Pedagogical Partnerships

A HOW-TO GUIDE

for Faculty, Students, and Academic Developers in Higher Education

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Alison Cook-Sather, Melanie Bahti, and Anita Ntem

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4 WHAT ARE THE SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACILITATING PEDAGOGICAL PARTNERSHIPS?

We discussed in chapter 2 that how you conceptualize partnership will help you decide what kind of program you want to develop, and we focused in chapter 3 on how to situate, name, and launch your program. Once you get clear on those kinds of questions and have a plan for your launch, you will want to think about how to frame, facilitate, and support the daily work of pedagogical partnership.

In terms of how you might conceptualize facilitation of pedagogical partnership, we discuss in this chapter what we consider the most productive way to frame pedagogical partnership work, why affirmation is so important to pedagogical partnership, and some useful approaches to thinking about feedback. Next we discuss what we see as the shared roles and responsibilities for all participants in partnership, how all participants can keep in focus that the work of pedagogical partnership is first and foremost about building relationships and learning to listen and engage as pedagogical partners, and how to keep in mind that it's OK if student and faculty partners have different expectations that lead to different outcomes.

We also identify the overarching attitudes and approaches that all participants in partnership might embrace, including: bringing an open mind to everyone's contribution; building trust; co-creating an approach to the work; practicing professional and confidential communication; being present to and mindful of others in pedagogical partnership; and advocating for pedagogical partners and for pedagogical partnership itself. Finally, we note the kinds of things for which student partners are *not* responsible.

What is the most productive way to frame pedagogical partnership work?

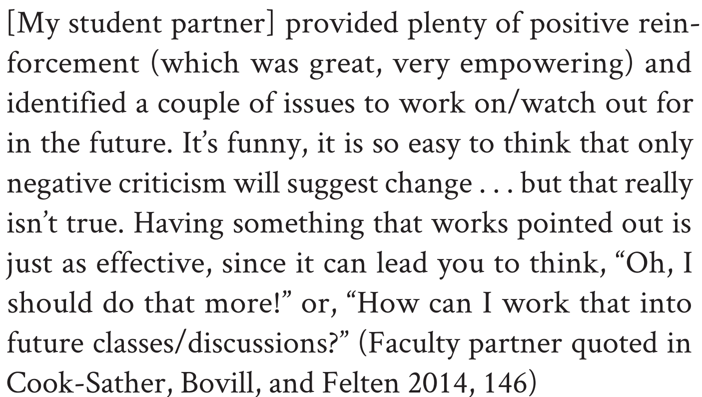
We have found that it is most productive to frame pedagogical partnership work as focused on sharing perspectives with the purpose of dialogue, not necessarily critique and change. As Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten (2014, 23) have argued, "The goal of student-faculty partnership work is not change for change's sake but rather to achieve a deeper understanding of teaching and learning that comes from shared analysis and revision." We recognize that some faculty may choose to undertake pedagogical partnership because they are seeking to revitalize or revise their pedagogy or curriculum, and change, either of understanding or of practice, may indeed result from the partnership work. However, we recommend that:

- all participants in pedagogical partnership frame partnership as aiming to foster an exchange of perspectives;
- students and faculty begin partnership with a focus on what is already effective in the faculty partners' practices and why; and
- partners then move to explore what, if anything, might be revised.

Program directors can offer this kind of framing when initially contacting or when responding to prospective faculty and student partners. They can also emphasize this kind of framing in the guidelines they develop and share with faculty and student partners. And finally, they can create structures, particularly within the weekly student partner meetings and the opportunities for reflection and assessment discussed in chapter 9, for stepping back and focusing specifically on what is working well and why.

Faculty and student partners can also be intentional about framing partnership in positive terms. If they start by getting a sense of one another's perspectives on what each values and hopes for in teaching and learning, then they can work together to deepen existing commitments and reinforce successful practices as well as explore whatever pedagogical and curricular challenges the faculty member might be experiencing. We emphasize the importance of this kind of framing because, as we discuss in chapter 1, there is a big difference—psychologically and practically—between entering partnership with the assumption that something is

"wrong" and needs fixing and entering partnership with the assumption, as Smith College's pedagogical partnership program puts it, "that there are many ways to teach well and that all teaching is improvable" (Smith College Student-Faculty Pedagogical Partnership Program). Our premise is that being cognizant of and acknowledging what works well provides a strong psychological and practical foundation for both affirmation and improvement. The faculty member quoted below articulates the power of positive reinforcement:



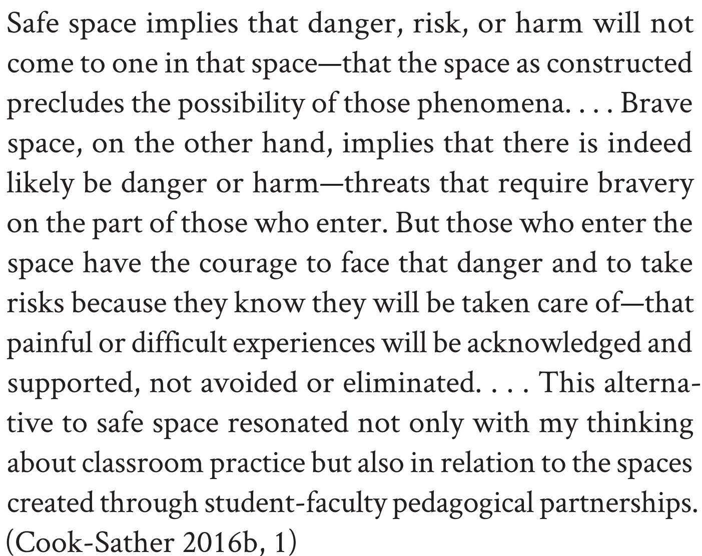
> [My student partner] provided plenty of positive reinforcement (which was great, very empowering) and identified a couple of issues to work on/watch out for in the future. It's funny, it is so easy to think that only negative criticism will suggest change . . . but that really isn't true. Having something that works pointed out is just as effective, since it can lead you to think, "Oh, I should do that more!" or, "How can I work that into future classes/discussions?" (Faculty partner quoted in Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten 2014, 146)

Why is affirmation so important to pedagogical partnership?

Related to the point above about framing, we want to emphasize in particular the importance of affirmation. By that we do not mean superficial, empty, or false praise. Rather, we mean the genuine recognition of intention and of endeavors to achieve a laudable goal. Such recognition requires finding and focusing on positive and productive effort—it is searching for and supporting the good faith attempts and actual accomplishments of faculty and student partners. Because what it means to be kind or nice versus being constructive and critical varies across cultures, it is important to be in conversation with all involved in partnership about what affirmation means.

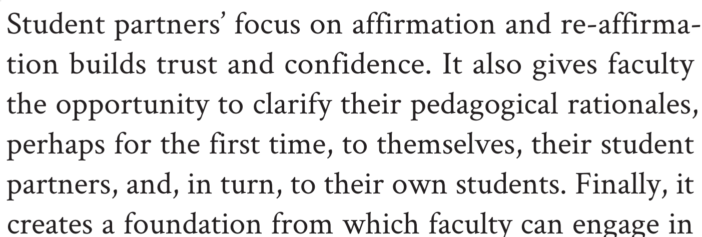
The most basic way in which affirmation is important to all participants in partnership—program directors, faculty partners, and student partners—is in recognizing that each participant is taking a risk in embracing pedagogical partnership and warrants recognition of the

courage it takes to do so. Because pedagogical partnership runs counter to traditional hierarchical structures and modes of interacting among those in higher education, it is important to affirm that partnership work requires the courage to assert respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility alongside traditional ways of thinking and being together. It requires bravery and it creates a brave space—a more useful construct, to our minds, than safe space. Alison distinguishes between safe and brave space:



> Safe space implies that danger, risk, or harm will not come to one in that space—that the space as constructed precludes the possibility of those phenomena. . . . Brave space, on the other hand, implies that there is indeed likely be danger or harm—threats that require bravery on the part of those who enter. But those who enter the space have the courage to face that danger and to take risks because they know they will be taken care of—that painful or difficult experiences will be acknowledged and supported, not avoided or eliminated. . . . This alternative to safe space resonated not only with my thinking about classroom practice but also in relation to the spaces created through student-faculty pedagogical partnerships. (Cook-Sather 2016b, 1)

Affirmation is particularly important for faculty because inviting a student partner to observe one's teaching or help redesign one's curriculum requires being vulnerable and trusting, willing to emerge from the standard "pedagogical solitude" (Shulman 2004) in which most faculty labor. As Cook-Sather et al. (2017, 129) argue:



> Student partners' focus on affirmation and re-affirmation builds trust and confidence. It also gives faculty the opportunity to clarify their pedagogical rationales, perhaps for the first time, to themselves, their student partners, and, in turn, to their own students. Finally, it creates a foundation from which faculty can engage in

genuine exploration and productive risk taking in partnership with their student consultants.

Practicing affirmation and working to be authentic in affirming the efforts of faculty partners gives student partners in particular opportunities to develop empathy for those good faith attempts. The practice of affirming and acknowledging the specifics of positive strategies, steps, and approaches builds a perspective that students can take to their other courses and interactions with other faculty. A student partner in the SaLT program and the founder of Ursinus College's partnership program offer thoughts on the importance of affirmation and support:

> "Faculty often come into partnerships with the notion that they will be critiqued, and that's why building a strong foundation of affirmation is key at the beginning of, and throughout, a partnership."
>
> —Natasha Daviduke,
> student partner in the SaLT program
> (personal communication)

> "A few years ago I shared an Atul Gawande (2011) piece on mentoring with the faculty who were working with student consultants. The point was that high-level professionals (his focus was on surgeons) still get observed and 'coached'—this happens in many professions, but it doesn't happen much in teaching. I thought this was valuable, in that it reminded me that professionals with a high level of expertise still need, and deserve, support."
>
> —Meredith Goldsmith, founding director,
> Teaching and Learning Institute,
> Ursinus College, United States
> (personal communication)

Finally, affirmation of student partners is important. Assuming the role of pedagogical or curricular consultant to faculty members is daunting. Almost everything in formal education tells students that they are there to learn, not to teach, to listen to the experts, not to claim their own expertise, to attend to a monologue, not contribute to a dialogue. It

is important for program directors, faculty partners, and other student partners to consider ways in which they can affirm students' identities, knowledge, perspectives, questions, and insights. Pedagogical partnership invites student partners to offer their perspectives as part of a thoughtful conversation, not as any kind of prescription for practice. Student partners' experiences and insights meet faculty partners' experiences and insights, and the result is a more informed discussion of what is happening and what is possible in teaching and learning in higher education.

The following are some examples of affirmations we use in the SaLT program. They can be offered by program directors, faculty partners, or student partners:

- "I really appreciate the thought and effort you have put into creating this assignment/activity/approach/set of observation notes."
- "That comment/activity/approach prompts me to think in a whole different way about X. Thank you for that reframing."
- "I am so grateful for the way we are able to disagree and learn from our disagreement about this question/activity/practice."
- "I am really glad that you gave students an in-depth explanation as to what the class will entail so that there is less confusion about what the expectations are."
- "I noticed that for the first half of the class period, students were willingly participating rather than being cold-called on as much. I think the transition [to willingly participate] has a lot to do with the questions starting off small and then leading to a larger thematic question."
- "Love how you reiterated and framed the question so that students can figure out how to answer the question you are specifically targeting as opposed to stating what sounds 'right.'"
- "Nice way to stimulate the metacognitive awareness aspect of the work we are doing. This will guide students to think through making continuous connections."

What all of these affirmations have in common is that they are genuine expressions of appreciation, they specify what the appreciation is for, and they reveal what matters to the person uttering them as well as what that person appreciates about the interlocutor's effort.

What are some useful approaches to conceptualizing feedback?

One of the threshold concepts to pedagogical partnership that we noted in chapter 1 and discussed in detail in the "Threshold Concepts in Pedagogical Partnership" resource is that partnership is not about finding what is wrong and fixing it. Oftentimes faculty partners fear and student partners expect that the student partner's role is to identify problems in their faculty partners' pedagogical and curricular approaches and to remedy them. While faculty partners may want to revise their curricular and pedagogical approaches, this find-problems-and-fix-them frame is not the most productive one with which to approach partnership.

When Sophia Abbot was the post-bac fellow for the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning at Trinity University, she wrote:

> Many students (in my experience) express an anxiety around giving *helpful enough* feedback (a fear I shared when I was a SaLT consultant myself). When framed as perspective sharing and reminding students there's no goal for accomplishing a particular change, I find students feel less of a pressure to always have something constructive and classroom changing to contribute in their reflections with faculty. (Personal communication)

Student partners can have other worries about feedback. They worry that they might not notice important things or that the way they deliver their feedback might upset or offend faculty, and they can feel many other manifestations of uncertainty around their capacity and faculty receptivity. One Berea College student partner describes this concern and also what helped her address it:

> One of the biggest challenges of this partnership was learning how to give appropriate, authentic feedback. In the beginning, my feedback was complimentary and not actually helpful; Amanda was already receiving feedback like this from her peers. I was afraid that my suggestions would stifle conversations, be read in the wrong tone,

> or overstep the professional line. I had to become more comfortable with reflective feedback so that I would be fully invested in her teaching goal. I eventually found that it worked best to ask questions about what I saw so that a conversation could stem from that. I did not want my feedback to be only about how I would do things differently because then there would be no room for conversation.
>
> —Ashley Ferrell,
> Technology Help Desk Student Supervisor,
> Berea College, United States
> (personal communication)

It is important to give careful consideration to how to conceptualize and offer feedback that is affirming and productively challenging. In the SaLT program, we talk a lot about starting with a focus on what is working well and why and also on how to make feedback to faculty "hearable." In Berea College's pedagogical partnership program, the work of Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen (2014) on feedback offers a useful springboard for discussion—both in the faculty and the student meetings—about different kinds of feedback and about the triggers that can make it hard to hear feedback. Stone and Heen's advice provides faculty with some guidelines for shaping and receiving feedback, and their analysis sensitizes student consultants to an array of reasons a partner may hear some things more easily than others. Students are at times surprised how vulnerable faculty partners may feel, and such a framework can help them understand why. See the "Ways of Conceptualizing Feedback" resource.

It is useful, when focusing on how to receive as well as offer feedback, to return to the principles that underlie pedagogical partnership: respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility. The finding-problems-and-fixing-them frame, everyone's sensitivity to receiving feedback, and everyone's need to learn how to offer constructive feedback can, at least initially, work against these principles. If, however, they are intentionally embraced alongside deliberate efforts to offer and receive feedback as described above, the results are at once more affirming and more

inspiring. A student partner from Berea College's pedagogical partnership program captures this potential:

> This program helped me to understand how to give and receive helpful feedback. The most important lesson I learned from this is that learning can be bidirectional; the faculty is wanting to develop and learn just the same as the students. Feedback is always welcomed and appreciated if it is delivered the proper way. I think this program has provided me with ways to give feedback as a student and has also prepared me to receive feedback in future professions. (Personal communication)

What are shared roles and responsibilities for all participants in partnership?

The co-creation of pedagogical partnerships unfolds through building relationships based on genuinely listening and engaging and on recognizing that different partners may have different goals that lead to different outcomes, some of which can be known in advance and some of which emerge through the collaboration. As Matthews (2017a, 4) argues: "While the process of engaging in partnership is associated with a range of beneficial and desired outcomes for both students and staff (Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2017), the driving force for engaging in [partnership work] is not achievement of any particular, predetermined outcome." So, given this organic nature of partnership, how might partners approach the work of building relationships, learning to listen and engage, and be OK if student partners and faculty partners have different expectations that lead to different outcomes?

How can all participants keep in focus that the work of pedagogical partnership is first and foremost about building relationships?

While partnerships are highly individual and dialogic, and every partnership will be different, everyone involved in partnerships—program directors, faculty partners, and student partners—can work to create

conditions for partnership based on premises of respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility (Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten 2014). Respect is an attitude that entails taking seriously and valuing what someone else brings to an encounter. It demands openness and receptivity; calls for willingness to consider experiences or perspectives that are different from our own; and often requires a withholding of judgment. If respect is an attitude, reciprocity is a way of interacting; it is a process of balanced give-and-take in which there is equity in what is exchanged and how it is exchanged. Responsibility is both required for and inspired by partnership. It is student partners sharing insights based on their own experience and expertise and learning from faculty partners about their pedagogical rationales and goals, and it is faculty partners engaging with—not necessarily enacting—what student partners have to offer.

Building pedagogical partnerships based on these principles entails valuing the other participants involved and taking the time and energy to attend to them in genuine ways. Relationship building begins with the first communication between student and faculty partners, at which it is helpful for them to discuss why they are interested in this work and what hopes they bring to it. Discussing previous teaching and learning experiences, current study or research interests, and generally just slowing down to have these more personal exchanges help participants remember that pedagogical partnership is not just transactional. If faculty and student partners engage one another as whole people, they can build a strong and trusting connection that will enable the part of their work that is focused on analyzing teaching and learning. We return to this discussion in chapter 6 with some specific recommendations for building relationships in classroom-focused partnerships.

How can all participants learn to listen and engage as pedagogical partners?

One of the threshold concepts we noted in chapter 1 and discussed in detail in the "Threshold Concepts in Pedagogical Partnership" resource is that students have knowledge of teaching and learning. This threshold concept can cause student partners to hesitate to speak and faculty partners sometimes to struggle to hear what students have to offer. There are

other ways in which all participants need to learn to listen and engage as partners.

Because it is most countercultural, learning to listen to students might be hardest. Program directors will want to give careful thought to how to honor student perspectives without suggesting or implying that students have all the answers or solutions to pedagogical challenges. In other words, they can work to find ways to frame student perspectives as essential and authoritative but not definitive or omniscient. Pedagogical partnership is a co-creational process; therefore, when a program director or a faculty partner invites a student's perspective, it is necessary not only to acknowledge that student's experiences but also to share their own perspectives as well. This way, all partners can map out the possible gaps and loopholes as a way to figure out how best to proceed.

The skill of listening—and the experience of being listened to—must be fostered and supported, not taken for granted. At Berea College, student partners spend time learning about listening and practice strategies together before trying them out with faculty partners, especially early on in the relationship. They begin with a set of guidelines developed by Deandra Little and Michael Palmer, formerly and currently of the University of Virginia, respectively. They map levels and kinds of listening and offer productive approaches to questioning. The conceptual categories include listener-, problem-, and speaker-focused listening, each with explanations, and Little and Palmer provide examples of powerful questions to use when the goal is to clarify the situation, set goals, create possibilities, and measure action. We share these guidelines in the "Ways of Thinking about Listening" resource.

One of the most important kinds of awareness we have noted has to do with the complexity of identities. Both student and faculty partners bring with them to pedagogical partnership multiple identities, and part of listening well is not reducing people to any single aspect of their identities. In particular, given the change of roles pedagogical partnership catalyzes, we recommend that all participants in pedagogical partnership try to avoid the danger Storrs and Mihelich (1998, 7) identify: that "a politics of experience often has the unintended result of reducing one's complex identity into its most visible component"—in this case, student

or faculty member. If student and faculty partners are reduced to their studentness and facultyness, you lose all context, personal preferences, and other factors that influence their experience. Therefore, listen for context as well as content; invite expansion and explanation.

Finally, remember that when anyone—program director, faculty member, or student partner—is sharing their perspective, that perspective is one that is personally experienced and so one valid way of perceiving and making sense, but not the only valid way. Student partners need to learn to trust their experiences and interpretations of them, but they must simultaneously become more open to the legitimacy and value of other viewpoints. Education students in particular will sometimes feel inclined to share their knowledge from having studied education in a way that can sound or feel too directive or prescriptive to faculty. Everyone's perspective needs to be valued, but none should be privileged over the others. Instead, all should be explicitly put into dialogue with one another. As former student partner Natasha Daviduke asserts: "Partnership means ideas flow both ways, and each person is valued for the experience they bring to the table" (personal communication).

One of the most important dimensions of listening and engaging as pedagogical partners is asking good questions. In keeping with the premises of partnership we emphasize in this book, good questions are ones that are respectful rather than judgmental, genuine rather than assuming or looking for a particular response, and open and inviting of further exploration rather than closing it down. In the "Questions that Facilitate Productive Talking and Listening" resource, we list some of the questions we have developed through SaLT.

How do we keep in mind that it's OK if student partners and faculty partners have different expectations that lead to different outcomes?

While student and faculty partners are in a co-created pedagogical partnership, just as they contribute different things to the partnership, they may have different expectations that lead to different outcomes for each. Not only is that OK, it is actually very consistent with the premises of pedagogical partnership. Everyone involved—program directors, faculty

partners, and student partners—can remind themselves regularly that these differences are healthy and can be supported.

One way to do this is to recognize, and remind one another to keep in mind, that this work is ongoing, that it is complex and complicated, and that not only are there multiple ways to teach well, there are rarely easy solutions to pedagogical or curricular challenges. Pedagogical partnership work is part of the larger project of striving toward more communicative and balanced relationships in higher education. Stepping back from the daily work and regaining perspective on how it fits into all participants' larger set of experiences, practices, and goals can help.

In chapter 8, we discuss the challenges of pedagogical partnership, some of which emerge from and contribute to differences in expectations and outcomes. In the "Outcomes of Pedagogical Partnership Work" resource, we present the most common outcomes of pedagogical partnership for students, faculty, program directors, and institutions, some of which are shared and some of which are different.

What overarching attitudes and approaches might all participants in partnership embrace?

To engage in the work of building relationships, listening, and supporting the pursuit of shared and respective goals, it is helpful if all participants in pedagogical partnership embrace a set of attitudes and approaches that facilitate productive engagement. In this section we describe what this looks like for program directors, faculty partners, and student partners.

How do you ensure that you bring an open mind to everyone's contribution?

Pedagogical partnership work is likely to be most effective if all participants enter into this work with the mindset that everyone brings valuable experiences and perspectives. Program directors and faculty partners can remind themselves that students might not be experts in facilitation or have the level of disciplinary expertise that faculty have, but they bring experience and expertise as students and as knowers more generally (Sorenson 2001; Cook-Sather, Bovill, and Felten 2014; de Bie et al. 2019). Reconceptualizing students as partners in pedagogical exploration

requires challenging assumptions that are inscribed in the hierarchical structures and clearly delineated roles of higher education, but it does not require invalidating program director or faculty expertise. The most productive mindset for program directors and faculty partners to develop, therefore, is one of openness and receptivity to what students have to offer that can inform and extend the expertise those program directors and faculty partners already have, as well as open up experiences, perspectives, and possible approaches that they may not have considered.

Program directors and student partners can enter into pedagogical partnership work with the mindset that faculty are accustomed to working from their disciplinary expertise but they may or may not have had the opportunity to delve deeply into explorations of pedagogical and curricular development. Whether faculty are coming straight from graduate school or have been teaching for a while, they likely have absorbed—and had little time or opportunity to question—the pedagogical and curricular approaches that are the norms within their disciplines. Questioning those can feel destabilizing, and so program directors and student partners need to be empathetic to the challenge of engaging in the ongoing process of "'self-authoring' a professional identity as an educator" (Gunersel, Barnett, and Etienne 2013, 35; see also Cook-Sather 2016a). The particular intersection of disciplinary and pedagogical orientations and individual identities that each faculty member brings requires that program directors and student partners learn from faculty partners about their previous experiences, their commitments, and their hopes and goals for their pedagogical and curricular development. Being inquisitive and receptive helps to keep an open mind to what faculty bring to pedagogical partnership.

And finally, faculty and student partners can focus on how program directors have as their main goal the support and facilitation of dialogue about pedagogical and curricular co-creation and embrace their efforts and recommendations within that frame. Because program directors occupy the most administrative role in the trio, faculty can worry that program directors are part of the evaluative machinery of the institution, and depending on how the program is designed in terms of student compensation for their work, students may experience program directors

as their bosses. Like the shifts of mindset articulated above, faculty and student partners may need to step back from assumptions and expectations of those in administrative roles and be receptive to the effort program directors are making to create liminal spaces—outside of regular, more evaluative structures, roles, and relationships—within which faculty and student partners can explore, experiment, (re)affirm, and revise as needed. Equally, they can strive to have an open mind regarding how what they try out in the "as-if" spaces of pedagogical partnership might inform their work beyond the pedagogical partnership itself (Cook-Sather and Felten 2017a).

How can you build trust?

As Goldsmith, Hanscom, Throop, and Young (2017, 7) assert: "At the very heart of partnership is . . . trust. Trust enables collaboration and dialogue, growth and reflection, for persons, programs, and institutions. The need for trust should not seem unduly daunting. . . . Trust is built one question, one conversation, at a time." We suggest that program directors need to be thoughtful and intentional about building trust with both faculty partners and student partners. The main areas in which trust needs to be built with faculty partners are in relation to the threshold concepts we identified in chapter 1: faculty fears of surveillance, that the program aims to "fix" their teaching by imposing particular pedagogical practices, and that program directors and student partners expect faculty to do what their student partners say.

Trust building can entail reminding faculty that all the work they do is confidential and that the program director does not see student partners' observation notes or participate directly in the curriculum design or redesign process. It can entail regularly inviting and responding to faculty members' own commitments and interests, thereby reinforcing the idea that program directors aim to meet faculty where they are rather than to impose any particular theory or approach or to expose faculty in any way. Likewise, it can include regular reiteration of the goals of the program: that the purpose is dialogue not imposition, and that student partners have a perspective on, not a prescription for, pedagogical and curricular approaches. It can also encompass adjusting program

structures and practices, such as the classroom observation component of classroom-focused pedagogical partnerships, so that the faculty partners still benefit from dialogue with a student partner but need not have the student partner in their classrooms if that makes them feel too vulnerable or if the content of their courses is too sensitive (as in many social work courses). All of these approaches contribute to building faculty trust because they are responsive to needs and goals that faculty identify, and they directly address and aim to dispel the particular worries some faculty bring to pedagogical partnership.

Program directors' efforts to build trust with student partners also focus on addressing the threshold concepts identified in chapter 1. The self-doubt that many student partners bring regarding their capacities to be pedagogical partners and the misperception with which they embark upon pedagogical partnership—that their job is to find problems and fix them—are both challenging to address. Program directors can build trust in relation to the first issue, concerning student self-doubt, by creating spaces and opportunities through which students can articulate and come to see their capacities. For instance, as discussed in detail in chapter 5, program directors can invite student partners to reflect in writing on the strengths and skills they bring to pedagogical partnership work and then ask them to share and affirm those with other student partners, reinforcing the ways in which these contributions can inform pedagogical partnership work.

Building trust in relation to the misperception that the student partner's job is to find problems with their faculty partners' curricular and pedagogical approaches and fix them entails regularly repeating that this is not their job. Many student partners have stated that it takes them several weeks to come to believe this, but the repetition, which is a form of permission to let go of that notion of the work, helps build this trust. Linked to the practices of relationship building, affirmation, listening, and accepting differences of goal and outcome, as discussed in earlier sections of this chapter, contribute to building trust.

Faculty partners' efforts to build trust focus primarily on their work with their student partners. Student partners often describe the necessary foundation for trust in terms of the respect on which it is premised

and the time it takes to build. As one student partner explained: "Partnerships that place undergraduates in the role of consultants to faculty members create processes that inherently require reciprocal respect and shared responsibility." She continued: "Fostering this mutual respect and responsibility takes time because it is rare for student voice to be legitimized in such a formal manner." What helped this student build trust in her faculty partner was, in part, the fact that "we both knew he was interested in developing his skills as a professor. Because of this, we were able to proceed and take each other seriously and engage in a relationship of mutual and generative respect" (Kahler 2014, 1).

This mutuality is noted by many student partners. As Ann, a student ambassador in a partnership program in Australia, put it: "Learning is not one sided; it's teachers and students engaging in dialogue. It's not like you just learn from teachers. They can learn from you and it doesn't have to be limited to what a syllabus says" (Bell et al. 2017, 5). Faculty members can build trust with their student partners by demonstrating that they are open to engaging in respectful dialogue, willing, where possible, to experiment with the curricular and pedagogical approaches they co-create with their student partners, and ready to offer a rationale for why they are or are not open to acting on the perspectives and suggestions of their student partners.

Student partners' efforts to build trust focus primarily on their work with their faculty partners. In the SaLT program, we have found that such trust building works best if student partners focus first on what is working well and why in their faculty partners' practice, affirming existing strengths and capacities they discern. "The Pedagogical Benefits of Enacting Positive Psychology Practices through a Student-Faculty Partnership Approach to Academic Development," co-authored by Alison and faculty and student partners (Cook-Sather et al. 2017), describes how, when student partners practice affirmation and encouragement of strengths-based growth, they help accelerate processes of faculty acclimation and self-authoring and sustain energy for continued development. Faculty typically work alone or in collaboration with other faculty; it is unusual to collaborate with students in this way, and so they need to know that they can trust student partners.

Particularly when student partners encounter what might feel like resistance in their faculty partners, it is important to redouble trust-building efforts. As one student partner explained when she encountered what she perceived as resistance from her faculty partner:

> I jump back to building a community and trust. People need positive reinforcement to carry out change. I have had more personal check-ins when faced with resistance because I always think there is something more past the surface. I try to build a space for this multiplicity. (Student partner quoted in Ntem and Cook-Sather 2018, 89)

While trust is essential to functional and meaningful pedagogical partnerships, trust is also a tricky phenomenon. As Alise de Bie notes, "there may be very good reasons why an ethic of distrust is crucial to partnerships across difference and status." As she argues: "The 'pain' of partnership is one moment where distrust seems especially significant—where it's a good idea to be skeptical, uncertain, to distrust partnership discourse that often presents partnerships as (only) a good thing" (de Bie and Raaper 2019). While we have found trust to be essential to our work through pedagogical partnership, we agree with de Bie that totalizing narratives or single "right ways" are problematic.

How might you co-create an approach to the pedagogical partnership work?

Co-creation is the premise of pedagogical partnership, but how do you do it? In their more administrative role, program directors can at once offer a basic structure for the partnership work and be open to reimagining and revising it in response to input from faculty and student partners. The guidelines for working in partnership offered in chapters 6 and 7 and in the "Guidelines for Student and Faculty Partners in Classroom-focused Pedagogical Partnerships" resource, for instance, are informed by both Alison as the SaLT program director and many student and faculty partners. Furthermore, program directors can share the responsibility for facilitating components of the pedagogical partnership work, such as orientations and the weekly meetings of student partners. Experienced

student partners and post-bac fellows can co-facilitate or facilitate on their own the orientations for student partners described in the "Sample Outlines for Student Partner Orientations" resource. The particular questions student partners bring to the weekly meetings, their requests for feedback on ideas they have or frustrations they are experiencing, and their proposals that the group delve into particular challenges within partnership (e.g., resistances, which led to Anita and Alison publishing an article on that topic [Ntem and Cook-Sather 2018]) are all opportunities for student partners to co-create approaches to the work of pedagogical partnership.

Faculty partners can contribute to a co-creation approach by formulating and sharing with student partners their pedagogical commitments and rationales as well as their hopes, questions, and concerns toward the goal of identifying an initial focus for the pedagogical partnership work. This focus may be vague or only partially formed at first, and it is likely to evolve over the course of the partnership, but having a sense up front of what matters to a faculty partner and what they want to explore helps student partners focus their attention and energy most productively. Part of the work of being a faculty partner is developing language to use in dialogue with student partners; it can be in part through partnership that faculty develop language for identifying underlying and perhaps unconscious pedagogical commitments and for refining articulations of pedagogical rationales.

Student partners in SaLT have indicated that they feel least able to develop productive pedagogical partnerships when their faculty partners are not forthcoming or open. As one student partner described this: her faculty partner was "resistant to let me into her pedagogical thinking space'" (student partner quoted in Ntem and Cook-Sather 2018, 87). When faculty partners let their student partners into their pedagogical thinking space in relation to classroom-focused pedagogical work, "the instructor and consultant review the proceedings of each class together, noting anything from how each class fit into a broader pedagogical arc to an interesting comment a certain student made." Ideally, as these student and faculty partners continue, "the partnership works not as a one-way critique, but as a way to reflect and grow together, offering each

other feedback and solving the puzzles of the class as a team" (Abbott and Been 2017, 1). Even when such co-creation is challenging, "dealing with the uncomfortable places real conversations can take you allows you to reconstruct more productive approaches to the classroom" (Faculty partner quoted in Cook-Sather 2015).

For student partners, a co-creation approach entails attending closely to faculty members' existing pedagogical commitments and those that may still be developing, as well as sharing thoughts and insights that their faculty partners might not have previously considered or worked through. The balance between being receptive to faculty interest and focus on the one hand and sharing their own experiences and ideas on the other contributes to a co-creation approach. Learning to achieve this balance is a unique process for each partnership—dependent on the individual faculty and student partner—and it is partly a process of developing language to use in dialogue with faculty partners. This includes using the kinds of affirmations and questions we mentioned in previous sections in this chapter and in the "Questions that Facilitate Talking and Listening" resource, and learning to explain the "why" behind those affirmations and questions, respectfully but confidently.

Student partners bring particular contributions to pedagogical partnership. In the "Student Partners' Particular Contributions to Pedagogical Partnership" resource, we expand on these points about what students bring in particular to pedagogical partnership by addressing these questions:

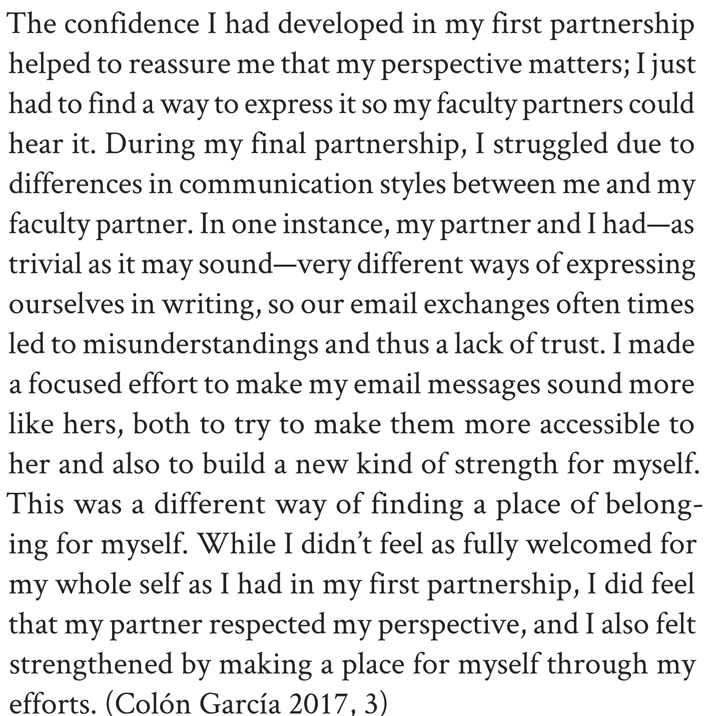
- What contributes to the quality of attention that supports reflection?
- What is important about the student perspective . . . and gathering other students' perspectives?
- Why is it useful to have a student perspective from outside the discipline?
- How do student partners affirm multiple forms of knowledge?

How do you practice professional and confidential communication?

Pedagogical partnerships require professional communication across positions and roles, all of which needs to respect and keep confidential

the pedagogical partnership work upon which they focus. Much of the planning and organizing work that program directors do takes place over email, and so it is worth being cognizant of what you include in email messages. For instance, when Alison writes about the SaLT program to faculty members who are joining Bryn Mawr or Haverford College, she introduces herself, describes her history at the institutions, and explains the philosophy and approach of the program. This gives prospective faculty partners time to process what they will be signing on to if they choose to participate.

Faculty partners also need to consider the nature of their communications. Because students and faculty enter into pedagogical partnership from their respective institutional roles, faculty can facilitate the transition into a different kind of working relationship through being intentional about how they address and communicate with student partners. As the student reflection below illustrates, communication is linked to trust and the building of a productive professional relationship:



> The confidence I had developed in my first partnership helped to reassure me that my perspective matters; I just had to find a way to express it so my faculty partners could hear it. During my final partnership, I struggled due to differences in communication styles between me and my faculty partner. In one instance, my partner and I had—as trivial as it may sound—very different ways of expressing ourselves in writing, so our email exchanges often times led to misunderstandings and thus a lack of trust. I made a focused effort to make my email messages sound more like hers, both to try to make them more accessible to her and also to build a new kind of strength for myself. This was a different way of finding a place of belonging for myself. While I didn't feel as fully welcomed for my whole self as I had in my first partnership, I did feel that my partner respected my perspective, and I also felt strengthened by making a place for myself through my efforts. (Colón García 2017, 3)

Student partners have some of the greatest challenges in practicing professional and confidential communication because of the multiple relationships in which they function. Like program directors and faculty partners, student partners need to consider the kinds of email messages they send, both as initial contacts and throughout the partnership. In SaLT, student partners are the first to make contact with their faculty partners, so they set the tone of the partnership. Opening these with professional greetings (e.g., "Dear Professor Smith") and including the appropriate level of detail (see the "Sample Message to Student Partners from the SaLT Program Director" resource) constitute professional communication.

A more complicated challenge for student partners is managing peers and friends who are enrolled in the class on which the student partner is working. In the SaLT program, we emphasize the importance of student partners listening to peer and friend input but not sharing their own perspectives or interpretations of their faculty partners' goals. They can offer to share their peers' and friends' perspectives anonymously with faculty partners, but they should not endeavor to address the perspectives on their own. It is important that student partners avoid sharing what faculty partners discuss or trying to explain what they think their faculty partners are trying to achieve. Sharing that kind of information constitutes a violation of the confidentiality of the partnership.

It is essential that student and faculty partners communicate with one another and with program directors if they are not able to fulfill their responsibilities or if they have a concern of any kind about their partnership. Early and ongoing communication about any problems or issues—as well as about what is working well!—supports realizing the potential of pedagogical partnership and helps prevent miscommunication from escalating into tension and distrust.

How can you be present to and mindful of others in pedagogical partnership?

Pedagogical partnership programs like SaLT require lots of meetings. Program directors regularly meet with student partners, and faculty and student partners have weekly or biweekly meetings. Given how busy

everyone is (one of the main logistical challenges of pedagogical partnership that we discuss in chapter 8), it is important that all participants schedule regular meeting times, stick to those as faithfully as possible, and contact those with whom they were scheduled to meet if they have to cancel. These are standard practices of common courtesy, but failing to adhere to them has a particularly detrimental effect on pedagogical partnership, striving as it does to build relationships premised on trust, respect, and co-creation.

Pedagogical partnership demands real and deep commitment and requires time and work to succeed. Reading the messages and guidelines that program directors provide can help both faculty and student partners be prepared for the practical and emotional intensity of pedagogical partnership work (and also the challenges that we discuss in chapter 8). Similarly, engaging fully in the orientation sessions offered to student partners, as described in chapter 5 and the "Sample Outlines for Student Partner Orientations" resource, can help ground and make real the ideas and approaches described in the guidelines and afford student partners an opportunity to learn from one another about pedagogical partnership work.

For all participants, the most regular and ongoing way to be present is to participate actively and thoughtfully in weekly meetings. These meetings are spaces for actively sharing experiences, questions, insights, celebrations, struggles, and every other aspect of partnership work. It is essential that everything that is said in these meetings stays in these meetings; they must remain confidential. A useful guiding principle for these spaces is: Leave what is said; take what is learned.

In the weekly meetings of the student partners and program director, it is beneficial to both experienced student partners and the students who are just starting out in the partner role if the experienced student partners share previous experiences, strategies, and approaches they have developed, as well as the insights they have gained from their work. It is also important that experienced partners are conscious of the fact that every partnership is different and so for themselves and for others, there should be no "one right way." Indeed, as we note in chapter 1, sometimes a second partnership is hardest because student partners expect it to be

like the first. So, the most productive role experienced student partners can play—for themselves and for new student partners—is to describe their approaches, their evolution, and their ever-deepening understanding of their work (see Eze 2019 for an example of such a description).

How might you advocate for pedagogical partners and for pedagogical partnership itself?

Because the work of pedagogical partnership is unfamiliar to many, radical to some, and challenging to all, it is essential that participants in pedagogical partnership advocate for the work and for one another in the work. The various attitudes and approaches we have outlined here can inform efforts that program directors, faculty partners, and student partners make to advocate for all participants involved. All participants can promote the ideals of partnership beyond the institution as well—through publications, presentations, and informal conversations. The "Partial List of Themed Issues of *Teaching and Learning Together in Higher Education*" resource provides one set of examples.

For what kinds of things are student partners not responsible?

Pedagogical partnerships focused on classrooms and curriculum concentrate on teaching practices and course design and redesign. In the SaLT program, responsibilities that student partners should not assume include clerical kinds of work, such as photocopying.

The student partners in classroom-focused partnerships are there to observe and offer feedback. They are not there to participate, unless their not doing so would be too awkward. For instance, one student partner worked with a professor who started all her class sessions with physical activities meant to build trust and create certain kinds of embodied experiences. The faculty partner felt that it was essential that her student partner do these activities as well, lest the students enrolled in the course and she herself were made to feel self-conscious. Sometimes, especially in small classes, it can also be beneficial for the student partner to participate occasionally. As former SaLT student partner Sasha Mathrani suggests, "The faculty partner and student partner should be on the same page

about how much participation they feel makes sense, and if they want a make a change they should be in communication about it" (personal communication). In chapter 6, we discuss in detail the importance of setting expectations at the beginning of the semester in which a faculty and student work in classroom-focused pedagogical partnership.

Unless the student partners are enrolled in the course or the partnership is between the professor and the entire class, they should not be expected to do the readings or assignments for the course. They are compensated for the pedagogical support they are offering, and if a faculty member wants student partners to do additional academic work, that needs to be negotiated with the student partner and be part of what they are compensated for.

Finally, student partners should not be in the role of attempting to explain to students enrolled in a course what their faculty partner's pedagogical goals are. The student partner's role is to observe classroom practice and to gather and share student perspectives if their faculty partners are open to that, but it is not to mediate in this sense.

YOUR TURN

Conceptualizing facilitation:

Everyone has different ideas about what facilitation entails, and people on your campus may have different notions of the facilitation roles in pedagogical partnership.

What is the range of forms of facilitation already enacted on your campus?

How do you see facilitation of pedagogical partnership as described in this chapter being similar to those forms or constituting a new form of facilitation?

What particular challenges, if any, do you anticipate with the forms of facilitation partnership requires?

How can you convey to potential participants in pedagogical partnership programs the importance of affirmation?

What approaches to building trust have been successful on your campus and how might they be integrated into your pedagogical partnership work?

Clarifying roles and responsibilities:

What is your understanding of the shared roles and responsibilities of all participants in partnership? What are the distinctions or differences among the roles and how can you support participants in clarifying those for themselves and for one another?

In what contexts and in what ways are feedback offered on your campus? How are those similar to and different from the feedback in and about pedagogical partnership discussed in this chapter and in the "Ways of Conceptualizing Feedback" resource?

Fostering productive attitudes and approaches:

What kinds of trust-building activities might you explore and create as part of developing pedagogical partnerships on your campus?

Considering the discussion of overarching attitudes and approaches we offer, which might already exist on your campus, which might need to be developed, and how will you support both?

What challenges of communication (e.g., writing professional emails, being cognizant of others' investment in partnership and other commitments) do you anticipate within your partnership program and also between participants and those not involved? How will you prepare partners to manage these?

What will student partners **not** be responsible for in your partnership program? How can you keep in mind and convey those boundaries to others?