ENGAGING STUDENTS IN TRANSNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

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Background

- **BA(Hons) International Business**
  - *University of Strathclyde*
  - *Exchange: University of South Australia*
- **Vice President Education at USSA for 2 years**
- **Erasmus Mundus Masters in Research & Innovation in Higher Education (MaRIHE) 2013-2015**
  - **Locations:**
    - Austria: Danube University Krems (Sem. 1 & 4)
    - Finland: University of Tampere (Sem. 2)
    - China: Beijing Normal University (Sem. 3)
  - **Thesis: Transnational Student Engagement**
- **PhD at Heriot-Watt University**
  - **Aim: Enhance the experiences of transnational students**
Content

- Master’s Thesis Findings
  - Defining Transnational Student Engagement
  - Summary of findings
  - Apathy Cycle
- Elements of engaging transnational students
“TRANSNATIONAL STUDENT ENGAGEMENT: THE INVISIBLE STUDENTS?”

Available on Academia.edu or ResearchGate
What is TNE Student Engagement?

**Student-Led**

“Student engagement to me means **representing** the Uni A’s brand and getting to network within Uni A.... I think it is something that is more prominent in Scotland unlike the international centre, because I think it is the culture more, it is set up more in that way in Scotland. However, when it comes to the UAE, people don’t want to do a lot of stuff. **So it’s work, university and then I don’t want to do anything else, I don’t want to get engaged.**”

**Staff-Led**

“... I would define it as answering and **involving the student** into something, so that the student is engaging in a process, in a decision, in a strategy... Engagement is just involvement of a student.”

“...interact with the students is also important in order to interact with the lecturers.”
Key Findings

• Students are committed to their degree, to learning and personal development
• The classroom is where students feel most engaged
• No co-production of curriculum
• Students equate quality with challenging workload
• TNE students are alienated from the general university community
• Low partnership, high consumerism
• No closing the feedback loop
• Apathy Cycle
Apathy Cycle

- TNE Students are invisible to institutions
- Out of sight, out of mind
- Focus is on local students

- External commitments
- No closing the loop
- No representation
- Why bother?

- Students do not engage much in class.
- Too many commitments
- Students complain too much and too often
Who has the power to break this cycle?
ELEMENTS OF ENGAGING TRANSNATIONAL STUDENTS
Transnational Student Engagement

- VLE
- Library Resources
- Staff Support
- A&F
- Representation
- Induction Pack
- Campaigns
- Services
- Closing the Feedback Loop
VLE:
- Communication
- JD: Share one moodle?
- Class reps?
Library Resources:
- Access abroad?
- Full degree?
- Inform students
Assessment & Feedback
- Policy
- Does curriculum match?
Transnational Student Engagement

- Staff Support
- VLE
- Library Resources
- A&F
- Representation
  - Student Union/Association
  - Class Reps
    - Training?
  - SSLCs
- Induction Pack
- Campaigns
- Services
- Closing the Feedback Loop
Services
- Online access?
- Enrolment
- Access for part-time students?
Campaigns
• Teaching Excellence Awards
• Newsletters
Induction Pack:
- What do TNE students get?
Closing the Feedback Loop:
- Communication
- Comment Box example
- SSLCs minutes

Transnational Student Engagement
- VLE
- Library Resources
- A&F
- Representation
- Services
- Campaigns
- Induction Pack
- Staff Support
- Closing the Feedback Loop
Staff Support:
- Training (tutors)
- Recognition
- Communication
Conclusion

If in doubt, ask the students:

“... students are neither disciplinary or pedagogical experts. Rather, their experience and expertise typically is in being a student – something that many faculty have not been for many years. They understand where they and their peers are coming from and, often, where they think they are going.”

(Cook-Sather, Bovill & Felten, 2014, p. 15)
THANK YOU

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