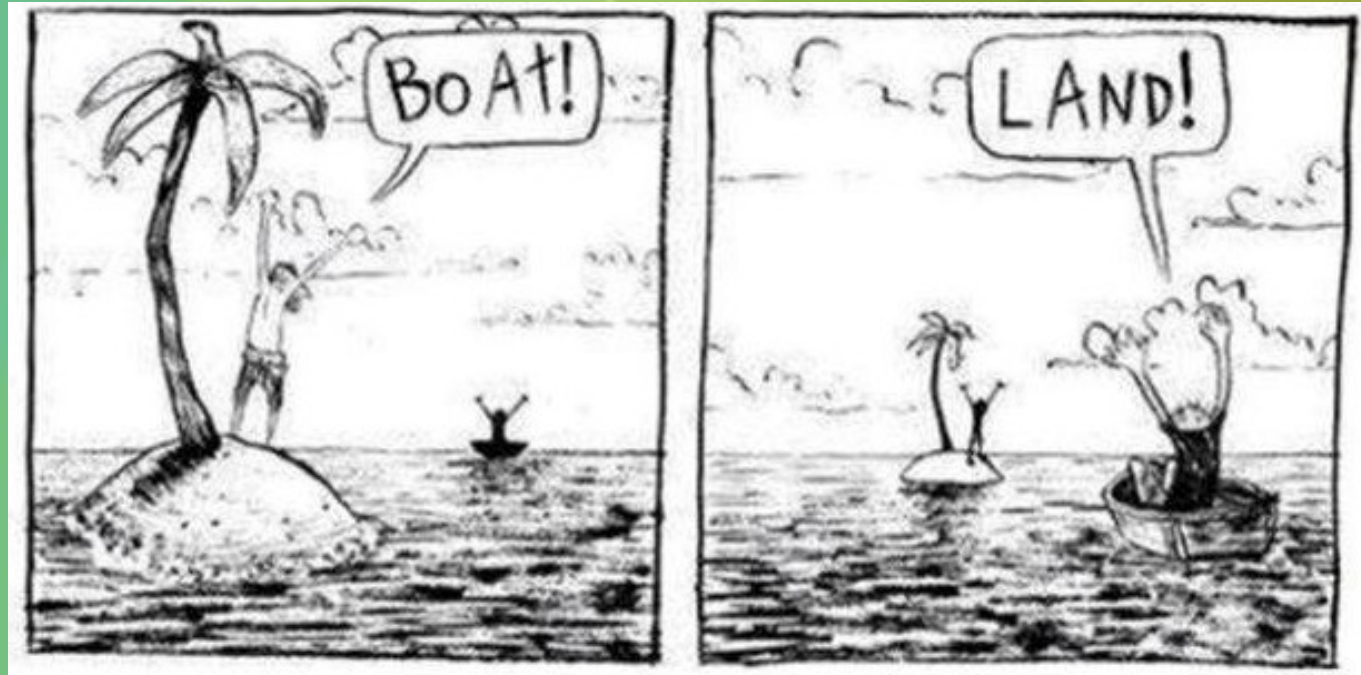


Relationship-rich education, deliberative academic development, and public good after 2020



Leading Higher Education As and For Public Good

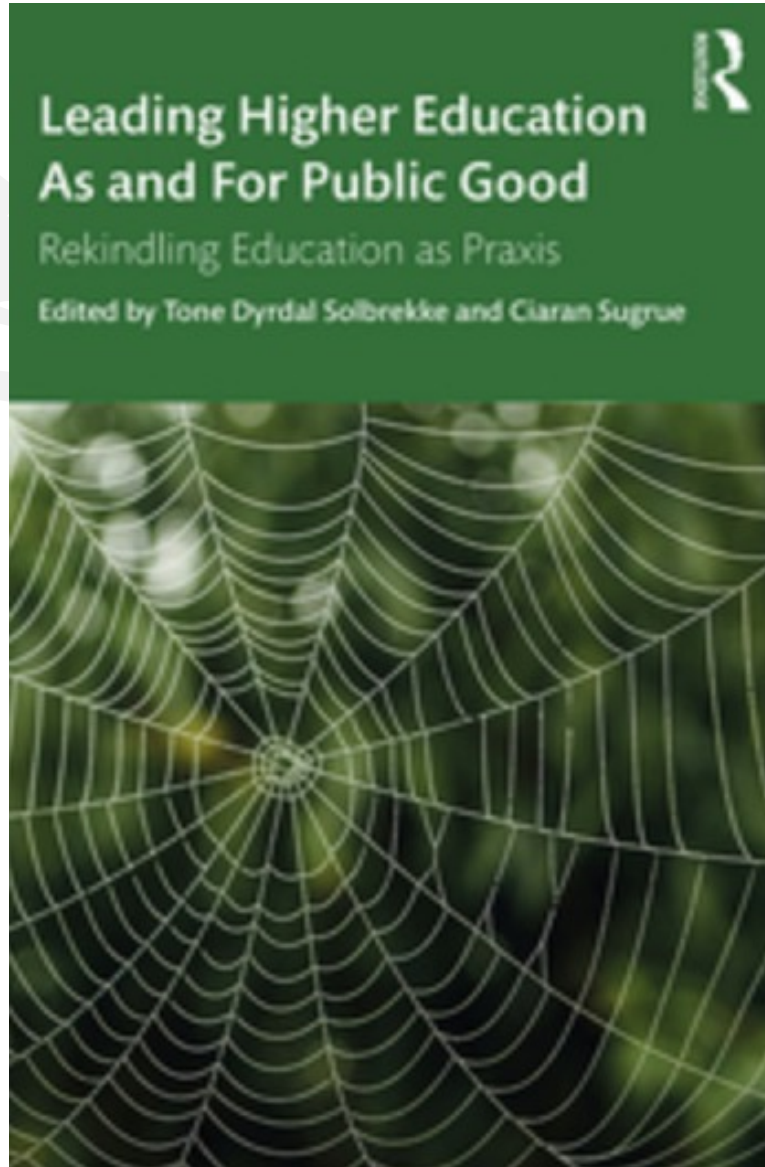
Peter Felten | Center for Engaged Learning | Elon University





Trustful talk among strangers is essential to create a shared sense of public good.

(Allen, 2004)

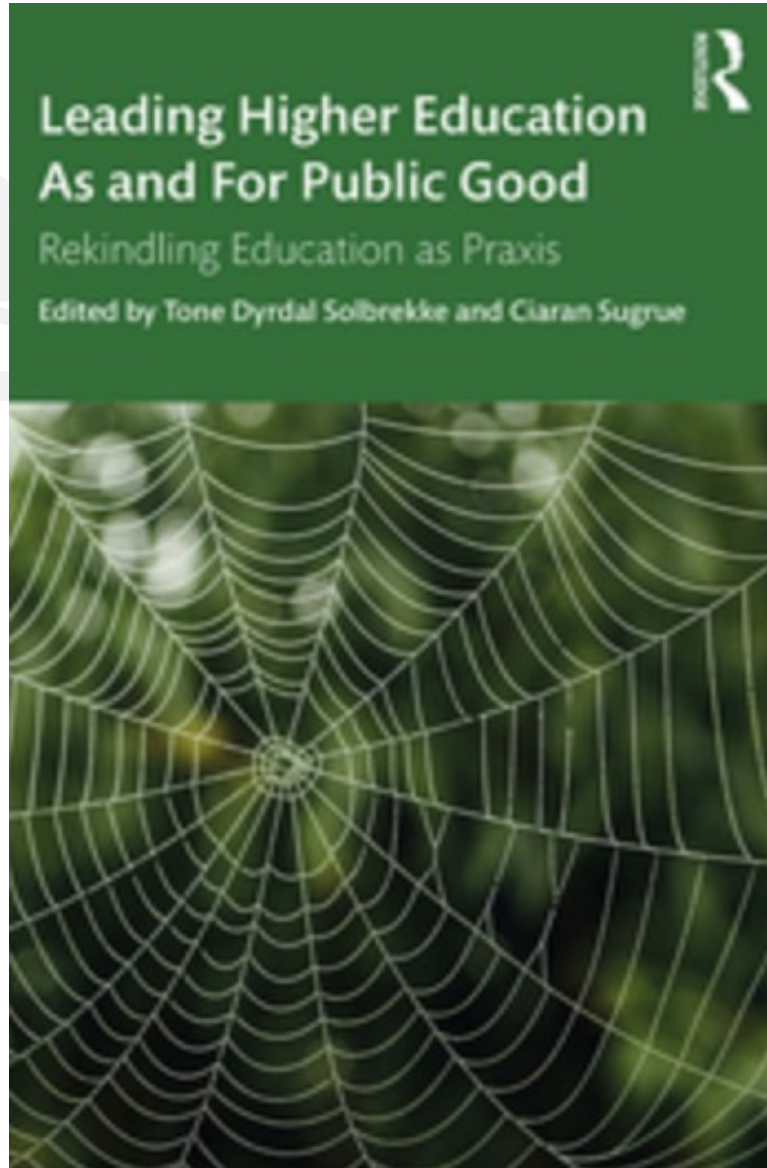


“How do contemporary universities [and academic developers specifically] teach values, beliefs and moral responsibilities in ways that are consistent with promoting public good?”

(Chapter 1, p. 9)

Is deliberative academic development for public good an appealing but “unattainable ideal” in contemporary higher education?

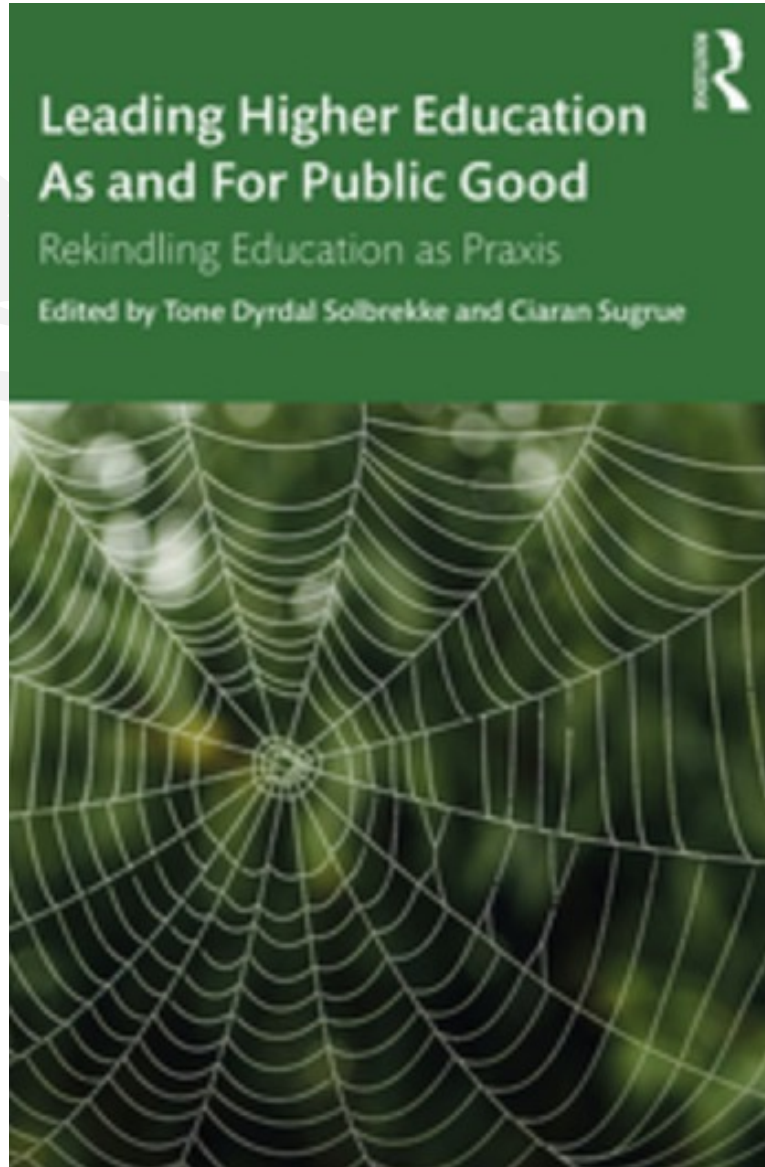
(Chapter 11, p. 172)



“How do [academic developers] teach values, beliefs and moral responsibilities in ways that are consistent with promoting public good?”

Deliberative communication

1. *What is PhD education (good) for?*
2. *Constructive alignment*
3. *Learning outcomes*
4. *Holistic formation*
5. *Developing a template to assess students in clinical work*

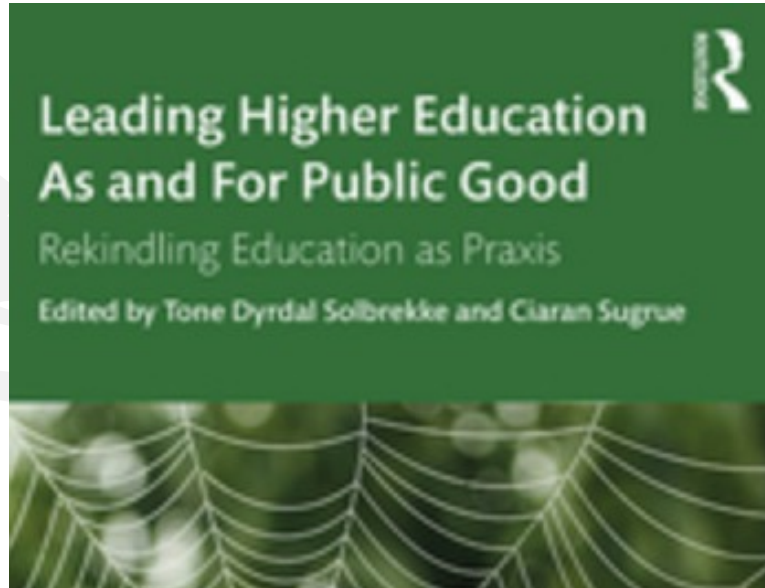


1. “role of courage needed as an AD” (p. 88)
2. “for the AD, it was quite challenging to see himself in action and to take the risk of being transparent and open with colleagues” (p. 103)
3. “how difficult it can be to practice deliberative leadership within a complex web of commitments” (p. 119)
4. “the vulnerable position leaders of deliberative communicative processes are in” (p. 139)
5. “it can be challenging to use deliberative communication when conflicts are evident” (p. 153)

Is deliberative leadership/academic development for public good an appealing but “unattainable ideal” in contemporary higher education?



Is there hope for academic development that is rooted in deliberative communication (“trustful talk”) as and for public good?



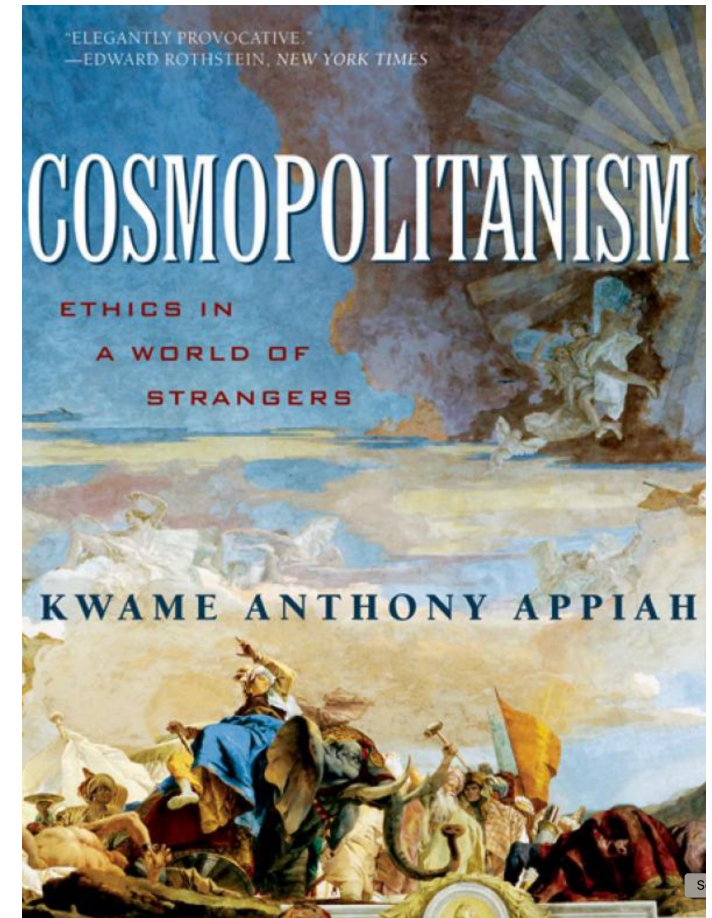
“How do contemporary universities [and academic developers specifically] teach values, beliefs and moral responsibilities in ways that are consistent with promoting public good?”


Question 1:

Is it possible and desirable for academic developers to “teach values, beliefs and moral responsibilities in ways that are consistent with promoting public good?”

“We can live together without agreeing on what the values are that make it good to live together; we can agree about what to do in most cases, without agreeing about why it is right.” (p. 71)


“Indeed, our political coexistence, as subjects or citizens, depends on being able to agree about practices while disagreeing about their justification.” (p. 70)





“there is growing pressure on ADs to be appropriately
‘performative’...[in ways that] run the risk of being
rudderless, of being flexible to the point where they do not
stand for anything...and as a consequence lack authenticity
that is anchored in a set of values and a moral compass.”

(Sugrue et al., 2018, p. 2343)



The fundamental work of academic development is not to aim for universally shared values, but rather to cultivate purposeful practices that can be widely embraced by a diversity of people for a variety of reasons.

(Cook-Sather & Felten, 2017, p. 176)



“Deliberative communication...offers participants opportunities to practice as well as to cultivate intellectual virtues.”

(Chapter 6, p. 89)

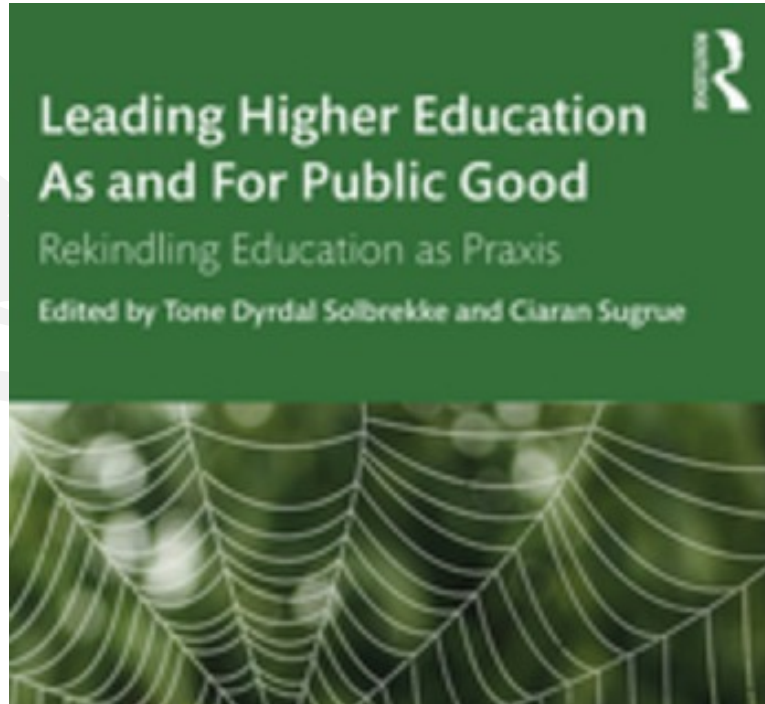
“We acquire virtues by first putting them into action. We become just by the practice of just actions, temperate by the practice of temperate actions, brave by the practice of brave acts.”

(Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 2)

“[Curiosity, open-mindedness, and other ‘intellectual virtues’] are highly valued in the labor market and are not set in stone at birth. They can be improved. Cognitive and character skills change with age and with instruction...[and are] malleable at later ages.”

(Heckman & Kautz, 2013, pp. 3-4).


Academic development should focus on practices as and for public good, regardless of the value systems of our institutions and contexts.



1. “role of courage needed as an AD” (Chapter 6, p. 88)
2. “for the AD, it was quite challenging to see himself in action and to take the risk of being transparent and open with colleagues” (Chapter 7, p. 103)
3. “how difficult it can be to practice deliberative leadership within a complex web of commitments” (Chapter 8, p. 119)
4. “the vulnerable position leaders of deliberative communicative processes are in” (Chapter 9, p. 139)
5. “it can be challenging to use deliberative communication when conflicts are evident” (Chapter 10, p. 153)

Question 2:

What is – and what should be – the role of academic development (and academic developers) in higher education as and for public good?



The role of academic development/academic developers in
higher education is...

contextual

maturing

ambiguous

collaborative

connected

co-opted

uncertain

defensive

precarious

marginal

(excerpted from Sugrue et al., 2018, pp. 2341-42)

The role of academic development/academic developers in higher education is...

“despite accepted insecurities and ‘precariousness’, Sutherland (2015) suggests persuasively that it is time for ADs to embrace their circumstance and work with and within them rather than lament the state of the field [and] their status and identities within it”

(Sugrue et al., 2018, p. 2342)

Defensive
Precarious
Marginal

(excerpted from Sugrue et al., 2018, pp. 2341-42)

The role of academic development/academic developers in higher education is...

ADs should embrace not “a marginality one wishes to lose, to give up, or surrender as part of moving to the center,” but rather adopt marginality “as a site one stays in, clings to even, because it nourishes one’s capacity to resist. It offers the possibility of radical perspectives from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds.”

(hooks, 1990, p. 342)

**Precarious
Marginal**

(excerpted from Sugrue et al., 2018, pp. 2341-42)



The role of academic development/academic developers in
higher education for public good is...

“Liberating academic teachers?”

(Roxå & Mårtensson, 2017)


“Liberating teachers, students, and everyone involved in
teaching and learning in higher education”

(Felten et al., 2019)

“Disrupting coloniality of knowledge, being, and power”

(Behari-Leak & Mokou, 2019)

To lead with and through deliberative communication



“higher education institutions might become ‘**as-if**’ places – places where long term goals of social change are lived inside of the institution as if they were already norms for society.”

(Walker, 2009, p. 221)

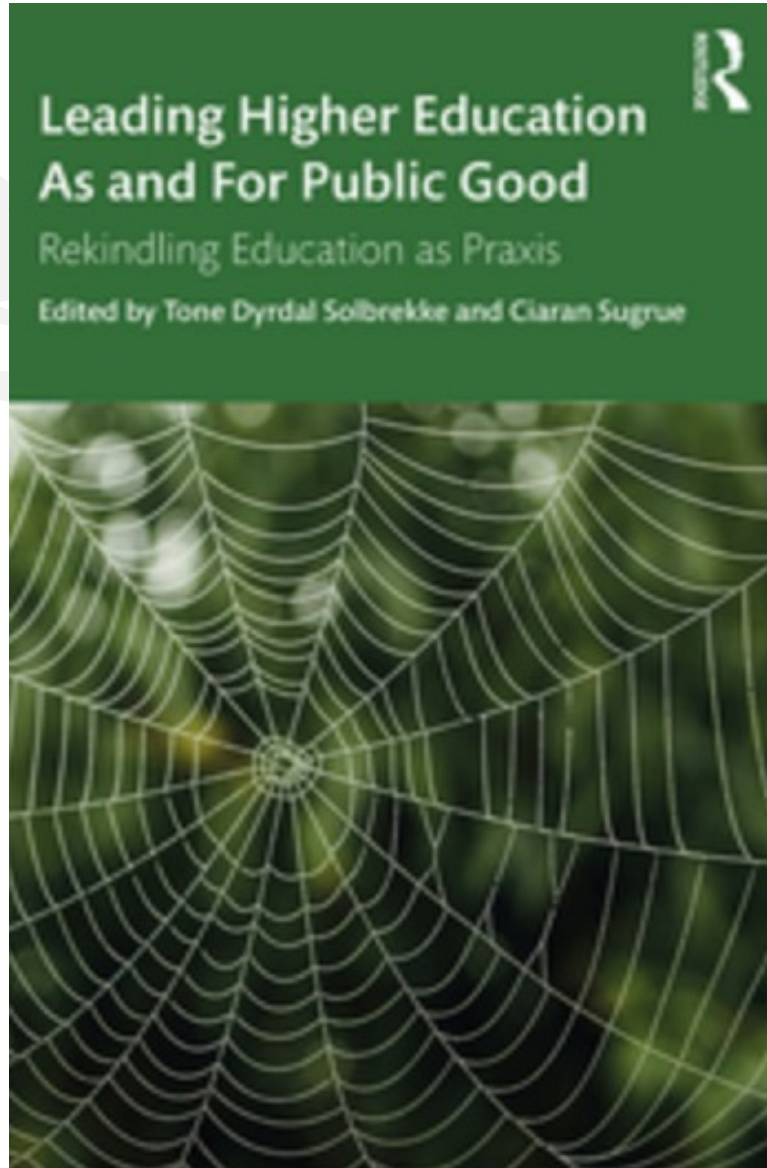


Academic development programs


“~~higher education institutions~~ might become ‘**as-if**’ places – places where long term goals of social change are lived inside of the institution as if they were already norms for society.”

(Walker, 2009, p. 221)

Academic development should be an **'as-if'** practice – enacting open-mindedness, courage, curiosity, honesty, integrity, and capacity for legitimate compromise as-if they were already norms for the academy and in society.




Question 3:
Do students benefit when
academic development is
practiced as and for public good?



The Tracer Project documents “that faculty development influences teaching practices; that teaching improved through faculty development can be documented; and that students benefit from innovative teaching techniques as shown by improved learning outcomes.”

(Condon et al., 2016, p. 11)




Participating in these faculty learning communities “has lasting impact on the way instructors design courses” and also correlates with higher quality “implementation of student-centered” active learning pedagogies.

(Wheeler & Bach, 2021, 13)


Faculty who participated in these faculty learning communities significantly reduced “the failure gap between [under-represented minority students] and white students” in their courses.

(Wheeler & Bach, 2021, 14)



“higher education as, and for, public good...is about helping students see and nurture *their* capacities to live in the world and to encourage them to deliberate on what professional responsibility and active citizenship implies.”

(Chapter 1, p. 11)



“...right from the start she was really careful about how I thought about science and making sure that my voice was validated and that I was asking questions in lab meetings. She also would carve out time to talk one-on-one about science. She’d ask what I think and really listen to what I said. That’s how I learned to develop my science brain.”


(Samantha Paskvan, quoted in Felten & Lambert, 2020, p. 131)

Academic development should result in both more equitable educational outcomes and students nurturing their capacities to act for public good.

Academic development should focus on practices as and for public good, regardless of the value systems of our institutions and contexts.

Academic development should be an 'as-if' practice – enacting open-mindedness, courage, curiosity, honesty, integrity, and capacity for legitimate compromise as-if they were already norms for the academy and in society.

Academic development should result in both more equitable educational outcomes and students nurturing their capacities to act for public good.



“It’s easy to forget what [academic development] at university is really about when working with the concrete bits, such as learning outcomes or constructive alignment. Lift the gaze!”

(Chapter 8, p. 107)

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