Where Are the Students in Efforts for Inclusive Excellence? Two Approaches to Positioning Students as Critical Partners for Inclusive Pedagogical Practices

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Abstract

Most educational development for inclusive excellence does not draw directly on the experiences and perspectives of students. This article presents two different approaches to positioning undergraduate students as critical partners in developing inclusive pedagogical practices. Co-authored by the directors of and student partners who participated in each approach, the article defines inclusive excellence and inclusive teaching and provides selected examples of partnership work that strives for equity and inclusion. It then describes our different approaches, discusses potential benefits of launching student-faculty partnership work through these approaches, and offers recommendations for developing pedagogical partnership efforts for inclusive excellence at other institutions.

Keywords: *inclusive excellence, inclusive teaching, students as partners, equity*

Most educational development designed to support faculty in reaching a diversity of students does not draw directly on the experiences

and perspectives of students themselves. Yet students have essential insights without which we cannot develop the most effective pedagogical approaches (Cook-Sather, 2019; Felten et al., 2019; Healey et al., 2016; Marquis et al., 2016; Reynolds et al., 2019). Furthermore, when students, particularly those typically underrepresented in and underserved by postsecondary institutions, are positioned as educational developers, they can mobilize a culture shift on campuses toward greater equity, inclusion, and justice (Cook-Sather, Krishna Prasad et al., 2019; de Bie et al., 2021). Takayama et al. (2017) have argued that such a culture shift can be advanced through strategic multi-level leadership that can start at the macro, meso, or micro level. In this discussion, we describe how Lafayette College positioned students as partners in an effort for inclusive excellence at the macro level that aimed for an immediate institution-wide effect and how Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges positioned students as partners in a pilot program at the micro level that then grew to encompass the meso and macro levels.

The discussion we offer here builds on two sessions presented at the 2019 annual Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network conference. Tracie and Anna co-facilitated a session describing the forums that support dialogue between students and instructors at Lafayette College as part of their teaching and learning center's efforts to foster the development of inclusive teaching (Addy & DeVault, 2019; see also Addy et al., 2019). Alison co-facilitated a pre-conference workshop designed around *Pedagogical Partnerships: A How-to Guide for Faculty, Students, and Academic Developers in Higher Education* (Cook-Sather et al., 2019b), a book that features the pedagogical partnership program at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges in which Nicole has participated and which has been emulated at colleges and universities around the world. Both approaches send the message to instructors and to students that student experiences, voices, and perspectives matter in efforts for inclusive excellence, and both provide spaces for instructors and students to engage in critical dialogue as a key component of such efforts. One approach does so

through inviting instructors and students into dialogue in single-session, campus-wide forums, and the other does so through supporting semester-long, one-on-one pedagogical partnerships between undergraduate students and instructors.

This article is co-authored by Tracie and Anna, director of and student fellow, respectively, in the Center for the Integration of Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship at Lafayette College, and Alison and Nicole, director of and student consultant, respectively, in the Students as Learners and Teachers program at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges. We frame the description of our two approaches by briefly reviewing definitions of inclusive excellence and inclusive teaching and addressing the question that constitutes the first part of our title—"Where are the students in efforts for inclusive excellence?"—with calls for and selected examples of partnership work that strives for equity and inclusion. Because the context-specific nature of partnership work (Healey & Healey, 2018) requires that different institutions develop different approaches that resonate and are sustainable within particular colleges and universities, the majority of the article is devoted to describing our different approaches and discussing the potential benefits of launching student-faculty partnership work through these approaches. We conclude with recommendations for developing pedagogical partnership efforts for inclusive excellence at other institutions.

Question: Where Are the Students in Efforts for Inclusive Excellence?

Inclusive excellence focuses on student intellectual and social development, purposefully develops and utilizes organizational resources to enhance student learning, attends to the cultural differences learners bring to the educational experience and that enhance the enterprise, and creates a welcoming community that engages all of its diversity in the service of student and organizational learning (Williams et al., 2005). Inclusive teaching "refers to the ways in which pedagogy,

curricula and assessment are designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all," and it "embraces a view of the individual and individual difference as the source of diversity that can enrich the lives and learning of others" (Hockings, 2010). Building on Hockings's (2010) framework in their synthesis of recent literature, Lawrie et al. (2017) noted several ways that the term *inclusive* is used:

- pedagogies should meet the diversity of learners' needs, and should not create barriers for particular students or student groups;
- pedagogies should enable accessibility and be crafted through consultation amongst a variety of institutional stakeholders;
- assessment should be multimodal and flexible while maintaining academic standards;
- institutions should adopt a more holistic, comprehensive approach to supporting teaching and learning for diverse groups of learners. (p. 13)

Based on their analysis, Lawrie et al. (2017) argued for a "whole-of-institution" approach to developing inclusive and equitable approaches to teaching and learning (p. 11). Focusing on the role of students, in their article "Inclusive Teaching," Dewsbury and Brame (2019) evoked critical pedagogue Paulo Freire (1970), who argued that "instructors should build pedagogy around the voices and lives of their students," drawing on "dialogue with students to build classes as inclusive spaces" (p. 2). How might we work with students to move toward whole-of-institution approaches that can help instructors and staff shift from "talking the talk" to "walking the walk" (McNair et al., 2020) of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)?

Students, whom Willis (2018) called "a new group of DEI champions," want to play an active role in this work, and they seek "more formalized recognition for their knowledge, skill and efforts; more advanced training; and professional opportunities for leadership roles." Like these students, we see the need for recognition of all

students—students of color and other underrepresented and under-served groups in particular—as "holders and creators of knowledge" (Delgado Bernal, 2002, p. 106) and, specifically, as co-creators of understandings and practices of postsecondary education that are responsive to a diversity of students (Cook-Sather & Agu, 2013; Cook-Sather, Krishna Prasad et al., 2019; de Bie et al., 2019).

Therefore, in response to the question that forms the first part of our title—Where are the students in efforts for inclusive excellence?—we propose that students should be in partnership with instructors and with educational and organizational developers. While DEI initiatives, like much educational development work, focus on student experiences, most do not include students in their conceptualization or implementation. A growing body of literature suggests that student-faculty pedagogical partnerships—in which students are "co-learners, co-researchers, co-inquirers, co-developers, and co-designers" (Healey et al., 2016, p. 2) with faculty, staff, administrators, and other students—have the potential to foster greater equity and inclusion through the practices pedagogical partnerships nurture (e.g., Cook-Sather, 2018a, 2019; Cook-Sather et al., 2019b) as well as through changing the way we conceptualize and enact educational and institutional development (Cook-Sather, Krishna Prasad et al., 2019). Many pedagogical partnership approaches not only reimagine the place of students in educational development (Felten et al., 2019) but also specifically ground their projects and/or analyses in critical race and/or feminist theory (e.g., Cates et al., 2018; Cook-Sather & Agu, 2013; Mercer-Mapstone & Mercer, 2018), and arguments are emerging regarding partnerships' potential to counter ontological, epistemic, and affective forms of harm created and perpetuated by higher education institutions (de Bie et al., 2019, 2021).

Most approaches to fostering student-faculty dialogue and partnership focused on pedagogical and curricular development have as an underlying goal the creation of more equitable and inclusive practices, but institutions vary regarding the extent to which they explicitly name that goal (Cook-Sather et al., 2019b). For instance, both Co-create

UVA at the University of Virginia (Doktor et al., 2019) and McMaster University's Student Partners Program (Marquis et al., 2016) were co-created by instructors, staff, and students, and while both founders of and participants in these programs would articulate a commitment to equity and inclusion, that language does not permeate descriptions of the programs' founding.

Other organizations do frame the launch of their programs in explicit terms of equity and inclusion. Smith College's Sherrerd Center for Teaching and Learning stated clearly that their goal in launching their student-faculty partnership program was to develop a more inclusive learning environment. Berea College's student-faculty pedagogical partnership program was launched as a component of a multi-part, institutional effort called "Belonging, Inclusive Excellence, and Student Learning" (Cook-Sather, Ortquist-Ahrens, et al., 2019; see also Bruder et al., under review; Cook-Sather & Seay, 2021). Florida Gulf Coast's Student-Faculty Partnership Program was developed explicitly to foster a sense of belonging for both faculty and students (Cook-Sather, Ortquist-Ahrens et al., 2019; Reynolds et al., 2019). And Victoria University of Wellington links its partnership program, Ako in Action, with both university-wide commitment to a new Learning and Teaching Strategy that was co-written with students and Aotearoa / New Zealand's country-wide commitment to bi-culturalism. *Ako* is a Māori term that means both to teach *and* to learn, and Victoria University of Wellington's partnership program enacts the principle of *akoranga*, understood as a "collective responsibility for learning" (Lenihan-Ikin et al., 2020; Leota & Sutherland, 2020).

This selective review of other student-faculty pedagogical partnership programs that both implicitly and explicitly work toward greater equity and inclusion provides some context for the approaches we have developed through the programming offered through the Center for the Integration of Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship at Lafayette College and through the Students as Learners and Teachers (SaLT) program at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges.

Two Approaches to Positioning Students as Critical Partners for Inclusive Pedagogical Practices

We present our two approaches as different starting points for pursuing whole-of-institution approaches to inclusive excellence.

Students as Partners for Inclusive Excellence at Lafayette College (Tracie)

The mission of the Center for the Integration of Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship at Lafayette College is to partner with instructors in their work as teacher-scholars. After several months of learning about the culture of the campus and where the center could add value to the institution, Tracie moved forward on initiatives centered on inclusive teaching excellence. In particular, she focused on one- to one-and-a-half-hour panel discussions and forums featuring student voices held during the lunch hour or late afternoon. Lafayette already had a brief history of student partnerships prior to Tracie's arrival; a previous director piloted a student partnership program with instructors on a smaller scale to further teaching efforts. Students also presented during a learning community session for new instructors. Seeing the success of student partnerships and positive feedback from the instructors, Tracie expanded the center's approach to employ student fellows as partners with the center and engaged students in center events open to all instructors.

With funding from a Pennsylvania Consortium for the Liberal Arts Arthur Vining Davis Foundations Teaching and Learning Award, Tracie employed four student partners and worked in partnership on inclusive teaching efforts with the teaching center director at Muhlenberg College, who also employed four student partners. Student partners at both Lafayette and Muhlenberg focused on topics within inclusive excellence relevant to their contexts, emphasizing what students would like their instructors to know from the perspectives of learners. Lafayette and Muhlenberg also engaged in collaborations with other offices and departments on their campuses for these sessions.

Two student partners at Lafayette worked on general inclusive teaching efforts, and two partners worked on issues pertaining to students of Asian descent. In addition to offering programming through the Inclusive Teaching & Excellence Series, a secondary goal was to generate sustainable products from the partnerships that would continue to benefit instructors, students, and the center. These products included a variety of online resources, such as a guide for inclusive teaching written by students for instructors, a write-up explaining and providing recommendations to instructors on the myth of the "model minority" stereotype, and a podcast for new faculty featuring interviews with two professors and a student who valued inclusive teaching efforts. These resources became part of the center's website and continued to be shared with Lafayette faculty.

The employment of student partners as fellows for the center was beneficial for a director in the process of building a teaching center and programming around inclusive teaching for several reasons. The partnerships (a) allowed the teaching center to initiate positive and mutually beneficial collaborations with a wide variety of offices and groups on campus, (b) engaged students in center work giving learners meaningful employment, (c) advanced center programming, and (d) enabled the development of sustainable resources around teaching and learning. Additionally, instructors enjoyed hearing student perspectives at the sessions and learning practical information that they could incorporate directly into their classes. Students were compensated for their efforts through the grant award; however, centers also can employ students through operating budgets paying an hourly wage or providing a small stipend or create voluntary positions as fellowships. Below are sample initiatives featuring student partnerships.

Learning Community for New Instructors:
Lafayette Student Life Panel

To further the understanding of new faculty with regard to the culture of the college, the center organized a student panel to allow

learners to share their experiences as students at Lafayette. This one-hour panel discussion was run yearly during the new faculty learning community gathering that met regularly over the course of the year. Panelists included between five to seven students, and an invitation was extended beyond the student fellows. Student panelists shared their involvements at the college, including both co-curricular activities and employment, and personal recommendations for how their instructors can support their learning in the classroom. Instructors also had the opportunity to ask students questions. Generally, new instructors walked away from this session with new perspectives and enjoyed the opportunity to ask students questions in a lower-stakes setting of mutual respect.

Panel Discussion: What Lafayette Students Want Instructors to Know

The center organized a student panel discussion for instructors of all disciplines and ranks that was moderated by the dean of students and was part of the Inclusive Teaching & Excellence Series. Students from diverse majors and backgrounds had the opportunity to tell their instructors what they wanted them to know about equity and inclusion in the classroom. Initial ground rules were set during the discussion, including that students would not share the names of specific instructors, courses, or departments and would focus on sharing ideas that would further actionable change.

Panel Discussion: Dare to Be Dark

In addition to the two center fellows focused on general topics within inclusive teaching, one of whom was Anna, a co-author of this article, two other fellows facilitated an Inclusive Teaching & Excellence Series session and developed an online resource specific to addressing inclusion concerns related to students of Asian descent. The resource focused on the myth of the model minority stereotype. This stereotype

involves viewing Asian American students as the model minority and denies the individualism of such learners. The fellows led a session titled "Dare to Be Dark" that presented a great opportunity to partner with instructors, staff, and students at the college to hold a discussion on the issue of colorism, which is discrimination among individuals of the same race or ethnicity based on skin tone. Instructors and student panelists presented their powerful stories and experiences with colorism, and the session was well received.

The Students as Learners and Teachers Program at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges (Alison)

In the fall 2006 semester, a group of instructors, students, and administrators at Bryn Mawr College conceptualized a teaching and learning initiative with the goal of creating new structures within which all members of the campus community—faculty, staff, and students—could interact as teachers, learners, and colleagues; collaborate and create relationships that move beyond the limitations of the traditional roles they play; and link everyone within the college community to educational opportunity and the opportunity to foster it for others (see Lesnick & Cook-Sather, 2010). As this initiative was evolving, with generous support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, several faculty members approached Alison, unbeknownst to one another, to express their desire to make their classrooms more inclusive of and responsive to a diversity of students. Alison convened focus groups of students who identified as feeling underserved by the institution and those who identified as allies, and she consulted them about how to develop an educational development program for faculty focused on creating more inclusive and responsive classrooms. The students' recommendation was that five students of color should be hired as student consultants, and so the pilot phase of what became the Students as Learners and Teachers (SaLT) program paired these five students with the five instructors who had approached Alison.

In the spring 2007 semester, each student partner visited one session per week of their faculty partner's focal course; took detailed observation notes to give to their faculty partner; met weekly with their faculty partner to discuss the notes and anything else related to how the course was unfolding; and participated in weekly, one-hour meetings with Alison and other student consultants working in partnership with faculty. (See Cook-Sather, 2018b, 2019, for details and Cook-Sather & Des-Ogugua, 2018, for an extended discussion of the pilot and the recommendations generated by the student and faculty participants.) These one-on-one, semester-long, student-faculty pedagogical partnerships became the model the SaLT program embraced, and since the program's advent, over 300 faculty and 200 student partners have participated in more than 400 partnerships.

This micro-level focus on pairs of faculty and students was made possible in part by the grant support from the Mellon Foundation (and subsequently by funding provided by the provosts' offices on Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges' campuses when the grant funding ended). In addition, it was an approach suited to a time and a context that had not yet formed the kinds of commitment to equity and inclusion that are in place today, and it was an initiative that emerged in the absence of any formal center for teaching and learning. After the pilot phase, the language the SaLT program used to describe the partnership work was not the language of equity and inclusion, although that remained the driving commitment, but rather the less pointed language of dialogue across differences of position and perspective.

This approach remains the main mode of SaLT work, although students also participate in new faculty orientation and other forums (see Cook-Sather, 2016), such as those that Tracie describes above. In contrast to the one-time panel discussions that have potentially wide campus reach, SaLT supports fewer faculty in long-term, one-on-one partnerships, which can contribute to faculty developing voice and agency in changing pedagogy in the broader college culture (Cook-Sather et al., 2021). There are two primary forms such partnerships take.

Classroom-Focused Partnerships

One-on-one, semester-long partnerships with student consultants are available in two basic versions: (1) to all incoming faculty at both Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges, linked to a two-hour, weekly pedagogy seminar Alison facilitates and for which participating instructors are granted a one-course reduction in teaching, and (2) to any instructor at the two colleges at any stage of their careers as a stand-alone partnership for no financial or other compensation for the faculty. In both cases, the student-faculty partnerships include the observations and meetings described above, and student consultants are paid at the top of the pay scale for every hour they spend on this work.

All student consultants who are available participate in a two-hour orientation prior to beginning their partnership work, and all are provided with detailed guidelines for embarking on, developing, and concluding their partnerships (these are meant as recommendations, not prescriptions). The main support for this demanding intellectual and emotional work comes from the weekly student consultant meetings Alison facilitates, however. Likewise, the main focus of the pedagogical work the student-faculty pairs do is guided by faculty-identified foci, although as the partnerships unfold over the course of the semester, it may be the student partner who identifies possible areas for exploration. Some partnerships focus very explicitly on equity and inclusion (see Perez, 2016, for a faculty partner reflection on such work, and Brunson, 2018, for a student partner reflection) and others less explicitly so.

Curriculum-Focused Partnerships

Each semester, a number of faculty who have already experienced a classroom-focused partnership request to expand their partnership work to focus on curriculum design and redesign. These faculty might work with small groups of students who have taken the focal course to redesign structures, assignments, and forms of assessment (for an example, see Charkoudian et al., 2015).

In these partnerships, faculty and student partners are more independent: they arrange their own schedules, and the student partners typically do not meet with the cohort of students participating in pedagogy-focused partnerships. These long-term, curriculum-focused partnerships inform the way faculty teach their courses. As one faculty partner explains, "I consciously created an environment of pedagogical transparency and fostered an environment in which students could come to me with continual feedback and suggestions to make the course stronger" (Charkoudian et al., 2015, p. 9). Similarly, another faculty partner found his partnership work had the effect of "deepening the in-class relationship" between faculty and students and has proven efficacious "in broadening participation and retention of underrepresented minorities in the field" (Narayanan & Abbot, 2020, p. 194).

The SaLT approach, which has been emulated at numerous colleges and universities, affords the institution and its faculty and students the following benefits: (a) ongoing support to incoming faculty as they learn to navigate a new institution, its culture(s), and its student populations (Oh, 2014; Perez, 2016); (b) opportunity for faculty at any point in their career to work in long-term partnership to reaffirm and, where appropriate, revise their pedagogical and curricular approaches (Conner, 2012; Luker & Morris, 2016); (c) meaningful employment for students, particularly those who need to work (Ameyaa et al., 2021; de Bie et al., 2021; Jack, 2019); and (d) contribution to an ethos of partnership on campus. Detailed guidelines regarding how to develop such a program are available through the free, open-access how-to guide that was the basis for the POD pre-conference workshop (Cook-Sather et al., 2019a, 2019b).

Discussion

Tracie's and Alison's descriptions highlight how both of the programs create forums in which faculty and students have the opportunity to engage in conversations about inclusivity in teaching and learning that

typically do not unfold. Both approaches create spaces within which instructors and students can be in dialogue with one another about how to design pedagogy, curricula, and assessment "to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all" and to recognize diversity as enriching the lives and learning of others (Hockings, 2010). Both approaches provide structures that support instructors in developing pedagogies that meet the diversity of learners' needs and reduce barriers for particular students or student groups and assessments that are multimodal and flexible while maintaining academic standards (Lawrie et al., 2017). And both approaches support instructors in drawing on "dialogue with students to build classes as inclusive spaces" (Dewsbury & Brame, 2019, p. 2).

The various, wide-reaching forums at Lafayette College are ideal for educational developers who want to get started with student partnerships but may not have the resources to facilitate more intensive initiatives. Generally, by partnering with student groups on campus who are invested in equity and inclusion, teaching center directors can increase their odds of finding students interested in participating in one or a few events with minimal time commitment and financial resources. Larger panel discussion sessions incorporating student voice can also reach a larger number of instructors. If there is a particular topic that is important to explore as a larger workshop, this type of session can be quite opportunistic. Furthermore, these sessions can be helpful for instructors who have limited time because of competing priorities to attend more sustained, ongoing initiatives. Forums can also provide a venue where faculty, students, and administrative staff can together explore an important topic area within inclusive teaching. Suggested topics can originate from the campus community as well as from where the teaching center sees a relevant need to align with strategic initiatives. Finally, these sessions also provide a means by which teaching centers can partner with other offices on campus, building and strengthening relationships.

The over-time, intensive, semester-long partnerships might emerge through different processes from single center-sponsored events, and

they focus on building partnership modes of engagement for instructors and students and supporting the development of the confidence, clarity, and capacity necessary to engage in those ways. Such partnerships can be initiated by individual faculty by reallocating funds for teaching or research assistants, supported by freestanding programs (like SaLT), or facilitated through teaching and learning centers (as at Florida Gulf Coast University, McMaster University, Smith College, and others). Through over-time dialogue, as Nicole suggests, faculty have the opportunity to "say aloud" their values (Perez, 2016) and develop, with ongoing support from their student partners, both habits and conscious awareness regarding how to enact them (Cook-Sather & Agu, 2013; Cook-Sather & Des-Ogugua, 2018). The time they invest in the long-term partnership saves them time later because they develop perspectives and partnership modes of being—what one student partner called "respecting voices"—that inform all their work with students (Cook-Sather, 2014, 2020) as well as student engagement with faculty and one another (Cook-Sather et al., 2019b). The longer-term, intensive partnerships also build faculty confidence and capacity (Cook-Sather et al., 2021; Cook-Sather & Wilson, 2020) in ways that carry forward both over time (into future course planning and facilitation) and across context (faculty's own teaching realms, department meetings, etc.).

As Anna and Nicole note, both approaches amplify student voices and position students as change agents, providing recognition for their knowledge and opportunities for leadership (Willis, 2018). In Anna's words, it's easy to talk about inclusivity in the classroom, but it is not nearly as common to feel like student concerns about inclusivity are being taken seriously. Being able not only to share the student voice but also to see it making a real change across campus was meaningful and rewarding. In addition to these benefits, both approaches afford students opportunities to engage in meaningful, compensated equity work, which aligns with student partners' own goals for their education and professional lives. Such student commitment to the work has a substantial, positive impact on the effectiveness of the programs, as Anna and Nicole explain below.

Student Perspectives (Anna and Nicole)

While the approaches at Lafayette College and Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges are different in numerous ways, they have in common how a relatively small number of student fellows or student consultants can have an impact on a large number of faculty and students. Anna and Nicole noted that their partnership work for more inclusive practices forged new connections among students and faculty, provided important personal and professional experiences for them, and were empowering both for them and for other students.

Regarding the newly forged connections among students and faculty, Anna and Nicole found that the partnership work gave them the opportunity to form valuable connections with instructors in departments with whom they might have never crossed paths otherwise and to work with them to create more inclusive classrooms and practices. Anna reflected on how Lafayette's approach has been especially effective in facilitating communication and mutual understanding between professors and students campus wide. It has helped to bridge the disconnect by giving students a chance to voice their concerns and providing a venue for professors to ask students the questions they might never have asked otherwise. It seemed that the forums created a space in which both professors and students felt comfortable communicating and participating in events and were open to dialogue about issues that usually remain undiscussed. Helping to close this gap can create a more comfortable, more empathetic, and more understanding classroom, thereby promoting a more inclusive learning environment.

Nicole reflected that the SaLT program also provides a space for students and faculty to come together, but it is a semester-long process of focusing on the learning of the professor and the observations and knowledge of the student. This contrasts with the typical faculty-student relationship that exists in a classroom setting, which is often mediated by power dynamics; the unique relationships forged through SaLT aim to flip the script. Just as the open forums at

Lafayette allow an exchange of perspectives and ideas, SaLT allows for students to bring up aspects of classes that might otherwise go unnoticed or unspoken: a professor speeding through PowerPoint slides, the white students in a class being the only ones to speak, all students looking at the professor rather than peers while they share, and many more "noticings" (a term one of Nicole's faculty partners used). SaLT creates more accessible educational spaces by bridging the work of students and faculty. In this program, students and professors are both learners and teachers. Each role is considered valuable and important and, by positioning students in a more empowering role, they play a part in transforming the educational spaces they inhabit. In this way, educational spaces become more accessible to all students, especially those doing the work and those in the faculty partner's classes.

Regarding the important personal and professional experiences partnership work afforded them, both Anna and Nicole found the experience of working in partnership to be enriching and valuable. Anna got a lot of practice with professional communication and networking through planning events, gathering information for their resources, and presenting at a conference. Reflecting on the experience, she noted that she was able to network with professionals from different institutions, had the opportunity to co-present about Lafayette's work at a professional development conference, spoke to professionals in the field of inclusive pedagogy from all over the country, and was able to build her professional network.

Similarly, Nicole described feeling truly enriched by her work as a student consultant. All her faculty partners were open, honest, and humble, and they actively welcomed and invited her thoughts. Beyond the feeling of empowerment that came from faculty listening to and sometimes acting on her recommendations, Nicole experienced an ongoing, iterative opportunity for reflection—a cyclical process of exploration, analysis, and revision. She suggests that this relationship, sustained and built over time, allows for the constant deepening of ideas, comments, and reflections. For example, she and her faculty

partner worked on course design, starting broadly with ongoing discussions that allowed her to reflect on previous conversations, make connections with the topics being discussed in the present, and formulate a range of thoughts and reflections.

Finally, regarding their own sense of empowerment and the way the work empowered other students, both Anna and Nicole felt personally empowered through their partnership work to, as Anna put it, share their opinions and perspectives about a topic on which students don't often get to have as much of a voice. Through these programs, as Nicole explains, students are sent the message that their voices matter, both explicitly and due to the nature of the partnership. Anna pointed out that this on-campus employment opportunity was especially valuable because she was able to speak up while also amplifying the voices of others and their voices as students were being heard and taken into consideration by instructors. Both approaches access many student voices by taking student feedback while planning initiatives and putting students at the forefront of panels, at Lafayette, and by gathering mid-semester feedback and engaging in other forms of assessment and dialogue at Bryn Mawr and Haverford Colleges. Nicole noted that, in a typical SaLT partnership, students observe class and take notes on what they notice, later adding in comments and reflections. These notes are often the basis for further discussions between the faculty partner and the student. In this way, whatever it is that a student is noticing and observing in the class is meaningful. Their reflections on these observations are informed by their own experiences as students, which they are experts at being.

Recommendations for Developing Pedagogical Partnership Work at Other Institutions

In pondering which approach to take, educational developers will want to consider institutional priorities, cultures, structures, and resources. In this section, we pose several overarching questions to ask and propose steps to take in developing partnership work.

The origin stories of our two approaches offered above illustrate two different ways to approach the positioning of students as critical partners in efforts for inclusive excellence. The following are overarching questions to ask regarding how institutions might develop pedagogical partnership work for inclusive excellence:

- Will this be a center-based or an individually led initiative?
- How much time will it require of participants and what roles will they take on?
- Will the focus emerge from campus-wide inclusivity challenges or more course-specific ones?

In order to be responsive to the context-specific nature of partnership work (Healey & Healey, 2018), we recommend:

- considering goals toward inclusive teaching efforts;
- developing (ideally in partnership with students) initiatives with those goals in mind;
- obtaining the resources needed; and
- inviting students and other partners to build the efforts.

Feedback we gathered at the end of our 2019 POD Network conference sessions yielded some ideas. Tracie and Anna invited participants in their workshop, "Students as Critical Partners for Inclusive Pedagogical Practices," to share their approaches to student partnership with the educational development community. Participants were asked how they planned to engage students in their work as they move toward inclusive excellence. Sample responses included:

- organizing student panels for new instructor orientation and other center events;
- integrating student feedback from department or program exit interviews;
- employing a small number of student fellows for the center;

- inviting students to serve on the center advisory board; and
- partnering with students to develop online resources on teaching and learning.

These responses highlight the value of students working as critical partners with faculty and staff and how small steps can be taken at little or no expense to hear student voices and advance inclusive teaching efforts at an institution.

In the session Alison co-facilitated, "Learning Relationships: How to Develop Student-Faculty Pedagogical Partnerships," she and her co-facilitator also invited participants to consider steps in launching more long-term partnership work. She learned that some participants were thinking about how to shift existing programs toward partnership (Jardine, 2020), and several participants reflected on steps Alison and her co-authors (Cook-Sather et al., 2019b) recommended:

1. Get a sense of what is happening elsewhere within and beyond your campus walls.
2. Create forums for dialogue and exploration among campus stakeholders.
3. Select faculty and students for a pilot cohort of partners.
4. Bring in people with experience to help guide the launch and to share experiences and advice.
5. Develop structures to support faculty and student participants.

Conclusion

Whether you take one of the two approaches we outline here or a different one altogether, including students in efforts for inclusive excellence work can benefit everyone involved. As Nicole argues, positioning students as the experts in being students and empowering their voices can help institutions to better address the expressed needs of the populations they serve. Outside of end-of-term feedback,

students are not often given a chance to share their opinions on their classes, professors, or institutions. While students may have these conversations among themselves, such exchanges are isolated to the student population. Student-faculty partnership work creates a bridge for ideas to flow across these different groups. In this way, students and faculty have the opportunity to work in tandem and collaboratively to transform the institutions and spaces they inhabit. Such transformation is more important now than ever before (Addy et al., 2020).

Biographies

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