

# STUDENTS AS PARTNERS ROUNDTABLE 2025

Exploring the possibilities and tensions in  
student-staff partnerships and social justice work  
in higher education



25-27th June 2025

University of Westminster

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

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# Welcome!

On behalf of the Student Partnership team, we are thrilled to welcome you to Part One of the Students as Partners Roundtable 2025!

From the very beginning, this roundtable was imagined as a space where students and educators could come together to reflect, be in dialogue, and grapple with the complexities of working collaboratively across different roles, experiences, and power dynamics within the university.

For us, student partnership is not only about co-creation or co-design. It's about imagining new atmospheres of learning, whether they be decolonial, anti-racist, feminist or relational, that challenge the dominant logics of the university and make space for different ways of knowing, relating, and being.

We also recognise that partnership work does not take place in a vacuum. Who we are, where we are situated, and the institutional, social, and political contexts we move through all shape how we enter into partnership and how we relate to one another. This roundtable invites us to acknowledge those contexts—however complex or uncomfortable—and consider how they inform both the possibilities and the tensions that come with working together toward more just and inclusive forms of higher education.

We're so grateful to you for showing up to think, to share, and to dream with us. Over the next three days, we invite you to take part in the roundtable with openness and curiosity. And above all, let it be a space where you can imagine and begin to build something different.

Whether you're a returning collaborator or here for the first time, welcome. We're so glad you're with us.

In solidarity,  
The Student Partnership Team at Westminster

# About the roundtable

The Students as Partners Roundtable is an annual gathering that brings together students, educators, and professional staff to explore and deepen partnership practices in higher education. Rooted in principles of collaboration, reciprocity, and shared responsibility, the Roundtable creates space to reflect critically on what it means to work together across roles, power dynamics, and lived experiences. Already established for over a decade in Australia, this is the first time the event will be held internationally.

At the University of Westminster, student partnership work is grounded in social justice. We strive to ask radical questions, centre minoritised groups, and challenge traditional knowledge creation approaches. This work takes form through our Students as Co-Creators (SCC) programme, the Ambassadors programme and the Pedagogies for Social Justice (PSJ) project.

This year's theme, 'Exploring the possibilities and tensions in student-staff partnerships and social justice work in higher education', invites us to engage in open, critical, and generative conversations about the changing nature of student partnership, particularly as it intersects with the principles and practices of social justice.

Together, we will explore the challenges and transformative potential of working in partnership in ways that centre equity, inclusion, and collective responsibility. Whether through research, curriculum design, activism, or everyday encounters in partnership spaces, this Roundtable offers an opportunity to share practices, ask difficult questions, and reimagine what partnership can be both within and beyond the university.

We've created a live [Padlet](#) board for the roundtable. Please use it throughout the conference to share your reflections and ideas as they emerge!





# Acknowledgement

For us, advancing social justice must begin with a clear acknowledgment of our specific contexts and histories. We recognise that we are part of systems shaped by power and privilege, especially as we operate within institutions built on and still perpetuating inequality and injustice.

Within partnership, doing justice-oriented work – whether it is anti-racist, decolonial, feminist, or otherwise – means we must keep reflecting on ourselves and our actions, both individually and together. We need to stay aware of how we might, even without meaning to, repeat the same power dynamics we’re trying to challenge.

Over the course of the next three days, many of the workshops and events you attend will draw upon the knowledge, practices, and lived experiences of students, educators, and scholar-activists working at the intersections of justice, equity, and partnership. As you engage with the sessions, speakers, and one another, we encourage you to self-reflect, listen deeply and be open to new perspectives. In our own work, we have found that this process, while sometimes uncomfortable, is also deeply generative and an opportunity for connection and growth.

We also acknowledge that social justice refers to more than intellectual and emotional work. It requires direct action towards dismantling systems that uphold inequality, including white supremacy, capitalism, patriarchy, ableism, and neocolonialism. This means changing unfair practices both within and outside our institutions, sharing power and resources, and listening to those most affected by injustice. We stand with everyone working for these changes.

# Our Projects and Programmes



The **Student Partnership Ambassadors** initiative empowers students to co-create change within the university through direct collaboration with the Student Partnership team and playing a key role in co-designing and delivering workshops and events that promote student-staff collaboration, build community, and create spaces for dialogue around partnership, social justice, and educational change.

The **Students as Co-Creators** programme at the University of Westminster is a collaborative initiative that empowers students to actively participate in shaping their educational experiences. By partnering with academic and professional staff, students engage in co-designed research and curriculum projects aimed at enhancing learning and teaching across the university.

The **Pedagogies for Social Justice** project is a student-staff collaboration committed to centring student voices in our values, beliefs and experiences and to using these to dismantle contemporary forms of coloniality in curricula, relationships, and research. Through collaborative research, creative practice, and critical dialogue, the project supports students and staff in developing pedagogical tools that decolonise curricula and build solidarities within and beyond the university.

# The Schedule

## **Papers and workshops:**

- All workshops will take place on the ground floor.
- In-person papers will take place on the second floor.
- Online papers will take place via Zoom and will not be recorded.

## **Plenaries:**

- All plenaries will be recorded and live streamed.
- You are welcome to attend them in-person or online.
- Recordings will be available to watch until 4<sup>th</sup> July.

**Day One**  
**Wednesday 25th June**  
**1-7pm (GMT)**

| Time                       | Activity & Chair  | Room  | Titles and speakers  |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| 1:00-1:30PM                | Welcome   | Orla Gough<br>Lecture Theatre<br>and livestream | Jennifer Fraser and Fatima Maatwk (University of Westminster)  |
| 1:30-3:00PM                | Workshops<br>(in-person)  | MG14  | Workshop 1a: <i>Voice, power and reflexivity: Lessons from research on campus spaces with students</i><br><br>Gemma Jackson (University of Bradford)   |
|                            |   | MG28  | Workshop 1b: <i>Liberation labour &amp; the rejection of power: How to effectively start partnership conversations and navigate the impacts of structural inequalities with student liberation leaders and groups</i><br><br>Ashley Storer-Smith (Anglia Ruskin University)  |
|                            | Papers<br>(in-person)<br><br>Chair:<br>Kelly Matthews                               | M216  | Paper 1a: <i>From statistics to stories: Co-creating spaces for racial equity through student-staff partnerships</i><br><br>Yasmin Kulasi (University of Westminster)<br><br>Paper 1b: <i>Applying a social justice lens in HE — Cognitive skills of compassionate communication (CSCC) for online team building</i><br><br>Viji Jayasundara, Theo Gilbert (University of Hertfordshire)<br><br>Paper 1c: <i>Dreaming as pedagogy: Inquiring possibilities of knowing otherwise</i><br><br>Delso Batista (Nottingham Trent University)   |
|                            | Papers<br>(online)<br><br>Chair:<br>Fatima Maatwk<br><br>Moderator:<br>Sangya Tyagi | Zoom  | Paper 2a: <i>Minimising power imbalances: Fostering a culture of equitable collaboration in 'Students as Co-Creators' projects</i><br><br>Yick Long Tam and Gustavo Espinoza-Ramos (University of Westminster)<br><br>Paper 2b: <i>Transforming learning through peer partnerships</i><br><br>Theresa Clementson and Catherine McConnell (University of Brighton)<br><br>Paper 2c: <i>Technology-enhanced case-based learning and small group teaching: A pilot study designed in collaboration with medical students</i><br><br>Athanasios Hassoulas, Owen Crawford, Saiyonora Hemrom, Andreia de Almeida, Marcus J Coffey, Megan Hodgson, VBecky Leveridge, Diya Karwa, Alice Lethbridge, Huw Williams, Alex Voisey, Karen Reed, Sarju Patel, Hannah Shaw (Cardiff University) |
| <b>Break (3:00-3:30PM)</b> |   |   |  |

Please note: All online joining links will be sent via email to registered roundtable participants on Monday 23rd June.

| Break (3:00-3:30PM) |   |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|---|
| 3:30-5:00PM         | Workshops<br>(in-person)  | MG14  | <p>Workshop 2a: <i>Click, share, change: Social media for social justice and building partnerships with the University of Westminster Student Partnership Ambassadors</i></p> <p>Esra Tahir, Özge Süvari, Khim Gurung, Yumeng Yang (University of Westminster)</p>  |
|                     |   | MG28  | <p>Workshop 2b: <i>Creating social justice through storytelling</i></p> <p>Amita Nijhawan (University of the Arts London)</p>   |
|                     | Papers<br>(in-person)<br><br>Chair:<br>Huanyu Huang                                 | M216  | <p>Paper 3a: <i>Kicking against the pricks or reflecting the neo-liberal university? The ambivalent narrative of 'social justice' in student-staff partnership curriculum initiatives at Western Sydney University</i></p> <p>Tai Peseta and Samuel Suresh (Western Sydney University)</p> <p>Paper 3b: <i>Reimagining higher education: Student-staff partnerships as pathways</i></p> <p>Zachary Omitowoju (University of Westminster)</p> <p>Paper 3c: <i>Communal communities of coffee: co-creating a walking tour exploring coffee, colonialism and community</i></p> <p>Shukri Sultan, Zainab Raheel, Amy MacLatchy (University of Westminster)</p>  |
|                     | Papers<br>(online)<br><br>Chair:<br>Geyujing Shen<br><br>Moderator:<br>Sangya Tyagi | Zoom  | <p>Paper 4a: <i>Pursuing social justice through student-staff pedagogical partnership in the SaLT program: Three student partners' shared and varied approaches</i></p> <p>Alison-Cook Sather (Bryn Mawr College), Aaniyah Alexander (Bryn Mawr College), Brisa Kane (Haverford College), Dante Nguyen (Haverford College)</p> <p>Paper 4b: <i>Decolonising student-staff partnership: Using visual methodologies to engage differently</i></p> <p>Esai Reddy (University of Cape Town), Ashleigh Petersen-Cloete (University of Western Cape), Deidré Johnson (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Joe-Dean Roberts (University of Cape Town), Lukhona Leni (University of Western Cape), Tefo Mosienyane (University of Cape Town), Zwelibanzi Ngculu (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Asanda Ngoasheng (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Daniela Gachago (University of Cape Town), Subethra Pather (University of Western Cape), Xena Cupido (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)</p> |
| Break (5:00-5:30PM) |   |   |   |
| 5:30-7:00PM         | Plenary   | Orla Gough<br>Lecture Theatre<br>and livestream | <p><i>Redistributing power in the academy: Understanding the importance of relationality and partnership in decolonial work</i></p> <p>Kelsea Costin (University of Westminster) and Yahlinaaw (University of Victoria)</p>   |

Please note: All online joining links will be sent via email to registered roundtable participants on Monday 23rd June.

**Day Two**  
**Thursday 26th June**  
**10am–5:30pm (GMT)**

| Time                             | Activity                | Room                                      | Titles and speakers  |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|
| 10:00-10:30AM                    | Welcome and reflections | Orla Gough Lecture Theatre and livestream | Samuel Suresh (Western Sydney University) and Yumeng Yang (University of Westminster)  |
| 10:30AM-12:00noon                | Plenary                 | Orla Gough Lecture Theatre and livestream | <i>Beyond the classroom: Sustaining student-staff partnerships in the pursuit of social justice</i><br><br>Tai Peseta (Western Sydney University), Fabien Littel (University of Southampton), Esai Reddy (University of Cape Town), Gabriela Brasileiro (University of Amsterdam), Muhammad Saadiq Dollie (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Özge Süvari (University of Westminster), Esra Tahir (University of Westminster) |
| <b>Break (12:00 noon-2:00PM)</b> |                         |   |  |
| 2:00-3:30PM                      | Workshops (in-person)   | MG14                                      | Workshop 3a: <i>Maah!Ga Sdiihlga GawGa – “Returning Missing Seeds”: Reclaiming Indigenous power structures</i><br><br>YahlNaaw (University of Victoria)  |
|                                  |                         | MG28                                      | Workshop 3b: <i>Cause when I think about it it’s bittersweet: Exploring the experience of Black students in EDI student-staff partnership programmes</i><br><br>Tamara Reid (Kingston University)  |

Please note: All online joining links will be sent via email to registered roundtable participants on Monday 23rd June.



|                     |   |      |   |
|---------------------|---|------|---|
|                     | Papers<br>(in-person)<br><br>Chair: Samuel Suresh                         | M216 | Paper 5a: <i>Student-staff coalitions for climate justice: Making and sustaining activism in universities</i><br><br>Jenna Condie, Thilakshi Mallawa Arachchi, James Gourley (Western Sydney University)<br><br>Paper 5b: <i>Empowering rural communities through student-staff partnerships: A social justice approach to water solutions</i><br><br>Amos Adeniyi, Muhammad Saadiq Dollie, Tristan Justin Bailey, Melusi Nkuna, Whiteny Heuvel, Zwelibanzi Ngculu (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)<br><br>Paper 5c: <i>Improving student belonging and success through co-created, decolonized pedagogies and anti-racist practice</i><br><br>Syra Shakir (Leeds Trinity University)      |
|                     | Papers<br>(online)<br><br>Chair: Fatima Maatwk<br>Moderator: Sangya Tyagi | Zoom | Paper 6a: <i>Cultivating inclusive student-teacher relationships to advance partnerships and social justice</i><br><br>Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka (University of Stirling) and Daisy Bao (University of Edinburgh)<br><br>Paper 6b: <i>Aiming to improve social inclusion in physician assistant students' classroom experience through partnership</i><br><br>Heather Dwyer, Haili Dunbar, Rayne Loder, Hope Coleman-Plourde (Tufts University)<br><br>Paper 6c: <i>The impact of pedagogical partnership on students' professional skills and lives</i><br><br>Nessren Ourdyl, Heather Dwyer, Carie Cardamone (Tufts University)   |
| Break (3:30-4:00PM) |   |      |   |
| 4:00-5:30PM         | Workshops<br>(in-person)  | MG28 | Workshop 4a: <i>Dreaming alternatives for western neoliberal academia</i><br><br>Delso Batista (Nottingham Trent University)  |
|                     | Papers<br>(in-person)<br><br>Chair: Kyra Araneta                          | M216 | Panel 1: <i>Promoting inclusive student-staff partnerships in a teaching and academic development programme: Affordances and challenges</i><br><br>Naomi McAreavey, Olive Lennon, Rachel Farrell, Seán Paul Teeling (University College Dublin)   |
|                     | Papers<br>(online)<br><br>Chair: Kelsea Costin<br>Moderator: Sangya Tyagi | Zoom | Panel 2: <i>Fostering social justice through student-staff course re-design partnership projects at the University of British Columbia</i><br><br>Roselynn Verwoord, Nesrine Basheer, Caroline Lebrec, Shreya Diwan, Savindya Mudadeniya (University of British Columbia)<br><br>Panel 2, paper 1a: Promoting diversity and inclusion in course re-design partnership projects: Insights from UBC's Students as Partners Initiative<br><br>Panel 2, paper 1b: Celebrating EDI and Alternative Epistemologies with Arabic-speaking Students<br><br>Panel 2, paper 1c: Co-Developing EDI resources to be used in a safe and inclusive classroom: <i>Le voyage d'Alex</i> (Diwan and Mudadeniya, 2023) |

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**Day Three**  
**Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June**  
**9am–3:30pm (GMT)**

| Time         | Activity  | Room                                      |   |
|--------------|---|---|---|
| 9:00-9:30AM  | Welcome and reflections   | Orla Gough Lecture Theatre and livestream | Kelly Matthews (University of Queensland) and Khim Gurung (University of Westminster)   |
| 9:30-11:00AM | Workshops (in-person)   | MG14                                      | Workshop 5a: <i>Not fit for purpose: Mending for hope</i><br>Tanveer Ahmed (Central Saint Martins, UAL)   |
|              |   | MG28                                      | Workshop 5b: <i>Working with students as partners in a social justice-oriented Law clinic: Practice and legacy</i><br><br>Gillian Melville, Kathleen Bolt and Claudia Hoey (University of Strathclyde)  |
|              | Papers (online)<br><br>Chair: Samuel Suresh<br>Moderator: Fatima Maatwk | Zoom                                      | Paper 7a: <i>Creating real and sustainable change through Students as Partners projects</i><br><br>Francesca Harrison and Sascha Jenkins (University of Technology Sydney)<br><br>Paper 7b: <i>Student-faculty partnerships for equitable research in higher education</i><br><br>Zhang Jiayue and Wang Tianchang (Wenzhou-Kean University)<br><br>Paper 7c: <i>Student-staff partnership: How unhealthy can it be?</i><br><br>Aisha Naz Ansari |

Please note: All online joining links will be sent via email to registered roundtable participants on Monday 23rd June.



|                       |  |      |   |
|-----------------------|--|------|---|
|                       | <p>Papers (online)</p> <p>Chair: Aysha Ali<br/>Moderator: Sangya Tyagi</p> | Zoom | <p><i>Paper 8a: Let's do it justice: Students are co-creators of belonging in higher education</i></p> <p>Maria Ishkova (University of Sydney), Darren Moon (LSE), Hannah Nguyen (University of Sydney), Minhyung (Daniel) Park (University of Sydney), Carol Farhoud (University of Sydney), Kyaw Zaw (Augustine) Aung (University of Sydney), Michael Fernando (University of Sydney), Jasmine Meyabadi (University of Sydney), Abby Bobbowski (University of Sydney), Henry Luong (University of Sydney)</p> <p><i>Paper 8b: Bridging the knowledge gap: A teaching assistant's reflection on the Students as Partners (SaP) approach</i></p> <p>Xiaojun Gu (Wenzhou-Kean University)</p> <p><i>Paper 8c: Possible SaP engagement models: Vertical and horizontal dimensions in Asian Universities</i></p> <p>Peter Lau (The University of Hong Kong), Beatrice Chu (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology), Sung Nok Chiu (Hong Kong Baptist University), Theresa Kwong (Hong Kong Baptist University), Jessie Zheng (University of Hong Kong)</p> |
| Break (11:00-11:30AM) |  |      |   |
| 11:30-1:00PM          | Workshops (in-person)  | MG14 | <p><i>Workshop 6a: Critical intersections: Principles and values in social justice and partnership work</i></p> <p>Maisha Islam (University of Southampton)</p>   |
|                       |  | MG28 | <p><i>Workshop 6b: Compassionate coaching and social justice: developing a coaching approach for student-staff partnerships</i></p> <p>Kathryn Waddington and Karl Donaldson (University of Westminster)</p>  |

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|                     |  |  |  |
|---------------------|--|--|--|
|                     | <p>Papers (in-person)</p> <p>Chair: Özge Süvari</p>                            | M216   | <p>Paper 9a: <i>Navigating power dynamics and English dominance in a virtual exchange project involving Canadian and Ecuadorian students</i></p> <p>Michael Wong (McMaster University) and Nergiz Turgut (Universidad San Francisco de Quito)</p> <p>Paper 9b: <i>Building connections in postgraduate classrooms: Possibilities of multicultural student-staff partnership in action research</i></p> <p>Aurora Hiu Hei Ma, Ana Salazar Londoño and Zhuoan Wang (University College London)</p> <p>Paper 9c: <i>Design study of a student-faculty partnership program implementing assessment as an equitable pedagogical practice at a research-intensive Minority Serving Institution</i></p> <p>Adriana Signorini (University of California, Merced)</p>   |
|                     | <p>Papers (online)</p> <p>Chair: Kelsea Costin<br/>Moderator: Sangya Tyagi</p> | Zoom   | <p>Paper 10a: <i>Tensions and transformations: Exploring student-staff partnerships for social justice in post #FeesMustFall South African Higher Education</i></p> <p>Lukhona Leni (University of Western Cape), Xena Cupido (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Subethra Pather (University of Western Cape), Daniela Gachago (University of Cape Town), Ashleigh Peterson-Cloete (University of Western Cape), Zwelibanzi Ngculu (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Tefo Mosienyane (University of Cape Town), Asanda Ngoasheng (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Joe-Dean Roberts (University of Cape Town), Esai Reddy (University of Cape Town), Deidré Johnson (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)</p> <p>Paper 10b: <i>Challenges and possibilities of doing justice-oriented student-faculty partnership work in an elite private university in India</i></p> <p>Ishita Chatterjee and Kavyasri Saravanan (O.P. Jindal Global University)</p> |
| Break (1:00-1:30PM) |  |  |  |
| 1:30-3:30PM         | Plenary and closing  | <p>Orla Gough<br/>Lecture Theatre and livestream</p> | <p><i>Building stamina for justice: Perspectives on social justice work in higher education</i></p> <p>Kyra Araneta (University of Westminster), Sharon Stein (University of British Columbia), Séagh Kehoe (University of Westminster) and Lara Pownall (University of Westminster)</p>   |

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# plenary Day 1

Wednesday 25th June  
5:30-7PM (GMT)

Redistributing power in the academy: understanding the importance of relationality and partnership in decolonial work

This plenary brings Kelsea Costin (UK) and Yahlnaaw (Turtle Island) together to discuss the redistribution of power in universities in relation to partnership work.

Considering questions and the interrelatedness of knowledge production, relationality, decolonial work and student-staff partnership, these speakers will delve into conversation about what it means to do social justice work in their unique contexts, whilst also acknowledging their similarities within colonising frameworks. Their discussion will focus on building partnership relationships ethically and with consideration to minoritized groups, especially from a decolonial perspective.

## Kelsea Costin

Postgraduate student, SOAS



Kelsea Costin (she/her) is a Research Assistant for the Pedagogies for Social Justice project (PSJ). Whilst completing her BA in Sociology in 2023, Kelsea joined the PSJ as a Research Intern. In her current role as a Research Assistant, she has continued to contribute to the field, conducting university-wide research. Her most recent publication on student and staff perceptions on decolonising the curriculum has appeared in a special edition centring social justice and pedagogical partnership in Social Sciences. Kelsea has presented at multiple events connected to teaching, learning and social justice, including international and national conferences. As part of a student-staff collaboration, Kelsea believes that relationality and student-staff partnerships are crucial for dismantling institutional structures and challenging coloniality in the academy. After she completes her MA in Cultural Studies at SOAS, University of London, she is keen to prioritise student-driven knowledge production and decolonial and anti-racist work in academic communities.

## YahlNaaw

Indigenous Rights and Anti-Racism officer, University of Victoria



Jah! Xaaydaga 'las! YahlNaaw han.nuu dii kiiGa ga. HlGaagilda Xaayda Gwaii sda.uu hll iigiing. LƏ́KʷƏNƏN sda.uu hll naa.uu dii gan. Way.yad.uu 'Treaty 1' guu.uu hll naa.uu dii ga.

"Hello! Wonderful people! My name is YahlNaaw and I am from Skidegate, Haida Gwaii. I have the privilege of currently feeling a sense of home between Treaty 1 (colonially called Winnipeg, MB, Canada) and LƏ́KʷƏNƏN (colonially called Victoria, BC, Canada) lands"

YahlNaaw is Indigenous, queer, and transgender—an identity constellation that often involves navigating multiple intersecting worlds. They hold their identities, lived experiences, and relationships with care, recognizing these as powerful forces that shape and (re)direct their journey of living and learning. YahlNaaw is the Founder and Lead Consultant at Taajuu Consulting, an Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, and anti-oppression-focused consulting company. They also serve as the Indigenous Rights and Anti-Racism Officer at the University of Victoria's Equity and Human Rights office.

# plenary Day 2

Thursday 26th June  
10:30AM-12PM (GMT)

Beyond the classroom: sustaining student-staff partnerships in the pursuit of social justice

This plenary brings together students and educators engaged in student partnership and social justice work across universities in Australia, the Netherlands, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. Focusing on the power of student-staff collaborations, this session will explore how meaningful partnerships can drive real change within our institutions.

The speakers will delve into key questions about what it takes to build genuine student partnerships in the pursuit of social justice. They will address how to ensure students are active participants rather than passive; partners in co-creating knowledge and pedagogic tools; as well as how trust and care can be nurtured within these partnerships. The panel will be hosted by Dr Tai Peseta, Associate Professor and Academic Lead for Student-Staff Partnership at Western Sydney University.

Join us for an open discussion about sustaining impactful, long-term partnerships that foster a more socially-just and collaborative university culture and community.

If you're joining this plenary online, share your reflections and ask your questions via this [Padlet!](#)





## Esai Reddy

Postgraduate student, University of Cape Town

Esai Reddy is a Masters in Linguistics candidate. She completed a Bachelor of Social Science in Psychology, Linguistics and Sociology and a B.A. (Honours) in Linguistics. Her current research is looking at language experiences of Autism. She is interested in how language is used and perceived by the Autistic community. Co-creation is a key part of her own research as well as her involvement in DSJP. She has been involved in Students as Partners projects at UCT for the last few years. She currently serves as a researcher in the DSJP team. Outside of work, she is a creative at heart and can be found exploring galleries or painting her own works.



## Esra Tahir

Undergraduate student, University of Westminster

Esra Tahir is a Biomedical Science student at the University of Westminster with a strong interest in neuroscience, mental health, and social justice. She is currently a Student Ambassador for the Social Pedagogies for Social Justice (PSJJ) Project, where she contributes to student partnership initiatives and research on inclusive education. Previously, she worked as a Research Assistant for the PSJ Project, focusing on decolonisation and higher education research. Esra is also involved in neuroscience research and community engagement, aiming to bridge scientific knowledge with social impact.



## Fabien Littel

PhD candidate, University of Southampton

Fabien Littel (he/him) is a Postgraduate Researcher / PhD candidate in Organisational Behaviour at the Southampton Business School, University of Southampton. Following a 20-year career in various areas of HR in global blue-chip companies, Fabien decided to undertake a PhD in Organisational Behaviour, to further pursue his interest in business ethics, moral agency, and responsible business practices, and move towards a second career into academia. His PhD research focuses on climate change-related individual ethics for employees working in the oil & gas industry, and how a greater understanding and appreciation of these micro-dynamics may help foster change towards a sustainable future. He is co-chair (PGR) of the university's LGBTQIA+ staff network.

## Gabriela Brasileiro

Postgraduate student, University of Amsterdam

Gabriela Brasileiro (she/her) is an LLM student at the University of Amsterdam, specializing in international and transnational criminal law. Her research explores the possibilities of decolonizing international criminal law to enhance the field's legitimacy. Previously, she worked as a programme intern and consultant for the Inclusive Curriculum Consultants Programme at Kingston University London. Her approach to EDI is rooted in intersectionality, with an emphasis on adaptable and practical solutions for decolonization, anti-racism and inclusion through self-reflection, community care and education.





## Muhammad Saadiq Dollie

Undergraduate student, Cape Peninsula University of Technology

Muhammad Saadiq Dollie is a dedicated and ambitious BEng Tech (Honour) student in Chemical Engineering at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). He completed his BEngTech study last year 2024. A former Spine Road High School prefect, he has demonstrated leadership skills as a class representative throughout his university years, earning commendation from the Dean of Engineering.



## Özge Süvari

PhD candidate, University of Westminster

Özge Süvari (she/her) is a doctoral researcher in the School of Architecture + Cities at the University of Westminster. Her research interest includes Anthropocene histories, ecologies and beings with a particular focus on the role of drawing in deciphering the climate crisis. Before her doctoral studies, she was an adjunct lecturer and practising architect in Turkey, where she was committed to designing public spaces and buildings in environmentally responsible ways. Since January 2024, she has been a research intern on the Pedagogies for Social Justice (PSJ) project and a student ambassador with the Student Partnership team. Navigating in academia as a both student and lecturer, she is committed to partnership and social justice as fundamental to shaping research, teaching, and learning.



## Dr Tai Peseta

Associate Professor, Western Sydney University

Dr Tai Peseta is Associate Professor, Learning Futures in the Learning and Teaching Portfolio, Division of Education at Western Sydney University, Australia. Since 2017, she has led a suite of strategic curriculum and education initiatives, many alongside a team of student partners. Tai is an experienced higher education teacher and researcher with publications in the field of critical university studies, doctoral education, curriculum, and academic identity and development.

# plenary Day 3

Friday 27th June  
1:30-3:30PM (GMT)

Building stamina for justice: perspectives on social justice work in higher education

This plenary brings together voices from across the academic landscape to explore the complexities of social justice work in higher education. Our diverse panel features Dr Sharon Stein (University of British Columbia), whose scholarship and practice interrogates the colonial foundations of higher education; Dr Séagh Kehoe (University of Westminster) a senior lecturer and union organiser engaged with exploring ways to study within, against, and beyond the university. Kyra Araneta (University of Westminster), an early-career researcher advancing decolonial approaches through student-staff partnerships; and undergraduate student activist Lara Pownall (University of Westminster), who brings vital insight from the student perspective.

Drawing from their distinct yet interconnected experiences, these speakers will explore critical questions about navigating the ups and downs of social justice work in higher education such as: How do we balance urgency with the need for deep, systemic change? How do we maintain authentic partnerships while managing institutional pressures? What does true accountability look like in this work, and how can we actively practice it? And, amid setbacks and resistance, how do we develop the stamina to sustain this work for the long haul?





## Kyra Araneta

Lecturer, University of Westminster

Kyra Araneta (she/her) is a Lecturer in Student Partnership and Social Justice in the Centre for Education and Teaching Innovation (CETI) at the University of Westminster. Her research focuses on critical race and decolonial pedagogies, social justice education, intersectionality, and the role of student-staff partnerships in fostering ethical learning environments. As part of the Pedagogies for Social Justice Project (PSJ), she hosts the PSJ podcast, co-creates with students, and contributes to the field through publications and keynote addresses.



## Lara Pownall

Undergraduate student, University of Westminster

Lara Pownall (she/her) is a second-year BSc Biomedical Science student at the University of Westminster. As a mature-aged disabled student who entered higher education through a foundation year, she understands firsthand the extra challenges disabled students can face in this space. Lara has been engaged in student partnerships to impact pedagogical practices, with the aim of creating a more socially just learning environment. She is dedicated to amplifying the voices of disabled students to encourage positive, meaningful change towards equitable opportunities in higher education. Lara's experiences at university have helped her co-deliver workshops on how student partnerships can help build an equitable and decolonised life sciences curriculum. In addition to her studies, Lara works part-time as an inpatient Nursing Assistant in the NHS, which has furthered her passion for addressing healthcare inequities. In 2023, she attended a summer programme in Canada at the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Medicine on obstetrics and gynaecology, in which she was fortunate to learn about their work to promote accessibility to culturally sensitive healthcare for Indigenous communities.

## Dr Séagh Kehoe

Senior Lecturer, University of Westminster

Séagh is a Senior Lecturer in Chinese Studies and Course Leader for the BA in Culture, Environment and Social Change at the School of Humanities, University of Westminster. At the moment, they spend a lot of time thinking about how to study within/against/beyond the university. They are also a union organiser.



## Dr Sharon Stein

Associate Professor, University of British Columbia

Sharon Stein is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia, and holds a Professorship in Climate Complexity and Coloniality in Higher Education. Her work asks how education can prepare people to navigate social and ecological breakdown in relevant, reparative, and intergenerationally responsible ways. She is the author of *Unsettling the University: Confronting the Colonial Foundations of US Higher Education* (JHU Press, 2022), founder of the Critical Internationalization Studies Network ([criticalinternationalization.net](http://criticalinternationalization.net)), and a co-founder of the Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures Collective ([decolonialfutures.net](http://decolonialfutures.net)).

### **Voice, power and reflexivity: Lessons from research on campus spaces with students**

Staff and students working in partnership brings together people who are identified by institutional roles that sit within a hierarchical structure. Understanding the power dynamics involved is crucial to better promote student voice and co-work. Reflexivity is also key to challenging assumptions and being open to the views of others. This interactive workshop will explore a novel place-based and student-led approach to understanding use of campus. This method was chosen for a PhD project to address staff bias in literature on campus spaces and give opportunity for students to openly share their experiences. The tensions between 'us' and 'them'(students and staff) will be explored with workshop attendees through activities with research data and discussions.

Facilitator: Gemma Jackson (University of Bradford)

Gemma Jackson is a final year PhD student in social psychology at the University of Bradford, United Kingdom. She was inspired from a decade of volunteering and employment at the University's Students' Union to research university social learning spaces and carry out a study that captures students' voices and experience. Her thesis calls for staff to be reflexive to become aware of assumptions about university experience and campus space. She now works as a Researcher Developer for postgraduate researchers. She has a passion for place-based qualitative research, co-production methods and higher education.

### **Liberation labour & the rejection of power: How to effectively start partnership conversations and navigate the impacts of structural inequalities with student liberation leaders and groups**

The one of the biggest barriers with starting student-staff partnership conversations is having underrepresented students to want to come to the table. As underrepresented student leaders, they have significant trust issues with their institution for some or all of the following reasons:

- Activist Burnout – the sheer mental & physical fatigue of constantly fighting for these issues against structural inequality
- Racial Battle Fatigue & other Liberation Battle Fatigue – the added burnout of a campaigner due to the cultural & social inequalities they face in their activism as well as pressure of having to continue this fight for their own equality
- Allies & Fellow Community Members who are staff being forced to/absorbed into the structural inequality of the institution
- Structural Fatigue – the fatigue of student leaders having to comply and navigate complicated and immovable structures to be heard and accepted
- Liberation Labour – where there is an expectation of students from this community to take unpaid physical & emotional labour once in spaces to create change

The presenter of this workshop has conducted a range of research around these topics, specifically focusing on Students' Union Leaders experiences within structural systems as well as the impact on these issues on Trans & Non-Binary student belonging in HE. With this research as well as experience in delivering staff-student partnership activity around social justice within a wide range of institutions; this workshop will focus on the key trends, experiences, successes, and failures within this area and how to effectively navigate this work. This workshop will help institution staff better understand the experiences and feelings of underrepresented students when trying to create change within their institution; the biases that are created by student leaders from these experiences; and how to effectively approach and start staff-student partnership conversations around social justice issues. Utilising this stakeholder mindset and experiential learning approach, attendees will develop an initial approach around effectively engaging with underrepresented students within their position of power.

Facilitator: Ashley Storer-Smith (Anglia Ruskin University)

Ashley (They/Them) is a researcher and practitioner of Student Engagement in Higher Education with specific focuses on underrepresented groups and their interaction with the commercialisation of Higher Education. Their recent research has focused on Trans & Non-Binary student engagement and belonging and how that impacts wellbeing. For a decade, their professional experience in Students' Unions within the UK was focused around student voice, campaigns, activism, and representative structures. Across that experience, they have developed key sector leading work around how to effectively support student activism & campaigns, develop inclusive representation & cocreation structures,

## **Click, share, change: Social media for social justice and building partnerships with the University of Westminster Student Partnership Ambassadors**

Esra Tahir is a final-year Biomedical Science student at the University of Westminster, with a keen interest in neuroscience and mental health. She has experience in research, student partnership projects, and social media engagement, with a strong focus on decolonisation, social justice, and inclusive education. She is currently a Student Ambassador for the Social Pedagogies for Social Justice (PSJ) Project, where she organises events, and conducts research on anti-racist and decolonial practices in education. She also works as a Research Assistant on a QHT-funded neuroscience study, investigating the role of clay-based learning in education and wellbeing.

**Facilitators:** Esra Tahir, Khim Gurung, Özge Süvari, Yumeng Yang (University of Westminster)

Khimkala Gurung is currently pursuing a degree in Biomedicine, with a strong passion for exploring the intersection of science and healthcare. As a Student Partnership Ambassador, she works to bridge the gap between students and faculty, ensuring that student voices are heard while contributing to a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. She is dedicated to advocacy, collaboration, and creating spaces where students can thrive both academically and personally. Beyond her studies and ambassador responsibilities, Khimkala enjoys engaging in science outreach and exploring her love for cooking. She believes in the power of student partnerships to drive positive change within the university community.

Özge Süvari (she/her) is a doctoral researcher in the School of Architecture + Cities at the University of Westminster. Her research interests include Anthropocene histories, ecologies, and beings, with a particular focus on the role of drawing in deciphering the climate crisis. Before her doctoral studies, she was an adjunct lecturer and practising architect in Turkey, where she was committed to designing public spaces and buildings in environmentally responsible ways. Since January 2024, she has been a research intern on the Pedagogies for Social Justice (PSJ) project and a student ambassador with the Student Partnership team. Navigating in academia as a both student and lecturer, she is committed to partnership and social justice as fundamental to shaping research, teaching, and learning.

Yumeng Yang is a MPhil student in Sociology at the University of Westminster. Yumeng's research is at the intersections of media studies, gender studies and Chinese studies. She is particularly interested in the study of queer expression on Chinese social media platforms. In 2023, she participated in the Chinese National College Student Entrepreneurship Project. This experience allowed her to collaborate with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds, deepening her appreciation for teamwork and the value of multicultural perspectives and student insights in enhancing projects. As a Student Ambassador, she recognizes the unique opportunity to bridge the gap between students, faculty, and the wider community in University of Westminster. Yumeng Yang aims to promote cross-cultural exchange by engaging with students from various nationalities and academic disciplines and advocate for student voices in shaping a more accessible and welcoming academic environment. Meanwhile, she is also keen on developing a deeper intercultural understanding, which complements her academic pursuits in sociology and enhances her personal growth. By serving as a Student Ambassador, she hopes to inspire others to embrace diversity and work collectively towards a more inclusive university experience for all.

## **Creating social justice through storytelling**

Tutors and students have always co-created and worked in partnership. But co-creating with students is a radical act, an act that can, and perhaps should, lead to not only transformation of the curriculum, but also social transformation and self-discovery. For partnership to work alongside social justice and decoloniality, how can we meaningfully position ourselves and our stories in our research, teaching and practice? How can we explore self in a way that helps us form meaningful connections with others? In this workshop we explore and practice storytelling techniques that writers use to evoke place, self and lived experience. We reflect on how these techniques disrupt hegemonic modes of writing 'self', and challenge ideas of who gets to write, how they get to write and what they get to write about.

**Facilitator:** Amita Nijhawan (University of the Arts London)

Dr Amita Nijhawan is an Educational Developer in Academic Enhancement at UAL. She mentors staff and students in using creative writing techniques to develop a writing voice, and to radically insert storytelling, identity and auto-ethnography into research and practice. She has published in Decolonial Dialogues, New Theatre Quarterly, various Routledge and OUP anthologies, Media/Culture, and South Asian Popular Culture Journal. She has a PhD in Dance Studies and as an author, she publishes novels and short stories, and has been writer-in-residence with Spread the Word, Leverhulme, UCL, Literature Works, the British Council and others.

## From statistics to stories: Co-creating spaces for racial equity through student-staff partnerships

This paper presentation examines how student-staff partnerships produce transformative outputs that extend social justice work beyond traditional academic boundaries. Our 'BAME Voices' research project at Westminster Business School demonstrates how collaborative knowledge creation between staff and student co-researchers generates innovative outputs that amplify marginalised perspectives and drive institutional change in addressing racial inequities in UK higher education. The awarding gap provides stark evidence of systemic inequities, with recent data showing 87.1% of white students received a first or 2:1 degree classification compared with only 77.2% of BAME students (Advance HE, 2022). At Westminster Business School specifically, this gap widens: 72.9% of white students achieve a 1st or 2:1 degree, compared to only 53% of Black students and 61.8% of Asian students. These disparities reflect what Hussain and Bagguley (2024) describe as the 'White atmosphere' of universities, institutional cultures that enforce racialised hierarchies and exacerbate feelings of alienation and exclusion for these minoritised students. Our partnership model engages four student co-researchers from minoritised backgrounds in a collaborative investigation of these inequities. This approach reflects Cook-Sather and Felten's (2014) 'ethic of reciprocity,' emphasising mutual exchange of expertise. Rooted in Freire's (1970) concept of education as the practice of freedom, our model challenges traditional hierarchies of knowledge production by positioning racially minoritised students as active researchers. By examining the lived experiences of both students and staff from similar backgrounds, these student researchers are centred as co-creators rather than passive recipients of education. This also serves as a form of pedagogical resistance against what Matusov and Sullivan (2020) describe as pedagogical violence, the enforced submission to rigid Eurocentric structures that constrain the agency of racially minoritised students. Through a series of co-created podcasts and a documentary short film, our partnership creates 'counter-spaces' where these minoritised voices are centred and institutional inequities are made visible in ways conventional academic publications often fail to achieve (Bie et al., 2021). These multimedia formats reach broader institutional and public audiences, creating dialogic spaces across traditional boundaries and contribute to the momentum for structural change. The presentation will critically reflect on both the successes and challenges of this approach, addressing tensions between process and product in partnership work (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017). We will examine how ethical frameworks have guided our navigation of power differentials and discuss practical strategies for developing similar partnership-based multimedia initiatives, acknowledging the 'context-dependent nature' of students as partners practices (Healey and Healey, 2018). By transforming not just what knowledge is created, but how it is shared and with whom, this presentation contributes to broader conversations about decolonising knowledge production in higher education. Our experience offers a model for leveraging partnerships to create impactful, accessible outputs that advance social justice by making institutional inequities visible and amplifying the voices of those most affected by structural racism in academia.

Speaker: Yasmin Kulasi (University of Westminster)

Yasmin Kulasi is a Senior Lecturer at Westminster Business School and doctoral researcher in education at Keele University. Her work sits at the intersection of critical pedagogy, sustainability, and inclusive education, challenging traditional hierarchies to amplify marginalised voices. She leads student-staff partnership projects focused on social justice, including the BAME Voices – Unpacking Narratives project, where student co-researchers from racially minoritised backgrounds explore the awarding gap through reciprocal mentorship and storytelling. Drawing on Freirean approaches, Yasmin's teaching and research reimagine knowledge creation as collaborative processes that center equity and critical consciousness. Yasmin's pedagogical practice extends to integrating immersive technologies such as virtual reality to foster global citizenship and experiential learning, creating accessible pathways for students to engage with complex social and environmental issues. Her broader sector contributions include inclusive curriculum design and education for sustainable development frameworks. She is committed to creating transformative educational spaces that move beyond tokenism, fostering genuine co-created change where students and staff work as partners in building more equitable learning environments.

## **Applying a social justice lens in HE – Cognitive skills of compassionate communication (CSCC) for online team building**

The pandemic-driven shift to online platforms in Higher Education (HE) caused significant social and academic isolation amongst students. Today, students remain hesitant to turn on their cameras during online group meetings. This reluctance, coupled with a lack of motivation to maintain screen gaze, negatively affects their participation in online teamwork. Additionally, behaviours such as dominating discussions and/or not contributing at all are still identified as common challenges in teamworking. All of this undermines the achieving social justice within and beyond group interactions in HE teamwork including online. Research indicates the significance of teamwork in the evolving HE landscape as a crucial element of collaborative pedagogy, effectively promoting creativity, critical thinking, interpersonal skills, and collective knowledge acquisition among students. Students often express concerns about group work, such as the free-rider problem and conflicting problems, which can hinder their academic performance and achievements which directly affect experiencing social justice within their student journeys. Employers are prioritising teamworking and communication skills in graduates (Albelha et al, 2020). Addressing these challenges, recent research (Gilbert, 2016, 2018, Harvey et al, 2020) demonstrate the impact of cognitive compassion on enhancing social and learning experiences among students in in-person learning environments. According to Gilbert, compassion in teamwork requires noticing (not normalising) one's own or others' distress/disadvantaging and taking wise action to reduce or prevent that. In relation to staff and students' partnership, this session presents research on the application of the cognitive skills of compassionate communications (CSCC) in online team meetings, particularly in relation to social justice. The mixed-methods study involved eight groups of four STEM students (from five UK and five Sri Lankan universities), who were video-recorded during task-focused team meetings (before, and then again after), a 90-minute online CSCC developmental training session. Data were also collected from two questionnaires, focus groups, and ethnographic field notes during pre- and post-intervention. Each member's screen gaze during pre- and post-intervention for every presentation, and every follow-up discussion was recorded for comparative analyses. The comparison of the results from quantitative and qualitative data analyses before and after the intervention demonstrated a significant increase in students' attentiveness and motivation to turn on their cameras during online team meetings. The findings highlight the benefits of using the science of cognitive compassion (which we will explain) to motivate students to switch on their cameras to better support each other's social and learning experience of online teamwork, including with strangers. These changes suggest the development of a shared, interdependent identity within the teams. The findings are relevant to current higher education practices, in re-framing our understanding of excellence in teamworking in any discipline through authentic assessments including of individual students' criticality, reducing marking time by up to 66% (Fallaize, 2024). The study supports the staff in 90 universities on CSCC developmental training on team dynamics and social justice for both staff and students. This is particularly important right now and without delay in higher education, the purpose of which is to serve the public good – locally and globally before it is too late.

**Speakers: Viji Jayasundara and Theo Gilbert (University of Hertfordshire)**

On a scholarship for Sri Lanka from the World Bank, Viji Jayasundara completed her PhD in Development of Cognitive Skills of Compassionate Communication for Higher Education's Online Group Work Management at the University of Hertfordshire in December 2023. An active researcher since 2011, she is currently an Employer Liaison Tutor in Hertfordshire Business School where she is also actively supporting the Schools Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team. She was previously Head of the Department of English Language Teaching at the Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka. She is now part of the AURORA Women Leadership Programme offered by AdvanceHE and was honoured with the Areles Mollerman Prize 2024 at the recent UH Teaching Excellence Award Ceremony. Going forward, her career ambitions are centred on fostering cognitive compassionate communications and advancing research around that for academia and beyond.

Based at University of Hertfordshire's Centre for Learning, Access and Student Success, and Business School. Professor Theo Gilbert is creator of the Compassion in HE Network. The network comprises staff from 90 universities to help each other get the science of cognitive compassion onto the curricula, in almost any discipline that assesses team/group work. He is very keen to support and link staff with others in their disciplines and/or beyond, and has supported effective teamwork at, e.g., the National Crime Agency, the Home Office, The Food Standard's agency. He's the 2018 Advance HE's/Times Higher's Most Innovative Teacher of the Year and a keynote speaker at the Annual National Teaching Fellow/CATE Symposium (2020). He has a strong presence on YouTube and is published in a number of journals and book chapters.

## **Dreaming as pedagogy: Inquiring possibilities of knowing otherwise**

Dreaming is an ordinary process of (re)creating and (re)imagining relationships, realities, and the self. Dreaming connects the past, present, and future, fostering alternative ways of being and knowing. Moreover, dreaming plays a crucial role in the ongoing project of decolonisation, as it encourages dialogue and imagination that can lead to a new social order. Decolonial and Indigenous scholarship teaches us that dreaming involves community memory and dialogue, acts as a form of resistance against colonial legacies, and helps envision the future while creating collective alternatives for ways of being, relating, and knowing. This paper aims to discuss dreaming as a pedagogical method, explore its meanings within decolonial and Indigenous frameworks, and examine how dreaming can be integrated into educational practices as a tool for decolonial praxis. The study includes a review of the literature and practical applications to investigate dreaming as a pedagogical approach within decolonial and Indigenous contexts. It analyses scholarship on dreaming and pedagogy to identify key theoretical and practical strategies for incorporating dreaming into learning spaces. This study examines epistemic struggles and positions decolonial dreaming as a collaborative and transformative learning tool. Research shows that dreaming can be an effective educational tool by promoting critical thinking, creativity, and self-reflection. Collective dreaming also enhances community learning and emotional intelligence, acting as a catalyst for transformative education. This study inquires into the potential of dreaming as a pedagogical approach for fostering alternative ways of knowing in academic spaces. Drawing from Indigenous and decolonial perspectives on dreaming, this paper encourages speculative inquiry into innovative knowledge and learning methods. The findings aim to inspire the integration of dreaming as a critical and relational practice, promoting new possibilities for knowledge production, collaboration, and social transformation in educational settings.

**Speaker: Delso Batista (Nottingham Trent University)**

Delso Batista is a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist with a PhD in Psychology in progress at Nottingham Trent University, focusing on the experiences of racialised students in higher education. He holds a degree from PUC-MG (Brazil) and a master's from ULHT (Portugal). His work spans LGBTQIA+ issues, decolonisation, mental health, and intersectionality, with experience across Brazil, Portugal, and the UK. A registered OPP, EuroPsy, and BACP member, he has worked with institutions like NEPE, RUM0, and Docklands Outreach. He is also the author of *Posso te tratar por tu?* (2021) and *Tudo é Racismo* (2024).

## **Reimagining higher education: Student-staff partnerships as pathways**

Student-staff partnerships in higher education (HE) are increasingly recognised as transformative mechanisms for fostering inclusive, democratic, and socially just learning environments. This paper explores the contemporary possibilities and challenges of such partnerships, particularly in relation to social justice work. Drawing on recent scholarship (Matthews et al., 2022; Bovill, 2021), we examine how co-creation between students and staff challenges traditional hierarchies and advances unbiased knowledge production. However, tensions continue to persist regarding power dynamics, institutional constraints and the sustainability of these partnerships (Mercieca & McDonald, 2023). The paper argues that student-staff partnerships, when implemented effectively, can serve as powerful tools for advancing social justice within HE. I highlight case studies of innovative partnership initiatives that have led to substantial policy changes and enhanced student engagement in institutional decision-making. Additionally, I consider how intersectionality (Collins, 2020) informs these collaborations, ensuring that marginalised voices are central to institutional transformation. By critically engaging with the themes of student-staff partnerships and social justice, this paper contributes to ongoing discussions on HE's role in fostering equity. It underscores the importance of reflexivity, mutual accountability and sustainable institutional change to ensure that partnerships move beyond rhetoric toward meaningful action. The findings offer valuable insights for HE practitioners, policymakers and scholars committed to fostering authentic collaborations that advance fairness and justice.

**Speaker: Zachary Omitowoju (University of Westminster)**

Zach is an Artificial Intelligence Masters student at the University of Westminster. He is committed to understanding how we can improve student engagement happening in both a digital and physical sense through research and meetings within the Steering Group. Combined with a background as a Lead Collaborative Engagement and Retention Team Mentor for the School of Arts and Humanities and working as a Student Panel Member for the Centre for Student and Community Engagement, both at Nottingham Trent University, Zach is passionate about using his interpersonal skills to see how we can bridge the gap between student services and social mobility around students, ensuring that student views are central to this work.



## **Kicking against the pricks or reflecting the neo-liberal university? The ambivalent narrative of 'social justice' in student-staff partnership curriculum initiatives at Western Sydney University**

One way of interrogating Student-Staff Partnership (SSP) research and practice is to focus on the ways its initiatives are oriented towards interrupting entrenched power dynamics in higher education – at a whole range of levels. In the classroom, for example, rather than baking in the expectation that students give feedback, and teachers respond to it – akin to transaction – SSP reminds us that responsibility and action can be taken by both teachers and students when commensurate acts of curiosity, inquiry, relationality and responsibility are present. Taking this perspective – one of co-inquiry– (Suresh & Peseta, in preparation) we get a glimpse into how the act of feedback is expanded into a form of care that is refractive. Another approach is to centre the student – where SSP initiatives recognise that students' embodied materiality and access to capital carries different, uneven and unequal prospects in the world. And because SSP is located in the university – with its homely public narrative of uplift, mobility, equality – participation in partnership is laced with the promise of individual transformation. SSP becomes a chance to stand out, differentiate, and to add value in ways that put students more securely on the journey to purpose and success. A third tactic is to see SSP as part of a suite of responses to the obstinate challenges confronting our world. Through partnership, students and staff are engaged alongside each other, and with allied communities, in social and political action to address climate justice, anti-racism, decolonisation, poverty, and gender equality, among others. Here, SSP becomes a practice where the university's walls are porous, and its responsibilities are directed outwards. In all three orientations – SSP is marshalled as a response to a very different set of educational encounters. But what kind of solution does it offer? A relational form of expansion? A route to social mobility? A protest counternarrative? Is kicking against the pricks an inherent logic of SSP?

As the staff and student leads of the WSU Student Partner team where our initiatives focused largely on strategic curriculum and education transformation (from 2017-2024), all kinds of stories, rationales, and logics have been attached to our partnership work – some were inputs that drove the purpose of SSP; others were outcomes – both intended and unexpected. Some stories are those senior leaders tell about our work ("it's been a success, now we need to scale"). Some are stories student partners themselves tell about what they've learned and what's frustrated them ("staff don't know how to partner" to "this work has helped sharpened my critical judgement"). And some are stories that the staff involved in SSP tell about their experiences of co-creation alongside students too ("I got limited value from the student partners" or "I can't imagine doing curriculum renewal without them now"). Some of these stories make us bristle, others paint SSP as a relatively straightforward endeavour that just happens naturally when students and staff occupy rooms together, while other stories are capacious enough to embrace SSP's messiness and contradiction. It is in this context, that our questions about social justice come to the surface. In this presentation, we use the word 'ambivalence' not to signal that social justice isn't a laudable or necessary SSP aim; rather, it is to notice that SSP's emergence or life-world in the University – one mired in contested logics that require each other – scholarly, bureaucratic, and corporate – to draw on Barcan's (2016) image of a palimpsest, invites us to see SSP as equally caught up in those same logics. And it is to ask a more open set of questions about what we see and understand social justice to be in our partnership work, where we see it happening both in the university and beyond, and the stories we tell each other and ourselves about how SSP moves us towards it.

**Speakers: Tai Peseta and Samuel Suresh (Western Sydney University)**

Dr Tai Peseta is Associate Professor, Learning Futures in the Learning and Teaching Portfolio, Division of Education at Western Sydney University, Australia. Since 2017, she has led a suite of strategic curriculum and education initiatives, many alongside a team of student partners. Tai is an experienced higher education teacher and researcher with publications in the field of critical university studies, doctoral education, curriculum, and academic identity and development.

## **Communal communities of coffee: co-creating a walking tour exploring coffee, colonialism and community**

City campus universities sometimes feel like archipelagos in the sea of the metropolis. They are disconnected from one another and the local community in which they are situated. For many, consumerism is the only means of engagement. In this presentation we reflect on our student-staff partnership project that examines the university's transactional relationship with its community through coffee and walking. Staff and students at the University of Westminster conducted coffee-investigations between two campuses, Marylebone and Cavendish, to connect the past with the present, and the local with the global community. Walking has provided a medium to co-interrogate, through the lens of coffee, our current consumption practices with historical extractive colonial processes that have given name to the streets between the campuses.

**Speakers:** Shukri Sultan, Amy MacLatchy and Ayesha (University of Westminster)

Shukri Sultan is a London-based lecturer, writer, and researcher. She teaches at the University of Westminster and co-founded the architecture criticism collective, Afterparti. She is interested in archives, dissemination, zines, and spatial justice. Her research focuses on spaces appropriated or enforced on Muslim minorities in cities worldwide. At the core of this research is an examination of the relationship between the body, prayer, and space, as well as the related questions of citizenship and participation. She has written for Canadian Centre for Architecture, Wallpaper Magazine, RIBA Journal and The Architects' Journal.

Dr Amy MacLatchy is a Lecturer in the Centre of Education and Teaching Innovation (CETI), at the University of Westminster. Her teachings have focused on Foundation students through the core modules Introduction to Academic Practice and Critical Thinking for Academic and Professional development. She is interested in and informed by the collaborative nature of student-staff partnership. Her research focuses on building communities of belonging and developing these relationships within her pedagogical and research-based practices.

I'm Ayesha and I'm a foundation student who is fascinated with history and its ongoing impacts on humanity/ society. I like oranges.



## Minimising power imbalances: Fostering a culture of equitable collaboration in 'Students as Co-Creators' projects

In the last decade, higher education institutions have undergone significant transformations due to different factors, including the declines in student enrolments, financial constraints, technological advancement, embedding education for sustainable development (ESD) and improving inclusivity and equity. To attend the latter, universities have been developing policies, processes and practices to create learning environments where all learners, regardless of their backgrounds, can thrive academically and socially. One of these practices is through the development of student-staff partnerships. Collaboration between students and university staff can take different names, including students as partners (SaP), students as co-creators, student-faculty pedagogical partnerships and student-staff partnerships. In the last decade, there has been an extent of literature that identifies the advantages of these partnerships on students, including the development of transferable competencies, enhanced engagement, and self-confidence. At the same time, these benefits have an impact on an institutional level, including the development of effective and responsive teaching practices, the strengthening of the relationships between students and staff, and the development of an inclusive curriculum and learning environment. However, the impact of student-staff partnerships in the learning environment has been challenged in the literature due to tensions regarding navigating the dual roles of educator/learner and partners (different expectations in contribution to the project), inclusivity and representation (only a select group of students are involved in these projects), traditional hierarchy structures (that can lead to resistance to collaborate with students), power imbalances (that hinder genuine collaboration), and the institutional structures (scarce support and recognition to these projects). These issues have a negative impact on the partnership members such as exclusion, a lack of recognition of their knowledge, marginalisation of their voices and emotional burnout. For that reason, this presentation will explore these advantages and disadvantages and propose a model of student-staff partnership to minimize power imbalances among its members and foster equitable collaboration. This model balances a pragmatic approach and equity that has been developed through a reflection of a student and lecturer at the Westminster Business School who were involved in different projects in the last two years. We hope this model helps and encourages other educators and students to be interested in being part of student-staff partnerships, improve collaboration between its members, and encourage course leaders and education policymakers to improve the design of these projects. Therefore, this model includes the following steps: managing expectations, team formation, balancing guidance and student agency, transparent and shared decision-making, training, continuous feedback, and dissemination of outputs to enhance employability.

**Speakers:** Yick Long Tam and Gustavo Espinoza-Ramos (University of Westminster)

Yick is a penultimate (placement) year student at the Westminster Business School. He was once a student of Gustavo in sustainability, later participating in this collaboration, sharing similar ideals with Gustavo in student-teacher partnerships. Growing up, Yick has been observing and reflecting on educational impression, effectiveness, and communications on the individual, student perspective. He believes that education happens everywhere outside an institution, ranging from parenting and mentoring to on-the-job training and peer-to-peer teaching, and has executed his vision in available opportunities: from being a training specialist in his part-time career, to leading the Westminster Team in the University Business Challenge for 3 years, once reaching overall first runnerup. His insights on education, combined with knowledge on business management studies, is hoped to provide values in this collaboration, not only to create education favourable to fellow students, but also bettering the various kinds of education, leadership, and management.

Gustavo is a senior lecturer at the Westminster Business School at the undergraduate and master levels, and he has also supervised master students' dissertations. His research interests are pedagogy, business sustainability, and social partnerships. Gustavo has been leading projects that disseminate good teaching practices and enhance pedagogical knowledge when working with students on co-creator projects. He has experience in giving presentations and writing book chapters and blogs about teaching and learning in higher education. His contributions to academic literature also serve as valuable resources for fellow educators, promoting a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration in higher education.

## Transforming learning through peer partnerships

Fostering peer communities and peer learning in higher education can be a sustainable approach to enhancing student experience, belonging, and satisfaction while positively impacting attainment and progression. Rooted in the principles of Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy (1970), peer learning challenges traditional, hierarchical structures by positioning students as active participants in their education rather than passive recipients of knowledge. By engaging in co-creation and shared learning experiences, students develop autonomy, agency, and a sense of collective responsibility for their learning and that of their peers. This talk will explore evidence-informed pedagogic research on peer learning in HE, drawing on frameworks that guide the development of peer learning schemes that empower students as partners in shaping their educational experiences (Chilvers, 2025). A socially just approach to peer learning acknowledges the transformative potential of education in challenging systemic inequalities. Freire (1970) emphasised that education should be a process of liberation, where learners are empowered to think critically and enact change. Peer learning provides a powerful mechanism for this transformation, particularly for students from marginalised or underrepresented backgrounds. By creating inclusive opportunities for peer talk, students can gain access to spaces where their voices are heard, their lived experiences inform collective learning, and their agency is strengthened (Clementson, 2025). Compassionate pedagogies (Gibbs, 2017), which emphasise care, empathy, and mutual support, play a key role in encouraging peer learning environments which are safe, inclusive, and empowering for all students. Research demonstrates (Lochite and McConnell, 2024; Emsley-Jones et al., 2024, EmsleyJones, 2024) that peer learning fosters reciprocal relationships, a shared repertoire of academic and professional skills, and collaborative problem-solving. Peer-to-peer (horizontal) and nearpeer (vertical) learning schemes enable students to support one another's learning while also developing key employability skills such as leadership, communication, and teamwork. However, these schemes often require careful academic facilitation to ensure their sustainability and effectiveness. Staff play a crucial role in enabling students to access and sustain peer communities by scaffolding reflection and learning, providing guidance on effective communication and boundary-setting, and embedding inclusive practices that recognise diverse student needs and experiences. Beyond improving engagement and academic outcomes, peer learning also contributes to the development of a more inclusive academic culture. Higher education institutions have a responsibility to foster learning environments where all students feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to succeed (Lemon et al., 2024). By embedding social justice principles into peer learning initiatives, staff can help create educational spaces that challenge dominant power structures, promote equity, and encourage collective action. This shift requires moving beyond deficit models of student support and instead embracing asset-based approaches that recognise and build on students' existing strengths and knowledge. This session will explore a range of peer learning approaches and critically examine the values that underpin them. We will discuss practical strategies for implementing and sustaining peer learning schemes and consider how staff can support students in co-creating more equitable, collaborative, and socially integrated learning environments. By embedding principles of education for social justice, compassion, and partnership, we can cultivate peer learning communities that not only enhance student success but also contribute to broader efforts toward educational equity and systemic change.

**Speakers:** Theresa Clementson and Catherine McConnell (University of Brighton)

Theresa's current role at the University of Brighton is to lead on the development of Peer Communities, an integral part of our institutional Access and Participation Plan (2025-2029). She also provides specialist academic literacies support to students to develop their writing. Theresa has recently completed her PhD studies which focused on the development of transformative pedagogies for developing voice through peer talk.

Catherine's current role is to provide educational leadership in the areas of student success, engagement and partnership, embedding skills development within the curriculum, and peer learning. She currently holds the national role of Co-Chair for the Association of Peer Learning and Support, a network of over 400 colleagues working in the field of peer learning in higher education. Catherine completed an Education Doctorate in 2021 focusing on the complexities inherent in students as partners work.

## **Pursuing social justice through student-staff pedagogical partnership in the SaLT program: Three student partners' shared and varied approaches**

Student-staff pedagogical partnerships can constitute and foster equitable and just practices in higher education, but they do not do so automatically (de Bie et al., 2021; de Bie et al., 2022). Existing scholarship provides guidance in the form of revisiting principles of partnership through a social justice lens (Dollinger & Mercer-Mapstone, 2019; Healey, 2024), arguing for curricular justice (Abbot, 2023), and calling for collective action to decolonize knowledge production and pedagogical practices (Arnata et al., 2025). Publications also propose frameworks for socially just student-staff partnerships in the Global South (Mosienyane et al., forthcoming), and expand 3 models for how student leadership in partnership program development can further social justice goals (Scheve & Piper, forthcoming). Staff co-author of this paper, Alison Cook-Sather, has forged links between student-staff partnerships and social justice work in practice through the nearly 20-year-old pedagogical partnership program she facilitates, Students as Learners and Teachers (SaLT). This paper builds on previous publications focused on "politicised compassion" (Gibson & Cook-Sather, 2020) and the pursuit of epistemic, affective, and ontological justice (de Bie et al., 2021) and on publications co-authored with student partners focused on social justice work within the SaLT program (Ameyaa et al., 2021; Cook-Sather, 2018; Cook-Sather et al., 2025; de Bie et al., 2019). It presents the experiences of three SaLT student partners who have taken both shared and various approaches to fostering social justice through pedagogical partnership. All three student authors, Dante Nguyen, Aaniyah Alexander, and Brisa Kane, have worked in one-on-one, semester-long, pedagogical partnerships with academic staff to enact and develop equitable and inclusive practices. These forms of pedagogical partnership work position Nguyen, Alexander, and Kane to experience themselves in and to support staff in developing practices that distribute resources and opportunities more equitably within circumscribed contexts (e.g., individual classrooms). All also have the potential to contribute to the dismantling of harmful institutional structures and disciplinary practices that perpetuate inequities. These forms of partnership differ, too: one-on-one partnerships focused on curriculum and pedagogy, team partnerships focused on changing disciplinary norms, interventions to scale up the benefits of partnership, and authoring and editing afford different opportunities and carry different constraints. In this paper we will address challenges (e.g., staff resistance, institutional culture, practice and publication norms, and characteristics of white supremacy culture that permeate all of these) as well as successes these three SaLT student partners have experienced through their shared and varied approaches to pursuing social justice through student-staff pedagogical partnership.

**Speakers:** Alison-Cook Sather (Bryn Mawr College), Aaniyah Alexander (Bryn Mawr College), Brisa Kane (Haverford College), Dante Nguyen (Haverford College)

Alison Cook-Sather, Ph.D., is the Mary Katharine Woodworth Professor of Education at Bryn Mawr College and Director of the Teaching and Learning Institute at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges in the United States. She has developed internationally recognized programs that position students and teachers as pedagogical partners, most notably Students as Learners and Teachers (SaLT), which has served as a model for numerous other institutions around the world. Author or co-author of over 150 articles and book chapters and ten books, Alison has spoken or consulted on pedagogical partnership work in 13 countries, served as a visiting scholar at a number of institutions, including University of Cambridge in England, and is the recipient of a number of awards, including the Alumni Excellence in Education Award from the Graduate School of Education at Stanford University.

Aaniyah Alexander is completing a degree at Bryn Mawr College in Political Science and Education Studies. They work as a student consultant in the Students as Learners and Teachers program at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges. Within this work, Aaniyah has engaged with one-on-one partnerships with faculty as well as co-facilitating pedagogy circles for BIPOC faculty. Aaniyah has a deep passion for practicing equity and leading with love, leading them to various educational spaces across the world! From Bloomberg LP to Cape Verde, Africa, they have a deep commitment to minimizing injustice and increasing capacities for care. They believe that support, communication, and equity are the foundation to/of community building.

Brisa Kane is completing a degree at Haverford College in Anthropology and Education Studies. She serves as a co-editor of the US team for the International Journal of Students as Partners and as a student consultant in the Students as Learners and Teachers program at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges. She works in a variety of educational spaces including a kindergarten classroom, a college orientation program, and an outdoor education leadership program. She is dedicated to understanding and creating student-staff partnerships in all educational settings.

Dante Nguyen is completing a degree at Haverford College in Chemistry and Education Studies, with a concentration in Biochemistry. He has worked as a student consultant in the Students as Learners and Teachers program at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges and as the facilitator of the cross-institutional Pairing Student Partners program. Dante holds additional roles as a TA, a Peer Coach, and a member of the Customs leadership team. He has co-authored an article on expanding student-faculty pedagogical benefits to students not participating in formal pedagogical partnerships, and he has an interest in understanding and transforming science teaching and practices.

## Decolonising student-staff partnership: Using visual methodologies to engage differently

To respond to the calls for decolonising the curriculum and including student voice in research during the fallist protests, we have established a student-staff partnership project, Designing for Social Justice Partnership. The project involves three diverse South African higher education institutions in the Western Cape, South Africa – CPUT, UWC & UCT – each with designated student-staff teams. Our project is built on co-creation values between students and staff (Ngoasheng, et al., 2019). What has emerged from our work is the importance of inclusive processes recognising culture, context and agency of the team members and how this informs power dynamics. In an effort to make our work more accessible, we have integrated visual methods into every step of our research process. We have reimagined conventional research practices by integrating visual methods as a way of decolonising our research practice (Morreira, et al., 2020; Brown, 2021). This includes the presence of a visual notetaker in our team who documents our progress through illustrations. These illustrations have formed a visual toolkit which we use in facilitating workshops on student-staff partnership and disseminating our research. We have also used photovoice and platforms like Padlet to facilitate and document the co-creation process between students and staff. Using participatory visual methods, this presentation will focus on the first part of the project: the co-created design process for the development of the DSJP short course with the co-research team, consisting of students and staff from the three different institutions. Using reflections and the artefacts developed in the process, and framed by principles of emerging strategies the study will show how important it is to foreground and intentionally work at decolonial and accessible research practices.

**Speakers:** Esai Reddy (University of Cape Town), Ashleigh Petersen-Cloete (University of Western Cape), Deidré Johnson (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Joe-Dean Roberts (University of Cape Town), Lukhona Leni (University of Western Cape), Tefo Mosienyane (University of Cape Town), Zwelibanzi Ngculu (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Asanda Ngoasheng (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Daniela Gachago (University of Cape Town), Subethra Pather (University of Western Cape), Xena Cupido (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)

Esai Reddy is a Masters in Linguistics candidate. She completed a Bachelor of Social Science in Psychology, Linguistics and Sociology and a B.A. (Honours) in Linguistics. Her current research is looking at language experiences of Autism. She is interested in how language is used and perceived by the Autistic community. Co-creation is a key part of her own research as well as her involvement in DSJP. She has been involved in Students as Partners projects at UCT for the last few years. She currently serves as a researcher in the DSJP team. Outside of work, she is a creative at heart and can be found exploring galleries or painting her own works.

Ashleigh Petersen-Cloete is a dedicated and disciplined PhD Candidate in the Desmond Tutu Centre for Religion and Social Justice at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. Her research focuses on social justice and religion, specifically gender and social media. Social justice has always been a crucial aspect of Ashleigh's postgraduate research. As a researcher, she aims to utilise her scholarly excellence, exemplified in the award of two postgraduate degrees Cum Laude, to co-create with this project. Ashleigh looks forward to using her knowledge, skills, and attitudes to make a difference in the Design for Social Justice Partnership project.

Since founding EdXimia Pty (Ltd) in August 2022, a visionary eLearning consultancy specialising in course strategy and design, as well as development in the realm of learning design, Deidré Johnson has been at the forefront of EdTech innovation, offering consultancy services in best practices, accreditation compliance, and the development of online learning materials. With a mission to make education accessible to all in a socially just way, EdXimia excels in crafting innovative learning strategies and designing digital solutions that drive educational transformation. With a Master of Science in Biokinetics, she combines academic expertise with practical experience in enhancing online education and corporate training. Her career highlights include roles in academic governance, compliance, and educational innovation, focusing on operational management, stakeholder relationship building, and the development of engaging learning experiences. Outside of her professional endeavours, Deidré enjoys running and outdoor activities, emphasising her belief in the importance of balance between work and personal well-being.

Joe-Dean Roberts holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences degree from the University of Cape Town, with majors in Gender Studies and Law. She is currently pursuing an LLB degree, which, while challenging, she finds deeply rewarding. Her passions lie in advocating for women and children and exploring leadership research within higher education. As a Student Assistant, she provides general administrative support to the DSJP partners. Being part of the DSJP team allows her to actively engage in co-creation through meaningful collaboration, contributing to the advancement of student-staff partnerships within the university space and the Global South.

Lukhona Leni is a devoted scholar with a Master of Commerce in Information Systems, currently pursuing a PhD at the University of the Western Cape. As a researcher on this project, Lukhona aspires to contribute meaningfully to the co-creation and co-design processes, leveraging her academic insights and expertise in Information Systems. Lukhona's role as a researcher on this project exemplifies her dedication to bridging academia and social impact, contributing to the broader mission of co-creating across differences for the betterment of higher education.

Tefo is a Junior Research Fellow at the Centre for Innovation for Learning and Teaching (CILT) at the University of Cape Town. Tefo is excited to take up a role in a team that is deeply rooted in fostering social justice within education through collaborative student-staff partnerships. In this position, Tefo hopes to explore the landscape of student-staff partnerships in the global south, with a specific focus on Africa and the Western Cape and strive to amplify voices and perspectives often marginalised within traditional educational structures. Tefo is also PhD student studying Anthropology and Ethnology at the University of the Western Cape and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (co-tutelle), where his research interests lie between third space theory, the rural development in the Kalahari and education policy. In many ways, this project is a continuation of his MPhil in Education from the University of Cambridge, where he explored rural education policy in the Botswana Kalahari. Prior to joining the Designing for Social Justice Partnership team at UCT, Tefo served as a Monitoring & Evaluation Officer at think-tank, where their project management skills were instrumental in implementing developing Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on critical research methodologies. He then worked as a management consultant focusing on the nexus of competition economics and public health in Africa.

Zwelibanzi works in Fundani in the First Year Experience (FYE) unit. His work centres around student transition, support and retention. Our methods of achieving this are through our mentoring and retention officer programs which employ senior students who we train to provide academic & psycho-social support to 1st year students. Additionally, he supports 1st year students personally too, through the workshops he provides institution wide, on various academic & non-academic (psycho-social) topics. He has also served as a researcher, as his unit had a research element in the past collecting data on the demographics of our 1st year population in order to better inform policy creation and, the solutions aimed at meeting the needs of our 1st year students. On a more personal front, his 1st qualification was in Industrial Psychology, with his most recent Master's in Business, yet with a research focus on safety in the workplace (offshore oil rigs, specifically). Zwelibanzi is a Researcher and will be completing his PhD as part of the project. He is immensely grateful for this opportunity & in particular looking forward to all the academic support and, guidance the partners/ collaborators will be providing him as seasoned and accomplished academics themselves.

Asanda Ngoasheng is currently the Coach/Facilitator for the Designing for Social Justice Partnership Project (DSJP). Ngoasheng is a scholar and activist in the education, gender, diversity and politics space. She is regularly interviewed on these topics in local (SABC), regional (News Central) and international media (BBC, Voice of America). Her career has included working as a journalist and a media academic and curriculum transformation advocate at the University of Witwatersrand and Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). She has spoken globally including in SA (UNISA), the United States (Duke University), United Kingdom (Sussex University), Germany (University of Konstanz), Denmark (Oxfam Ibis), Austria (Bruno Kreisky Forum). Ngoasheng has led institutional journeys of change at academic institutions, nonprofits and corporates through her diversity and decolonising the curriculum work. Her interdisciplinary, transnational research and practice have made her a sought-after facilitator and thought leader. She has written academic articles, chapters and opinion pieces on these topics exploring how her work as an academic and diversity practitioner, crosses people and knowledge boundaries by using interdisciplinary autoethnographic narratives and methodologies to tell the stories of her participation in social, academic and activist life. In her work and projects, she seeks to demonstrate that Decolonial pedagogies, while political in nature, can go beyond mere 'political' statements and become true practice and methodology with an impact on one's ways of working and ways of engaging with racialised, othered, marginalised, minoritised people. They also emphasize that institutional change does not happen in a vacuum, is political, difficult, and emotionally taxing and it is best done in collaboration with different stakeholders.

Daniela is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Innovation for Learning and Teaching (CILT) at the University of Cape Town. Her current research focuses on academic staff development for designing blended and online learning in higher education, with a particular focus on developing socially just learning and curriculum designs based on co-creation and equity-oriented compassionate design principles. She teaches on the PG Diploma in EdTech, the Masters in EdTech and convenes the Masters in Higher Education Studies (HES) at UCT. She completed a Masters in Adult Education at the University of Botswana and received a PHD from the School of Education at the University of Cape Town. She is a C1-rated researcher and 2022 Fulbright Scholar who has published more than 80 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. She is the managing editor of CriSTaL, the journal for critical studies in teaching and learning in higher education. She blogs at <http://danielagachago.blogspot.com> and tweets under @dgachago17.

Prof Subethra (Su) Pather is currently the Learning & Teaching specialist in the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). She plays an important role in enhancing UWC's student success initiatives. Prof Pather is UWC's Lead for the Siyaphumelela Student Success project funded by the Kresge Foundation. She is Deputy President of the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA). Prof Pather is the manager of UWC First Year Experience (FYE), First Year Peer Mentoring, Academic Advising and Tutor Enhancement Program at an institutional level. She is also involved in a regional project on Designing for Social Justice Partnership (DSJP) in South Africa and an international project on Mentoring Meaningful Learning experiences at the Center for Engaged Learning at Elon University in the USA. Her research interests are located within the higher education field with a particular focus on supporting first-year student access, transition, retention, and success. Her extensive academic publications and academic presentations are located in this field. She is also involved in several national and international networks in first-year experience and student-staff partnerships to advance student success in South Africa and her research agenda.

Xena Cupido holds the position of Director at the Fundani Centre for Higher Education Development, at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Her scholarly pursuits centre around the critical domain of student engagement and success, with a specific focus on participatory learning, holistic student engagement, and designing for social justice. Recently, Dr. Cupido has also demonstrated a growing interest in the integration of digital technologies as an instrumental pedagogical tool to optimize the process of learning and teaching. Xena has actively engaged in projects focused on learning and teaching, student academic development, and the fundamental pursuit of social justice within the realm of higher education. Her focus extends to co-creating curriculum frameworks, implementing participatory student engagement practices, promoting access, and effectively addressing youth needs to enhance overall success. On a national level, Dr. Cupido has established collaborations through involvement with the Siyaphumelela Network and the TAU Fellowship which advances teaching at the university. These associations are centered on bolstering institutional capacities to provide holistic support for students.

### **Maahlgā Sdiihlga GawGa – “Returning Missing Seeds”: Reclaiming Indigenous power structures**

This session provides an overview of Indigenous power structures and their barriers aimed at revitalization, reclamation, and reconciliation. Topics covered will include: Rematriation, decolonization, Indigenization, intergenerational trauma, biological warfare, and forced relocation. Much of these knowledges are tied to Indigenous lands on Turtle Island (colonially-called Canada) but are fluid, flexible, and adaptable by expanding to lands impacted by colonialism, white supremacy, and eco-terrorism. Centralizing relationality and understanding the colonial hi/stories of the lands we are situated on is a starting point to support the reclamation of Indigenous power structures.

Facilitator: YahlNaaw (University of Victoria)

ah! Xaaydaga ‘las! YahlNaaw han.nuu dii kiiGa ga. HlGaagilda Xaayda Gwaii sda.uu hll iigiing. LƏ́KʷƏŋƏN sda.uu hll naa.uu dii gan. Way.yad.uu ‘Treaty 1’ guu.uu hll naa.uu dii ga.

“Hello! Wonderful people! My name is YahlNaaw and I am from Skidegate, Haida Gwaii. I have the privilege of currently feeling a sense of home between Treaty 1 (colonially called Winnipeg, MB, Canada) and LƏ́KʷƏŋƏN (colonially called Victoria, BC, Canada) lands”

YahlNaaw is Indigenous, queer, and transgender—an identity constellation that often involves navigating multiple intersecting worlds. They hold their identities, lived experiences, and relationships with care, recognizing these as powerful forces that shape and (re)direct their journey of living and learning. YahlNaaw is the Founder and Lead Consultant at Taajuu Consulting, an Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, and anti-oppression-focused consulting company. They also serve as the Indigenous Rights and Anti-Racism Officer at the University of Victoria’s Equity and Human Rights office.

### **Cause when I think about it it’s bittersweet: Exploring the experience of Black students in EDI student-staff partnership programmes**

Through the eyes of the composite character of Lauryn Mensah, a BAME ambassador, we will explore the rise of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Student-Staff Partnerships and the experiences of Black students within these programmes. In this workshop, staff and students will work as Critical Race Theory Detectives to unpack Lauryn’s experience and investigate what could be done to improve or change Lauryn’s experience. This session will leave participants with important questions and tools to think more intentionally about student-staff partnership programmes and co-create an antiracist student-staff partnership framework.

Facilitator: Tamara Reid (Kingston University)

Tamara Reid is Programme Lead of the national award-winning Inclusive Curriculum Consultants Program at Kingston University, where she supports the development of an inclusive curriculum through student-staff partnership. Throughout her career, she has taken part in supporting work on and presenting on the Black Asian, and Ethnic Minority awarding gap at both an institutional, regional, and national level.

## **Workshop: Dreaming Alternatives for Western Neoliberal Academia**

Decolonial dreaming fundamentally transforms exclusionary and hierarchical practices in spaces like the Western neoliberal university. It involves a practice of participatory dialogue and collective reimagination, creating alternative ways of being and relating. Rooted in ancestral knowledge, decolonial dreaming connects the past, present, and future through storytelling, art, reciprocity, and song. As an essential step in decolonisation, dreaming creates opportunities for dialogue and new social possibilities. The practice of communal dreaming encourages resistance to colonial legacies, bridging human experiences and contributing to envisioning alternatives for social interaction. Decolonial dreaming fosters collective engagement and commitment to action toward change. Recognising the decolonial project as an ongoing endeavour in the face of coloniality, dreaming plays a crucial role in reimagining and envisioning change in spaces like academia. This workshop invites students, faculty, and staff to collectively reimagine university spaces by challenging oppressive practices and envisioning new possibilities. Through the practice of a dreaming council, participants can share stories about the future of higher education.

**Facilitator: Delso Batista (Nottingham Trent University)**

Delso Batista is a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist with a PhD in Psychology in progress at Nottingham Trent University, focusing on the experiences of racialised students in higher education. He holds a degree from PUC-MG (Brazil) and a master's from ULHT (Portugal). His work spans LGBTQIA+ issues, decolonisation, mental health, and intersectionality, with experience across Brazil, Portugal, and the UK. A registered OPP, EuroPsy, and BACP member, he has worked with institutions like NEPE, RUM0, and Docklands Outreach. He is also the author of *Posso te tratar por tu?* (2021) and *Tudo é Racismo* (2024).



## Student-staff coalitions for climate justice: Making and sustaining activism in universities

Universities have long been critical sites for activism, enabling networks and spaces that support direct engagement in social movements (Gready & Jackson, 2025). However, campus-based organising is becoming increasingly challenging as academic freedom, protest rights, and critiques of institutional ties face mounting repression (Bayeh & Riemer, 2024). In this context, sustaining student-staff partnerships with activist intentions requires careful navigation of institutional politics and external pressures. This paper explores how students and staff engaged in climate justice activism can sustain their commitments: to one another, to activist curricula, to campus-based collectives and initiatives, to the causes they organise for, and to the institution itself. Situated on unceded Dharug, Eora, Dharawal (Tharawal), and Wiradjuri lands in so-called Australia, we are committed to building and sustaining a “student-staff coalition” for climate justice at Western Sydney University. As a multi-campus institution located in a heatimpacted region shaped by long-standing socio-spatial injustices, our university presents both challenges and opportunities for grassroots organising. In response, we have mobilised by creating the ‘Festival of Action’, a student-staff initiative that emerged from a universitywide transdisciplinary curriculum innovation project grounded in “partnership pedagogies” (Barrie & Pizzica, 2019). The Festival of Action brings students, staff, partners, and community members together using an events-based approach to organise across different causes but to date, we have focused on climate justice and collaborations with youth-led climate organisations. Although our student-staff coalition originated from an official curriculum innovation project, we found that embedding climate justice into the university curriculum, despite its urgency, is slow, difficult, and often perceived as an unwelcome imposition on already overcrowded programmes (McCowan, 2023). Subsequently, the Festival of Action offers an important ‘third space’ (Bhabha, 1994), an alternative site for activist pedagogy that legitimises climate justice education and activism by linking students with broader climate movements and external partners. The Festival of Action project has been experienced and interpreted differently across campuses, oscillating between palatable protest and meaningful change. It acts as a case study in the university’s submission to the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, where Western Sydney University has been ranked number one overall in the world for three consecutive years. Yet, this institutional recognition raises critical tensions: how do we ensure our activism remains uncompromised by the market-driven imperatives of climate branding, rankings, and accolades? What change are we striving to create, and what values and practices can sustain our work with integrity? How do we continue to centre the voices of the most marginalised students, particularly when dissent that challenges the status quo is met with institutional resistance and carries real consequences for precariously positioned students and staff? While a shared activist purpose unites us, colonial constraints, curriculum rigidity, and external pressures continue to shape participation dynamics, underscoring the urgency of cultivating and protecting ethical, caring, and action-oriented spaces. This paper argues that student-staff coalitions, when intentionally organised and grounded in community-based initiatives, serve as a vital mechanism for justice-oriented activism that drives meaningful, systemic change within and beyond the university.

Speakers: Jenna Condie (Western Sydney University)

Contributors: Thilakshi Mallawa Arachchi, James Gourley (Western Sydney University)

Dr Jenna Condie is an academic, activist and community organiser. On unceded Dharug and Gundungurra lands, she works as a Senior Lecturer in Digital Society at Western Sydney University, Australia. Her research examines how digital participation and activist practices empower communities to mobilise for safe, equitable, and sustainable futures, with a focus on fostering caring relationships and collective resilience that drive systemic change. Working in and with communities across housing equity, childcare systems, higher education, and climate justice, she employs activist and participatory digital methods to directly support community organising, and to help create the societal transformations needed for a caring society and liveable planet.

## **Empowering rural communities through student-staff partnerships: A social justice approach to water solutions**

Student-staff partnerships in Higher Education can potentially drive meaningful social justice work, particularly in addressing critical societal challenges. This paper presents a collaborative project between students and staff at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), aimed at tackling water insecurity in rural South African communities. The “Generic Water Solution for Rural Communities” project is part of the DHET UCDP Collaborative Project “Designing for Social Justice Partnerships”, which integrates community engagement, research, and innovative engineering solutions to provide sustainable water treatment interventions. Through an inclusive Students as Partners (SaP) approach, this initiative empowers students to co-create knowledge, develop technical solutions, and engage directly with marginalized communities. The partnership fosters a participatory and decolonial approach, centering community voices in designing and implementing decentralized ceramic membrane systems for water treatment. The project also emphasizes ethical engagement, student-led research, and long-term sustainability, aligning with social justice and equity principles in higher education. This presentation will explore the possibilities and tensions in student-staff partnerships within social justice work, drawing from our experiences navigating power dynamics, resource constraints, and community engagement challenges (Trowell, 2024; Davis & Parmenter, 2021). It will also reflect on lessons learned in bridging engineering education and grassroots activism, positioning students as change agents in tackling real-world sustainability issues (Burleson et al., 2023). By sharing our experiences, we hope to contribute to the global conversation on the role of student-staff partnerships in advancing decolonial, social justice, and community-driven solutions in higher education. This case study highlights how partnerships can move beyond the classroom, transforming students into co-creators of social impact and driving systemic change in historically underserved communities

**Speakers:** Amos Adeniyi and Muhammad Saadiq Dollie (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)

**Contributors:** Tristan Justin Bailey, Melusi Nkuna, Whiteny Heuvel, Zwelibanzi Ngculu (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)

Dr. Amos Adeniyi is a Senior Lecturer in Chemical Engineering at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) with extensive experience in academia, research, and industry. He holds a Doctor of Technology in Chemical Engineering from Tshwane University of Technology and has a strong background in membrane technology, water treatment, carbon capture, and sustainable engineering solutions. With a career spanning academia and industry, Dr. Adeniyi has worked as a researcher, lecturer, technical packaging manager at Procter & Gamble, and chemical engineer at Marlow Aquatec South Africa/SigroTech Germany, where he contributed to innovative desalination technologies. He has supervised numerous postgraduate students and is actively involved in research collaborations, including with the European Institute of Membranes. His research focuses on membrane synthesis for water purification, nanotechnology applications, and environmental sustainability. Dr. Adeniyi has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals, presented at international conferences, and serves as a reviewer for NRF Thuthuka funding. He is also leading community engagement projects such as the Sandvlei Water Awareness Campaign and the Hammanskraal Borehole Water Treatment Project. A dedicated educator, Dr. Adeniyi integrates research-led teaching with real-world applications, ensuring students gain both theoretical and practical expertise. His work aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, emphasizing innovative solutions for global water and energy challenges. He is a member of professional organizations including IChemE, IMWA, WISA, and ECSA. His ongoing contributions to chemical engineering research and education continue to impact industry and society positively.

Muhammad Saadiq Dollie is a dedicated and ambitious BEng Tech (Honour) student in Chemical Engineering at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). He completed his BEngTech study last year 2024. A former Spine Road High School prefect, he has demonstrated leadership skills as a class representative throughout his university years, earning commendation from the Dean of Engineering.

## **Improving student belonging and success through co-created, decolonized pedagogies and anti-racist practice**

For decades, the higher education sector in the UK has failed to address differential outcomes for students from racialized backgrounds, such as poor retention and the awarding gap. At the same time, there continues to be challenges for students of any background in developing a sense of belonging at university and feeling connected to the institution, their peers and curriculum. Collectively, these issues can negatively impact retention, achievement, and well-being for all students, irrespective of race. My thesis sets out how using a co-created pedagogic approach to learning and teaching, through a decolonized and anti-racist lens, can improve both success and belonging for all students. The research was undertaken over a four-year life cycle to investigate the long-term outcomes of such work, using mixed methods to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from students. The research design involved two phases: phase one comprised the design and implementation of the co-creation interventions and phase two, evaluation of the interventions and how both impacted student attainment and sense of belonging. The interventions set out to improve outcomes not only for students involved in the interventions, but also the wider student community. Findings presented in my thesis reveal there are causal mechanisms supporting raised student attainment and student sense of belonging as a consequence of the co-creation interventions. Based on my findings, I argue that co-creation is a causal mechanism which can support student success and belonging. However, encapsulated within co-creation there must be safe spaces, coaching, respect, anti-racist theory, a decolonized curriculum, and teaching with love, which are further causal mechanisms. As such, I argue that there is a relationship between co-creation and both anti-racism and decolonization which, all together, has the potential to raise student attainment and foster a sense of belonging.

**Speaker: Syra Shakir (Leeds Trinity University)**

Syra Shakir is an Associate Professor in Learning and Teaching at Leeds Trinity University. She works on embedding race equity in the curriculum, decolonisation, anti-racist pedagogy, and co-creation with students to build belonging. Her research interests are in the pedagogy of co-creation, critical race theory, and education for social justice.

## Cultivating inclusive student-teacher relationships to advance partnerships and social justice

Student-teacher relationships matter in creating inclusive student engagement opportunities in higher education. Student engagement is a wide-ranging topic (Kuh 2008; Trowler 2010; Bryson 2014). Much of the existing literature discusses student course representation and curriculum co-creation as two distinct approaches. Student course representation is embedded in UK quality assurance and enhancement processes, where student leaders gather feedback from the wide student cohort and work with staff to enhance the quality of courses (Bols 2020; Cornelius-Bell 2022). Curriculum co-creation is growing more widespread in the UK and in various international contexts, but it is much more rare than course representation since it tends to be led by willing teachers and takes considerable care and effort for both students and teachers to partner in decision-making regarding aspects of a course (Bovill 2020; Lubicz-Nawrocka 2022). Both course representation and curriculum co-creation have been promoted within higher education with their potentials for improving equity, and enhancing the student experience for all students, particularly those from traditionally marginalised backgrounds (LuescherMamashela 2013; Cook-Sather et al.'s 2014). However, there is a notable paucity of prior empirical research comparing the ways that student representation and curriculum co-creation can lead to different forms of relationship-building that could be considered partnerships. The exceptions are work by Matthews and Dollinger (2022) and Patrick (2022). Therefore, our qualitative study first examined student course representatives' and co-creators' perceptions of effective student-teacher relationships in courses generally, followed by an analysis of the differences in those relationships between teachers and (a) course representatives and (b) curriculum co-creators in achieving strong working relationships as partners. Partnerships including curriculum co-creation can advance social justice by counteracting the neoliberal values and culture of performativity prevalent in higher education (Gibson & Cook-Sather 2020; Lubicz-Nawrocka 2023). We identified five elements of effective student-teacher relationships within the classroom context that help students feel included, connected, respected, valued, and inspired. We found that both student course representatives and co-creators tend to be highly engaged students, but they take up different opportunities to enhance the academic experience. The student course representative role often draws on similar principles to curriculum co-creation but, depending on the values shared and the relationships developed with teachers, their opportunities to work in partnership with teachers can differ. Furthermore, different communication structures inherent in course representation and curriculum co-creation yielded distinct contributions and risks in building inclusive student-teacher relationships that promote equity and social justice in learning. To deepen understanding of inclusive student engagement, in this paper we explore opportunities to enhance these relationships and work towards meaningful partnerships between students and teachers that can advance social justice.

**Speakers:** Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka (University of Stirling) and Daisy Bao (University of Edinburgh)

Dr Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka is currently an Academic Development Partner at the University of Stirling, supporting teachers' development, their teaching and student engagement practices, and their professional accreditation. She previously completed her PhD research at the University of Edinburgh and held various roles with that University and its Students' Association to advance student and staff development.

Xiuxiu Bao is a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh, focusing on student engagement and equitable learning in higher education. She is a student representative at the Moray House School of Education and Sport and at the national level with the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science. She previously completed her Bachelor's degree at Hangzhou Normal University and her Master's degree at Shanghai Normal University in China.

## **Aiming to improve social inclusion in physician assistant students' classroom experience through partnership**

Pedagogical partnership programs often facilitate collaborations between students and faculty to bolster inclusive instructional methodologies and equitable opportunities for classroom engagement. Improving equitable learning experiences for students is of particular importance within physician assistant (PA) education given the historical concerns around lack of diverse representation in the PA workforce and subsequent efforts toward increasing diversity within the profession (Kozikowski et al. 2024). In PA programs, over-reliance on GPA and standardized test scores in the admission process poses barriers to recruiting and matriculating a diverse cohort of students (DiBaise et al. 2015; Yuen and Honda 2019). And yet, matriculating a more diverse class is insufficient; retention of diverse students is just as important and has also posed a challenge for PA programs (Bradley-Guidry et al. 2022). Building a welcoming, supportive learning environment is critical for PA programs aiming to address inequitable teaching practices and graduate a more diverse class. In an effort to increase social equity and inclusion in PA education, we began to explore ways to create a supportive, welcoming classroom climate in a PA program by incorporating a student-faculty partnership, which was established between an undergraduate student and a graduate PA program faculty member. The partnership included classroom observations, syllabus/lecture review, and midsemester feedback from the student partner, as well as weekly meetings between the student partner and faculty member to iteratively revise approaches to course instruction and student engagement. At the end of the course, we gathered survey data on the partnership's impact on PA students' perceptions of classroom climate and the PA program in general. A qualitative analysis revealed that student responses indicate they experienced a sense of improved classroom climate, open communication, trust, and support because of the partnership. The findings of this study suggest that incorporating a student-faculty partnership model within a PA program can be an effective strategy for fostering a more inclusive and equitable learning environment that could ultimately promote social equity in medical education.

**Speakers: Heather Dwyer, Haili Dunbar, Rayne Loder, Hope Coleman-Plourde (Tufts University)**

Heather Dwyer is the Associate Director for Teaching, Learning, and Inclusion at Tufts University's Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching. Heather provides leadership on programs and initiatives that center diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. She supports instructors in understanding the inequities embedded in higher education and how teaching and learning can create systems that are more welcoming for all students. Heather's work is published in *To Improve the Academy*, the *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, *Frontiers in Education*, and *Ecology and Evolution*. She brings experiences from centers for teaching and learning at Carnegie Mellon University and Suffolk University. Heather earned her Ph.D. in Ecology at UC Davis.

Haili Dunbar was born in Chongqing, China, and immigrated to the U.S. at age 10. She earned a B.A. in Psychology and History from NYU in 2010, publishing *Micaela Bastida: A Peruvian Hero in The Historian*. She completed a postbaccalaureate in pre-medical studies at Harvard Extension, serving as an organic chemistry teaching fellow post-graduation. Before attending the Tufts University School of Medicine PA Program, she worked in dermatology research at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. After earning her master's in medical science, she became the first PA at Tufts Medical Center Quincy Primary Care in 2017. In 2021, Haili transitioned to academia as Assistant Professor and Admissions Chair at Tufts' PA Program. Now Director of Clinical Education, she focuses on expanding the clinical excellence of the program and has six peer-reviewed publications. She serves on the university's Anti-Racism Committee and enjoys traveling, ballet, and rock climbing with her daughter.

Rayne Loder received a bachelor's degree in biology from Lebanon Valley College in 2006. She then spent five years working as a seasonal park ranger and EMT for the National Park Service before completing her clinical training as a physician assistant, graduating from Lock Haven University with a master's degree in health science in 2013. As a PA, Rayne has spent most of her clinical career practicing family and emergency medicine in rural and medically underserved environments. She has worked as a full-time PA educator since 2018 and is currently a PhD candidate in health professions education at the University of Maryland. Rayne is active within the PA education research community and currently serves as the "Exploring Medicine Through the Arts" feature editor for the *Journal of Physician Assistant Education*.

Hope Coleman-Plourde is a senior at Tufts University studying Education and Child Study and Human Development. She has been working with the Pedagogical Partnership Program (P3) for the past three years and is passionate about increasing access to education.

## The impact of pedagogical partnership on students' professional skills and lives

Pedagogical partnership experiences support students in developing professional skills, but little documentation exists on whether and how those skills are applied in their future professional roles. These skills encompass career readiness competencies, such as communication, critical thinking, leadership, and teamwork (National Association of Colleges and Employers 2024). Importantly, they often comprise a hidden curriculum in that they are related to an unspoken, yet necessary, set of rules and norms of behavior that prepare students for the workplace (Giroux & Penna 1979). Some of these skills may be culturally bound to and particularly valued in dominant (i.e., white, Western, male) ideals and behaviors (Costandius and Bitzer 2015). Because these sought-after skills are often neither explicitly identified nor taught in higher education, students with dominant identities and/or privileged backgrounds are more likely to leave the academy having developed them. This study explores the potential for pedagogical partnership to promote social equity by fostering the development and eventual application of these essential professional skills. At an R1 university, one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with alumni of a pedagogical partnership program to explore the skills they developed and how these relate to their post-undergraduate academic and professional careers. A grounded theory analysis of participants' reflections revealed that involvement in pedagogical partnerships impacted their development and application of professional skills, such as relationship building, communication, ability to navigate power imbalances, pedagogical knowledge, and equity-related skills. It also contributed to the development of personal attributes such as self-confidence, resilience, and flexibility. This research demonstrates how pedagogical partnership programs can provide an opportunity for student partners, often from marginalized backgrounds, to develop tacit knowledge and essential skills for post-graduation career successes.

### Speakers: Nessren Ourdyl, Heather Dwyer, Carie Cardamone (Tufts University)

Nessren Ourdyl is a graduating senior at Tufts University's School of Arts & Sciences majoring in Cognitive and Brain Sciences. Passionate about educational initiatives and equity for students from under presented backgrounds, she has served as a student partner with Tufts Pedagogical Partnership Program. In the program, she also served as student ambassador where she supported this research on impact of the Pedagogical Partnerships on student partners at the university.

Heather Dwyer is the Associate Director for Teaching, Learning, and Inclusion at Tufts University's Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching. Heather provides leadership on programs and initiatives that center diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. She supports instructors in understanding the inequities embedded in higher education and how teaching and learning can create systems that are more welcoming for all students. Heather's work is published in *To Improve the Academy*, the *Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education*, *Frontiers in Education*, and *Ecology and Evolution*. She brings experiences from centers for teaching and learning at Carnegie Mellon University and Suffolk University. Heather earned her Ph.D. in Ecology at UC Davis.

Carie Cardamone brings expertise in assessment, STEM & professional school pedagogies, and AI to Tufts University's center for the Enhancement of Learning & Teaching. She applies both quantitative and qualitative methods to educational research and faculty development, helping instructors adopt scholarly teaching practices. Her work integrates the science of learning and thoughtful uses of technology to create engaging curricula and draws on her experiences as a faculty member at Wheelock College, a Postdoc at MIT, and an Associate Director at Brown University's teaching center. She holds a PhD from the Yale Center for Astronomy & Astrophysics.

### **Promoting inclusive student-staff partnerships in a teaching and academic development programme: Affordances and challenges**

As a multi-disciplinary team of four faculty members from University College Dublin (UCD), we have been working together on a research project exploring student-staff partnership in teaching and learning. Our collaboration emerged from the Teaching and Academic Development Fellowship, a biennial programme designed to address strategic institutional priorities while advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning. Each of us individually applied for the fellowship and did not know each other until we started the project. While Rachel brought scholarly expertise on student-staff partnership, Olive, Naomi, and Seán Paul had practitioner experience in their respective fields. Together, we were tasked with developing a research project on the theme of Students as Partners in Teaching and Learning. Our presentation will critically reflect on the affordances and challenges of our work on inclusive student-staff partnerships in this context.

We will discuss a range of affordances:

- A university-wide strategy that explicitly supports student-staff partnerships
- Financial support through individual and group bursaries
- Institutional backing via UCD Teaching and Learning
- Access to international expertise, providing external guidance
- An accountable reporting structure, ensuring project sustainability
- Interdisciplinary collaboration, allowing us to draw on diverse perspectives

And some challenges:

- Academic Gatekeeping and Power Imbalances: The fellowship programme was designed for faculty, making it difficult to incorporate students as meaningful partners. This raises important questions about how institutional structures can reinforce hierarchies, even within partnership initiatives.
- Methodological Challenges: As a multidisciplinary team, we encountered challenges in developing a shared research methodology that honoured different epistemological traditions.
- Institutional Expectations vs. Autonomy: Balancing an autonomous research agenda with institutional expectations required careful negotiation.
- Unintended Consequences of Institutional Support: While financial and strategic backing is crucial, it can also shape and constrain the ways in which partnership work unfolds.

We will then describe our work on developing an inclusive model of student-staff partnership, which involves:

1. Critically Examining Existing Partnership Models – We map out current student-staff partnerships within UCD to understand the extent to which they promote inclusion and equitable engagement.
2. Developing an Inclusive Theoretical and Methodological Framework – Our research is underpinned by a critical realist methodology, which allows us to explore how structural, cultural, and personal factors interact to shape partnership experiences. This approach helps us move beyond surface-level descriptions and develop a highly contextualized understanding of partnership dynamics.
3. Advocating for Institutional Change – Our findings aim to inform university policy and practice, ensuring that future partnership initiatives are designed with inclusivity and accessibility at their core.

Our presentation shows that while institutional backing is valuable, it must be critically examined to ensure that it does not unintentionally reinforce existing inequities. Through this presentation, we seek to contribute to broader conversations about how universities can move beyond performative partnership models towards genuinely transformative, socially just collaborations.

We propose a single-paper presentation, but we are also open to expanding this into a three paper panel:

- Paper 1: Challenges and affordances of engaging in student-staff partnerships within the structure of a faculty-oriented fellowship programme.
- Paper 2: A critical overview of student-staff partnerships at UCD, highlighting how existing models promote (or fail to promote) inclusion.
- Paper 3: A detailed discussion of our critical realist methodology, exploring how it facilitates a deeper, more inclusive analysis of partnership work in a specific institutional context.



Panelists: Naomi McAreavey, Olive Lennon, Rachel Farrell, Seán Paul Teeling (University College Dublin)

Naomi McAreavey is a Renaissance Literature lecturer in the UCD School of English, Drama and Film. She tries to provide a warm and inclusive learning environment for her students by offering them different ways of engaging. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is at the heart of her teaching through which she embraces the diversity in her classrooms and helps her students become more engaged and empowered learners. As a University for All Faculty Partner, Naomi has helped increase UDL practice in her school and college to ensure that inclusion is at the heart of their activities.

Olive Lennon is an Associate Professor in the UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science. Her research centres on neurorehabilitation and on exploring how to best prepare entry-level students for evidence-based professional practice and interprofessional working. In her teaching, she tries to promote collaborative, interactive learning. In her former role as Associate Dean for postgraduate education (2019–2023), she has worked alongside postgraduate research students to form a student-led committee, support peer-to-peer learning and co-design a postgraduate pathway map for self-regulation.

Rachel Farrell is the Director of the Professional Master of Education (PME) Programme in the UCD School of Education and the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies in the UCD College of Social Sciences and Law. Her primary research interests lie in Democratic Pedagogical Partnerships and Expansive Learning in Initial Teacher Education (ITE). She has led numerous collaborative initiatives in which UCD students play a central role, including projects on the effective use of immersive technology in post-primary education with SchooVR, the evaluation of digital portfolios in ITE with Microsoft Education Ireland, cyber resilience education with the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, addressing gender bias in STEAM with Science Foundation Ireland (SFI), and the Oide Young Economist of the Year national awards for post-primary students, developed in partnership with multiple universities and government agencies.

Seán Paul Teeling holds a joint appointment with the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems and the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital. His teaching focuses on the opportunities and challenges involved in implementing person-centred quality improvement programmes within the health system. He supports healthcare professionals—across clinical, educational, managerial, and research roles—in exploring innovative ways of working both individually and collectively to enhance the experiences of care for both service providers and service users.

## Fostering social justice through student-staff course re-design partnership projects at the University of British Columbia

From March 2022 to March 2025, the University of British Columbia's (UBC) Students as Partners Initiative funded 52 course re-design projects across 10 faculties. Collectively, these projects compensated 133 undergraduate students to partner with 65 faculty and 23 staff in the redesign and scholarly evaluation of undergraduate courses, positioning students as collaborators in the academic mission of the university. Many of these course re-design projects focused explicitly on advancing social justice and creating more equitable, diverse, and inclusive classrooms. In this panel session, which will highlight the voices of students, faculty, and staff who were involved in funded SaP course re-design projects that sought to build partnerships through a shared commitment to social justice, we will explore the individual and collective learning that occurred through the process of working in partnership. Specifically, panelists will discuss how being a partner and contributing "equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualization, decision-making, implementation, investigation, or analysis" (Cook-Sather et al., 2014, pp. 6-7) has impacted their interest in and commitment to advancing social justice through teaching, learning, and course design. Through this panel, participants will explore the impact of partnership on advancing social justice in undergraduate courses at UBC and beyond.

Panelists: Roselynn Verwoord, Nesrine Basheer, Caroline Lebrech, Shreya Diwan, Savindya Mudadeniya (University of British Columbia)

Roselynn Verwoord is the Strategist: Students as Partners at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and provides leadership in the design, implementation and evaluation of UBC's SaP initiative. She holds a PhD in Educational Studies as well as a Master of Arts in Society, Culture, and Politics in Education from UBC and a Bachelor of Education Degree in Elementary Curriculum.

Nesrine Basheer (Faculty), Department of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia

Caroline Lebrech (Faculty), Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, University of British Columbia

Shreya Diwan (Undergraduate Student), Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, University of British Columbia.

Savindya Mudadeniya (Undergraduate Student), Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, University of British Columbia.

### Paper abstracts:

Paper 1: Promoting diversity and inclusion in course re-design partnership projects: Insights from UBC's Students as Partners Initiative

In 2021, the Vancouver campus of the University of British Columbia (UBC), a Canadian public research-intensive university, committed approximately \$600,000 to the Students as Partners (SaP) Initiative. This program positions students as collaborators in the university's academic mission by providing grants of up to \$7,000 to undergraduate students working alongside faculty to design or re-design UBC undergraduate courses. These partnerships last up to twelve months and are supported by a cohort of program participants and mentors from the UBC Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, a campus-wide teaching support unit. Faculty bring disciplinary expertise, staff mentors offer course and program design guidance, and students contribute unique insights into the student experience. The scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) is fundamentally focused on improving the student learning experience, making students central to SoTL efforts. Consequently, student partnerships are recognized as a core principle of effective SoTL practice (Felten, 2013a). However, questions remain about whose voices are included in these partnerships and whose voices might be marginalized. These questions were crucial in shaping the development and implementation of UBC's SaP Initiative. In this presentation, we will explore how UBC's SaP Initiative deliberately aimed to include diverse voices and perspectives in course redesign partnerships. The goal was to counteract exclusionary practices related to gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. Building on the work of Felten et al. (2013b), who highlighted how certain students, particularly those without cultural capital, are often marginalized in SoTL activities (e.g., McIntyre, Pedder, & Rudduck, 2005), we will discuss the principles we developed to foster diverse student participation. We will also examine the opportunities and challenges faculty faced in identifying and engaging a broad range of student voices in these partnership projects.

## Paper 2: Celebrating EDI and Alternative Epistemologies with Arabic-speaking Students

ARBM 450 “Advanced Studies in Arabic Language and Cultures”, a fourth year undergraduate elective course at the University of British Columbia (UBC), was designed in response to heritage and native Arabic-speaking students’ desire to take a course where they can develop their proficiency in Standard Arabic, celebrate their diverse Arab identities, and engage with questions unique to the Arab-spring generation. The course creates space at UBC for Arabic-speaking students to examine and co-create knowledge through alternative, often marginalized epistemologies, and in so doing enrich their own learning experience and the process of knowledge production on campus. The course was piloted in Winter 2023. Students provided positive feedback regarding the course content and their overall learning experience; however, instructor observations and students’ comments in the Student Evaluation of Instruction suggested that the course would benefit from major redesign to include more conceptually challenging topics and to provide students with adequate linguistic support to engage with these topics. We (one faculty member and three undergraduate students) engaged in partnership to redesign the course. The re-design sought to revise the course topics to significantly integrate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). The course covers 12 topics, one per week; however, we noticed that certain topics seemed to create discomfort during class discussions. Some students selfcensored and/or switched to English. These discussions were mostly related to EDI in the Arab world (e.g., marginalization of Arab queers). Prior to joining UBC, students in ARBM 450 had learned Arabic within education systems that avoid “taboo” and “divisive” questions. We sought to replace the least engaging topics with ones that help students practice vulnerability, reflexivity, courage, and empathy as antidotes to toxic positivity. For each topic, we sought to select an authentic text (e.g., academic lecture, podcast), provide a list of related vocabulary items, create pre- class tasks where students research and reflect on the topic individually, and design classroom activities that promote dialogue and critical thinking (e.g., structured debates). In this presentation, we discuss the process of working in partnership to re-design the course in support of EDI.

## Paper 3: Co-Developing EDI resources to be used in a safe and inclusive classroom: *Le voyage d’Alex* (Diwan and Mudadeniya, 2023)

FREN 101-102, a first year undergraduate beginners language course recently took an action-oriented approach to teaching and learning, in alignment with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), as seen in its latest version of the companion volume with new descriptors (Council of Europe, 2021). With the switch to online course delivery, we needed to select a new textbook with its e-book version and complementary online platform. We also needed a textbook that would offer more diversity in its representation of the francophone world. With a new textbook comes new learning activities and updated teaching content. Our beginners’ courses needed a complementary module that will address the lack of writing skills covered by the textbook. We (one faculty member and two undergraduate students) undertook a partnership project to design a complementary module to enhance the reading and writing skills of students registered in FREN 101-102. This would allow for coverage of a wider range of topics that go beyond the textbook. Specifically, we developed eight activities to enhance reading and writing skills for FREN 101-102. Each activity has its description, a practice quiz and a survey. One of the eight activities we designed consists of a comic book that introduces the use of non-binary pronouns in the French language classroom, with an equity, diversity, inclusivity, and decolonization (EDID) approach to teaching. The goal of this comic book was to include more inclusive language and make use of the gender-neutral pronoun to align with UBC’s commitment to inclusive teaching practices in the classroom. Further, the addition of a literature and culture component, in our view, can spark a greater interest in pursuing French language study. In this presentation, we discuss the process of working as co-creators of a social justice component of a French Beginners’ course for the creation of the comic book *Le voyage d’Alex* (Diwan and Mudadeniya, 2023). Inspired by Mouffe’s concept of “l’illusion du consensus” (2016), we built a teaching resource that illustrates a conflict on the use of gender-neutral binary pronouns in the classroom. The conflict resolution is about finding allies (peers, teacher) to advocate for a more open-minded approach when it comes to being exposed to new concepts and realities, especially when those are related to someone’s identity.

**Not fit for purpose: Mending for hope**

Extractivist thinking is an approach that separates resources from their original contexts, linked to colonial or capitalist exploitation, and describes the exploitation of people, land, and cultures. Extractivist approaches underpin the university, seeing knowledge as a resource to be mined and exploited, objectifies people and ecosystems as sources of data and imposes western frameworks on all forms of knowing: this approach is not fit for purpose. Instead we need alternatives approaches, ones that resist the colonial harms that dominate the university and educational processes. To explore these themes, this workshop will use everyday fashion mending techniques rooted in home dressmaking and ancestral knowledges systems that embody anti- racist, non-elitist, and non-heteronormative concepts with the hope of mending garments as a way to discuss mending the university: we will ask how these approaches work towards reciprocal, respectful knowledge sharing that centres local and embodied knowledge systems? Please bring an item of clothing that is no longer fit for purpose that you would like to mend: stained, ripped, too small, too big, full of holes, moth eaten, worn out, or something that you no longer wear. You will be shown some simple sewing techniques for patching and mending. You will be provided with needles, threads and fabric patches and hopefully will be able to take home a mended garment, anew with hope!

Facilitator: Tanveer Ahmed (Central Saint Martins, UAL)

Tanveer (she/her) is Senior Lecturer in Fashion and Race at Central Saint Martins. Her research recognises the urgent need to explore alternative justice-oriented forms of fashion design by centring plural fashion narratives inspired by anti-colonial concepts of fashion. Working in the emerging academic field of decolonial fashion has led to Tanveer writing key decolonising fashion modules in the UK at The Royal College of Art and Central Saint Martins and internationally, for The American University of Paris. Tanveer has also been invited to guest lecture on decolonial design at universities in the UK, The Netherlands, Germany, France and Switzerland. Tanveer's publications have contributed to the growing body of literature that aims to decolonise the Eurocentric canon of fashion and recent publications include 'bell hooks: The Joys of Cultural Differences and Racial Justice in Fashion' in *Thinking Through Fashion*, (eds Rocamora and Smelik, Bloomsbury 2005)

**Critical intersections: Principles and values in social justice and partnership work**

Approaches to partnership and social justice work mandate both students and staff to be cognizant of the principles and values that shape who they are in order to produce authentic and ethical outcomes. In this workshop, Maisha will explore with participants the critical intersections of positionality, theory and the current socio-political climate which invariably shape the context of partnership work but also the systemic factors which both threaten and strengthen the need for equity-based approaches in higher education.

Facilitator: Maisha Islam (University of Southampton)

Maisha Islam is the Research Culture Lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Southampton's Doctoral College. Her research areas of interest and expertise centre student engagement, and racial and religious equity in higher education. She is a co-editor of the recently published book 'Uncovering Islamophobia in Higher Education: Supporting the success of Muslim students and staff', and co-Chair of a Research England/Office for Students Steering Group seeking to improve access and participation of racially minoritised students in postgraduate research.

## **Working with students as partners in a social justice-oriented Law clinic: Practice and legacy**

Bovill, et al define true student-faculty partnership as a “reciprocal process whereby all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to the learning process” (2014). Studies have shown that students, when working as partners with educators, often co-create ideas and knowledge that not only enhance their own education but improve current teaching/learning methods overall. Similarly, Clinical Legal Education is a progressive educational ideology and andragogy that engages students beyond the traditional didactic teaching models and encourages them to apply knowledge to real life situations. At Strathclyde Law Clinic, students are recruited partially based on their desire to give back to their communities and their understanding of social justice related issues. Once in the clinic, students are assigned real client cases and work closely with their peers and a staff supervisor to progress each case. This results in an organic form of learning, where students and staff often become more akin to colleagues than teacher and student, working in partnership to achieve a common goal. This concept and application of partnership working reshapes what traditionally has been an unequal and hierarchical relationship between staff and students and instead builds a community of students and staff. One legacy of this is that students who become lawyers give back to the clinic, by volunteering their time at free legal advice clinics. While this way of working creates many benefits, it also can give rise to challenges. This workshop will focus on relationship-building and trust, while also looking the potential pitfalls. We explore the benefits and challenges associated with students engaging on equal terms with opposing solicitors, courts and Tribunals in employment cases, and what needs to be in place to allow staff to trust and empower them to do so. It will also explore to what extent students the clinic shapes students' perceptions of social justice, and to what extent they seem to commit to pro bono in their careers. It also explores whether students need to be vetted for recruitment based on their commitment to social justice, or whether this could be inculcated in all students by virtue of being part of a law clinic, and how this might be measured.

**Facilitators: Gillian Melville, Kathleen Bolt and Claudia Hoey (University of Strathclyde)**

Gillian is a practicing solicitor in the UK, and a teaching fellow and lecturer at the University of Strathclyde, Scotland. As a solicitor, Gillian has specialised in employment law for 15 years. She is also specialised in immigration and asylum law and is regulated by the Law Society of Scotland and the Office of the Immigration Commission. Gillian has worked in higher education for 10 years, teaching clinical legal education and legal ethics. Gillian supervises and mentors law students in their work at Strathclyde Law Clinic, a clinic which aims to plug gaps in legal service provision while also giving students a holistic practical experience of representing real clients. Representation in this context includes advocating for clients at courts and tribunals. More recently, Gillian has developed a research interest and has published on ‘working with students as partners’, a practice of learning and education that places students at the centre of their own learning.

Kathleen Bolt is a solicitor and mediator with extensive experience as an employment and discrimination lawyer. She is a registered member of the Scottish Mediation Register. She mediates in mediations involving complex employment and discrimination disputes. She mediates with the Edinburgh Sheriff Court In Court Mediation Service and volunteered with Edinburgh Community Mediation Service. She currently coordinates the Mediation and Mediation Advocacy Elective on the Diploma in Legal Practice at the University of Strathclyde and assists with the Employment Mediation elective on the MSc in Conflict Resolution at Strathclyde. Day to day she is currently employed as a legal supervisor with the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic and acts as a solicitor for members of the GMB union as part of the Employment Team at Unionline Scotland. She regularly appears as an advocate in judicial mediations.

Claudia is a housing and dispute resolution specialist. Claudia worked as a solicitor for several years for a number corporate firms before joining Strathclyde Law Clinic as a housing case supervisor in 2025. Claudia's work is funded by Safe Deposit Scotland and is part of a three-year project geared towards plugging the gap in legal service provision in the area of housing.

## Compassionate coaching and social justice: developing a coaching approach for student-staff partnerships

The workshop is underpinned by the assumptions of a coaching mindset – authenticity, openness, growth and non-judgemental attitude – all of which are core to social justice work. The purpose of the workshop is to highlight the value of a coaching approach in staffstudent partnerships and show how this was developed beyond a higher education context into coaching with social impact. We will describe how Kathryn's interest in partnership working when she was head of psychology enabled her to work with students using a coaching approach and components of a thinking environment, which include equality, diversity, appreciation and encouragement. She invited and encouraged Karl to co-present a student perspective with her in a keynote address at an international STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) gender equality conference. She also established (along with colleagues at the University of Westminster Bryan Bonaparte and Deborah Husbands) a reverse mentoring scheme where minoritised students were supported as mentors to senior university leaders. An essential concept in creating a thinking environment is the principle of being equal thinking partners, which involves 'leaving your ego outside' for both parties. Karl will share what this meant for him in practice as a student mentor to a Head of School mentee, and how coaching has enabled him to transfer learning and skills from university into his role as employability lead at a Wipers, a youth justice social enterprise in London. Participants will be introduced to the NEAR model of compassion: Noticing, Empathising, Appraising, Responding, and the principles of compassionate coaching as co-created developmental dialogue. The workshop will incorporate creative methods and participants will have the opportunity to practice core coaching skills of: (i) contracting as equal thinking partners; (ii) active listening; (iii) exploring options and choices; (iv) challenging thinking; and (v) reflecting. We will role model the coaching techniques of thinking in pairs and use of thinking rounds to promote dialogue centring on the question: How can a coaching approach be incorporated into student-staff partnerships in social justice work? We are also interested to hear feedback and suggestions from workshop participants about our 'next steps' towards coaching with social impact. This involves co-creating a reciprocal mentoring initiative with youth ambassadors at Wipers to enable them to share their stories with someone in a senior/influential role. Wipers' youth ambassadors help design services and take action on critical issues like mental health, homelessness, and equity for racial and minoritised communities and groups. An anticipated outcome of the workshop is the potential for future collaboration and sharing resources with the University of Westminster Students as Co-Creators Programme.

Facilitators: Kathryn Waddington and Karl Donaldson (University of Westminster)

Kathryn is a chartered coaching psychologist with wide-ranging higher education experience as a researcher and leader and has a particular interest in academic-practitioner research collaboration and practice. Kathryn values social justice, relational pedagogy and scholarship, she cares deeply about research that makes a difference in practice. She has worked with undergraduate students as co-researchers and equal thinking partners in research into developing compassionate pedagogical practices. As head of psychology she led a reverse mentoring project, where minoritised undergraduate psychology students mentored senior university leaders. Karl was a student mentor in this project, and on completion of his degree they have continued their partnership work with the youth justice social enterprise Wipers<sup>1</sup>, where he is employability lead.

Karl has been a youth practitioner for over 30 years and has witnessed how the impact of misdiagnosis, poor-education and socio-economic status can often lead to poor opportunities and negative lifestyles. He is dedicated to supporting young people and helping them use creative media to find their voices and speak their authentic truths. His mission is to help young people look at the story of their lives differently and supportively challenge comfort zones and any unhealthy beliefs they may have about themselves. When studying at the University of Westminster Karl mentored a senior university leader and has taken learning from that experience into his practice as employability lead working with vulnerable and disadvantaged young people.

### Technology-enhanced case-based learning and small group teaching: A pilot study designed in collaboration with medical students

The recent paradigm shift in teaching provision within higher education has led to blended models of learning prevailing in the pedagogic literature and in education practice. This shift has also resulted in an abundance of tools and technologies coming to market. Whilst the value of integrating technology into teaching and assessment has been well-established in the literature, the magnitude of choice available to educators and to students can be overwhelming. The current pilot investigated the feasibility of integrating key technologies in delivering technology-enhanced learning (TEL) case-based learning (CBL) within a sample of year two medical students. Co-creation with students was central to this study, with senior medical students (in years 4 and 5) involved in the design of the pilot, and who also led on near-peer teaching sessions incorporated in the pilot. The year 2 cohort was selected at random, as was the control group receiving conventional CBL. Both groups were matched on prior academic performance. The TEL-CBL group received 1) in-person tutorials delivered within an immersive learning suite, 2) access to 3D anatomy software to explore during their self-directed learning time, 3) virtual reality (VR) guided anatomy exploration during tutorials, 4) access to a generative AI-based simulated virtual patient repository to practice key skills such as communication and history taking, and 5) an immersive medical emergency simulation. Metrics assessed included formative academic performance, student learning experience, and confidence in relation to communication and clinical skills. The results revealed that the TEL-CBL group outperformed their peers in successive formative assessments ( $p < 0.05$ ), engaged thoroughly with the technologies at their disposal, and reported that these technologies enhanced their learning experience. Furthermore, students reported that access to the GenAI-simulated virtual patient platform and the immersive medical emergency simulation improved their clinical confidence and gave them a useful insight into what they can expect during the clinical phase of their medical education. The results are discussed in relation to the advantages that key emerging technologies may play in enhancing student performance, experience and confidence through engaging and inclusive approaches that target a range of student learning styles and needs.

Speaker: Athanasios Hassoulas (Cardiff University)

Contributors: Owen Crawford (Learning Technology Manager); Saiyonora Hemrom (Simulation Lead); Dr Andreia de Almeida (HIVE Education Lead); Prof Marcus J CoSey (HIVE Deputy Director); Megan Hodgson (Year 5 Medical Student); Becky Leveridge (Year 5 Medical Student); Diya Karwa (Year 4 Medical Student); Dr Alice Lethbridge (Radiology Lead); Dr Huw Williams (HIVE Clinical Innovation Lead); Dr Alex Voisey (HIVE Scholarship Lead); Dr Karen Reed (EDI Co-Lead); Dr Sarju Patel (Year 2 Director); Dr Hannah Shaw (Anatomy Lead)

Dr Athanasios Hassoulas is the Director of the HIVE (Hybrid and Immersive Virtual Environments) Innovation Unit, where he oversees the digital education capabilities and innovations in high-quality teaching provision for the Cardiff School of Medicine. An Associate Professor in Medical Education, he teaches psychological medicine on the MBBCh programme as well as on various MSc programmes within the School of Medicine. His work focuses on exploring innovative teaching practices that actively incorporate the student voice in shaping the curriculum. He has presented his research at national and international conferences and has received numerous teaching awards for his introduction of interactive teaching methods. Dr Hassoulas is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (PFHEA), a Chartered Member of the British Psychological Society (CPsychol), a member of the Medical Schools Council Digital Education Steering Group, and a member of both the AMEE International Association of Medical Educators and the AMEE Technology-Enhanced Learning Committee.



## **Design study of a student-faculty partnership program implementing assessment as an equitable pedagogical practice at a research-intensive Minority Serving Institution**

This design study investigated how the Students Assessing Teaching and Learning (SATAL) program, a student-faculty partnership program at a research-intensive, minority-serving institution implementing assessment as a pedagogical practice, enacts equity and social justice in its regular operations. By utilizing different assessment tools, such as Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate STEM (COPUS) and Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID), the SATAL program partners collect the student learning experience and offer quantitative and qualitative data for faculty to implement effective changes in their courses. Following the data collection and analysis, student partners meet with faculty and share their expert student feedback to close the assessment cycle in the community. This holistic approach allows SATAL student partners to support faculty in understanding who students are and how to respond to their needs and implement effective change. I utilized two frameworks, Montenegro and Jankowski's (2020) and de Bie et al.'s (2021), to analyze preexisting data collected from 7 faculty and 13 student partners through surveys during the academic year 2021-2022. Findings indicated that the SATAL program supports academic staff in becoming knowledgeable about the student populations served as they respond to identified needs in pursuit of an equitable learning environment. A variety of faculty's self-described pedagogical changes were noted as being equitable, such as reflection opportunities, authentic, ongoing assessment, nurturing trusting relationships, and data disaggregation. In addition, SATAL's efforts adhered to practices pursuing all three states of de Bie et al.'s 2021 framework: epistemic, affective, and ontological justice. SATAL design furnished student partners and their peers in their courses with practices to advocate for their learning in a student-centered environment for everyone to flourish, participate, and have influence. Some of the implications of the SATAL program study are that cultivating relationships and communication should be prioritized in the student-faculty partnership educational experience. A primary limitation of this study is its scope, as it is important to understand the needs of MSI institutions and their students for everyone to flourish, participate and have influence.

**Speaker: Adriana Signorini (University of California, Merced)**

Adriana Signorini relocated from Argentina to California, USA to continue her career and interest in advancing student learning. She joined UC Merced in 2007, where she founded the Students Assessing Teaching and Learning (SATAL) program at this research-intensive Hispanic-serving institution. SATAL fosters student-faculty pedagogical partnerships to support formative assessment, gathering and integrating student feedback to enhance course development and address diverse learning needs. Adriana holds a doctorate in Educational Leadership, specializing in assessment as an equitable pedagogical approach to closing performance gaps and promoting student success. She co-founded and co-chairs the POD Network's Special Interest Group (SIG) on Co-creation through Partnership and serves as a POD CORE member, contributing to faculty development at a national level.

## **Navigating power dynamics and English dominance in a virtual exchange project involving Canadian and Ecuadorian students**

While study abroad programs have been shown to enhance intercultural awareness, they remain inaccessible to many students due to factors such as financial constraints and discomfort with travel. Reports indicate that Canada and especially Latin America have some of the lowest student participation rates in these programs globally. To address these barriers, we implemented a 12-week virtual exchange project in two neuroscience courses, pairing Canadian with Ecuadorian students. Through an inquiry-based approach, students collaborated in small, inter-institutional groups to develop an intervention for a neuroscience-related issue, which culminated in a written report and a pitch to external judges. To gain insights into the experiences and takeaways of Canadian and Ecuadorian students from this virtual exchange, we conducted qualitative analyses of their written reflections and feedback from one iteration of the project. Key themes that emerged included navigating differences, language expansion, intercultural collaboration, and fostering an inclusive atmosphere. These themes suggest that our virtual exchange project effectively increased students' cultural awareness and openness. Despite the generally positive outcomes, our findings also highlight areas for improvement, particularly concerning technology and time management. We discuss these findings in the context of virtual exchange literature and offer considerations for enhancing future virtual exchanges. Importantly, we aim to generate discussions and reflections on addressing systemic issues related to power dynamics and English dominance in virtual exchanges.

**Speakers:** Michael Wong (McMaster University) and Nergiz Turgut (Universidad San Francisco de Quito)

Michael Wong is an Instructor and Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neuroscience at McMaster University in Canada. Michael teaches using an inquiry-based approach in which students are drivers of their own learning. He has implemented this pedagogy across the courses and curricula he has developed, refined, and taught over the last 10 years. Additionally, he has experience embedding a virtual exchange project with collaborators at the Universidad San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador. His interest in intercultural collaboration and communication stems both from his own research interests in equity, diversity, and inclusion and his own lived experience navigating eastern and western cultures.

Nergiz Turgut is a full-time professor at Universidad San Francisco de Quito, where she has been teaching courses in Neuroscience and Neuropsychology in English and Spanish to undergraduate Psychology students for the past four years. She has experience building international collaborations through Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)/virtual exchange projects with Indiana University Bloomington, USA and McMaster University, Canada. Her research interests lie in clinical neuropsychology and improving learning experiences for students in STEM. As a Kurdish-German who has lived in Ecuador and Europe for several years, she has a special interest in cultural aspects and diversity.

## **Building connections in postgraduate classrooms: Possibilities of multicultural student-staff partnership in action research**

The lack of connection among students and staff has become a widely recognised concern in an internationalised higher education (HE) environment. In response, our study taking place at the IOE Sociology Cluster, UCL explores how active student engagement help students thrive academically, personally, and socially. Our project involves staff members, students and alumni from the cluster to review a toolkit prepared by the project team in listening rooms to codevelop strategies that help foster meaningful connection in multicultural classrooms. Our study deploys the student-staff partnership bilaterally, with the grassroots involvement of informants and that among the partnership itself to show the possibilities of the partnership in forging a more just and engaging HE environment.

**Speakers:** Aurora Hiu Hei Ma, Ana Salazar Londoño and Zhuoan Wang (University College London)

Aurora Ma is a Social Justice and Education MA student at the Institute of Education, UCL. She is currently an academic representative of the programme and a student partner of the sociology cluster ChangeMakers project: 'Reimagining postgraduate studies: Good practices for building a learning community'. Her current research centres on British National (Overseas) visa holders from Hong Kong who have recently arrived in the UK, and investigates the ethnic identity construction of these young immigrants within a multicultural education environment. Prior to joining UCL, she completed her bachelor's degree in Gender Studies at the University of Hong Kong, with double minors in Education and English Studies. She also worked as a research assistant at the Faculty of Education and Department of Social Work and Social Administration at HKU.

Ana Salazar Londoño is a Colombian student of the Social Justice and Education MA at the Institute of Education, UCL. She is currently a student partner of the sociology cluster ChangeMakers project: 'Reimagining postgraduate studies: Good practices for building a learning community'. She is an economist and lawyer, and holds an MRes in Education all from University of the Andes in Bogota, Colombia. Her research centers on wellbeing and inclusion experiences in school for marginalized students, particularly LGBTQ+ students. She has worked in the education field as a researcher, policy designer and implementor in the Colombian context.

Zhuoan Wang is an MA student in Policy Studies in Education at the UCL Institute of Education. She is currently a student partner of the sociology cluster ChangeMakers project: 'Reimagining postgraduate studies: Good practices for building a learning community'. Her research focuses on the revival of girls' schools in 1980s China, examining its interplay with sociopolitical, cultural, and gender discourses, employing oral history and historical documentary analysis in a case study. Her research interests also include social equality. Before joining UCL, she completed her Bachelor's degree in Education Management at East China Normal University.

### Creating real and sustainable change through Students as Partners projects

Participating in the inaugural Students as Partners projects program at the University of Technology Sydney has been a highly valuable experience for students. It not only provided the opportunity to develop research skills and capabilities but also created meaningful outcomes that serve the student community. Francesca's project focused on the experiences of students navigating loss and bereavement, examining how human-centred support might enhance outcomes for students and the broader UTS community. The project has created interest across the sector, but how do we support students to continue to partner with staff to implement lasting change? This paper explores the paid and unpaid expectations on students and staff in student partnership programs. The role identity of a 'student partner' was a challenging aspect of scoping projects and navigating institutional stakeholders. The student partner role was frequently questioned as students and staff looked to rebalance their relationship in order to co-design and deliver sustainable solutions. The increased sense of agency and 'mattering' (Cook-Sather et.al., 2024), however, is potentially undermined by post-project renegotiation of the partner relationship.

**Speakers:** Francesca Harrison and Sascha Jenkins (University of Technology Sydney)

Francesca is a third-year undergraduate student completing a Bachelor of Communication (Social and Political Sciences) Bachelor of Creative Intelligence and Innovation. She has an interest in the human experience of inclusive and human-centred design. Her most recent research project looks at the experiences of university students experiencing loss and bereavement.

Sascha is well recognised for her work in creating both digital and physical user experiences to support client and community engagement. At UTS, Sascha was critical to the activation of the UTS Central building at the heart of the campus. She has also led University-wide strategic projects, such as establishing a service portal (Student Learning Hub) and leading the establishment of the Students as Partners projects grants program. Sascha has qualifications in arts and business. She completed a PHD in history and worked in academia and heritage consulting, before moving into professional roles in the University sector. Her career has focused on enhancing the student experience, through positions in libraries, Faculty teaching and learning, work integrated learning, governance and curriculum review. She has a particular interest in the creation and activation of campus spaces and innovative service delivery

## Student-faculty partnerships for equitable research in higher education

Traditionally, undergraduate students have had limited access to research opportunities that allow them to work closely with professors. While universities offer research courses and small research-based projects within classroom settings, undergraduate students' experience with grant writing, choosing a topic or methodology and active participation in real-life research projects remains limited. These practices often perpetuate social inequality and restrict undergraduate students' opportunities to make meaningful contributions to research endeavors. This sometimes leads to university-funded research that has little to do with students' growth and learning. In this presentation, we aim to share a university-wide initiative called Students Partnering with Faculty (SPF) and our lived experiences collaborating with our professor on funded, real-life research projects. The presentation will focus on the details of the SPF initiative at our university, arguing that programs like SPF facilitate a shift towards collaboration, where students actively contribute to professors' research projects as partners rather than as assistants. We will highlight the mechanisms involved in this initiative and how they promote student voice and representation in research projects undertaken in collaboration with faculty. In the second part of our presentation, we will substantiate our argument by sharing our own experiences working with professors on one or two research projects. By doing so, we will highlight our personal, professional, and academic growth and the reciprocity involved in these collaborations. That said, such collaborations also come with challenges from multiple perspectives—students, faculty, management, and even the broader research community. Finally, we will conclude our presentation by exploring the potential of university-wide initiatives to enhance student participation in meaningful research projects. By examining both the possibilities and tensions within student-staff partnerships, we aim to highlight how these collaborations can foster a more equitable academic environment. This approach transforms the student-professor relationship into one of mutual respect and collaboration, where students not only gain academic and professional skills but also contribute to social justice.

**Speakers:** Zhang Jiayue and Wang Tianchang (Wenzhou-Kean University)

Zhang Jiayue is a junior undergraduate student majoring in Psychology at the College of Liberal Arts, Wenzhou-Kean University. She is conducting two SPF with professors in education. During the year of 2024, she held the role of Teaching Assistant for PSY 1000 (General Psychology). She is working closely with faculties, organizing mentorship programs and assisting department work. She is interested in education psychology and positive psychology, especially motivating students.

Wang Tianchang is a psychology major from Wenzhou-Kean University. As a junior undergraduate student, She has worked collaboratively with professors in student partnering faculty (SpF) research programs. She is also an experienced mentor and peer tutor to share academic knowledge within school settings. Her research interest lies in teaching and learning in higher education. She is proficient in using statistical software such as SPSS, and Mplus. Her clinical experience is in Wenzhou No. 7 Hospital and a private psychological counseling organization.

## Student-staff partnership: How unhealthy can it be?

“My experience as a student has highlighted the potential for meaningful collaboration with faculty in co-constructing knowledge. However, my engagement with staff members – particularly in the graduate program office at a well-reputed university – has been far from a true partnership. The university, founded by an influential religious figure, primarily serves a specific community, and this affiliation has shaped its administrative dynamics in ways that undermine inclusivity, fairness, and trust. The student-staff partnership framework emphasises reciprocity, respect, and shared responsibility, yet my experience was marked by exclusion and bias. From the outset, selective treatment was evident. University-branded souvenirs were distributed exclusively to students from the affiliated community, signalling an imbalance in the way students were valued and supported. A more distressing experience occurred when I was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Instead of providing reasonable accommodations, the graduate office pressured me to leave the university and isolate at home, disregarding the fact that I was already following medical guidelines in my hostel. This lack of compassionate partnership not only created unnecessary hardship but also reinforced a culture where student well-being was secondary to rigid institutional norms. Even after securing permission to stay through a doctor’s recommendation, I faced social exclusion, as peers ridiculed me, avoided contact, and complained about my presence—even after my full recovery. This experience highlighted the absence of a student-centered approach in staff decision-making, which contradicts the principles of care and co-agency in student-staff partnerships. Despite these challenges, I remained committed to my academic progress. Over time, I gained recognition for my work, earning the respect of peers and faculty. However, the most disheartening incident occurred during the student award nominations. Along with several colleagues, I submitted my application for the Research Excellence Award. At the time, my academic contributions included six international publications, ten conference presentations, five blog publications, a pioneering systematic review at the institution, and the establishment of an informal learning platform called Research Café. Despite meeting and exceeding the criteria, my application was dismissed by the award committee—comprising members from the same affiliated community—while an individual with no publication record or research experience beyond their thesis was nominated. Ironically, the award went unclaimed. Even after the committee and the dean acknowledged their unfair decision and apologised, they refused to amend it, reinforcing structural biases within the institution.

Reflecting on these experiences through the student-staff partnership lens, I have learned that effective partnerships require equity, trust, and shared decision-making—all of which were absent in my case. My engagement with staff was not a partnership but a hierarchical and exclusionary relationship where students were expected to conform rather than collaborate. These experiences have reinforced my belief that institutions must move beyond rhetoric to embed genuine partnerships where students are recognised as valued stakeholders. They must establish transparent and inclusive mechanisms for student engagement, particularly in administrative decision-making. This experience also sparked broader discussions among students about the credibility of the graduate office and the fairness of institutional processes. It serves as a critical case study of how biases—whether based on community affiliation, health status, or institutional politics—can erode trust and compromise the integrity of student-staff partnerships. Addressing these challenges requires institutions to foster genuine co-agency, where students are empowered to contribute meaningfully, and staff actively work toward building inclusive and equitable relationships with all students.”

Speaker: Aisha Naz Ansari (The Aga Khan University)

Aisha Naz Ansari is a research specialist at The Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) in Pakistan. She completed an MPhil Education from the AKU-IED and holds a B.Ed (Hons.) degree from Sukkur IBA University. She has published more than twenty (20) research articles and research blogs in international and national journals and forums. Her research areas include systematic reviews, educational technology, educational psychology, holistic student development, teacher education, public-private partnerships, and classroom teaching and learning.

## Let's do it justice: Students are co-creators of belonging in higher education

As belonging gains increasing recognition as a crucial factor in student success, engagement, and well-being (QILT, 2024), it remains an area of development for many Australian universities and generally in Higher Education. It's heartbreaking that one in three Australians report being lonely with less than one in two students reporting a positive sense of belonging to their university, and in UK, 25% of students felt lonely most of the time, and half of them – one or two times a week (Crawford, 2024). Literature provides three key theoretical framings for belonging: place-based, identity-based, and interpersonal with belonging often being understood as a feeling – being included, recognised, or valued within a space or relationships (Crawford, 2024). Much like the best practices of psychological safety (Edmondson, n.d.), we want to discuss how belonging is also deeply tied to agency and ownership—the ability to influence, shape, and co-create that space and relationships. No matter which framework of belongingness we use, through our practice we see that true belonging cannot be passively received; it must be actively constructed through meaningful participation and relational experiences. In student-staff partnerships, this means moving beyond the tokenistic offering of some 'seat at the predefined table' to student-representatives and actively enabling all students to reimagine the settings and take ownership of their learning. In this session, we will introduce our rework of the Edmondson's psychological safety matrix for the purpose of exploring student sense of belongingness and discuss our practical strategies of embedding student-staff partnerships at the heart of student learning journey to inspire and empower students as co-creators of belonging, rather than mere recipients of institutional initiatives. Empirical evidence will be drawn from our We Like to Movie-Move It project—an innovative student-staff partnership initiative co-designed by educators at the University of Sydney and LSE and supported by a teaching innovation grant from the University of Sydney Business School. This initiative amplifies student voices beyond the classroom, scaling best practices from an award-winning unit to multiple learning contexts by empowering students as agents of change. By leveraging video-based assignments (Schultz & Quinn, 2014) and whole-of-class student partnerships (Cook-Sather & Matthews, 2021), this project demonstrates how creative and participatory pedagogies enhance students' sense of ownership over their learning (Pauli et al., 2016). Engaging students as co-creators of knowledge and facilitators of peer learning (Fiorella & Mayer, 2013), we reimagine the traditional classroom as a space of collective authorship and institutional transformation. Students in this initiative were not only producing content but also shaping institutional narratives around teamwork, communication, and engagement, fostering a broader culture of belonging. In this interactive session, these students will take the lead, inviting educators to explore new models of student partnership in the name of social justice and belonging. Get ready to meet them in breakouts—where they will challenge any reservations about sharing power and demonstrate the transformative potential of co-creation.

**Speakers:** Maria Ishkova (University of Sydney), Darren Moon (LSE), Hannah Nguyen (University of Sydney), Minhyung (Daniel) Park (University of Sydney), Carol Farhoud (University of Sydney), Kyaw Zaw (Augustine) Aung (University of Sydney), Michael Fernando (University of Sydney), Jasmine Meyabadi (University of Sydney), Abby Bobbowski (University of Sydney), Henry Luong (University of Sydney)

Dr Maria Ishkova, SFHEA, is an education-focused academic in Work and Organisational Studies at the University of Sydney Business School, with over 15 years of award-winning experience in leading organisational communication across business and industry bodies. She coordinates undergraduate and postgraduate units and delivers masterclasses on organisational communication for students and professional staff, addressing both individual and organisational perspectives to guide learners toward professional success.

Darren works closely with departmental colleagues to develop pedagogically sound use of technologies and improve student learning outcomes. Darren co-teaches the course 'IR318: Visual International Politics' and advises colleagues across the school on filmmaking and visual methods for teaching and assessment. He has presented widely both in the UK and internationally, is experienced in designing and developing online and blended learning solutions in a variety of contexts. Darren manages the learning technology content development function within the Eden Centre.

Hannah Nguyen is a dedicated advocate for student partnership and educational transformation. Growing up at the United Nations International School, she was immersed in a global learning environment that instilled in her a deep commitment to inclusivity, crosscultural understanding, and the pursuit of an egalitarian world. This foundation shaped her passion for building towards a greater sense of harmony in the classroom and beyond.



Minhyung Park is a Bachelor of Commerce and Laws student at the University of Sydney, with a strong focus on finance, and legal analysis. He has worked across multiple university disciplines, contributing to curriculum development in Finance, and is actively involved in education innovation. Daniel is also part of the ARC Laureate team at the School of Life and Environmental Sciences, focusing on Soil Security. Beyond academia, Daniel has consulting experience in business strategy, having led teams in the Business Consulting Practicum and 180 Degrees Consulting. His interdisciplinary expertise and practical experience inform his research and presentations at academic and industry conferences.

Carol is a Juris Doctor student (2027) and Bachelor of Commerce graduate (2024) at the University of Sydney with a passion for student advocacy, social justice, learning and collaboration. Her strong academic background in law, leadership, and management earned her a place on an academic exchange to the University of California, Los Angeles, where she further developed her leadership skills and love of learning as the media representative for the University. She has been recognised through multiple scholarships, including the Longworth Scholarship (JD) and the Vice Chancellor's Global Mobility Scholarship (exchange). Carol's commitment to equity and inclusion is evident in her leadership roles, particularly as a Student Partner at the University of Sydney, where she works to enhance student-staff collaboration, empower student participation, and create inclusive learning environments.

Kyaw Zaw (Augustine) Aung is a dedicated Commerce student at the University of Sydney, majoring in Accounting and Management & Leadership. With a strong academic foundation and hands-on experience in mentoring, student partnerships, and customer service showcasing his adaptability and problem-solving skills. Passionate about continuous learning and professional growth, Augustine is eager to apply his analytical and leadership expertise in accounting, audit, or assurance roles. Fluent in English, Mandarin, and Burmese, he brings a global perspective and strong communication abilities to any team.

Michael is a passionate educator and strategist, committed to innovative learning experiences and impactful teaching – and a business developer with a strong track record in international business projects. Michael holds a Master's degree in Marketing, Strategy, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship from The University of Sydney Business School. Former Vice President of Beta Gamma Sigma, University of Sydney, he is committed to academic excellence and leadership development and recognised for excellence in teaching, receiving multiple Feedback For Teaching Awards, including International HRM (2024), Leadership in a Post-Crisis World (2023), Organisational Communication (2022&2021), Global Business (2022 & 2021).

### **Bridging the knowledge gap: A teaching assistant's reflection on the Students as Partners (SaP) approach**

This presentation reflects on my ongoing journey as an undergraduate teaching assistant, working alongside a faculty member who is a dedicated advocate of the Students as Partners (SaP) approach. Inspired by my previous research collaborations with her and motivated by her publication on how teaching assistant roles can transcend traditional boundaries to become true partnerships in classroom instruction, I applied for the role in Spring 2025 after responding to an open call requiring prior completion of PSY 4230. Throughout this collaborative teaching experience, I encountered both challenges and opportunities for growth, as the conference theme encourages exploration of the possibilities and tensions in student-staff partnerships. Among several opportunities, one significant realization was the impact of the curse of knowledge, a cognitive bias in social psychology in which individuals with expertise struggle to recall what it is like to lack that knowledge. This barrier often emerges in the classroom when professors unintentionally assume students share the same foundational understanding. As a teaching assistant, I was crucial in bridging this gap by offering insights from a student's perspective to enhance clarity and engagement during lectures. This presentation will explore how the teaching assistant's role can be made more meaningful to effectively mitigate the curse of knowledge, highlight practical strategies for improving instructor-student communication with the help of student partners, and reflect on the broader impact of the SaP model in fostering meaningful partnerships in higher education classrooms.

**Speaker: Xiaojun Gu (Wenzhou-Kean University)**

Xiaojun Gu is an undergraduate psychology student at Wenzhou-Kean University, China, and a member of the Psi Chi International Honor Society. Her research interests include educational psychology, counseling psychology, family therapy, and art therapy. She collaborated on a study analyzing the evolving trajectory of parental educational anxiety, which will be presented at the InSITE conference in July 2025, and co-organized community workshops to support anxious parents. Committed to mutual learning, Xiaojun actively participates in her department's Mentor Club, discussing academic challenges and sharing psychological insights with peers. Her work bridges academic inquiry with community engagement, fostering dialogue on mental health and family well-being.

## Possible SaP engagement models: Vertical and horizontal dimensions in Asian Universities

Student-staff partnership, a collaborative and pedagogical approach that considers students as active contributors to teaching, learning, research and related development, is gaining traction in the AsiaPacific region. Asian universities offer distinctive contexts for Students as Partners (SaP) initiatives, influenced by cultural dynamics, institutional frameworks, and historical legacies significantly shaped by Confucian values, presenting both opportunities and challenges. Liang and Matthews (2023) also discussed this expanded view in student-staff partnership in China. While Confucian values emphasize hierarchy, respect for authority, and social harmony—traditionally seen as constraints on egalitarian collaboration—they also underscore the importance of mutual responsibility, ethical relationships, and collective well-being, which is a foundation for influential partnerships. Lau and Zheng (2025) proposed that within a Hong Kong context, when students are involved in SaP projects, they develop identities from “helpers” to “partners” through six stages, i.e., Awareness, Exploration/Engagement, Identification, Differentiation, Generativity, and Integration. This transformation of identity facilitates deeper engagement in partnership and enhances the project's maturity and influence. This presentation delves into the conceptualization and practical implications of possible models of SaP engagement for social inclusion from the vertical and horizontal dimensions. The vertical dimension emphasizes structured, hierarchical interactions, where top-down institutional initiatives create ripple effects that influence engagement, while also incorporating bottom-up feedback loops that empower participants to shape policies, curricula, and practices in SaP projects, fostering equity and amplifying marginalized voices. In contrast, the horizontal dimension focuses on decentralized partnerships, where participants advance community empowerment, and cultivate inclusive spaces for diverse perspectives to thrive

**Speakers:** Peter Lau (The University of Hong Kong), Beatrice Chu (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology), Sung Nok Chiu (Hong Kong Baptist University), Theresa Kwong (Hong Kong Baptist University), Jessie Zheng (University of Hong Kong)

Dr Peter Lau is a Lecturer at the Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre at the University of Hong Kong. He completed his doctorate in Education at Nottingham Trent University and was awarded a Fellowship of Advance HE. He collaborates with colleagues and students on various university-funded teaching development projects. A recent collaborative project, “Students as Co-Designers: Formalising Student-Educator Partnerships in Curriculum and Pedagogy Co-Creation,” won the Global Bronze Award for the Power of Partnership at the QS Reimagine Education 2023. He serves as the Secretary for the Hong Kong Branch of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA). His research interests include pedagogical partnerships, social inclusion, and graduate teaching assistant development.

Dr Beatrice Chu has been working as an Educational Developer and Head of the Professional Development Team in the Center for Education Innovation at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology since 2013. She receives the Doctor of Philosophy in Physics (1992), and Master of Education in Educational Administration and Management (2006). She has over 20 years of experience in different sectors of tertiary education. Her current emphasis areas are innovative instructional approaches and programs that facilitate learners' knowledge, skillset, and mindset for the 21st century. She involves in multiple initiatives and projects on innovative pedagogies such as authentic learning through experiential approaches, gamification and game-based learning, AR/VR/MR technology in teaching, and studying undergraduate students' intercultural issues and challenges and promoting intercultural teaching competence at the University.

Sung Nok Chiu earned his BSc and MPhil at the University of Hong Kong and Dr.rer.nat. at TU Bergakademie Freiberg with the support of a DAAD scholarship. He is currently a Professor of Statistics at Hong Kong Baptist University, where he has worked for 30 years, and received the President's Award for Outstanding Performance in Teaching in 2015. From 2019 to 2024, he served concurrently as the Director of General Education (GE), overseeing the development and maintenance of an interdisciplinary, research-led GE curriculum. During his tenure, he facilitated the adoption of innovative learning methods and pedagogy in the GE programme and enhanced experiential learning opportunities for students in diverse GE courses. In addition to his teaching and administrative contributions, he is a seasoned researcher. His work is best exemplified by two coauthored monographs: *Spatial Tessellations: Concepts and Applications of Voronoi Diagrams and Stochastic Geometry and its Applications*. Both publications are key references in their respective research areas and have been widely cited.

Theresa Kwong, PhD, Senior Fellow of Higher Education Academy (SFHEA), is the Director of the Centre for Holistic Teaching and Learning, Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU). Theresa's major responsibilities at the Centre include leading the promotion of a quality culture of learning and teaching within the University and beyond; advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning at the University; providing expertise to individuals and departments regarding pedagogical issues, e-learning adoption and outcomes assessments; and advising on the development and implementation of eLearning strategy and the promotion of innovative pedagogical and assessment methods. Theresa received a number of teaching and learning grants from within and outside the university and her research interests include academic integrity, technology-enhanced learning, faculty professional development, and outcomes assessment.

Jessie Zheng received her Master of Education from the University of Hong Kong in 2023 where she developed a strong foundation in educational research and practice. She is now working as a research assistant at the University of Hong Kong conducting research about Students as Partners. Before her current role, Jessie gained valuable experience in higher education as an academic secretary at Northeast Normal University in China from 2018 to 2021. In this capacity, she honed her organizational and administrative skills while supporting the academic operations of the university. This role also provided her with a deep understanding of the higher education landscape in China, further enriching her professional background. Her research topics mainly include higher education, Students as Partners, and parent engagement.

## **Tensions and transformations: Exploring student-staff partnerships for social justice in post #FeesMustFall South African Higher Education**

This presentation explores the complex interplay between student-staff partnerships and social justice work in South African higher education following the 2016 #FeesMustFall (#FMF) movement. Drawing on a three-year multi-institutional project involving three differently positioned universities in the Western Cape, we examine how cultivating equitable student-staff partnerships can catalyse the development of socially just educational practices. Our work responds directly to the fallist movement's call for decolonisation and meaningful participation in curriculum development. Using a framework informed by decoloniality, ubuntu, and sentipensante pedagogy, we have developed a context-sensitive approach to partnership that acknowledges and works within, rather than ignoring, existing power differentials, institutional cultures, and individual positionalities. Through critical collective autoethnography and collaborative reflection, we trace the evolution of our partnerships from initial discomfort with power asymmetries toward the co-creation of a "living curriculum" This is a dynamic, responsive educational framework that is not static but evolves with the needs and experiences of the students and staff and centres on social justice outcomes. Data analysis from our focus group interview and student-staff partnership workshops exposes the underlying tensions in collaborations across traditional university hierarchies. These tensions are particularly significant in post-apartheid South Africa, where institutional structures still carry the imprint of historical inequalities. Our analysis demonstrates the importance of creating brave spaces where productive discomfort can emerge, institutional contexts can be critically examined, and power relationships can be actively negotiated rather than superficially equalised. We present emerging frameworks for studentstaff partnerships that prioritise equity while recognising the intricate ecosystem of higher education transformation in South Africa's post-apartheid landscape. This presentation offers theoretical insights and practical approaches for those seeking authentic partnerships across institutional hierarchies while working toward socially just educational outcomes. Participants will gain insights into frameworks for assessing partnership equity and implementing context-sensitive collaborative approaches in their institutions, equipping them to make a real difference. This presentation explores the complex interplay between student-staff partnerships and social justice work in South African higher education following the 2016 #FeesMustFall (#FMF) movement. Drawing on a three-year multi-institutional project involving three differently positioned universities in the Western Cape, we examine how cultivating equitable student-staff partnerships can catalyse the development of socially just educational practices. Our work responds directly to the fallist movement's call for decolonisation and meaningful participation in curriculum development. Using a framework informed by decoloniality, ubuntu, and sentipensante pedagogy, we have developed a context-sensitive approach to partnership that acknowledges and works within, rather than ignoring, existing power differentials, institutional cultures, and individual positionalities. Through critical collective autoethnography and collaborative reflection, we trace the evolution of our partnerships from initial discomfort with power asymmetries toward the co-creation of a "living curriculum" This is a dynamic, responsive educational framework that is not static but evolves with the needs and experiences of the students and staff and centres on social justice outcomes. Data analysis from our focus group interview and student-staff partnership workshops exposes the underlying tensions in collaborations across traditional university hierarchies. These tensions are particularly significant in post-apartheid South Africa, where institutional structures still carry the imprint of historical inequalities. Our analysis demonstrates the importance of creating brave spaces where productive discomfort can emerge, institutional contexts can be critically examined, and power relationships can be actively negotiated rather than superficially equalised. We present emerging frameworks for studentstaff partnerships that prioritise equity while recognising the intricate ecosystem of higher education transformation in South Africa's post-apartheid landscape. This presentation offers theoretical insights and practical approaches for those seeking authentic partnerships across institutional hierarchies while working toward socially just educational outcomes. Participants will gain insights into frameworks for assessing partnership equity and implementing context-sensitive collaborative approaches in their institutions, equipping them to make a real difference.

**Speakers:** Lukhona Leni (University of Western Cape), Xena Cupido (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Subethra Pather (University of Western Cape), Daniela Gachago (University of Cape Town), Ashleigh Peterson-Cloete (University of Western Cape), Zwelibanzi Ngculu (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Tefo Mosienyane (University of Cape Town), Asanda Ngoasheng (Cape Peninsula University of Technology), Joe-Dean Roberts (University of Cape Town), Esai Reddy (University of Cape Town), Deidre Johnson (Cape Peninsula University of Technology)

Lukhona Leni is a devoted scholar with a Master of Commerce in Information Systems. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of the Western Cape. As a researcher on this project, Lukhona aspires to contribute meaningfully to the co-creation and co-design processes, leveraging her academic insights and expertise in Information Systems. Lukhona's role as a researcher on this project exemplifies her dedication to bridging academia and social impact, contributing to the broader mission of co-creating across differences for the betterment of higher education.

Xena Cupido holds the position of Director at the Fundani Centre for Higher Education Development, at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. Her scholarly pursuits centre the critical domain of student engagement and success, specifically focusing on participatory learning, holistic student engagement, and designing for social justice. Dr. Cupido has recently demonstrated a growing interest in integrating digital technologies as an instrumental pedagogical tool to optimise the learning and teaching process. Xena has actively engaged in projects focused on learning and teaching, student academic development, and the fundamental pursuit of social justice within higher education. Her focus extends to co-creating curriculum frameworks, implementing participatory student engagement practices, promoting access, and effectively addressing youth needs to enhance overall success. On a national level, Dr. Cupido has established collaborations through involvement with the Siyaphumelela Network and the TAU Fellowship, which advances teaching at the university. These associations are centered on bolstering institutional capacities to provide holistic student support.

Prof Subethra (Su) Pather is currently the Learning & Teaching specialist in the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic at the University of the Western Cape (UWC). She plays a vital role in enhancing UWC's student success initiatives. Prof Pather is UWC's Lead for the Siyaphumelela Student Success project funded by the Kresge Foundation. She is Deputy President of the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA). Prof Pather manages UWC's first-year experience (FYE), first-year peer mentoring, academic advising, and tutor enhancement program at an institutional level. She is also involved in a regional project on Designing for Social Justice Partnership (DSJP) in South Africa and an international project on Mentoring Meaningful Learning experiences at the Center for Engaged Learning at Elon University in the USA. Her research interests are in higher education, focusing on supporting first-year student access, transition, retention, and success. Her extensive academic publications and academic presentations are located in this field. She is also involved in several national and international networks in first-year experience and student-staff partnerships to advance student success in South Africa and her research agenda.

Daniela is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Innovation for Learning and Teaching (CILT) at the University of Cape Town. Her current research focuses on academic staff development for designing blended and online learning in higher education, focusing on developing socially just learning and curriculum designs based on co-creation and equity-oriented compassionate design principles. She teaches on the PG Diploma in EdTech and the Master's in EdTech and convenes the Master's in Higher Education Studies (HES) at UCT. She completed a Master's in Adult Education at the University of Botswana and received a PHD from the School of Education at the University of Cape Town. She is a C1-rated researcher and 2022 Fulbright Scholar who has published over 80 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters. She is the managing editor of *CriStaL*, the journal for critical studies in teaching and learning in higher education. She blogs at <http://danielagachago.blogspot.com> and tweets under @dgachago17.

Ashleigh Petersen-Cloete is a PhD Candidate in the Desmond Tutu Centre for Religion and Social Justice at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. Her research focuses on social justice and religion, specifically on the culture of gender and purity in TikTok. Ashleigh is a Researcher for the Design for Social Justice Partnership Project.

As a CPUT, Fundani staff member in the First Year Experience (FYE) unit, my work centres around student transition, support, and retention. Our methods of achieving this are through our mentoring and retention officer programs, which employ senior students we train to provide academic and psychosocial support to first-year students. Additionally, I support students at all levels personally, through consultations and the workshops I provide, on various academic & non-academic (psycho-social) topics. I've also served as an assistant researcher in our unit, collecting data on the demographics of our first-year student population to inform better policy creation and solutions to meet this cohort's needs. Most recently, I was appointed as a researcher representing CPUT in the collaborative DSJP project.

Tefo is a Junior Research Fellow at the Centre for Innovation for Learning and Teaching (CILT) at the University of Cape Town. Tefo is excited to take up a role in a team that is deeply rooted in fostering social justice within education through collaborative student-staff partnerships. In this position, Tefo hopes to explore the landscape of student-staff alliances in the global south, explicitly focusing on Africa and the Western Cape, and strive to amplify voices and perspectives often marginalised within traditional educational structures. Tefo is also a PhD student studying Anthropology and Ethnology at the University of the Western Cape and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (co-tutelle), where his research interests lie between third space theory, the rural development in the Kalahari and education policy. In many ways, this project continues his MPhil in Education from the University of Cambridge, where he explored rural education policy in the Botswana Kalahari. Before joining the Designing for Social Justice Partnership team at UCT, Tefo served as a Monitoring & Evaluation Officer at a think-tank, where their project management skills were instrumental in developing Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on critical research methodologies. He then worked as a management consultant focusing on the nexus of competition economics and public health in Africa.

Ngoasheng is the Coach/Facilitator for the Designing for Social Justice Partnership Project (DSJP). She is a scholar and activist in the education, gender, diversity and politics. She is regularly interviewed on these topics in local (SABC), regional (News Central) and international media (BBC, Voice of America). Her career has included working as a journalist and a media academic and curriculum transformation advocate at the University of Witwatersrand and Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). She has spoken globally including in SA (UNISA), United States (Duke University), United Kingdom (Sussex University), Germany (University of Konstanz), Denmark (Oxfam Ibis), Austria (Bruno Kreisky Forum). Ngoasheng has led institutional journeys of change at academic institutions, nonprofits and corporates through her diversity and decolonising the curriculum work. Her interdisciplinary, transnational research and practice have made her a sought-after facilitator and thought leader. She has written academic articles, chapters and opinion pieces on these topics, exploring how her work as an educational and diversity practitioner, crosses people and knowledge boundaries by using interdisciplinary autoethnographic narratives and methodologies to tell the stories of her participation in social, academic and activist life. In her work and projects, she seeks to demonstrate that Decolonial pedagogies, while political, can go beyond mere 'political' statements and become actual practice and methodology with an impact on one's ways of working and ways of engaging with racialised, othered, marginalised, minoritised people. They also emphasise that institutional change does not happen in a vacuum, is political, complex and emotionally taxing, and is best done in collaboration with stakeholders.

Joe-Dean Roberts is a Bachelor of Social Sciences graduate from the University of Cape Town, majoring in Gender Studies and Law. She is currently completing a challenging but fulfilling LLB degree. Her interests primarily concern advocacy for women and children and a keen interest in leadership research within higher education. She is the project administrator, there to offer general administrative support to the DSJP partners. Being part of the DSJP team means she can envision and see co-creation through active collaboration.

Esai Reddy is a Master's in Linguistics candidate. She completed a Bachelor of Social Science in Psychology, Linguistics and Sociology and a B.A. (Honours) in Linguistics. Her current research is looking at language experiences of Autism. She is interested in how language is used and perceived by the Autistic community. Co-creation is a key part of her research and her involvement in DSJP. She has been involved in Students as Partners projects at UCT through UCT Lead for the last year. She currently serves as a researcher in the DSJP team. Outside of work, she is a creative at heart and can be found exploring galleries or painting her works.

Deidré Johnson is an accomplished educator with an extensive background in learning strategy and design, online higher education, and corporate training. Since founding EdXimia Pty (Ltd) in August 2022, a visionary eLearning consultancy specialising in course strategy and design and development in the realm of learning design, Deidré Johnson has been at the forefront of EdTech innovation, offering consultancy services in best practices, accreditation compliance, and the development of online learning materials. With a mission to make education accessible to all in a socially just way, EdXimia excels in crafting innovative learning strategies and designing digital solutions that drive educational transformation. With a Master of Science in Biokinetics, she combines academic expertise with practical experience in enhancing online education and corporate training. Her career highlights include roles in academic governance, compliance, and educational innovation, focusing on operational management, stakeholder relationship building, and developing engaging learning experiences. Outside of her professional endeavours, Deidré enjoys running and outdoor activities, emphasising her belief in the importance of balance between work and personal well-being.



## Challenges and possibilities of doing justice-oriented student-faculty partnership work in an elite private university in India

The university, where we, a teacher-student duo, situate our experiences, represents a growing trend of elite educational institutions in India that promise global academic standards, interdisciplinary learning, and critical pedagogy. However, these institutions also reflect the problems of neoliberal academia. While they provide greater freedom of speech than state-controlled public universities in India, their functions are fundamentally shaped by market logics, donor interests, global rankings and politics of appeasement. These universities attract students from wealthy families and become bastions of privilege and exclusions, with a very low percentage of students who come through scholarships. As a result, they also tend to perpetuate hierarchies and inequalities inherent in the broader societal structure. Within this context, faculty and students engaging in justice-oriented work often face challenges where their academic inquiry must align with institutional branding rather than foster radical critique. This study explores key tensions around accountability, responsibility, pedagogical aims and resource allocation through a dialogue between a faculty member and a student. We situate these reflections within debates on neoliberalism in higher education (Giroux, 2014), the politics of academic freedom (Butler, 2015), and decolonial pedagogies (Bhambra, Gebrial & Nişancıoğlu 2018). First, we analyse how universities evade accountability, shifting responsibility onto faculty while restricting student participation. Neoliberal universities prioritise risk management over academic freedom, discouraging engagement with politically sensitive issues (Apple, 2013). This is particularly relevant in the Indian context, where faculty members addressing topics like caste, religion-based atrocities, and state-sponsored oppression often face institutional censure. The growing trend of universities demanding faculty apologies for politically controversial discussions reflects a broader strategy of appeasement and risk avoidance. Second, we highlight the paradox of justice-oriented education. While faculty are encouraged to integrate decolonial, justice thinking and human rights frameworks to meet global academic trends, universities impose rigid bureaucratic processes that undermine the slow and collective nature of justice work (Tuck & Yang, 2018). This echoes Freire's (2018) critique, in which knowledge is treated as a transaction rather than a transformative process. Justice work requires time and flexibility, yet university structures remain committed to standardised semester-based formats that limit deep engagement with these issues. Genuine collaboration necessitates dismantling hegemonic academic practices that view students as mere contributors to publications without passive knowledge recipients rather than co-creators (Bovill, Cook-Sather & Felten, 2011). We also critique neoliberal education that prioritises rankings, employability, and marketability over critical inquiry and social impact; research is aligned with international funding rather than prioritising local and urgent social issues (Connell, 2020). We examine the pressures on students in elite institutions to conform to dominant norms, where justice-oriented work or social engagement is often reduced to a resume-building exercise. While faculty may have access to funding mechanisms, undergraduate students are largely excluded from structural support, rendering justice-oriented initiatives an individual pursuit rather than an institutional priority. Furthermore, we explore the disciplinary disparities in advancing justice-oriented work, noting that the bulk of this responsibility falls on social sciences and humanities, while other disciplines remain less engaged. Ultimately, this paper calls for a radical reimagining of student-staff partnerships—one that transcends symbolic gestures and moves toward genuine institutional commitments to challenge existing power structures and sustain long-term engagement with social justice struggles. We advocate for partnerships that resist the market-driven imperatives of the neoliberal university and instead foster meaningful, justice-centered academic collaborations.

Speaker: Ishita Chatterjee and Kavyasri Saravanan (O.P. Jindal Global University)

Ishita Chatterjee is an Associate Professor at the Jindal School of Art and Architecture, O. P. Jindal Global University. She has a PhD from the University of Melbourne. Her work focuses on informal urbanism, housing rights, spatial justice, and architectural pedagogy. She received the Antipode Foundation's Right to the Discipline grant in 2023 for her work on 'Urban Natures and Informal Settlements: Resisting Coercive Environmentalism and Forced Evictions.' She has been an active participant in social movements for housing rights in India.

Kavyasri Saravanan is a Bachelor of Architecture student at O.P. Jindal Global University with a strong interest in social justice and interdisciplinary approaches to equity. As a student in an elite private university, she has witnessed firsthand the tensions between institutional branding and justice-oriented work, particularly the challenges of fostering meaningful student-staff partnerships within neoliberal academic structures. Her lived experience and academic pursuits drive her commitment to reimagining higher education as a space for transformative, justice-driven collaboration.

# Getting around and facilities

- Gender-neutral, single-stalled toilets are located on the ground floor. From the main entrance, turn right and continue to the end of the hallway.
- Water fountains can be found throughout the Marylebone Building, including:
  - To the left of the entrance, past the gates
  - On the second floor, outside the female disabled toilet
- Prayer rooms are located on the second floor.
  - Women's prayer room: B207
  - Men's prayer room: B207b
- Quiet rooms are available on the second floor, where all papers will be held. Attendees are welcome to use rooms M217 and M218 for rest or time out.

[For directions to campus](#)

[For the campus accessibility guide](#)

# Further reading

We asked some of our speakers to recommend books that have inspired their thinking and practice. You'll find that selection of texts here, alongside a few of our own favourite reads that inform and guide our work across various projects.

Some of these titles were also featured in our raffle. Congratulations to the winners!

Afzaal, A. (2023). Teaching at twilight: The meaning of education in the age of collapse. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

Cook-Sather, A. (2022). Co-creating equitable teaching and learning: Structuring student voice into higher education. Harvard Education Press.

De Bie, A., Marquis, E., Cook-Sather, A., & Luqueño, L. (2023). Promoting equity and justice through pedagogical partnership. Taylor & Francis.

Freire, P. (2018). Pedagogy of the oppressed. Bloomsbury Academic. (Original work published 1970)

Gravett, K. (2023). Relational pedagogies: Connections and mattering in higher education. Bloomsbury Academic.

hooks, B. (1994). Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom. New York, NY: Routledge.

Leduc, A. (2020). Disfigured: On fairy tales, disability, and making space. Coach House Books.

Meyerhoff, E. (2019). Beyond education: Radical studying for another world. University of Minnesota Press.

Okoth, K. O. (2023). Red Africa: Reclaiming revolutionary black politics. Verso Books.

Parasram, A., & Khasnabish, A. (2022). Frequently Asked White Questions. Fernwood Publishing.

Peters, M. A., & Biesta, G. (2009). Derrida, deconstruction, and the politics of pedagogy (Vol. 323). Peter Lang.

Rendón, L. I., & Cantú, N. (2023). Sentipensante (sensing/thinking) pedagogy: Educating for wholeness, social justice, and liberation. Routledge.

Rowe, A. C. (2008). Power lines: On the subject of feminist alliances. Duke University Press.

Salih, T. (2009). Season of Migration to the North. New York Review of Books.

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (Eds.). (2018). Toward what justice? Describing diverse dreams of justice in education. Routledge.

# Further resources

[Building the Anti-Racist Classroom](#)

[Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures](#)

[Convivial Thinking](#)

[Western Sydney University – A Manifesto for Student-Staff Partnerships and Equity](#)

[Real Paradigms](#)

[Pedagogies for Social Justice – ‘Decolonising the Curriculum Toolkit’](#)

[Student Partnership Reading Lists \(University of Westminster\)](#)

# A special thanks to...

## Our students:

Shifa Afzal  
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