'OUTSIDE THE BUBBLE' BELONGING AND NON-BELONGING AS SITUATED PRACTICE

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BELONGING IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

Belonging has become a fundamental narrative within higher education practice and research.

BUT WHAT IS BELONGING?

a human need (Strayhorn 2012)

an emotional attachment, feeling at 'home', feeling safe (Yuval-Davis 2006)

strongly associated with academic achievement and a successful life at university (Ahn and Davis 2020, 622)

Belonging and the higher education landscape

Community

Equity

Belonging

Inclusion

Diversity

Mattering

BELONGING IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

uniform discourse associated with retention

ideas of students as full time, campus based

culturally specific and normative notions of belonging

But who can belong, how and to where?

Guyotte, Flint, and Latopolski (2019, 14)

'what are we wanting students to belong to? Why? When might belonging be undesirable?'

'What does belonging do? What does it make possible? How might it constrain?'

Troubling the boundaries of belonging:

1. Belonging as uniform
2. Belonging as inherently positive
3. Belonging as fixed

TIME, SPACE, RELATIONS

Space (Massey 1994; 2005) 'a simultaneity of stories-so-far', belonging a constellation of relations 'meeting and weaving together'

Braidotti (2019) process-ontology

Situated and embodied knowledges (Haraway 1988)

Belonging and the (post)digital university

Binaries of digital versus in person no longer fit for purpose

'The shapes of the university's spaces are in motion' (Barnett 2021)

What do richer understandings of belonging enable us to do?

support students to express the ways in which they feel included

(Winstone, Balloo, Gravett, et al 2020).

to express why they may choose not to belong – 'outside the bubble'

(Gravett and Winstone 2021).

to attend more closely to the situated moments of learning

(Gravett and Ajjawi 2021)

Belonging in the micro-moments of learning and teaching

Relational pedagogies

know the individual, dialogic approaches, staying in touch

understand material constraints

openness and presence rather than content

communities of practice

diversity of multimodal approaches

formative feedback

assessment for learning

Student-staff partnership and co-creation (Bovill 2021)

Belonging as a mutual feeling

'noticing stance' (Gourlay 2021)

Fostering belonging via engaging curricula, assessment and feedback practices – belonging as a mutual process

- Greater engagement and formative feedback via new structure; interactive tutorials with participant led readings
- Programmatic Assessment design
- Different voices
- Working in partnership
- Noticing stance
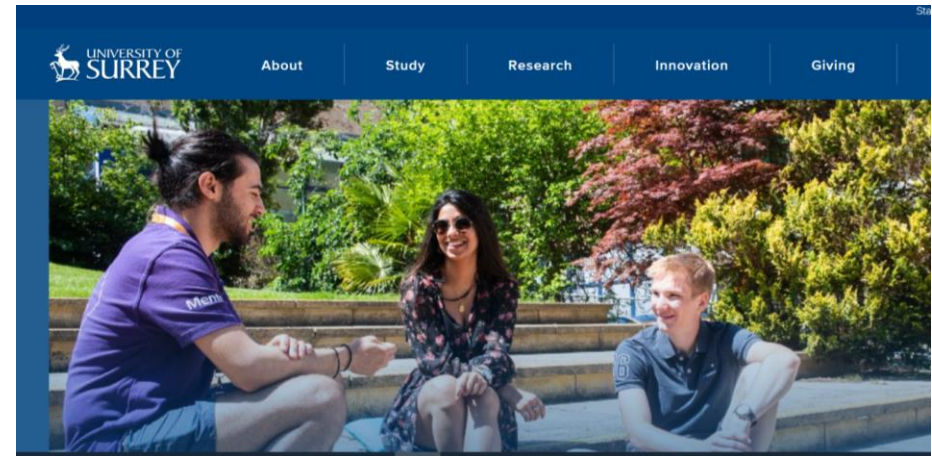
How have you used partnership, assessment and feedback practices to foster belonging?

How has your practice changed as a result of the pandemic?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Images from unsplash

Further references: Karen Gravett and Rola Ajjawi (2021) Belonging as situated practice, *Studies in Higher Education*

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DOMINANT DISCOURSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Critical Perspectives, Cartographies and Practice

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