intervention will consist of various parts: First, there will be asynchronous online self-study units before the first workshop takes place, with tasks to complete, followed by peer-review and -feedback, then individual review of the tasks. After this phase, there will be a central synchronous online group workshop. After the workshop, further self-study units will be employed online, with tasks aimed at supporting teaching practice in the current teaching period, to be worked through asynchronously at teaches' own pace, available throughout the semester. Halfway through the teaching period, a short Q&A-workshop will be carried out to address the most pressing issues the teachers are experiencing in their practice.

The didactic intervention will focus on the promotion of five key competencies that have been identified as essential in the EMI-context in prior studies: EMI-awareness, pedagogic-, communicative-, multicultural-, and language competence. Expected findings in the current study, deriving from experience gathered within 15 years of conceptualizing, carrying out, and evaluating didactic workshops focusing on the named competencies for international university teachers in English as L2, as well as workshops in L1, at over 40 universities and various graduate centres, and based on competencies developed in two extensive trainings for university teacher professionalization as a participant, are: -self-efficacy experience plays a crucial role in teacher professionalization -by going through a learning process on teaching competences for EMI-teaching as individuals and peers, the participating teachers will experience an increase in self-efficacy regarding their teaching performance in EMI-courses -this may contribute to improved

teaching performance, professionalization in teaching in L1 and in L2 -thereby students' learning opportunities may be stimulated, with conceivably more didactic support, indirect or direct, to reach the intended learning outcomes through inspired ways of teaching.

Expected outcomes of the doctoral study are that the participating teachers will have experienced a transformation in their self-efficacy after going through the process of the didactic intervention and applied research methods, with awareness and reflexion through practice and communication on what they have learned, regarding teaching at universities in general and in the EMI-context in particular, resulting in higher teaching quality. The deducted insights from the interviews will be discussed, taking into account the differences of the overall system, institutions, and field-specifics of the included universities and teachers. The teachers' biographical background including experiences in academic and teaching development will also be looked at when interpreting the interview results. As portrayed above, research in EMI and affiliated fields indicates that more theoretical and practical approaches are required, specifically pedagogical approaches, to address challenges and demands deriving from globally rising numbers of EMI-taught university courses, supporting and advancing teaching and learning in the EMI-context.

In order to advance practice, policy and future research regarding academic development in EMI-contexts, the ongoing doctoral study, introduced here, explores a pedagogical approach offered to university teachers through a didactic intervention, to inspire their self-efficacy and teaching performance, with the results of the individual interviews and a group interview to be evaluated and discussed The outcomes will indicate how this approach might serve as a future model for approaches in academic development and practice in the EMI-context, while considering contextual and practical variables, thus helping to further develop policies and structures fostering EMI-teacher education and professionalization, inviting rising numbers of teacher training and research in this area.

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Papers 35

From Credential-Chasing to Capacity-Building: Six Ways Sessionals Approach Educational Development

Brandon Sabourin

Abstract

Planning meaningful educational development for sessional instructors involves taking stock of their needs. Such needs stem from institutional and departmental teaching cultures and the reliance on contract academic work more broadly. But how much do we know about the types of development sessionals actually need? How do we begin to understand how sessionals approach educational development? Drawing from a larger study exploring educational development for sessionals, this paper presents a set of six qualitatively unique ways that sessionals might approach educational development. Through a series of phenomenographic interviews, 17 sessionals shared that their approaches toward educational development are informed by extrinsic and intrinsic motivations to participate, aligning with deep and surface approaches to learning. Implications for programming and community building will be discussed.

Keywords: sessionals, phenomenography, educational development programming, qualitative approaches

Educational development is an ongoing challenge for sessionals. Several studies over the last decade have noted the disparity of opportunities across geographic regions, institutions, and even departments (Author, 2021; Heffernan, 2018; McComb & Eather, 2023). Light et al. (2009) posit that educational development has the potential to influence teaching approaches, in turn affecting students' approaches to learning. But how much do we know about the types of development sessionals actually need? How do we begin to understand how they actually approach educational development?

Phenomenography is a research approach concerned with understanding the qualitatively different ways that a learning experience can be perceived by the learner or the educator. Marton (1988) claims that "phenomenographers do not make statements about the world as such, but about people's conceptions of the world" (p. 144). Marton's (1988) hypothesis is predicated on the idea that understanding the actions of students—"what the student does" (Shuell, 1986, p. 429)—can allow for meaningful understanding of teaching and learning conditions. The purpose of phenomenography is therefore, not to explore experiences for the sake of understanding a phenomenon itself, but to explore the qualitatively different ways that teaching and learning are conceived, so as to understand their conceptions and perhaps influence them through changing teaching and learning conditions.

The purpose of this research was to understand how the unique approaches to teaching and conceptions of teaching identified by sessionals can inform the development of targeted educational development programming. Drawing from the qualitative phase of a larger mixed-methods study on sessional instructors' educational development needs (Author, 2025), this paper presents a set of approaches sessional instructors take toward educational development. Seventeen semi-structured, virtual interviews were conducted with sessionals from a mid-sized university in Canada. Analysis of interview data led to the creation of a phenomenographic outcome space (fig. 1) which depicts the six qualitatively different ways sessionals in the study approach educational development:

1. Educational development as not necessary. 2. Educational development as a checkbox item. 3. Educational development as a leveraged credential. 4. Educational development as an opportunity to grow as an educator. 5. Educational development as a community-building activity. 6. Educational development as a catalyst to improve student learning.

The six approaches to educational development were derived from how sessionals described their approaches to teaching, conceptions of teaching, teaching and assessment techniques, interest in educational development, and motivation for future educational development activities. The resulting outcome space (fig. 1) shows each approach mapped to three themes of expanding awareness: (a) motivation, (b) sphere of influence, and (c) learning and teaching approach qualities.

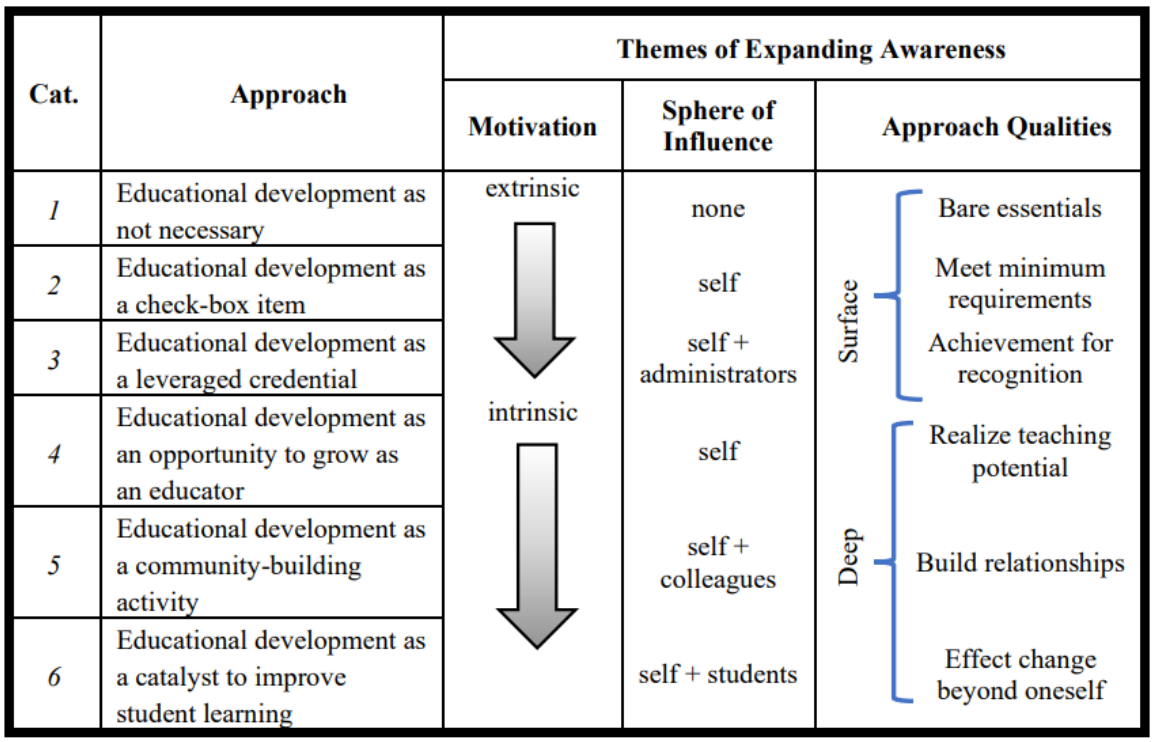


Fig 1: Six Approaches Sessional Instructors Take Toward Educational Development.

Ultimately, the results of this study support Light et al.'s (2009) assertion that educational development has an influence on instructors' approaches to and conceptions of teaching. Participants will be able to compare distinct approaches sessionals take toward their teaching and reflect on the ways sessionals approach educational development given several contextual factors. This set of approaches toward educational development is a novel contribution to the educational development literature. Prior to conducting this study, I was not able to find a model by which to classify how sessionals—or faculty members from any rank—approach educational development. Ultimately, a sessional's next step in their development is theirs, regardless of how much an educational developer may desire that to be aligned to a particular theory or best practice. Providing educational development based on need is the strategy needed to close the gap between misaligned conceptions and approaches.

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AI as Dialogic Catalyst: Archetypal Roles and Epistemic Agency in Interthinking

Sharon Bratt

Abstract

Educational developers are confronting a profound pedagogical and epistemic shift—one in which students' ways of thinking and creating knowledge are being reshaped by generative artificial intelligence (AI). The Dialogic Catalyst Triangle, positions AI not as a content generator but as a dialogic partner in inquiry. Drawing on dialogic pedagogy and Mercer and Littleton's concept of interthinking, the framework integrates interthinking, archetypal team roles, and AI as an epistemic agent within a third-space ecosystem of learning. By enacting archetypal functions such as skeptic, clarifier, and integrator, AI can catalyze exploratory dialogue and deepen collective reasoning while preserving human agency. For educational developers, the framework offers a scholarly lens to guide faculty engagement with AI and advance critical, evidence-informed approaches to pedagogy and epistemic practice in higher education.

Extended Summary

Educational developers face a pedagogical and epistemic shift as students' ways of thinking and creating knowledge are being reshaped by generative AI. The challenge is guiding educators through this transformation. Drawing on traditions of dialogic pedagogy and collaborative learning, we propose a conceptual framework—the Dialogic Catalyst Triangle—to explore how AI can assume epistemic functions within human dialogue. The model provides a theoretical foundation for educational developers seeking to engage faculty in evidence-informed discussions about AI's pedagogical potential.

The aim of this paper is to present a conceptual model for positioning AI as a dialogic catalyst in collaborative learning. The Dialogic Catalyst Triangle integrates three elements: interthinking, archetypal roles in collaboration, and AI as an epistemic agent within a third-space ecosystem of inquiry. It conceptualizes AI as a structured partner that can extend human dialogue, stimulate exploratory talk, and diversify collective reasoning. The framework is a theoretically grounded conceptual tool, offered for educational developers to help faculty apply dialogic pedagogy when integrating AI into teaching and learning.

Theoretical Framework: Dialogic pedagogy views learning as a social, discursive process. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized language as a mediational tool, while Mercer and Littleton (2007) describe interthinking as reasoning together through dialogue. Alexander (2020) extends this tradition to dialogic teaching, highlighting how structured discussion promotes critical engagement and mutual understanding. In higher education, dialogic inquiry (Wells, 1999; Skidmore, 2006) and Freire's (2000) conception of dialogue as transformative praxis frame AI not as automation but as a participant in meaning-making. Building on Bereiter's (1994) notion of progressive discourse, AI can serve as a dialogic stimulus—introducing perspectives that prompt human reflection and refinement of ideas.

Epistemic agency—the capacity to generate, evaluate, and circulate knowledge claims (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006)—is increasingly distributed across human and technological participants (Lund & Smørdal, 2006). Recent research conceptualizes AI as epistemic infrastructure (Chen, 2025), reflective scaffold (Degen & Asanov, 2025), or dialogic partner (Beale, 2025). Our framework contributes by positioning AI as an archetypal catalyst—mediating and extending collaborative reasoning while sustaining human agency.

Cooperative learning often assigns rotating roles (e.g., recorder, monitor) to scaffold participation. Later work highlights the importance of structured processes and task design to support balanced participation within teams (Sibley & Ostafichuk, 2014). Belbin (2010) identifies recurring team role patterns. We draw on these traditions to frame epistemic archetypes as dynamic functions—enacted by humans or AI—to sustain inquiry.

Gutiérrez's (2008) notion of third space—a zone where discourses intersect and hybrid practices emerge—informs the model's ecological dimension. The third-space ecosystem of inquiry describes the dynamic interplay between human and AI participants, where understanding emerges through adaptive, interdependent dialogue. Within this ecosystem, AI acts as a catalyst for epistemic balance, helping learners interrogate assumptions, synthesize ideas, and expand shared understanding.

The Dialogic Catalyst Triangle represents the intersection of interthinking, archetypal roles, and epistemic agency within the third space. Figure 1 illustrates the Dialogic Catalyst Triangle. Drawing on Belbin's (2010) theory of team roles, we reinterpret roles such as coordinator or monitor as epistemic archetypes—recurrent functions that sustain inquiry. AI can enact or provoke these functions: posing challenges, clarifying reasoning, integrating perspectives, or introducing novel ideas. Rather than replacing human dialogue, AI catalyzes it—supporting progressive discourse and distributed reasoning. By framing these interactions as archetypal, the model provides a vocabulary for educational developers to discuss AI's pedagogical value beyond content generation or efficiency.

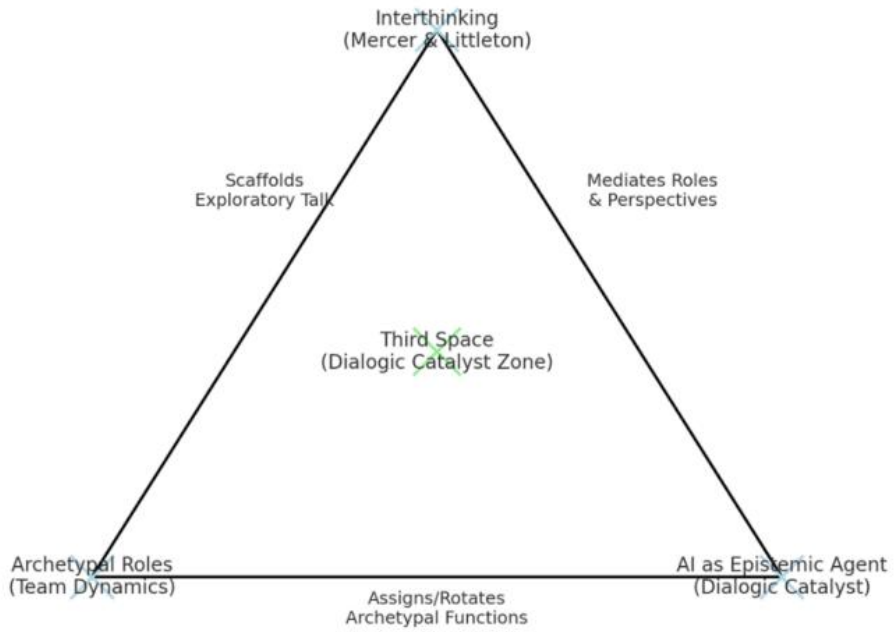


Fig 1. The Dialogic Catalyst Triangle: AI as an epistemic agent in a third-space ecosystem.

The Dialogic Catalyst Triangle advances a conceptual argument: that generative AI can function as a dialogic catalyst in collaborative learning rather than a content-generation tool. It reframes AI from a transactional technology to a participant in inquiry, sustaining epistemic balance within the third-space ecosystem.

Its educational significance lies in helping educational developers navigate the pedagogical and epistemic shifts emerging with AI. It foregrounds epistemic agency, encouraging educators to examine how human and AI contributions intersect in knowledge construction.

Educational developers can use this framework to help faculty apply dialogic pedagogy when integrating AI, designing learning activities where technology supports inquiry rather than replaces it.

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Done by, done to, done through and done with: Academic Developers delivering strategic projects

Laura Milne, Jackie Potter, Claire Stocks

Abstract

In response to sector-wide pressures, our Academic Development team has led two major strategic projects impacting and influencing the university, namely a whole-institution curriculum redesign (reworking over 100 courses) and a rebuild of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to enable improved learning design at scale. This work has required negotiation of our identities, and development of nuanced approaches to leadership. The current neoliberal climate impacting Higher Education globally creates and extends potential tensions between business efficiencies and learning. Against this backdrop, academic developers are deployed to lead change projects to ensure strategic imperatives are supportive of institutional needs and ambitions. This paper explores academic developers' leadership roles in institutional transformation, drawing on established leadership frameworks and academic development literature, and proposes a conceptual framework for leading change at scale. Grounded in leadership theories and case-based reflection, we introduce a typology of leadership modalities experienced by academic developers: done by (through facilitation), done to (navigating tension around change), done through (operational project management and stakeholder liaison), and done with (collaborative grassroots leadership across silos). We offer attendees practical strategies and evidence-based insights for leading large-scale strategic transformation, balancing institutional imperatives with pedagogical values, while negotiating personal and professional identities as academic developers.

Keywords: academic development, strategic leadership, negotiated identity, change agent

Extended Summary

Between recurrent black swan events such as the Covid-19 pandemic or the rise of Generative Artificial Intelligence disrupting "business as usual", increased financial insecurity, the rise of neoliberal pressures, and regulatory changes, it is unsurprising that Higher Education Institutions appear to be stuck in a cycle of relentless change. Within this environment, academic developers occupy a pivotal role to support change at scale. As Academic Developers, we negotiate our roles within distributed leadership structures (Bolden et al., 2012; Spillane et al, 2001) to lead, facilitate and support strategic development at our institutions. Often working between and alongside traditional hierarchies of leadership, we manage change and support colleagues through the tensions of delivering more with less, improving student experience and maintaining high academic standards.

Academic development exemplifies negotiated leadership within complex and rapidly changing institutional contexts (Spillane, 2001, Floyd and Fung, 2012; Whitchurch, 2013). Roles have expanded from teaching enhancement to leading institutional change, requiring negotiated identity and sharp political acumen (Whitchurch 2013), supporting a shift from individual heroic models of leadership to highly collaborative and relational models (Bolden et al., 2012). As Bolden et al (2012) and Bryman (2007) argue, effective leadership in HE is collaborative and relational, requiring trust-building and facilitation; these skills are central to Academic Developers' work as change agents at all levels, e.g. recent special issues of IJAD on relational academic development and trust introduced by Dean and Geertsema, (2023) and Pleschová, et al., (2025) respectively.

Two strategic projects led by Academic Developers illustrate these dynamics: a whole-institution curriculum redesign and a VLE rebuild to support improved learning design. Both projects required Academic Developers to adapt and negotiate their leadership roles due to the scale of the projects and their strategic significance, driven by pedagogic and business efficiency aims. For the curriculum redesign project, we facilitated design sprint workshops for all course teams, created resources and supporting documentation, and evaluated the experience reported by both senior leaders and course team members (see Authors, 2025). For the VLE redesign project, we ran iterative co-design workshops to elicit design requirements from staff and students, and ran numerous CPD activities to ensure module teams were confident to use the new platform. The emotional intelligence and political acumen of Academic Developers placed them well to lead this work which often surfaced challenging "human" factors, such as strong emotional response to change.

This paper presents a novel conceptual framework of leadership, whereby different typological modalities are constructed around the key roles undertaken by Academic Developers. Work is 'done by', 'done to', 'done through' and 'done with' Academic Developers as they negotiate their leadership across an institution, through expertise, practice and strong relational ties. Firstly, in both our case study projects, leadership is done by Academic Developers, in the facilitation of design sprints or co-design workshops. Leadership is done to, where Academic Developers adopted the role of the builders, rather than the architects of change; senior leadership set a strategic direction that Academic Developers were tasked to deliver. Leadership is done through, where in both case studies, Academic Developers took on functional roles including as project managers and liaisons between different stakeholders. Finally, leadership is done with, where we guided the narrative of change, using our established relational networks across the institution to influence change beyond our formal management responsibilities. We also worked to develop leadership in others, building local champions for effective change at grassroots levels. Understanding one's own identity negotiation

process as a reflective practitioner places Academic Developers in an excellent position to be leader, facilitator, manager and change agent to achieve whole-institution change

Across the projects, we draw some common points for consideration as we construct our leadership. Through their work with colleagues, Academic Developers are often brought face-to-face with the messy human factors of change – particularly strong emotions relating to workload, sense of own identity and the insecurity that can come from cycles of repeated change. Firstly, we need to work to build trust across silos and functional groups. This involves developing "soft" networks, which are impactful to pilot new ideas, receive early user feedback, and establish a cohort of grassroots champions for change. Secondly, communication approaches need to be tailored to avoid blind spots, and highlight intended benefits to end users, expected outputs and deadlines, to provide clarity and increase buy-in. Appropriate feedback cycles and consultation can also improve buy-in, but may extend project timelines.

In conclusion, this paper presents a novel understanding of how Academic Developers experience and negotiate leadership as done to, done by, done through and done with them to achieve whole-institution change. We will present some evidence-based practical strategies for leading change at scale, drawn from our experiences with two major strategic projects. For the ICED 2026 audience, this paper explicitly supports a scholarly and practice-based understanding of how Academic Developers occupy a pivotal role to lead change at scale in line with institutional strategy.

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Nothing about us without us: Mapping neurodivergent actives on good teaching onto the Universal Design for Learning

Mayuko Nakamura, Lori Henehan

Abstract

With the growing number of neurodivergent students in higher education, it is essential to equip educators with strategies that foster inclusive learning environments. Despite institutional efforts to make teaching more accessible, many neurodivergent students continue to report concerns about classroom environments and instructional practices that hinder their success (Accardo et al., 2024). Furthermore, much of the existing literature overlooks the perspectives of the very students these practices aim to support (Kingsbury et al., 2020). To address this gap, we conducted focus groups in Spring 2024 with self-identified neurodivergent undergraduate students at a large public university to explore their views on effective teaching strategies. Findings reveal persistent challenges related to rigid course structures and limited flexibility, alongside recommendations for practices that promote engagement and equity. We mapped these student-identified strategies onto the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework (CAST, 2025) to create a practical guide for intentional course design. This framework offers actionable recommendations for instructors and provides a foundation for future research on the experiences of neurodivergent students in college classrooms. By centering student voices, this work advances evidence-informed approaches to academic development and promotes equitable learning opportunities for all.

Keywords: neurodiversity, universal design for learning (UDL), inclusive pedagogy, equitable pedagogy

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Papers 36

Pedagogical consultancies with Academic Developers: experiences from the University of Trento

Elena Benini, Helga Ballardini, Paola Venuti, Anna Serbati

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of pedagogical consultations provided by Academic Developers (ADs) at the University of Trento in the FormID Teaching and Learning Centre. Over two academic years, 38 lecturers received support, mainly following participation in a teaching innovation funding call. Using a multi-level qualitative and quantitative approach, the research explores how ADs improve reflective practice, methodological change and professional growth. Results highlight increased adoption of active teaching strategies and improved planning. The study contributes to evidence-based evaluation in faculty development and suggests future directions for research in faculty development. Moreover, this study provides elements for the continuous improvement of the actions in teaching and learning centers.

Keywords: Faculty Development, Teaching Innovation, Academic Developers, Pedagogical Consultancies

Extended Summary

Introduction: In recent years, faculty development has taken on an increasingly strategic role within academic institutions, acting as a lever for improving the quality of university teaching. In this context, the role of the Academic Developer (AD) has grown as a professional capable of promoting planning and reflection on pedagogical practices, supporting teaching innovation and accompanying the professional growth of teachers (Leibowitz, 2014). However, despite the growth of programmes and interventions led by ADs, the scientific literature highlights a persistent lack of systematic studies that rigorously document the effectiveness and impact of these activities (Beach et al., 2016; Nair et al., 2025). This contribution is part of what Beach et al. (2016) define as the “era of evidence” in faculty development, in which there is a shift from simply providing training services to the need to document and evaluate the real impact of interventions. As Pleschová (2025) points out, effective evaluation must go beyond the immediate measurement of participants' reactions to investigate in depth sustainable changes in teaching practices and professionalism. In this perspective, this study aims to contribute to the construction of a culture of evidence-based evaluation, based on empirical data and critical reflection on ADs activities.

Methodology: This study aims to investigate an initiative launched by the Teaching and Learning Centre at the University of Trento, in Italy, the teaching consultancy services offered to university lecturers by Academic Developers. The TLC offers lecturers who request it the opportunity for 1-1 sessions with an Academic Developer to help them implement teaching innovation initiatives within their courses. Over the last two academic years (2022-2023 and 2023-2024), 38 teachers have been supported. Most of these lecturers requested support for their teaching activities after participating in a call for proposals entitled “Call for Teaching Innovation”. aimed to offer funding to lecturers who propose innovative teaching projects.

The research is based on the following question: What is the impact of the pedagogical consultations conducted by Academic Developers on the adoption of innovative methodologies and the improvement of teaching practices among university lecturers?

The aim is to explore whether and how such consultations promote processes of reflection, change and experimentation in teachers' practice, contributing to greater openness towards active and inclusive teaching methodologies. The work also aims to fill a gap in the literature on the effectiveness of teaching consultations as a tool for professional development, with a specific focus on the University of Trento, in Italian context.

The study uses a mixed methods methodology that collects data from three perspectives: teachers, academic developers and students, with the aim of triangulating the emerging perspectives.

First level: analysis of 22 cases of university lecturers who received support, through:

- analysis of 22 final reflection reports produced by lecturers by identifying the teaching architectures adopted (Bonaiuti, 2014),- 503 questionnaires administered to students participating in classes where teaching innovation was introduced by the lecturers previously supported by ADs- field notes written by the ADs during the sessions.

Second level: qualitative analysis through in-depth interviews with:

- 10 teachers, to explore the perceived impact on their teaching practice,- 10 students, to investigate their perception of the quality and effectiveness of innovative teaching,- 4 ADs, to gather their views on the mentoring process and the transformations observed.

Data analysis is based on a triangulation logic between sources and perspectives with the aim of constructing a framework consistent with the multilevel model proposed by Hurney et al. (2024).

Results: The analysis of teaching reports shows a prevalence of collaborative (41.18%) and exploratory (32.35%) approaches, with reduced adoption of traditional models. Supported teachers report significant benefits in terms of planning, professional reflection and design creativity. Consultations have promoted greater awareness of the teaching role and more intentional and structured planning.

On the student side, the questionnaires show a generally positive attitude towards innovative teaching activities, with appreciation for interactivity, group work and practical experiences. However, there are also critical issues related to time management, workloads and the use of technology.

The ADs' field notes confirm the adoption of active methodologies such as Team-Based Learning, Project Work, the flipped classroom and the use of digital tools (Moodle, Wooclap, ChatGPT). Teaching design is enriched with tools such as lesson plans, assessment rubrics and portfolios, promoting more reflective and personalised learning.

The results confirm the role of ADs as bridge figures capable of translating pedagogical visions into concrete practices, supporting innovation processes that arise from dialogue and collaboration (McGrath, 2020). One methodological issue concerns the self-selection of participants, which may have influenced the results by returning a

partially favourable view of innovation. For this reason, it is suggested that future research also include the voices of those who did not participate spontaneously (Evans & Chauvin, 1993) and develop longitudinal pathways to monitor the evolution of practices over time.

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Academic Professional Development: A Reflexive Account of Informal Mentorship in a Transformative Context.

Shanya Reuben, Shaida Bobat, Vukani Luvuyo Makhaba

Abstract

Despite policy directives prioritizing academic development in South Africa's higher education context, mentorship, as a key mechanism for situated learning, has yet to be embedded as a consistent, institutionalized practice. While frameworks including the Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework (2015) emphasize academic capacity building, the relational, performative and embodied nature of mentorship is seldom in the foreground. In this reflective account I reflect on the role of informal mentorship which emerged organically through relational exchanges. In this autoethnographic reflexive account, using Wegner's Community of Practice framework as a lens, I reposition mentorship from the academic periphery and recast it as integral to my professional development. My reflections draw on informal mentorship relationships with two mentors, an Indian Female and an African Male whose contrasting but complementary approaches allowed me to reclaim my critical voice. Two central themes are emphasized: Learning in Practice and Becoming through Practice, which jointly demonstrate the centrality of relational, informal mentorship in shaping competence and identity in a community of practice.

Keywords: Mentorship; Professional Development; Informal Learning Academic Identity

Aim: This autoethnographic reflexive account repositions mentorship, as a relational and embodied practice, from the academic periphery and recasts it as integral to professional academic development. The paper explores the first authors journey of reclaiming her critical voice, a voice that she had long suppressed but which gradually re-emerged through participation in a supportive community of practice.

Theoretical Framework: Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice (COP) framework positions learning as a social and relational process. Wegner explains three key features occurring in these communities: mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire. For Wegner, an organic outcome of being part of a community of practice is identity formation. In the first authors case, COP is used to unpack the "kind of professional" she became within this community.

Methodological Approach: As a central component to academic development, Aryal (2022) suggests that the practice of critical self-reflection remains central in both scrutinizing and modifying deeply ingrained preconceptions with the view to foster deeper understandings of complex social phenomena. While single autoethnographic accounts are not transferrable to other contexts, the value of ethnographic work lies in the author's account being viewed as an illustration and relatable experience to others who may experience similarities (Boncori & Smith, 2018). Adopting Wegner's (1998) Community of Practice as a theoretical lens, this paper draws on a selection of the first author's journal entries as data. Data is analysed thematically. This study received full ethics exemption from the UKZN Research Ethics Committee (Ref: 00028375) and has met institutional requirements for ethical conduct.

Key Findings: The findings are based on a selection of reflections which speak most directly to the centrality of the relational, informal mentorship shaping the first authors professional development in a community of practice. These intentional selections offer empirical grounding for the two themes discussed in this paper: Learning in practice and Becoming through practice which collectively illustrate how discursive repertoires intersect with the observation of embodied presence. Learning in Practice reflects competence development through the process of relational and embodied mentorship by drawing on central discursive expressions. This theme highlights how mentors embodied expressions created a shared relational space where the first author's development could unfold.

Becoming through Practice reflects the process of what Wenger (1998) refers to as "becoming a certain kind of person in practice". The journey is not solitary; but depends on relationships and finding a nurturing space where it progressively feels safer to make sense of struggles. Teaching identity development is unpacked in relation to history, context, and community. The theme explores the idea that becoming matters as much as doing and that justice, care, and context are critical components of the teaching self.

Theoretical Significance: This reflexive account demonstrates that informal mentorship, when enacted through relational and embodied practices, is central to academic professional development. Wenger's (1998) COP framework is positioned as a useful tool to illustrate that academic development is as much about belonging and becoming as it is about acquiring a set of learned skills. Educational Significance: This account affirms the centrality of relational, informal mentorship in shaping competence and identity within communities of practice. The first author reflects on the process of reclaiming her critical voice. A case for higher education valuing identity work alongside competence is made.

Practice Implications: The findings of this paper are framed as a useful tool to address some of the national higher education concerns in South Africa. Despite sustained policy initiatives to drive formalised mentorship in South Africa, in practice, such endeavours remain inconsistent and underdeveloped. Various policy frameworks such as the National Framework for Enhancing Academics as University Teachers (2018) have foregrounded capacity building, yet, as

Dhunpath et al. (2018) explain, there is an absence of any substantive discussion around what it means to be a good university teacher.

Future Research: Future research should explore further the role of mentorship within intentional, professional development frameworks as an innovative means to bridge policy voids.

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Preparing for professional learning through practicing peer-mentoring

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Abstract

Peer-mentoring offers important learning opportunities for student-teachers, and it likewise supports learning for practicing teachers working in schools. Peer-mentoring can facilitate individual and collective learning, critical reflection, and practice development (Geeraerts et al., 2015). If student-teachers learn the practice of peer-mentoring during their education, they are better prepared both to continue learning and to participate in and contribute to professional learning communities. In this study we examine student-teachers' peer-mentoring conversations based on video recordings of their practicum teaching. Our analysis identified instances of student-teachers engaging in epistemic practices that are central to their enrolment in, preparation for, and contribution to the profession. By analytically attending to enacted epistemic practices, and by interpreting these findings through the notion of scaffolding, we explore how epistemic practices can be better supported in peer-mentoring settings. The findings have implications for teacher educators and student-teachers seeking to enhance the learning that occurs through peer-mentoring.

Keywords: Peer mentoring, Epistemic practices, Workplace learning, Teacher Education

Extended Summary

Research aims: This study reports on a research project that recognises student-teachers' need for procedural knowledge about how to engage in professional collaboration, conceptualising peer-mentoring as a competence required for induction into the profession's knowledge culture.

In contemporary work life, learning on the job is essential across professions as formal education cannot fully prepare practitioners for the complexity and evolving demands of professional work. As professional tasks become more complex and expectations multiply, collegial guidance and support grow increasingly important. Traditions of peer-mentoring and feedback are central sources of workplace learning in many fields (e.g. Chapman & Collins, 2009), yet such practices remain less prevalent in teaching despite evidence that they foster professional communities and support individual and collective learning in schools (Geeraerts et al., 2015). If student-teachers learn the practice of peer-mentoring during their education, they are better prepared both to continue learning and to contribute to, and exercise agency within, their professional communities.

Collegial collaboration is given considerable emphasis in Norwegian school policy documents, where it is presented as a means of facilitating knowledge sharing and of supporting both individual professional growth and the development of professional communities. Accordingly, the capacity to participate in collegial collaboration is a core competence for student-teachers, preparing them to meet the collaborative demands and expectations of professional practice.

Our study's empirical context—a learning design in teacher education where student-teachers engage in peer mentoring around classroom videos of their own teaching—enables investigation of how peer-mentoring contributes to student-teachers' development as professional practitioners. To open up and examine this phenomenon, we employ analytic concepts from epistemic practice theory (Nerland, 2016). Building on studies that link structured peer-mentoring to improved teaching and learning, critical reflection, and practice development (Kohut, Burnap & Yon, 2007; Thomas et al., 2014; Heikkinen, Jokinen & Tynjälä, 2012), we treat peer-mentoring as an epistemic practice that ought to be taught within professional education.

The following research question guides our study:

How does structured peer mentoring contribute to student-teachers' development as professional practitioners?

We adopt a theoretical stance that foregrounds learning across the education–work boundary and considers how professional learning is distributed and enacted across institutional and workplace settings (Nerland, 2018). In this study, peer-mentoring is positioned both as a form of workplace learning and as an analytical lens for examining how student- teachers work with knowledge that informs practice. Specifically, we draw on research that frames such collaborative learning activities as epistemic practices (Nerland, 2016; 2018; Jensen et al.,), using the concept to analyse what teachers do to address complex, practice-based problems and how they collectively investigate and mobilise relevant knowledge. Epistemic practices denote the processes by which theoretical and practice-generated problems are explored, refined and circulated within a profession. We pay particular attention to the mediating role of profession-specific knowledge resources and technologies in students' feedback interactions.

The data derive from a learning design in which student teachers at a large Norwegian teacher education programme filmed their own teaching during practicum and discussed the recordings in peer groups guided by a question template. The corpus comprises video recorded conversations from six peer groups of three to five students (N = 23). Data were collected in the autumns of 2021 and 2022.

We identified four primary manifestations of epistemic practices among participating student-teachers. These practices were oriented to problem framing, exploration, justification and counterfactual imagination (considering what might have been). Substantively, student-teachers' interactions focused on articulating characteristics of effective teaching, discussing productive forms of classroom dialogue, and formulating and justifying assessment practices.

The learning design afforded several positive opportunities. The guide, disciplinary terminology and technology (video) shaped student teachers' practices by narrowing focus and preventing conversations from becoming personal, thereby enabling interaction centred on examining and improving teaching practice. The videos functioned as a lens on embodied habits and implicit assumptions, and short, sequenced clips made discussion more manageable. Access to peers' reasoning and instructional choices created new forms of collective interaction that complemented traditional mentoring; participants often reported that peer feedback felt more concrete and actionable than mentor feedback. Group conversations and feedback also served as consolidation moments.

Framing structured peer-mentoring as an epistemic practice (Nerland, 2016) is both educationally and theoretically significant: it provides a window into how student-teachers make tacit classroom knowledge explicit, justify instructional decisions, and translate conceptual understanding into actionable classroom practice, while also advancing theories of workplace learning by showing how collective inquiry mediates the production, circulation, and legitimation of profession-specific knowledge.

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Enhancing Teaching Agency via Observation-Based Consultation: Implementing BOPPPS with New Faculty

I-Fan Chang, Meilun Shih

Abstract

Higher education institutions increasingly emphasize learner-centered pedagogy, yet novice faculty members often face challenges in translating theoretical frameworks into practical classroom strategies (Hollywood et al., 2020; Kane et al., 2002). This study examines how structured observation-based teaching consultations enhance the development of teaching agency among early-career instructors implementing the BOPPPS framework (Bridge-In, Outcomes, Pre-Assessment, Participatory Learning, Post-Assessment, and Summary). Using a mixed-methods design, data were collected from 51 instructors who received classroom observation and consultation between 2023 and 2025. Quantitative results indicated high satisfaction with the consultation process (M = 4.84, SD = 0.37) and substantial improvement in understanding personal teaching approaches (M = 4.69, SD = 0.51). Ninety-two percent of participants reported having modified or intending to modify their instructional methods. Among the six BOPPPS components, Participatory Learning was identified as both the most impactful (43.9%) and one of the most challenging (36.8%), followed by Pre-Assessment (39.5%). Qualitative findings illustrate that feedback derived from systematic classroom observation supported instructors in transforming reflection into action, navigating contextual constraints, and leading to diverse pedagogical innovations such as active learning, structured group discussions, and modularized course design. The study proposes a Consultation-Enabled Agency Model explaining how evidence-informed feedback and reflective dialogue facilitate sustainable pedagogical change. The findings offer insights for academic development programs aiming to strengthen teaching agency and promote contextualized learning innovation among novice faculty.

Keywords: Teacher agency, Pedagogical transformation, Teaching consultation, Novice faculty

Extended Summary

New faculty members often face difficulties in translating pedagogical theories into effective classroom practice (Hollywood et al., 2020; Kane et al., 2002). Previously, voluntary consultation services at the studied university saw low engagement, primarily because faculty lacked the pedagogical vocabulary to articulate their needs or diagnose their own teaching issues. To bridge this gap, the teaching center embedded a structured consultation process into its new faculty orientation.

The BOPPPS framework was strategically selected to establish a shared cognitive platform between consultants and instructors, most of whom possess no prior pedagogical training. For consultants, BOPPPS provides a systematic observation protocol, enabling them to move beyond vague impressions to provide structured, evidence-based feedback. This design transforms the consultation from a reactive service into a proactive, guided intervention suitable for novices.

Against this backdrop, this study examines how this observation-based consultation supports the development of teaching agency among new faculty implementing the BOPPPS framework. Specifically, it investigates (a) how instructors perceive the consultation's contribution to their agency, (b) which BOPPPS components are experienced as most impactful and challenging, and (c) what pedagogical changes instructors report implementing.

The research is grounded in the concept of teacher agency, viewed as the capacity of educators to make informed choices within social and structural contexts (Eteläpelto et al., 2013; Priestley et al., 2015). Three interrelated dimensions frame this study: (1) Personal agency: confidence and awareness of one’s teaching identity; (2) Social agency: interaction and collaborative engagement with students; and (3) Structural agency: the ability to navigate institutional constraints and classroom realities.

To link agency with practice, the study employs the BOPPPS framework (Bridge-In, Outcomes, Pre-Assessment, Participatory Learning, Post-Assessment, and Summary). Originating from the Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW), this model is widely adopted

in North American higher education to train novice instructors due to its operational simplicity and effectiveness (Foxe et al., 2017; ISW Network, n.d.).

The BOPPPS framework provides a structured foundation for cross-disciplinary application. This applicability allows educational developers, acting as non-subject-matter experts, to quickly identify structural gaps in course design without needing deep disciplinary knowledge (Dawson et al., 2014). By serving as a diagnostic lens, BOPPPS promotes intentional design and iterative reflection, fundamental conditions for enacting teacher agency. In this study, the BOPPPS sequence thus serves a dual function: it is both the specific instructional content being implemented by the novice faculty and the analytic lens used to interpret agency development.

A mixed-methods design combined quantitative survey analysis with qualitative reflection data from 51 instructors who participated in classroom observation and post-observation consultation between 2023 and 2025. Quantitative data from post-consultation surveys indicated extremely high satisfaction with the process (M = 4.84, SD = 0.37) and a strong

perception that the consultation enhanced understanding of personal teaching styles (M = 4.69, SD = 0.51). Notably, 92% of instructors reported that they had already modified or planned to modify their teaching approaches. Qualitative data were derived from open-ended responses describing which BOPPPS elements had the most impact, which were most challenging, and what teaching strategies were adopted after consultation. Content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) was conducted, cross-referencing BOPPPS components with the three dimensions of teacher agency.

The analysis revealed three central findings. First, consultation fostered reflective clarity and agency awareness. Participants expressed that the observation and dialogue helped them recognize their teaching patterns and refine course design logic. For many, articulating learning outcomes (Outcomes) clarified instructional intent and guided both teaching and learning focus. Second, Participatory Learning presented a paradox: it was rated most impactful (43.9%) yet highly challenging to sustain (36.8%), second only to Pre-Assessment (39.5%). The faculty explained that fostering meaningful participation required managing uneven student readiness, large-class logistics, and cultural hesitancy toward speaking up in classrooms. This paradox illustrates the tension between pedagogical aspiration and contextual constraint, which is central to agency enactment. Third, consultation catalyzed tangible pedagogical change. Many instructors incorporated active learning strategies such as Think–Pair–Share, jigsaw, and case-based learning to strengthen interaction and critical thinking. Others introduced pre-class learning sheets, embedded low-stakes quizzes, or modularized lectures into shorter segments to sustain attention. Teachers also adopted practical suggestions from consultants, such as assigning roles within group discussions, integrating reflection time before sharing, using digital polling tools or live response systems to increase engagement, or observing students from the back of the room to better gauge participation. Collectively, these actions illustrate a progression from awareness to experimentation to implementation.

The findings indicate that teachers perceived the observation-based consultation as a catalyst for developing teaching agency, addressing the study's three focal questions on perception, challenge, and pedagogical change. The findings contribute to understanding how consultation-based faculty development can activate teaching agencies. The proposed Consultation-Enabled Agency Model conceptualizes consultation as a cyclical process that moves through three phases: (1) reflective awareness: teachers develop metacognitive understanding of their teaching decisions; (2) instructional experimentation: teachers implement new strategies supported by evidence-informed feedback; and (3) sustained action: teachers adapt and internalize practices suited to their disciplinary and institutional contexts. Through this process, classroom observation and dialogue strengthen personal agency (confidence and reflection), social agency (interactive pedagogy), and structural agency (navigating constraints). Consultation thus functions as both a reflective mirror and a developmental scaffold that connects professional learning with authentic classroom realities. From an institutional perspective, this study demonstrates how structured observation-based consultation can serve as an effective mechanism for transforming pedagogical knowledge into situated practice. For academic developers, it emphasizes the value of sustained feedback loops, contextualized observation protocols, and follow-up support to ensure continuity of pedagogical growth. Future research could examine longitudinal trajectories of teacher agency and the ripple effects on student learning engagement and outcomes.

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Papers 37

Agency in Action: Graduate Student Partnership Planning in Academic Development

Kimberley Grant, Jaclyn Carter, Sreyasi Biswas, Patti Dyjur, Erika Smith

Abstract

Following a nationwide study on how Teaching and Learning Centers partner with graduate students in academic development activities, this session shares a practical application of our findings through a Graduate Student Partnership Plan template. The original research, grounded in the Students-as-Partners (SaP) framework, highlights the three core principles for effective partnerships: respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility.

The Graduate Student Partnership Plan consolidates these best practices into a practical tool that makes transparent and explicit the expectations and goals of both academic developers and graduate students. It also incorporates final reflection questions to review learnings and identify future growth opportunities.

This session will share the template, feedback from graduate students after one academic year of implementation, lessons learned from this first iteration and planned future adaptations. This research-informed framework provides academic developers with a pragmatic guide for establishing meaningful partnerships that enhance agency and create mutually beneficial working relationships.

Keywords: Students as Partners (SaP), Staff-Student Partnerships (SSP), Academic Development, Teaching and Learning Centers

Extended Summary

Aim: Following the findings of a nation-wide study on how Teaching and Learning Centres are partnering with graduate students in academic development activities (Author, 2023), we will share how we are applying our learning through the development and use of a Graduate Student Partnership Plan template. We will review the findings of the initial study and describe how we sought to consolidate the best practices into a partnership template to make transparent and explicit the expectations and goals of both partners: the academic developer and the graduate student. By the time of the conference, we will have been using the Graduate Student Partnership Plan for an academic year and will share the template, feedback from our graduate students, lessons learned from this first iteration, and any needed future adaptations.

Theoretical framework: The original study examined how Canadian Teaching and Learning Centres (TLCs) partner with graduate students in academic development (AD), using the Students-as-Partners (SaP) model as its theoretical foundation (Cook-Sather, 2014). The research, conducted through surveys and follow-up interviews, and approved by institutional ethics boards, built upon existing literature and prior environmental scan findings (Author, 2020) to explore current practices, effective strategies, and future possibilities for graduate student partnerships (Hutchings, 2000).

The findings revealed substantial benefits of partnering with graduate students in AD when partnerships follow three core SaP principles: respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility. These principles provide a framework for developing meaningful collaborations that enhance teaching and learning cultures in higher education and served as the foundation for the development of the Graduate Student Partnership Plan.

Respect - Engaging with students-as-partners provides opportunities for 'respectful, mutually beneficial learning partnerships' (Matthews, 2017, p. 1). Intentional planning ensures partnerships honour graduate students' primary identity as students accountable to graduate supervisors. Participants recommended obtaining supervisor acknowledgment or permission for each partnership to prevent conflicts arising from competing accountabilities. Respect also manifests through meaningful induction into the AD field and ongoing mentorship. The template includes intentional questions to prompt mutually defined indicators of success as well as providing opportunities for student partners to articulate any anticipated areas where they may need additional support.

Shared responsibility – As with other forms of SaP, working with graduate students in TLCs focuses on flattening power hierarchies while engaging students in meaningful AD activities with potential leadership opportunities (Cook-Sather, 2014; Matthews, 2017). Recognizing that many graduate student partners possess teaching assistant experience, interviewees recommended providing appropriate autonomy and ensuring students function as active contributors to the TLC's mission. Participants also noted that learning often occurs through socialization and informal peer mentoring, leading most to recommend hiring small cohorts of graduate students who work collaboratively. In addition to hiring three graduate students who can offer peer support, we have ensured that each question in our Graduate Student Partnership Guide has space for both the academic developer and the graduate student to discuss and respond to questions such as how and how often do we plan to communicate? and how will we know that we are progressing in our aims?

Reciprocity – Meaningful partnerships require that both parties benefit from the experience. The study echoes Boye et al. (2011) in promoting 'mutually positive, reciprocal relationships between faculty and students' (p. 79). In this context, our participants emphasized the importance of giving students a high degree of agency over their engagement. Many graduate students are preparing for a career in academia, so TLCs can provide them with valuable experiences to support their aims. Participants consistently highlighted two reciprocity dimensions: immediate workplace equity, including fair compensation for all time and effort, and future-focused benefits such as developing and documenting professional academic skills. The Graduate Student Partnership Plan template includes space for clarifying hours of work, two-way feedback processes, and questions about how this role can help support graduate students' long term professional goals.

The study concluded that TLCs can establish effective partnerships by respecting graduate students' academic priorities, providing intentional introduction to and mentorship in academic development, offering meaningful opportunities to contribute to and lead activities, and supporting students' professional goals and agency. To extend our learning about this process, we have also included final reflection questions for academic developers and graduate students to discuss and reflect upon at the end of the project or contract to review their learnings, strengths, and opportunities to continue to grow in the future.

Implications: Sharing this Graduate Student Partnership Plan template helps academic developers who are working with graduate students by outlining a pragmatic, research-informed framework to establish meaningful partnerships that are respectful, reciprocal, and include shared responsibility. The template provides a guide for intentional conversations and reflections that enhance agency for graduate students and academic developers to work together in mutually beneficial ways.

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Graduate Teaching Preparation: Partnering with Graduate Students to Design for Transformation

Stefanie T Baier

Abstract

With the advent of AI, the continued politicization of university practices, funding distributions, and goal structures, graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) are often undervalued and overlooked as educators. Yet they may be change agents in leading innovative approaches to support student success and classroom learning, teaching, and mentoring (Pentecost, et al., 2012; Sateria et al, 2023). To recognize the important roles GTAs play in transforming students' learning experiences, 14 GTA Preparation program directors at 14 research-intensive U. S. universities were surveyed and interviewed to learn about their approaches to involving experienced GTAs in designing curricula for university-wide GTA preparation programs in partnership with educational developers and departments. The program directors were asked to describe the history of their programs, the process and evolution of their curriculum design, and how their programs have responded to changing pedagogical challenges and subsequent demands on GTAs. The results showed that GTA preparation program directors attributed the impact of their programs largely to their partnerships with advanced graduate teaching assistants. Providing these graduate students the opportunity to partner in shaping curriculum design, delivery, assessment, and feedback resulted in greater participation and commitment of and graduate teaching assistants' investment in their teaching professional development. The importance of building communities of practice to discuss and engage with evidence-based teaching and learning practices and how to successfully partner with GTAs will be discussed. [1]Graduate students in other contexts may be called tertiary students.

Keywords: Graduate Students as Partners, Teaching Assistants, Curriculum Design, Teaching Professional Development
Study Aims and Theoretical Framework

Extended Summary

New Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) often lack sufficient experience and training in delivering subject content, leading discussions, effectively assessing student learning, and designing meaningful learning e experiences, or navigating emerging technologies within the teaching/learning context. Their responsibilities vary depending on whether they are leading laboratory sessions, discussion groups, or teaching entire courses. Without a solid foundation in pedagogy, they often spend a large proportion of time designing meaningful learning experiences. Traditionally universities have used generic approaches to training their GTAs. More recently, some universities have recognized that involving advanced graduate student educators in GTA preparation programs. Involving graduate students as partners in developing such programs may provide additional benefits (Simon & Pleshova 2021) including a higher commitment to teaching professional development. Building on the frameworks of Lock et al. (2021) and Simon et al. (2021) This research paper aims to illuminate how intentional Graduate Teaching preparation program design and delivery impacts graduate students' pedagogical skill development; it aims to describe how deliberate partnering with graduate students in designing GTA programs may influence the value placed on teaching professional development and building communities of practices around pedagogical practice.

Methods: For this study, GTA preparation program directors at 14 research-intensive universities in the U.S. were surveyed and interviewed. For the analyzes we used a mixed-methods approach; descriptive statistics and basic comparisons to identify commonalities, differences, and unique elements among institutions from the survey questions yielded three codes in addition to eight codes identified based on existing literature. These interview data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2016) thematic analysis framework with a total of eleven codes. Some of the major themes included, the career trajectories of program leaders in relation to their work in educational development; their curriculum design approach and topic selection; their collaboration with various university stakeholders including GTAs; the format of collecting program feedback; program strengths, challenges, and needs; community-building components; provision of ongoing teaching professional development; initiatives to support international GTAs; communication strategies.

Preliminary findings reveal the diverse ways in which staff leading GTA Preparation programs at research-intensive universities develop curricula and structure, and deliver pedagogical training. Curriculum development ranged from revising inherited programs to following standard curricula supplemented with topics addressing emerging pedagogical and technological needs of GTAs. Program components included training on relevant policies, teaching fundamentals (lesson planning, syllabus development, assessment, learning management systems, and first-time teaching), microteaching, and specialized workshops on teaching-related topics. Specific training tracks catered to new international and domestic GTAs, while returning GTAs and postdoctoral researchers had opportunities to refine their teaching skills. Program leaders emphasized the importance of partnering with units, staff and advanced graduate teaching assistants, and attributed much of the positive GTA preparation program impact to these partnerships. Directors addressed challenges and needs based on collected feedback, and how they used these to inform future programming. While community-building was recognized as an important goal, it was often assumed to develop

organically, yet only a handful were intentional and highlighted the important role of GTAs in building these communities of practice.

In conclusion, this research underscores the importance of intentionally involving pedagogically advanced graduate teaching assistants in planning GTA preparation programs to be transformative for GTAs and subsequently the students they teach. Implications for Practice GTAs are often overlooked as educators and prepared for their roles via long-existing university-wide programming. This study sheds light on current practices of developing GTA preparation programs at larger research-intensive U.S. universities, outlining the program development processes, evaluation practices, and partnerships shaping their programs. The finding about program leads who partner with advanced GTAs reporting greater impact on the pedagogical development of GTAs also aligns with Dorner & Kumar who argue for an integrated approach in academic development for Ph.D. students (Dorner & Kumar, 2022). This study's findings also show that moving from a hierarchical approach of program implementation to a collaborative partnership approach with graduate students may be more transformative not only for the students they teach but also for them as future faculty. This research encourages program leaders to explore partnership models.

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Designing for change: Educational developers and department-level capacity building

Oskar Gedda

Abstract

This paper analyses the role of educational developers as capacity builders in research-intensive environments, using an ongoing development initiative in a Master of Science in Engineering programme at a Swedish university as an illustrative case. The programme operates under significant organisational constraints: low completion rates, a strong "my course" culture, unclear mandates in educational leadership, and fragmented course structures. These conditions are treated not as exceptional failures but as structural features shaping the conditions under which programme-level development work must operate. Drawing on an extensive logbook, interviews with key actors, and a synthesising development report, Kezar's multi-lens framework for organisational change is employed to interpret the developer's work in collaboration with programme directors, teachers, and departmental leadership. The work is conceptualised through five interwoven roles: designer of structures, navigator of external conditions, co-constructor of meaning, cultural worker, and political actor, connecting structural, cultural, cognitive, evolutionary, and political dimensions of change. What emerges is a picture of educational development as inherently ongoing work, shaped by structural conditions that persist beyond any single initiative. The paper discusses implications for how the developer's role might be understood less as discrete problem-solving or visionary, and more as sustained capacity support within change processes that are structurally complex and without a clear endpoint.

Keywords: Multi-lens perspective, Educational development, Distributed leadership, Change approaches

Extended summary

This paper presents an ongoing analysis of an educational development initiative at a research-intensive department at a Swedish university. The focus is a relatively recently established Master of Science in Engineering programme, where institutional expectations coincide with significant structural and cultural challenges. The programme has struggled with low completion rates, unclear roles in educational leadership, a fragmented course structure, and a strong tradition of individual ownership of courses. To support programme development, an educational developer has been formally attached to the programme and department over an extended period. The developer's work is not carried out in isolation but in close collaboration with the programme director, the associate head of department for education, a programme development group, individual teachers, and faculty-level representatives. Together, these actors experiment with different ways of organising course and programme development, staff dialogue, and leadership support.

Three main empirical sources underpin the analysis: a detailed logbook documenting meetings, decisions, and activities over nearly two years; interviews with three different leadership functions; and an aggregated development report prepared for local leadership. Taken together, these materials provide a rich insight into how a distributed development process unfolds over time – which issues reoccur, which structures are constructed, which tensions arise, and which partial results are achieved.

Kezar's multi-lens framework for organisational change in higher education (Kezar, 2018) is used as the analytical lens. Rather than treating change as a single, linear process, Kezar conceptualises change as the interplay of several complementary logics: scientific/technical-rational, evolutionary, social-cognitive, cultural, and political. On this basis, the paper identifies five interwoven roles through which the educational developer – in collaboration with others – contributes to building capacity at the department:

1. Designer of structures: The scientific/technical-rational dimension appears in the joint work of constructing concrete structures for educational development. Together with the programme director, teaching teams and administrative staff, course development templates are created, a stepwise course design process with explicit versions (from initial sketch to fully revised course) is introduced, and connections are established between course level, programme learning outcomes, and quality assurance systems. Here the educational developer acts as a catalyst and co-designer rather than as the sole architect of structures that others subsequently own and further develop.

2. Steward of time: The evolutionary dimension becomes visible in how the developer, together with local leaders, introduces and safeguards a long-term perspective on change. A multi-year programme development plan is formulated in which all courses are to undergo redesign in sequence. Pilot courses are selected in dialogue with the programme director and teaching teams, and recurring forums (staff meetings, course experience days, programme days) are established to create a rhythm of collective reflection and adjustment. Stewardship of time thus becomes a distributed responsibility, with the developer contributing planning logic and continuity, while local leaders anchor and prioritise within the wider workload.

3. Co-constructor of meaning: Through Kezar's social-cognitive lens, the analysis highlights how the educational developer, in dialogue with others, participates in shaping the understanding of the "object" of development. In conversations and document work with the programme development group and leadership, concepts such as

programme idea, professional identity, progression, and the relationship between individual courses and the programme as a whole are elaborated. The developer here functions as a co-constructor of language and questions, rather than as a solitary interpreter. Meaning is produced in conversations where different actors contribute their perspectives, experiences and interests.

4. Cultural worker: The cultural dimension is evident in collective efforts to shift local norms from a “my course” culture towards a more programme-oriented perspective. Together with the programme director and engaged teachers, microcultures are built – for example in the programme development group, in staff meetings with a focus on course design, and in course experience days where the teaching staff share and analyse results. These arenas cultivate practices in which it is normal to speak about courses as parts of a larger whole, and where collegial scrutiny and joint decisions are expected behaviours. Cultural work is thus highly distributed: the educational developer can initiate and contribute to certain activities, but the culture is formed and sustained by the wider teaching community.

5. Political actor: Kezar’s political lens makes visible how the educational developer, together with key actors, works with power, mandates and resources. The logbook and report document coordinated efforts to clarify expectations on programme directors, the associate head of department, and the programme group; to make capacity gaps in course development and educational leadership visible; and to link local development initiatives to faculty strategies and funding opportunities. The educational developer does not appear as an opponent to the institution but as part of a coalition of actors attempting to elevate educational issues on the strategic agenda.

Taken together, these five roles illustrate how an educational developer in a research-intensive environment can function as capacity reinforcement within a distributed development process, rather than as a solitary “expert” or provider of isolated pedagogical inputs. The analysis suggests that the developer’s most significant contribution lies in jointly weaving together structural, temporal, cognitive, cultural, and political dimensions of change into a more coherent developmental trajectory for the programme and department. At the same time, the case reveals persisting capacity needs: unclear and fragile educational leadership roles, limited and uneven engagement in collegial development forums, and weak feedback loops between programme-level work and institutional decision-making. These limitations do not primarily reflect deficiencies of individuals or single roles, but rather the constraints of the collective development capacity that emerges when structures and mandates do not fully support distributed work. The paper concludes by arguing that institutions seeking to strengthen educational development in research-intensive environments should explicitly conceptualise and mandate educational developers as part of distributed leadership and shared capacity for change. In doing so, developers are positioned as strategic capacity reinforcement within multi-lens change processes, rather than as peripheral advisors alongside the core academic mission.

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Agency as a Driver for Transformative Academic Development in Extended Curriculum Programmes

Tshegofatso Setilo

Abstract

In South African Higher Education Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) are a vital equity-driven intervention aimed at supporting students who meet the university admission requirements but are academically underprepared yet are capable. However, ECPs often remain marginalised within institutional structures, limiting their potential to effect meaningful transformation. This paper positions agency of students, academic developers and lecturers as a central driver for reimagining ECPs as transformative spaces. Drawing on Archer's morphogenetic approach to agency and principles from the Flexible Degree Proposal, the paper explores how academic development can foster agency at multiple levels to enhance teaching, learning, and organisational change. Through case-based reflections on ECP practice, I highlight strategies such as participatory curriculum design, scaffolded learning environments, and collaborative professional communities. I argue that when academic developers act as strategic partners rather than service providers, ECPs can shift from remedial provision to drivers of institutional transformation advancing equity, epistemic access, and success.

Keywords: Agency, Access, Success, Transformation, Extended Curriculum Programmes.

Extended Summary

Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECPs) were designed to improve access and success for students who are academically underprepared yet capable, addressing historical inequities in South African higher education. However, their marginal positioning often framed as remedial limits their transformative potential. This paper argues that agency must become central to reimagining ECPs as drivers of systemic transformation, rather than isolated interventions. Specifically, it examines how agency at multiple levels (student, lecturer, and institutional) can inform strategic academic development, leading to improved teaching, learning, and organisational change.

This paper employs Archer's morphogenetic approach to agency, which highlights the dynamic interaction between individuals' reflexivity and the structural conditions shaping their choices. For ECP students, agency involves navigating alienating academic spaces while developing ownership of their learning journeys (Mogashana, Case & Williams, 2022). For lecturers and academic developers, agency requires acting as change agents who challenge structural barriers and create enabling learning environments. Additionally, the paper draws on decolonial pedagogies (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2016), which conceptualise agency as more than individual empowerment—it becomes collective action toward transforming epistemic cultures and curricula. This framing positions ECPs not only as developmental pathways but also as spaces for challenging dominant knowledge systems and institutional practices. This is a conceptual and reflective paper integrating:

- Case-based reflections from ECP curriculum development and academic advising initiatives at a South African university.
- Document analysis of national policy (e.g., CHE Flexible Degree Proposal) and institutional ECP frameworks.
- Synthesis of research on agency in ECPs, including Mogashana et al. (2022) on student reflexivity, and Ogude et al. (2021) on strategic student success initiatives.
- This triangulated approach enables a nuanced conceptualisation of agency within ECPs, with implications for academic development practice and policy.

The Key Findings and Argument are as follows:

1. ECPs as Marginal Yet Strategically Valuable ECPs are often perceived as remedial and positioned on the institutional periphery. However, their hybrid nature makes them fertile spaces for experimentation in curriculum design, assessment practices, and student support models. They can serve as laboratories for systemic innovation which can inform mainstream programmes when strategically leveraged.

2. Multi-level Agency as a Transformative Mechanism

- Student Agency: ECP students often demonstrate corporate agency (collective reflexivity and purposeful action) when provided with opportunities for meaningful participation in their learning. Co-designed curricula and scaffolded transitions foster a sense of ownership.
- Lecturer Agency: Lecturers in ECPs are positioned as pedagogical innovators but often lack recognition or institutional support. Academic developers can enable their agency by creating cross-disciplinary learning communities and aligning workload models with developmental practice.
- Institutional Agency: Academic development units must move beyond service functions to become strategic partners in decision-making—shaping teaching, learning, and equity agendas across faculties.

3. Strategic Practices for Embedding Agency

- Participatory curriculum co-design: Involving students in curriculum planning to ensure relevance and epistemic access.
- Scaffolded epistemic transitions: Building progressive academic literacies and disciplinary confidence across the ECP to mainstream continuum.
- Collaborative professional communities: Establishing cross-faculty networks of ECP and mainstream lecturers to share insights and co-create inclusive practices.
- Strategic academic development: Positioning academic developers as leaders in institutional transformation rather than peripheral support staff.

Theoretical and Educational Significance Implications for Practice:

- Reframing ECPs as sites of innovation can mitigate stigma, increase student belonging, and improve success.
- Empowering lecturers and developers as change agents will enhance institutional responsiveness to diverse student needs.

Implications for Policy:

- Aligning ECPs with the Flexible Degree Proposal can institutionalise developmental provision across undergraduate curricula.
- Recognising and rewarding ECP lecturers' expertise will enhance programme sustainability and innovation.

Implications for Research:

- Further studies should track the long-term impact of agency-focused interventions on student retention, throughput, and graduate outcomes.
- Comparative research across universities can illuminate best practices for scaling ECP innovations to mainstream curricula.

In conclusion ECPs have long been viewed as remedial tracks for "at-risk" students. This paper argues that when agency becomes a guiding principle, ECPs can transform into strategic levers for institutional change. By cultivating student, lecturer, and institutional agency, academic development shifts from a support-oriented role to one of institutional leadership—driving systemic equity and success.

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From Strategy Overload to Strategic Coherence: Rethinking Curriculum Enhancement Through an Ecosystem Lens

Aranee Manoharan

Abstract

Academic teams across higher education face growing pressure to integrate multiple institutional priorities, such as inclusion, sustainability, employability, wellbeing, and digital capability, into their curricula. While each priority matters, they are often developed in silos, leaving educators to combine them with limited guidance and no coherent framework. This ICED Talk argues that the challenge is structural rather than individual, and that academic developers have a crucial role in making complexity workable.

Drawing on my experience as a third-space professional working at the intersection of academic practice and professional services, the talk introduces an ecosystem approach that helps programme teams see connections across competing agendas. Through co-designed tools and facilitation methods, this approach reframes curriculum as an interconnected system shaped by multiple "ecological pressures."

The talk shares key insights from working with academics, cross-functional teams, and students to transform strategy overload into strategic coherence. It highlights how clearer visualisation, shared language, and collaborative design strengthen staff agency, reduce cognitive burden, and support more meaningful institutional learning. The aim is to inspire new ways of thinking about curriculum enhancement and the distributed nature of academic development.

Keywords: Academic development, curriculum design, ecosystems, strategy alignment, inclusive practice

Extended Summary

This talk begins with a familiar moment: a programme team gathered around a table, surrounded by institutional priorities printed on glossy PDFs. Inclusion. Sustainability. Employability. Wellbeing. Digital transformation. Each priority arrives with its own strategy, language, definitions, and expectations. Each claims to be urgent. And each, in practice, competes for time, attention, and curriculum space.

It is in moments like these that academic teams often ask, "How are we meant to do all of this?" The question is not about willingness. It is about coherence.

The central message of this talk is simple: curriculum enhancement has become structurally overloaded, not because the priorities are wrong, but because we ask academics to integrate them through fragmented, siloed processes. The result is duplication, fatigue, and surface-level change; patterns that are well documented in whole-institution studies of change (Barnett, 2011; Kezar, 2014). What we need is not more strategies, but better ways of seeing how they fit together.

This talk presents an alternative: an ecosystem-based approach to academic development that helps academic teams work with institutional priorities as interconnected, mutually reinforcing components rather than as competing demands.

The approach is rooted in my experience as a third-space professional who sits between academic and professional spheres. Through my career in higher education in both academic and professional services roles, I have spent years supporting programme teams who want to do the right thing but lack an integrated way to tackle the complexity placed upon them. Working with academics, professional services colleagues, and students, I have developed a series of tools and frameworks that help turn strategy overload into strategic coherence. The talk unfolds through key moments of insight drawn from this co-design work.

Moment 1: Seeing the problem for what it is - structural, not personal.

One of the earliest lessons was that academic staff do not fail to integrate institutional priorities because they lack commitment. They struggle because strategies are written asynchronously, by different teams, using different conceptual frames. The effect is cumulative. A lecturer once told me: "Every year I'm given a new priority to add to my curriculum. No one ever tells me what I should take out." This comment stayed with me. It captured the hidden curriculum of institutional expectations. It also revealed that trying to "add more" is not only unsustainable, it creates shallow, compliance-driven practice. Academic development needs to start by acknowledging this structural reality, rather than treating integration struggles as individual shortcomings.

Moment 2: Academic developers as strategy translators. Across my work, I witnessed the distinctive role academic developers play in making sense of institutional agendas. Whether based in teaching and learning centres or embedded in professional services, they serve as boundary-spanning translators (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006; Sutherland, 2018). They are the people who sit at the intersections, between senior leadership priorities and classroom realities, between policy and pedagogy, between aspiration and implementation. Third-space colleagues (Whitchurch, 2008, 2012), like those in careers, EDI, wellbeing, or digital roles, contribute an equally rich layer of expertise. My talk argues that

recognising and empowering this distributed academic development ecosystem is essential for meaningful institutional change.

Moment 3: A different way to see curriculum, as an ecosystem. The turning point came when I began using systems-thinking concepts (Banathy, 1992; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Sterman, 2000) to describe what was happening in curriculum design conversations. Instead of treating inclusion, sustainability, employability, wellbeing, and digital capability as separate layers, I began describing them as interacting elements of a curriculum ecosystem. Each institutional strategy became an "ecological pressure" shaping how learning evolves. When I shared this with academic teams, something shifted. People said things like: "Now I can see the connections." "This explains why everything feels so crowded." "This helps us plan more intentionally." The ecosystem metaphor gave language to what teams were experiencing, and a way to think holistically rather than additively.

Moment 4: Co-design as the engine of agency. None of the tools I developed were created alone. They emerged through iterative co-design with programme leaders, module conveners, learning designers, careers professionals, and students. This participatory approach mirrors the partnership literature (Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014), which emphasises the importance of shared ownership in educational change.

Through workshops and prototype testing, we created:

- Inclusive by Design model
- Inclusive curriculum design framework
- Curriculum ecosystem mapping tool
- Structured facilitation methods that help teams integrate institutional priorities into shared programme outcomes

A guiding principle runs through all these tools: The work is not about adding more, it is about creating coherence.

Moment 5: What happens when coherence emerges. When teams use a systemic lens, they begin making different decisions. They reduce duplication. They recognise synergies. They identify what genuinely matters for their students. They feel more confident and more empowered. This is agency in practice: the capacity to act with clarity and intention (Bandura, 2001). Institutionally, the tools create consistent outputs that support organisational learning (Argyris & Schön, 1996; Trowler, 2012). Leaders gain clearer data, programme teams articulate needs more effectively, and conversations shift from compliance to purpose.

The talk argues that this shift, from overload to coherence, opens new space for creativity, collaboration, and more meaningful forms of curriculum transformation (Bamber, 2020).

Significance for Academic Development: This ICED Talk invites the sector to reimagine academic development not as a centralised function but as a dynamic ecosystem of roles, relationships, and practices. It challenges us to recognise the contributions of third-space colleagues, to rethink curriculum as an interconnected system, and to build tools that make complexity manageable.

By offering a fresh conceptual language and practical examples from real institutional contexts, the talk aims to spark dialogue about how we design strategies, support academics, and create conditions where agency, individual and collective, can thrive.

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Papers 38

Using AI-Supported Fictional Scenarios in Academic Development Courses

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Abstract

Fictional scenarios are increasingly used in academic development to foster reflection, professional vision, and the transfer of pedagogical concepts into authentic teaching practice. Recent studies highlight the potential of generative artificial intelligence to support the efficient creation of educational scenarios and case materials. Building on this emerging body of work, this paper presents a multiple case study examining the use of AI-supported fictional scenarios in academic development courses for university teachers across diverse disciplines.

The scenarios were collaboratively designed by educational developers using generative artificial intelligence as a co-creative tool, following iterative processes of drafting, curation, and pedagogical validation commonly described in recent research. Drawing on course artefacts, participant reflections, and facilitator notes, the study explores how fictional scenarios function as boundary objects that support dialogue, reduce perceived risk, and enable engagement with complex teaching challenges.

Findings indicate that AI-supported scenario design enhances realism, diversity, and adaptability while reducing development time. The paper discusses the educational value, limitations, and ethical considerations of integrating AI-generated scenarios into academic development practice, with implications for educational developers designing scalable and reflective professional learning.

Keywords: Academic development, Scenario-based learning, Fictional scenarios, Generative AI, Educational design

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper:

This paper examines how fictional scenarios, co-created with the support of generative AI, can be effectively integrated into academic development courses for university teachers. While recent research demonstrates the feasibility and educational value of AI-generated scenarios and case studies in health and professional education (Bakkum et al., 2023; Berbenyuk et al., 2024; Silvestri-Elmore & Burton, 2024), their use in academic development contexts has received limited attention. This study addresses this gap by focusing on courses designed for academic staff from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. The paper aims to explore (a) how educational developers design AI-supported fictional scenarios, (b) how participants engage with these scenarios during academic development activities, and (c) what learning outcomes and professional insights are associated with this approach.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework:

The study is informed by scenario-based learning and recent literature on AI-supported pedagogical design. Bai et al. (2024) propose a write–curate–verify model that foregrounds the importance of human judgment and pedagogical alignment when working with generative AI. This approach guided the scenario design process in the present study, where AI-generated drafts were iteratively refined by educational developers to ensure contextual relevance and educational value. Fictional scenarios allow participants to engage with complex teaching dilemmas while maintaining psychological safety, an affordance also identified in studies of AI-generated clinical cases (Berbenyuk et al., 2024). In line with Başer and Şahin (2025), scenarios were designed to be adaptable rather than prescriptive, enabling facilitators to adjust focus and complexity according to course goals.

Methodological Approach:

A multiple case study design was chosen to support qualitative rigor through triangulation, contextual sensitivity, and analytic comparison across courses. Examining several cases enabled within-case depth as well as cross-case pattern identification, enhancing the credibility and dependability of the findings. Attention to contextual variation across disciplines and course formats strengthens the transferability of insights to other academic development settings. The study draws on four academic development courses delivered between 2023 and 2025. Data sources include AI-generated and human-edited scenario texts, facilitator design notes, participant written reflections, and post-course evaluation responses. Data were analysed thematically, with attention to scenario design processes, participant engagement, and perceived learning outcomes.

Key Findings:

The analysis suggests that AI significantly reduced the time required to create high-quality fictional scenarios while increasing diversity, realism, and contextual variation, consistent with previous findings in medical and professional education (Bakkum et al., 2023; Silvestri-Elmore & Burton, 2024). Participants described scenarios as authentic yet non-

threatening representations of teaching practice, supporting open discussion of uncertainty, error, and pedagogical decision-making. Engagement with scenarios contributed to the development of professional vision, particularly in areas such as student motivation, assessment feedback, and inclusive teaching. Several participants reported transferring scenario-based approaches into their own teaching or supervision practices, including the use of AI to generate preparatory scenarios for students.

Educational and Theoretical Significance:

This study extends existing research on AI-generated scenarios by situating them explicitly within academic development. It demonstrates how educational developers can use generative AI as a co-creative design partner while retaining pedagogical oversight and ethical responsibility. The findings highlight fictional scenarios as effective mediating artefacts that support reflective dialogue across disciplinary boundaries. The paper contributes evidence-informed guidance for academic developers seeking scalable, flexible, and psychologically safe learning designs, and identifies directions for future research on long-term impact and responsible AI use in professional learning.

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Between Anxiety and Agency. Educator Perceptions of Generative AI in a UK University

Vanessa Mar-Molinero, Erika Corradini

Abstract

As generative AI tools reshape Higher Education, educators are grappling with a complex terrain of ethical uncertainty, professional anxiety, and shifting pedagogical norms. This empirical paper presents findings from a two-year study of 93 and 90+ (respectively) university educators participating in an academic development programme exploring the pedagogical integration of AI. Drawing on posthumanist theory (Braidotti, 2013), onto-epistemology (Barad, 2007), and critical realism (Archer, 2000), the study investigates how staff perceive AI's role in teaching and learning, and how these perceptions intersect with identification, well-being, and institutional contexts. Data were gathered from qualitative reflections, AI usage protocols, declarations, workshop transcripts, and a confidence survey. Thematic and discourse analysis revealed educators positioned AI as simultaneously helpful and threatening, a tool for efficiency and access, yet also a source of moral unease and fears of deskilling. Emotional tensions, such as guilt, overwhelm, and imposterism, were prevalent. Staff described a reluctance to share their AI use with peers or students due to reputational risk and ethical dilemmas, and expressed a desire for reflective, values-driven professional development. This paper argues that academic developers must navigate not only technical upskilling but emotional and ethical labour, providing space for identity work and epistemic agency in the AI age. Implications for inclusive academic development and institutional strategy are discussed.

Keywords: Epistemic Agency, Affective Dimensions of AI, Posthuman Pedagogy, Inclusive Academic Development

Extended Summary

Aim of the Paper: This paper explores how university educators in the UK perceive and experience the integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in their teaching practices. It investigates the affective, ethical, and epistemic dimensions of staff engagement with AI tools such as ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot, with particular attention to how AI entangles with academic identity, well-being, and pedagogy. The study focuses on the responses from a two-year study of 93 and 90+ staff members participating in a cross-disciplinary academic development programme designed to develop reflective practice, inclusive design, pedagogical critique, and AI. As AI continues to disrupt traditional notions of teaching and learning, this paper aims to examine:

- How educators conceptualise their relationship with AI in terms of values, identification, and academic agency
- The emotional and institutional barriers affecting their willingness or ability to adopt AI
- The implications of these perceptions for academic developers tasked with supporting staff through pedagogical and technological transformation

This paper examines how academic developers construct, share, and apply knowledge in interdisciplinary and collaborative contexts, especially in the face of digital disruption.

Theoretical Framework:
Educator responses to generative AI are shaped not only by technical considerations but also by deep epistemological and ontological questions, such as what constitutes knowledge, who or what can be a teacher, and what is human expertise in the age of AI? To understand these entanglements, this study draws on a multi-theoretical and interdisciplinary framework that combines posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013), onto-epistemology (Barad, 2007), and critical realism (Archer, 2000). These frameworks allow us to examine how identification, knowledge, and emotion are co-constituted in the shifting material-discursive landscape of AI in higher education. Braidotti's (2013) posthumanism challenges the human/technology binary, which allows us to interrogate and recognise AI not as an external tool but as a relational force entangled in the construction of subjectivity, authorship, and learning. Barad's (2007) concept of intra-action helps theorise AI use as not a simple action upon an object, but a mutual constitution of meaning and agency. In this sense, educators are not only adopting AI, but they are also becoming different kinds of educators through these encounters. In this study, these shifts are often experienced affectively, through anxiety, ambivalence, or curiosity. To complement this, Archer's (2000) critical realism draws attention to the neoliberal structural conditions, such as policy uncertainty, workload intensification, and institutional inertia, that constrain or enable educator agency. While posthumanism foregrounds complexity and co-constitution, critical realism anchors our understanding in real institutional dynamics that must be navigated, such as policy gaps, assessment pressures, and reputational risk. Together, these theoretical lenses allow us to explore the lived realities of staff adapting to AI, not as "adopters" or "resisters," but as subjects navigating deeply felt tensions between opportunity and risk, creativity and compliance and innovation and integrity.

Methodology: The research adopted a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods design, situated within an academic development context. The study was conducted as part of a professional academic development programme for staff at a UK university. Ethical approval was obtained via the institution's ERGO process. Participants were educators from

diverse disciplines, roles (academic, clinical, teaching-focused, combined research/teaching pathways, professional services), and career stages. All were actively engaged in teaching and curriculum design. Data sources included:

- Structured workshop reflections
- Whiteboard and breakout discussions during AI training
- AI Usage Protocol and Declarations (designed in partnership with participants for transparency in assessments)
- Follow-up open-text surveys
- A confidence self-assessment scale
- Notes and feedback from small group discussions and role-play exercises

A two-stage analysis was undertaken:

1. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify key patterns across reflections and discussions

2. Discourse analysis to explore how educators positioned themselves in relation to AI and the moral/emotional narratives embedded in their responses

Key Findings:

Participants viewed AI as both a source of support and a source of discomfort. They acknowledged benefits in terms of efficiency, feedback, and accessibility, yet simultaneously expressed ethical uncertainty and professional vulnerability. While some welcomed AI as a "helpful critical friend," others described it as undermining their sense of pedagogical authority or subject expertise. Reputational anxiety emerged as a core theme. Educators voiced concern about being judged by colleagues or students for using AI, with many admitting they used it "quietly" or as a "dirty little secret". This secrecy limited peer exchange and reinforced a culture of cautious and secretive experimentation. Many participants also reported feelings of guilt, confusion, or shame about their use of AI. These were not only personal reactions but reflections of institutional silence and conflicting discourses on innovation, compliance, and integrity. The AI workshops offered space to explore these tensions in an open and reflective way. Educators described the sessions as "thought-provoking," "reassuring," and "a safe place to think aloud." This highlights the importance of emotionally attuned, relational development spaces.

Theoretical and Educational Significance:

The emergence of generative AI within higher education surfaces not only practical challenges but ontological and epistemic tensions that call into question long-held assumptions about authorship, expertise, and academic labour. As this study shows, educators do not simply encounter AI as a tool, they encounter it as a force that unsettles the boundaries of what it means to teach, to know, and to be seen as pedagogically credible. Participants' accounts, ranging from cautious enthusiasm to reputational anxiety, highlight an entanglement of affect, institutional norms, and digital practice that is best understood through a posthuman and relational lens. Braidotti's (2013) posthumanism reminds us that AI is not external to the educator but is constitutive of a changing subjectivity, one that is increasingly interwoven with algorithmic agents, shifting notions of authorship, and the labour of digital self-management. The 'shame' or guilt expressed by participants about 'using AI to make things easier' is not reducible to a misunderstanding or lack of skill, but it reflects deeper concerns about value, legitimacy, disability, global Englishes, power, and what kinds of academic work are morally sanctioned. In parallel, the presence of moral ambivalence and quiet experimentation in participants' narratives reveals the structural contradictions that Archer (2000) would characterise as part of the morphogenetic cycle.

While institutional policies remain vague, and public discourse remains polarised, individual educators navigate their own constrained reflexivity, testing out what is possible, permissible, or prudent. Their agency, then, is both emergent and fractured, shaped not just by what AI can do but by what academic culture allows to be said and seen, and more importantly, by whom and for whom. Crucially, these tensions were most generative when mediated through compassionate, dialogic spaces. Educators described relief at being able to "speak aloud" their uncertainties in a non-judgmental context, where they were not treated as either resisters or adopters but as whole professionals exploring and sharing their experiences of new epistemic terrain. In this way, the study contributes to the growing body of work on the "compassion turn" in academic development (Waddington, 2021; Waddington & Bonaparte, 2024a/b), which argues that emotional safety, recognition, and trust are not peripheral to professional learning but foundational to epistemic agency.

From an academic development perspective, the findings signal a need to rethink our role, not merely as skills trainers or policy communicators, but as facilitators of ontological transition. As Barad (2007) notes, knowledge-making is a matter of intra-action, we do not stand outside of the systems we study or teach, we are always already entangled. If academic inclusive identity is being reconfigured through AI, then our development practices must respond by creating reflexive, inclusive, and structurally compassionate learning environments that support educators in becoming-with these technologies. This paper discusses the need for us to go beyond technical training to engage educators in

structured, reflective, brave, and safe spaces to discuss the ethical, emotional, and disciplinary dimensions of AI. Development sessions in this light must normalise uncertainty and offer space for collective sensemaking. They must foreground values and equity alongside functionality, especially for those who experience digital transformation not as innovation but as overwhelm. If we fail to do this, we risk deepening inequities and silencing critical voices at precisely the moment we need them most.

This paper also raises broader strategic implications. By embedding structured reflection, values-led dialogue, and co-created AI protocols into academic development, we scaffold not only practice but trust. Trust, in turn, enables sustainable pedagogical change, particularly as institutions begin to link AI to strategic priorities such as assessment redesign, student satisfaction, and digital inclusion. Finally, the study serves as the baseline for a five-year longitudinal evaluation, which will explore whether these early interventions in staff practice contribute to a systemic impact across the teaching culture and student experience. In particular, we will investigate the relationship between academic staff confidence in AI-enhanced pedagogy and downstream effects such as National Student Survey (NSS) scores related to teaching quality, feedback, and learning support. The central question animating this work is not whether educators "adopt AI" but whether they are enabled to navigate complexity with epistemic confidence, pedagogical agency, and ethical care. In a time of accelerating technological disruption, it is this blend of critical reflexivity and relational support that may define the future of inclusive and humanising academic development.

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Teaching in the AI Era: Faculty Perspectives and Institutional Implications. Findings from University-Wide Survey.

Sigurbjoerg Johannesdottir, Asta Bryndis Schram

Abstract

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly integrated into higher education, understanding teachers' attitudes and support needs is critical for informed institutional strategies. This pilot study examined university teachers' experiences and perceptions of AI in teaching at an Icelandic university. A survey was distributed to 2,003 faculty members, including sessional staff, with 79 items on a six-point Likert scale and open-ended questions. The response rate was 17%, 33% among tenure-track faculty.

Preliminary findings indicate that most respondents hold positive attitudes toward AI and view it as potentially useful in academic contexts. Teachers most often reported using generative AI to generate ideas for assignments and assist with course organization, while less frequently for designing full courses, creating content, writing exams, or grading. Some also used AI for rubrics, programming, data analysis, summaries, and translation. Ethical concerns were prominent, including fears of student misuse, irresponsible reliance, and data security risks. Respondents also noted worries about bias, inaccuracy, and the reliability of AI-generated content, alongside their own limited knowledge of AI tools. Teachers were most familiar with ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot. Over half expressed interest in professional development opportunities such as workshops on AI integration and guiding students in responsible use. Recommended support included institutional guidelines, free software access, instructional resources, online forums, and allocated time for teaching development.

Findings highlight the need for universities to address teachers' concerns and provide clear guidance, resources, and training to enable effective and ethical AI integration in higher education.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, higher education, faculty attitudes, professional development, AI integration

Extended Summary

As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly integrated into higher education, understanding teachers' attitudes and needs is essential for informed institutional responses. This pilot study explores university teachers' experiences and attitudes towards the use of AI in teaching at an Icelandic university and their needs for support.

A survey was distributed via SurveyMonkey to 2003 university teachers, including sessional staff. It comprised 79 items on a six-point Likert scale, along with open-ended response fields. Response rate was 17%, 33% among tenure-track faculty. Preliminary findings suggest that the majority hold a generally positive attitude toward AI and perceive it as potentially useful in academic contexts. Teachers most frequently reported using gen-AI to get ideas for assignments and to support course organization. However, AI was used less often for designing full courses, developing course content, writing exams, or grading. Some respondents reported using AI for creating rubrics, programming, data analysis, writing summaries, and translation.

While many expressed interest in learning how to integrate AI into their teaching, several concerns emerged. Ethical issues were prominent, including fears that students might misuse AI or rely on it irresponsibly. Teachers also expressed anxiety about data security, including the risk that shared content might become publicly accessible. Further concerns included the potential for AI-generated content to be biased, inaccurate, or unreliable. Many teachers highlighted their own limited knowledge of AI tools and called for greater institutional support.

Teachers were most familiar with ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot, and few reported having a personal subscription to AI tools. More than half of the respondents expressed interest in participating in professional development opportunities such as workshops focused on AI integration in teaching, including how to guide students in responsible AI use.

Participants recommended a variety of supports, including: 1) Assistance from support staff; 2) Free access to needed software; 3) Clear guidance and instructional video resources; 4) Online forums for sharing proper AI prompts; 5) Clear university guidelines and policies and regarding AI use; 5) Allocated time for teaching development.

These findings underscore the importance of engaging with teachers' perspectives when developing institutional strategies for AI integration. While many educators recognize the opportunities AI presents, they also voice significant concerns and articulate a strong need for guidance, resources, and clarity. Universities must actively respond to these needs to equip teachers to navigate and help shape the future of AI-enhanced higher education.

Critical thinking, critical citizenship and GenAI: the case of (mathematics) education

Shipra Sachdeva

Abstract

In this paper, mathematics education research employing Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools is scrutinized to investigate how the notions of critical thinking and critical citizenship are discussed in the concerned research literature. A scoping literature review combined with content and document analysis is conducted to explore this question. The research literature lists several uses of GenAI in mathematics classrooms, such as, being mathematical problem-solving assistants, discussion partners and personalized interactive tutors for learners. Findings convey that GenAI tools can support the development of learners' critical thinking with respect to thinking logically and can improve their problem-solving abilities by giving personalized feedback. However, if and how GenAI can encourage learners to become critical thinking citizens and participate in decisions concerning their own learning processes is a theme not much explored yet. Therefore, in this paper, I present an overview of how the concepts of critical thinking and critical citizenship are discussed in relation to the use of GenAI in mathematics education research literature. Moreover, I highlight the challenges mathematics educators may face while preparing both pre-service teachers and learners to become critical thinkers and citizens through learning mathematics in the age of GenAI.

Keywords: Critical thinking, critical citizenship, artificial intelligence, mathematics education

Extended Summary

In mathematics education, the GenAI tools such as ChatGPT, Google Gemini or Microsoft Copilot etc. have evolved from being used as calculation and problem-solving assistants to being interactive and personalised tutoring systems (bin Mohamed et al., 2022; Niño-Rojas et al., 2024). Wardat et al. (2023) found that ChatGPT can offer comprehensive instruction and can increase educational success by providing basic understanding of mathematics to the user. However, the authors also point out that ChatGPT lacked a deep understanding of geometry and cannot effectively correct misconceptions. The authors concluded that despite future improvements in its mathematical capabilities, ChatGPT is not completely dependable for teaching mathematics to learners. Arifin et al. (2025) conducted a systematic literature review specifically focusing on AI's influence on learners' critical thinking ability. The authors conclude that though AI can contribute positively to learners' critical thinking development, particularly due to interactive learning, but there is also a risk that learners become overly reliant on technology to solve the problems procedurally and do not gain a deep conceptual understanding.

The concept of critical thinking is often understood in its cognitive domain as being the ability to think logically and making decisions based on available evidence and substantiated arguments (Facione, 1990). However, there also have been arguments for critical thinking forming the grounds for human reflection and action in the political, social and personal spheres of their lives (McLaren, 1994). In mathematics education research, scholars such as Mellin-Olsen (1987), Skovsmose (1994) and Ernest (2002, 2016) have reciprocated similar concerns. These authors emphasise the need of imparting critical reflectiveness and participating skills into the learners through their mathematics education so that they can become critical and active citizens engaging in a democratic society. Research studies (such as, Lindenskov (2010), Sachdeva (2024) and Sachdeva and Eggen (2021)) suggest that given the opportunity, learners can not only engage themselves critically in decisions concerning their mathematics teaching and learning activities, but they can also suggest changes in these activities. In this way, they can get to experience being a critical and active citizen who plays an active role in the decision-making process of their mathematics learning activities – thus practicing participation in a mini-democratic society in the form of their mathematics classroom.

The introduction of GenAI in mathematics classroom however positions mathematics educators and teachers in a peculiar situation when it comes to developing critically aware, active, and participating citizens for a democratic society. An apparent conflict can be imagined between mathematics education for critical thinking and citizenship[1] on the one hand and using GenAI to learn mathematics[2] on the other. I aim to discuss this conflict by conducting a scoping literature review (SLR) (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005) that elaborates how the concepts of critical thinking and critical citizenship are discussed in the literature exploring the use of GenAI in mathematics education. The SLR will be combined with the content and document analysis of the research papers selected to be scrutinized at the end of the SLR.

In GenAI age, teacher education institutions bear the responsibility to educate in-service and pre-service teachers so that they feel prepared to integrate GenAI tools in their teaching and learning activities of all subjects. It is also

[1] In which the aim is to empower mathematics learners themselves to not only have to exercise their critical reflection and agency to introduce changes in their mathematics learning processes but also become critically aware of and participate in greater societal decisions.

[2] In which the task is partially delegated to an automated system to solve problems and the critical thinking, reflection and participation is, strictly taken, neither required, nor expected. The task can just be left to a chatbot.

substantial to find the ways of integrating GenAI in (mathematics) education to develop learners' critical thinking in a holistic manner (i.e. from both cognitive, personal, social, and political perspectives) so that this development lays the foundation for them to become future critical citizens. The findings from this SLR would highlight the challenges, opportunities, and limitations inherent in the new landscape of integrating GenAI tools in mathematics education. A discussion of these challenges, opportunities and limitations will have both theoretical and educational implications for practice, policy, and future of mathematics education and research.

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AIaddin Genie Lamp: Grant three Educational Development wishes to AI

Alev Elçi

Abstract

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has started to influence every aspect of people's lives. Applications of AI have begun demonstrating their potential to improve many aspects of teaching and learning in all academic disciplines, particularly in education, especially higher education. Initially, faculty had debatable attitudes towards AI use for educational development, although some pioneers adopted it immediately, others ignored it. While some concerns may arise as higher education institutions, faculty, and students increasingly utilize AI, the fact remains that AI technologies are beginning to transform the way teaching/learning are designed, delivered, and assessed. As the main educational influencers in the classroom, are faculty receiving sufficient support from AI to help manage educational development? Although faculty needs are investigated in literature, there is a need to look beyond the box and investigate whether the support needs of faculty from AI in extreme dimensions are scarce. This qualitative study explores the evolving educational development via AI, emphasizing how AI integration can enhance teaching effectiveness and quality from the wishes, needs and expectations of faculty members. The participants are higher-education faculty members from diverse disciplines with varying levels of experience in AI. Faculty are asked to respond to open-ended questions using the metaphor of rubbing a magic lamp of AIaddin, and to share three wishes/needs that indicate what they would expect most, as a faculty member, from AI. The responses to this questionnaire will help educational developers envision a future in which faculty development and AI interaction coexist in a dynamic, reflective, and values-driven partnership.

Keywords: Educational Development, Higher Education, Faculty Development, Artificial Intelligence, Needs

Extended Summary

The term artificial intelligence (AI) was first used in the 1950s. Since than it developed through several distinct phases, with its most significant blast occurring after 2020. Here after, AI began to find application areas in education, particularly in higher education, that enhance multiple aspects of teaching and learning. In the beginning faculty members approached differently to its use, some pioneers started to adopt it immediately some ignored. But students were more enthusiastic and this quick integration forged faculty members to learn and use it. From intelligent tutoring systems and adaptive learning platforms to learning analytics and generative AI tools, these technologies have progressively transformed the ways in which instruction is designed, delivered, and

experienced. The individualization and personalization for different ages and types of learners, designing the curriculum, grading the assessments, and providing student engagement not only saves the time of some administrative work for faculty members but may also enhances the quality of instruction. Besides the faculty members' individual efforts, the main organizational support is coming from institutional educational or faculty developers. As AI rapidly reshapes the landscape of higher education, faculty developers are challenged to help educators adapt not only to new tools but to new ways of thinking, teaching, and relating to knowledge. It should not be overlooked that the ethical, emotional, and professional dimensions of AI adoption, including issues of bias, authenticity, and faculty identity should be considered. This qualitative study explores the evolving intersection between educational development and AI, emphasizing how thoughtful integration can enhance teaching effectiveness, creativity, and academic integrity from the perceptions and needs of faculty members. Faculty is asked to respond to open ended questions and write their related stories in response to: If you had a magic lamp of Artificial Intelligence, and when you rubbed the lamp it said, "Grant me three of your Educational Development wishes!"... As a faculty member, please share your 3 wishes/needs that indicate what you expect most from Artificial Intelligence? The responses to this questionnaire will provide educational developers to envision a future in which faculty development and AI interaction coexist in a dynamic, reflective, and values-driven partnership. By integrating technological literacy with emotional intelligence and ethical awareness, institutions can prepare faculty not just to use AI, but also to lead with it responsibly and creatively.

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Papers 39

Direction and Co-construction: time, social space and agency in large scale educational reform

Roland Tormey, Iris Capdevila

Abstract

This paper explores the complexities of shared agency and managerial direction within large scale educational change processes. While there is a recognition that teachers sense of ownership and agency are central to change processes, this is enacted within organizational frameworks which legitimize and give impulsion to such change. How people experience their own sense of agency in such environments is also shaped by their sense of phenomenological time within the change process. By applying concepts of shared agency and phenomenological time, the authors examine facilitatory methods for involving students and educators in large-scale reform, identifying opportunities and limitations within collaborative processes.

Keywords

Agency, Phenomenological Time, Educational Reform, Stakeholders

1 The tension of direction and co-construction

Large-scale educational reform processes require a degree of coordination, facilitation and institutional legitimacy which would normally require impulsion from – or, at a minimum, the agreement of – the university's senior management. This in turn might be expected to give the reform some direction in terms of the kinds of goals they wish to achieve through the reform or the kinds of curriculum they wish to enact. Alongside this direction, however, is the reality that, as Goüedard et al., (2020: 7) note teachers' agency plays "a crucial role in curriculum implementation, as teachers are not solely passive executors only playing a role at the final stage of the reform, but rather active actors that should be taken into account throughout the whole reform process". And while teachers are certainly key stakeholders in a reform process, they are not the only ones: students, potential employers and wider society are all understood as having a stake in decisions taken. This, in a sense, sets up a potential conflict between the (pre-ordained) direction needed to launch a process, and the need to create co-constructive spaces for teacher and learner agency in the process.

Indeed, this tension is perhaps even more fundamental, given that, in practice, there is a general tendency towards New Public Managerialist approaches to educational reform (Broucker and De Wit, 2015) which see teachers primarily as mere implementors of reforms conceived by managers. Underpinning this division is a fundamentally different understanding of curriculum: where curriculum is understood as 'product' and defined in terms of (Bloom's taxonomy defined) learning outcomes to be achieved, teachers are often seen (at best) as a conduit, or (at worst) a barrier to effective transmission. Where curriculum is understood as a process of creating learning experiences in interaction between teachers and students, teachers are not transmitters of curriculum but rather curriculum makers (Clandinin and Connelly, 1992; Elliott, 2024). The tension between direction and co-construction is not simply about creating and constraining spaces for co-construction, it also plays out in the ways in which different ideological understandings of the nature of curriculum shape the assumptions and beliefs that people bring to the process.

2 Agency in both space and time

A key aspect of this is not only the spaces where co-construction are possible but also the timeframes within which these opportunities are evident. Educational change does not only happen across the social space of the university but also across time – or rather across multiple time frameworks. Hargreaves (1994) identified that time is not uniform in educational reform but is rather experienced differently by people across an organization. While there is an official measure of technical-rational time (expressed in terms of minutes, hours, class periods, semesters etc.), phenomenological time is experienced subjectively and can be experienced as moving faster or slower depending on workload, relationships and feelings. Time is also a political resource, and so management of a change process involves definition of project phases, tasks, and responsibilities in ways that give different actors specific times and spaces for action at different moments in a change process and denies them space for agency in others. For example, the separation in time between the definition of learning goals of reform and the exploration of means to reach those goals may help to create the sense of teachers as being treated as transmitters, not makers, of curriculum, at least at particular moments in the process.

3 The complication of direction and co-construction in large scale change

In our university, we have launched a large scale and ambitious plan to rethink our Bachelor programs to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to thrive in a rapid-evolving world and reach their full potential. The project aims to reimagine 13 BSc programs, taught by circa 1,000 teachers to over 7,000 students. In order to begin the project and to ensure its legitimacy, the project requires the support of the senior management, who identified that (i)

the process should be based on active participation of the whole community and (ii) that the discussion should be focused on a series of goals which reflected the institution's particular ethos and strengths.

The change process will roll out over a series of years. In keeping with a 'design' methodology, the process is designed to follow phases of (A) Review, (B) Design, (C) Implement, and (D) Evaluate and Optimize. Such a process means that in the 'Review' phase, the primary focus is on collecting evidence, not on making decisions. While this may make sense when the whole timescale of the project is viewed on a (technical-rational) timeline or Gantt chart it does not necessarily map onto the sense of urgency to participate as felt by teachers and other stakeholders who want to ensure they are not being excluded from decision-making.

In this paper, we explore how we seek to balance in practice the demands of direction and shared agency across a large and long-term curriculum reform project. We reflect on what this says about shared agency, and on how change processes are designed and experienced across time.

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Building Capacity Through Shared Leadership: Establishing a Resilient Professional Learning Community for Sustainable Organizational Learning

Megan McCrary, Marysol Thayre

Abstract

This collaborative space focuses on how shared leadership, collective efficacy, and human-centered design can transform Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) into resilient, sustainable systems for organizational learning. Drawing on parallel redesign efforts at two secondary school sites in San Diego, the session highlights how PLCs grounded in social–emotional research, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can cultivate psychological safety, belonging, and teacher agency. These conditions enabled general education, English Language Development, and special education teachers to break down silos, develop shared literacy goals, and engage in collaborative inquiry that improved instructional practice and student outcomes. The purpose of this collaborative space is to create a reflective and generative environment where participants examine their own institutional contexts and co-design strategies for building capacity-centered PLCs that endure beyond individual leaders. Through guided discussion, case analysis, and co-creation, attendees will explore how distributed leadership and equity-driven professional learning structures can strengthen organizational resilience. Participants will leave with adaptable frameworks, practical tools, and actionable steps for cultivating sustainable, empowering professional cultures within their own educational settings.

Keywords: Shared Leadership, Professional Learning Communities, Organizational Learning, Teacher Agency

Extended Summary

Background and Context: Across our two secondary school sites in San Diego, we observed a persistent challenge common to many educational settings: professional learning structures were inconsistent, fragmented, and often reactive. Teachers were expected to navigate increasingly diverse student needs—linguistic, cultural, and academic—without cohesive systems to support collaboration or instructional growth. Department meetings frequently centered on logistical updates rather than meaningful inquiry, and siloed working patterns limited collective responsibility for student outcomes.

In response, we separately redesigned our English Department Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), drawing from a shared set of research-based principles to create coherent, equity-driven professional learning ecosystems. Although our sites differ in demographics, size, and organizational culture, our work converged around three common frameworks: social-emotional learning research, collective efficacy theory, and distributed/shared leadership models. These frameworks helped us shift PLC structures from compliance-based routines to human-centered professional communities capable of sustaining growth over time.

Our redesigns were also guided by a parallel insight: the psychological needs of adult learners mirror those of students. Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs as an organizing lens, we focused intentionally on cultivating safety, belonging, autonomy, and purpose within teacher teams. When these foundational needs were met, teachers demonstrated increased willingness to take instructional risks, engage in honest reflection, and participate in shared problem-solving. This alignment between social-emotional needs and professional capacity became a cornerstone of our approach.

The collaborative space format is intentionally chosen because the work of building resilient, shared-leadership PLCs is inherently relational and context-dependent. Rather than delivering a static presentation, we aim to create a participatory environment where attendees can reflect on their own institutional conditions, compare experiences, and co-construct strategies tailored to their settings. Research on professional learning consistently shows that educators learn best through dialogue, modeling, and purposeful collaboration—conditions this format uniquely supports. Moreover, our project emerged from two separate yet philosophically aligned sites, which allows us to offer dual perspectives on how common principles can be adapted to different contexts. A collaborative space enables participants to engage with this adaptability directly: analyzing tensions, identifying potential barriers, and generating solutions that reflect the complexity of their roles. Participants will not only learn from our experiences but also from one another, modeling the very conditions of shared leadership we aim to cultivate.

Intended Goals and Outcomes Participants will leave the collaborative space with:

1. A deeper understanding of how shared leadership, collective efficacy, and social-emotional research can inform the design of resilient PLCs. We will unpack the theoretical foundations that guided our redesigns, making these principles accessible and adaptable.

2. Practical tools and structures for fostering teacher agency and sustainable collaboration. These include strategies for building psychological safety, facilitating reflective dialogue, and developing cross-disciplinary partnerships.

3. An equity-centered framework for professional learning grounded in Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Participants will explore how literacy-focused, universally accessible practices can unify teachers around shared instructional commitments.

4. Strategies for cultivating continuity and resilience in professional learning systems. Through discussing distributed leadership approaches, participants will identify ways to ensure that collaborative structures persist despite leadership changes, policy shifts, or fluctuating organizational conditions.

5. A personalized action plan aligned to their own institutional context. By the end of the session, attendees will articulate one or two concrete next steps for strengthening their professional learning ecosystems.

The collaborative space will be structured to balance reflection, discussion, and co-design:

1. Opening Provocation: "What Does Your PLC Make Possible?" (10 minutes) Participants reflect individually on their school's current professional learning structures and identify both opportunities and constraints.

2. Mini-Framework: Shared Leadership + Maslow for Adults (15 minutes) We introduce the core theoretical principles guiding our redesigns, emphasizing how psychological safety, belonging, and distributed leadership shape teacher learning.

3. Dual Case Snapshots (15 minutes) We briefly present our two site-based models, highlighting similarities, contextual differences, and early impacts (e.g., literacy gains, cross-departmental collaboration, increased teacher confidence).

4. Collaborative Inquiry Groups (25 minutes) Participants form small groups to analyze their institutional contexts using a guided protocol. Prompts include: – What unmet "adult needs" are limiting instructional growth? – Where does shared leadership currently exist, and where could it be strengthened? – What silos might be disrupted through intentional design?

5. Design Sprint: Building a Resilient PLC Structure (20 minutes) Using templates provided, each group sketches a PLC redesign or enhancement tailored to their site, incorporating shared leadership, equity goals, literacy or disciplinary priorities, and sustainability strategies.

6. Collective Sharing + Next Steps (10 minutes) Participants share key insights, challenges, or innovations. Each attendee identifies one actionable step to implement upon return to their institution.

This collaborative space is designed for:

- Academic developers focused on faculty learning and organizational capacity
- School or district leaders seeking sustainable professional learning models
- Teacher leaders and instructional coaches working to build collaborative staff cultures
- Higher education faculty engaged in educator preparation
- Anyone looking to strengthen collective agency, cross-disciplinary collaboration, or human-centered leadership within their institution

The session is particularly relevant for those navigating changing policies, staff turnover, or inconsistent professional learning systems—and for leaders seeking to cultivate resilient, equity-driven cultures capable of sustaining impact over time.

Institutional Collaboration for Improving the Educational Model at ETSII

María Sancho, Enrique Cabrera Rochera, Ángel Ortiz Bas

Abstract

Faced with current challenges in higher education (such as the growing number of degree programs, competition from private universities, and the emergence of artificial intelligence in learning and assessment processes), the School of Industrial Engineering (ETSII) at the Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV) has launched a participatory process to redefine its educational model. This process was structured around two strategic workshops: one for faculty and another for students, aimed at identifying critical areas and agreeing on common guidelines. As a result, four mixed working groups (faculty, students, and management team) were created around key axes considered essential for engineering education today: Assessment, Academic Integrity, Rigor, and Complex Problem-Solving. Each group developed a set of guidelines that will serve as the basis for implementing the new educational model across all ETSII programs. This collaborative approach has integrated diverse perspectives, ensured institutional alignment, and strengthened the School's academic identity. The proposal illustrates how institutional collaboration among students, faculty, and academic leaders can generate solid consensus and innovative practices to enrich curriculum design and improve the training of future engineers.

Keywords: Educational model; curriculum design; engineering; institutional collaboration

Extended Summary

The School of Industrial Engineering (ETSII) at the Universitat Politècnica de València faces a transformation scenario marked by competition from private universities, the expansion of online programs, and the emergence of artificial intelligence in learning and assessment processes. In response to these challenges, ETSII launched a participatory process to define a consensual educational model among faculty and students, reinforcing academic identity and ensuring the training of engineers with competencies adapted to current and future demands.

The main objective of this work is to present the experience of institutional collaboration among students, faculty, and the management team to agree on guidelines that will shape curriculum design and teaching practices.

The process was developed in two complementary phases:

1) Participatory workshops:

- ETSII Innovation and Strategy Workshop (faculty): identification of critical areas and discussion of improvement proposals.

- Student meeting: collection of concerns and expectations regarding the critical areas identified in the faculty workshop.

2) Work in mixed groups (faculty, students, and management team): One mixed working group was created for each of the strategic axes defined as essential for high-quality training at ETSII at the faculty workshop. Each group prepared a set of guidelines that will be discussed in a second Innovation and Strategy Workshop with faculty, approved later by the School Council, and the intended as a reference for teaching practices across all programs.

Key Outcomes: The four strategic axis defined after the first faculty workshop were: Assessment, Academic Integrity, Rigor, and Complex Problem-Solving.

Table 1 summarises the main agreed principles and recommendations for each axis defined after the work in mixed groups. These proposals will be discussed in a second workshop with faculty with the aim of intended them as teaching references.

Table 1. Main principles an recommendations for the 4 ETSII strategic axes

Axis	Principles	Main Agreed Recommendations
Assessment	Promote deep learning; responsible use of technology; homogeneous criteria.	Limit the weight of multiple-choice exams in final grades; avoid non-presential online tests; written assignments: max 30%, mandatory oral defense, authorship declaration, AI use allowed but documented; lab work: min 20%, individual and presential evaluation.
Academic Integrity	Culture of integrity; shared responsibility; prevention over sanction.	Integrity training from first year; common exam regulations; exam custody protocols; deterrent sanctions for fraud.
Rigor	Formal and technical rigor; homogeneous criteria; assessment as a formative tool.	Clear communication of criteria and consequences; coordination of workload and faculty exemplarity; integrate in assessment the correct use of units, spelling and grammar, clear presentation, and proper referencing, with penalties of 5–10%.
Complex Problem-Solving	Promote critical thinking; realistic and multidisciplinary contexts; progressive difficulty and autonomy.	Establish a roadmap for each program; use rubrics that value process, reasoning, and knowledge integration; create pilot faculty groups to advise and share best practices.

This work offers a replicable experience for other institutions, based on co-creation of the educational model through institutional collaboration. Its relevance lies in:

- Integration of key stakeholders: active participation of students, faculty, and academic leaders ensures guidelines meet training needs while adapting to contextual and systemic constraints.

- Competency-based and transversal approach: proposals address essential competencies for contemporary engineering, such as technical rigor, effective communication, integrity, and complex problem-solving.

- Adaptation to technological context: inclusion of ethical AI use and reflection on its impact on assessment positions ETSII as a benchmark in educational innovation.

The proposed model promotes curricular coherence, assessment quality, and comprehensive engineer training—key aspects for accreditation and continuous improvement. In summary, this initiative demonstrates that institutional collaboration is a driver for educational innovation, capable of generating solid consensus and practices that enrich curriculum design in complex and changing environments.

Implicit policy, explicit uncertainty: Teacher agency and the double-didactic mandate in the era of AI

Peter Vinnervik

Abstract

Policy initiatives regarding digitalisation and generative artificial intelligence increasingly shape higher education as an implicit curriculum policy rather than through explicit reform. This position paper argues that such initiatives function as signals that reshape professional judgement and the competence demands placed on academic teachers. Drawing on curriculum theory and policy enactment, the paper examines how a techno-solutionist rationale redirects educational discourse. Using the 2017 introduction of programming in school curricula as an illustration of how vague technology-driven reform messages generate 'distributed uncertainty', the paper identifies structural parallels to the pervasive pressure for AI-driven reform currently facing higher education. It highlights how supranational organisations and the Edtech industry act as policy entrepreneurs, promoting 'learnification' and instrumental versions of 'AI literacy' that risk marginalising disciplinary knowledge. Viewing technology as a primary driver for change often leads to superficial implementation, where complex pedagogical goals are reduced to technical procedures. The paper concludes by outlining the implications for academic development, highlighting a double-didactic mandate. Academic developers must support teachers through capacity building and collective professional learning, ensuring that pedagogical choices remain grounded in student Bildung rather than technological adherence.

Keywords: Generative AI, Implicit curriculum policy, Techno-solutionism, Teacher agency, Academic development

Extended Summary

Techno-solutionism and the rationale of inevitability

Digitalisation and artificial intelligence (AI) are consistently positioned in higher education policy through a discourse of inevitability, futurereadiness, and the transformative promise of enhanced learning. This framing acts as an implicit curriculum policy, where technological adaptation serves as a proxy for educational quality. Consequently, a techno-solutionist rationale prevails, the belief that complex educational challenges are resolvable through technological interventions (Thibaud, 2025).

This paper adopts a conceptual and reflective approach, using curriculum theory to examine the structural mechanisms embedded in these policy signals. It explores the tension between implicit policy, the professional agency required of academic teachers to enact meaningful curriculum work (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012), and the critical role of academic development in navigating this landscape. By treating technological change as a curriculum-theoretical challenge, we can move beyond instrumental questions of utility to more fundamental questions regarding the nature of knowledge.

The mechanism of uncertainty

To understand how vague policy signals operate and reshape teacher agency, we can draw structural lessons from the 2017 introduction of programming in school curricula (Author, 2021). This specific case is utilised not to equate the two educational sectors, but because it provides an empirical illustration of what may happen when a reform message lacks didactic clarity. While this was a formal reform, research demonstrates that its policy formation was heavily influenced by private tech actors occupying significant space within the policy field, effectively moving the agenda beyond traditional sectoral borders (Raptopoulou, 2021).

The central challenge identified on this transformation arena was a fundamental lack of clarity in the reform messages. When policy signals are vague and heavily influenced by external technological imperatives, the responsibility for interpreting and transforming technological change is displaced onto individual teachers (Ball et al., 2012). This creates a state of ‘distributed uncertainty’, where the epistemic work of integrating new technological content into existing pedagogical frameworks is severely underestimated. For higher education, the relevance of this illustration lies in the mechanism itself. When policy lacks didactic clarity, it leaves teachers exposed to external pressures, significantly increasing the risk that technological adaptation is prioritised over independent pedagogical judgement.

Implicit signalling and the redirection of discourse

In higher education, the mechanism of policy enactment is amplified. While Ball et al. (2012) focus on schools, their framework reveals how HE policy operates through institutional strategies and external expectations rather than national syllabi. Regarding digital infrastructure, these guidelines are heavily influenced by 'super policy entrepreneurs' (Mochizuki et al., 2025). Even when mediated through organisations like the OECD and UNESCO, such responses often fail to challenge Big Tech dominance, instead reinforcing an agenda where complex educational challenges are framed as problems for immediate technological resolution (Thibaud, 2025). Fuelled by solutionist narratives promising to optimise the learning experience (Thibaud, 2025), this discourse promotes 'learnification', a focus on generic processes over subject-specific content. Here, the object of learning is often reduced to instrumental versions of 'AI literacy' (Sperling et al., 2024), where technical mastery supersedes disciplinary depth. Without clear disciplinary and didactic

frameworks, academic teachers become vulnerable to these implicit signals, placing the pressure from external technological drivers directly upon their professional integrity.

Epistemic risks and the impact of 'wrong drivers'

The consequence of this technocentric shift can be understood through the lens of educational change. When technology and rapid implementation are treated as primary drivers for change, the reform relies on what Fullan (2011) terms 'wrong drivers'. Without adequate structural support for capacity building and collective learning, this approach often leads to superficial understanding and a loss of professional agency. Consequently, if teachers are expected to become ‘AI-ready’ without subject-specific didactic integration, the academic subject risks being redefined by the technological tool (Willermark, 2025). In such environments, pedagogical activities may maintain the superficial appearance of an original learning objective but lose their epistemic core. For instance, exercises intended to foster complex argumentation may be reduced to shallow audits of AI-generated texts for algorithmic errors. As Selwyn (2024) cautions, there is a profound risk in reorganising education to fit machine-readable formats, as it bypasses the cognitive friction necessary for higher learning.

Implications for academic development: The double-didactic mandate

This analysis challenges academic development, which operates within a double-didactic mandate, i.e., supporting teacher competence while modelling pedagogical approaches. By treating technology as the primary driver, or reducing support to instrumental training, we do teachers a disservice. To support agency, we must focus on 'right drivers': capacity building and collective professional learning (Fullan, 2011). This involves fostering epistemic capacity, helping teachers collectively evaluate how AI alters their discipline's core epistemology. This requires 'slow pedagogy' to protect student Bildung and professional identity by identifying cognitive processes that should remain unmediated (Selwyn, 2024). Furthermore, developers must support systemic integration, assisting departments in prioritising disciplinary integrity over technological adherence. By making implicit policy mechanisms visible, academic developers empower teachers to move from passive enactors of policy to autonomous, pedagogically grounded architects of their curricula.

From Training to Teaching Practice: Implementing Action Methods in Classroom

Mari Karm, Airi Niilo

Abstract

To enhance students' transferable skills, teaching staff need both the competence and the methods to guide this development. A six-month training programme was designed, including six days of contact sessions focused on action methods. Participants were asked to implement the learned strategies in their daily teaching and reflect on their experiences. A longitudinal study was conducted, drawing on participants' reflective diaries and interviews two years after the training. Data were analysed using qualitative content analysis. The results revealed that the use in daily practice was influenced by how the methods were experienced during the training. Action methods perceived as understandable, and useful during the training were retained in teaching practice. Awareness of action methods supported lecturers agency to make choices. Furthermore, participants reported becoming more attentive to active methods in other trainings and conferences, actively seeking new teaching strategies, and purposefully integrating them into their teaching.

Keywords: action methods, training, longitudinal study, teaching practice

Extended Summary

In university studies maintaining and fostering social relationships, as well as supporting cooperative teaching and learning, has become essential. To enhance students' transferable skills, teaching staff need both the competence and the methods to guide this development. A six-month training programme was designed, comprising six days of contact sessions focused on action methods. The aim of this presentation is to introduce a longitudinal study that explored the significance of action methods training for participating teaching staff and their willingness to apply the learned methods in their teaching. The training was structured based on Kolb's (Kolb, 1984) experiential learning concept. The activity methods used in the training were derived from sociometric techniques and drama methods. Previous research conducted in educational settings (Skar & Flagstad, 2021) indicates that the use of sociometric techniques in the seminars activate participation and involvement on various levels (embodied, cognitively, emotionally, personally, socially and verbally), within and between the participants in the different encounters. Opportunities to reflect are necessary for meaningful learning because reflection slows down activity, giving the time for the learner to work through the material and connect it with previous ideas. Reflection enables learners to develop greater 'ownership' of the material of learning, making it more personally meaningful to themselves and improving their understanding of it (Moon, 2001). Therefore, reflection and reflective journal entries formed an important part of both the training and the research.

The research questions were: 1) What changes do the participant describe in their understanding of group learning and the use of action methods? 2) How do participants describe their experiences of using action methods in their teaching practice? A longitudinal study was conducted to analyse participants' training experiences and the application of learned methods in subsequent teaching practice. The sample included 15 lecturers who participated in the training and completed reflective diaries during the programme. In addition, six lecturers were interviewed two years after the training. The data consisted of participants' reflective diaries and follow-up interviews, and were analysed using qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012).

The results revealed that the use of action methods in daily practice was influenced by how these methods were experienced during the training. Techniques perceived as clear and useful during the programme were retained in teaching practice. In their reflections, participants expressed a wide range of ideas on how to integrate the learned techniques into their training and teaching processes. Action methods were considered particularly applicable during the warm-up phase, supporting group formation and activating learners throughout the learning process. Reflection diaries and interviews revealed that participants found it of great value to think about the meaning of the action methods during the training, rather than simply doing exercises. The practical implication of this study aligns with Skar and Flagstad's (2021) recommendation to frame sociometric exercises more toward the subject matter rather than as mere 'getting to know each other' activities. Awareness of action methods supported lecturers agency to make choices. Furthermore, participants reported becoming more attentive to active methods in other trainings and conferences, actively seeking new teaching strategies, and purposefully integrating them into their teaching. Future research could focus more on how to integrate action methods into teaching and learning the content of the subject, while supporting students' collaboration skills and how to support academics' agency to make choices in their teaching practice.

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Papers 40

Perceptual Convergences and Divergences on Active-Learning after Faculty Development

Gabriel Hervas, José Luis Medina, Patricia Silva, Isaac Calduch

Abstract

Many faculty development (FD) initiatives aim to promote innovative, student-centered teaching practices, yet lecturers' pedagogical intentions do not always align with students' perceptions of the resulting learning experience. This study examines perceptions of class sessions taught by lecturers who participated in a FD initiative at the BLINDED, where they learned and implemented an active-learning methodology. Equivalent surveys were administered to lecturers and students immediately after each session; quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and qualitative data through thematic analysis. Findings from 18 lecturers and 234 students show convergence in perceptions of innovation, satisfaction, reflexivity, and support for self-regulated learning. However, divergences emerged: students rated the impact on learning, motivation, and clarity slightly lower than lecturers, and a minority expressed some minor reservations. Lecturers reported considerably higher workload, greater ICT-related challenges, and more concern for inclusivity. These results suggest that while FD can effectively support pedagogical innovation, translating new methodologies into practice requires sustained support and clearer communication with students. The study highlights the importance of aligning pedagogical intentions with students' lived experiences and ensuring that FD initiatives provide follow-up structures to help lecturers adjust to the complexities of active-learning implementation.

Keywords: Faculty development, active learning, teacher-student perceptions

Extended Summary

Introduction

Faculty development (FD) initiatives commonly encourage lecturers to adopt active, student-centered approaches to enhance engagement and learning. Yet research shows that the effectiveness of FD is uneven and that students may not perceive the outcomes of pedagogical innovations as intended by lecturer; moreover, students often evaluate innovative methods differently, especially when they disrupt established routines or introduce new cognitive and participatory demands, and even when they learn more, they might perceive they learnt less (Deslauriers et al., 2019). This study examines the impact of a FD program at the BLINDED in which lecturers learned an active-learning methodology and implemented it in their teaching. By gathering parallel data from lecturers and students who experienced the same class sessions, we aimed to compare their perceptions and assess the degree of alignment or divergence. Understanding these perceptual differences is essential for refining both pedagogical practice and FD initiatives.

Context, Participants, and Methods

The study took place at the School of Education of the BLINDED as part of the BLINDED FD initiative. Grounded in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), the initiative combined mentorship, peer observation, and reflective practice. Participating lecturers were required to design and teach at least two sessions using the newly introduced active-learning methodology (among others, flipped classroom, ABP, simulation, etc.) Data were collected through equivalent surveys administered immediately after each session to lecturers and students. The instruments included Likert-scale items and open-ended questions to assess and compare the teaching and learning experience from both perspectives. We present the results for the responses from 18 lecturers (15 with more than five years' teaching experience; 15 women) and 234 students (89% women), mostly second- and fourth-year undergraduates. On average, 13 students responded per session. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were coded thematically and compared across groups.

Results

Overall, both groups evaluated the sessions very positively, though lecturers tended to adopt a more critical stance. Convergences and divergences emerged across several dimensions.

High convergence (under 7,5% discrepance)

- Satisfaction and innovation: Both groups expressed high satisfaction with the sessions. Lecturers rated their satisfaction slightly lower (by about 2%), but both agreed that the sessions were markedly more innovative than typical classes.

- Reflexivity and self-regulation: Lecturers and students agreed that the methodology increased reflexivity and supported self-regulated learning.

- Evaluation: Both groups considered evaluation in these sessions as learning-focused (students felt it was slightly less focused on learning, 5%, than lecturers believed).

- Inclusivity and diversity: Both groups felt the sessions as inclusive, with students perceiving them as marginally more inclusive than lecturers (by roughly 5%), possibly reflecting lecturers' heightened awareness of unmet needs.

- Comparison with other methods: 18.1% of students rated the methodology 6/10 or below when compared with other methodologies in their degree (lecturers: 16.7%). Low divergence (between 7,5%)

- Impact on learning and motivation: Students rated the sessions as slightly less helpful for improving learning and motivation than lecturers did. While still positive, students' evaluations consistently fell a few percentage points lower.

- Workload: Lecturers perceived a substantial increase in workload linked to planning, coordination, and the demands of implementing a new methodology. Students also perceived increased workload, though the rise was notably smaller. The gap suggests that lecturers experienced the instructional shift as considerably more taxing.

- Recommendation. Lecturers were 8% less likely to recommend continued use of the methodology, reinforcing their more critical viewpoint. Relevant divergences (15% or more)

- Clarity and followability: Students were 15% more likely to indicate that the session was difficult to follow.

- ICT use: Lecturers rated the usefulness of ICT tools in the session 16% lower than students, suggesting implementation challenges that were not equally visible to learners.

Lecturers emphasized learning, engagement, motivation, and the challenges of planning and time management. Students highlighted practical relevance, hands-on work, group collaboration, and concerns about time and workload.

Discussion

The FD initiative appears successful in supporting lecturers' adoption of active-learning methods. Both students and lecturers recognized the sessions' innovation and valued their reflective and participatory nature. However, the perceptual divergences indicate challenges in conveying pedagogical intentions to students, especially (since we discuss teaching methods) in regards with the clarity and followability of the sessions, which may require more explicit structure and scaffolding to make the sessions fully effective. Lecturers' higher reported workload and critical self-evaluation are consistent with research showing that adopting new pedagogies demands substantial preparation and emotional investment, especially during early implementation. These findings underscore the need for FD initiatives to include ongoing support, opportunities for peer exchange, and strategies for managing workload and self-critique (with the affective implications involved in it).

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Agency in Higher Education Strategy: Applying Improvisation in Academic Development

Benjamin Phipps

Abstract

In this conceptual paper, I draw on the concept of musical improvisation and the developed research literature around it to argue that academic developers' practice can be viewed much like jazz musicians' work as an agentic practice in a constant state of becoming. I draw on my dual expertise as a musician/ethnomusicologist, studying the processes of improvisation and my work for the last six years as an academic developer in a large Australian university, developing the professional skills of educational and academic developers in preparation for institution-wide change initiatives. The article explores the cognitive and cultural perspectives of musical improvisation as effective frameworks for developing the skills and knowledge of academic developers to be applied in specific contexts that require human agency to lead individuals with expertise in making effective educational decisions and taking action to improve teaching. Auto-ethnographic reflections on improvisation and my experience in academic development ground the theoretical discussion of improvisation and the roles of academic developers as change agents in tangible scenarios. I argue that understanding the work of academic developers through the lens of musical improvisation could be an effective pathway to surface the expertise and evaluative judgment required to create educational change in teaching and learning communities in higher education, through concepts such as perceptual agency, temporal feedback monitoring and embodied knowledge.

Keywords: Academic Development, Improvisation, Agency, Higher Education

Extended Summary

The aim of this paper is to explore how nuanced thinking about improvisation from music research can inform the work of Academic Developers and provide helpful strategies and language to articulate the value of academic developers in strategic educational changes within Higher Education. To highlight the practical significance and the broad transferability of the findings, auto-ethnographic scenarios are used to illustrate the concepts.

In this paper, I examine academic development (AD) through the theoretical lens of research in musical improvisation. I interplay the literature on musical improvisation with research on ADs as change agents and illustrate the following core concepts that arise using auto-ethnographically informed reflections from my time as a musician/ ethnomusicological researcher, and my last six years as an Academic Developer in a large Australian University. The following concepts of listening/perceiving, the referent, and relational contingency are explored in their intersection with agency. I connect these concepts to specific instances in which they can usefully be applied to the work of academic developers, drawing on my experience. The article combines my dual expertise to tease out how the specific strategies of improvisation are evident in AD work and can help articulate our practices.

Musical improvisation is a contextually situated practice and a highly evaluative form of using knowledge that can offer us a nuanced view of an academic developer's role as a strategic one in higher education, requiring flexibility and judgement. I argue a more detailed understanding of improvisation in music offers a way to articulate better what and how academic developers work than models put forward based on organisational theories' definition of improvisation as dealing with the unforeseen (Hadida et al., 2015, 440-443). I examine four key concepts with their origins in musical improvisation research and developed from the interplay of the literature: listening/perceiving, the referent, relational contingency and agency (Berliner, 1994; Monson, 2008; Phipps, 2023; Pressing, 1984). I explore their usefulness in understanding ADs' strategic work and articulating its value using interspersed reflections that form a proposed model for conceptualising the skills and practices of ADs working in strategic change work in HE.

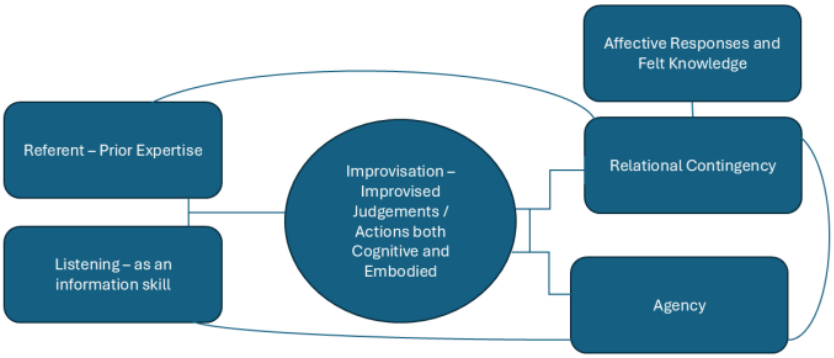


Fig. 1. A proposed model of Improvisation in Academic Development.

What we can see in the basic model above is that improvisation, while incorporating varied but also interrelated areas of skill and expertise, is drawn together by the role of the person in making judgements about how they will take action. What will be done requires at least these four inputs and perhaps many more, and they are interrelated in the decision-making process. None of the inputs is more important than the others in and of itself, but in the context of the needs, we know this is not the case, and judgments are made about which information is most significant, relying on the concept of perceptual agency, which integrates listening/feedback monitoring with the taking of action.

The significance of the model lays in its acknowledgement of the multifaceted nature and wealth of educational expertise required to carry out AD roles while also maintaining the importance of how this work is done in collaboration through relational contingency with people as a development of capability that is not just changing an experience for students but also has an affective dimension for educators that is felt and experienced. Here the model offers insights into how, despite the emotional burdens of educational change being unevenly distributed in HE, these relational aspects are also one of the aspects of AD with the most potential for transforming education because they are deeply human acts (Acker, 2012; Baker & Burke, 2023; Bayerlein & McGrath, 2018).

The embodied nature of improvisation highlights the interrelationship between expertise, action, listening, and the affective dimensions of relational work in educational change, offering a pathway forward to more holistic educational change strategies. The nature of improvisation, as a process, is important in this model as it highlights how effective changes to improve educational outcomes require attention to the conduct of the change process to be sustainable. Strategies such as feedback monitoring and perceptual skills that enable change in collaboration with others, rely on positive motivations, and rationales that develop staff as multifaceted individuals while also improving student learning, which are at the core of the value ADs contribute.

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Towards a collaborative digital environment, facilitated by artificial intelligence, for the analysis, visualization and educational application of musical repertoires from the oral tradition

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Abstract

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into the analysis, representation and pedagogical integration of oral tradition musical heritage within the educational ecosystem fosters an epistemic transformation beyond the mere incorporation of technological resources into the music classroom. This paper proposes and analyses the theoretical and epistemological foundations for the development of an AI-mediated collaborative digital environment geared towards the management, computational analysis, multimodal visualization and pedagogical integration of oral tradition music corpora encoded in MEI (Music Encoding Initiative) format within formal education, aligned with the current curriculum framework. The environment, developed within the EADIGIFOLK project, operates on a corpus of approximately 3,000 traditional pieces from Spain, Portugal, Colombia, Mexico, Italy and Ireland, and integrates tools for AIassisted musical analysis, visual representation of musical structures and elements, and the design of learning situations aligned with primary and secondary school curricula. The underlying premise is that, within an ecological environment for situated music learning, AI acts not merely as a technical support, but as a cognitive and semiotic mediator that uniquely reconfigures how musical knowledge is generated, organized and transmitted in collaborative and interdisciplinary settings, by virtue of its potential to facilitate the understanding of the logic and semantics implicit in musical corpora. This reconfiguration opens unprecedented challenges and opportunities for academic development, teacher training and knowledge production in music education, with significant implications for creativity and the construction of heritage knowledge linked to oral tradition, as well as for epistemological agency and the critical analysis of knowledge itself.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Oral Tradition Music Repertoires, Digital Humanities, Epistemology, Educational Ecosystem, Teacher Training, Music Encoding Initiative, Cognitive Mediation

Extended Summary

Introduction and Aim of the Study

The relentless integration of intelligence into educational processes, resources and practices poses major strategic challenges that touch upon the most fundamental aspects of pedagogical practice and which, ultimately, entail redefining the epistemological frameworks upon which academic knowledge is constructed, validated and transmitted (Nurnaningsih et al., 2026; Stewart, 2026). As Binny Jose et al. (2025) point out, these processes, which are fundamental to the reconfiguration of contemporary educational ecosystems, require articulation around in-depth debates on the epistemological architecture of knowledge, addressing issues such as criteria of legitimacy, modes of representation and conditions of access to processes of signification. In the specific field of music education and the intangible cultural heritage of oral transmission, the tension between the logics of computational formalisation and forms of phenomenological knowledge takes on particular significance. The circulation of traditional repertoires has historically been underpinned by relational and communitybased practices, which are difficult to reduce to formalised models without a loss of semantic density.

In this context, the emergence of artificial intelligence is not a neutral process, but rather a mediation that intervenes in the very construction of musical meaning, by favouring certain forms of representation, analysis and formalisation over others. Consequently, the debate is reopened as to which dimensions of the musical phenomenon are susceptible to codification, and how these decisions, embedded within specific socio-cultural and epistemological frameworks, condition both pedagogical practices and teacher training processes. From this perspective, the integration of AI also poses a direct challenge to the epistemological agency of teachers and students, by redefining the conditions of access, interpretation and validation of musical knowledge in technologically mediated environments (González & Merchán, 2022) . In this sense, the issue goes beyond the mere incorporation of tools to address the need to reconfigure music education ecosystems as complex pedagogical environments, in which artificial intelligence acts as an agent of didactic mediation capable of facilitating processes of personalised learning, creative development and meaningful knowledge construction. However, this transformative potential demands a critical integration that addresses its didactic, ethical and epistemological implications, ensuring that technological mediation does not lead to processes of formalist reduction, but rather contributes to preserving the cultural, expressive and heritage dimensions of the musical experience, whilst expanding the possibilities for understanding, experimentation and creation within the framework of open, inclusive and culturally situated musical learning ecologies (Merchán et al., 2024).

Drawing on the experience provided by the EA-DIGIFOLK project, which features a corpus of nearly 3,000 pieces of oral tradition music encoded in MEI (Music Encoding Initiative) format, accompanied by AI-assisted analysis tools, multimodal visualisation and the design of learning scenarios for primary and secondary education in Spain, Portugal, Colombia, Mexico, Italy and Ireland, the aim of this proposal is to critically analyse how AI-mediated ecological environments for music education reconfigure the processes of production, organisation and application of musical

knowledge in collaborative and interdisciplinary contexts, raising new issues regarding epistemological frameworks, pedagogical practices and forms of academic knowledge development.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the view of artificial intelligence as a cognitive artefact which, far from replacing the teacher's role, acts as a mediator in the processes of musical understanding by redistributing the cognitive load and broadening access to more complex operations (Cassinadri, 2024; Norman, 1991; Sweller, 1988). In this sense, one of the most significant contributions of these environments lies in their ability to translate sonic and structural complexity into visual and interactive representations that make accessible and operational aspects and dimensions of musical logic (modes, metres, structures and rhythmic patterns or melodic ranges) which conventional notation, by virtue of its abstract and symbolic nature, tends to limit and restrict (Fautley, 2017). This mediation does not simplify the musical phenomenon but rather reconfigures the conditions of access to its internal logic, allowing students to engage in processes such as structural comparison, pattern inference or artistic and creative experimentation without necessarily relying on prior mastery of complex symbolic systems. From this perspective, musical understanding shifts from models centred on decoding towards approaches in which knowledge emerges from the interaction between multiple forms of representation, cultural practices and technological mediations. Within this framework, music learning environments can be understood as dynamic ecologies in which artificial intelligence not only facilitates access to knowledge but also intervenes in its organisation, circulation and validation (Boyce-Tillman, 2004; Leman, 2007). This shift, in turn, introduces a decisive component of epistemological agency, insofar as teachers and students must develop criteria to interpret, question and guide algorithmically mediated processes (Bandura, 2001). Thus, the integration of artificial intelligence is not limited to an instrumental improvement in teaching but is part of a broader transformation of the frameworks upon which knowledge in music education is constructed, enabling the development of ecological approaches where technological mediation, meaningful understanding and critical responsibility in the use of representational systems converge.

The EA -DIGIFOLK platform: corpus, analysis and AI-mediated educational application

In line with this framework, the proposed environment is structured as an integrated system of mediations designed to facilitate an understanding of the musical phenomenon through representation and analysis. At its core lies the EADIGIFOLK corpus, which brings together approximately 3,000 pieces of oral tradition encoded in MEI format. This semantic encoding allows for the identification of aspects of musical logic relevant from a pedagogical perspective, such as mode or tonality, melodic range, genre, formal structure, language or context of use, among others. This not only enables systematic access to the repertoire but also allows it to be analysed and compared, significantly expanding the possibilities for interaction and understanding compared to exclusively oral transmission models or conventional notational media.

Building on this foundation, the incorporation of artificial intelligence-assisted music analysis tools enables the generation of multimodal representations (formal maps, harmonic development diagrams, rhythmic profiles or visualisations of melodic contours) that reveal structural and relational dimensions implicit in the very content of traditional repertoires, which are difficult to access through symbolic notation. In this sense, AI acts as a semiotic mediator (Nattiez, 1990; Merchán et al., 2024) that translates the abstraction of musical representation into content and access points that are accessible and intuitive from a conceptual standpoint, thereby facilitating understanding and allowing the cognitive load to be redirected towards higher-order processes, such as performance, the development of creativity, or informed decisionmaking. This mediation also opens the possibility of participation in analytical processes for students with varying levels of technical training, helping to democratise access to musical knowledge. These possibilities are applied in the educational setting through structured proposals that integrate mediated analysis with meaningful musical practices, linking phases of exploration, construction, creation and reflection (Merchán, 2024). In this way, the environment is not limited to facilitating access to content, but promotes interaction between analytical knowledge (formal patterns, stylistic features, rhythmic structures) and experiential knowledge (active listening, improvisation, creation and cultural reflection), in line with the distinction proposed by Boyce-Tillman (2004). This approach aligns with an ecological conception of musical learning, in which practices, resources and technological mediations form a dynamic system of relationships that transcends and extends the boundaries and practices typical of the classroom. Finally, the very configuration of the environment introduces a collaborative and interdisciplinary dimension that is particularly relevant from the perspective of academic development. The convergence of diverse profiles (musicologists, ethnomusicologists, specialists in didactics and educational technology, and practising teachers) gives rise to a community of practice in which knowledge is produced, organised and validated through dialogue between disciplines (Merchán et al., 2022; Clancy, 2023). In this sense, the environment not only facilitates an understanding of the musical phenomenon, but also reconfigures the modes of knowledge production, situating them in a shared space where technological mediation, educational practice and critical reflection are articulated together.

Implications for Academic Development

The context described has significant implications for academic development, understood as a sphere of research and reflective practice. It serves as a situated case study that allows us to examine how artificial intelligence is reshaping the epistemological frameworks of a humanities discipline characterised by its cognitive, conceptual and experiential complexity. Secondly, the environment establishes models of collaborative knowledge production in line with the demands of contemporary academic development, underpinned by processes of epistemological hybridisation and multicultural dialogue. These models bring together distributed interdisciplinary teams, shared digital infrastructures and dynamics of reflective validation, integrating research, teaching and innovation within frameworks of practice that promote the democratisation of knowledge and the active preservation of musical heritage in diverse contexts. In this vein, the environment directly challenges the professional position of those involved in academic development, placing them before a transformation that affects not only teaching and research methods, but also the very objects and forms of knowledge construction. In this context, it is necessary to rethink frameworks of action from a perspective in which technological mediation does not replace human agency but rather is articulated around it. In this sense, approaches centred on agency and reflexivity, such as those proposed by Bandura (2001) or Schön (1983), allow us to place the capacities for reflection, self-regulation and decision-making at the core of professional practice. From this perspective, artificial intelligence only realises its potential as a mediator of knowledge when it is embedded within a critical, situated and culturally engaged pedagogical framework (Hess, 2015; Merchán et al., 2024). Finally, the environment incorporates, across the board, a dimension aimed at promoting inclusivity and sustainability in access to musical heritage, by enabling repertoires of oral tradition (often linked to communities with limited archival resources) to be transcribed, analysed and reused in diverse educational contexts. Through the combination of structured codification and technological mediation, these repertoires become accessible objects of knowledge and open educational resources, contributing both to their preservation and to their reinterpretation within new learning frameworks. In this way, the environment aligns with contemporary approaches to academic development focused on equity, the democratisation of knowledge and epistemic justice in higher education.

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Scale Down in Order to Scale Up – experiences and results from a hybrid learning lab.

Marie Leijon, Åse Tieva

Abstract

In this presentation we will share results from a four year educational development- and research project on hybrid learning environments. The aim with the project has been to investigate how space, technology, pedagogy and social interaction can be designed for hybrid learning situations where students can participate on-site and digitally, simultaneously, and on equal terms. Our results show that this version of hybrid is very hard to accomplish with high quality. Teachers invest substantial time in preparing and implementing hybrid instruction. Hybrid teaching places high demands on pedagogical, technical, and spatial competence, requiring educators to adapt their approaches across different spaces and media. Support must therefore be technologically and pedagogically innovative, grounded in an understanding of the challenges of hybrid teaching. While the hybrid learning lab represents a high-tech solution, further challenges arise when teachers seek to implement hybrid teaching in other campus spaces. Issues include coordinating perspectives across the organization and integrating the lab into existing structures. Innovation projects often create demands that exceed current organizational capacities. In this presentation, we share insights from the third and final iteration, which involved scaling down hybrid ambitions to enable broader support for hybrid learning across the university.

Keywords: Hybrid, Learning environment, Learning lab, Co-design

Extended Summary

Aim

In this presentation we will share results from a four year educational development- and research project on hybrid learning environments. The aim with the project has been to investigate how space, technology, pedagogy and social interaction can be designed for hybrid learning situations where students can participate on-site and digitally, simultaneously, and on equal terms.

Hybrid learning can take many forms, but our interest lies in scenarios where students collaborate across different media. For instance, a group of students on campus might interact with another group online, each situated in their respective locations. While various teaching and learning activities in synchronous hybrid environments have been studied (e.g., Raes et al., 2020; Bülow, 2022), less attention has been given to student collaboration. Based on our experience as researchers and educational developers in higher education, simultaneous collaboration with mixed modes of participation is challenging. Existing research agrees on the benefits of hybrid settings regarding flexibility and accessibility. The hybrid format can enrich students' learning experiences but poses challenges related to technology and design, necessitating support for both teachers and students. The hybrid learning lab in this presentation has been developed in a joint process between the university and the facility owner. It has been designed as testbed with allocated annual fundings for change and development throughout the project (2021 – 2025). There has been assigned technical and pedagogical support, and the lab has been co-designed in a participatory process in close collaboration with teachers and students (Author et al., 2022, 2023).

Theoretical framework and methodological approach

As hybrid learning environments are complex, we turn to sociomateriality for a theoretical understanding. Sociomaterial approaches understand people, places, actions and the material to be intertwined and constantly shaping each other (Fenwick et al., 2015). In hybrid environments students and teachers are present in multiple, fluid spaces where the digital, material, personal, and social are intrinsically connected (Lamb et al., 2022). The sociomaterial helps us to move away from isolating aspects of collaboration in synchronous hybrid environments towards unpack how they are enmeshed in practice. Furthermore, a sociomaterial lens highlights that social practices and material artefacts—such as furniture, technology, and architecture—are not separate entities but are mutually constitutive. Thus, sociomateriality challenges us to view learning environments not as static backdrops, but as dynamic assemblages of people, tools, values, and practices that are continually being configured and reconfigured through everyday use. This is also how we understand collaboration in synchronous hybrid learning environments – as assemblages (Author et al., nd).

The project has been inspired by the real-world laboraty design process with co-design as a research- and participatory process (Ninnemann et al., 2024; Schneidewind et al., (2018) and the four phases 1) Research, 2) Experiment, 3) Evaluation and 4) Scale.

The first phase involved taking inventory of existing research and development work on formal hybrid learning environments. The second phase brought together a multi-professional working group of diverse stakeholders to identify needs, generate ideas, and transform these into a program proposal. This proposal was then translated by a multidisciplinary team into a concrete construction plan for the hybrid learning lab. In the third phase, an iterative

design process was carried out, including ongoing evaluation, surveys, observations, interviews and design adjustments, followed by research activities. The fourth and final phase focused on leveraging the knowledge developed throughout the project to enable scaling up. This presentation focus on the results and the challenging with scaling up.

Key findings

The results from the iterative process and the finalized project shows that hybrid learning spaces can be understood as an entanglement of interactions between students, teachers, material, practices, spaces and different temporalities. The hybrid format can enrich students' learning experiences but poses challenges related to technology and design, necessitating support for both teachers and students. Hybrid learning comes in many forms, from transfer of information and lecture via group work to synchronous collaboration between onsite and online students. After the first iteration, audio technology and furniture were modified. In the second iteration, further adjustments were made to audio and visual technology to improve quality, particularly for online participants. Curtains were added in the lab to create sub-spaces, and tables were repositioned to enable groups to work closer to screens—though this reduced the flexibility of the physical space. User feedback after these iterations revealed that teachers invest substantial time in preparing and implementing hybrid instruction. Hybrid teaching places high demands on pedagogical, technical, and spatial competence, requiring educators to adapt their approaches across different spaces and media. Support must therefore be technologically and pedagogically innovative, grounded in an understanding of the challenges of hybrid teaching. The third iteration addressed the question of scaling up. While the hybrid learning lab represents a high-tech solution, challenges arise when teachers seek to implement hybrid teaching in other campus spaces. Issues include coordinating perspectives across the organization and integrating the lab into existing structures. Innovation projects often create demands that exceed current organizational capacities. In this presentation, we share insights from the third and final iteration, which involved scaling down hybrid ambitions to enable broader support for hybrid learning across the university.

Significance and implications

Our project aimed to explore how space, technology, pedagogy, and social interaction can be designed to support hybrid learning situations where students participate both on-site and online – simultaneously and on equal terms. Our results show that this is very hard to accomplish with high quality. So why continue aiming for the most complex version of hybrid? This will be discussed during the presentation.

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Enhancing student autonomy and accountability in technical engineering work through digital Kanban

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Abstract

The development of complex technical work in engineering (such as requirements analysis, planning tasks, preliminary designs or full technical projects) requires students to demonstrate autonomy, organisational skills and the ability to manage uncertainty. However, many students lack structured mechanisms to regulate their own work process, which often results in late requests for support, poorly formulated questions, cognitive overload and an excessive dependence on the instructor. This contribution analyses the effects of using digital Kanban boards, implemented through Trello, on student agency, cognitive security and accountability in professionally oriented engineering courses. Based on teaching experience, it has been observed that the systematic use of individual Kanban boards fosters greater student initiative in planning and monitoring their work, improves the quality of feedback and enables the early identification of blocked tasks. When technical work is carried out in small groups, Trello introduces an additional improvement by making the actual distribution of tasks visible. This transparency reduces passive behaviours and imbalances in participation, promoting a fairer allocation of responsibilities without the need for constant instructor intervention. The introduction of an explicit protocol for managing cognitively blocked tasks and a structured channel for requesting meetings transforms teaching and learning processes, shifting the instructor's role towards technical supervision. Overall, the approach contributes to greater student autonomy and a more professional management of technical work in higher engineering education.

Keywords: Engineering education, Technical work, Digital tools, Trello

Extended Summary

Student autonomy and process management in engineering education.

In professionally oriented engineering courses, students are required to develop complex technical work such as requirements analyses, planning activities, preliminary designs or full technical projects. These activities closely reproduce professional practice, as they involve incomplete initial definitions, the integration of multiple sources of information, regulatory constraints, technical decision-making and iterative revisions throughout the process. Such work requires not only technical knowledge but also competencies related to work organisation, uncertainty management and adaptability. However, many students approach these tasks without explicit structures to help them regulate their own work process (Martin et al., 2005). As a result, reactive behaviours emerge, including late requests for help, poorly formulated questions and a high level of insecurity regarding real progress, affecting both individual performance and the overall quality of the technical outcome.

Structuring technical work through Trello boards

To address these difficulties, this contribution proposes the use of Trello as a teaching and learning tool for organising and monitoring technical work in the university classroom. Each student is provided with an individual board, previously structured by the instructor, which acts as a shared reference framework throughout the development of the work (Saltz & Heckman, 2020). The board is organised into seven lists: Backlog, Resources, Stakeholders, Meeting Topics, In Progress, Blocked and Done. All tasks required for the development of the technical work are initially placed in Backlog. From there, students decide which tasks to activate and move to In Progress, setting priorities and realistic completion dates. The Resources and Stakeholders lists allow students to identify necessary resources and external dependencies, while Meeting Topics acts as a structured channel for formulating questions and requesting meetings with the instructor. When a task cannot progress, it is moved to Blocked, activating a predefined action protocol. Completed tasks are transferred to Done, providing a clear and continuous view of progress. This same board structure is replicated across all students, ensuring methodological consistency while allowing autonomous work management.

Effects on student autonomy and cognitive security

The systematic use of Trello boards leads to a significant increase in student autonomy (Shchetynina et al., 2022). After an initial adaptation phase, students progressively assume responsibility for planning and monitoring their work without the need for constant supervision. They are able to identify subsequent steps and progress more smoothly and efficiently. At the same time, a clear improvement in cognitive security is observed. The visibility of work and the existence of intermediate milestones reduce uncertainty and the feeling of "not knowing whether progress is adequate". Even when changes or revisions require reworking completed tasks, students respond in a more structured and confident manner, reorganising their work without losing overall control.

Structured management of cognitive blockages and improved feedback

A key element of the approach is the explicit management of blocked tasks. When a task cannot advance due to missing information, technical uncertainty or external dependencies, the student clearly identifies it as blocked on the board. This action activates a protocol that includes identifying the cause of the blockage and reviewing related completed

tasks. If the blockage persists, the student formulates a specific question and adds it to the Meeting Topics list, which constitutes the only channel for requesting meetings. Meetings are time-limited and exclusively focused on resolving the identified blockages. New meetings cannot be requested until previous issues have been resolved and work has resumed. This procedure significantly improves the quality of feedback and the efficiency of tutorials, which become focused on concrete technical problems and relevant decisions, avoiding unproductive or poorly defined meetings.

Impact on quality, traceability and group work

Organising work through Trello also has a direct impact on the quality of technical outputs. The continuous visualisation of tasks and dependencies facilitates the early detection of inconsistencies between different parts of the work. In addition, the board provides clear traceability of technical decisions, allowing identification of when and why specific choices were made (Strickroth et al., 2022). When work is carried out in small groups, the board provides an additional benefit: transparency in the actual distribution of tasks. Individual responsibilities become visible, reducing passive behaviours and imbalances in workload. Groups can redistribute tasks autonomously, promoting more equitable and professional collaboration without constant instructor intervention.

Transformation of the instructor`s role

The use of Trello supports the implementation of an active, project-based learning methodology in which students assume a central role in decision-making, self-organisation and progress monitoring. In this context, the instructor's role evolves towards that of a learning facilitator and process supervisor, similar to the management of a project office, rather than responding reactively to isolated issues.

The analysis of boards enables continuous formative assessment, early detection of difficulties and the provision of strategic feedback, contributing to a teaching and learning process that is more autonomous, structured and aligned with professional engineering practice.

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Workshop 37

Culture as Strategy: Leading from the Third-Space for Agency, Innovation, and Workforce Alignment

Angela Atwell, Dean Goon

Abstract

Higher education institutions often articulate values of collaboration, inclusion, and innovation in their strategic plans. However, translating those values into workplace culture is complex. Peter Drucker's assertion that "culture eats strategy for lunch" underscores how workforce culture ultimately determines whether strategy succeeds. This interactive workshop explores how leading from the third space; a theoretical, hybrid, boundary-spanning space between traditional academic and administrative staff domains, can transform culture into strategy and empower workforce agency. Drawing on experience in our Division of Academic Innovation, we illustrate how inherited culture can be enhanced by integrating academic technology, instructional design, teaching excellence, and research creating a new work culture that supports agility and trust. Using design-thinking principles, participants will analyze their own institutional contexts, identify cultural gaps and potential opportunities, and co-create strategies for aligning workforce culture with strategic priorities. Through reflection, discussion, and collaborative prototyping, participants will leave with practical frameworks and tools for cultivating agency, inclusion, and innovation transforming culture into a living, strategic asset for institutional success.

Keywords: Third Space Leadership, Organizational Culture, Workforce Agency, Innovation & Strategy

Extended Summary

Theoretical and Research-Based Foundations

This workshop is based on the application of Third Space Theory in Higher Education. Third-Space Theory, originally proposed by Bhabha (2004) was intended to describe the interaction between identity and culture. Whitchurch (2009, 2015, 2019), Veles (2022), and others apply these principles to the changing workforce in higher education. In this context, the Third Space Theory provides a powerful framework for understanding how individuals operate across the boundaries of academic and professional domains. Rather than existing at the margins, these hybrid professionals inhabit a dynamic and relational space, one defined by translation, negotiation, and the co-construction of meaning between institutional, disciplinary, and human priorities.

Within this theoretical third space, agency is enacted through relational influence rather than positional authority. Scholars have noted that such professionals often engage in "cross-boundary work" (Whitchurch, 2009,2015,2019; Veles, 2022) that bridge diverse institutional cultures and create shared understanding across hierarchies. In this context, culture becomes both a medium and a mechanism for organizational change. Third space professionals cultivate trust, reframe narratives, and broker shared meaning between leadership vision and everyday practice (Whitchurch 2009, 2015, 2019). These acts of translation form the foundation of cultural agency the process through which individuals shape, reinforce, or transform organizational values in ways that sustain innovation and inclusion.

This perspective reframes the relationship between culture and strategy. Rather than viewing culture as a backdrop to strategy execution, third space leadership positions culture as an active site of strategy formation, where meaning-making, collaboration, and trust-building produce the conditions for institutional agility. Through this lens, hybrid professionals serve as cultural architects who connect values, people, and innovation, embodying the agency that drives strategic transformation.

The third space in higher education represents the intersection where academic and professional roles converge, producing hybrid or blended professionals, such as instructional designers, academic developers, and learning technologists who operate across traditional boundaries (Bhabha, 2004; Veles, 2022; Whitchurch, 2009,2015, 2019). These professionals embody the capacity to navigate and align diverse perspectives to enact institutional change.

1. Culture as Strategic Infrastructure Rather than treating culture as background, this approach frames it as the engine of strategic implementation (Schein & Schein, 2017; Fletcher, 2021). Culture determines how individuals prioritize tasks, collaborate, and take risks. When strategy and culture align, institutions can innovate sustainably.

2. Design Thinking and Wicked Problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973) Creating a culture of innovation is a "wicked problem", requiring complex analysis, iterative solutions, and co-creational buy-in. Design thinking provides a structure for exploring messy issues through empathy, ideation, and prototyping, reinforcing participants' agency as change agents.

Together, these perspectives situate culture as strategy, not as rhetoric, but as a developmental process that depends on agency, trust, and cross-boundary collaboration.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Analyze how culture operates as strategy within their institutional and departmental contexts.

2. Apply the concept of Third-Space leadership to bridge traditional academic and administrative cultures leveraging the new blended professional roles.

3. Identify barriers and enablers of workforce agency in academic development work.

4. Design actionable strategies or interventions that align culture with strategic goals using design-thinking tools.

5. Build personal and collective commitments to sustaining cultures of innovation and psychological safety.

Interactive Methods and Activities

- Introduction
- Individual Exercise: Assess current strategic alignment / misalignment
- Share Examples and Lessons Learned
- Table Talks, Brainstorming, Prototyping o 1) How can informal leaders contribute to strategy? o 2) How can evolving workforce needs be advocated within institutional constraints? o 3) How can we evaluate culture effectively?
- Summarize Themes
- Commitment to enact one strategy in own context

Relevance

Academic developers are uniquely positioned in the third space, operating between institutional strategy and the lived experiences of educators. This position grants them both insight into cultural dynamics and agency to influence them. However, developers often encounter misalignment between institutional values (innovation, inclusion, excellence) and structural realities (hierarchies, limited recognition, or unclear authority).

By reframing culture as strategy, this workshop equips academic developers to:

- Exercise agency in aligning institutional goals with human-centered practices.
- Lead cross-boundary collaborations that strengthen educational innovation.
- Facilitate cultural evaluation and reflection within teaching and learning units.
- Cultivate psychological safety and shared ownership, key to sustaining innovation.

This aligns directly with ICED 26's focus on Agency in Academic Development, emphasizing both individual and collective capacity to enact change.

Intended Audience

This workshop is designed for:

- Academic developers seeking tools to foster agency and innovation.
- Middle managers or leaders responsible for implementing institutional strategies through people and culture.
- Early-career professionals in hybrid roles (e.g., instructional designers, learning technologists) navigating the Third Space.
- Senior leaders and directors of teaching and learning centers exploring cultural transformation as strategic leverage.

The diversity of perspectives is essential: the design-thinking structure allows participants from different career stages to share experiences and co-create new insights

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Workshop 38

Centering Participant Agency in Academic Development Events: Prioritizing Presence Over Preparation

Katherine Raichle, Andrea Verdan

Abstract

This workshop explores "low-prep, high-presence" academic development events that prioritize participant agency and authenticity over perfection. Rather than meticulously orchestrated programming, these gatherings center faculty/academic staff as the creators of event content, adapting to their evolving needs and allowing them to be agents of change in their professional work as leaders, researchers, and educators. Drawing from research on social support and weak-tie theory, and models such as Communities of Practice, we'll examine how intentionally designed yet flexible spaces foster crucial social, emotional, and informational support, particularly during times of uncertainty. We'll identify strategies for creating responsive programming that requires minimal preparation while maximizing impact during especially challenging times.

Keywords: Communities of Practice, Adaptive Facilitation, Faculty Well-Being, Social Support

Extended Summary

Theoretical foundations and relevance: Perfectionism is a trait often tied with professional identities in academia (Pope-Ruark, 2022). As academic developers, we likewise strive to offer “perfect” programming, carefully planned events that require intensive preparation. However, we run the risk of conflating high-impact events with only those that call for careful orchestration. Yet year after year, at conferences with developers from around the world, we know that some of the most meaningful and impactful engagements arise from holding space for the unpredictable or controversial work in academia, where faculty members need immediate emotional or instrumental help from colleagues. This can, and has, happened when facilitators and participants show up with authenticity, intentionality, and a willingness to co-construct the foci of their time together.

This interactive workshop will explore “low-prep, high-presence” events, defined as those that are, by design, aimed at centering faculty/academic staff as the agents of event content and direction, thus adaptable to their changing contexts and acute needs. Such events aim to normalize the messiness and imperfect nature of academic work, fostering social, emotional, and informational support for faculty members and academic leaders alike, especially in times of stress, uncertainty, and/or institutional change. The examples we provide during this session are informed by robust literature on the impact of social and instrumental support on well-being (e.g., Zell & Stockus, 2025) coupled with Granovetter’s (1973) strength of weak ties theory (Moreton, Kelly, & Sandstrom, 2023). Moreover, we have drawn from the literature on types of educational development events, such as Communities of Practice (Sánchez -Cardona, Sánchez-Lugo, & Vžlez-González, 2012; Wenger, 1998) and Candid Conversations (Hall & Green, 2016) which gather faculty members who share professional and/or interpersonal identities to deepen knowledge and discuss relevant topics.

This literature provides models for effective group facilitation without over-preparing content. In this hands-on and interactive session participants will identify low-prep, high-impact strategies and events that suit their own institutions, that foster individual and collective social support and learning, and inclusively draw upon diverse expertise, experiences, and knowledge. Moreover, we will explore how these events can be facile enough to center faculty participants as content creators and agents of their own academic lives, responding to their immediate needs. Audience and Learning Outcomes: This session is intended for educational developers and/or professional staff at different career stages (new/recent, mid-career, experienced) from all types of higher education institutions.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

• Apply low-prep experiential activities to inform events aimed at fostering social support, resilience, and community among faculty members and faculty leaders.

• Identify opportunities within their own institutions for implementing similar programming that supports academic staff well-being and collaboration.

Session Outline & Activities:

I. Introduction (5 minutes)

• Set community agreements, frame the session, and provide an overview of goals and structure

II. Research and Context (10 minutes)

- Brief presentation on relevant research on communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) and social support (Zell & Stockus, 2025) as tools to promote well-being in times of ambiguity or challenge.

- The theme of "agency" in higher education is central to the work that we do as educational developers, especially during times of uncertainty and in the context of changing landscapes in higher ed.

The programming we will present (and that we facilitate on our campus) inherently meets the needs of this moment that may otherwise be met with a sense of helplessness for faculty and developers. At the heart of our work is amplifying agency for faculty through our programing, but also the facilitators as they flexibly adapt to the needs of the faculty in the moment.

III. Approach 1: Community of Practice (22 minutes)

- Case Example: Monthly Chairs' Community of Practice focused on connection over content, exploring examples of social and informational support and unexpected outcomes.
- Planned Interaction: Educational Developers' Community of Practice
  - o Participants complete Padlet poll ranking topics they are grappling with as academic developers.
  - o Based on poll results, participants have discussions to share ideas and experiences, and help each other problem-solve.
- Wrap-Up: Whole group debrief and reflection on the experience of participating in a community of practice. Simple "how-to" for replicating with minimal planning.

IV. Approach 2: Candid Conversations (23 minutes)

- Case Example: Share examples of candid conversation (Hall & Green, 2016) events for academic staff, i.e., "Teaching during an election season" and "What do we mean by rigor?"
- Planned Interaction: Educational Developers' Candid Conversation on Generative AI o Participants complete a line-up activity to answer a timely question that is intentionally designed to surface differences of opinion. o Participants have small-group discussions to explain their agreement or disagreement with the statement.
- Wrap-Up: Whole group debrief and reflection on the experience of participating in a candid conversation that is, by design, a timely topic of conversation. Simple "how-to" for replicating, highlight tools (e.g., open prompts, simple digital tools) that make candid conversations easy to facilitate.

V. Approach 3: When Things Don't Go As Planned (15 minutes)

- Case Example: Celebration of risk-taking, a year-end gathering of faculty members to share valiant efforts that may not have had the results desired
- Planned Interaction: Educational Developers Celebration of Risk-Taking o Participants complete Padlet board, anonymously sharing risks they have taken in their work as leaders, scholars, and/or educators. o We celebrate collective vulnerability with a metaphorical "toast."
- Wrap-Up: Quick tips for facilitating similar celebrations and normalizing experimentation in educational development events.

VI. Reflection and Action Planning (15 minutes)

- Individual and small-group reflection of the following questions:
  - o What's one low-prep idea you want to try at your institution?
  - o What is one habit you want to develop (or let go of) to help you be more present during your workshops and events?
- Padlet will be a collective document of new ideas generated during the session.

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Workshop 39

Peer Observation in Practice: Helping Observers Recognize and Instructors Reflect on Good Teaching

Lauren Barbeau, Claudia Cornejo Happel

Abstract

Research tells us that effective peer observations can enhance reflection, boost confidence, and build community related to teaching. Peer observations can also promote equity in the evaluation of teaching by introducing the perspective of a peer. Poorly designed and executed peer observations, however, can have the opposite impact. This workshop introduces the Critical Teaching Behavior (CTB) observation tools and offers training for educational developers and faculty conducting peer observations to help them maximize the benefits associated with effective practice. Participants will use the instruments to take notes on a class video, identify strengths, and give formative feedback that promotes reflection and growth.

Keywords: Peer Observation, Teaching Observation, Peer Review of Teaching, Evaluation of Teaching

Extended Summary

Interest in peer observation has grown internationally in the last twenty years as institutions seek more equitable, holistic means by which to assess teaching beyond a simple reliance on student ratings (Esterhazy et al., 2021; Barrios-Rodríguez et al., 2023; Metzler & Kurz, 2025). Research indicates that peer observations can boost teaching confidence, build community, foster personal reflection, and enhance teaching effectiveness, with benefits for observed faculty, observers, and the larger campus teaching community (Barbeau & Cornejo Happel, 2023; Hendry et al., 2021; Georgiou et al., 2018; Esterhazy et al., 2021; Barrios-Rodríguez et al., 2023). To achieve these benefits, however, we must be careful to avoid potential pitfalls associated with peer observation. Poorly conducted peer observations can create anxiety, tension, fear of judgment, and concerns about bias (Bell & Thomson, 2018; Barbeau & Cornejo Happel, 2023). To maximize the benefits associated with peer observations, we must first recognize there is no one-size-fits-all method of effective teaching. Our colleagues teach differently based on their contexts. If we want to support instructor agency throughout the peer observation process, we cannot rely on checklist instruments.

We need a holistic instrument that embraces a diversity of contextually relevant teaching strategies, but we all need to share a common understanding of good teaching practices so we can know them when we see them. To do that, we must first ground our understanding of effective teaching in research-based practices proven to support student success. We can then develop a shared understanding of effective teaching based on this research (Barbeau & Cornejo Happel, 2023). Feedback is only helpful if it's given in a language understood by the receiver. By focusing on what research says, we can approach our colleagues' teaching more objectively.

This session is based on our research on what makes peer observation work. We share instruments we developed to help faculty maximize benefits while minimizing problems. These instruments are designed to work across instructional modalities, eliminating the need to use a variety of instruments that may lead to confusion and misalignment of feedback across courses taught in multiple modalities. For the sake of time, we focus on using the instruments for in-person teaching observations in this session.

The first instrument, the pre-observation instructor worksheet, helps observers collect essential logistical information while also initiating instructor reflection and conversation, essential components of peer observations that lead to teaching growth (Bell & Thomson, 2018).

Our notetaking instrument, used during the observation, prompts observers to collect data based on their senses: what can they see, hear, and feel in the room? It encourages observers to focus on capturing faculty and student behaviors and provides a separate space to record their thoughts, ideas, and questions. We designed this instrument to encourage observers to collect raw, unfiltered data as much as possible during observations in preparation for writing the report.

Finally, the observation report instrument promotes flexibility in the use of diverse teaching techniques by suggesting broad categories and a range of behaviors for observers. Though the report form provides observable behaviors as guidance, this instrument is not designed to be used as a checklist. Instead, clear definitions and behaviors provide examples and language to ground conversations in a shared understanding of effective teaching practices.

Examples suggest additional materials: an observer can review to learn more about the course design and delivery beyond a single class visit. The report form also fosters instructor agency and reflective practice by prompting the observed instructor to write a self-assessment of the class session or module(s) observed. This narrative is supplied to observers before they write their reports to ensure that the instructor's perspective informs, and is included in, the final report.

During the workshop, participants will engage with the research on peer observation (10 minutes) before participating in phases of a simulated peer observation. The simulation begins with a review of instruments designed to facilitate the pre-observation phase (5 minutes) before moving into extended note-taking practice.

Participants practice using their senses to collect data on the environment and discuss how environmental factors impact teaching and learning in a space (10 minutes).

Next, participants work in pairs to practice taking notes on instructor and student behaviors while watching a short video clip. We debrief by discussing what we learn when we only account for instructor or student behaviors versus how our perspective shifts when we consider the two in conjunction (25 minutes).

In the closing activity, participants work in small groups to turn their notes into feedback for the observed instructor (30 minutes). In this jigsaw, each group completes one section of the report form.

We close with a gallery walk and conversation to identify one category of strength for the instructor and one category where we can ask probing questions or offer a resource to support the instructor's growth (10 minutes).

After engaging in this session, participants will be able to 1) describe benefits of peer observations, 2) identify effective teaching behaviors in the classroom, 3) offer specific examples of strengths in feedback to instructor, 4) suggest actionable steps for growth in feedback to the instructor. In addition, participants will leave the session with a suite of tools to support them through all phases of a peer observation. The training will equip them to conduct observations that maximize the research-based benefits associated with effective peer observations.

We recommend this session for graduate students, instructors, and educational developers at all stages of their careers. While the session is particularly suited to those new to conducting peer observations, seasoned observers will find value in this session as a model of a training workshop they can deliver at their institutions. In addition to the materials shared with participants throughout the session, we also make the workshop lesson plan available to allow participants to reuse it.

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Workshop 40

Making pedagogical content knowledge visible: Enhancing course design for university teaching

Quincy Elvira, Rene Glastra van Loon

Theoretical or research-based foundations.

When considering pedagogical development programs (PDPs) from the perspective of higher education teachers' self-identified needs, the emphasis would primarily be on general pedagogical themes such as course development, student engagement, teaching methods, student diversity, and evaluation and assessment (Brown et al., 2025). While these topics are important, they mainly address general skills. At the same time, a central goal of university education is to transform how students engage with disciplinary knowledge and develop ways of thinking within their field (Meyer & Land, 2005). From this perspective, it is essential that PDPs also emphasize subject-specific pedagogy, known as pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) (Vereijken & van der Rijst, 2023). Research across both K–12 and higher education has shown that PCK represents a teacher's unique integration of content and pedagogy, enabling them to adapt instructional strategies to the specific characteristics of the subject (Sarkar et al., 2024) . Yet, its direct application to the course design process remains underdeveloped.

This represents a key opportunity. Course design provides the structural framework of a course, while PCK provides the disciplinary pedagogical substance that fills that structure with meaning. Designing a course is ultimately about crafting a learning journey that guides students in thinking, reasoning, and acting like a practitioner within their discipline. In this workshop, we aim to demonstrate how PCK can serve as a foundation for high-quality course design. A PCK-informed course design ensures that all aspects of a course (content, learning activities, instructional strategies, student engagement, and assessment) are grounded in deep understanding of both the subject matter and effective ways for students to learn it.

Our goal is to show that PCK is not merely a theoretical framework, but a practical tool that helps educators develop richer, more inclusive, and more effective curricula. By fostering the articulation and development of PCK, instructors can make informed, pedagogically sound decisions that improve both their teaching and students' learning experiences.

Learning goals or outcomes for participants.

- Use PCK to make curriculum and course design decisions explicit and discussable.
- Explore how content, pedagogy, students, assessment, and context interact in real design work.
- Strengthen constructive alignment by using PCK to create discipline-informed, high-quality alignment between learning goals, teaching strategies, and assessment.

A description of interactive methods or activities with approximate timings.

Workshop activity 1: diamond-shaped card-sorting activity (30 min)

Activity Steps

1. Prepare the cards

Cards have been developed based on Roberts (2015), each containing statements that correspond to one of the five conceptual views on curriculum orientations, which form part of PCK.

2. Present the five orientations

3. Distribute the cards

There are fifteen cards in total, three for each orientation.

4. Card placement in diamond

Participants place only 9 cards out of 15 in the diamond-shaped layout, weighing their relative importance.
5. Facilitated discussion 6. Share previous participants' experiences

Discuss insights from participants who have already completed the course.

Workshop activity 2: Mapping PCK interactions (30 min)

Activity Steps

1. Introduce the PCK components

2. Select a teaching scenario. Participants are provided with a teaching scenario relevant to higher education.

3. Map component interactions

Based on Suh & Park (2017), in small groups, participants place the PCK component cards on a table or board and draw arrows to show how the components interact in the context of the scenario.

4. Group reflection

Groups discuss what they observed about the interactions between PCK components and how the scenario illustrates the dynamic nature of teaching.

5. Link to academic developer role & course design

Participants reflect on how academic developers can support faculty in balancing and strengthening these interactions.

The relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education.

Both the diamond-shaped card-sorting activity and the PCK interaction mapping activity help participants make explicit principles of teaching and curriculum design. In the diamond activity, participants weigh and discuss the relative importance of curriculum orientations, revealing priorities that guide instructional design choices. In the PCK mapping activity, they explore how content knowledge, pedagogy, student understanding, assessment, and context interact in authentic design scenarios. Together, these activities enable academic developers to support and guide teachers and course developers in professional development, emphasizing that deep disciplinary understanding is essential for designing curricula that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for students, while effectively aligning learning objectives, teaching strategies, and assessments.

Intended audience

These activities are valuable for academic developers at all career stages. Early-career developers gain hands-on experience with PCK interactions and teaching dynamics. Experienced developers can deepen skills in coaching, curriculum advising, and evidence-based course design. Developers working across disciplines see how PCK components operate in diverse contexts, while developer teams supporting course or program design can identify faculty needs and plan targeted interventions. Overall, these activities help developers support faculty in translating disciplinary knowledge into effective, student-centered curricula.

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Workshop 41

Reflecting on impact: A guided walk-through

Clare Gormley, Martina Crehan, Rob Lowney, Anna Serbati, Asta Daunorienė

Abstract

Whatever our opinions on the use of the word 'impact', those of us who support teaching and learning are increasingly being called upon to prove that our work is meaningful, worth the time and effort invested, and impactful (Sutherland and Hall, 2018). The EDIN Impact Analysis Tool underpinning this workshop was developed to help anyone with an interest in educational/academic development capture how and where their work has impact. Originally developed by the Educational Developers of Ireland Network (EDIN), the tool offers a structured series of steps to help guide reflective evaluation of the impact of an educational innovation, project, or intervention. The steps encompass a wide range of potential evidence, drawing upon the work of Bamber (2013) to help 'evidence the value' of teaching, learning and assessment efforts. Colleagues from three European universities will guide participants through the tool, offering examples from their institutional contexts to stimulate ideas. Throughout the workshop, participants will interact with the tool to create a tangible, personalised output of their own about the potential impact of a chosen staff development initiative. The objective will be to compile a mix of potential evidence data, thus generating an 'evidence grid' or document somewhat similar to the sample evidence grid described in Bamber and Stefani (2016, p. 251).The workshop will also generate discussions and recommendations about further internationalising the tool to support practice in a wide range of roles and contexts.

Keywords: Impact Evaluation, Educational Development, Academic Development, Evidencing Value

Extended Summary

While the term 'impact' does not always easily align with some of the fundamental concepts and practices of development (Bamber and Stefani, 2016), there remains pressure on those in teaching enhancement roles to demonstrate the influence of their work (Sutherland and Hall, 2018; Bamber, 2013). Given the intense pace of higher education today, there may be limited opportunity for such professionals to reflect closely on the effects of the initiatives they introduce. It is against this backdrop that staff in educational support roles may wish to consider a variety of approaches to evaluate the effectiveness of their work and apply tools and prompts to support this reflective focus.

The EDIN Impact Analysis Tool underpinning this workshop was developed for this reason to help anyone with an interest in educational/academic development reflect on how and where their work has impact. Originally developed by the Educational Developers of Ireland Network (EDIN), the tool offers a structured series of steps to help walk participants through a reflective evaluation of the impact of an educational innovation, project, or intervention. The steps encompass a wide range of potential evidence, drawing upon the work of Bamber (2013) to help 'evidence the value' of teaching, learning and assessment efforts.

Intended Audience

- Leaders and members of T&L centres such as heads of units, educational/academic developers at all levels, and learning technologists;
- Lecturers, quality enhancement colleagues, and senior managers.
- Anyone who has led or is currently leading an educational project or staff development initiative that requires demonstrable evidence of impact

Intended Learning Outcomes

- To introduce participants to an interactive, practical, and accessible tool for documenting impact that they can apply in multiple higher education contexts
- To provide a space where participants can give focused time to considering where their staff development work/innovation in teaching and learning has had impact
- To provide some ideas and lessons learned about potential sources of impact from the perspectives of three European universities
- To crowdsource participants' views on how the tool could be further internationalised and improved

Activities to be carried out including with/by the audience

The proposed session will be structured and timed as follows:

1. (1-10 mins): Welcome and Introductions. The opening section will include a discussion of why evidence of the impact of staff development matters, how the tool came about, and what its main purpose is. Explain that not all prompts may apply for every type of initiative so don't worry if you need to skip certain parts. Also explain that responses are

completely private to the person inputting. Facilitators will move around the tables throughout to answer questions that may arise.

2. (11-15mins): Direct participants to link where they can open the tool. Participants are asked to briefly describe the specific project/initiative they are going to focus on. Participants can refer to an educational development project or to an individual teaching activity based on whatever scenario makes most sense for them and their role.

3. (16-30 mins): Facilitators will ask a series of questions, allowing time for participants to respond to each in turn and input their responses to the tool: 'How does this initiative align with theory and agreed frameworks?' 'Have you identified existing research/scholarship related to this initiative?' 'Who did you consult with in the planning/evaluation of this initiative?' 'How are you evaluating this initiative?'

4. (30-40 mins) To help inspire participants, two short vignettes will be presented:

Short Vignette 1: University X facilitator will describe some responses to the tool at their institution, describing what types of project(s) they used it for, what aspects resonated most, and what emerged for them.

5. (41-60 mins) Returning to the tool, Facilitators will ask a series of questions, allowing time for participants to respond to each in turn and input their responses to the tool: 'Will this result in changes to policy/strategy?' 'Will this result in changes to practice?' 'What anecdotes/testimonies have you heard to support this initiative?' 'What changes to student outcomes have resulted from this initiative?' 'How does this initiative align with strategic priorities and local culture/context?' Then the second vignette will then be introduced. (61-70 mins)

Short Vignette 2: University Y facilitator will describe some responses to the tool from their institution, describing what types of project(s) they used it for, what aspects resonated most, and what emerged for them.

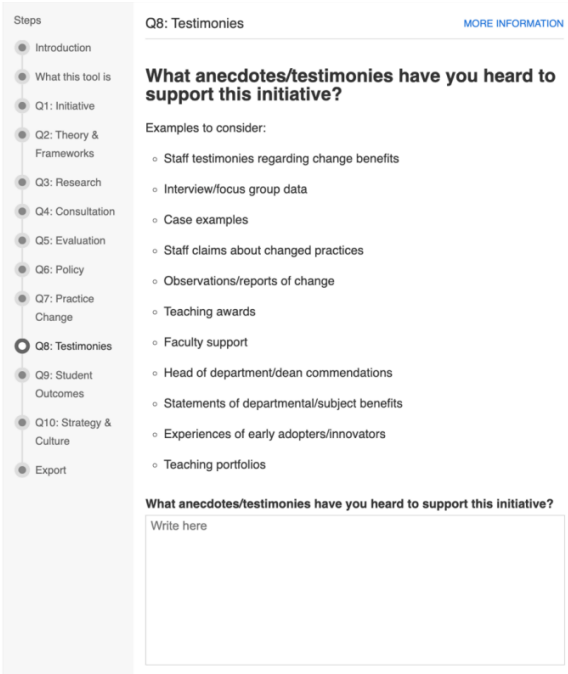
6. Participants are asked to export all responses to Word and save their own responses locally.

7. There will then be an open invitation to the floor to invite further discussion and what came up for the participants as they engaged in this process. What, if any, surprises emerged? Did it confirm/contradict your initial thinking? Facilitators will use the interactive Vevox audience participation tool to invite anonymous responses and use these as a basis for an active discussion about a tool of this nature

8. Final Poll - How can we internationalise and improve this tool? Let's hear your thoughts on what else should be included! Feedback will be gathered via Vevox audience participation activity.

A published chapter describing the intention, design, and development of the tool is available should this proposal be accepted. Note that the tool itself will also be shared if accepted but cannot be shown in full as yet as it would be identifying. The following screenshot illustrates one step/page from the tool.

Fig. 1: Image from the EDIN Impact Analysis Tool



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Workshop 42

Agency in Academic Development: Comparing Structures, Roles, and Strategic Positioning

Sabrina Gallner

Abstract

Faculty development is widely recognised as a key lever for improving teaching and learning and for advancing institutional change. Yet academic developers' agency—their capacity to influence practices, environments, and strategic directions—varies substantially across countries and institutions, depending on how academic development is positioned and resourced. This workshop offers an interactive, comparative space to explore how organisational embedding, strategic alignment, and professional role configurations enable or constrain agency in academic development.

Drawing on agentic theory and professional agency scholarship, and informed by research on "third space" roles in higher education, the workshop begins with a brief conceptual framing and a short case vignette from a decentralised higher education context where academic development is largely locally organised and coordinated through a national professional network. Participants then work in small groups to map their own national/institutional contexts (e.g., organisational location, mandate, strategic leverage, typical role profiles, legitimacy tensions). Cross-case comparison and collective synthesis will identify patterns, tensions, and leverage points for strengthening agency. The workshop is designed for practical takeaways, networking, and seeding potential international collaboration (e.g., joint research, shared frameworks, or follow-up symposia).

Keywords: Agency; professional agency; academic development; third space professionals

Extended Summary

Theoretical or research-based foundations

The ICED 2026 theme "Agency and Academic Development" foregrounds a core question for the field: Who can influence change in universities, under which conditions, and through which roles and strategies? Academic development frequently operates at the intersection of teaching practice, organisational learning, and institutional strategy. However, its capacity to act as a meaningful change agent differs across contexts. In some systems, academic development is strategically integrated, structurally mandated, and resourced; in others, it remains decentralised, project-based, or framed primarily as service provision. These configurations matter because they shape academic developers' room for manoeuvre, their legitimacy, and their ability to broker change. This workshop addresses agency as a relational and context-embedded phenomenon: agency is not only a personal capacity but also an outcome of professional identity work, organisational positioning, and networked collaboration.

The workshop draws on three complementary strands of scholarship. First, Bandura's agentic perspective conceptualises agency through intentionality, forethought, self-regulation, and self-reflection, and distinguishes between personal, proxy, and collective modes of agency. This distinction is particularly relevant for academic development, where influence is often exercised not only through direct action (e.g., course design support) but also through proxy routes (e.g., enabling leaders or programme directors to act) and collective action (e.g., communities of practice, professional networks). Second, research on professional agency emphasises that agency is enacted at work through the interplay of individual expertise and identity with structural and cultural conditions. From a subject-centred socio-cultural perspective, professional agency is analytically separable from context but mutually constitutive with it: institutional constraints and resources shape agency, while professionals also (re)shape practices and structures through their actions, positioning, and negotiations. Third, scholarship on third space professionals highlights how many academic developers inhabit hybrid roles between academic, administrative, and strategic domains. These roles are often characterised by blurred boundaries, shifting mandates, and the need to continuously negotiate legitimacy and influence. Agency here becomes strongly relational: it depends on alliances, credibility across communities, and the capacity to translate between institutional logics.

To ground the discussion, the workshop introduces a short vignette from a decentralised higher education context where academic development is predominantly organised at institutional level, with highly heterogeneous organisational placements and mandates. In this context, a national professional network supports exchange and community building, strengthening collective forms of agency even in the absence of central steering. Prior research in such settings points to recurring tensions around legitimacy, autonomy, and recognition, illustrating how structural positioning shapes professional agency. This vignette is not presented as a "model", but as a catalyst for comparison: participants are invited to contrast it with contexts where academic development is more centrally regulated, strongly strategised, or embedded in quality assurance, digital transformation, or educational innovation agendas.

The workshop aims to:

1. Make visible how academic development is positioned across different national/institutional contexts (structures, mandates, strategic alignment).

2. Explore how these conditions enable or constrain professional agency (personal, proxy, collective).

3. Identify cross-context patterns (typologies of positioning and agency conditions).

4. Produce practical leverage points for strengthening agency (e.g., role framing, alliances, evidence use, network strategies).

5. Seed future international collaboration (shared mapping instruments, comparative research, joint proposals).

1.3 A description of interactive methods or activities with approximate timings.

1) Framing (10 min). Brief conceptual input on agency (personal/proxy/collective), professional agency, and third space roles; explanation of the mapping approach and outputs.

2) Context mapping in small groups (25 min). Participants map their contexts using a structured template, for example:

- Organisational location (e.g., central unit, faculty-based, QA, HR, digital learning).
- Mandate and primary functions (staff development, curricular work, evaluation, strategy, digital transformation).
- Strategic leverage (formal reporting lines, decision proximity, resourcing).
- Dominant role identity (service provider, partner, broker, change agent, researcher).
- Key tensions (legitimacy, autonomy, recognition; research–service balance).
- Typical modes of agency (personal/proxy/collective) and where they are most effective.

3) Cross-case comparison (25 min). Groups pair up or rotate to compare maps and extract similarities/differences. The facilitator guides attention to structural "agency conditions" (e.g., mandate clarity, proximity to decision-making, credibility sources, network power).
4) Collective synthesis (20 min). The workshop clusters insights into 3–5 emerging patterns (e.g., "strategically anchored", "service-framed", "network-enabled decentralised", "project-driven innovation"). Participants co-create a set of leverage points linked to each pattern.
5) Outlook (10 min). Participants identify follow-up opportunities: an international working group, a shared comparative dataset, a joint publication, or a symposium proposal. The workshop is designed to be inclusive: mapping is visual and structured, and the synthesis can be supported via a shared digital wall or paper-based clustering.

The relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education.

Participants leave with:

- a reusable mapping instrument for describing academic development structures and agency conditions,
- an international comparative snapshot of how the field is positioned,
- an evidence-informed set of leverage points for strengthening professional agency,
- new connections for collaboration beyond the session.

Intended audience (e.g. early-career developers, senior leaders, teaching staff).

This workshop is intended for academic developers and educational developers working in higher education, across different career stages, who are interested in the role of agency in shaping teaching, learning, and institutional change. The primary audience includes:

- Early- and mid-career academic developers, seeking to better understand how organisational structures and strategic positioning influence their professional agency.
- Senior academic developers and leaders of teaching and learning centres, interested in reflecting on strategic leverage, institutional embedding, and the conditions that enable or constrain agency.
- Professionals working in hybrid or "third space" roles at the interface of teaching, quality assurance, digital learning, and institutional development.
- Researchers in higher education and academic development, particularly those focusing on professional roles, organisational contexts, and agency.
- Representatives of national or international academic development networks, interested in comparative perspectives and collective forms of agency. The workshop is not primarily aimed at general teaching staff, but at those who work systemically and strategically in academic development and related areas.

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Workshop 43

AI as a Mediator for Emotionally Intelligent Feedback

Kate Ippolito, Monika Pazio Rossiter

Abstract

AI is increasingly recognised as a valuable tool for providing students with feedback on assessed work, offering timely and personalised responses. Yet, its role remains distinct from the human feedback, which is essential for building relational and emotional connection, that fosters reciprocal recognition of disciplinary standards and effort in attaining them, and builds trust between students and teachers. Recent scholarship highlights the affective dimensions of feedback and the need for both students and staff to manage emotions effectively when engaging with feedback. Emotional intelligence (EI) - the ability to anticipate and respond to emotional impact - is central to this process, but it is not innate and must be developed. This workshop explores both how the differing impact of human feedback and AI feedback on learner and teacher emotions can be leveraged, and how AI can support the development of EI, moving beyond automated feedback systems toward using AI as a mediator to enhance emotional understanding. Through interactive activities, participants will reflect on the role of emotions in feedback, compare strengths and limitations of human feedback and AI feedback, with a focus on affective impact, examine practical strategies for integrating AI to foster EI, and critically consider the affordances and challenges of these approaches.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, AI, feedback, engagement.

Extended Summary

AI has been identified as a valuable tool in the context of feedback, offering timely and personalised feedback (Lee and Moore, 2024). Corbin et al. (2025) attempt to distinguish between what AI-generated feedback is better placed to achieve and where the human element is needed in the context of feedback. They argue that AI is helpful for corrective aspects of feedback, while the role of the human is in building the relational aspects that AI cannot meaningfully replicate, such as showing empathy based on shared experience, and recognising effort and reciprocal vulnerability (Corbin et al., 2025). Students perceive that whilst feedback generated by GenAI is rapid, easy to access and avoids interpersonal risks associated with asking the teacher, it lacks the contextual and disciplinary awareness, and trustworthiness offered by their human teachers' feedback (Henderson et al., 2025).

This distinction echoes recent discourse emphasising the emotional dimension of feedback, embedded into the concept of staff and student feedback literacy (Carless and Winstone, 2020). Both perspectives stress the need to pay attention to affect: staff should design experiences that anticipate and help students to manage their emotional responses, and students and teachers need strategies to regulate emotions associated with feedback, to overcome barriers to engagement.

In our practice as educational developers and teachers, we find affective factors in feedback particularly challenging to navigate. Emotions that feedback evokes can be unpredictable yet significantly influence engagement. Preferences for how feedback messages are communicated vary and depend on personal value attached to praise, critique, advice etc. - categories commonly found in feedback (Rossiter, 2023).

Appropriate and effective consideration of emotion in feedback requires emotional intelligence (EI), the ability to recognise and understand your own and other's emotions and to use this to inform thinking and action (Salovey and Meyer, 1990). This involves teachers judiciously acknowledging and regulating their own emotional response to student's assessed work and using their awareness of learner emotion to produce feedback that fosters a productive emotional response. It requires students to recognise the emotional impact of feedback and manage their affective response to motivate action (Hui, Ippolito and Charalambous, 2025). EI is not innate and can be developed, including through working intentionally with the emotions created in university learning and teaching contexts (Ippolito and Kingsbury, 2024).

This workshop explores how AI can foster the development of emotional intelligence (EI), a critical skill for meaningful engagement with feedback. We focus explicitly on the emotional dimension. Rather than limiting the discussion to automated feedback systems that dominate current discourse, we consider how AI can act as a mediator - enhancing emotional understanding and facilitating feedback interactions - rather than simply generating evaluative comments. We explore how AI might act as a mediator between staff and student emotions, not by producing feedback, but by reframing and supporting emotionally intelligent communication. This perspective adds a new dimension to teacher feedback literacy: recognising how one's own assessment-related emotions manifest in feedback.

The workshop is aimed at teaching staff and any academic developers involved in giving feedback themselves, or supporting staff and students in developing their agency for engaging with feedback. It will be interactive, encouraging

reflection on educational development work and impact, and exchange of ideas supported with evidence from research and practice.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants will be better able to:

- Recognise the role that teacher and student emotions play in feedback
- Compare the differing strengths and limitations of human and AI feedback
- Reflect on the role that AI can play in developing emotional intelligence
- Identify practical strategies for educational developers to help staff and students work with emotion through AI-mediated approaches
- Critically evaluate practical applications of AI for developing emotional intelligence in the context of the process and product of feedback

Time	Facilitator / Participant Activity
5 mins	Introduction to workshop purpose, approach and participants.
10 mins	Ice breaker activity: Identify which emotions are associated with feedback from learner and teacher perspectives, and reasons why.
15 mins	Exchange of practical examples of how AI is used for feedback within participants' contexts. Discuss: What emotions do these practices contribute to in students and staff?
15 mins	Facilitators share evocative examples of human and AI-generated feedback. Group discussions to compare differing strengths and limitations of human and AI feedback, with specific focus on emotional impact.
15 mins	Practical work with an AI model to reframe feedback messages.
20 mins	Identify strategies and opportunities using AI-mediated approaches to help: • staff craft more emotionally intelligent feedback • students reflect and regulate emotion

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Workshop 44

Decolonial speculations: Storying our preferred educational futures in a Gen AI era

Aisha Haque

Abstract

Academic developers are being called upon to support instructors and students in navigating generative AI (genAI) for teaching and learning purposes. At the same time, some students and educators call for the complete rejection of genAI given its complicity in capitalist and extractive forms of knowledge production. Within this fractured landscape, what role can academic developers play in helping our campus communities re-vision and create the kinds of educational futures we collectively wish to cultivate? In this session, we will draw on a decolonial speculations framework to collectively imagine alternate futures for higher education and explore the agency we have as academic developers to build those preferred futures.

Keywords: decolonization, agency, academic development, speculative methodologies

Extended Summary

Theoretical and research foundations

Generative AI (genAI) is imbricated in capitalist and extractive forms of knowledge production that exacerbate global inequalities (Adams, 2021; Muldoon & Wu, 2023; Png, 2022), are harmful to the planet (Bashir et al., 2024; Crawford, 2021), and engage in linguistic and cultural appropriation (Cave & Dihal, 2020; Roberts & Montoya, 2023). The proliferation of genAI within higher education systems, which have long been identified as instruments of imperialism, requires careful scrutiny. Scholars have traced not only the imperial roots of the Westernized university (Grosfoguel, 2013; Smith, 2021) but also its continued perpetuation of harmful legacies through cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2013; Brunette-Debassige et al., 2022). Situating debates about genAI within these neocolonial framings signals an urgent need to re-vision the role and purpose of higher education and the role academic developers play in cultivating our futures – particularly because current conversations assert the inevitability of genAI, thereby undermining the agency of individuals to shape their own narratives (Watters, 2025).

Speculative methodologies encompass any form of future thinking focused on exploring possible futures. For example, speculative fiction uses radical imagination to envision different worlds (Imarisha & Brown, 2015). Although speculative methodologies have potential for re-writing the future, some speculative design tools have been critiqued for perpetuating colonial notions of the past and present (Patil et. al., 2024). A relational approach to speculation, grounded in decolonial ways of knowing and being, offers productive sites to co-construct radically transformative pluriverses (Escobar, 2018) while critically evaluating the role of genAI within our preferred educational futures.

I argue that decolonial speculations create spaces of possibilities and experimentations allowing for engagement with the messiness of genAI's neo-colonial entanglements while holding multiple truths, ways of knowing and being, and futures in tension. It offers pathways for acknowledging past harms when shaping our understanding of our present moment (Terry et al., 2024), which is essential for imagining the future differently.

This workshop will introduce participants to a conceptual framework for speculation rooted in decolonial notions of care and relationality. This is an approach we are developing and experimenting with at XXXX University. A decolonial approach to speculation is about practicing, not merely predicting, the future by acknowledging and attempting to mitigate possible harms of past and present actions in future states. This approach can open new ways of unsettling the inevitability narratives of genAI as a singular shared future, recognizing that multiple futures can exist simultaneously.

Relevance for academic developers

Holmes et al. (2012) articulate the impossibility of neutrality when it comes to what we do as academic developers and the way we are positioned in the power dynamics at institutions, despite the occasional need to be perceived as impartial bystanders. Green and Little (2013) further explore the way our hybrid identities as academic developers can help us navigate tricky terrain in beneficial ways because the margins are simultaneously peripheral and productive spaces. I find myself returning to these conversations in our present moment as genAI promises to fundamentally shift the landscape of higher education. When the stakes are this high, can we (academic developers) afford to be neutral? What agency do we have in helping shape the conversations around us? What role are we currently playing in navigating genAI in teaching and learning and what role do we wish to play? I believe that exploring future scenarios through a decolonial speculations exercise will help us dig deeper into this conversation.

Workshop outcomes: In this session, participants will: (1) experiment with the decolonial speculations framework by co-constructing a vignette of their preferred educational futures in small groups; (2) identify points of agency for

academic developers in shaping how we achieve the educational futures we wish to see; and (3) explore how they might use this approach at their own institutions to spark conversations about shaping teaching and learning futures that centre care and relationality.

Workshop outline

5 minutes	Welcome and session outcomes
20 minutes	Background on the framework: ○ What are "decolonial speculations"? How can this approach help us imagine different educational futures with (or without) genAI? ○ Look at 2 short example vignettes together that were created by educators at XXXX University
25 minutes	Workshop participants will work in small groups to create a short vignette of their own based on the provided prompts.
30 minutes	We will select one vignette to analyse together for the purpose of identifying where we, as academic developers, hold agency in making change at our institutions towards achieving that preferred future. ○ For example, what changes to policy might have to be made? What skills might students need to develop? How can we, through our roles, empower instructors to make these changes? Etc.
10 minutes	Debrief: How might you use this approach at your own institutions?

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Workshop 45

Bridging Borders: Supporting international students in higher education

Rachana Bhave, Karen Crouch

Abstract

International students enrich academic communities with diverse perspectives, yet their transition to higher education often involves navigating complex cultural, linguistic, and institutional challenges. From pre-arrival hurdles be it language proficiency, credential validation, and immigration processes to post-arrival experiences of isolation and hidden expectations, these students face barriers that can substantively impact their success and sense of belonging, amidst growing global unrest and changing immigration policies. At the same time, an institution-wide and coordinated support network has the potential to help international students and scholars to thrive and contribute to the cultural, academic and economic milieu of the place they are in. Drawn from the experience of building an academic development program grounded in culturally responsive teaching frameworks, this interactive workshop aims to provide a model for a collaborative, inter-unit and student-informed approach to supporting international students and scholars. The workshop is designed for higher education teaching staff, educational developers, and academic leaders committed to building inclusive learning environments and will include resources, models as well as time to reflect on challenges and opportunities when building sustainable academic development programming to support international students. Attendees will leave with a portable set of discussion prompts, curated resources, and an implementation roadmap adaptable for education development programs at their own institutions.

Keywords: International students; Inter-unit collaboration; Culturally Responsive Teaching; Academic Development

Extended Summary

Theoretical or Research-Based Foundations

International students enrich higher education with diverse perspectives, yet their academic journey often involves navigating systemic barriers before and after arrival. Faculty teaching international students as well as their peers are often unaware of the many challenges international students experience. Pre-arrival challenges such as language proficiency exams, credential validation, and immigration processes are often compounded by post-arrival stressors such as isolation, culture shock, and implicit expectations embedded in the hidden curriculum (Andrade, 2006). These barriers are intensified by shifting immigration policies, limited work opportunities, creating uncertainty that affects academic engagement and well-being (Open Doors, 2025). Moreover, the nature of barriers varies depending on the academic culture of the host country, the cultural context from which international students hail from, and their own motivations for pursuing an education abroad (Glass et al. 2015). This makes it challenging to determine the support immigrating students may most need, while also ensuring that intercultural adjustment does not imply assimilation (Glass et al. 2021).

Research underscores that faculty and staff play a pivotal role in shaping international students' sense of belonging and success by making hidden curriculum explicit (Glass et al., 2015). However, this support cannot be siloed within classrooms or labs; it requires coordinated, inter-unit collaboration across teaching, advising, and student services. This workshop draws from various frameworks on linguistically informed pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching (Hammond 2014), inclusive pedagogy (Sathy & Hogan, 2019), and the book Fostering International Student Success in Higher Education (Shapiro et al., 2023) alongside lived experiences of international students. These approaches emphasize understanding the global landscape of international student mobility, recognizing peculiarities of academic and deep culture in different countries, and integrating equity-minded course design and professional development pathways.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

1) Identify systemic and classroom-level challenges faced by international students, including hidden curriculum, visa-related stress, cultural differences.

2) Identify relevant resources that can help clarify expectations around academic integrity, collaboration, and classroom participation.

3) Map collaborative pathways across units to create holistic support systems for international students.

4) Develop an actionable plan for such training in their own institutional context.

Interactive Methods and Approximate Timings

8 mins: Welcome and Networking: Participants mingle and share in small groups their roles, departments, and motivations for attending. Participants will be asked to switch shoes from right to left leg throughout the first 45 mins as part of an empathy building exercise to international student experiences around what cultural shifts can feel like.

15 min: Framing Presentation: Overview of international student demographics, challenges (visa restrictions, cultural adjustment), and campus resource infrastructure in U.S. and a few other countries where students majorly go to study, based on Open Doors Study abroad data and other global mobility metrics.

15 mins: Jigsaw Discussion.

- 8 of 15 mins: Divide participants first by their institutional role - (faculty, education developers, staff, students) to discuss opportunities and challenges specific to how they interact with international students. Will use Hammond's Culture Tree to guide conversation particularly around aspects of deep and shallow cultural beliefs.
- 7 of 15 mins: Debrief: Share key insights from role-based discussions.

5 mins: Ask participants to switch back their shoes and de-brief on what the experience was like. Share parallels to the experiences of international students and how this activity is utilized in CTL programming at the facilitator's institution.

17 mins: Overview of long-term and short-term programs at the facilitator's institution, format of programming, resources and challenges in implementing this programming. Participants will receive resource hand-out outlining the syllabus, readings and feedback offered by participants.

10 mins: Participants engage in 5 mins of individual reflection on what themes they would pick to address in their unit from the possible list of topics they could cover, and the format of programming they would develop. In the next 5 mins participants will work through the next part of their worksheet to identify key collaborators in this effort.

5 mins: Debrief share-out and questions

15 mins: Participants reflect and discuss in response to prompts on themes such as cultural awareness, immigration policies, campus integration, and advocacy followed by a de-brief. Some prompts include

a) How can campus units better support well-being amid immigration uncertainty?

b) What barriers to participation exist, and how can they be addressed?

Relevance to Academic Development: Academic development increasingly demands global perspectives and inclusive practices. International students face unique challenges that cannot be addressed solely through classroom strategies; they require systemic coordination across units. This workshop models an inter-unit approach, fostering collaboration among faculty, staff, and students to create sustainable solutions. By integrating institutional resources and evidence-based strategies, the session equips participants to design programs and practices that enhance belonging, equity, and success for international students—advancing both educational quality and campus internationalization goals. Throughout, facilitators will highlight example activities they conducted, offer insights into opportunities and challenges of such programming, its parallels to programming in other institutions as well as lived experiences of international students.

Intended Audience: Academic developers, faculty and staff involved in teaching and learning support.

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Workshop 46

Integration of Generative AI in University Teaching: Strategies to Lead Educational Transformation.

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Abstract

Digital transformation is redefining higher education, not only in technological terms but also in pedagogical conceptions and in the role of faculty. The emergence of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) offers unprecedented opportunities to innovate in curriculum design, activity creation, assessment, and enhance the learning process while also raising legal, ethical and epistemological challenges that require critical reflection. In this context, faculty agency becomes a central axis: it is not about adopting tools uncritically, but about deciding how and why to use them, aligning their application with learning objectives and graduate profile competencies. This workshop adopts a participant-centered design that actively engages faculty in applying GenAI to their own teaching contexts. Rather than receiving information passively, participants work through structured, practice-oriented tasks that prompt reflection on their courses and reveal opportunities for pedagogical improvement. Through collaborative activities, guided discussions, and hands-on experimentation with GenAI tools, attendees develop concrete outputs, including draft ideas for curriculum alignment, examples of AI-supported learning activities, and strategies for navigating legal, ethical, and pedagogical challenges. By the end of the session, participants will leave with actionable resources, such as templates, prompts, and design principles, that can be immediately implemented in their classrooms. Grounded in practical relevance and collaborative inquiry, the workshop fosters professional agencies, provides a practical guide to support GenAI effective integration, and equips faculty to design technology-enhanced learning environments. Ultimately, it aims to translate conceptual insights into tangible practices, providing a shared space for experimentation and collective problem-solving around emerging challenges in higher education.

Keywords: Generative Artificial Intelligence, Teacher's agency, Strategies, Higher Education

Extended Summary

Relevance of the Topic for Academic Development in Higher Education

Although research on teacher agency in higher education has expanded substantially over the last decade, several contextual factors limiting higher education teacher agency (HETA) can be identified. A primary constraint is heavy workload and lack of time, which restricts teachers' capacity to engage in reflective practice, innovate pedagogically, or participate in research (Cong-Lem, 2024). A second obstacle concerns the lack of structured spaces for reflection and professional dialogue, which are essential for developing agency. Additionally, teachers often struggle to engage in research due to insufficient time, expertise, or institutional support (Vu, 2020).

By reducing routine administrative demands and providing support for pedagogical design, research tasks, and reflective practice (Lim et al., 2023), GenAI has the potential to alleviate several barriers that constrain HETA. However, risks such as reproducing biases from training data, fostering over-reliance on automated outputs, concerns related to data privacy, intellectual property, and academic integrity highlight the need to examine how GenAI (re) shapes teachers' agency and to identify strategies that maximize its benefits while mitigating potential drawbacks.

This workshop addresses that need by providing a space to explore how GenAI can enhance curricular coherence, foster deep learning, and promote authentic assessment practices. The proposal is directly connected to professional development, understood as a continuous process of reflection, innovation, and improvement that demands integrating educational research and practice within an ethical and responsible framework. In this sense, this workshop is drawn on two well-established theoretical frameworks: the MDAD (Framework for Academic Teaching Development) (Paricio et al., 2019a) and DigCompEdu (European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators) (Redecker, 2017). The MDAD serves as a roadmap to assess the current situation and identify ways forward. A set of activities for university teachers is proposed, each aligned with selected MDAD levels and dimensions. We also map the corresponding DigCompEdu areas and subareas involved in these activities.

Furthermore, the workshop promotes educational innovation and academic leadership, empowering faculty to take an active role in institutional transformation. Designing courses and activities with GenAI involves leading change processes, contributing to teaching culture, and ensuring that technology is used to expand learning opportunities rather than diminish them. Ultimately, this workshop provides tools and criteria for faculty to exercise their agency in an informed, critical, and creative way, strengthening their role as drivers of quality and equity in higher education.

This workshop is designed for university faculty, particularly those interested in teaching innovation and the integration of emerging technologies into their practice. It also addresses teacher educators, who play a key role in preparing for future faculty and fostering pedagogical transformation. Additionally, it is highly relevant for academic developers and

institutional leaders, responsible for guiding strategic initiatives that enhance teaching quality, promote innovation, and align educational practices with the evolving demands of higher education in the digital era.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to identify opportunities to use GenAI to:

- Design courses aligned with the competencies of the graduate profile.
- Create GenAI-based activities aligned with their learning objectives and critically reflect on their legal, ethical and pedagogical use.
- Implement strategies that foster student ownership of learning objectives and tasks, promoting engagement and responsibility.
- Create a climate of trust and active participation in the classroom.
- Design learning environments centered on inquiry, problems, or challenges Participants will take an active role as change agents, connecting their individual practices to broader institutional transformation.

The workshop is structured into three key moments, combining participatory dynamics and critical reflection:

1 Initial Activity (15 min)

The session will introduce key principles for effective curriculum planning and activity design, supported by several illustrative examples aligned with the levels of MDAD. Using a collaborative tool (e.g. Wooclap), participants will create a word cloud reflecting ideas on how GenAI can enhance teaching and learning practices. Additionally, brainstorming with GenAI encourages participants to explore new possibilities, reinforcing their role as agents of change.

2 Group Work (45 min)

Participants will be organized into groups according to their interests and profiles. Each group will design a concrete proposal focused on improving curriculum planning and teaching practices. Examples of possible tasks include:

- Integrating GenAI to align courses with graduate profile competencies.
- Developing GenAI-based activities that promote deep learning and self-regulation.
- Designing inquiry-driven learning environments, where GenAI supports problem-solving.
- Exploring strategies to create a climate of trust and participation using GenAI.
- Reflecting on legal, ethical, and pedagogical implications of GenAI.

Facilitators will energize the process with Socratic questions and practical examples, inspiring participants to think critically and creatively. They will also capture each group's key insights and innovative ideas to showcase them in the final session, turning the workshop into a space for shared learning and collective transformation.

3 Final Discussion (30 min) A plenary session will be held to debate how GenAI can strengthen teacher agency and educational innovation. Conclusions will be collected on a collaborative board to identify challenges and opportunities.

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Workshop 47

Fostering sense of belonging in and through educational development

Gabriela Pleschova, Peter Felten

Abstract

The concept of belonging has recently become vital for understanding why certain groups and individuals thrive and others do not reach their full potential in higher education. A strong sense of belonging enables students and academic staff to learn and grow, even in the face of significant challenges. On the other hand, belonging uncertainty contributes to students and staff feeling isolated and disempowered, making it harder for them to succeed. In short, sense of belonging has serious consequences for individuals, their future study and careers, and also for their colleagues, institutions, and society as a whole.

In this workshop, we draw on insights from three recent books on belonging in higher education (Cohen, 2022; McCabe, 2025; Young-Ann, Venn and Lowe, 2025), alongside key empirical and conceptual literature and our own research (citations withheld for anonymity), to explore how educational developers and other academics can translate the concept of belonging into meaningful action in their own contexts. Participants will be invited to critically reflect on their own understanding of belonging, exchange perspectives with others, and identify specific ways in which they can foster a stronger sense of belonging in their contexts.

The workshop highlights participants' agency in shaping more equitable, collaborative, and inclusive academic environments for students and staff. Its interactive format supports reflection, dialogue, contextual awareness, and the generation of concrete ideas for practice.

Extended Summary

The concept of belonging has gained increasing prominence in higher education research as scholars and practitioners seek to understand why certain individuals and groups do or do not realise their potential within academic environments. When students or staff do not feel that they genuinely belong, they are more likely to underperform academically or professionally, disengage from their communities, and, in some cases, leave higher education or academic careers altogether. Conversely, a strong sense of belonging empowers students and staff to persist through difficulties and to have the agency necessary to thrive. The consequences are far-reaching, affecting not only individuals' academic trajectories, career prospects, and personal well-being, but also the functioning of teams, departments, institutions, and wider society.

This workshop is built upon insights drawn from three recent and influential books on belonging in higher education (Cohen, 2022; McCabe, 2025; Young-Ann, Venn and Lowe, 2025), as well as foundational and recent empirical and conceptual research on belonging (Bentrim and Henning, 2022; Gravett and Ajjawi, 2021; Hartlep, Strayhorn and Bonner, 2025; Tholen et al., 2022), and the facilitators' own research and practice (citations withheld for anonymity). Together, these sources reveal belonging as a multi-dimensional, relational, and dynamic concept, deeply shaped by academic cultures, power structures, social identities, and everyday interactions in teaching, learning, and collegial work.

The workshop aims to move beyond a purely conceptual understanding of belonging and to focus instead on its practical implications: What does belonging look like in daily academic life? How might it be fostered or hindered through teaching practices, assessment, curriculum design, departmental cultures, leadership approaches, or informal interactions? What roles can educational developers, teachers, and leaders play in recognising and responding to threats to belonging, and how might they create conditions in which belonging can flourish equitably?

The session will begin by inviting participants to share and explore their personal and professional understandings of belonging in the context of their higher education experiences. Through guided discussion in pairs or small groups, participants will reflect on questions such as: When have I felt that I truly belong in academia? When have I felt like an outsider? What conditions, relationships, or practices contributed to those experiences?

Following this, the facilitators will present key insights from the selected literature. These will include both what is already well-documented—such as the links between belonging, well-being, student engagement, staff retention, and academic success—and what is less frequently discussed, including the structural and cultural barriers that can subtly undermine belonging, especially in interdisciplinary, international, or highly competitive academic environments. The facilitators will also highlight aspects that are under-conceptualised in some of the literature, drawing attention to power relations, disciplinary norms, and institutional practices that influence who is seen as "fitting in" and who is not. Finally, the facilitators will identify a few strategies that have been shown to develop belonging for students and staff from marginalized backgrounds.

Participants will then talk in pairs or small groups to discuss how the presented ideas challenge, confirm, or expand their understanding of belonging. They will be encouraged to identify one or more principles, strategies, or practices that they consider feasible and meaningful in their own institutional contexts and with the groups they work with – including graduate students, early-career academics, international staff, and marginalised or under-represented groups within their institutions.

The workshop will conclude with a brief plenary sharing and a written exit ticket. This will provide participants with an opportunity to articulate at least one concrete action they intend to take to foster a stronger sense of belonging in their own professional environment.

By combining personal reflection, theoretical grounding, dialogue, and a focus on action, the workshop seeks to support participants in recognising both the importance of belonging and their own agency in cultivating it.

Learning outcomes for participants:

- Formulate their own definition of belonging in higher education, informed by recent literature.
- Exchange and critically reflect on perspectives from colleagues across disciplines, roles, and professional contexts in order to deepen and challenge their understanding of belonging.
- Identify one or more concrete, context-specific actions to foster belonging in and through their own work.

A description of interactive methods or activities with approximate timings:

- Introductions and framing: 5 minutes
- Exchange in pairs / groups of three: What is your current understanding of belonging in higher education? 10 minutes
- Facilitator presentation: key ideas from books and research 15 minutes
- Pairs / small groups: How does this inform or challenge your understanding of belonging? 15 minutes
- Plenary discussion 10 minutes
- Written exit ticket (individual reflection & commitment to action) 5 minutes

Total: 60 minutes

o The relevance of the topic for academic development in higher education: Research shows that even short-term threats to belonging can negatively influence well-being, performance, interpersonal relationships, and openness to others. Conversely, a strong sense of belonging increases confidence, collaboration, empathy and resilience (Cohen, 2022). These outcomes are directly linked to the goals of academic development, which include fostering inclusive learning environments, supporting staff and student flourishing, strengthening collaboration, and promoting equity.

In this workshop, we invite the participants to join us for a slow conversation that prompts thinking and reflection about what we mean by a need to belong in higher education and to foster belonging of our colleagues: teachers, students and everyone else in the academia.

Intended audience (e.g. early-career developers, senior leaders, teaching staff): Educational developers (at any stage of career), leaders, teaching staff members, may be also students.

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Workshop 48

Collaborative agentic practice through a playshop: Towards productively disrupting academic norms

Rieta Ganas, Greig Krull, Rosaline Govender, Adriano Giovanelli, Balitiye Monareng, Subethra Pather

Abstract

Drawing on the design principles of an educational escape room, this "playshop" is designed for participants to collaborate through creativity in small groups to "escape" a metaphorical higher education context. Led by a narrative, the aim is to explore a series of collective play activities to escape from socialized academic norms that do not serve and consider alternative shifts. The playshop intends to purposefully and productively disrupt academic and academic development institutionalized higher education practice norms and to collectively and agentically reshift, refocus and reimagine higher education practices. A globally diverse and multilingual group of participants will add to the collective complexity of experiential engagement, and foster multicultural, multidisciplinary and multi-perspective negotiation and mediation through collegial conditions. The playshop provides an opportunity for academic developers, academics and higher education practitioners to explore opportunities to dismantle taken-for-granted individual, institutional and disciplinary assumptions and foster novel ways of enacting academic agency and interdisciplinary approaches to support meaningful transformation. The value of this workshop is the decolonial intention to provide reimagined interactive playful engagements as a catalyst to productively disrupt contexts, practices and practitioner identities.

Keywords: Academic Agency, Academic Development, Game-based Learning, Productive disruption

Extended Summary

Grounded in engaging, immersive decolonial sense- and meaning-making values through collective play, a team of academic developers from different higher education institutions in the Global South aim to offer an escape room inspired simulation as a collaborative and participatory problem-solving experience. This "playshop" aims to actively engage participants in disrupting their taken for granted higher education and academic norms assumptions and explore through playful, equitable participatory scholarly approaches, alternative ways to reshift, refocus and reimagine higher education.

The key intended outcomes for participants are: (1) Experientially explore, through play and collaboration, alternative ways to address challenges related to enacting academic agency towards productively disrupting disciplinary knowledge silos and academic norms; and (2) Reflect on opportunities to apply relevant, responsive and transformative play and game-based principles in challenging higher education contexts. The collective equitable participatory play approach is intentionally designed as an experiential exploratory opportunity for individual and collective grappling through transforming perspectives of higher education practices and norms. Hands-on activities and reflections aim to enable creative exploration, conceptualisation and theorisation towards enacting academic and academic development agency as diverse ways of knowing, being and doing.

Underpinned by a decolonial and transformative framing using an (un)conferencing approach (Ganas et al., 2025), the design principles informing the escape room style playshop were adapted from the Room2Educ8 framework (Fotaris & Mastoras, 2022). Debriefing and reflection are key components of the playshop (Veldkamp et al., 2020) to promote participant application in their own institutions or contexts. Given the increasing complexities and diversities within higher education, the opportunity to productively disrupt normative participatory processes and practices could enable the generation of alternative perspectives to respond to higher education's pressing issues and contextual realities.

The key takeaway is the use of productive disruption (Behari-Leak & Ganas, 2024) and a playful methodological approach that participants can adapt and contextualise in their own higher education practices. The intended workshop audience is academic developers, academics and higher education practitioners in higher education.

This workshop is designed to be an in-person activity for 90 minutes. The playshop will be facilitated by three facilitators. Table 1 below provides a description of the interactive components of the playshop (activity and goal) together with approximate timings.

A plenary session will be led by the facilitators at the start and at the end of the playshop. However, for the majority of the workshop, participants will be "playing" in small groups (of between 5-10 participants), each around a table.

The goal is to complete a series of activity challenges that unlock clues to be able to "escape the table". While collaborating to complete the activity challenges, participants will also be encouraged to reflect on their experiences. An instructional narrative will form part of the guided facilitation enabling further conditions for collegiality and working with and through a collective. The activities are designed for each group to move through the activity challenges with the support of a playshop booklet and associated materials to complete each activity. Facilitators will move around the room providing support, addressing queries and offering clues where needed. This playshop is relevant for academic development in higher education because it provides a metaphorical playful yet productively disruptive methodological

approach. This will enable higher education practitioners and academic developers to stretch their critical collaborative engagement in more critical and playful ways. The broader intentions are to shift beyond socialised and practiced academic norms towards enacting reimagined and agentic alternative ways as equitable inclusive higher education transformational change.

This workshop is designed to be participant-centred with participants primarily exploring in small groups for the majority of the workshop, which also provides a networking opportunity for participants "playing" together. The intention of the playshop is to provide an experience and suggested activities that can be adapted for participants use in their own contexts in innovative ways. In terms of venue requirements, this workshop will require a flat-room structure with movable tables and chairs for a group setting.

Table 1. Playshop Overview of Activities

Activity	Goal	Timing
Setting the Scene	Facilitators to explain the playshop purpose and provide initial instructions. Participants join small groups at a table.	5 minutes
Activate the shields to form the team	Participants will complete a "disciplinary shield" card, share this information with their team members to form an interdisciplinary collective to collaboratively meet the challenges ahead.	15 minutes
Challenge 1: Dismantle the tower of isolation	Teams attempt to dismantle an "ivory" tower to find three words to solve a riddle. Then reflect on this experience.	20 minutes
Challenge 2: Scenario escape	Select a higher education scenario challenge to collaboratively find an appropriate response. Use the clues to solve a word puzzle. Then reflect on this experience.	20 minutes
Art your reflection	Use the materials provided on the table to form a collaborative artwork based on individual and collective reflections.	20 minutes
Close-out	Share takeaways from the playshop and reflect on how these activities can be adapted for different contexts.	10 minutes

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Workshop 49

Agency in Practice: Designing (Supportive) Project-Based Learning for Mid-Career Academics

Rick Huizinga

Abstract

Supporting mid-career academic staff in their teaching development can sometimes be overlooked in favour of beginning teacher programmes (i.e. PhD or early-career) or leadership-focused initiatives. Rather, mid-career university teachers are often 'where the magic happens' in terms of educational change, innovation, and student success at programme level. At the University of Groningen, a project-based programme exists for academics of this level and has been successful in utilizing participants agency to improve or change their own programmes while concurrently offering support to budding educational leaders. However, the project-based approach has not happened without continued discussion around several key, and ongoing, choices. In this workshop, we will use these five dilemmas to guide participants towards 1) initial design/redesign plans for a project-based programme in their own institutions (for mid-career faculty) and 2) a significant amount of knowledge and expertise sharing between academic developers. The session will largely consist of 'dash design' steps where participants can expect to combine brief individual reflections with multiple (and rotating) small group discussions.

Keywords: mid-career academics, academic development, project-based (adult) learning, programme innovation

Extended Summary

The purpose and outcomes of this workshop can be stated directly at the outset in order to guide the reader through the following proposal: This practice-focused workshop will use this gathering of academic developers to firstly, join in a design process to consider project-based designs for the professional development of mid-career faculty members. Secondly, the primary intention of this process is to simply have a high amount of knowledge sharing amongst colleagues who lead (or are interested in) teaching development programmes for this career level.

The focus on these university teachers are two-fold. Firstly, this particular target group can sometimes be ignored as professional development time and resources are focused on early-career programmes or high leadership-level initiatives (Cahill et al 2015). Secondly, in terms of educational innovation or change, experienced teachers working across courses and curriculum are often where this 'teacher leadership' takes place (Muijs & Harris, 2003). At the University of Groningen (and most other Dutch universities), the 'Senior Teaching Qualification' was designed ten years ago to address the gap in supporting this teaching group/level.

This workshop has a second purpose, which is to highlight project-based learning as a programmatic method for academic development at this level. By utilising a project-based approach, university teachers are developing their own agency and authentic learning as they seek to improve student learning or student experience in their own programmes. At the same time, while a project-centred approach can help the participants develop their own skills in leading educational change, the programme must also support these faculty members as the amount of roles/skills expected of them rise (Cahill, et al, 2015, Lawrence et al, 2024). More anecdotally from ours and others' experience with the 'STQ' in the Netherlands, they are regularly learning how to both take and share the lead, a challenging skill for academics at this level where formal influence in resources is not always the case (Brouwer & In't Veld, 2018).

This workshop aims to gather educational developers to think through a project-based approach for their own teaching staff, develop their own ideas through a guided process, and share ideas with peer practitioners. To achieve this, the we will lean on our own experiences in the design process: In the 'STQ' at the University of Groningen, the project-based programme is a continually iterative process with much discussion focused on several strategic dilemmas. These key choices have become central boundaries of our programme and will be used for the structure of this workshop. Rather than use general design steps (i.e. backwards design), participants will be guided through these same dilemmas as each will become 'steps' towards the overall design (or re-design) of their own programmes. By focusing on key dilemmas, we argue that discussions can be more specific, critically useful, and in-depth.

These dilemmas will be briefly share in this proposal but expanded upon in the session itself:

- Organisational Focus: Should the support of these projects be at course, programme, or faculty level? What is developmentally appropriate for mid-career faculty with (educational) leadership aspirations?
- Development Aims: Should development focus on the individual or (external) authentic changes in the university…or both?
- Project Nature: Related to the organisational focus, would SoTL be appropriate or a more deliverable-based (and embedded) approach?
- Key programme activities: how to best support the initial idea of these projects—Peer groups? Guest presentations? Content-focused workshops?

- Dissemination: How can projects be used to disseminate good practices or even highlight the work of the project leaders?

1.1 Outcomes

1) Participants will produce an initial idea/direction of their own project-based designs for mid-career faculty members.

2) Participants will exchange conceptual and practical ideas regarding support for mid-career teaching academic staff.

1.2 Process

After a short introduction to the topic, the format, and sample project titles, participants will take part in 5 short design steps. Each step consists of individual reflection (2 minutes) and small group discussion (10 minutes). (If discussions go a bit long, the format is flexible to reduce the number to 4 steps.) To increase knowledge-sharing, participants will rotate to different groups at the mid-point; this also reduces the need for a long drawn-out plenary debrief. The wrap-up will mainly focus on takeaways from the group and (possible) next steps. Though the process will be a 'dash' and quite fast, the facilitator(s) are quite experienced and will aim for a 'less is more' session where the focus is on relaxed group exchange.

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Workshop 50

Mapping What We Value: Applying the Institutional Teaching Culture Framework to Strengthen Teaching Cultures

Lori Goff, Erika Kustra, Donna Ellis, Lindsay Shaw, Hannah MacDougall, Madelyn Law, Lynn Taylor

Abstract

How do institutional strategies reflect what universities truly value about teaching? This interactive workshop invites academic developers to explore that question through the lens of the Institutional Teaching Culture (ITC) Framework, an evidence-based model grounded in ten years of Canadian research on valuing teaching. The framework identifies six key levers that signal how institutions demonstrate value for teaching through their strategic initiatives, assessment practices, infrastructure, engagement, and reward systems. Participants will use the ITC levers to analyze and map their own institutional or departmental strategy documents, identifying where teaching culture is represented, and noting where gaps or tensions exist. Through facilitated reflection and cross-institutional dialogue, participants will uncover patterns of alignment and dissonance, consider how to strengthen agency in their contexts, and develop one actionable idea for advancing a culture that truly values teaching.

This workshop bridges research and practice, offering academic developers a structured yet adaptable approach for integrating teaching culture analysis into institutional planning. It aligns with Agency and Strategy, foregrounding how developers can act as strategic agents of change to influence policy, resource allocation, and institutional narratives about teaching and learning.

Keywords: Teaching culture; academic development; institutional strategy; educational change

Extended Summary

Background and Rationale: Across the global higher education landscape, academic developers are increasingly called upon to strengthen teaching and learning through both scholarship and strategic influence. Institutional cultures are important to consider when trying to enact such organizational change (Reinholz & Apkarian, 2018), and strategic plans and policies provide glimpses into what is valued (Cook, 2010; Schein, 2016). Institutional strategy documents, including strategic plans, academic plans, and teaching and learning frameworks, provide some evidence that reflect how universities articulate what they value, but they can also reveal gaps between aspiration and enactment, particularly when it comes to teaching (Gray & Radloff, 2010).

The Institutional Teaching Culture (ITC) Framework provides insight into how teaching might be valued and supported within institutions. Grounded in the concept of institutional culture as a dynamic interplay of shared values, beliefs, and practices (Cox et al, 2011; Kezar & Eckel, 2002), the ITC Framework identifies six levers that influence how teaching is prioritized and enacted:

- Institutional Strategic Initiatives and Practices Prioritize Effective Teaching
- Assessment of Teaching is Constructive and Flexible
- Effective Teaching is Implemented
- Infrastructure Exists to Support Teaching
- Broad Engagement Occurs Around Teaching
- Effective Teaching is Recognized and Rewarded

Using these levers to analyse strategic documents across five Canadian universities, the research team found that the framework illuminates both institutional strengths and systemic blind spots. For example, while infrastructure and engagement were often highlighted, assessment and recognition of teaching were underrepresented. This analytical approach provides an evidence-based method to identify where documented strategic priorities align well, or fail to align, with institutional values about teaching. This workshop draws from some of our research to engage international academic developers in applying the ITC Framework as a practical tool for strategic reflection, alignment, and advocacy. It directly connects to the ICED 2026 sub-theme Agency and Strategy, positioning academic developers as key actors in shaping institutional transformation through evidence-informed strategy work.

The session is designed for academic developers, teaching and learning centre leaders, senior academic leaders, and academic directors engaged in strategic planning and culture change.

Following an introduction to the framework and existing research, participants will engage in small cross-institutional groups for an interactive mapping exercise to analyse an institutional document. In a large group debrief discussion, participants will share insights and patterns they observed across contexts and identify one step they can take to help advance their institution's teaching culture. The purpose of this workshop is to enable participants to:

- Apply the ITC Framework to analyse how teaching and learning are represented in their own institutional or departmental strategic documents
- Identify gaps and strengths across the six ITC levers
- Develop one actionable idea or advocacy strategy to advance a stronger culture of teaching in their context
- Share insights across international institutions to explore diverse approaches to valuing teaching.

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Workshop 51

Ethical agency: A values-first approach to academic development

Deandra Little, David Green

Abstract

Facilitating change is central to our work as academic developers (Timmermans, 2014), and requires trust and ethical practice. Whether working with individual instructors and departments or in committees developing institutional policy, our work focuses on improving conditions for teaching and learning in specific contexts. We encounter opportunities to effect this change: new initiatives to launch, new research findings to apply to our own contexts, new colleagues to engage and inspire. Simultaneously, many of us are also experiencing resistance and scarcity – in resources and our bandwidth to start new projects and maintain cherished practices without burning out or diminishing trust. How do we choose intentionally among those many activities and ideas? How do we find agency in the decision-making process and clearly articulate our values, commitments, and ethical code of practice in order to maintain trust? This session offers participants space for structured reflection and discernment in community to consider our own professional identities, agency, ethical priorities, and key values that motivate and animate our efforts. Facilitators will draw on the latest draft of the POD Network's "Ethical Guidelines for Educational Developers," as well as research on developers' values, positionality, and integrity (Wilson & Popovic, 2025; Author & Author, dates). As a group, we'll discuss the role that each of these plays at various levels in our work – micro, meso, macro. Ultimately, we aim for participants to leave the session with ideas and reflective questions for proactively making good and sustainable choices, centered on their own values and ethics.

Keywords: Values, ethics, decision making, Reflective Practice

Extended Summary

Facilitating change is central to our work as educational developers (Timmermans, 2014, p. 310), and requires trust and ethical practice (e.g., Wilson & Popovic, 2025; Author & Author, dates). Whether working with individual instructors and departments or in committees developing institutional policy, our work focuses on improving conditions for teaching and learning in context. We encounter opportunities to effect this change: new initiatives to launch, new research findings to apply, new colleagues to engage and inspire. Simultaneously, many of us are also experiencing resistance and scarcity – in resources and our own bandwidth to start new projects and maintain cherished practices without burning out (Pope-Ruark, 2022) or diminishing trust.

How do we choose intentionally among those many activities and ideas? How do we find agency in the decision-making process and clearly articulate our values and commitments to our colleagues and to university leaders in order to maintain trust and signal the professional ethical code guiding our choices (Wilson & Popovic, 2025)?

This session offers participants space for structured reflection and discernment in community to consider our own professional identities, scope of agency, ethical priorities, and key values that motivate and animate our efforts. Facilitators will draw on the latest draft of the POD Network's "Ethical Guidelines for Educational Developers" (2025), as well as research on developers' values, positionality, and integrity (Wilson & Popovic, 2025; Authors, in press; Little & Green, 2012; POD Network, 2011) to prompt individual and paired reflection about ethical priorities and values. As a group, we'll discuss the role that these values play at various levels in our work – micro, meso, macro (Hannah & Lester, 2009) – and consider factors in our contexts that may enable or hinder our exercising agency and enacting these values. Ultimately, we aim for participants to leave the session with ideas and reflective questions for proactively making good and sustainable choices, centred on their own values and ethics.

Learning goals:

Participants will

- be introduced to three nested frameworks focused on aspects of ethical virtues and values in educational development
- apply these frameworks through a series of guided reflection and discussion prompts to articulate their own ethical priorities and values as well as their professional context
- better understand and communicate those values to others (such as colleagues, academic staff, supervisors) and anticipate where those values may be challenged or come into conflict within their professional context.
- leave with ideas and reflective questions for making good and sustainable choices, centred on their own values and ethics

Outline of interactive session with approximate timings:

I. Introduction, opening centering activity, and the 4M framework (7 minutes)

a. Introducing nested frameworks for articulating ethical priorities and values in AD work using the 4M framework

II. Ethical Lenses: Reflecting on values, role/position, and identity (30 mins)

a. Framing:

i. Macro-level Case Study: One Network's Values & Ethical guidelines (5 mins)

ii. Micro-level: Ethical priorities and values from the integrity framework (3 mins)

b. Individual writing related to the ethical virtues or other AD values (5-7 mins)

i. Recall a time recently when you were facilitating change at the individual, department, or institutional level.

ii. Which of your values or ethical priorities were most relevant in this situation? Were they affirmed or challenged? How was your agency to act on these enabled or hindered? By whom or what factors?

c. Pair/Triad Active Listening Rounds (10-12 mins)

i. In pairs/triads, participants share reflections and apply empathetic listening skills

d. Large group debrief (5-8 mins) at a high level

III. Aligning our words, actions, and values: Consistency & Alignment (15-20 mins)

a. Framing:

i. Micro-level: Consistency, Authenticity, Courage: Enacting Ethical Values/our commitments to, or with, others in specific contexts (5 min)

b. Exploring common AD "dilemmas" (15 mins)

i. Considering how we act with Courage, Authenticity, and Agency when there are conflicting values, needs, tensions:

ii. What would you say? What would you do? Why?

iii. What compromises would you be willing to consider? Why or why not? iv. What constraints or challenges do you anticipate in enacting this particular value in your context?

IV. Ethics in Action: Self in context (15 mins)

a. Framing:

i. Meso Framework: Mapping Context using the margins model (5 mins)

b. Mapping your context (5 mins)

i. Individual reflection on other common dilemmas or challenges to your ethical principles or values within your context

c. Group debrief (5 min)

V. Conclusion: Sustaining our ethical commitments (10 mins)

a. Group discussion: How can you remain accountable to act on or center these values in an ongoing way?

b. Setting up cross-national accountability and affinity groups for those who want one

c. Wrapping up

Intended audience: This session is intended for academic developers at all career stages.

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Workshop 52

Scholar. Author. Writer: Exploring Academic Writing Identity in Academic Development

Derisa Grant, Anna Flaming, Laura Cruz

Abstract

Through academic writing, educational developers can contribute to a broader body of evidence-based practice, gain credibility among instructional, and advance their careers. Recent studies have suggested, however, that educational developers may hold a complex relationship with, and perhaps even a resistance to, adopting an academic writing identity.

In this collaborative space, structured as a unique participatory action research project (PAR), you will be invited to reflect on, explore, and describe your scholarly identity (e.g., scholar, author, researcher, content developer, etc.) and identify intersections among your academic writing identity, prior writing experiences, social identities, and role(s) within academic development.

Keywords

Scholarship of Academic Development (SoAD), Academic Writing, Academic Identities, Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Extended Summary

Prior research, including a recent study published by the presenters, suggests that an academic writing identity may be a charged and perhaps even traumatic topic for some academic developers, particularly those from historically underrepresented identities, institutions, or geo-political regions and/or those who have experienced personal, relational, or institutional barriers to writing. Building on the insights gained in their study, the presenters will facilitate a collaborative session that aspires to augment our understanding of the role of social identities, contexts, and experiences in shaping academic writing identity in the distinctive space(s) occupied by academic developers. Through the collaborative exploration of these challenging identities and contested spaces, we ultimately aim to identify strategies to support equity and inclusion for academic developers as writers in the field and begin to address persistent inequities in voice and perspective within the scholarship of academic development (and related fields, such as the scholarship of teaching and learning).

The purpose of the session is to explore the academic writing identity of academic developers, a project that contributes to our evidence-based understanding of the field. In the session, participants will share how they self-identify (e.g., writer, scholar, other) and will have numerous ways to collaborate as they reflect on, share, and find commonalities in their scholarly identity narratives.

Rather than foisting a writing identity onto participants, the design of the session aims to provide a space of agency [the conference theme] in which they self-identify, adopting an identity that feels authentic to them and describing that identity in terms that are personally meaningful. Our goal is to create a space in which all participants, particularly those who have felt alienated from academic writing, may express their academic writing identity and consider the implications of the language we use to describe ourselves.

Participants in the collaborative space will

- Identify and explore their academic writing identity in terms that they choose and that feel authentic to their experience;
- Discuss the affordances and limitations of their chosen academic writing identity;
- Create a narrative of their academic writing identity by connecting it to social identities and prior writing experiences, such as experiences with mentoring or peer-reviewer feedback
- Appreciate the array of identities and orientations other educational developers have to academic writing
- Gain experience in the facilitation of participatory action research (PAR) projects, as a means for addressing persistent inequities in voice and perspective, with the possibility of future publication(s) building on insights gained during the session

Session Plan

Overview 10 Minutes: We will invite participants to be a part of scholarly production (a participatory action research project) and engage in the academic writing process, but not in an intimidating, overwhelming, or prescriptive way. We will remind attendees that participation is voluntary and they can engage to the extent they feel comfortable

Identity Circles 20 Minutes: In this activity, we'll ask participants to move into groups based on their primary academic writing identity: e.g, scholar, writer, researcher, other/none. Participants with limited mobility or those who do not

wish to move will be able to hold up signs to share their identity. In these groups, participants will discuss prompts about their chosen identity, such as why it resonates; what doesn't resonate about the other identities; what content this identity allows them to write, and what they might not write because of this identity. Facilitator/notetakers will be in each group capturing the insights

Sharing Session 10 Minutes: Participants will be invited to engage with the work of other groups, followed by a whole group discussion reflecting on the similarity and differences in writing production among the groups.

Academic Writing Biography 15 Minutes: We will ask participants to engage in a creative expression of their academic writing identity. They may choose to write, draw, paint. Specifically, we will ask participants to connect their chosen identity to prior writing experiences, their social identities (e.g., race, class, etc.), and/or institutional role and to critically evaluate the affective baggage (i.e., emotional weight) associated with different academic writing identities.

Warp Up 5 Minutes: To wrap-up, we will engage in reflection-informed planning, discuss next steps for the project, and identify pathways for participants to continue to co-create and co-research on the subject.

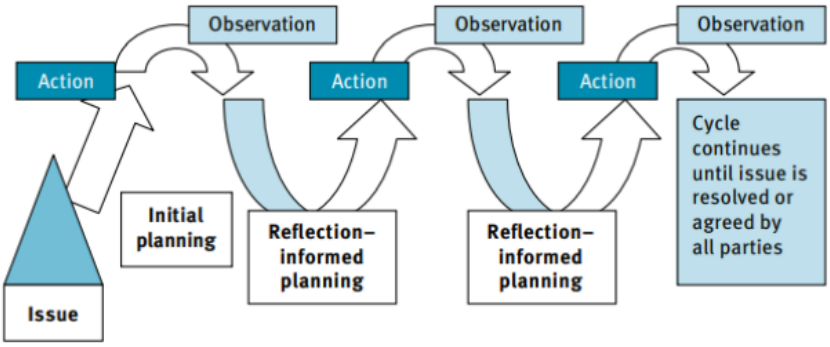


Fig. 1. The Participatory Action Research (PAR) Model (Walker, 2009)

The target audience for the session is educational developers across all ranks, roles, prior experience, and institutional contexts, who may be interested in becoming scholars of educational/academic development and/or expanding their current scholarship to reflect on questions of authorship and identity in the field.

We encourage participation from professionals whose voices and experiences have historically been under-represented in the scholarly literature.

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Workshop 53

Collaborative Program Development: Using Figma to Foster Agency and Alignment in Curriculum Design

Claudine Warburton, Darinka Aguirre Amador, Terri Carde

Abstract

This workshop shares the story of developing the Graphic Design and Interactive Media (GDIM) diploma program. The initiative began amid institutional uncertainty, leadership transitions, and rapid technological disruption driven by artificial intelligence. Through these challenges, a cross-functional team—including a program champion, an instructional development consultant, and an operations specialist—developed a collaborative process that redefined how curriculum could be co-created. Central to this process was the use of Figma, and specifically FigJam, as a shared, visual workspace. This platform enabled course developers and consultants to transparently co-design, align learning outcomes, and identify overlaps and synergies across 16 interconnected courses.

Participants in this 90-minute workshop—designed for developers, senior leaders, and teaching staff—will experience a condensed version of the mapping activity that supported the GDIM program's development, thereby learning how visual collaboration tools can enhance agency, cohesion, and innovation in academic program design. The workshop aligns with ICED26's theme of Agency and Academic Development by demonstrating how academic developers can act as change agents through technology-enabled, inclusive, and collaborative curriculum processes.

Keywords: Collaborative Program Development, Visual Collaboration Tools, Interactive Mapping

Extended Summary

Context and Rationale: Program development in higher education is often fragmented, with course developers working independently and focusing only on their own course objectives. This siloed approach can result in misalignment with broader program goals, missed opportunities for integration, and diminished motivation. The development of XXX's GDIM diploma program—set to launch in January 2026—demonstrates how intentional collaboration and digital tools are essential for achieving cohesion, synergy, and strategic innovation. The project began in 2021 when XXX's Associate Dean invited a faculty member to serve as program champion for a new diploma program intended to bridge graphic design and interactive media. At the time, institutional procedures for new program development were unclear, and the team—comprising the program champion, an instructional development consultant, and an operations coordinator—had to navigate an evolving and often ambiguous approval process.

By 2022, the project entered its proposal phase, requiring the design of 16 new courses aligned with institutional standards and industry needs. However, numerous roadblocks emerged, including leadership changes, unclear communication channels, and shifting governmental policies affecting postsecondary programs and student enrolment. The rapid emergence of artificial intelligence in 2023 further complicated the landscape, compelling the team to re-examine and future-proof the curriculum to ensure relevance and adaptability.

These challenges underscored the need for a collaborative, transparent, and agile approach. To achieve this, the team adopted Figma, a cloud-based design and collaboration platform, and its whiteboarding companion FigJam, as the central workspace for program and course development. Traditionally used in interface and product design, Figma's real-time collaboration features proved highly effective for educational design, allowing the team to visualize course structures, assignments, and outcomes simultaneously. This shared environment empowered developers to work asynchronously while maintaining visibility into others' progress and aligning their courses with overarching program goals.

Each course developer was assigned a dedicated FigJam space to map weekly topics, assessments, and projects. These individual maps were layered into a shared program overview, enabling the team to collectively identify gaps, overlaps, and opportunities for integration. The visual nature of FigJam fostered a sense of ownership and accountability—participants could see where their work fit within the larger curriculum ecosystem. Periodic synchronous meetings allowed the entire team to review progress together, address workload balance, and refine the sequence of skill progression. Ultimately this approach advanced the quality and relevance of the curriculum and empowered developers as agents of change, driving institutional goals and innovation.

Workshop Structure (90 min)

1. Introduction and Context (30 min)

    o Participants are given an overview of the GDIM program and the collaborative development process. o Facilitators share the brief narrative of the GDIM program's development journey, highlighting the challenges of navigating institutional structures, leadership changes, and rapid technological shifts.

o Participants are introduced to the concept of visual curriculum mapping and its role in fostering alignment and transparency.

2. Figma in Action (15 min)

o Live demonstration of the FigJam workspace used for GDIM o Mapping activity, showing how FigJam supports real-time co-development, accountability, and transparency

o Discussion of key insights and lessons learned from implementing this approach

3. Interactive Component (30 min)

o Participants work in small groups. Using a shared FigJam file, they navigate the workspace to explore the tools and features that can be used for team collaboration.

o Participants discuss application of the technology for their own educational contexts and how it could be used to support collaborative design.

o Facilitators provide live guidance, mirroring the methods used at XXXX.

4. Reflection and Group Discussion (15 min)

o Participants and facilitators share strategies for balancing asynchronous and synchronous collaboration, ensuring progression of skills and managing workload.

o Groups share observations about how visual collaboration supports communication and alignment.

o Facilitators connect participant reflections to broader concepts of academic agency, distributed leadership, and institutional learning.

o Participants leave with practical tips for using collaborative tools to enhance agency and cohesion in academic program development.

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to complete the following:

1. Identify key benefits of collaborative program development for improving curriculum alignment, synergy, and transparency.

2. Describe how visual mapping tools (such as Figma/FigJam) can be used to support communication, teamwork, accountability, transparency, and agency in course design.

3. Discuss strategies for motivating course developers to collaborate and seek joint projects.

4. Reflect on how digital collaboration platforms can be leveraged to enhance institutional coherence and innovation.

Workshop 54

Prioritising with Purpose: An Agile Framework for Strategic Resource Decisions in Teaching and Learning Centres

Kata Dosa, Réka Futász

Abstract

Leaders of Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) often face an unrelenting challenge: too many essential initiatives, programs, and stakeholder demands—but never enough time, staff, or funding to meet them all. This workshop offers a structured, collaborative method for strategic prioritisation that helps CTL leaders decide what to do next—and what to stop—in alignment with institutional goals and available capacity. Using an agile-inspired Business Value / Effort–Impact framework, participants will co-create decision criteria (e.g., strategic alignment, innovation, client value, reputational or societal impact) and apply them first through a hands-on case study and then to their own institutional context. Because the method can be revisited periodically, it supports institutional resilience—allowing CTLs to realign priorities as strategies evolve or external disruptions arise. The session balances analytical structure with participatory reflection, enabling leaders to act as proactive change agents who steer their portfolios strategically rather than reactively. Participants will leave with a ready-to-use prioritisation template and facilitation guide to support transparent, evidence-informed decision-making in their own contexts.

Keywords: academic development leadership, strategic prioritisation, agile methods in higher education, resource allocation, institutional resilience, Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTLs), agency and strategy, organisational learning, impact–effort matrix, adaptive strategy

Extended Summary

Theoretical or Research-Based Foundations

Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) routinely face mission overload: expanding mandates (faculty development, curricular enhancement, evidence-based teaching, accreditation, digital transformation) amid flat or shrinking resources. This results in chronic portfolio congestion, opaque trade-offs, and strategic drift. An agile-derived prioritisation approach addresses this by making value–capacity decisions explicit, participatory, and repeatable.

Agile methods—developed for dynamic environments—use iterative, value-focused planning to manage changing demand and limited capacity. Two relevant mechanisms are: (a) impact–effort mapping, which visualises benefits versus costs to identify quick wins, major bets, deferables, and eliminables, and (b) multi-criteria business value scoring, which weights initiatives against agreed criteria (e.g., strategic alignment, client/learner value, innovation, compliance, reputational/societal impact). Empirical and practice-oriented literature shows that agile governance practices improve responsiveness and focus by aligning work with evolving strategy and feedback (Rigby, Sutherland, & Takeuchi, 2016; Leffingwell, 2018). Transposed to higher education, these tools shift CTLs from reactive task-taking to proactive portfolio stewardship. Teams co-create criteria, score candidate initiatives, and make trade-offs visible, which supports psychological safety and high-quality dialogue (Edmondson, 2019). The process strengthens agency—leaders set and justify priorities rather than waiting for top-down directives—and embeds organisational learning by recording rationales and reviewing outcomes. Crucially, because the method is periodically reusable, it underpins resilience: CTLs can realign rapidly when institutional strategies shift or disruptions occur (e.g., policy changes, enrolment shocks, technology waves). Research on academic developers' agency underscores the importance of such structures to mediate tensions between institutional demands and local professional judgement (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2017).

Learning Goals or Outcomes

Participants will

1. Diagnose structural/cultural drivers of "too much to do, too few resources."
2. Understand agile prioritisation logics (impact–effort; multi-criteria value).
3. Co-design criteria tailored to CTL strategy and context.
4. Practise collaborative prioritisation on a realistic case.
5. Apply the framework to their own portfolio to produce an actionable ranked list (proceed, postpone, stop, monitor).
6. Plan periodic reuse to sustain alignment and institutional resilience.

Interactive Methods and Activities:

0–10 min: Framing. Shared problem, aims, and link to agency/resilience.

10–20 min: Concept Primer. Impact–effort and business value scoring; examples; brief Q&A.

20–40 min: Team Case. Small groups prioritise a fictional CTL portfolio; co-create 5–7 criteria; map/rank items.

40–55 min: Flash Reports. Two-minute share-outs; facilitator synthesises patterns and trade-offs.

55–80 min: Own Context. Individuals list 5–7 live initiatives; apply criteria; map/rank; note decisions and risks; optional peer check.

80–90 min: Implementation Plan. Decide cadence (e.g., quarterly review), governance touchpoints, communication artifacts (one-page portfolio, heatmap), and next-step commitment. The design balances concise input with practice and immediate transfer. Participants receive a lightweight template to replicate with their teams.

Relevance for Academic Development in Higher Education: The workshop directly tackles a structural dilemma: CTLs face more "must-do" items than capacity allows, with strategic dilution and staff burnout as chronic risks. Traditional planning rarely resolves competing imperatives or documents transparent trade-offs. An agile, criteria-based process reframes prioritisation from defensive refusal to strategic choice: "what we choose to do now—and why." It builds a shared language for value, clarifies the opportunity cost of new requests, and supports evidence-informed conversations with senior leadership and faculties about scope, sequencing, and resourcing. Because the method is explicitly iterative, it embeds resilience: as institutional priorities evolve or external shocks arise, CTLs can reconvene, re-score, and re-sequence work to maintain alignment without losing momentum. This supports sustainable organisational learning, reduces hidden work, and enhances credibility through visible reasoning and reviewable decisions. In line with ICED's Sub-theme 2 ("Agency and Strategy"), the workshop positions academic developers as change agents and portfolio stewards who lead alignment across curricula, pedagogy, and institutional goals through transparent, revisitable prioritisation.

Intended Audience: Heads and deputy heads of CTLs; senior academic developers with planning/resource mandates; institutional leaders overseeing educational development portfolios. Participants should hold (or be preparing for) responsibility to set priorities, allocate resources, and communicate rationale across stakeholders.

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Collaborative Space 28

Reframing Sustainability in Engineering Education: Epistemological Foundations & Pedagogical Methods

Valentina Rossi, Fabrizio Butera, Roland Tormey

Abstract

Sustainability is increasingly recognised as a core component of engineering education (EE), promoted by accreditation bodies and global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals. Despite the proliferation of sustainability competency frameworks, important gaps remain regarding how these competencies are embedded in curricula, experienced by students, and supported through appropriate pedagogical methods. This study addresses these gaps by exploring how pedagogical approaches can mediate the tension between institutional norms of EE and sustainability principles. As the initial phase of a four-year project, a systematic literature review guided by the SPIDER framework is conducted to examine the epistemological compatibility between engineering and sustainability. The findings are synthesised into a matrix of compatibility that supports critical reflection and collaborative discussion, with the aim of informing curriculum development and enabling methodological transfer to other disciplines.

Keywords: Epistemology, Engineering, Sustainability, Pedagogical Methods

Extended Summary

Background

As supranational organizations promote the alignment of learning objectives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNESCO, 2017), the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), the primary licensing body in the STEM fields, recognizes sustainability as a core component of quality education (Gonzalez, 2025). As a consequence, a multitude of frameworks have been published with the intention of scaffolding the integration of sustainability competencies in higher education (HE) – see Bianchi et al. (2022), Brundiers et al., (2021), Sipos et al. (2008), Wiek et al. (2011); and more specifically in engineering education (EE) – see Cooper at al. (2023). The commonality among these is the claim that more knowledge is needed to support curriculum development and evaluation (Brundiers et al., 2021; Redman & Wiek, 2021; Sipos et al., 2008). However, there is a lack of empirical studies on how sustainability competences are reflected in the learning objectives (written curriculum). When learning objectives are connected to sustainability, it is unclear how students experience them and whether they feel empowered to make a change (experienced curriculum) and there is a delay in the inclusion of intrapersonal and action competencies (Salovaara et al., 2020; Trencher et al., 2018). Ultimately, evidence shows a lack of clarity on the effectiveness of pedagogical methods required to include sustainability competences in EE (Guerra, 2017; Leifler & Dahlin, 2020). This research project aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on competency frameworks by providing evidence about pedagogical methods suitable for incorporating sustainability competencies as an integral part of the engineering curriculum. Namely, "To what extent are engineering and sustainability epistemologies compatible?". Because we wanted to provide an overview of the existing knowledge on this research topic, we chose a systematic literature review methodology guided by Siddaway et al. (2019) and based on the SPIDER search tool, which has shown higher levels of specificity as compared to other search tools (Methley et al., 2014). Although this might be a necessary step in many research projects, we were vigilant not to only summarize the results (Siddaway et al., 2019), but also to critically analyse them and organize what we called a matrix of compatibility of engineering and sustainability epistemologies. Therefore, the results not only portray similarities, but highlight compatibilities in the students' process of acquiring new knowledge in both engineering and sustainability.

Rationale for the collaborative format

The collaborative discussion builds on the above-mentioned matrix of compatibility and aims at involving participants in a constructive discussion to share insights about the findings, as well as critically discuss the study limitations and next potential steps.

Intended goals and outcomes

At the end of this discussion, all participants will be able to:

- Visualise compatibilities between sustainability and engineering epistemologies and the corresponding pedagogical methods.
- Replicate the same methodology in other fields – i.e., mathematics and sustainability.

Session outline

We aim for participants to interact with the material presented as opposed to passively listening to it. The session will unfold as observed in Table 1.

Table 1. Collaborative Discussion outline

Time	Activity	Setting
5’	Introduction: context & objectives of the session	Plenary
10’	Participants’ introduction via think-pair-share	Small groups
15’	Results from the conceptual study (Study 1)	Plenary
20’	Structured discussion on the compatibility matrix	Small groups + Plenary
5’	Conclusion: takeaways from both the study and the collaborative discussion	Plenary

Target audience

This session is intended for faculty developers and practitioners who face the challenge of integrating sustainability in EE in their own institutions. All researchers working on this topic are welcome to contribute.

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Collaborative Space 29

Critical Educational Development: Exploring Critical Approaches to Dismantle Inequities within Post-Secondary Education

Fouzia Usman

Abstract

In recent years, we have seen work related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Anti-racism gain momentum across post-secondary institutions in North America. Educational developers are uniquely positioned to provide support to faculties as they are encouraged to acknowledge, and even embrace, non-Euro centric ways of knowing and doing. With the aim of decolonizing and decentering whiteness in curriculum and pedagogical practices, it is essential that critical approaches are considered to re-examine educational development. For this Collaborative Space session, the presenter would like engage participants with the concept of "critical educational development" (Ultsch, et al., 2021), a way to dismantle systemic inequities that arise in post-secondary education due to power imbalances. Furthermore, participants will also be invited to share their experiences of engaging in educational development at their institutions through a critical lens.

Using critical pedagogy (Friere, 2005) – "an intersection of education and critical theory", the presenter seeks to invite participants to examine, and even interrogate, dominant narratives, critique power and privilege, and encourage student agency and empowerment. The presenter will pose the participants with 1-3 open-ended questions that will prompt the discussion on identifying factors that contribute to widening the inequity gaps which cause equity-deserving groups to be further marginalized and face increasing barriers in post-secondary education. With the aim of closing equity gaps in post-secondary education, this session will also focus on ways by which critical educational development can enhance the work of decolonization, EDI and anti-racism in mainstream teaching and learning across post-secondary institutions.

Keywords: Educational Development, Critical Pedagogies, Decolonization, Equity

Extended Summary

Background and Context

Across post-secondary institutions globally, there has been increased attention to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), anti-racism, and decolonization in teaching and learning. While these efforts signal important institutional commitments, they often remain constrained by Eurocentric epistemologies, entrenched power structures, and normative assumptions about knowledge, teaching, and academic success. In many contexts, educational development continues to be positioned as a neutral, technical practice, focused primarily on instructional effectiveness rather than on the social, political, and historical dimensions of education. Educational developers occupy a unique and influential position within higher education ecosystems. They work at the intersection of faculty development, curriculum design, institutional policy, and pedagogical innovation, and are therefore well placed to question dominant narratives and support transformative change. As institutions increasingly encourage faculty to acknowledge and engage with diverse ways of knowing and being, educational developers are called upon to critically reflect on their own practices, assumptions, and positionalities. This collaborative space introduces the concept of critical educational development (Ultsch et al., 2021) as a framework for examining how power, privilege, and systemic inequities are reproduced – or resisted – through educational development work. Drawing on critical pedagogy (Freire, 2005), the session foregrounds education as a political and relational practice and invites participants to interrogate how whiteness, coloniality, and institutional norms shape teaching and learning across global post-secondary contexts. While the presenter's experience is grounded in the North American higher education landscape, the issues addressed are deeply resonant across international contexts, including Europe and beyond.

The collaborative space format is intentionally aligned with the principles of critical pedagogy and critical educational development. Rather than positioning the presenter as the sole authority, this session centers dialogue, shared inquiry, and collective meaning-making. Critical approaches to educational development require space for reflection, discomfort, questioning, and the surfacing of multiple perspectives; these aims are best achieved through participatory engagement rather than traditional presentation formats. Participants bring diverse institutional, cultural, and national contexts that can deepen understanding of how inequities manifest differently and similarly across higher education systems. A collaborative format enables participants to learn from one another, to articulate challenges and tensions in their own practice, and to explore possibilities for action that are contextually responsive. This approach reflects Freire's emphasis on dialogical learning and positions participants as co-constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients.

A central goal of this collaborative space is to further develop and refine the emerging framework of critical educational development through collective exploration and dialogue with participants. While critical educational development (Ultsch et al., 2021) provides an important conceptual foundation, this session positions the framework as evolving, contextual, and responsive to diverse institutional, cultural, and national settings.

The collaborative space is intentionally designed to treat participants not only as learners, but as co-inquirers whose experiences and insights will contribute to shaping and extending this work. Specifically, the session aims to:

- Explore and collectively interrogate the concept of critical educational development as both a theoretical framework and a praxis-oriented approach to educational development.
- Engage participants in examining how power, privilege, coloniality, and dominant epistemologies shape educational development practices across different post-secondary contexts.
- Surface cross-cultural and cross-institutional perspectives that can inform the ongoing development of critical educational development beyond a single national or institutional lens.
- Identify tensions, challenges, and possibilities associated with applying critical approaches to educational development, particularly in relation to decolonization, EDI, and anti-racism.
- Generate shared insights, guiding questions, and potential principles that can contribute to the continued evolution of the critical educational development framework.

By the end of the session, participants will have contributed to the collective shaping of critical educational development while gaining reflective insights and practical considerations they can adapt within their own educational development roles. The session thus functions not only as a space for professional learning, but also as a collaborative inquiry into how educational development can more intentionally work toward equity, justice, and transformation in higher education.

Overview of Session Structure

The 60 minute collaborative space will be structured to balance framing, dialogue, and reflection:

1. Opening and Framing (10 minutes): The presenter will briefly introduce the concept of critical educational development, situating it within critical pedagogy and current global conversations around decolonization, EDI, and anti-racism in higher education. Key concepts such as power, positionality, and decentering dominant narratives will be outlined.

2. Small-Group Dialogue (20 minutes): Participants will be invited to engage in small-group discussions guided by 1–3 open-ended questions. These questions will prompt participants to identify factors within their institutions that contribute to widening equity gaps and to reflect on how educational development practices may unintentionally reinforce or challenge these dynamics.

3. Collective Sharing and Synthesis (20 minutes): Groups will reconvene to share insights, tensions, and emerging themes. The presenter will facilitate a synthesis of ideas, highlighting connections across contexts and surfacing promising practices and unresolved questions.

4. Closing Reflection (10 minutes): The session will conclude with a reflective prompt encouraging participants to identify one critical question or action they will carry forward into their educational development work.

Target Audience: This collaborative space is intended for educational developers, academic developers, faculty developers, teaching and learning specialists, and others engaged in supporting teaching and learning in post-secondary education. It will also be valuable for academic leaders, curriculum designers, and scholar-practitioners interested in critical pedagogy, decolonization, and equity-oriented change.

Participants should join this session if they are seeking to move beyond performative or compliance-driven EDI efforts and are interested in critically examining their role in shaping institutional cultures and pedagogical practices. The session is particularly suited for those who value reflective dialogue, are willing to engage with complexity and discomfort, and are committed to advancing more equitable and inclusive higher education environments within their local and global contexts.

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Collaborative Space 30

When AI Becomes a Colleague: Academic Developer Agency in AI Governance

Jannette Flores

Abstract

The rapid expansion of AI tools in higher education is reshaping the work of academic developers, who are increasingly called upon to guide faculty, reassure leadership, and sustain student trust despite limited institutional frameworks. This Collaborative Space introduces the Learning Integrity Trust (LIT) Framework, a conceptual model that supports academic developers in articulating and strengthening institutional agency in the age of generative AI. Rather than offering a finished model, the session invites participants to interrogate, refine, and extend the LIT Framework in relation to their own systems, constraints, and priorities. Through structured dialogue and small-group exploration, participants will examine how faculty, student, and institutional agency are shaped by emerging AI practices and governance choices. The session aims to surface shared challenges, context-specific adaptations, and potential collaborations, supporting academic developers who work at the intersection of educational practice, policy, and institutional strategy.

Keywords: AI governance, academic development, faculty agency, institutional strategy

Extended Summary

Background and context

Academic developers increasingly find themselves navigating institutional responses to generative AI while supporting faculty, maintaining student trust, and meeting quality assurance expectations. They are asked to interpret or implement emerging policies, support assessment design, and provide guidance on acceptable AI use across diverse disciplines. Yet institutional frameworks often lag behind practice, leaving academic developers to fill governance gaps informally.

Agency, understood as the capacity to initiate action and influence conditions in complex systems, provides a useful lens for examining this work (Bandura, 2020). Recent scholarship highlights how learner agency is shaped within AI mediated and post digital environments, where tools and institutional structures both expand and constrain possibilities for action (Brod, 2025; Code, 2025). Studies of students' use of generative AI reinforce this dynamic, showing learners actively negotiating institutional expectations, making strategic choices, and reflecting on the effects of AI on their own learning (Faraon et al., 2025; Petrakieva et al., 2025).

Within this context, academic developers occupy a critical yet under-defined role in shaping institutional responses to AI. The Learning Integrity Trust (LIT) Framework conceptualizes AI governance across five domains: data privacy and security, transparency in AI use, instructional red flags and support, learning insight and feedback, and governance and oversight. It provides shared language for discussing how AI practices affect faculty, student, and institutional agency.

The LIT Framework is mature enough to guide reflection but intentionally open for adaptation. A Collaborative Space is therefore preferable to a traditional presentation. Rather than positioning the framework as a fixed model, the session invites participants to critique, expand, and localize its five domains. This format supports dialogic exploration, shared sensemaking, and cross-institutional insight. It aligns with the conference theme of agency by treating participants as co-interpreters whose local knowledge strengthens and reshapes emerging governance approaches.

By the end of the session, participants will:

1. Engage with the five domains of the LIT Framework as a conceptual tool for AI governance in higher education.

2. Identify points of alignment, conflict, or tension between the framework and their own institutional conditions.

3. Surface questions, refinements, and extensions that may strengthen the framework across varied contexts.

4. Generate ideas for potential collaborative work, such as comparative case studies, shared resources, or co-authored publications.

The overarching aim is to help academic developers articulate their role in shaping institutional AI strategy and to equip them with a flexible conceptual model that supports that work.

Session structure (60 minutes, adaptable)

0–10 minutes: Shared challenges and framing Participants briefly describe one AI-related challenge from their contexts. The facilitator introduces the LIT Framework and situates the conversation within current research on agency.

10–20 minutes: Overview of the LIT Framework A concise explanation of the five domains is provided. The aim is clarity rather than depth, leaving the majority of time for participant dialogue.

20–40 minutes: Small-group exploration and critique Participants work in small groups using two guiding prompts:

1. Which aspects of the LIT Framework reflect your current or desired practices?
2. What adaptations or extensions would make the framework more meaningful for your context?

Concrete examples from participants' institutions are encouraged.

40–55 minutes: Collective synthesis Participants identify themes, proposed refinements, and persistent questions. Ideas for ongoing collaboration are captured (e.g., shared tools, comparative projects).

55–60 minutes: Closing reflection Participants articulate one takeaway or next step they plan to pursue.

This session is designed for academic developers, educational technologists, teaching and learning center staff, program directors, and institutional leaders who engage with faculty development, curriculum support, or AI policy conversations. It is suitable for individuals navigating AI-related governance questions regardless of technical expertise.

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Collaborative Space 31

Collective Approaches in Faculty Development: Emerging Strategies to Foster Teacher Cultures

Iris Maria Pedersen, Simone Brendstrup, Anne Line Wittek, Mette Krogh Christensen

Abstract

Across higher education, there is growing recognition that sustainable pedagogical development depends on cultivating collegial environments where teachers can engage in shared reflection, mutual feedback, and the exchange of pedagogical knowledge. This collaborative space invites contributions to an emerging conversation about how structured collective approaches can be designed and embedded in faculty development to strengthen teacher cultures and support academic staff – particularly those who experience pedagogical work as isolated or insufficiently supported.

The session addresses a core challenge in academic development: how to move beyond individualized models of pedagogical training toward collaborative formats that foster trust, encourage openness about teaching, and promote a sense of belonging to a wider pedagogical community. Drawing on empirical insights from ongoing collegial initiatives, the session highlights key design considerations, including the selection and framing of pedagogical topics, the balance between formal and informal structures, participants' capacities for peer feedback, and the management of group dynamics.

Participants are invited to engage critically with these issues, relate them to their own institutional contexts, and explore how collegial approaches can be integrated into faculty development programs and departmental practices. By leveraging the interactive potential of ICED's collaborative space format, the session aims to advance conceptual understandings of collegiality in academic development, spark new cross-institutional dialogues, and seed future research and development collaborations focused on creating sustainable collegial environments for pedagogical growth.

Keywords: Faculty Development, Collegiality, Peer Mentoring, Teaching Cultures

Extended Summary

Background and context

Across higher education, there is increasing recognition that high-quality teaching and sustainable pedagogical development depend not only on individual teacher training but also on collegial environments that support shared reflection, mutual feedback, and the exchange of pedagogical knowledge (de Lange & Wittek, 2023; Roxa & Martensson, 2009; de Lange et al., 2023). Thus, faculty development initiatives should provide structured opportunities for teachers to learn with - and from - each other, rather than positioning pedagogical work as an individual endeavour.

This collaborative space aims to explore collegial approaches to faculty development in different organisational settings. Drawing on the experiences and empirical data from faculty development projects at our institution with collegial approaches at their core, we aim to share knowledge and spark discussions about potentials and barriers concerning collegial faculty development approaches in universities.

Although situated in different disciplinary contexts, the projects respond to the ongoing challenge that many university teachers - especially early career academics - lack opportunities for collaborative engagement with pedagogical development and often feel isolated in their teaching responsibilities. In addition, the projects share a common concern: How to design and sustain structured, meaningful collective approaches that help teachers develop pedagogical competence and a stronger professional community around teaching?

Using these projects as a starting point, the session will highlight similarities, differences, and points of intersection that can inform broader discussions about collective faculty development approaches in universities.

Why implement collective approaches? The motivation for introducing collective approaches in faculty development stems from recurring challenges: some academics feel alone in their teaching tasks, some experience a lack of collegial or departmental support, and many struggle to engage with university pedagogy as a new and unfamiliar discourse (Crome et al., 2019). In addition, academics often describe their pedagogical development as an isolated process.

Previous studies show that informal conversations as well as formal collegial approaches in faculty development can lead to increased belonging and improved teaching practices, but outcomes vary widely (Pleschová et al., 2021). Formal structures and careful facilitation can help ensure that collegial dialogue is intentional, evidence-informed, and aligned with local pedagogical aims.

Hence, in our faculty development projects, we designed collegial approaches to foster constructive peer feedback, broaden pedagogical and disciplinary understanding, promote professional dialogue, and strengthen a sense of belonging to a wider teaching community.

While our preliminary results indicate potential for strengthening collegiality around teaching, several important themes emerged for further consideration:

- The selection and framing of pedagogical topics
- Conditions for trust-building and the de-privatisation of teaching practice
- Negotiations of "storylines" and "positions" in the collegial space
- The balance between informal and formal structures in collegial initiatives
- Participants' capabilities for engaging in peer feedback
- Management of group dynamics within collegial approaches Rationale for choosing ICED's collaborative space

The projects are currently in development, generating new empirical insights while simultaneously raising conceptual and practical questions about how collegial approaches are best designed, facilitated, and embedded. The format of ICED's collaborative space is ideal for discussing these questions and for engaging participants from different educational settings, with similar or differing experiences, to gain new perspectives and spark development and research collaborations across universities. With this session we hope to enable a dynamic exchange that can expand the theoretical grounding of collegial approaches while also enriching their practical application.

Intended goals and outcomes of the session: While the conference theme encompasses broad discussions of agency and academic development, this session's primary contribution lies in illuminating and discussing concrete collective approaches in faculty development that support teacher agency. The session thus speaks directly to ICED26 conference interest in enhancing teaching cultures, supporting new teachers, and strengthening organizational learning through collaborative practices.

The session aims to:

- Present the main features of our collective approaches and emerging ideas regarding 1) what structures best support productive dialogues about teaching in Higher Education, 2) how departments can encourage greater openness about teaching, and 3) how collective approaches can become a sustainable element of faculty development.
- Invite participants to discuss and relate the approaches to their own institutional contexts and initiatives.
- Discuss how structured collegial practices can be embedded in faculty development programs and departmental cultures.
- Explore ideas for creating supportive and sustainable teacher cultures
- Identify potential collaborations among institutions working with collective approaches and/or comparative research efforts.

Participants will gain both conceptual understanding and practical inspiration for developing collective approaches that enhance pedagogical development at their own institutions.

Session structure

1. Introduction (15 min.) Brief framing of our collective approaches in faculty development and important points for discussion.

2. Facilitated small-group discussions (25 min.) Sharing perspectives, experiences and institutional considerations.

3. Collective synthesis and collaboration mapping (20 min.)

Target audience: Everyone interested in collective approaches to faculty development is welcome, and we believe this collaborative space will be of particular interest to:

- Educational developers designing faculty development initiatives and programs
- Researchers studying collective approaches to faculty development or teaching cultures

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Collaborative Space 32

Leveraging Agency in the Borderlands: Fostering Critical Consciousness for Organizational Change

Mascha Gemein, Jessica Zeitler, Kristin Winet

Abstract

As faculty and student diversity increases and teaching scholarship advances, a critical gap persists between individual academic developers' expertise and how that knowledge shapes organizational cultures and practices within teaching and learning centers, especially in borderlands contexts where multiple identities, languages, and worldviews intersect. Despite this growing diversity, however, many centers for teaching and learning remain relatively ethnocentric, i.e., focused on the dominant culture's practices, strategies, and theories. Our collaborative space session explores how academic developers can leverage their agency to integrate ethnorelative positioning into their own work, model it with their teams, and collaboratively explore border pedagogy with faculty they support. As a brief case study, three academic developers from a U.S.-Mexican borderlands institution will share their positionality, current work, and explore strategies for supporting instructors in culturally responsive, border-conscious teaching that integrates international perspectives. We will address tensions between the focus on individual intercultural perspectives in the internationalization discourse and the community and place-based approach in border pedagogy, examining how teaching centers can pursue organizational learning towards ethnorelative practices. We invite academic developers who work in borderlands to engage in structured dialogue about the conversations their centers are having—or lack—regarding intercultural competence, multilingualism, place, and teaching. Through an interactive mapping activity, participants will reflect on how well their teaching centers approach borderlands complexities in their programming, identify their own positionality as change agents, and consider strategies for building an ethnorelative perspective on teaching and learning within their centers and/or institutions.

Keywords: Border Pedagogy; Ethnorelativism; Academic Developer Agency; Organizational Learning

Extended Summary

Context & goals: The borderlands profoundly influence daily university life through student and faculty demographics, research priorities, institutional initiatives, and community outreach. Many academic developers increasingly foster equitable, culturally responsive teaching practices that are contextualized within local contexts. Yet teaching centers often remain disconnected from this context, defaulting to presumably universal, yet potentially ethnocentric, evidence-based teaching practices (Brooks, Dwyer & Rodriguez, 2022) or internationalization frameworks that may not address the specific cultural dynamics, power relations, and pedagogical opportunities. Further, many teaching centers struggle to translate individual expertise into sustained organizational learning (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999) to shape their practice. This challenge becomes particularly acute in borderlands contexts, i.e., geographic, cultural, and linguistic spaces where multiple identities, languages, and worldviews intersect and interact.

In this collaborative space, we will map our own positionality and context and lead a discussion on the confluences of scholarly frameworks, local contexts, individual agency, and organizational learning. By the end of our session, we will have:

1.Reflected on scholarly frameworks and border contexts that inform their individual and/or organizational practices and agency; and

2.Explored pathways for using individual agency to support organizational units in consciously engaging in ethnorelativistic learning and practice.

Session overview: For about 20 minutes, three academic developers working in the U.S.-Mexican borderlands will share perspectives on the tension between scholarly frameworks and organizational practice while reflecting on their agency. For our borderlands, two main frameworks are relevant, though little is done to connect them meaningfully. Border pedagogy, as articulated by Giroux (2005) and rooted in Anzaldúa's (2012) theorization of borderlands concientización, views learning as crossing cultural, linguistic, and ideological boundaries, fostering critical reflection on identity, power, and social justice. It cultivates tolerance for ambiguity and new consciousness, while remaining deeply place-based, attentive to local histories and power dynamics. Internationally conscious pedagogies, informed by intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2017) and communication frameworks (Bennett, 2013), emphasize person-centered approaches that build mindsets and strategies for navigating cultural and linguistic differences. While such global perspectives also call for examining power and inequity, practice often focuses on individual behavior rather than systemic or place-based perspectives, which can cause a disconnect from border pedagogy that is rooted in the lived experiences of specific border communities. Similarly, frameworks like culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2018) and critical consciousness don't always intersect with place-based borderlands approaches in productive ways. As academic developers working in these contexts, we face the challenge of making different frameworks and ethnorelative, critical

engagement accessible and actionable for ourselves and faculty who may not share cultural or geographic affiliations with their students and/or the borderlands, or who may be unfamiliar with intercultural learning entirely.

In the brief panel, we will reflect on our positionalities (Little, Green, & Felton, 2019) from a place-based perspective and comment on our agency within the larger context of our teaching center, outlining a case study in which capacity and learning do not align. Analyzing our situation using the 4I Framework of organizational learning (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999), we notice that while intuiting and interpreting are embodied by several people in our center, as represented by the panelists, group-based integration is not yet taking place, and we do not yet see borderlands-informed practice and programming.

For 15 minutes following the panel, participants will engage in a similar reflection and mapping process guided by a visual template, leading into a Think/Write-Pair-Share activity to recognize common patterns and key differences. Then, for the second half of the session, the focus shifts to a small group and/or forum discussion, depending on the number of participants, to explore pathways for using individual agency to support organizational units in integrating and institutionalising borderlands-conscious, ethnorelativistic learning and practice.

Relevance, audience & format rationale: This session adopts a collaborative space format because the issues academic developers face, from navigating organizational resistance to seeing themselves as change agents, benefit from shared inquiry across contexts. Engaging ICED's global community of practice ensures critical awareness of differences and ethnorelative perspectives, leveraging locally developed strategies and multilingual bodies of scholarship. Moreover, scholarship on fostering organizational agency in borderlands contexts is much-needed, and the collaborative session format supports relationship-building that can lead to future research collaborations, co-authored publications, or grant proposals.

We invite all those interested in borderlands to join this collaborative, structured dialogue about the conversations their centers are having—or not—regarding teaching and teaching support in a borderlands context. The competencies and agency of individual academic developers do not automatically translate into teaching center consciousness or practice. This gap exists for multiple reasons: we may lack clear strategies for translating individual knowledge into organizational action, we may face institutional barriers that resist change, or we may be uncertain about our own authority and roles as agents of organizational change. By modeling reflection on our own positionality and inviting participants to do the same, we aim to create a meta-level learning experience about how academic developers can lead organizational change.

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Collaborative Space 33

Teaching Large Isn't Small Work: Advocating for What Large-Class Instructors Need

Mayuko Nakamura

Abstract

Teaching large classes presents unique challenges that instructors of smaller classes do not typically face. Instructors often navigate diminished student engagement (Cahill, et al., 2017; Exeter et al., 2010; Goff et al., 2007), reduced student-student interaction (Elson et al., 2018; Mahalingam et al., 2008), increased grading loads (Broadbent et al., 2019), and emerging technologies such as AI (Meng et al., 2024), all while managing the unseen labor required to sustain engagement at scale. This session provides an opportunity for academic developers, instructors, and administrators to share their experiences, exchange strategies, and advocate for institutional support. Through guided discussion, participants will explore practical approaches to conducting meaningful assessments, leveraging technology, and fostering inclusive learning environments in high-enrollment settings. The session aims to generate actionable ideas for improving teaching conditions and student outcomes through dialogue, resource sharing, and collective advocacy for impactful change.

Keywords: Large Class, Student Engagement, Assessment, Inclusive Pedagogy

Extended Summary

Background and Context

Large-enrollment courses have become increasingly common in higher education, driven by diminishing budgets and the need to offer foundational courses to diverse student populations. While these courses are essential for institutional efficiency, they present unique pedagogical and logistical challenges. Instructors managing classes of 100, 200, or even 500 students must balance content delivery with meaningful engagement, all while navigating evolving student needs and emerging technologies such as generative AI.

The complexity of teaching at scale often involves significant "invisible labor," such as managing communication, troubleshooting technology, and addressing academic integrity concerns, which are rarely acknowledged by institutions. These challenges can lead to instructor fatigue and a decline in teaching quality if not adequately addressed. Despite the prevalence of large classes, institutional conversations about teaching often consider smaller courses as the default, leaving instructors of large classes without tailored resources or advocacy.

This collaborative session responds to these gaps by creating a space for instructors to share experiences, identify common challenges, and co-develop strategies for sustainable and effective large-class teaching.

Rationale for the Collaborative Format

In the fall 2025 semester, we hosted an event where instructors could share their experiences, resources, and strategies for teaching large classes. We received overwhelmingly positive responses and generated numerous insightful ideas that helped us advocate for large course instructors. Building on the success we achieved at our institution, I'd like to extend the dialogues to academic developers and instructors from around the world and start creating a foundation for joint research and publications.

This session is intended to create an environment where we can share candid experiences of teaching large classes and collaboratively explore strategies for improvement. The session explores the resources currently available in participants' institutions for instructors of large-enrolled courses and generates ideas to enhance our abilities to advocate for them.

By engaging in structured discussions and completing worksheets, participants will have the opportunity to exchange insights on managing high-enrollment courses, reflect on their current support strategies, and create shared resources. This collaborative approach positions the session as a springboard for ongoing research and evidence-based innovation in large-class teaching.

The session aims to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Identify Challenges: Surface the most pressing issues instructors face when teaching large classes, including workload, technology integration, and student engagement.

2. Share Strategies: Exchange evidence-informed practices for managing large-class environments effectively.

3. Build Community: Create connections among academic developers and instructors for ongoing support and resource sharing.

4. Advocate for Change: Generate recommendations for institutional policies and resources that better support large-class teaching. By the end of the session, participants will have developed a set of practical strategies, established a network of peers, and gained a shared framework for advocating improvements in teaching conditions.

Session Structure

The 60-minute session will be highly interactive and organized into three phases:

• Opening and Context Setting (10 minutes):

o Brief overview of the challenges and opportunities in large-class teaching. o Framing questions for discussion: What works? What's hard? What's needed?

• Collaborative Discussion (30 minutes):

o Participants will engage in small-group conversations focused on key themes: o Managing classroom dynamics and student engagement. o Leveraging technology (including AI) effectively. o Addressing workload and resource gaps. o Groups will document insights and recommendations on shared boards or digital platforms.

• Synthesis and Action Planning (20 minutes):

o Whole-group discussion to identify common themes and actionable steps. o Complete a list of strategies and advocacy priorities that fit their institutional context and needs.

The session is designed for:

- Instructors teaching large classes across disciplines who seek practical strategies and community support.
- Academic developers and instructional designers interested in improving resources for large-class teaching.
- Administrators and policy makers who influence workload policies and resource allocation.

Participants should join this session because it offers a rare opportunity to connect with peers, share candid experiences, and contribute to shaping institutional practices that recognize the complexity of teaching at scale. Large-class teaching is often undervalued in institutional discourse, yet it plays a critical role in student success and retention. By creating a collaborative space for academic developers, instructors, and administrators to share insights and advocate for systemic support, this session addresses an urgent need in higher education. The outcomes will inform future programming, resource development, and policy conversations.

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Collaborative Space 34

Inclusive Teaching Exchange – A Collaborative Space for Sustainable Pedagogy

Malin Östman

Abstract

Universities face increasingly diverse student groups, including a growing number of students with disabilities. This creates challenges for teachers who must provide inclusive learning environments while managing already time-pressured schedules. At Uppsala University, we are implementing a project aimed at strengthening teachers' competence to meet these challenges. This project stretches over three years, starting autumn 2025.

The purpose is to shift focus from individual accommodations to adaptable teaching practices that benefit all students, reduce teacher stress, and promote sustainability in academic work. Participants in this collaborative space will engage in dialogue and practical idea exchange, contributing to a community of practice that advances equity and quality in higher education.

Keywords: Inclusive teaching, pedagogics, disabilities, faculty development

Extended Summary

Background and Context

It is a fact that Swedish higher education is becoming increasingly diverse both due to broadened recruitment and an increasing number of students with needs and disabilities. The number of students receiving targeted pedagogical support at our university has quadrupled in the past decade, now totalling around 2,700. In addition to this, many of course have unregistered needs.

This diversity enriches learning but also creates challenges for teachers who must provide inclusive environments while managing heavy workloads. This can create stress and a bad work environment. Inclusive teaching methods—such as clarity, structure, and contextualization—benefit all or most students and reduce the need for individual accommodations. However, many teachers lack knowledge of these strategies. Uppsala Universities initiative via this project, aims to strengthen teachers' competence in inclusive teaching, shifting focus from individual accommodations to adaptable practices that work for diverse needs.

Rationale for the Collaborative Format

This collaborative space enables educators and pedagogic developers as well as everyone interested, to share experiences and to exchange strategies and solutions. There is a need for more discussion around how to manage the increased number of students with disabilities in the higher education context and much is to be gained by sharing experiences.

Goals and Outcomes

The collaborative space aims to increase teachers' competence in inclusive teaching by learning from peers. The goal is also to create contacts and networks for future collaboration and sharing.

Session Structure

The session will be very interactive and be structured (this is just a suggestion and may be subject to minor changes):

- Introduction (10 min): Overview of UU's project and challenges.
- Collaborative dialogue (30 min): Small-group discussions on barriers and experiences.
- Idea co-creation (30 min): Groups develop practical strategies.
- Reflection (20 min): Summarize insights and next steps for building a community of practice.

Hopefully, participants will leave with actionable ideas and a network of peers committed to inclusive education.

Target Audience

University teachers, academic developers, and educational leaders seeking practical strategies for inclusive teaching. Policy makers and administrators interested in reducing administrative burdens and improving student success are also welcome as well as other interested in the theme.

Collaborative Space 35

Tapping on Identity and Competencies: Researchers' Assets for Navigating the Transdisciplinary Journey

Hussein Zeidan, Laura de Groot, Amber Mers

Abstract

Transdisciplinary approaches have emerged as important avenues for addressing complex societal problems, both within and beyond academia. These approaches transcend disciplinary boundaries, fostering connections among disciplines and engaging non-academic stakeholders in problem-solving. As a result, a considerable scholarly effort has been dedicated to identifying and recommending the key skills and competencies required for (successful) transdisciplinary endeavours, both in research and educational contexts. However, current studies often overlook the role of individual identities in developing such competencies for transdisciplinarity, including the multifaceted array of values, beliefs, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and backgrounds that greatly influence one's participation in and contributions to transdisciplinary work. To move beyond this, we seek to broaden the current discourse by highlighting the importance of individual identities in developing transdisciplinary competencies and exploring which aspects are considered most crucial for engaging in transdisciplinary environments. Therefore, this workshop provides a space for academics, lecturers and practitioners to reflect on their individual identities and to uncover the elements they consider vital in supporting them in their transdisciplinary journey. The workshop exercises leverage on the reflective mindset we champion in transdisciplinary environments, allowing us and the participants to move beyond surface-level narratives and engage in deeper conversations about the complexities of competency development.

Keywords: Transdisciplinarity, Competency development, Identity, Reflexivity, Academic development

Extended Summary

Transdisciplinary approaches have emerged as important avenues for addressing complex societal problems (Klein, 2015). Although the literature presents a wide range of definitions and interpretations of transdisciplinarity, most share common elements, such as transcending disciplinary boundaries, fostering connections among different (academic) fields, and engaging with stakeholders beyond academia to tackle complex societal challenges (Klein, 2015).

As transdisciplinary approaches gain popularity, there is a growing interest in exploring the competencies required to navigate transdisciplinary spaces successfully (Redman & Wiek, 2021). However, this focus can obscure the diversity of skills involved, the processes through which they are developed, and the dynamic trade-offs inherent in transdisciplinary work. Moreover, current studies often overlook the role of individual identity in competency development for transdisciplinarity. The multifaceted array of values, beliefs, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and backgrounds that shape individual identities strongly influences one's participation in and contributions to transdisciplinary endeavours (King & Kitchener, 2010). To move beyond the prevailing emphasis on acquiring lists of competencies for managing complexity needed in transdisciplinary research and educational settings, we aim to broaden the discourse by emphasising the significance of researchers' and practitioners' individual identities in developing these skills. It is therefore essential to explore which aspects of identity individuals consider most critical for their engagement in transdisciplinary environments.

In this context, we propose organising a workshop at the ICED-26 conference, inviting scholars, researchers, lecturers, and practitioners to reflect on their individual identities and explore how these shape their engagement in transdisciplinary contexts. The workshop will focus on uncovering the elements of participants' identities that they consider vital in supporting their roles as transdisciplinary researchers and/or practitioners. We are eager to contribute to the conference theme of Agency and Academic Development, encompassing both knowledge creation and teaching and learning practices. We welcome participants interested in exploring their (professional) identity and exercising agency in transdisciplinary contexts, as well as those committed to fostering transdisciplinary teaching and learning.

We believe that participating in a creative reflection exercise, drawing upon personal experiences and the development of transdisciplinary competencies, can lead to the emergence of intriguing insights and contribute to fostering the reflective mindset that we champion throughout the transdisciplinary journey. The exercise will also help us to identify the key milestones and challenges of our fellow researchers'/practitioners' transdisciplinary journey. During the workshop session, a metaphorical "backpack" will be used to symbolise what participants have accumulated throughout their life's journey. This includes essential items they have chosen to carry and rely on, reflecting on why their backpacks appear as they do. Subsequently, participants will explore how their backpacks can be further filled with new essentials to support their ongoing transdisciplinary paths.

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Posters 6

From threshold concepts to expert reasoning in Cultural Heritage Conservation Education

María-Ángeles Carabal-Montagud, Amparo Fernández March, Javier Paricio Royo

Abstract

In university education within complex professional disciplines, such as Cultural Heritage Conservation and Restoration, teaching staff recurrently identify difficulties related to students' deep understanding, particularly in transversal content and processes. This paper presents an institutional teaching-research project developed at the Universitat Politècnica de València, whose primary aim has been to analyse and characterise these difficulties from an interdisciplinary and collaborative perspective. The project is grounded in theoretical frameworks such as threshold concepts (Meyer & Land, 2003; Barradell, 2013), learning bottlenecks (Pace, 2017), and the Decoding the Disciplines model (Middendorf & Pace, 2004), all integrated within a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning approach. Through a consensus-based methodology, teaching staff from different disciplinary areas engaged in the decoding of expert reasoning, comparing expert and novice perspectives and designing pedagogical devices aimed at making visible the thinking processes involved in professional decision-making. Rather than reporting learning outcomes, this article focuses on describing the type of academic work undertaken, the methodological processes followed, and the value of fostering teaching communities of practice to support the development of deep understanding.

Keywords: Deep Understanding, Expert Reasoning, Threshold Concepts, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), Communities of Practice

Extended Summary

Introduction

In university programmes oriented towards professional practice, knowledge acquisition goes beyond content assimilation and involves the development of discipline-specific ways of thinking, reasoning, and decision-making. In the Degree in Cultural Heritage Conservation and Restoration at the Universitat Politècnica de València, this demand is reinforced by the programme's interdisciplinary nature, integrating knowledge from fields such as chemistry, physics, iconography, photography, graphic documentation, and art history. Teaching staff consistently observe that many students experience persistent difficulties in coherently integrating this knowledge, often resulting in conceptual errors, incomplete reasoning, or poorly grounded decisions in complex professional contexts. These difficulties become particularly evident in advanced stages of the programme, when students must transfer learning to real intervention scenarios. In response, the project initially adopted the threshold concepts framework (Meyer & Land, 2003), understood as conceptual gateways that transform disciplinary understanding but may also act as points of blockage. As the work progressed, this assumption was reconsidered, and the focus gradually shifted towards analysing expert reasoning processes underlying many of the identified learning difficulties

Theoretical framework

The project is grounded in a combination of complementary theoretical approaches. On the one hand, threshold concepts theory provides a useful framework for understanding why certain forms of learning are particularly troublesome and transformative (Meyer & Land, 2003; Land, Meyer & Baillie, 2010). However, several authors have highlighted the methodological complexities involved in identifying threshold concepts, as well as the need for rigorous and participatory approaches (Barradell, 2013). On the other hand, the Decoding the Disciplines paradigm (Middendorf & Pace, 2004; Pace, 2017) offers analytical tools to examine learning bottlenecks, understood not only as problematic concepts but also as disciplinary reasoning steps that students are unable to carry out. This approach places particular emphasis on making explicit the cognitive processes that experts apply automatically, yet which are rarely taught in an explicit manner.

Finally, the project is situated within the framework of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), which conceptualises university teaching as a legitimate space for systematic inquiry, critical reflection, and the shared construction of pedagogical knowledge (Paricio, Fernández & Fernández, 2019).

Methodological approach

The work was developed as an institutional Teaching Innovation and Improvement Project (PIME) funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (ICE UPV), involving teaching staff from transversal subjects within the degree and master's programmes in Cultural Heritage Conservation and Restoration. The methodological design followed a consensus-based approach (Barradell, 2013), creating a shared interdisciplinary space for reflection. The process combined discipline-specific literature review with guided training and decoding sessions, focused on identifying expert reasoning processes. A key element was the systematic comparison between expert and novice perspectives, which revealed that many learning difficulties were better understood as issues of deep understanding or learning

bottlenecks, rather than threshold concepts in a strict sense. Students were also actively involved through qualitative and quantitative methods, including open-ended questionnaires, thinking-aloud activities, and focus groups, enabling the exploration of learning processes from their own perspectives within an ethical, non-assessment-oriented framework.

Types of teaching practices developed

Building on the decoding and analytical work, a range of teaching practices were designed with the aim of making disciplinary thinking visible and fostering deep understanding. These practices included metacognitive activities, guided reflection devices, expert critical thinking workshops, and progressive scaffolding strategies, adapted to the specific characteristics of each discipline. Beyond the particularities of each subject area, these interventions share a set of common principles: the explicit articulation of reasoning processes, the use of error as a learning resource, the verbalisation of thinking, and the creation of spaces for critical dialogue between teaching staff and students. The goal was not the transmission of additional content, but rather the conscious reconstruction of the ways of thinking inherent to professional practice.

Value for academic development

The main contribution of this work does not lie in the presentation of learning outcomes, but rather in the description of a form of academic work that positions teaching staff as researchers of their own teaching practice. The project has fostered the development of teaching communities of practice in which shared language, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies have been developed to address complex learning challenges. Moreover, the approach adopted is transferable to other university contexts and professional disciplines, particularly those characterised by interdisciplinarity and decision-making under conditions of uncertainty. The project contributes to ongoing debates on academic development, deep learning, and the professionalisation of university teaching.

Conclusions and future directions

This work highlights the value of combining the frameworks of threshold concepts, learning bottlenecks, and Decoding the Disciplines within a SoTL approach to investigate deep understanding in higher education. The experience developed suggests that many student learning difficulties are linked to unarticulated expert reasoning processes, reinforcing the need to continue researching and sharing teaching practices aimed at making disciplinary thinking visible. The project opens a line of work with continuity, focused on teaching improvement, shared reflection, and the strengthening of academic communities committed to meaningful learning.

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Enhancing Instructor Knowledge of Generative AI in Higher Education through Educational Development: A Scholarship of Academic Development Project

Robert Kordts, Belinda Muñoz Solheim

Abstract

The rapid advancement of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) calls for targeted educational development to support instructors in navigating its pedagogical implications. This poster reports on a Scholarship of Academic Development (SoAD) project (Eggins & Macdonald, 2003) that evaluated an educational development course designed to enhance teachers' knowledge of genAI in higher education. The course was guided by the TPACK framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006), focusing on pedagogical knowledge (PK), technology-related knowledge (TK), and their intersection (TPK). Sixteen educators participated in the study, completing pre- and post-course questionnaires that assessed PK, genAI-TK, and genAI-TPK (Schmidt et al., 2009). Items also examined instructors' perceptions of genAI's teaching opportunities and challenges (Kiryakova & Angelova, 2023). Results demonstrated significant growth in genAI-TK and genAI-TPK, while PK remained stable. Participants additionally reported heightened recognition of opportunities and fewer perceived challenges in applying genAI in teaching. These findings suggest that the course effectively strengthened instructors' genAI-related knowledge and positively influenced their pedagogical perspectives. The stability of PK underscores the importance of further investigation, including qualitative observation data collected during the course sessions. Data from two course implementations (spring and fall 2024) will be presented at the conference. By situating this work within SoAD, the study contributes to ongoing discussions on how academic developers can cultivate epistemic agency, advance knowledge, and foster inclusive, sustainable pedagogical practices in the face of digital transformation.

Keywords: generative AI, TPACK framework, quantitative research, Scholarship of Academic Development (SoAD)

Extended Summary

Aim

Generative AI (genAI) and large language models (LLMs) are rapidly reshaping higher education, producing both opportunity and uncertainty. Teachers and students request clearer guidance, training, and norms for ethical, effective use. This Scholarship of Academic Development (SoAD) poster investigates whether and how an educational development course at the University XY in spring and fall 2024 enhanced instructors' knowledge of genAI and shifted their perceptions of its possibilities and challenges. We examine changes in instructors' knowledge related to genAI and perceived opportunities/challenges and consider implications for academic development and policy.

Theoretical Framework and Methodological Approach

We conceptualize the work as Scholarship of Academic Development (SoAD; Eggins & Macdonald, 2003), foregrounding how academic developers build, share, and mobilize knowledge to influence teaching practice and institutional culture. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge framework (TPACK) provides the analytic lens to distinguish and relate instructors' pedagogical knowledge (PK), technology knowledge tailored to generative AI (genAI-TK), and technological–pedagogical knowledge tailored to generative AI (genAI-TPK) (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Koehler et al., 2013).

Students-as-partners in SoAD. A student co-author acted as co-researcher, leading qualitative data collection, memoing, coding, theme interpretation, and co-writing. This partnership strengthens credibility/ecological validity and models inclusive SoAD practice. It also resonates with students-as-partners approaches that advocate collaborative sense-making around AI norms and practices.

Design and procedures. We employed a sequential mixed-methods pre–post design (Creswell, 2021). Quantitatively, matched pre/post responses were available for 15 instructors. Instruments included: (a) an adaptation of Schmidt et al.'s (2009) TPACK scales to assess PK, genAI-TK, and genAI-TPK; and (b) items on perceived opportunities and challenges of genAI in teaching adapted from Kiryakova and Angelova (2023). Qualitatively, observation memos were compiled and subjected to qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2000). The student co-author and faculty co-author jointly engaged in collaborative analysis. Ethical approval was secured (UiB RETTE; Sikt/NSD). Participation was voluntary with informed consent; data were pseudonymized and securely stored.

Quantitative results

Internal consistencies were acceptable for the TPACK-adapted subscales (Schmidt et al., 2009). Repeated-measures ANOVAs showed significant gains from pre to post in genAI-TK, $F(1,15) = 25.72$, $p < .001$, and genAI-TPK, $F(1,15) = 32.00$, $p < .001$; PK showed a non-significant increase, $F(1,15) = 2.25$, $p = .15$. For perceptions, a significant interaction indicated a marginally significant rising endorsement of opportunities with constant emphasis on challenges from pre to post, $F(1,15) = 3.52$, $p = .08$. Reliability for the opportunities/challenges scales was modest but usable ($\alpha > .60$) given adaptation (Kiryakova & Angelova, 2023).

The course targeted genAI-specific knowledge and its pedagogical integration, and participants' gains concentrated precisely in genAI-TK and genAI-TPK. PK stability may reflect the shorter timeframe, small sample, and the course's design focus. The attitudinal shift suggests structured, critical engagement can reduce apprehension while elevating pedagogically meaningful use cases.

Qualitative insights

Observation memos yielded six interconnected themes: (1) teacher concerns; (2) perceived benefits; (3) implementation challenges; (4) pedagogical strategies; (5) ethical considerations; (6) student reactions/engagement. Participants also reported feelings of isolation as early adopters, underscoring the need for communities of practice and institutional coordination. Together, these patterns echo sector surveys that call for clear guidance and joint sense-making between staff and students (Johnston et al., 2024; UNESCO, 2023).

Limitations

The study is exploratory with a small, self-selected cohort of likely early adopters (Rogers, 1962). The design is non-experimental; causality cannot be inferred. Some perception scales exhibited only moderate reliability after adaptation. Ongoing data collection in the third course run (autumn 2025) and interviews will broaden and deepen the evidence base.

Theoretical and Educational Significance

Advancing epistemic agency in academic development. Our SoAD approach positions academic developers as stewards of responsible innovation: convening reflective, interdisciplinary spaces where teachers interrogate LLM capabilities and limits without anthropomorphizing AI, and where knowledge is co-constructed through practice.

Results. Results support targeted, activity-rich designs that build genAI-TK (mechanics, limitations, bias, citation/provenance) and genAI-TPK (how pedagogy changes because of LLMs); embed critical evaluation of AI outputs; and model assessment strategies that prioritize validity over mere cheating prevention (Dawson et al., 2024). Pedagogical moves include prompt-engineering as literacy, structured comparison of human vs. AI drafts, reflective disclosure of AI use, and discipline-sensitive scenarios.

Policy. Institutions should promulgate clear, program-level guidance on acceptable use, transparency, and citation norms; provide privacy-aware tool access; and sponsor communities of practice that reduce adopter isolation. AI audits and ongoing professional learning are recommended.

Research. Future work will expand samples, incorporate interviews, and track persistence of knowledge gains. Comparative designs across disciplines can surface contextual moderators of impact.

Conclusion

A short, well-scaffolded intervention can strengthen genAI-TK/TPK and shift perceptions toward productive, responsible use, supporting inclusive and sustainable academic development.

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Academic development approaches for Blended Learning at University of Trento

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Abstract

Blended Learning (BL) is nowadays widely spreading at university level in response to the current need for flexibility in learning situations, thus combining two traditional models: the in-person and the online (synchronous or asynchronous) models in which the use of computer-based technologies increasingly assumes a central role in the teaching/learning process (Graham et al., 2005; Graham, 2006).

The University of Trento has also taken up the challenge of introducing teaching methods in BL, responding to emerging and current training needs, launching the Blended Learning trial in June 2025, promoting a flexible and personalized model that integrates in-person activities and online learning for bachelor and master degree students.

The model, developed within a team of experts of our university through the Teacher and Learning Center (TLC), adopted a methodological framework based on three approaches: Flipped Classroom, Individual and Group Active Learning (Bruni et al., 2023).

Our contribution focuses on the teachers' training methodological and technological program and the services that TLC developed in order to support the implementation of the BL, also presenting the mapping of the learning scenarios and the methodological-technological choices planned for the trial.

Keywords: Blended Learning, University Teacher Training, Teaching Methodologies, FD Impact evaluation

Extended Summary

The contribution presents the model for the development of the BL by outlining organizational and instrumental aspects along with preliminary results of the monitoring process. In June 2025 the University of Trento, through the TLC, formally launched the Blended Learning (BL) pilot project. The project aims at increasing flexibility and quality of teaching and learning, identifying three main objectives:

- meet the changing needs of the student community;
- increase the attractiveness and inclusiveness of its educational offerings;
- enhance international visibility.

Theoretical framework and methodological approach

In line with national and international literature (Vaughan et al., 2013), the methodological framework of this BL project is based on the proposal of three fundamental teaching scenarios: Flipped Classroom (FC), Individual Active Learning (IAL) and Group Active Learning (GAL) (Akçayır & Akçayır, 2018; Alterman & Harsch 2015). As designing BL activities requires a reconceptualization of teaching/learning process, the first phase of the project focused on educational development activities and preparation of documents and design materials. For this reason, the University of Trento has implemented a series of measures and made available several resources to support the academic staff:

- guidelines for the didactic-methodological, technological design, and reporting of BL activities;
- workshops on the three methodological approaches for the practical testing of the three scenarios integrated with Moodle technologies and a specific webinar on the administrative aspects of reporting BL activities in the register;
- Moodle community;
- Moodle templates illustrating the three approaches and a combination of them, to be used as models adaptable to different disciplines and learning objectives;
- consultancy sessions with TLC instructional designers;
- tutor facilitators.

This specific training consisted of practical workshops in webinar format on the three methodological approaches integrated with Moodle technologies and a specific webinar on the administrative aspects; at the same time teachers could interact in the Moodle community (i.e. forum and FAQs) and try operational tools, guidelines, and different design templates. Moreover, teachers had the possibility to receive personalized support from instructional designers of our consultancy service. Specific seminars for master students to be trained and hired as tutors in support of the BL activities were also offered. The trial involves a total of 62 volunteer teachers from 13 departments, for a total of 70 courses.

The second phase of the project consists of the monitoring of the experimentation based on a mixed-methods design combining quantitative tools (pre and post-trial surveys for both teachers and students and learning analytics) and focus groups for teachers and students.

Preliminary results

To collect empirical data of the entire implementation process, we created a database that contains quantitative data (i.e., number of participants, teaching hours) along with qualitative information from the reports of the consultancy sessions. Another documentation tool was identified in the planning documents that each teacher prepared. Through the drafting of these planning documents, the teaching and methodological choices made by teachers were formalized together with the corresponding integration of Moodle tools. Teachers structured their courses on the Moodle platform, supported by TLC staff, both for technical and methodological aspects required for online activities. Table1 and table 2 report a synthesis of the BL mapping.

Table 1. Learning scenarios and activities (occurrences)

Learning Scenario	**Occurrences** ***n***
FC - Flipped Classroom	12
IAL - Individual Active Learning	12
GAL - Group Active Learning	18
Activity Type	**Occurrences** ***n***
Reflective activities	21
Video Lessons	19
Group collaborative activities	18
Questions collection for the in-person lesson	17
In-depth resources	16
Papers/presentations/posters - other products	15
Formative self-assessment - online content	15
Feedback on activities	13
Metacognitive activities	11
Group discussions	10
Formative evaluation of in-person lesson	10
Collaborative writing	3
Individual exercises	1

Table 2. Activities and Moodle Tools (occurrences)

Moodle Tools	Occurrences *n*
Task	43
Group forum	21
Video - lessons or additional resources	20
Quiz_assessment	17
Board	15
Individual forum	14
Personalized feedback (individual/group)	11
Quiz_self assessment	11
Journal - metacognitive diary	11
Glossary	3
Wiki - collaborative writing	3

Theoretical and Educational Significance

The project reinforces the role of institutional TLC in supporting faculty development and fostering innovation in teaching practices. This work contributes to the theoretical development of blended learning (BL) in higher education by operationalizing a comprehensive framework of different learning approaches. Through the mapping of pedagogical and technological interventions, the study demonstrates how BL can enhance teaching flexibility, inclusiveness, and engagement within university contexts. Its implications extend to policy by providing a replicable educational development model aligned with national regulatory frameworks, emphasizing the need for structured teacher support and continuous monitoring; results could evaluate long-term impacts on student engagement and achievement, and examine how BL strategies can be adapted across disciplines and cultural contexts.

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IDEO as a Catalyst for Teaching Innovation and Internationalization at UAH

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Abstract

The Center for Teaching Innovation Support and Online Studies (IDEO, for short) is the center responsible for orchestrating the main teaching and learning innovative actions at [Name of University], Spain. The main purpose of this contribution is to provide some details on the organizational and strategic transformation brought with its creation and consolidation at [Name of University]: coordinating the calls for innovative projects and innovative groups, organizing an annual workshop collecting innovative experiences in teaching along a course (EIDU), and promoting the internationalization of teaching innovation within the framework of the alliance of European universities EUGLOH, in which [Name of University] is involved. The contribution concludes with some brief remarks on future directions for IDEO.

Keywords: teaching and learning center, institutional innovative action, internationalization of teaching practices, organizational transformation

Extended Summary

The center IDEO (Apoyo a la Innovación Docente y Estudios Online / Center for Teaching Innovation Support and Online Studies) was created to provide a instrumental support for teaching at [Name of University], Spain, in 2019. IDEO manages the main innovative actions at [Name of University], together with the virtual learning platform implemented at our university. We highlight the following actions:

Teaching Innovation Groups (GID). This is one of the distinctive features of our university compared with most innovative programmes at other institutions. The GIDs were created to improve teaching quality and to foster continuous reflection on our educational model. They provide a stable framework for groups of teachers to investigate teaching methodologies or other forms of pedagogical innovation over an extended period of time, in contrast with one-off projects carried out within a single academic year. Excellence Groups are additionally distinguished from the rest by the trajectory and achievements of their members. This structure is designed to mirror the organisation of research groups commonly found in Spanish universities. There are currently more than seventy active groups (twenty-seven of them recognised as Excellence Groups) covering all branches of knowledge and working with a wide range of methodologies, such as flipped classroom approaches, educational tools, and others. This structure has become a key element of our university's identity, with more than six hundred teachers participating in one of these groups over the past year Teaching Innovation projects (PID). The annual call for projects provides a participatory framework for targeted innovative actions carried out mainly within a single academic year. In recent years, we have promoted the so-called Ai3 projects, consisting of innovative initiatives with significant institutional impact or particular strategic relevance. The participation of [Name of University] in the EUGLOH European Alliance of Universities has also motivated a coordinated call that supports innovative actions involving several European partner universities. The workshop EIDU (Encuentro de Innovación Docente Universitaria – Workshop on innovative teaching at university) is organized by IDEO. Each edition creates an open space for dialogue, debate and reflection on higher education teaching, inviting all members of the university community to share their experiences. Held at the end of every academic year, EIDU has evolved considerably since its first edition in the early 2000s. Recent editions have focused on a major topic in higher education, featuring experts who address the theme from a range of perspectives. The most recent edition was devoted to AI and its impact on university teaching, including contributions from institutional representatives, academics, legal experts, and a round table with students from different disciplines. The 2026 edition will run in parallel with the first EUGLOH Conference on Pedagogical Development, and both events will take place during the same week at [Name of University], further strengthening the international dimension of our teaching innovation initiatives. Another action promoting the internationalization of teaching innovation is the Innovative Coffees (Cafés Innovadores), organized in collaboration with EUGLOH. These informal meetings, held twice each semester, provide a space for teachers to discuss shared interests related to teaching innovation. Over the last academic year, several topics were addressed, including flipped classroom methodology, service-learning, game-based learning, teaching through English, etc., with an average attendance of more than forty teachers.

IDEO is currently promoting additional initiatives, such as a new award recognizing the trajectory of an individual teacher or a group of teachers, and a call to support participation in teaching innovation conferences, allowing academics to disseminate the outcomes of their innovative projects. Looking ahead, there are many possible directions for continued development, with a strong emphasis on further enhancing the internationalization of teaching innovation at [Name of University] while always keeping in mind the fundamental purpose of innovation: improving student learning experience.

Designing Aspirational Oaths: an Ethics of Care Framework

Valentina Rossi, Ab Hausel

Abstract

This poster outlines a structured approach to designing aspirational oaths in STEM higher education institutions (HEIs) based on Tronto's ethics of care framework. Using the Archimedean Oath as a case study, it proposes a transferable process applicable across disciplines. Aspirational oaths differ from other ethical codes by promoting values that extend beyond compliance, encouraging professionals to prioritize societal responsibility. The Archimedean Oath demonstrates a student-led, evolving commitment shaped by social and technological challenges, yet its design process remains insufficiently formalized. To address this, the poster introduces a five-step model grounded in care-ethics: responsibility, solidarity, attentiveness, competence, and responsiveness. This framework supports inclusive stakeholder engagement, attention to marginalized voices, and iterative refinement. The proposed approach enables HEIs to develop context-specific, collaboratively designed oaths that integrate ethical reflection with technical education, fostering responsible and socially aware STEM professionals.

Keywords: Archimedean Oath, aspirational oath, Ethics of care

Extended Summary

Aim of the Poster and Implications: This poster illustrates a step-by-step process for designing aspirational oaths for STEM higher education institutions (HEIs) based on Tronto's ethics of care approach. Inspired by a case study from engineering education, the Archimedean Oath, the design process is structured such that the resulting aspirational oath can be adopted widely throughout STEM fields, including architecture. This poster addresses STEM educators and academic developers responsible for institutional policy who aim to adopt an aspirational oath for their department or institution. Undergraduate and graduate students are welcome to interact with the poster as primary users of the oath. This contribution is also directed to industry leaders seeking young professionals equipped to address ethical and sustainability challenges.

Aspirational Oaths in HEIs: A commitment to ethics can be expressed in different ways. The goal of disciplinary codes is to ensure that professionals behave in accordance with specific disciplinary values and norms (e.g., corporate codes of conduct). Advisory codes help exercise moral judgments in practice on the basis of more general values and norms, typically by appointing a person of trust with whom problems can be discussed (e.g., SEFI ethics code of conduct). Finally, aspirational codes do not only have the objective to express the moral values of a profession to the disciplinary community, but also to the outside world (Van de Poel & Royakkers, 2023). Given these distinctions, a question arises: if the ethical commitment is already expressed elsewhere, why are aspirational tools needed? Brown et al. (2025) provided a twofold answer: first, aspirational elements can incentivize considering minimum requirements critically and improve designs beyond legal standards. Second, the aspirational elements can serve as a reminder that, in conflictual situations, the engineer's duty is to prioritize the aspirations of the profession. These two claims are equally valid for all professionals learning to design tools and/or interventions throughout their studies.

Archimedean Oath as a Case Study: In Europe, a notable example of aspirational commitment in STEM education is the Archimedean Oath from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL), a professional ethical pledge adopted by engineers, architects, and scientists, which emphasizes integrity, responsibility, and societal contribution (Clerget, 2024; Rossi et al., 2024). Other such oaths exist, for example the Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer in Canada and the Order of the Engineer in the United States. However, while these are formally celebrated at graduation in a symbolic manner (e.g., the acquisition of a ring) (Wedel, 2023), the Archimedean Oath is not characterized by a long standing ritual. On the contrary, the value of this oath lays in its roots and the process that led to 3 its design and acquisition. Originally developed in the 1990s in response to the social unrest around the role of nuclear power in energy provision, and subsequently revised in 2023 to address rapid technological developments and the implications of climate change, the oath has been created through student-led initiatives and associations (Clerget, 2024). As explained by one of the alumni who wrote the oath in the 1990s, they felt the need to "emphasise their commitment to their institution and global responsibility". This highlights that students did not wait for the institution to impose ethical goals but owned the process to express care to their peers, their institution and society. A need for a streamlined approach to design aspirational oaths that are in line with HEI's cultural and institutional content has been identified (Rossi et al., 2024).

Ethics of a Care as Framework to Design Aspirational Oaths: Tronto's ethics of care framework (2013) provides a mindful guide to express an ethical commitment by making sure that all actors' voices, including students, are heard and represented. Five aspects can be used to organize this description of care: responsibility, solidarity, attentiveness, competence, and responsiveness. This poster illustrates how they can be translated into a scaffolded process to design an aspirational oath. This approach is not new; it is inspired by the Ethics of Care Inquiry proposed by Jurado et al. (2026) aimed at helping students develop case studies based on these five dimensions and guiding questions.

1. Responsibility helps with mapping relationships and affected parties. As Tronto (2013) treats ethics as relational rather than individual, this step helps designers include the necessary stakeholders (students, administrative staff, professors, deans) throughout the design process. To facilitate this step a guiding question is: “who will be affected, directly or indirectly, now or later?”

2. Solidarity means identifying absent or weakly represented voices. It is important to account for the voices that cannot be heard (e.g., minoritised groups, nonhumans, etc). A guiding question at this stage is: “whose voice is least likely to shape this decision, and may be strongly affected by it?”

3. Attentiveness investigates the understanding of lived experiences and needs. It requires exercising the ability to account for perspectives of others through prior research. Phrased as a question: “how would students who take the oath react to the ethical commitment?”

4. Competence refers to proposing technical and ethical responses. Ethics requires technical knowledge, which needs to be acquired in the curriculum. The question at this stage is “what elements of students’ educational programme prepared them to face such ethical commitment?”. This part is not directly in the aspirational oath’s statements; however, it is fundamental to provide students with the instruments to comply with those statements.

5. Responsiveness evaluates the effects and remaining open to revision. As the case study of the Archimedean Oath demonstrates, it has been discussed and revised on several occasions to confirm relevance.

To conclude, aspirational oaths should be the fruit of a collaborative design process across representative bodies, from students to institutions. Since each HEI’s context is different, it could be detrimental to impose the same oath that has been used elsewhere. For this reason, a five-step approach grounded in Tronto’s ethics of care framework and Jurado et al.’s Ethics of Care Inquiry model is recommended to design an aspirational oath that meets the unique context of each institution.

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Underlying Approaches to Assessment in AI Policies in Higher Education. From Control to Agency

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Abstract

The rapid emergence of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has led universities to develop policies aimed at guiding its use in teaching, learning, and assessment. Assessment has become a focal point, as GenAI challenges established assumptions about authorship, originality, validity, and evidence of learning. While institutional policies seek to safeguard academic standards, they increasingly acknowledge GenAI's pedagogical potential. But how these documents conceptualise assessment in AI-mediated contexts and how they frame student and teacher agency? This study presents a comparative analysis of GenAI-related policies from 14 universities in Switzerland and Spain. Drawing on Chan's AI Ecological Education Policy Framework (2023) and Bacchi's problematisation approach (2012), it explores how assessment is constructed across governance, operational, and pedagogical levels, and how policies balance risks and opportunities associated with GenAI.

Findings show that policies articulate a dual narrative. On the one hand, they foreground concerns about academic integrity, plagiarism, transparency, bias, and data protection. On the other, they increasingly promote pedagogically oriented assessment practices, including formative, authentic, and competency-based approaches. Policies also recognise GenAI's potential to enhance feedback and support self-regulated learning, while consistently emphasising human oversight. Overall, some documents position students as developing epistemic agents and teachers as pedagogical designers requiring institutional support. However, this coexists with more restrictive representations in which students are framed as potential sources of misconduct and teachers as responsible for enforcing compliance. The study concludes that current GenAI policies function as transitional documents that oscillate between control-oriented and pedagogically oriented visions.

Keywords: University Policies, Assessment, GenAI, Teacher Agency, Student Agency

Extended Summary

The rapid emergence of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) has prompted universities to develop institutional policies, guidelines, and regulations intended to guide its use in teaching, learning, and assessment. Assessment has become a focal point of these policy responses, as GenAI challenges established assumptions about authorship, originality, validity, and evidence of learning. While institutional policies aim to safeguard academic standards, they also increasingly acknowledge GenAI's pedagogical potential. However, little empirical research has examined how these documents conceptualise assessment in AI-mediated contexts or how they frame student and teacher agency. This contribution presents a comparative analysis of GenAI-related assessment policies from universities in Switzerland and Spain. Its aim is to examine how assessment is constructed within these policies, how risks and possibilities are balanced, and how policy discourses enable or constrain student epistemic agency and teacher pedagogical agency. Rather than evaluating policy effectiveness, the study explores how institutional narratives shape emerging assessment practices in higher education.

Theoretical framework and methodological approach

The study is grounded in two complementary theoretical perspectives: the AI Ecological Education Policy Framework (Chan, 2023) and Bacchi's "What's the Problem Represented to be?" (WPR) approach to policy analysis (Bacchi, 2012). Chan's framework conceptualises AI policy as an educational ecosystem spanning governance (macro), operational (meso), and pedagogical (micro) levels. This multi-level lens is particularly relevant for analysing assessment, as it allows examination of how institutional regulations, support structures, and pedagogical guidance interact to shape assessment purposes, formats, and feedback practices in AI-mediated environments.

Bacchi's WPR approach provides a critical discursive lens, foregrounding how policies construct certain issues as "problems" requiring intervention. Applied to GenAI and assessment, this approach enables analysis of how policies frame the challenges and opportunities associated with AI, which assumptions underpin these framings, and which alternatives remain marginal or unarticulated. Methodologically, the study employs a qualitative, comparative document analysis of GenAI-related assessment policies from 14 universities in Switzerland and Spain. The corpus includes binding regulations, institutional policies, guidelines, and position papers published between 2023 and 2025. Documents were coded deductively using an analysis grid informed by both frameworks, focusing on representations of assessment purposes, formats, feedback, academic integrity, transparency, equity, training, and the attributed roles of students and teachers.

Key findings, arguments, and outcomes

The analysis reveals that GenAI policies across both national contexts consistently articulate a dual narrative of risk and pedagogical opportunity, particularly in relation to assessment. On the one hand, policies clearly foreground concerns about academic integrity, plagiarism, authorship, bias, data protection, and transparency. On the other hand, many

documents explicitly acknowledge GenAI's potential to support learning-oriented assessment practices, feedback processes, and the development of higher-order competencies. At the governance level, assessment is frequently framed as a site requiring protection to preserve the credibility of qualifications. This leads to the articulation of rules regarding permitted and prohibited AI uses, disclosure requirements, and accountability mechanisms. However, these regulatory elements are often accompanied by pedagogical rationales: assessment should be redesigned not merely to exclude AI, but to better capture reasoning, judgement, creativity, and reflective thinking; competencies that extend beyond AI-generated output. At the pedagogical level, policies in both contexts increasingly promote assessment formats aligned with formative, authentic, and competency-based approaches. Spanish universities, in particular, emphasise process-oriented assessment, staged submissions, reflective writing, and continuous feedback. Swiss universities adopt a more structured articulation of competency-based frameworks, recommending diverse formats such as oral examinations, project work, learning diaries, and portfolio-based assessment. Importantly, these formats are not only described as "AI-resistant," but also as pedagogically valuable for making learning processes visible. Across both contexts, policies explicitly recognise the potential of GenAI to enhance feedback practices. AI is presented as a tool that can support timely, personalised, and iterative feedback, assist students in self-regulation, and reduce routine workload for teachers. At the same time, policies consistently stress that AI-mediated feedback must remain under human oversight, reinforcing the central role of teacher judgement and pedagogical responsibility. From a problematisation perspective, the analysis shows that while academic integrity remains a dominant concern, it is not the sole frame through which assessment is understood. Policies increasingly represent assessment as a space for learning, reflection, and competence development, where GenAI can be used productively if integrated transparently and critically. However, the balance between these frames varies, and pedagogical possibilities are often articulated more tentatively than integrity-related risks. Implicit assumptions about agency are mixed. Students are frequently positioned as learners who must be guided to use AI responsibly, but also as developing epistemic agents expected to justify, document, and critically evaluate their use of GenAI in assessment tasks. Teachers are framed both as guardians of standards and as pedagogical designers responsible for aligning assessment formats with learning outcomes in an AI-rich environment. Training and support structures are widely recognised as essential to enabling both forms of agency.

Theoretical and educational significance

Theoretically, this study contributes to scholarship on AI and higher education by demonstrating how institutional policies simultaneously stabilise risk and open pedagogical space, particularly in assessment. By integrating ecological and problematisation perspectives, the analysis highlights how policies shape assessment not only through regulation, but through narratives about what assessment is for in an AI-mediated university. Educationally, the findings suggest that GenAI policies already contain important pedagogical signals that align with long-standing principles of assessment for learning, authenticity, and formative feedback. Rather than viewing current policies as purely restrictive, the study shows how they can be read as transitional documents that reflect ongoing negotiation between safeguarding standards and enabling learning. For policy and practice, the analysis underscores the importance of making pedagogical intentions more explicit within AI policies, particularly regarding assessment design and feedback. Policies that foreground student epistemic agency and teacher pedagogical agency are more likely to support meaningful assessment redesign and foster responsible engagement with GenAI. Future research should examine how these policy narratives are enacted in practice and how they evolve as institutions accumulate empirical evidence and experience. In conclusion, GenAI policies in higher education reflect an early but increasingly nuanced attempt to reconcile risk management with pedagogical innovation. When assessment is positioned not only as a site of control but as a space for learning, judgement, and agency, policies can play a constructive role in shaping equitable and educationally meaningful responses to AI in higher education.

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Iced Talks 5

The Traveling Workshop: Virtual Roadshows as Innovative Practices of Academic Development

Eva Erber, Laina Lockett

Abstract

How can academic developers construct, share, and apply knowledge beyond institutional boundaries while fostering agency among educators? This session introduces the "traveling workshop," an innovative, low-threshold, participatory format designed to connect diverse institutional contexts through online, collaborative educational development. This model, working similar to a virtual roadshow, serves as a flexible vehicle for disseminating pedagogical knowledge, sharing teaching practices and fostering interdisciplinary central to the format is the promotion of epistemic agency: participants engage in reflective practice, co-create knowledge, and develop actionable next steps tailored to their teaching contexts. This ICED-session will detail design principles, implementation strategies, facilitation techniques, and possible outcomes, demonstrating how the model supports academic developers in advancing community-building across boundaries. Attendees will leave with practical guidance for launching their own traveling workshop, gain insights into cross-institutional collaborations, and discuss approaches to leveraging the workshops as a foundation for Scholarship of Academic Development data collection.

Keywords: innovative formats, cross-contextual collaboration, community of practice, shared practices

Extended Summary

How can academic developers construct, share, and apply knowledge in ways that transcend institutional boundaries? And how can new formats foster agency for educational developers and instructors alike? Those were some of the questions we, two educational developers from different institutions, were asking ourselves very soon after we started our career, one in Europe, the other one in the United States. Whilst our personal growth partially grew through regular conversations – both with each other but also within our context – we realized that working together and speaking from different positions is a powerful tool we can leverage in our offerings for educators. Without initially realizing, we were building our own significant networks (Roxa and Martinsson, 2009) whilst thinking about how the teachers we are working with can leverage theirs. In one of our significant conversations (Roxa and Martinsson, 2009), we realized that our role can be one of facilitators of said meaningful exchanges. Our process modelled other types of interinstitutional collaboration methods, f.i. seen in joint degree programs, since, as Vugt and Gallagher (2025) note, the documentation of staff development in institutional collaboration is currently limited. This workshop introduces the result of our exploration and research: the format of a so-called traveling workshop, an innovative and collaborative model we created. Over the last few years, we have tested and adapted the format and engaged universities across the U.S in a traveling workshop. Initially focused on opening the conversation regarding non-major students and how they can be engaged in classes outside of their fields, the traveling workshop can be used to share various topics, teaching practices, and pedagogical knowledge with teachers and educational developers across the globe. Its low stakes and low threshold approach keeps it accessible to various university teachers and easily implementable for the workshop leaders. Thus, this format exemplifies how academic developers can creatively advance epistemologies, innovation, and scholarship by creating interdisciplinary spaces for reflection, knowledge exchange, and professional growth. Generally, a traveling workshop is designed as a flexible, participatory format. By focussing on virtual, collaborative learning, the workshop connects diverse institutional contexts, enabling participants to explore strategies for advancing teaching and learning within their context. Central to the workshop is the promotion of epistemic agency: participants engage in reflective practices that shape their professional identities, foster interdisciplinary partnerships, and generate actionable next steps for their individual teaching. This session directly addresses Sub-theme 1: Agency and Knowledge by showcasing the traveling workshop as an innovative format for generating, organizing, and sharing knowledge. Since we will explore a specific format in-depth, the workshop is suitable for a broad audience, ranging from early-career developers to teaching staff and even leadership. By sharing the design, implementation, and outcomes of a traveling workshop, this session aims to inspire participants to adopt and adapt similar models in their own contexts, thus hopefully also strengthening their agency. Attendees will leave with practical insights into how this innovative format can advance academic development and how it can also be a basis for collecting data for a Scholarship of Academic Development project. We will also share some of the survey results of our research study on the effectiveness of this type of workshop format. After the workshop, participants will:

- Be able to describe the traveling workshop model—its purpose, core principles (virtual, participatory, low-threshold), and how it differs from other faculty development formats.
- Have analyzed their own institutional context to identify enablers and constraints for cross-institutional collaboration and have mapped at least one concrete partner or audience segments (e.g., other educational developers, disciplinary faculty, students).

- Have designed a first draft of a facilitation plan for a traveling workshop session (objectives, interactive activities, roles, technologies) based on their specific context.

Used methods & Activities:

1. Welcome and short Intro to the concept of the "Traveling Workshop," how we have developed it, and our most important learnings and survey results from past participants in our traveling workshop (15')

2. 1-2-4-All Participants will jot down any ideas they have on post-its (on the format, their own context of adapting it, activities, etc.). Steps:

    1. 1 min individual jot.
    2. 2 min pair share.
    3. 4 min small-group comparison of ideas.
    4. 10 min hole-group harvest (max. 2-3 insights per group).
    5. We collect and organize/prioritize the insights already, answer questions (17'& 8' for Organization/Questions; 25' in total)

3. Case Sprint: Design a Traveling Workshop Outline Participants will start thinking about their own possible workshop. We will share a template with sections (audience, objectives, agenda) Steps:

    1. Participants pick a collaborator (within the room or not) and a topic
    2. They fill out the template
    3. They prioritize according to "must/should/could".
    4. Gallery Walk: each plan receives two sticky-note suggestions
    5. Short discussion of the post-its (15' for worksheet; 10' for gallery walk, 10' for discussion; 35' in total)

4. Reflection and Wrap-up Think-Pair-Share

    1. Define the next steps (and their timeframe)
    2. As a pair: Phrase them as actionable items
    3. Share with everyone
    4. Remaining time for Q&A (15')

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Strategic Agency in Academic Development: How Teaching Excellence & Innovation Center (TEIC) Shapes Teaching Policy and Institutional Transformation at Nova School of Business & Economics

Patrícia Xufre, Jessica Carvalho

Abstract

This ICED Talk examines how the Teaching Excellence & Innovation Center (TEIC), established in 2025 at Nova School of Business and Economics (Nova SBE), operates as a strategic agent shaping institutional policy, culture, and organisational transformation in teaching and learning. Rather than positioning academic development as a primarily supportive or service-oriented function, TEIC was intentionally designed to influence decision-making processes, align pedagogical practices with institutional priorities, and promote a coherent culture of teaching excellence across programmes.

The talk explores how TEIC exercises strategic agency through three interconnected levers: (1) policy coordination, exemplified by its leadership of the Instructor Training Plan (2025–2026), which formalises expectations for teaching readiness and embeds them within institutional governance; (2) strategic capacity-building, through the implementation of BEEP (Business & Economics Educational Practices), a cross-faculty development ecosystem supporting pedagogical innovation and curricular alignment; and (3) organisational learning, via the development of evaluation and feedback mechanisms that inform programme leadership, accreditation processes, and long-term educational strategy.

Drawing on early implementation experiences, governance design choices, and emerging challenges, the presentation illustrates how academic development units can act as catalysts for systemic change. The case offers transferable insights for institutions seeking to enhance the strategic influence, legitimacy, and resilience of their academic development structures.

Keywords: academic development; strategic agency; teaching policy; organisational change

Extended Summary

The central message of this talk is that academic development units can act as strategic agents of institutional transformation when they are intentionally positioned within governance structures, policy processes, and organisational learning cycles. Using the case of the Teaching Excellence & Innovation Center (TEIC) at Nova SBE, the talk argues that moving beyond a service-delivery model of faculty development enables more coherent, sustainable, and policy-aligned approaches to teaching excellence in higher education. Rather than asking how academic developers can better support individual teachers, this contribution reframes the question as: How can academic development shape institutional decisions, norms, and long-term educational strategy? The talk proposes that strategic agency emerges when academic development is designed to coordinate policy, build collective capacity, and translate evidence from teaching practice into organisational learning.

Introduction and aim of the paper

Across higher education systems, academic development units are increasingly expected to contribute not only to individual teaching improvement but also to institutional strategy, quality assurance, and organisational transformation (Gibbs, 2013; Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009). However, many centres for teaching and learning remain positioned primarily as service providers, with limited influence over policy, governance, or long-term educational strategy.

This paper analyses the Teaching Excellence & Innovation Center (TEIC) at Nova School of Business and Economics (Nova SBE) as an intentionally designed case of strategic academic development. Established in 2024, TEIC was conceived not merely to support faculty but to act as a coordinating mechanism linking teaching policy, pedagogical innovation, and institutional decision-making. Drawing on TEIC's Strategic Plan 2025–2030, the paper examines how academic development can be positioned as a strategic agent shaping teaching culture, institutional priorities, and organisational learning.

The aim of the paper is twofold: (1) to document the design principles, governance structures, and strategic choices underpinning TEIC; and (2) to contribute to the literature on academic development by illustrating how centres can exercise strategic agency while maintaining credibility and trust within the academic community.

Theoretical framing: strategic academic development and institutional agency

This paper advances a conceptualisation of strategic academic development that positions centres for teaching and learning as institutional actors with the capacity to exercise strategic agency. While academic development has long been associated with faculty support, professional learning, and pedagogical enhancement, its role in shaping institutional policy and organisational direction has been less explicitly theorised.

Building on Boud and Brew's (2013) call to reconceptualise academic development beyond deficit and service models, this paper draws on three complementary strands of literature: (1) academic development as cultural and relational practice; (2) organisational learning and change in higher education; and (3) policy-aligned educational leadership.

First, Roxå and Mårtensson (2009) emphasise that academic developers derive influence primarily through trust, networks, and credibility rather than formal authority. This insight foregrounds the relational dimension of strategic agency, highlighting that influence is enacted through conversations, shared meaning-making, and legitimacy within academic cultures. However, relational influence alone is often insufficient to sustain systemic change without institutional anchoring.

Second, organisational learning theories (Argyris & Schön, 1996) suggest that durable improvement depends on feedback loops that connect local practice with institutional decision-making. In higher education, this implies mechanisms that translate evidence from teaching practice into programme review, accreditation, and strategic planning. Academic development units are uniquely positioned to act as knowledge brokers in this process, provided they are structurally embedded within governance systems.

Third, work on educational leadership and policy alignment (Gibbs, 2013; Kezar & Gehrke, 2015) highlights the importance of aligning development activities with reward structures, quality assurance processes, and strategic priorities. Without such alignment, pedagogical innovation risks remaining marginal, fragmented, or short-lived.

Synthesising these strands, the paper proposes strategic academic development as a model characterised by three interdependent dimensions: (a) relational credibility (trust-based engagement with faculty); (b) governance integration (formal positioning within institutional decision-making); and (c) evidence-mediated influence (use of evaluation and impact data to inform policy and strategy). Strategic agency emerges not from any single dimension, but from their deliberate combination.

The TEIC case is analysed as an empirical instantiation of this model, illustrating how academic development can simultaneously preserve pedagogical legitimacy and exert sustained institutional influence.

Methodological approach and case context

The paper adopts a qualitative case study approach (Yin, 2018), drawing on documentary analysis of TEIC's Strategic Plan 2025–2030, internal design documents, and records of the co-creation process that informed its development. The strategic plan was constructed through an extensive participatory process involving over 200 contributors, including faculty members, students, programme leaders, institutional units, and external partners.

Nova SBE provides a particularly relevant context for examining strategic academic development. As an internationally accredited business school, it faces strong pressures related to teaching quality, innovation, accreditation standards, and global competitiveness. Prior to TEIC's creation, teaching development initiatives existed but were fragmented, with limited coordination across programmes and weak integration into institutional governance.

TEIC as a model of strategic academic development

To make the theoretical contribution explicit and transferable, Table 1 synthesises the proposed model of strategic academic development, mapping its three core dimensions to concrete mechanisms embedded in TEIC's design and operations. The table is intended as an analytical device rather than a descriptive inventory, highlighting how strategic agency is enacted through the alignment of relationships, structures, and evidence.

Table 1. Strategic academic development: conceptual dimensions and TEIC mechanisms.

Dimension of strategic academic development	Conceptual focus	TEIC mechanisms and examples
Relational credibility	Trust, legitimacy, and engagement within academic cultures; influence grounded in dialogue rather than authority	Co-creation of the Strategic Plan with faculty, students, and partners; advisory committee with academic representation; communities of practice and faculty-led initiatives within BEEP
Governance integration	Formal positioning within institutional decision-making and policy structures	Clear mandate and reporting lines to academic and management boards; leadership of the Instructor Training Plan embedded in quality assurance and programme governance
Evidence-mediated influence	Translation of pedagogical evidence into institutional learning and strategy	Monitoring and evaluation framework with defined KPIs; synthesis of evaluation data feeding programme reviews,

		accreditation processes, and strategic planning.

This mapping illustrates that TEIC's strategic agency does not rely on a single lever but on the deliberate combination of relational, structural, and evidence-based mechanisms. The following sections analyse these dimensions in more detail.

Policy coordination and governance integration

One of TEIC's defining features is its formal integration into Nova SBE's governance structure. The centre operates with a clear mandate, reporting lines to academic and management boards, and advisory bodies that include faculty and external stakeholders. This positioning enables TEIC to influence teaching-related policies while remaining academically grounded.

A key example is TEIC's leadership of the Instructor Training Plan (2025–2026), which formalises expectations for teaching readiness and embeds them within institutional quality frameworks. Rather than relying on voluntary participation alone, the plan establishes minimum standards aligned with programme governance, reflecting calls in the literature for closer alignment between academic development and institutional policy (Gibbs, 2013).

Strategic capacity-building through structured ecosystems

TEIC's second lever of strategic agency is capacity-building through structured, scalable initiatives. The Business & Economics Educational Practices (BEEP) ecosystem exemplifies this approach. BEEP integrates faculty development, pedagogical innovation, and curricular alignment within a coherent framework, supporting active learning, project-based learning, and responsible integration of educational technologies.

Unlike isolated innovation projects, BEEP is designed to support diffusion, coherence, and sustainability—responding to evidence that many pedagogical innovations fail to scale due to a lack of institutional alignment and evaluation (Kezar & Gehrke, 2015). By creating shared language and communities of practice, TEIC strengthens collective pedagogical capacity rather than focusing solely on individual skill acquisition.

Organisational learning, evaluation, and impact

A third strategic dimension of TEIC's work concerns organisational learning. The strategic plan places strong emphasis on monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment, with defined key performance indicators linked to faculty development, pedagogical innovation, student engagement, and institutional positioning.

Evaluation data are not treated merely as accountability instruments but as inputs for programme review, accreditation cycles, and strategic planning. This aligns with organisational learning theories that emphasise the importance of feedback loops in enabling institutions to learn from practice and adapt over time (Argyris & Schön, 1996).

Discussion: implications for academic development practice

The TEIC case illustrates that strategic agency in academic development does not arise from isolated initiatives or individual credibility alone, but from the alignment of relational, structural, and evidence-based dimensions. As synthesised in Table 1, relational credibility enables engagement and trust, governance integration provides durability and policy leverage, and evidence-mediated influence connects pedagogical practice to institutional learning.

Crucially, weakening any one of these dimensions constrains the others. Relational trust without governance integration limits impact to the local level; governance authority without credibility risks resistance and disengagement; and evidence without institutional channels for interpretation and action remains underutilised. Strategic academic development, therefore, depends on the deliberate orchestration of all three dimensions over time.

This insight extends existing literature by demonstrating how academic development units can sustain influence while preserving pedagogical legitimacy, an enduring tension in the field (Gibbs, 2013; Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009).

Conclusion and significance

This paper contributes to research on academic development by offering an empirically grounded example of how centres for teaching and learning can be positioned as strategic agents of institutional transformation. By analysing TEIC's design and early implementation, the study demonstrates how academic development can move beyond service provision towards coordinated, policy-informed, and evidence-based institutional change.

For academic developers, educational leaders, and policymakers, the TEIC model provides transferable insights into governance integration, strategic capacity-building, and organisational learning. More broadly, it invites renewed discussion within the ICED community about the evolving role of academic development in shaping the future of higher education.

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From Beginner to Advance: Accelerating Faculty AI Literacy through a Situated Mentorship Framework

Yiqun Sun, Rebecca Wakelin, Nuria Benavent-Esteve

Extended Summary

This talk addresses a central question in academic development: How can universities best support faculty in their exploration of AI integration in their teaching practice—particularly across diverse disciplines and varying levels of AI expertise? We argue that by operationalizing Community of Practice (CoP) theory (Wenger, 1998) and providing a competency framework and dedicated support such as workshops and guidance from instructional designers, institutions can create structured "learning partnerships" that are more effective than standalone training.

While workshops offer essential foundations, it is the ongoing social interaction—centred on collective goals, collaborative projects, and sustained pedagogical support—that builds the confidence and agency needed for deep instructional change. By shifting the focus from "tool mastery" to "pedagogical application," universities can empower faculty not only to navigate the complexities of AI integration but also to move from passive tool adoption to active pedagogical innovation, ultimately redefining their teaching practices (Zhai, et al., 2023).

Context or Experience Inspiring the Talk

This initiative emerged from the recognition that rapid advancements in GenAI were creating a "digital divide" among faculty. While some "early adopters" were already reshaping assessment, a significant portion of staff remained hesitant, unsure how to move beyond basic experimentation.

To address this, the university launched the AI Champion Mentorship Programme. The initiative commenced with a self-assessment framework to diagnose faculty AI literacy across four critical dimensions:

1. Tool Use: Technical proficiency.

2. Student Role: How they position students relative to AI (passive consumers vs. co-creators).

3. Collaboration/Innovation: Willingness to share and experiment.

4. Impact Scope: Classroom vs. institutional influence.

Based on these dimensions, faculty identified their current stage of integration:

- Beginner (Substitution): Using AI to streamline existing tasks.
- Intermediate (Intentional Integration): Integrating AI into course design and active student critiques.
- Advanced (Redefinition & Leadership): Leading innovation and guiding others.

Faculty were then invited to volunteer as a mentor or mentee using the information from their self-assessment. A short supplementary survey captured faculty teaching and AI experiences, desired support, and preference for pairing within or outside their discipline. This systematic process resulted in the formation of 51 mentor-mentee cohorts, involving 122 faculty members (51 mentors and 71 mentees).

The programme was rigorously scaffolded through a structured framework and ample support to facilitate scaffolded participation, enabling faculty to progressively develop confidence and competence in integrating AI into their teaching practice. The structure required each mentor-mentee pair to meet at least once a month, documented via a meeting log. To incentivize reification and sustained effort, both parties were required to produce a reflective artefact to enter the selection for the awards: Mentees to produce a Learning Portfolio to document their progression, and Mentors to produce an End-of-Project Report reflecting on their mentoring impact. To help the pairs sustain engagement and bridge the gap between theory and practice, the programme provided a comprehensive support ecosystem, including targeted workshops on AI tools and integration ideas tailored to the three proficiency levels, templates for meeting logs, portfolios, and reports, conversation guides to structure discussions, and on-demand instructional design support to offer faculty a chance to work with instructional designers and collaboratively design AI integration activities for their specific courses.

Key Examples, Arguments, or Moments Shaping the Talk: This presentation will analyse the innovation of this programme through three key structural elements:

1. A Self-Assessment Tool to Help with Matching

This tool was explicitly built upon established pedagogical model, the PICRAT Framework (Passive, Interactive, Creative; Replacement, Amplification, Transformation), for technology integration and student engagement (Kimmons, Graham, & West, 2020). This allowed faculty to diagnose their current practice across four critical dimensions (Tool Use, Student Role, Innovation/Collaboration, Impact). By framing their proficiency in three levels—Beginner (Substitution), Intermediate (Integration), and Advanced (Redefinition)—faculty were empowered with a precise vocabulary and pathway for growth within the programme.

2. Integrating Mentorship with Instructional Design (ID) Support

The second innovation is to pair peer mentorship with instructional design support. While the mentor relationship fostered a safe Community of Practice (CoP) for sharing strategies and addressing anxiety, the initiative recognised that mentors—who are primarily faculty—might lack the necessary time, technical depth, or design expertise for large-scale course redesign or achieving best practice. To solve this, the programme offered on-demand Instructional Design support. This unique service allowed mentor-mentee pairs to collaborate directly with instructional designers to co-design and co-create high-impact AI integration projects for their specific courses. This dual-support model ensured that good pedagogical ideas generated in mentorship meetings were given the professional design resources necessary to achieve the "Redefinition" level of integration, significantly accelerating the transfer of knowledge into sustained and quality practice.

3. Reflection Woven into the Fabric of Engagement

The programme was designed to foster deep reflection, transforming activities into genuine learning experiences. Drawing on Advance HE's guidance on critical reflection (Harvey et al., 2020), mentees were required to maintain a Learning Portfolio and mentors an End-of-Project Report. Crucially, the templates for these artefacts and the required monthly meeting logs were explicitly designed with embedded reflection prompts, encouraging faculty to document not just what they did, but why it worked or failed. This process of evidencing professional practice—a core component of the Professional Standards Framework (PSF 2023)—ensured that the mentorship journey culminated in tangible proof of impact and a deeper pedagogical understanding, which is essential for developing a long-term professional identity as an AI- literate educator.

Significance for Academic Development

This initiative provides a fresh perspective on faculty upskilling by demonstrating how mentorship acts as a crucial extension of traditional training. While workshops are essential for foundational knowledge, this programme sparks critical dialogue on the need for situated support to bridge the difficult gap between initial exposure and actual classroom implementation. It inspires change by offering academic developers a replicable model where structured learning partnerships and instructional design support work in tandem with standard professional development.

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