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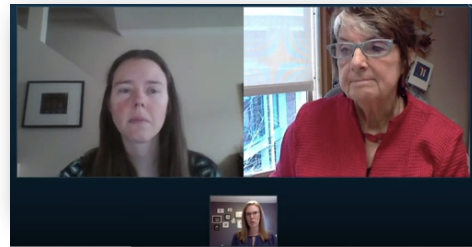


GUEST EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Students as Co-Inquirers Special Section

Welcome to this special section featuring students as co-inquirers. My name is Rebecca Pope-Ruark. I'm an associate professor of English and professional writing and rhetoric at Elon University in North Carolina (US) and one of the editors of this section. In this special section, we feature six articles exploring different ways students can serve as co-inquirers in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). We use the term "co-inquirers" to contend that students need to have a central and equitable role alongside faculty members studying teaching and learning. Carmen will tell us a bit about the history of the students as co-inquirers movement.

[View the guest editors' video introduction](#)



Historical perspective

I am Carmen Werder, a co-editor and contributor for this special section, and I'm pleased to share a bit about this history. As Director of the Teaching-Learning Academy at Western Washington University, I have had the pleasure of being engaged in this work for some time. However, in compiling this special section, we certainly don't presume to be rolling out the notion of students playing a fundamental role in the study of teaching and learning for the first time. Rather, in the process of collaborating with our wonderful contributors, the long and illustrious history of this work shines through even more clearly. As Alison Cook-Sather and Cathy Bovill have observed on the student voice moment in the UK, students have been occupying a central role in the work there since at least 1996, especially in K-12. And as I have highlighted elsewhere on an ISSOTL blog, the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) began fostering the co-inquiry role of students in higher education when it gave Western Washington University and Elon University a going public award in 1998 for their focus on Student Voices in the Carnegie Campus Conversations program. CASTL went on to sponsor two iterations of the student voices clusters of US higher education institutions dedicated to students playing key roles in this work (2003-2006, 2006-2009). So the work is decidedly not new.

What may be distinctive is the way that the pieces in this section highlight the need for students to play not only central roles, but increasingly *equitable* roles. The ISSOTL Students as Co-Inquirers Interest Group, which a former student and colleague of mine, Megan Otis, and I co-created in 2009, perhaps marks the first explicit use of the term "students as co-inquirers" in ISSOTL parlance. The Interest Group's (IG) name may be one indicator of the expanded interest in making the role of students

steadily more equitable. In fact, the idea for this special section bubbled up at the ISSOTL conference in Raleigh, when Rebecca and I brought the notion to the IG, where it became a proposal. Roselynn, a recent IG co-chair, will share more about our hopes for this section.

Student perspectives

My name is Roselynn Verwoord, and I'm a PhD student in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. I am also a co-editor of this special section. This section is indeed "special" in that it "walks the talk" of students as co-inquirers. What I mean by that is we have deliberately included students in all aspects of the section's creation, including having myself as a co-editor, having students as co-authors on most of the articles, and having a student respondent for each article. We have been intent on this co-creation process because, as educators and co-editors, we believe that students are integral to all dimensions of improving teaching and learning and, thus, should be included in all aspects of going public, including as co-inquirers and co-authors. The phrase "nothing for us, without us" comes to mind.

Introduction to the pieces

Our section features six unique pieces, each with a response from a student, aimed at highlighting observations and raising questions and implications. We start off with a theoretical model created by some of the leaders of this movement in the United Kingdom—Mick Healey, Abbi Flint, and Kathy Harrington. The authors articulate a four-part model of engagement through partnership.

Next, Carmen Werder, Shevell Thibou, and Kali Legg from Western Washington University and Scott Simkins, Karen Hornsby, and Tawanna Franklin from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University present two case studies of institutional co-inquiry initiatives in action (both situated in the United States) and the essential role of having shared questions to create a deeply collaborative dynamic among co-inquirers.

Alison Cook-Sather and Sophia Abbot use the metaphor of translation to analyze the collaborative work of a student-faculty partnership program at Bryn Mawr College and Haverford College (both in the United States). This translation metaphor enables them to point to transformations that can result in participants' perceptions of each other, the lenses for viewing teaching, and even their own self-perceptions as teachers and learners.

In the next piece, Camille Kandiko Howson and Saranne Weller interrogate a student-engaged model of teacher education in the UK to critically examine how various players perceive student expertise. They arrive at a crucial caveat: "the engagement of students in enhancement activities does not, as a matter of course, engender the transformative negotiation of conceptual thresholds in relation to expertise, authority, or power in the classroom."

Our fifth article, by Kayla Clampitt, Naomi Park, and Norman Vaughan from Mount Royal University in Canada, models co-inquiry with students by describing the process of how two students in a teacher education program (Kayla and Naomi) co-created and researched the impact of a second-year peer mentoring program that they developed based on their own experience in the program.

The final paper, by Amani Bell from the University of Sydney in Australia, explores why the concept of students as co-inquirers is an emerging field in Australian higher education, highlighting some of the opportunities and challenges with growing this movement in Australia. Of interest, and woven throughout the article, are excerpts from interviews with Australian higher education staff on how the Australian students as co-inquirers movement can continue to grow.

We hope you enjoy this special section. It has been an incredibly rewarding experience working together to prepare it and to learn from the many authors involved. We invite your comments and feedback on the ideas and concepts presented. May the co-inquiry with students movement continue to grow!

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