

Programme

Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching Conference 2025: Interdisciplinary Experiences: Engaging students with Interdisciplinary Thinking and Doing

Start Time	Duration	Lower Ground Floor, Centre Building	Auditorium (Lower Ground Floor, Centre Building)	CBG 2.04 (Second Floor, Centre Building)	CBG 2.05 (Second Floor, Centre Building)	CBG 2.06 (Second Floor, Centre Building)
9:00	30 mins	Arrival: Tea, coffee, refreshments				
9:30	45 mins		<p>Opening plenary</p> <p>Welcome from The London School of Economics and Political Science – Jillian Terry, Claudine Provencher and Claire Gordon</p> <p>Keynote:</p> <p>The Hero's Curriculum: Born from Rebellion, Built on Purpose – Elaine Brown, Anglia Ruskin University</p>			
10:15	15 mins	Changeover break				
10:30	20 mins		<p>Using Student Experience for Evaluation of Alignment in Interdisciplinary Modules – Simon Scott and Tim Jackson, University of Birmingham</p>	<p>Creating Opportunities for Vertically-Integrated Interdisciplinary Groupwork: Apps4Good - case study –Katya Paliwoda, University of Strathclyde</p>	<p>If you build it, they will come: locating interdisciplinary learning and teaching in online spaces – Sian Yeowell, University of Manchester</p>	<p>Fostering Interdisciplinary Habits of Mind? Student and Staff Perspectives from Sweden – Lisa Backman, Department of Education, Uppsala University</p> <p>Mapping students' reflections on the outcomes of their interdisciplinary projects through the BAsC degree programme at the London Interdisciplinary School – Finnian Russell, The London Interdisciplinary School</p>

10:50	20 mins		<p>Using a Research-Infused Curriculum to Engage Students: The View From Both Sides – Vivan Joseph and Olivia Gunn, University of Warwick</p>	<p>Engaging the reluctant learner: “I didn’t choose to study law!” – Luke Blindell and Peter Odell, University of Sheffield</p>	<p>Interdisciplinary education in degree apprenticeship programmes: an academic ideal or a practical necessity? – Antonios Kaniadakis, Brunel University of London</p>	<p>I couldn't square Marx with Marketing": The role of research-based learning in supporting students integrative understanding in interdisciplinary study – Elaine Tan, Newcastle University</p> <p>Enhancing Interdisciplinary Research Support for First-Year Undergraduates: A Case Study from LSE100 and LSE LIFE – Jenny Stowar and Michael Beaney, London School of Economics and Political Science</p>
11:10	20 mins		<p>Cultivating emotional connection with species and habitats: insights from an interdisciplinary undergraduate module – Ash Brockwell, London Interdisciplinary School</p>	<p>Co-creating interdisciplinary opportunities through Design Thinking: Introducing the 'Designing Together' Cards – Jessica Humphreys and Bo Kelestyn, University of Warwick</p>	<p>Co-creating a Manifesto for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching – Jenny Scoles, University of Edinburgh</p>	<p>Reflexive Design Project and Scenario Planning as vehicles for an international Global Classroom – Coyan Tromp and Lieke Mulder, University of Amsterdam</p> <p>COIL – a case study in learning interdisciplinary internationally- enhancing transferable skills – Patricia Perlman-Dee, University of Manchester</p>
11:30	15 mins	Morning break: Tea, coffee and refreshments				

11:45	20 mins		Mapping unchartered territory: rubrics cubed – Elaine Brown and Deborah Caws, Anglia Ruskin University	Developing a Faculty Interdisciplinary Hub: Challenges and opportunities – Megan Bruce and Emily Roper, Durham University	Criticality as Interdisciplinary Practice – Christopher Usher, Independent Researcher	Who Engages with Interdisciplinary Options? Insights into Student Performance and Experience in UCIL Units – Alison Fisher, University of Manchester Embracing experience in teaching: the transformative power of immersive field studies in higher education – Afroditi Koulaxi and Myria Georgiou, London School of Economics and Political Science
12:05	20 mins		Lessons from Dean of Interdisciplinarity: Towards a Comprehensive Institutional Vision – Iris van der Tuin, Utrecht University	Places and Spaces: Inviting Serendipity in Interdisciplinary Learning – Clare Conway, Kingston University	Making Interdisciplinary Connections and Building Social Community outside of the Higher Education Classroom – Danielle Cameron, London School of Economics and Political Science	Explore the Didactical Design tool for interdisciplinary education – Timothy Bland, Utrecht University A sneak preview into The Organisational Guide for Interdisciplinary Education – Margreet van der Ham, Utrecht University
12:25	20 mins		Concept Maps as Interdisciplinary Boundary Objects – Mike Tennant and Maria Vinograd, Imperial College London	Implementing a training programme for interdisciplinary educators in Africa and Asia working in the areas of Agriculture, Nutrition and Health – Mike Hill, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	Validating the Culturally Responsive Teaching Survey in an adult education environment – Elizabeth Kaplunov and Alex Avadanei, Regent College London	Hackathons as instruments of interdisciplinary thinking, engagement and community collaboration – Amanda Baker, Martha Mador and Tânia Dias Fonseca, Kingston University London An alternate viewpoint: Bringing a medical museum into optometry teaching – Stephanie Seville and Harriet Palfreyman, University of Manchester

12:45	45 mins	Lunch (Provided)				
13:30	20 mins		Using Generative AI to facilitate interdisciplinary teamwork and development of interdisciplinary competence – Nigel Forrest and Mike Tennant, Imperial College London	Connecting Across Disciplines and Countries: A Roadmap for Purposeful Interdisciplinary Collaboration among Early-Career Researchers – Emilie McSwiggan and Anna Bryan, University of Edinburgh	Integration and Synthesis Coaching - A Conduit for Interdisciplinary Belonging – Isaiah Wellington-Lynn, London Interdisciplinary School	Joint System Analysis and Scenario Development as valuable tools to integrate knowledge – Lieke Mulder and Coyan Tromp, University of Amsterdam
13:50	20 mins		Generative AI in Interdisciplinary Education - creating the interdisciplinary research question – Rianne van Lambalgen, Utrecht University	Interdisciplinary Teaching: Opportunities within Challenges – Yijing Li, Kings College London	From Pre-established “Packages” to Exploring and Enabling New Connections: Individualizing Interdisciplinary Programs in (North) Europe – Kirsi Cheas and Harri Kettunen, University of Vaasa & Finterdis - The Finnish Interdisciplinary Society and University of Helsinki	Visual abstracts as resources for low-threshold interdisciplinary encounters – Mira Vogel and Charlotte Haberstroh, Kings College London
14:10	5 mins	Changeover break				
14:15	20 mins		Extending the Reach of Interdisciplinary Education: Engaging New Audiences both Within and Beyond Academia – Amélie Mons, University of Manchester	The Power of Transdisciplinary Student-Faculty-Community Partnership in addressing Global Challenges – Glos Ho, Hong Kong Baptist University	Questioning the Institutional Default: Embracing Alternative Models for Interdisciplinary Programmes – Katrine Ellemose Lindvig, University of Copenhagen	On Getting Lost: Queerness, Interdisciplinarity, and Striving for Something Other – Joseph Appleton, London School of Economics and Political Science Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning through Discussion – Jess Grundy, Dianne Burns, University of Manchester

14:35	20 mins		<p>Book Panel Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning at British Universities: Theory and Practice – David Ashby, King’s College London, Daniel Frost, Independent Scholar, and Lukas Slothuus, University of Sussex</p>	<p>Learning how to collaborate: What learning goals to students set and what do they say they have learned? – Roosmarijn Van Woerden and Njal van Woerden, University of Amsterdam</p>	<p>Curious Objects: Playful exploration of interdisciplinarity – Mark Hamilton and Céleste Williams, Regent’s University London</p>	<p>LSE GROUPS: outside the curriculum, across the social sciences – Ellis Saxey, London School of Economics and Political Science</p> <p>Developing UCIL’s online Introduction to Interdisciplinary Learning – Maria Kopsacheili, University of Manchester</p>
14:55	20 mins			<p>Analysing Pedagogic Approaches from the Global South and its Interdisciplinary Potentials – Igor dos Santos Mota, University of Derby</p>		<p>Interdisciplinarity for All? Considering school-level interdisciplinary learning – Joanna Stell, University of Cambridge</p>
15:15	15 mins	Afternoon break: Tea, coffee and snacks				
15:30	40 mins		<p>Student Panel Interdisciplinarity in the social sciences: students’ perspectives</p>			
16:10	5 mins	Changeover break				
16:15	45 mins		<p>Closing plenary - Introducing TILT: a Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching – David Overend and Jenny Scoles, University of Edinburgh</p> <p>Closing Discussion</p>			
17:00		Wine Reception				

Opening Plenary

Welcome from the London School of Economics and Political Science

Jillian Terry, Associate Professor (Education) and Co-Director, LSE100

This year, the UK Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching Conference is proudly hosted by [LSE100](#) at the London School of Economics and Political Science. LSE100 is LSE's sector-leading flagship interdisciplinary course, taken by all undergraduates at the university as part of their degree programme. Designed to develop students' skills in thinking like a social scientist, LSE100 engages students in interdisciplinary investigation of the world's most complex challenges – currently, students can choose to focus on one of the following urgent questions: *How can we transform our climate futures? How can we control AI? How can we create a fair society?* Since being established in 2010, over 20,000 LSE undergraduate students have successfully completed LSE100, and the course team are regularly consulted by other universities across the UK and around the world to collaborate on the design and implementation of interdisciplinary learning at scale.

Jillian Terry is Associate Professor (Education) and Co-Director of LSE100 at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her work focuses on interdisciplinary pedagogy, innovative and inclusive education, and the design and implementation processes for embedding interdisciplinary learning opportunities into undergraduate curricula. She has worked as part of the LSE100 team in a range of teaching roles since 2015, most recently having taken up the post of Co-Director in 2021. As an interdisciplinary social scientist, Jillian's research expertise bridges politics, international relations, technology studies, and feminist ethics.

Claudine Provencher, Head of LSE LIFE and Director of Student Learning and Personal Development

Claudine Provencher is the Head of LSE LIFE and Director of Student Learning and Personal Development (SLPD) at LSE, a division that brings together the [Digital Skills Lab](#), the [Faith Centre](#), [LSE100](#) and [LSE LIFE](#). Thanks to the work done by its four constituents, SLPD supports students as they connect different aspects of their life and learning at LSE and beyond, helping them to develop the tools they need to think, create, and communicate as social scientists and fostering a feeling of community amongst them. It also supports them in connecting their in-classroom learning with the outside world and its ever-evolving demands, creating spaces for innovative thought, conversation and collaboration across the social sciences.

Combining a long stint in the private sector with her academic interests, Claudine's areas of expertise focus on the social psychology of student experience and the challenges and opportunities offered by autonomous teams in a higher education context. Claudine holds an MSc and a PhD in Social Psychology from the London School of Economics and Political Science, an MBA and a BA in Economics from McGill University.

Claire Gordon, Director of the LSE Eden Centre for Education Enhancement

Claire Gordon is the Director of the [LSE Eden Centre for Education Enhancement](#). The Eden Centre was established in 2019 and acts as a proactive, developmental centre of education expertise with a clear focus on academic staff development, curriculum enrichment and digital innovation. Drawing on an evidence-base and a commitment to inclusive practice, it works at both strategic and operational levels to enable education enhancement in line with School priorities and higher education sectoral requirements emerging from the Teaching Excellence Framework and the School's Access and Participation Plan. Claire is an educationalist and political scientist who leads a team of education experts at LSE enabling the design and delivery of excellent teaching and learning in the social sciences. She is currently playing a central role in shaping LSE's evolving response to generative AI and education. Her research interests include academic leadership, reward and recognition, and the interplay between research and education in higher education.

Keynote Address

This is the story of *The Hero's Curriculum*—fifty interdisciplinary Ruskin Modules built by bold educators with the curiosity and courage to challenge the norm. These aren't just mavericks—they're visionaries, risk-takers, and quiet revolutionaries. Together, they stepped off the map, reshaped what learning could be, and quietly transformed the student experience along the way. It's a journey of rebellion, meaning-making, and fearless curriculum design.

Ruskin modules were commended in Anglia Ruskin University's TEF Gold Award, by the Royal Society of Biology and won a national sustainability award in the category of Next Generation Learning and Skills. Both Elaine and the Trailblazer team have been recognised by ARU Vice Chancellor awards for leadership and collaborative excellence.

Anglia Ruskin University now has over fifty interdisciplinary Ruskin modules, which are compulsory in the second year of an undergraduate degree for almost all Anglia Ruskin students. This project has gone from 0-50 in approximately five years. The keynote will address the issues related to organisational support, liaison and negotiations with disciplinary areas and the immense task of developing and delivering these modules in such a condensed development schedule. All the modules are delivered online, to accommodate three campus locations, evidencing innovation in delivery as well as innovation in curriculum design. Elaine and her colleague are presenting later in the conference as they present their session related to collaborative development of assessment rubrics.

Elaine Brown is the Institutional Lead for Ruskin Modules. Elaine designed and led the implementation of Ruskin Modules at ARU including the support and development of trailblazing educators, the academic rigour and quality assurance of the modules, and the implementation of this interdisciplinary curriculum across institutional systems. With a BSc in Biochemistry and MSc in Computer Science, and pursuing a PhD in Education, Elaine believes in the power of integrating perspectives to transform experiences for all learners (students and staff). She researches these experiences and the motivations of educators to design innovative interdisciplinary education. Elaine is an editor of an upcoming book by Routledge which collates these experiences: *Introducing Interdisciplinary Modules in Higher Education: Enhancing Sustainability and Student Employability*.

Abstracts – Short Papers

Using Student Experience for Evaluation of Alignment in Interdisciplinary Modules

Simon Scott and Tim Jackson – University of Birmingham

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

Although the pedagogical benefits of interdisciplinarity are well-known, they are only realised if students understand what they're being asked to do, and why, so that they engage properly with it. An effective assessment strategy has a critical role in this. We know that students' perceptions of assessments and the feedback they receive are critical in shaping their learning experiences (Preston et al, 2020). But how well do students understand assessments and what is being asked of them? How effective are these assessments in motivating students to engage with key aspects of the interdisciplinary process? We teach different interdisciplinary modules at the University of Birmingham. One module – 'Communicating Design Stories' – is a distance-learning capstone module for postgraduates; interdisciplinarity is used to teach students how to design learning environments. The other module – 'Interdisciplinarity: Study and Practice' – introduces students to interdisciplinarity. In both cases, interdisciplinarity: is new to students; has a key role to play in their multidisciplinary education; and is introduced to students through the use of Allen Repko and Rick Szostak's *Interdisciplinary Research: Process and Theory* as its core text.

For each module, we will explain how we developed assessment strategies to align with module learning goals. Last summer, we conducted semi-structured interviews with students on the modules to learn about their experiences of the modules and interdisciplinarity, as well as their perception of the assessments and their role on the modules. We will discuss the alignment of assessments on the module from staff and student perspectives.

Simon Scott is Associate Professor in the Department of Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences, at the University of Birmingham. Having led on the department's interdisciplinary core curriculum, he is now programme lead for the BAsc Arts and Sciences. He also leads the university's Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary (ITD) Education Group, and has taken over leading the ITD Alliance's working group on 'Integration Experts' with Gemma O'Sullivan. Other than interdisciplinarity, his research expertise is in modern French philosophy (philosophers of difference), and ancient philosophy.

Tim Jackson (PhD, BSc) is a Reader in Electrical Engineering at the University Birmingham. His current research interests include students' experience of assessments and learning in interdisciplinary education, and reading and writing within Engineering education. His earlier research activities sat at an intersection of Physics, Materials Science and Electrical Engineering, centred around the electronic and magnetic properties of novel materials. Tim has also worked in science-based devised theatre, with a particular focus on exploration of issues through audience involvement. His teaching includes the design and tutoring of distance learning courses, and he has leadership roles in distance and digital learning, taught postgraduate programmes and widening participation.

Using a Research-Infused Curriculum to Engage Students: The View From Both Sides

Vivan Joseph and Olivia Gunn – University of Warwick

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Our presentation (co-authored and to be co-presented by a module convenor and a student) aims to show that engaging and inspiring students to think beyond disciplinary boundaries can be facilitated by making research an integral part of the module.

Interdisciplinarity has been identified by some (e.g. William Newell, 'Undergraduate General Education', 2010) as necessary for dealing with complex problems. It is our contention that many areas of study, research, and practice are complex because they involve multiple perspectives, which might be at odds with each other. In a rapidly changing world the established routines within disciplines may not adequately address the needs and interests of all participants to discussions (e.g. the needs and interests of patients within a medical system focused on biomedical approaches to defining and solving problems).

It is also our contention that for interdisciplinarity to be seen as more widely relevant, we need to adopt a more flexible approach rather than focusing on what is and isn't 'real' interdisciplinarity. Our presentation will examine the module 'Navigating Psychopathology' at Warwick, an interdisciplinary optional module for undergraduates from any disciplinary background. The module requires students to engage in research in two ways: by thinking through how the – sometimes very different – perspectives they encounter view the same subject matter (mental distress and disorder), and by crystallising those thoughts for their assessment. By adopting a flexible approach to interdisciplinarity, students have the space to arrive at their own integration of ideas. Our presentation will describe and evaluate this approach.

Vivan Joseph is a Teaching Fellow in the University of Warwick's Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning (IATL). While the academic background is in Philosophy, Vivan worked for various voluntary-sector organisations (including a mental health charity) after completing the undergraduate degree before returning over a decade later to do a PhD, when Vivan also first started teaching for IATL. IATL has pioneered interdisciplinary teaching at Warwick, and developed innovative assessment methods to complement that. In addition to interdisciplinary teaching, IATL also organises a yearly international, interdisciplinary conference for undergraduate research (ICUR), and publishes an international journal of undergraduate research (Reinvention). The research-infused approach I am involved with seeks to make student research a core part of engaging, supporting, and assessing interdisciplinary teaching and learning at Warwick.

Olivia Gunn is a final year Psychology with Education student. Olivia recently completed the Navigating Psychopathology module, in order to gain perspective about how psychopathology is perceived and understood outside of the traditional discipline perspective. Prior to coming to university, Olivia worked in alternative education settings and taught year 11s with anxiety and autism, which motivated Olivia to apply to university at 23. Throughout the work experience Olivia gained knowledge from a range of people, experiences and institutions that meant a constant improvement in practice and strategy to best engage students. Olivia believes that the experience of interdisciplinary teaching has helped to solidify beliefs about the usefulness of sharing knowledge, in a theoretical and research-based framework. Olivia hopes to share how this experience has been beneficial to her and to inspire other students and educators to engage in interdisciplinary teaching and learning.

Cultivating emotional connection with species and habitats: insights from an interdisciplinary undergraduate module

Ash Brockwell – London Interdisciplinary School

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

A former Senegalese Director-General of Water and Forestry, Baba Dioum, was quoted as saying that '[i]n the end we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught.' This statement is widely cited to highlight the importance of education for conservation, but tends to be implicitly summarised as 'we will conserve...only what we are taught [about]'. Dioum's assertion that education must foster love for other species, as the vital link between understanding and action, is usually overlooked.

This presentation will report on the experience of designing and delivering an interdisciplinary undergraduate module, 'Encountering Ecosystems through Mixed Methods Research and Practice'. This module, a Level 6 elective for the BASc Interdisciplinary Problems and Methods programme at the London Interdisciplinary School, aims to cultivate emotional connection with a local habitat and the species living there. It brings together non-anthropocentric cooperative inquiry, pioneered by Peter Reason in collaboration with Indigenous elders, with traditional ecology and ethno-ecology fieldwork. These diverse encounters are expressed through artistic practice in a medium of the student's choice - an exhibition submission and accompanying catalogue text.

I will present initial findings from an ongoing study into the module's outcomes, based on interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) of interviews with ex-students and thematic analysis of submitted assessments. I will also reflect more broadly on the role of interdisciplinary learning and teaching in creating transformative, systems-oriented and decolonial mindshifts, e.g., the shift between separation-based and interconnection-based thinking.

Dr Ashley Jay (Ash) Brockwell is an educator, consultant, poet, and visual artist. He holds an MBiochem (Hons) degree in Biochemistry from Oxford University, an MSc in Environmental Anthropology, and a PhD in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences from Wageningen University and Research, The Netherlands (focusing on values-centred evaluation of educational initiatives). Ash is a founding faculty member and Associate Professor at London Interdisciplinary School, where he holds two Area Lead roles – Problem-Based Learning, and Mixed Methods – and leads the 'Encountering Ecosystems' module. His publications span the fields of education, evaluation and program planning, healthcare, environmental management, ethnoecology / ethnopharmacology, design, and sustainability indicators. He is working on his first book, 'Mindshifts: Rethinking The Way We Think About Complex Problems'.

Creating Opportunities for Vertically-Integrated Interdisciplinary Groupwork: Apps4Good - case study

Katya Paliwoda – University of Strathclyde

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those new to Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

The Vertically Integrated Projects for Sustainable Development (VIP4SD) programme at the University of Strathclyde is an innovative programme designed to embed Research-Based Education for Sustainable Development (RBESD) into the undergraduate curriculum. Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the programme fosters long-term, ambitious project teams that benefit from both vertical integration, where students from different academic years collaborate, and horizontal integration, encouraging interdisciplinary teamwork. A flagship project within the VIP4SD portfolio is Apps4Good, a team comprising students from engineering, computer science, and business. Alongside academic staff and a national homeless charity, the team has designed app technology to expand and optimise the charity's reach in helping Glasgow's rough-sleeping community. This experiential learning opportunity, involving both inter-year (vertical) and interdisciplinary (horizontal) collaboration demonstrates the value of diverse and collective expertise in tackling complex social challenges. This presentation will draw on the Apps4Good case study to illustrate how experiential learning can foster a critical appreciation of interdisciplinary collaboration amongst students, as well as providing them with the motivation and opportunity to engage with interdisciplinary working in a way that is truly authentic and impactful (and credit-bearing). These experiential learning opportunities enable students from different disciplines to come together, to develop and apply their collective knowledge, skills and competencies, and to make tangible impact. This equips future graduates with the skills, knowledge, and inter/trans-disciplinary competencies they require to meet global challenges. The presentation will focus on the Apps4Good case study as a powerful example of how interdisciplinary learning can deliver transformational student outcomes.

Katya Paliwoda is a doctoral researcher at the University of Strathclyde, focusing on Human Resource Management with an emphasis on employee engagement and dynamic capabilities within high-growth industries. She is also a dedicated tutor in the Management Development Programme and the Department of Work, Employment, and Organisation, where she integrates research-based education and interdisciplinary collaboration into her teaching. Katya is passionate about sustainable development and transformative learning experiences. She has worked extensively on initiatives that bridge academia, industry, and social impact, fostering environments where students and professionals collaborate across disciplines to tackle complex challenges. Her work reflects a commitment to equipping future leaders with the critical skills and competencies needed to address global challenges, combining academic rigor with real-world application. Katya's dynamic approach to education and research inspires innovative thinking and collaborative problem-solving.

Engaging the reluctant learner: “I didn’t choose to study law!”

Luke Blindell and Peter Odell – University of Sheffield

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

It is always a challenge to engage the reluctant learner. This task is exacerbated when the student is taking part in interdisciplinary study. The University of Sheffield’s Law for Engineers module is a mandatory requirement for purposes of professional accreditation. However, there is frequently an initial lack of motivation in the undergraduate engineers for a subject they did not choose to study. This lack of enthusiasm is compounded by other potential barriers to learning. For example, the project centred teaching models used for engineering disciplines sharply contrasts with the lecture and discussion-based seminar format typically used in legal study. Similarly, where engineering subjects often focus on the purely technical, modern legal education emphasises the social, political, economic context in which the law resides.

Despite these challenges, when the module comes to an end, student feedback is overwhelmingly positive. The short paper aims to explain how these positive results have been achieved and, in doing so puts forward a framework for the interdisciplinary teaching of law. It will be suggested that law should be taught to non-law students centred around the four pillars of brevity, relevance, application and groupwork. The idea being that the law teacher should dispense with the verbosity often associated with legal teaching and focus on the application of the law in practice while consistently signalling the law’s relevance to the lives and future career of the target audience. The framework goes on to highlight the practical importance and benefits of peer-to-peer learning in this process.

Luke Blindell is an experienced university teacher within the School of Law at the University of Sheffield. Luke's interests in interdisciplinary teaching and learning stem from his work as module convenor for an extremely large, cross-faculty and interdisciplinary module designed to teach Law to Engineering students.

Peter Odell is the Director of Learning and Teaching of the School of Law at the University of Sheffield. Peter is a highly experienced teaching specialist and former convenor of the University's Law for Engineers module.

Co-creating interdisciplinary opportunities through Design Thinking: Introducing the 'Designing Together' Cards

Jessica Humphreys and Bo Kelestyn – University of Warwick

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

Design thinking offers an interdisciplinary structured approach to fostering creativity and problem-solving within Higher Education (Chon and Sim, 2019). This methodology presents exciting opportunities to influence decision-making processes and develop new educational initiatives (Dunne, 2016), addressing the critical challenge of enhancing the learning experience.

This session introduces a design thinking-based toolkit aimed at facilitating conversations in teaching and learning. Utilising cards created collaboratively by staff and students, we will demonstrate the potential of this resource to engage learners in the authentic co-creation of their learning environments and experiences (Fielding, 2001). Research indicates that this practice increases students' sense of belonging and their interest in university decision-making and co-creation.

We will discuss how the 'Designing Together' cards and methodology can be applied in interdisciplinary teaching and learning contexts to enhance student engagement and co-creation. This approach aims to improve education through more inclusive and participatory methods. Participants will have the opportunity to explore and take away a deck of cards as a tool for implementing design-led co-creation in their work and contexts.

Jess Humphreys is the Director of the Warwick International Higher Education Academy (WIHEA) and an Associate Professor at the University of Warwick. WIHEA, a community of over 800 staff and students, fosters educational excellence by developing and embedding outstanding learning and teaching practices. Previously, Jess led the Learning Design Consultancy Unit (LDCU) and professional development in digital education, earning the Advance HE Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence in 2022. She champions design thinking methodologies, focusing on embedding the student voice in digital education. Jess co-created and co-led the 'Designing Together' initiative at Warwick, uniting staff and students to address educational challenges. This initiative has resulted in various publications, a book chapter, and a deck of cards to help staff and students design and facilitate learning and teaching. The Designing Together team received an institutional Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence in 2024.

Dr Bo Kelestyn PFHEA is a design-thinking academic and practitioner. She invented the Warwick Secret Challenge, a design thinking-based methodology for co-creation in HE. Bo co-founded the award-winning Designing Together initiative, seeking to support and empower educators with the use of design for co-creation with resources such as the Designing Together deck of cards with activities, prompts, and facilitation structures to support different co-creation scenarios and needs. Bo is an Associate Professor at the Warwick Business School and is currently working on a book on design thinking.

If you build it, they will come: locating interdisciplinary. learning and teaching in online spaces

Sian Yeowell – University of Manchester

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Manchester's University College for Interdisciplinary Learning was established in 2012, with noble intentions and huge ambition: to harness the potential of interdisciplinarity to ignite higher order cognition, enhance employability, and prepare students for problem solving in a complex world.

But how to do that at a huge university, sprawled across two campuses, where physical and timetabling constraints confined students, and staff, to buildings named after giants of discipline, with limited opportunities to meet, let alone learn from, peers in other fields? For UCIL to fulfil its remit of offering all undergraduate students an experience of interdisciplinarity, creating a shared space that transcended these constraints became a priority.

Our solution was to develop UCIL's portfolio to include online as well as in-person units, allowing students to choose options to suit their preferences and availability. At the time of writing that portfolio includes 15 online and blended units, with 2000+ enrolments annually.

UCIL's online offer not only provides a flexible space where students from all disciplines can come together to share in interdisciplinary learning. It also enables a 'design and delivery by team' approach, facilitating collaboration between academics and professional staff, where different kinds of expertise are valued, and where it's often the third space professional who orchestrates interdisciplinarity.

This paper will share the experiences of the last 10 years and some of the things we've learnt along the way, offering practical insights into the value of online learning for interdisciplinary education and strategies for designing engaging, impactful online spaces.

Sian is a Teaching and Learning Manager in the Education Development team at the University of Manchester. She heads up UCIL's design, development and delivery team, leading on all aspects of curriculum development for UCIL's in-person, online and blended units. Sian has many years' experience as an educator, with a particular interest in online and interdisciplinary course and assessment design.

Interdisciplinary education and work based learning: an academic ideal or a practical necessity?

Antonios Kaniadakis – Brunel University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

Interdisciplinary education often faces misconceptions, particularly in higher education, where it may be perceived as extraneous to specialized degree programs. Students may resist engaging with interdisciplinary approaches if they see these as tangential to their primary area of study. However, modern disciplines, including computer science, are inherently interdisciplinary—blending mathematics, logic, design, and other fields. This paper argues that authentic, work-based learning naturally fosters interdisciplinarity by aligning curricula with real-world challenges rather than rigid subject divisions.

Through the case study of the Digital and Technology Solutions Specialist degree apprenticeship program, we demonstrate how interdisciplinary education can thrive in practice. This program integrates industry collaboration and work-based learning to immerse students in real-world problem-solving. By focusing on professional outcomes and embedding interdisciplinarity into authentic tasks, it avoids the pitfalls of artificially framing interdisciplinarity as an abstract concept. Instead, students organically encounter and engage with diverse perspectives and skills through their work.

This approach not only prepares students for interdisciplinary demands in industry but also challenges traditional academic conceptions of curricula as a collection of discrete subjects. By shifting the focus towards holistic, outcome-driven education, degree apprenticeships provide a replicable model for embedding interdisciplinarity in higher education, ultimately enhancing both employability and adaptability in dynamic professional landscapes.

This case highlights how interdisciplinary learning can be reframed as a practical necessity rather than an academic ideal, particularly through partnerships between academia and industry.

Dr Antonios Kaniadakis is a Reader in the Computer Science Department of Brunel University of London. He holds a PhD in Science, Technology, and Innovation Studies from the University of Edinburgh and has more than a decade experience designing and running interdisciplinary degree programmes and degree apprenticeships.

Co-creating a Manifesto for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching

Jenny Scoles – University of Edinburgh

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Why write a learning and teaching strategy when you can write a manifesto? Intentionally provocative, manifestos catalyse discussion and debate and, in re-visioning the status quo, they propose an ideal vision for the future. Attracted to the hopefulness of this format, we used a collaborative autoethnography methodological approach to assemble a manifesto that synthesises our aspirations for interdisciplinary learning and teaching (IDLT) within HE and beyond. Our ideas have been informed by research conducted with(in) an MA Interdisciplinary Futures programme at the Edinburgh Futures Institute as well as by our own lived experiences as interdisciplinary students and educators at various times, in diverse settings. The 11 principles set out in our manifesto not only examine current conceptualisations and practices of IDTL; they also interrogate the very systems and structures within which IDLT (are forced to) exist. They question what we might lose and, more importantly, what we might gain through pedagogical and structural rearrangement within formal education. The protracted, reflective and spiralling conversations from which this manifesto emerged – the very methodology underpinning our co-creation – have been central to our vision for future practice. Through such collegial and ongoing processes, learning communities can not only explore how different collaborators perceive and practise IDLT, but they can also open-up spaces for sharing, questioning and experimentation. Fundamentally an offering, this manifesto invites others to participate in this unfolding conversation to discuss what resonates and what does not; what is worth taking forward and what ought to be abandoned; and, crucially, to what effect.

Dr Jenny Scoles is an Academic Developer (Learning & Teaching Enhancement) at the Institute of Academic Development at the University of Edinburgh. She is Chief Editor of Teaching Matters blog and podcast, provides pedagogical support for University course and programme design, and leads the University's Learning & Teaching Conference. Her research interests include student-staff co-creation, climate pedagogy, interdisciplinary learning & teaching, professional learning, and sociomaterial methodologies. She is a Senior Fellow HEA, Affiliate of Edinburgh Futures Institute, and a Visiting Fellow at Edinburgh Napier University.

Mapping uncharted territory: rubrics cubed

Elaine Brown and Deborah Caws – Anglia Ruskin University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Interdisciplinarity can be a challenging concept for students to understand, which in turn can make interdisciplinary activities difficult to engage with. This presentation describes the co-creation and implementation of a rubric to support consistency and understanding. At Anglia Ruskin University, Ruskin Modules are problem-centred invitations for students to collaborate to respond to complex contemporary challenges. Each Ruskin Module shares an intended learning outcome to ensure constructive alignment of interdisciplinary learning with assessment. Some students struggle to understand interdisciplinarity both as a concept, and as a process, i.e., what needs to be done to evidence the integration of multiple disciplines in their work.

Rubrics can be used to ensure consistent assessment of student work by making expectations explicit to students, markers, and moderators. However, rubrics can also be used proactively with students in peer-peer activities to scaffold understanding.

A rubric was co-created with Ruskin Module Leaders articulating the evidence of interdisciplinarity in each of their modules. Informed by Boix Mansilla et al., (2009) the rubric was mapped to the Ruskin Module intended learning outcome and used across modules in Academic Year 2024/5.

The end of trimester Module Evaluation Survey showed an increase in student confidence for 'Assessment and Feedback' in interdisciplinarity with an average increase of +10.6%.

This presentation - 'Rubrics Cubed' - shares our experiences of co-creating and using a rubric to assess interdisciplinarity consistently across Ruskin Modules, and through peer-peer activities support students to understand interdisciplinarity as a concept and interdisciplinarity as a process.

Elaine is the Institutional Lead for Ruskin Modules at Anglia Ruskin University. Elaine designed and led the implementation of Ruskin Modules at ARU including the support and development of trailblazing educators, the academic rigour and quality assurance of the modules, and the implementation of this interdisciplinary curriculum across institutional systems. With a BSc in Biochemistry and MSc in Computer Science, and pursuing a PhD in Education, Elaine believes in the power of integrating perspectives to transform experiences for all learners (students and staff).

Deborah Caws is an experienced educator with a rich background in school teaching and senior leadership. Transitioning into Higher Education in 2018, she has applied her extensive experience to teach and lead courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Deborah has worked on, led, and written courses in Education, and currently serves as the Course Director of BA (Hons) Working with Children, Families, and Communities. She is also seconded as an Academic Developer for ARU's award-winning Ruskin Modules, where she leads CPD for tutors. Her research interests focus on pedagogic approaches to interdisciplinary curricula, grounded in relational pedagogy that fosters an inclusive, safe space for students to explore new perspectives. Deborah has presented at national conferences and has a book chapter due for publication in 2025. She is also nearing completion of a PhD exploring how teachers develop professional knowledge.

Lessons from a Dean of Interdisciplinary Education: Towards a Comprehensive Institutional Vision

Iris van der Tuin - Utrecht University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

At Utrecht University, the Programme for Interdisciplinary Education (2021–2025) fosters a comprehensive vision to enhance interdisciplinarity in education through the integration of educational innovation, research of education, and governance. Anchored in the university's Strategic Themes, the programme strengthens connections between interdisciplinary education and interdisciplinary research, with professional development for teachers playing a pivotal role.

Our distinctive integration of education, research, and governance establishes a strong foundation for fostering innovative educational practices and responding proactively to emerging developments and opportunities. Among these, a key focus today is recognizing and amplifying the influence and contributions of students within the interdisciplinary community. The field of interdisciplinary education increasingly emphasizes the need for student leaders who bring fresh perspectives, champion inclusive collaboration, and exhibit leadership in this domain. Their contributions are essential for shaping interdisciplinary approaches in education and research that address societal challenges effectively.

This short paper outlines the Programme's current progress and shares "Ten Lessons from a Dean of Interdisciplinary Education," offering practice-based insights into education, research, and governance. These lessons engage all stakeholders—educational developers, teachers, students, researchers, and institutional leaders—contributing to the ongoing development and implementation of interdisciplinary education at Utrecht University.

Iris van der Tuin is Professor of Theory of Cultural Inquiry in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Utrecht University, The Netherlands, where she is also university-wide Dean for Interdisciplinary Education. She initiated the university-wide research platform Subjects in Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching (SILT). Current and forthcoming research outputs are the collection 'Practice-based Research of Interdisciplinary Higher Education' for the journal Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, the chapter 'Teaching integration' (with Rianne van Lambalgen) in Edward Elgar Handbook of Interdisciplinary Teaching and Administration, and the volume Key Texts on Interdisciplinary Higher Education with Bristol University Press.

Concept Maps as Interdisciplinary Boundary Objects

Mike Tennant and Maria Vinograd – Imperial College London

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

Disciplines are described and constrained by boundaries that legitimise their practice. These boundaries act as a barrier to tackling problems that require the integration of different disciplines, such as those described by the Sustainable Development Goals. Boundary crossing is seen as necessary to support interdisciplinary problem-solving.

A boundary object is a representation of real-world phenomena that has some meaning for individuals from different backgrounds. For example, a map of the Lake District has meaning for a cartographer, a hiker and a farmer, but that meaning is mediated by the actor's backgrounds. The map can be said to have "interpretive flexibility" and act as a starting point from which individuals can work together in an interdisciplinary way.

If individuals from different disciplinary backgrounds can co-create such a map of a phenomenon of interest that is understood by all of those involved in the co-creation process, they have actively participated in an interdisciplinary learning process.

In this talk we present a team-based project on the MSc in Environmental Technology at Imperial that supports interdisciplinary learning. Students from different disciplinary backgrounds co-create a concept map of a biome – a distinct geographical region of the world. Individual team members must explain their understanding of the biome in ways that are meaningful to others who may not share that disciplinary vocabulary. The team interrogates their map and develops appropriate policy recommendations to tackle a critical issue that they identify.

We will offer some reflections on the effectiveness of this method for interdisciplinary education.

Mike works for half of the time in the Centre for Environmental Policy, where Mike co-convenes the "Business and the Environment Option" of the MSc in Environmental Technology. Mike is a natural scientist by training and an interdisciplinary scientist by preference. Mike's main interests are in systems thinking, complexity and innovation in the context of sustainability and organisations. Mike is particularly interested in using and developing creativity and systems tools to design disruptive and innovative products, services and policies that meet environmental and social needs.

Maria works in the Centre for Environmental Policy and co-convenes the "Environmental Resource Management Option" on the M.Sc. Environmental Technology. Maria is interested in human-environment interactions and the complex systems which dictate resource use and environmental impact. Maria's research interests are around how policy and society can enable the most efficient, lowest impact resource management methods and circular solutions. Maria also explores the interface between weather and society, analysing how communities respond to extreme weather impacts and risk of environmental change.

Developing a Faculty Interdisciplinary Hub: Challenges and opportunities

Megan Bruce and Emily Roper – Durham University

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

Addressing the theme of Places for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching, this talk provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities we have experienced at Durham University in the creation of an Interdisciplinary Hub within the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Initially encapsulating existing interdisciplinary programmes in the Faculty (BA Combined Honours in Social Sciences and MA Research Methods), the Interdisciplinary Hub will provide a home for newly developed cross-departmental programmes and modules at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. It will also provide a home for students on these programmes, who otherwise risk falling between two or more departments, offering a strong community and opportunities for belonging within the interdisciplinary space.

Our talk will summarise some of the challenges faced in developing this hub, the lessons learned along the way, and the opportunities offered by this structure going forward. It will be of interest to both academic and professional support colleagues as we explore both the opportunities for interdisciplinary ideas generation and assessment that this structure creates, alongside the more practical aspects of resource allocation, stakeholder engagement, and project planning.

Prof Megan Bruce has been Director of Combined Social Sciences at Durham University since 2017 and is Durham's interdisciplinary representative on University Education Committee. Her work focuses both on the academic aspects of interdisciplinary programmes, as well as on cohort building and student belonging in such interdisciplinary endeavours. She has established a network of undergraduate peer mentor schemes across the Faculty and wider university, and also holds the role of University Mentoring Coordinator leading staff across all academic departments to deliver the university's mentoring policy. Megan has, on behalf of Education Committee, led an institutional project on Student Voice over the past two years with a particular focus on ensuring that the voices of those students on interdisciplinary programmes are not overlooked.

Emily Roper is Deputy Faculty Manager in the Faculty of Social Sciences at Durham University, having previously held management roles in Durham Law School and in Durham's Department of Archaeology.

Places and Spaces: Inviting Serendipity in Interdisciplinary Learning

Clare Conway – Kingston University

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

In their editorial for the International Journal for Academic Development, Pleschová et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of informal conversations—in settings such as cafés, corridors, and canteens—in driving meaningful academic change. This paper extends their insights by examining how co-curricular projects that unite staff and students as partners can serve as underutilised yet powerful spaces for fostering interdisciplinary thinking.

Drawing on examples from Kingston University, we explore how such projects enable participants to collaboratively produce creative outputs while reshaping their understanding of interdisciplinary learning.

By analysing the development and outcomes of interdisciplinary co-curricular initiatives, we identify key structural elements that make these spaces effective, including their capacity to create networks of possibilities through meaningful dialogue. These projects demonstrate that informal, yet intentional spaces can generate lasting impacts, helping to align students' experiences with the broader goals of interdisciplinary education.

This paper argues that fostering "serendipity"—through spaces designed for open-ended conversations and collaboration—can enhance students' and staff's engagement with interdisciplinary thinking. As Clancy (2020) notes, "The conversation is a site for the production of knowledge," and its value lies in its unpredictability. By creating environments that prioritise meaningful conversations and shared ownership of learning, universities can demonstrate the relevance and importance of interdisciplinarity in a competitive and outcomes-driven educational landscape.

Clare is School Director of Learning and Teaching in the School of Design at Kingston School of Art. Clare initiates and leads co-curricular and in curricula interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary projects that bring together undergraduate and postgraduate students with graduates and staff from across the university in collaboration with external organisations. In 2017 Clare founded the student/alumni/staff interdisciplinary group: The Storybox Collective. The group works with archives and cultural heritage organisations to explore serendipitous approaches to research through collaborative making.

Implementing a training programme for interdisciplinary educators in Africa and Asia working in the areas of Agriculture, Nutrition and Health

Mike Hill - London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those who consider themselves experienced in interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

This paper will trace the development of a training programme for interdisciplinary educators in Africa and Asia from inception to its delivery. The paper will reflect on the key foci of the training programme and its emerging impact on the participants and their students and trainees.

The Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) Academy is a global community of researchers, practitioners and policymakers working on agriculture and food systems for improved nutrition and health. In 2020, the ANH's Curriculum Enrichment Working Group, in response to anecdotal feedback produced a paper "Assessing needs for interdisciplinarity in agriculture, nutrition, and health education". *

As well as a searchable online directory of teaching materials, a suite of interdisciplinary teaching materials was released in November 2023. The topics included Agriculture, Nutrition and Health Linkages, One Health, Gender, Equity and Empowerment and Climate Change, and Environment and Sustainability.

In November 2023, ANH Academy launched the Curriculum Enrichment Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme. The ToT Programme aims to establish a cohort of trainers/champions to deliver regional training in the use and context-specific adaptation of interdisciplinary teaching methods and materials. The core aim of this activity is to foster capacity sharing and peer to peer training around participatory teaching skills, and to support university-level educators in incorporating interdisciplinary approaches to ANH-related topics in and around their curriculums.

The paper will describe the focus of the two workshops and the response and subsequent impact currently being reported by the participants.

*<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2211912423000214?via%3Dihub>

Mike Hill is an Honorary Assistant Professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He has worked across the UK and overseas, partnering with academic staff to enhance the learning experience of their students. In his present role he works for the Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) Academy, a global community of researchers, practitioners and policymakers working on agriculture and food systems for improved nutrition and health. Following a needs assessment that identified four key thematic topics he has been working with university staff in Africa and Asia in delivering interdisciplinary sessions to undergraduate and postgraduate students, policymakers and workers.

Criticality as Interdisciplinary Practice

Christopher Usher – Independent Researcher

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

For as long as interdisciplinarity has been a recognised concept, what it means to produce, practice and interpret interdisciplinary work has been subject to debate. Some consider any output that integrates knowledge or methods across disciplines to be interdisciplinary. Others emphasise the need for a deliberate interdisciplinary “mode” of practice and thinking to be pursued for interdisciplinary integration to occur.

This debate highlights two key dimensions that interdisciplinary teaching and learning must acknowledge. First, to engage interdisciplinary work one must understand the elements that form interdisciplinary integration. Second, to be an engaged interdisciplinarian one must understand the practices that, combined, form an interdisciplinary mindset. In short, an effective interdisciplinary practitioner needs both practical and critical awareness of their art.

These competencies form a core component of the educational offering at the London Interdisciplinary School (LIS). In their third year, LIS students take a compulsory module in Mixed Methods Research and Interdisciplinarity (MMID), where they consolidate their interdisciplinary learning into a “kit of parts;” perspectives, competencies, and tools that have consistently accompanied (perhaps shaped) their interdisciplinary practice. Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning journey and articulate how these elements form a unique interdisciplinary “sensibility” in their work and beyond.

In this paper, we argue for the central role criticality must play in interdisciplinary teaching and learning. We examine the outcomes observed through the MMID module and go on to discuss broader implications, including the importance of these skills to advance the wider field of interdisciplinary practice.

Chris Usher is an interdisciplinary researcher and advocate. A graduate of the London Interdisciplinary School (LIS), where he was the inaugural recipient of the William Morris Award for academic excellence, he has cultivated expertise in interdisciplinary theory focusing on its interface with non-academic practice, policy, and cultural criticism. Currently serving as Editorial Assistant for the journal Interdisciplinary Science Reviews and a member of LIS’s research team, Chris contributes to advancing interdisciplinary principles and practices through education design and practice-led research. His current work bridges research and practice in fields including sustainability, policy, local government, and higher education.

Making Interdisciplinary Connections and Building Social Community outside of the Higher Education Classroom

Danielle Cameron – London School of Economics and Political Science

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

By drawing upon youth studies and education-based understandings of community, this paper examines the significance of interdisciplinary activities in building relationships between students. I foreground activities occurring outside of the classroom as means to understand the impacts of interdisciplinary opportunities in expanding student perspectives on community. Building upon Harry Blatterer's theorisation of "changing semantics of youth and adulthood" (2010), I situate interdisciplinary co-curricular activities as multivalent opportunities to exceed students' expectations of the university experience. As such, I argue that these activities can be positive interventions in the continued challenge faced by HE institutions concerning building social community.

Drawing upon my professional experiences of hosting events for LSE100, LSE's flagship interdisciplinary course, this paper offers reflections on the successes and challenges in engaging students in interdisciplinary activities. In particular, I focus on a visit to London's Foundling Museum as a key case study. This event brought students together from across disciplines and encouraged them to recognise collaborations between the arts and social sciences in shaping the city in which they live and work.

This paper, then, sits at an intersection of the conference's themes concerning opportunities, outcomes and places for interdisciplinary engagement in higher education. Akin to how interdisciplinarity challenges students to think beyond the boundaries of their disciplines, this paper posits the ways in which interdisciplinary co-curricular activities can encourage students to look beyond perceived social boundaries and, ultimately, re-articulate their relationships with one another and their environment.

Danielle Cameron recently completed a PhD in American Studies at the University of East Anglia. Her thesis examines constructions of adulthood and childhood, age-based relationality and space in post-1980 American literature. She currently works at LSE, where she delivers communications and events to support student experience on LSE100, the School's flagship interdisciplinary course for all undergraduate students. Danielle is experienced in working with undergraduate and postgraduate students, and she has taught at the University of Hertfordshire, the University of East Anglia and LSE.

Validating the Culturally Responsive Teaching Survey in an adult education environment

Elizabeth Kaplunov and Alex Avadanei – Regent College London

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

Motivation is essential for how learners acquire and apply new skills, with Self-Determination Theory emphasizing the role of high-quality motivation in supporting cultural identity, especially among low-performing students (Dweck, 1986; Chirkov, Ryan, & Willness, 2005). Cultural factors significantly influence learning, highlighting the importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity in educational settings to boost student engagement and success (Ginsberg & Wlodowski, 1995). Tailoring teaching practices to students' cultural needs and addressing biases are crucial for creating inclusive learning environments. However, much of the existing research has focused on primary and secondary education in the US and Europe, using mostly qualitative methods, which restricts generalisability.

This project aims to address these gaps by testing and validating a culturally responsive teaching (CRT) survey among UK-based higher education lecturers. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study combines quantitative and qualitative data to offer a comprehensive understanding of CRT practices in higher education, particularly within diverse and widening participation adult student populations.

The findings will present key pedagogical practices informed by CRT, revealing the strategies lecturers use and the motivations behind them. Additionally, the study will propose methods to enhance the cultural sensitivity of teaching approaches. The research aims to underscore how student-centred teaching methods that consider cultural backgrounds can promote more inclusive and engaging learning environments.

Dr Elizabeth Kaplunov is a chartered psychologist who evaluates projects about health technology for disabled and vulnerable people with a focus on gaining insight into processes, usage, feasibility, and outcome analysis. She has also previously worked in the charity sector (drugs and alcohol service, deaf health charity, and a charity for disabled people). She earned her PhD from the University of Bath in 2019, where she specialised in deaf health, communication, and motivation.

Alex Avadanei is a Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol) dedicated to fostering emotional well-being, resilience, and personal growth. Drawing on evidence-based modalities such as DBT and IPT, he specialises in emotional regulation, distress tolerance, and strengthening interpersonal relationships. He is also a trained psychometrician specialising in personality and attitude, integrating rigorous assessment strategies to support individuals across a range of challenges.

Using Generative AI to facilitate interdisciplinary teamwork and development of interdisciplinary competence

Nigel Forrest and Mike Tennant – Imperial College London

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Postgraduate

The process of creating shared vocabularies is a crucial foundational step in interdisciplinary problem solving. However, absent significant facilitation, groups may struggle to experiment in an imaginative way that helps develop intermediate vocabularies. In this short paper, we report on an exploratory project to understand if generative AI tools, specifically chatGPT, can provide this facilitation and accelerate the ability of disciplinary experts to tackle complex sustainability problems, such as biodiversity loss, climate change, and economic inequality. In the project, we formed an interdisciplinary team (three staff and three master's students) and co-created the process by which we would use ChatGPT to identify a specific sustainability problem, explore our disciplinary approaches, and synthesise a solution. Over a series of sessions, we iteratively used prompt engineering to generate formative feedback and develop a common understanding of how knowledge of the problem is represented and practiced by the others. We used a phenomenographic approach to observe the development of interdisciplinary competence in the student co-participants through the students' own perceptions and by qualitative assessment of project outputs. We observed the emergence of a shared vocabulary and interactional expertise that allowed the development of a sustainable solution space integrating elements from across participants' disciplines. Our findings also suggest ChatGPT, when appropriately prompted, can be an effective facilitation tool, particularly for synthesising disciplinary perspectives and generating innovative solution ideas. We provide a set of generic tips for how others may build upon our experience.

Nigel is a Teaching Fellow in the Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London where he co-convenes the Business and Environment option of the Master's in Environmental Technology. He has a Ph.D. in Sustainability from Arizona State University and spent seven years researching and teaching sustainable business at Arizona State and Leuphana universities before joining University of Northampton as a lecturer in sustainable business and then moving to Imperial College in 2022. His interests lie in understanding and furthering the role of SMEs, alternative business, and business in general, in developing sustainable local economies and communities.

Mike Tennant is Vice Dean (Education) and a Principal Teaching Fellow at the Centre for Environmental Policy, Faculty of Natural Sciences at Imperial College London. Mike is also co-convenor of the Business and Environment option of the Master's in Environmental Technology. He has a Ph.D. in Theoretical Chemistry from The University of Manchester and worked for 14 years in various roles in research and management in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries in the UK and USA before taking up a position at Imperial College to further his interests in understanding how business can contribute to, and benefit from, the growing sustainability movement.

Generative AI in Interdisciplinary Education - creating the interdisciplinary research question

Rianne van Lambalgen - Utrecht University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

In this paper presentation I will explore the use of Generative AI in Interdisciplinary Education. I will start with the role Generative AI in the creation of an interdisciplinary research question by multidisciplinary student teams. According to Repko and Szostak (2021), the interdisciplinary research question is complex, societal relevant, needs to be researchable by more than one discipline and does not contain disciplinary jargon or personal bias. Ideally, the interdisciplinary research question arises from a societal problem, after which a team of relevant disciplinary experts is created to integrate their perspectives related to this question. However in an educational setting, often the teams are limited by the disciplinary backgrounds that are available in the classroom (see also Menken and Keestra, 2016), in which case students need to create an interdisciplinary research question fitting their disciplinary backgrounds.

The process of creating an interdisciplinary research question by students can take up time, slowing down their interdisciplinary research process. However, it can also be a learning goal, encouraging perspective taking and creativity, through the process of finding common ground. In this presentation I will show what steps should be taken with use of ChatGPT to arrive at an interdisciplinary research question that fits the criteria according to Repko and Szostak (2020). In addition, I will reflect on what this means for learning goals in interdisciplinary education and how Generative AI can potentially be used to facilitate interdisciplinary teaching and learning.

Menken, S., & Keestra, M. (2016). An introduction to interdisciplinary research: Theory and practice. *An Introduction to Interdisciplinary Research*, 1-128.

Repko, A. F., & Szostak, R. (2021). *Interdisciplinary research: Process and theory*. Sage publications, California, USA.

Rianne van Lambalgen is Director of Education and Associate Professor at the School of Liberal Arts and has experience with interdisciplinary teaching and learning at the undergraduate level, postgraduate level and for professionals (teachers). She has a background in cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence and higher education and in her research on the digital support of interdisciplinary learning she combines these disciplinary perspectives. Her research focuses on how (technological) tools facilitate knowledge construction and connective and integrative thinking. Part of this is how methods in artificial intelligence can be used to facilitate aspects of interdisciplinary learning, for example through intelligent tutoring systems.

Connecting Across Disciplines and Countries: A Roadmap for Purposeful Interdisciplinary Collaboration among Early-Career Researchers

Emilie McSwiggan and Anna Bryan – University of Edinburgh Additional authors: Andrea Nedergaard Jensen, Imane Guellil, Catharina Thiel Sandholdt, Stella Arakelyan, Jonas Thorborg Stage, Amalie Russel, Kieran Sweeney

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Postgraduate

This presentation reflects on a recent collaboration between early-career researchers in Denmark and Scotland. The collaboration led to the development of a roadmap and recommendations for future interdisciplinary and cross-country projects, which may be useful to other students and educators with an interest in addressing complex societal challenges through interdisciplinary work.

A small interdisciplinary network, comprising nine postdoctoral researchers and postgraduate (Masters and PhD) students, came together in early 2024, supported by a seed-funding grant designed to explore future collaboration between the Universities of Copenhagen and Edinburgh. The network represented a wide range of disciplines and professional backgrounds, but all members shared a common interest in health inequalities among older adults.

Over the course of several online meetings, a series of individual and collaborative writing activities, and a day-long in-person workshop, we were able to develop an in-depth understanding and shared language around our topic of interest; to establish closer working relationships; and to identify several directions for potential future collaborations which would build on these foundations. We also reflected on the methods which enabled this kind of rich dialogue and mutual understanding and have proposed these as a framework for future collaborations.

Through this presentation, we will share an early-career researcher perspective on the value of interdisciplinary learning and collaboration. We will also reflect on the added value of cross-country collaboration, and the practical arrangements which can enable this; from senior-level support and championship, to the etiquette of virtual collaborations and the central importance of mutual respect and trust.

Emilie McSwiggan is a full-time PhD student with the Advanced Care Research Centre at the University of Edinburgh; part of an interdisciplinary cohort of students researching ageing and care. Her PhD explores the role of social prescribing for people in later life, with a particular interest in the community infrastructure needed to make social prescribing successful. In addition, she is a Teaching Fellow on the online Master of Public Health programme, teaching a global cohort of students. In this capacity, she co-leads the course on Leadership and Management in Public Health, and is responsible for the applied project (SLICC) option, offered as an alternative to a traditional dissertation.

Anna Bryan received her BA in Music from Columbia University in 2019 and MSc by Research in Music at the University of Edinburgh in 2020. During her master's research, she explored the use of music in Edinburgh Care Homes. Anna is a member of the first cohort of PhD students at the Advanced Care Research Centre, an interdisciplinary research centre studying topics relating to supporting the lives of people in later life. During her PhD, Anna has worked on a couple of external projects: one project related to the organisation of online music groups for those affected by dementia, while the other investigated the responses that made music "meaningful" for those affected by dementia (Meaningful Music: A Music and Dementia Research Study). Anna also conducted a summer research project in 2022 that explored the contexts for music research in Midlothian care homes. For her PhD she is exploring how activity providers use music in care homes.

Yijing Li – Kings College London

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

This is a reflection paper based on my teaching experience lead, design and co-teach across disciplines in the past 7 years, from an interdisciplinary background to teach varied subjects with interdisciplinary methods, whilst embed interdisciplinary thoughts into my pedagogical design; it has been concatenated by my "learn by practice" philosophy with diverse outputs and formats, but most importantly, it links closely with real life application thanks to supports from external partners and the joint efforts from professional services team, with shared spirits of cross-disciplinary application to benefit knowledge and skillsets from class to society.

Yijing joined King's College London in 2018 as a lecturer in CUSP London, and now is the Director for the centre. She has developed her teaching contents on urban analytics and data analysis from interdisciplinary perspective, integrating geospatial analytical methods, visualisation skills, quantitative-qualitative mixtures and practical teachings, to education undergraduates, postgraduates and senior government officials. She holds a PhD degree in Geography of Crime from University of Cambridge, and a MSc degree in Urban Ecology from Peking University.

Integration and Synthesis Coaching - A Conduit for Interdisciplinary Belonging

Isaiah Wellington-Lynn – London Interdisciplinary School

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those who consider themselves experienced in interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

At LIS, coaching is a vital pillar of interdisciplinary education and a core feature of our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. It provides a space to build a learning community, cultivate belonging, and foster interdisciplinarity. Here, students practise collective accountability, academic integrity, and creative exploration within an interdisciplinary context.

We offer two coaching programmes: Integration Coaching for undergraduates and Synthesis Coaching for master's students. While both focus on academic and personal growth within the same framework, the postgraduate programme places greater emphasis on professional application.

Our bespoke framework, PINTO, addresses key student needs: Presence, Integration, Next steps, and Tracking Outcomes. 'Presence' begins sessions with reflective activities like sharing highlights, writing poetry, or playing 'Two Truths and a Goal.' The 'Integration' phase encourages academic and interpersonal connection, personal growth, and intellectual depth through activities that synthesise learnings from problem-based and methods modules.

'Next steps' focuses on actionable strategies for advancing academic and personal development, emphasizing 'mindshifts' to tackle complex problems. Lastly, 'Tracking Outcomes' helps students set and monitor intentions for their academic, personal, and professional lives, segmented into accessible and aspirational goals.

Coaching at LIS ensures students not only succeed academically but also grow as individuals equipped to navigate and address complex, real-world challenges.

Our coaching team includes faculty, professional staff, and alumni and we track or impact based on feedback from Student Success and Wellbeing, module evaluation questions, and post-session conversations.

Isaiah is a creative scholar, working across academia, pedagogical innovation, and creative and strategic consulting. At LIS, Isaiah is Assistant Professor and Lead of Integration and Synthesis Coaching. He teaches anthropology, design, and qualitative research methods. He has presented keynote thought leadership on coaching and the future of education at the University of Cambridge and the University of Derby. Isaiah is currently an anthropology PhD Candidate at the University of Oxford and formerly studied at UCL, LSE, and Harvard. Isaiah's research investigates notions of belonging, meritocracy, social mobility, plural identities, and courage. Outside of academia, Isaiah has worked with organisations such as Adobe, Airbnb, the British Royal Family, Depop, J.P. Morgan, TwentyFirstCenturyBrand, Airbnb, the NHS, and Hachette (Little, Brown imprint).

From Pre-established “Packages” to Exploring and Enabling New Connections: Individualizing Interdisciplinary Programs in (Northern) Europe

Kirsi Cheas and Harri Kettunen - University of Vaasa & Finterdis - The Finnish Interdisciplinary Society and University of Helsinki

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those who consider themselves experienced in interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Continuing Professional Development

Interdisciplinary graduate and undergraduate study programs often consist of “packages,” bringing together different disciplines around a theme that the enrolled students are expected to integrate. Building on our lived experiences and a research/book project, our paper argues that such programs do not always support a genuinely curious student who is eager to explore and build new connections on their own beyond the scope of the “package.” For instance, in her doctoral research, the first author of this abstract wanted to integrate Latin American Studies and Journalism Studies to analyze the complexity of reporting on the region. However, integrating these particular fields was not possible in her university, because they were not jointly included in any pre-existing program, and administrative constraints prevented new supervision collaboration between these fields. Since then, the first author has spent three years at New York University in the U.S., discovering so-called Individualized Studies programs, which allow students to integrate different fields in novel ways, tailored to their particular interests and needs. These programs support faculty as they come together from different fields to supervise each individual student and become exposed to new interdisciplinary ideas in the process. This paper argues for the establishment of Individualized Studies in (North) Europe to advance new connections and broad interdisciplinarity rather than limiting students to navigating pre-existing interdisciplinary terrains. The authors are also eager to learn from practices in the U.K.

Dr. Kirsi Cheas is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Vaasa, Finland. Her project, funded by the Research Council of Finland and the Kone Foundation, examines collaborative investigative journalism across the U.S.-Mexico (Global North-South) border. Cheas received her doctorate in Latin American Studies at the University of Helsinki in 2018 and has spent three years as a visiting scholar at New York University. She is also the founder and president of Finterdis - The Finnish Interdisciplinary Society, and member of the board of directors of the U.S.-based Association for Interdisciplinary Studies (AIS).

Dr. Harri Kettunen has carried out interdisciplinary research projects, combining anthropology, archaeology, art history, biology, codicology, epigraphy, history, and linguistics. His publications include textbooks on Maya hieroglyphs, methodological studies on iconography, and interdisciplinary articles on topics such as warfare, biodiversity, and the Columbian exchange. His key area of interest is Mesoamerica. Harri is the coordinator of the Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences, Adjunct Professor of Latin American Studies at the University of Helsinki, and President of the European Association of Mayanists, Wayeb.

Joint System Analysis and Scenario Development as valuable tools to integrate knowledge

Lieke Mulder and Coyan Tromp – University of Amsterdam

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

The University of Amsterdam's interdisciplinary Bachelor Future Planet Studies takes today's complex sustainability challenges as focus of its program. In subsequent semesters, the issues of energy, climate change, food and water are addressed. Disciplinary courses are explicitly designed with the question in mind: what knowledge does this scientific perspective offer to help us find solutions for this particular challenge? In concluding capstone courses, students are challenged to combine and integrate the various types of disciplinary knowledge and skills they have gained. From day one, students are trained in Systems Thinking, which we view as an essential method to avoid simplistic, one-dimensional thinking and to help them think across disciplinary boundaries.

In the second year of our program, we use Joint System Analysis as tool to enhance integration in the project-based courses. Building on the basic system thinking capacities they have acquired in year one, we engage students in Group Model Building exercises where they collaboratively analyse a specified (sub)system. Besides making use of the knowledge gained in the disciplinary courses, they also need to use as input the results of the consultation of their target group and relevant experts. To ensure that the teams seriously work on the exercises, we organize these sessions on campus. In the concluding project of year two, we also invite them to use the STEPLE method to reflect on potential Socio-Cultural, Technological, Ecological, Political, Legislative, and Economic future drivers. This same method is successively used to develop scenarios that incorporate a multitude of disciplinary perspectives.

Lieke Mulder is educational developer and lecturer at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Amsterdam (UvA), contributing to the bachelor programme Future Planet Studies and the Master programme Complex Systems and Policy. She specialises in designing and teaching interdisciplinary, challenge-based courses on complex systems and sustainability, such as Change Making, Reflexive Design Project, and Scenario Planning. In addition, she draws on her years of experience as programme manager to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaboration among teaching staff. As chair of the Special Interest Group on Sustainability, she actively promotes innovative approaches to embedding sustainability in education.

Coyan Tromp is curriculum developer and assistant professor at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Amsterdam (UvA). In 2007, she stood at the cradle of the bachelor Future Planet Studies, a program in which knowledge and skills from various disciplinary fields are integrated to find solutions for complex sustainability issues. And she continually initiates and participates in new sustainability projects, at both bachelors' and masters' level, at all faculties. In her role as lecturer she has been coordinating and teaching interdisciplinary courses on Philosophy of Science, project-based courses such as the Reflexive Design Project, Future Planet Project and Scenario Planning. She participates as philosopher of science in UvA's Research Priority Area on Energy through the Lens of the Sustainable Development Goals (ENLENS). She regularly experiments with innovative pedagogical concepts (e.g. blended learning, the flipped classroom and rubrics) and publishes about these experiences.

Visual abstracts as resources for low-threshold interdisciplinary encounters

Mira Vogel and Charlotte Haberstroh – King’s College London

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

Education for Sustainability (EfS) aims to be transformative, preparing students to work across disciplines and settings, on problems with multiple, sometimes opposing, interest holders (Vogel et al, 2023). These encounters are inherently interdisciplinary and demanding for students, as they learn integrative behaviours to contribute their own knowledge and engage with others', synthesising new approaches. Designing and supporting this is no less demanding for educators. In today's pressured Higher Education climate, educational developers seek low-threshold approaches to avoid overwhelm and work with the grain of disciplinary cultures, building students' self-efficacy to represent their own discipline in addressing nexus problems.

This session shares a theoretically informed idea for encounters between students from different disciplines, based on visual abstracts of research articles relevant to sustainability and their respective learning outcomes (for example, Brand, 2025). Drawing on Star's concept of boundary objects (2010), we propose qualities of these abstracts which bring a fertile balance of focus and flexibility of perspective, stimulating students to apply and advance their own disciplinary learning while also interacting with others'. Conceptualising students' epistemic stability and adaptability (Horn et al, 2022) helps with identifying when this activity could be most fruitful, and how to scaffold it.

Activity overview: students reflect on how their discipline could address the issues outlined in their visual abstract, mobilising their module's learning outcomes. They consider which other disciplines also contribute to the issues and initiate a conversation with those students. This could take a variety of forms, including (the lowest threshold) asynchronously and digitally.

Mira is Senior Lecturer in Education and the Education for Sustainability (EfS) lead in King's Academy, the educational development team at King's College London. Having led a 2023 systematic review on Education for Sustainability for Advance HE, she is involved in integrating EfS into curricula across King's. Towards this, she creates circumstances for educators to come together in different ways to equip students with the knowledge, competencies, and willingness to take action on nexus sustainability problems. Relatedly, she is interested in different dimensions of inclusive educational practice, focusing on hidden curriculum, equitable group work, and discussing sensitive topics across difference. She also enables (particularly) colleagues on education career pathways to carry out educational scholarship and be recognised for it. Mira is an Academic Chair for the Open Campus of Circle U, an alliance of European research-intensive universities, and supports partnerships to develop new sustainability-focused modules.

Charlotte is the Programme and Curriculum Design Lead at King's Academy and the Faculty Liaison contact for King's Business School. In this role, she advises and develops academics and professional services on programme and module design. She joined King's in 2022, initially as a Learning Developer at King's Academy and then to support early careers academics with their professional development. Charlotte has an interest in the development of students' academic literacies, interdisciplinarity in education and research as well as the relation between university curricula and skills for the future. Charlotte is a comparative social policy scholar by training (PhD at the European University Institute Florence 2016) and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

Extending the Reach of Interdisciplinary Education: Engaging New Audiences both Within and Beyond Academia

Amélie Mons – University of Manchester

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

At the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL), we are embracing exciting new opportunities to expand interdisciplinary learning to broader audiences. UCIL offers courses that are accessible to students University-wide, collaboratively designed with academics from all Faculties, and developed in partnership with our internal team. While our interdisciplinary materials are designed to connect departments across the institution, they are also inherently versatile, capable of engaging a wide range of learners. We are now exploring and capitalising on this potential, actively repurposing content to engage new audiences –both within and beyond the University.

New QAA benchmarks state that all programmes should deliver education for sustainable development. UCIL is helping programmes across the University meet this benchmark by building an online bitesize version of our own sustainability unit. Any programmes will be able to select and tailor this interdisciplinary course to include into their own School programmes. Similarly, we are repurposing our interdisciplinary course on cybersecurity into a series of microcredentials tailored for the industry, therefore adapting interdisciplinary materials to new audiences outside academia.

Interdisciplinary learning goes beyond bridging academic boundaries; it creates pathways to accessible education for diverse audiences, accommodating different skill levels and learning stages. In this presentation, we will share insights into the outcomes, challenges and rewards of adapting interdisciplinary materials for new audiences, whether they are working professionals or very specific cohorts of students. We will also explore why this approach is a promising and sustainable direction for the future of interdisciplinary education.

Amélie is a Learning and Assessment Developer at the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (University of Manchester). Amélie specialised in interdisciplinary education and leadership theory. Each year, Amélie is specialised in interdisciplinary education and leadership theory. Each year, she guides hundreds of undergraduates through learning experiences that bridge multiple disciplines, fostering critical thinking and leadership skills.

Her research background is rooted in pedagogy within the arts, exploring how altered perceptions of reality can unlock innovative learning pathways. Drawing on Philosophy, Education and Theatre Studies, her work delves into the interplay between these fields to discover new approaches to teaching and learning.

The Power of Transdisciplinary Student-Faculty-Community Partnership in addressing Global Challenges

Glos Ho - Hong Kong Baptist University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

At Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), we integrate the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our undergraduate curriculum through a pioneering 9-unit course titled "Global Challenges." This innovative one-year course, following the 3Cs pedagogical approach (Connection, Complexity, and Collaboration), involves 135 students, 15 faculty members from various disciplines, and 6 community stakeholders. Instead of teaching a single discipline in one course, our approach fosters a real-life student-faculty-community partnership. Students engage in interviewing faculty from various disciplines, participating in diverse field trips, and proposing solutions to global challenges related to clothing, eating, living, and commuting.

Rather than end-of-semester exams, each unit culminates in student projects showcased on campus and within the broader community through collaboration with WWF-Hong Kong. This method fosters self-directed learning and encourages students to apply their knowledge in the community, promoting effective transdisciplinary collaboration. Focus group feedback revealed that the transdisciplinary teaching approach not only significantly enhanced sustainability literacy but also instilled a sense of responsibility to advocate for sustainable practices. Students actively participated and leveraged information to deepen their understanding. They learned to appreciate failure as part of the learning process, to persevere, and to cultivate a growth mindset. These experiences empower students to become confident transdisciplinary collaborators, enabling them to realize their capacity for change and their role in driving sustainable practices.

Dr. Glos Ho is the Director of Transdisciplinary Undergraduate Programmes and Principal Lecturer at Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU). She obtained her BSocSci (Economics) degree from the University of New South Wales, Australia, an MA (International Communications) from Macquarie University, Australia, and her PhD (Asian Studies) from the University of Hong Kong. She is currently a Senior Fellow of the Advance Higher Education. She received the HKBU President's Award for Outstanding Performance in Teaching in 2016 and in Team Teaching in 2018 and 2023. She was previously an Olympic grant holder at the Olympic Studies Centre, Lausanne and has served as Reviews Editor for the Asia Pacific Journal of Sport and Social Science.

Learning how to collaborate: What learning goals to students set and what do they say they have learned? A case study on a role based intervention in a first year sustainability course

Roosmarijn Van Woerden and Njal van Woerden – University of Amsterdam

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Purpose: Collaboration is an important sustainability competence. This study aims to identify which learning goals in collaboration students set for themselves and the teams they are part of, which learning activities they develop to achieve these goals, and to what extent they consider they have met their learning goals. Do students' priorities differ from what teamwork literature considers important?

Design/methodology/approach: This study is the result of a four year educational design research on enhancing students' collaborative competences during a first year transdisciplinary sustainability course. In four iterative cycles a role based educational intervention was developed and tested. Throughout the process focus groups were held with both students and lecturers in the course. For this paper we analyzed 250 student assignments on the formulation of their own learning goals in teamwork, as well as their self-assessment of their achievement.

Findings: Analysis shows that across the board, students formulate a lot of their learning goals, criteria for success and lessons learned in the communication category. In general there was quite a bit of alignment between students' own intended learning outcomes, the activities they undertake to achieve those goals and the final lessons they draw, although teams do not develop learning activities on all goals they have set for themselves, and teams also develop activities for which they have not explicitly formulated a goal. The use of the different roles (Task Manager, Process Manager, Relations Manager, Communications Manager) seemed to have helped them formulate specific learning goals and undertake activities to reach their goals.

Roosmarijn van Woerden finished her PhD-research (at Utrecht University) on teamwork in multidisciplinary student teams in 2024 and is currently doing research on the (teamwork) competences students need for interdisciplinary research and students' educational needs for teamwork teaching and learning in interdisciplinary undergraduate programs at the University of Amsterdam.

Analysing Pedagogic Approaches from the Global South and its Interdisciplinary Potentials

Igor dos Santos Mota – University of Derby

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Postgraduate

The urgent need to decolonise university curricula, in order to tackle awarding gaps and promote equity and belonging through modes of inclusive teaching and learning, has prompted a wave of progressive pedagogy, especially in the Global North – much of it advocating shifts in the subject matter and perspectives embraced within particular disciplines, or changes to teaching tonality and style (Morreira et al, 2021). Given the context, this paper aims to analyse pedagogic approaches from the Global South, more specifically from Brazil, and its potentials for interdisciplinary thinking and action, in order to help decolonise our curricula. As a research corpus, the following pedagogies were analysed, based on the referenced authors: Afro-Brazilian Pedagogies (Da Rosa, 2019; Pinheiro, 2021), Quilombola Pedagogies (Firmeza et al., 2022; Bispo dos Santos, 2023), Indigenous Pedagogies (Krenak, 2022), Pedagogies of Circularity (Ferreira, 2021) and Pedagogies of/from Crossroads (Rufino, 2019, 2021). Early results show that there is an innate interdisciplinary nature to the pedagogies analysed, mostly linking ancestral epistemologies through articulation of theory and practices. UK education systems could make good use of the learnings from these pedagogies, adapting it to the given cultural and social landscapes. It should be considered that decolonising our educational literature and teaching theory will help us drive change to our educational contexts, promoting social justice and democratic education to our students.

Igor is a PhD student in Arts, Humanities and Education at the University of Derby, developing research on Decolonising University Curriculum, supervised by Dr David Holloway and Dr Melanie Pope. Co-creator of the Decoloniality and Education Staff-Student Group, and member of the Pedagogic and Research Cluster and the Study and Research Group on Languages, Internationalisation and Language Policies. BA in English and Portuguese Languages and Literatures (State University of Feira de Santana, Brazil). Teacher, award-winning poet, and translator.

Questioning the Institutional Default: Embracing Alternative Models for Interdisciplinary Programmes

Katrine Ellemose Lindvig – University of Copenhagen

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those who consider themselves experienced in interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

This paper aims to challenge conventional thinking about the "ideal place" for interdisciplinary education through an analysis of a five-year NSF-funded interdisciplinary Master's programme - a programme that garnered mixed evaluations of its success. While the programme faced the ultimate challenge of discontinuation, its non-institutionalised nature fostered remarkable flexibility and innovation in collaborative infrastructures.

Although discussions of interdisciplinary spaces often focus on physical infrastructure or institutional frameworks, we argue that even initiatives that face challenges or fail to meet traditional metrics of success can offer valuable insights about creating flexible collaborative infrastructures beyond organisational boundaries. Drawing on the programme's experience of operating on top of established institutional structures, we demonstrate how this perceived limitation enabled more flexible learning pathways for individual students while fostering unconventional partnerships across diverse fields.

Through analysis of student experiences, teaching practices, and organisational dynamics, we show how the programme's fluid nature fostered unique interdisciplinary interactions that might have been constrained within more rigid institutional structures. Our findings illustrate the complex relationship between institutional measures of success and actual educational value, particularly in the context of the "pilot disease," where programmes are either discontinued or forced to transform into institutionally palatable versions, regardless of their pedagogical merits. Rather than focusing on creating permanent institutional homes for interdisciplinary activities, with this paper, we wish to invite for a discussion on how to sustain flexible, adaptive programmes that can thrive in the spaces between traditional institutional structures while maintaining necessary support and resources.

Katrine Ellemose Lindvig is an Assistant Professor of Higher Education Research at University of Copenhagen. Her main field of research is the translation of policy in higher education, and how concepts such as interdisciplinarity, sustainability and digitalisation translate and travel from research into the curriculum and everyday practices of higher education courses and programmes.

Curious Objects: Playful exploration of interdisciplinarity

Mark Hamilton and Céleste Williams – Regent's University London

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

We are evolving a playful process for evoking a supradiscipline. This has evolved in response to our University's 'whole-of-institution' shift to an interdisciplinary common curriculum, giving all students (from foundation to masters) set and elective learning opportunities outside their core discipline's usual boundaries. For our teachers and learners (drawn from over 140 nations), the excitement of this shift is accompanied by caution. Thus, our participatory process centres in playfulness, synthesising perspectives from psychology, andragogy, and progressive creative disciplines. Performativity, making of artefacts, and futurology inform this merger. We evoke a permissive space, that which D.W. Winnicott referred to as the liminal interface, wherein things acquire new potential as transitional objects invested with extraordinary meaning. Our participants first use physical filters, that employ prefixes, to modify a definition of disciplinarity as their 'badge'. They select a configuration that best matches their current epistemological position — e.g. post-disciplinary, multi-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary, etc. They then take seats ad hoc round café-like tables. These tables hold an array of odd objects purportedly from a parallel or future time and created by practitioners of a supradiscipline — a totalising conglomerate of our known disciplines. Using decolonial archaeological methods, and interactivity as a curatorial action, the participants make sense of these curious objects. This process of interpretation flows into a period of participants' own co-construction to make additional artefacts to join those found at the tables... And so, the cycle recommences with each additional participants' session. Incrementally, the imagined supradiscipline manifests.

Dr Mark James Hamilton – Assistant Professor, Regent's University London PhD, M.Phil, BA Hons., F. Cert. Psycho., F. Cert. Anat., Cert., PGCHE, SFHEA. "A movement-based scholar shaped by practicing art and education in cultures other than that to which he was born – primarily that of Aotearoa New Zealand and Kerala, Southern India. A seeker investigating worldviews emanating from the dynamic interface of diverse forms of physicality and shared reflection."

Céleste Williams - 3D Workshop Technician, Regent's University London BA, PGCHE, FHEA. "A dedicated daydreamer who enjoys existing in the threshold of translation. A thinking-through-making jack of all trades continuously attempting to create physical manifestations of theory. An Academic Technician if you will."

Interdisciplinarity for All? Considering school-level interdisciplinary learning

Joanna Snell – University of Cambridge

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Pre-university

School-level interdisciplinary learning is happening, and it may even be happening in a school near you. As such, the time is upon us to consider whether interdisciplinarity could be the future of our education system or simply the latest, well-meaning educational fad to fall by the wayside. Questions need asking to decide how interdisciplinary learning may land within our classrooms. Are 11-year olds capable of interdisciplinary learning? If interdisciplinary thinking provides such great benefits, is it not a skill that should be offered to all within society? How can this skill be taught? Can it be taught? Are schools already engaging in interdisciplinarity or simply what they believe is "interdisciplinarity"?

This paper will begin to explore these questions whilst reflecting upon the experiences of teachers within a UK secondary comprehensive as they begin to grapple with school-level interdisciplinary units. This is the start of a journey which could open interdisciplinary learning to every child: interdisciplinarity for all.

Joanna Stell finds herself at the intersection of interdisciplinary learning and classroom teaching. As a Liberal Arts and Sciences graduate from the University of Birmingham, Joanna has maintained an interest in interdisciplinarity within her new context as a secondary maths teacher at a Cambridgeshire state school. Alongside her teaching, Joanna is a Masters student at the University of Cambridge, focusing her research on interdisciplinary learning as an essential part of her school's International Baccalaureate curriculum.

Lightning Talks

Fostering Interdisciplinary Habits of Mind? Student and Staff Perspectives from Sweden

Lisa Backman - Uppsala University

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those who consider themselves experienced in interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Postgraduate

This talk examines key insights from two case studies of Swedish undergraduate programs in Global Development and the Humanities. The case selection represents ideal types of interdisciplinarity as “broad” and “narrow”. They further mirror the common arguments for why interdisciplinarity is needed, solving complex global problems or being more academically oriented. The cases have been explored empirically.

The results are based on a mixed-method approach, combining 42 semi-structured interviews, participatory observations, and social network analysis. First-year and third-year students from both programs were included, illuminating differences at the beginning and the end of their three-year interdisciplinary educational journey. Staff engaged in founding and running the program answer questions of why and how, and the analysis also shows how their background was key to working with interdisciplinary education.

Lisa Backman is a PhD student in the Sociology of Education at Uppsala University, Sweden, with just over a year remaining until her thesis defence. Her research investigates structures, organisation, and motives behind interdisciplinary higher education, focusing on discipline combinations, students and staff in Swedish undergraduate programs. Using a mixed-methods approach, her work empirically explores ideas and practices of interdisciplinary programs in Global Development and the Humanities. With an interdisciplinary academic background, Backman holds a B.A. in Human Sciences from Oxford University and an M.A. in Human Geography from Stockholm University. Parallel to her PhD-education, she is currently involved with setting up Uppsala University's research network on Research and Education Across Disciplines.

Mapping students' reflections on the outcomes of their interdisciplinary projects through the BSc degree programme at the London Interdisciplinary School (LIS)

Finnian Russell – London Interdisciplinary School

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Students studying the BSc at the London Interdisciplinary School (LIS) take a compulsory module in their third year, Mixed Methods and Interdisciplinarity. The two assessed tasks in this module prompt students to reflect on the outcomes of interdisciplinary activities they have undertaken to date, using an

interdisciplinary or mixed-methods framework of their choice. This lightning talk is a walkthrough of a meta-learning map that uses Newell's 2001 Theory of Interdisciplinary Studies to pull out successes and challenges of a student's journey through LIS's interdisciplinary curriculum.

This talk may be of interest to those curious about the pedagogy of a uniquely interdisciplinary institution like LIS, and how students engage with interdisciplinarity at an undergraduate level. This talk may also be of interest to those with strong opinions on using Newell's framework, or a complex systems-based rationale for deploying ID, as a benchmark for the success of ID activities.

Finn Russell is a final year BAsC student at the London Interdisciplinary School (LIS), the world's first university dedicated to interdisciplinarity. I am interested in complexity as a justification for interdisciplinarity and am writing a dissertation on representing complex systems as serious games, or 'wargames'.

"I couldn't square Marx with Marketing": The role of research-based learning in supporting students integrative understanding in interdisciplinary study

Elaine Tan – Newcastle University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

This lightning talk examines the role of the final-year project as a capstone activity that enables students to establish their own understanding of interdisciplinary learning experiences. Specifically, it investigates how students use the experience to reconcile the opposing views and positions that can emerge between disciplines, and the cognitive dissonance they may encounter in doing so. Through the process of designing and undertaking a self-determined research project, students reconciling multiple disciplinary perspectives to form a final output. The format of this final output is also self-determined (it can be a poster, podcast, exhibition, or whatever format they deem appropriate) to afford them opportunity to articulate meaning in a manner that reflects their own understanding of their academic journey.

Dr. Elaine Tan is a Senior Lecturer at Newcastle University Business School and within the Combined Honours program. She works with final-year undergraduate students, supporting them in the design and execution of their research-based projects. Her teaching focuses on fostering independent learning and critical thinking through interdisciplinary approaches. Her academic interests include the role of innovation and technology in education, particularly how digital tools can enhance student learning and research practices.

Enhancing Interdisciplinary Research Support for First-Year Undergraduates: A Case Study from LSE100 and LSE LIFE

Jenny Stowar and Michael Beaney – London School of Economics and Political Science

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

When embarking on interdisciplinary research students are often navigating multiple fields, each with their own methodologies, terminologies and theoretical frameworks (Youngblood, 2007). In 2021, LSE100 the LSE's flagship course for all undergraduate students, alongside LSE LIFE, the LSE's centre for students' academic personal and professional development, embarked on the formulation of a more cohesive support framework between the two units for the first-year undergraduates undertaking the course. Building on the strong support structures already within LSE100, LSE LIFE first developed a core series of workshops and then an additional dedicated one-to-one offering to support this large cohort of students. In this lightning talk we would like to talk you through the support we've developed, why we feel it is crucial to offer tailored support for the students undertaking their first assignment, and the complexities and challenges of supporting c.8000 first-year students.

Jenny has been part of LSE LIFE since its inception in 2016, transitioning from a Study Adviser to an Academic Learning Developer and Deputy Head of LSE LIFE. She currently manages the team of Study Advisers, ensuring that each LSE student receives high-quality, tailored advice sessions. Additionally, she oversees an expansive Student Academic Mentoring programme at LSE, which includes initiatives for undergraduates, postgraduates, and students who identify as neurodiverse. Her workshops primarily focus on planning and time management, as well as supporting students in developing their research ideas. Jenny has worked in higher education since 2006, with previous roles at Kingston University and the University of Roehampton. Her Master's degree is in Children's Literature, and she is a keen advocate for the importance of reading for pleasure at all ages. Her research interests include the benefits of peer mentoring and peer-assisted learning, with a particular focus on creating schemes that support the needs of diverse student populations.

Michael has been part of the Academic Learning Development team at LSE LIFE since 2022, and before that taught English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at the LSE's Language Centre from 2015. The workshops he teaches tend to be mostly focused on developing academic writing skills both for assignments and for dissertations. Previously he has worked as an English teacher in Istanbul and as a lecturer in a university in Naples, Italy. His Master's degree was in International Relations and for his doctoral studies at UCL's Institute of Education, he undertook an in-depth narrative study into the experiences of displaced PhD students and post-doctoral fellows from Türkiye and Syria in UK higher education institutions. His findings will be published later this year. Michael's research interests include academic identity in higher education, the potentialities of Third Spaces in higher education, and the impact of migration on transnational identity formation.

Reflexive Design Project and Scenario Planning as vehicles for an international Global Classroom

Coyan Tromp and Lieke Mulder – University of Amsterdam

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

Within the Bachelor program Future Planet Studies, project-based courses are the vehicles in which students are challenged to combine and integrate the various types of disciplinary knowledge they have gained on global sustainability issues. In the first semester of the second year, students collaboratively work out a suitable solution and concomitant action plan for a food-related issue in the Reflexive Design Project. In order to give students the chance to use as input knowledge gained in other, parallel courses and to actually put their plans into action, the course is spread out over twelve weeks. In the second semester, teams develop future visions and recommendations for water-related challenges in the concluding course Scenario Planning (four weeks, fulltime). We would like to investigate with interested parties whether and how these courses can function as vehicles for international Global Classrooms in which students from different countries work together on global sustainability issues.

Coyan Tromp is curriculum developer and assistant professor at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Amsterdam (UvA). In 2007, she stood at the cradle of the bachelor Future Planet Studies, a program in which knowledge and skills from various disciplinary fields are integrated to find solutions for complex sustainability issues. And she continually initiates and participates in new sustainability projects, at both bachelors' and masters' level, at all faculties. In her role as lecturer she has been coordinating and teaching interdisciplinary courses on Philosophy of Science, project-based courses such as the Reflexive Design Project, Future Planet Project and Scenario Planning. She participates as philosopher of science in UvA's Research Priority Area on Energy through the Lens of the Sustainable Development Goals (ENLENS). She regularly experiments with innovative pedagogical concepts (e.g. blended learning, the flipped classroom, rubrics, and the impact of generative AI) and publishes about these experiences.

Lieke Mulder is educational developer and lecturer at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Amsterdam (UvA), contributing to the bachelor programme Future Planet Studies and the Master programme Complex Systems and Policy. She specializes in designing and teaching interdisciplinary, challenge-based courses on complex systems and sustainability, such as Change Making, Reflexive Design Project, and Scenario Planning. In addition, she draws on her years of experience as programme manager to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaboration among teaching staff. As chair of the Special Interest Group on Sustainability, she actively promotes innovative approaches to embedding sustainability in education.

COIL – a case study in learning interdisciplinary internationally- enhancing transferable skills

Patricia Perlman-Dee – University of Manchester

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

This lightning talk will discuss an interdisciplinary, collaborative online international learning experience (COIL) that was organized and implemented in 2021 and 2022, allowing students from different discipline backgrounds as well as countries to experience an interdisciplinary and international trading floor environment in real-time. The COIL experience involved students from UK, the Netherlands, Canada, India, Romania and Germany, totalling over 300 students simultaneously interacting in real time.

Students were paired with students from other universities and disciplines during each session. Besides learning about trading and the markets, the intended learning outcomes were also to develop students' transferable skills, drawing upon different disciplines. The students had to communicate clearly, analyze, problem solve, evaluate and make investment decisions in real time, where “money” was on the table. The stress levels were high, and timeframes were tight. The opportunities to make full use of interdisciplinary learning were optimal, particularly focusing on transferable skills.

Patricia Perlman-Dee, CFA, is a Professor in Finance at University of Manchester. She has a master's in finance, a PGCE and is the Academic Director of Custom Programs at AMBS. Patricia has extensive experience working in large financial corporations such as Citigroup, JP Morgan, Nomura and Barclays in Manchester, London and New York. Patricia has created and teaches a range of courses across Undergraduate, Postgraduate, MBA and Executive Education. In 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019, Patricia was awarded (and highly commended) Faculty of Humanities AMBS Outstanding Teaching Award. Patricia is an experienced presenter from her professional career. She regularly presents on national and international educational conferences such as Advance HE and Edulearn conferences. In addition, Patricia has been the key speaker on several large charity functions, helping to raise over substantial amounts for the charities. Patricia is married and has four children. Philanthropy is also a large part of Patricia's life.

Who Engages with Interdisciplinary Options? Insights into Student Performance and Experience in UCIL Units

Alison Fisher – University of Manchester

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

The University of Manchester's College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL) offers a portfolio of more than 35 credit-bearing units, open to undergraduates from any programme. Opting to take a UCIL unit requires students to step outside their disciplinary comfort zones, immersing themselves in unfamiliar academic ideas, terminologies, teaching approaches, and assessment methods—a choice that many consider risky, as reflected in qualitative student feedback.

This talk presents insights into who chooses to take UCIL units, their academic outcomes, and their perceptions of the experience. We capture a profile of students opting for interdisciplinary study and identify those we struggle to reach. Quantitative data confirm that UCIL units uphold academic rigor while providing opportunities to thrive. Meanwhile, qualitative feedback sheds light on the challenges students encounter and the benefits they perceive. Findings prompt reflection on strategies to engage underrepresented groups and better support all students in navigating unfamiliar academic environments successfully.

Alison Fisher is the Academic Lead for the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL) at the University of Manchester, where she oversees operational management, quality assurance, and strategic development. With over a decade of involvement in UCIL, including serving as a board member prior to her appointment as Academic Lead in 2022, Alison has played a key role in advancing interdisciplinary learning across the University.

Embracing experience in teaching: the transformative power of immersive field studies in higher education

Afroditi Koulaxi and Myria Georgiou – London School of Economics and Political Science

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

This presentation explores the innovative MC420 Creative Project, part of the Identity, Transnationalism, and the Media course at the LSE. Rooted in experiential learning, the project immerses MSc students in East London's neighbourhoods fostering critical engagement with migration, gentrification, and digitisation. Guided by the work of Doreen Massey, students examine how identities and spaces co-construct one another within the global city's evolving socio-political landscape.

As an alternative piece of assessment, the project allows students to produce creative outputs – photographic compositions, vlogs, and webpages – that capture the interplay of urban change and technological transformation. These projects highlight key pedagogical insights: bridging theory with practice, fostering cultural immersion, encouraging collaborative learning, and enhancing researcher reflexivity.

Looking ahead, the integration of generative AI promises to expand accessibility, enabling inclusive and transformative fieldwork experiences. This case study supports the potential of immersive field studies to reshape higher education as an active and inclusive journey.

Dr Afroditi-Maria Koulaxi is an LSE100 Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her interdisciplinary research explores identity and migration at the intersection of sociology, urban studies, media, and communications. Currently, Dr Koulaxi's work investigates climate-driven displacement, with a particular emphasis on the immediate aftermath of Storm Daniel and its significant impact on citizenship, the digital divide, and resilience. Additional research includes an exploration of digital culture and gender, examining how femicides are represented in media narratives and emphasising the intersections of race, class, and gender in shaping public discourse on lethal violence against women.

Myria Georgiou is Professor of Media and Communications and Head of the Department of Media and Communications at LSE. Professor Georgiou is the author and editor of five books and more than sixty peer reviewed publications. Her work has been published in English, French, Portuguese, Japanese, and Greek. She has also worked as a consultant for a number of regional and international organisations, most importantly the Council of Europe in three different projects. She has written for and been interviewed by a number of national and international media, while, before becoming a full time academic, she worked as a journalist for BBC World Service, Greek press, and the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation.

Explore the Didactical Design tool for interdisciplinary education

Timothy Bland – Utrecht University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Postgraduate

As an educator, you face some major challenges in (re)designing, teaching and evaluating interdisciplinary education. The Interdisciplinary Education Programme at Utrecht University has developed an Interdisciplinary Design Tool to support you in your role as an educator in choosing specific interdisciplinary learning objectives, activities and assessment formats, which together make up the students' interdisciplinary learning process. This instrument utilises the constructive alignment design concept for interdisciplinary education. We invite you to explore the design tool with us, and hope it might be useful for you in future occasions.

Timothy Bland is policy advisor for the Interdisciplinary Education Programme and teacher at the bachelor programme Liberal Arts and Sciences at Utrecht University. With a background in organisational sciences and change management, he has assisted the Dean for interdisciplinary education throughout the process of developing a thriving culture of interdisciplinarity at Utrecht University.

A sneak preview into The Organisational Guide for Interdisciplinary Education

Margreet van der Ham – Utrecht University

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Continuing Professional Development

The Interdisciplinary Education Programme of Utrecht University has developed an Organisational Guide, aimed at teachers that are looking to (re-)develop interdisciplinary or interdepartmental/interfaculty education. This guide comprises the entire organizational design-, execution-, and evaluation process for educational endeavors, created for the context of Utrecht University but available for all. In this lightning talk, we would like you to explore the structure of the Guide and reflect on whether the organisational process of interdisciplinary education is different in your institution and how such a Guide could be suitable in your context.

Margreet van der Ham is an experienced policy advisor at Utrecht University, with extensive knowledge of the institutions structures and processes. As part of the Interdisciplinary Education Programme, she has focused on the 'infrastructure' needed for interdisciplinary education to be successful. The Organisational Guide is one of the products she has delivered.

Hackathons as instruments of interdisciplinary thinking, engagement and community collaboration

Amanda Baker, Martha Mador and Tania Dias Fonseca – Kingston University London

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

We will showcase how Hackathons are used as instruments to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, by engaging with community and industry partners to set real-world challenges that give students the opportunity to develop a wide variety of skills and offer authentic learning experiences, giving academic staff opportunities to re-imagine learning and teaching. Our approach to in-curricular term-wide Hackathons and extra-curricular single events will be explained, with examples that include using the campus as a learning laboratory, Sustainability as an exemplary topic, and project-based groupwork. The use of design thinking methodologies and collaborative tools that support these events are effective methods for creating transformative learning experiences which foster interdisciplinary collaboration that also solve complex societal problems. We will conclude on our work to develop a practical toolkit with self-directed learning and case studies to aid lecturers to tailor Hackathons within the context of their topic areas, either in curriculum or as extra-curricular opportunities.

Amanda Baker, is the HackCentre Manager and has over 15 years experience in Knowledge Exchange projects, including creative, sustainability, and community partnerships. Has championed the development of the HackCentre across Kingston University.

Dr Martha Mador is the Head of Enterprise Education with 30 years experience in the HE sector, 20 of them in Enterprise Education, Martha has developed and led sector wide knowledge exchange networks (HEEG, KnowledgeLondon) as well as local curriculum developments at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Dr Tania Dias Fonseca is the Strategic Academic Lead for Sustainability with 20 years experience as a teacher, teacher trainer, and sustainability champion. Now leading the integration of Sustainability and Net Zero into all academic areas.

An alternate viewpoint: Bringing a medical museum into optometry teaching

Stephanie Seville and Harriet Palfreyman – University of Manchester

Theme: Outcomes from Interdisciplinary opportunities and engagement

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

We introduce an interdisciplinary workshop devised by the Museum of Medicine and Health at the University of Manchester for students beginning an Undergraduate degree in optometry. During a compulsory two-hour workshop, students interacted with museum artefacts related to the history of optometry and eye health and were challenged to create a short piece of creative fiction based on their discussions. In bringing unfamiliar objects and creative approaches into the optometry classroom, we hoped to disrupt disciplinary norms and offer students a more interdisciplinary approach to their study. Storytelling with historical objects allowed them to see optometry from the outside in and to consider why wider society might tell certain stories about medical intervention – with spooky results! This talk will explore some of these stories and consider the lessons we learned as educators and invite further community discussion on how to productively disrupt disciplinary norms with creative approaches such as this.

Harriet Palfreyman lectures in Science Communication at the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine at the University of Manchester. She is a historian of medicine by background and regularly brings approaches from the humanities into her teaching of science communication. Her research focuses on the visual and material cultures of medicine - particularly around disease, sexual health, and surgery - from the nineteenth century to the present. As Academic Lead for Manchester University's Museum of Medicine and Health she is working on expanding the collection's use in student engagement including interdisciplinary teaching and developing work on object-centred teaching and learning.

Stephanie Seville works in Professional Services as the Heritage Officer for the Museum of Medicine and Health, in the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health at the University of Manchester and has been in this post for 10 years. She has a background in managing and curating collections spanning Fine Art, Decorative Art, Social and Industrial History. Alongside collections management and public engagement, Stephanie works to increase the teaching opportunities with the medical collection across faculties.

On Getting Lost: Queerness, Interdisciplinarity, and Striving for Something Other

Joseph Appleton – London School of Economics and Political Science

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Postgraduate

I want to suggest that queerness is interdisciplinarity's bedfellow. Queer is a process of getting lost, of losing one's way, of going astray. To go astray is an enactment, a doing, a turning away from what José Esteban Muñoz has called the "epistemologically there" and "ontologically static." Away, that is, from the inadequacies of the here and now. To go astray is also to go afield. And, here, to go afield might be to cross into other disciplinary fields—toward, that is, interdisciplinary ways of knowing and understanding. Like queerness, interdisciplinarity—specifically, interdisciplinary work—asks us to question the inadequacies of the here and now as we strive toward different futures. In this talk, then, I will attend to the—often fraught, necessarily messy—nature of interdisciplinary work in the higher education classroom, suggesting that queerness, as a process of getting lost, has much to teach us about interdisciplinary collaborations.

Joseph is an interdisciplinary researcher working in cultural studies, queer studies, and critical disability studies. Their research—which is spurred by an investment in the critical potential of doubt—focuses on questions relating to agency. For example, their PhD thesis attended to various experiences of epilepsy in order to trace the fragility of agency and the enduring unpredictability that a diagnosis of epilepsy engenders. Beyond the epileptic encounter, their work turns to other realms of experience, such as grief, ecstasy, desire, fear, precarity, time, and memory. Alongside their research and writing, Joseph has a background in community arts-based practices and education. They have taught in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne, and across the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney. Currently, Joseph is an LSE100 Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences.

Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning through Discussion

Jess Grundy and Dianne Burns – University of Manchester

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Postgraduate

It is well known that discussion is an excellent modality for teaching and learning. For our PGCert in Medical and Health Education, this discussion was felt to be a vital part of the design to encourage interdisciplinary teaching and learning between the faculty and students.

The students who enter the PGCert participate from across the globe, and so an asynchronous discussion board format was selected, with the hope that this would be inclusive and prompt genuine, authentic and deep discussion (and therefore learning). We carefully constructed prompting questions throughout the PGCert, which encouraged perspectives across disciplines within healthcare.

Although there is engagement with this learning opportunity, for the past 2 years this has remained the minority. The discussion boards have not been well engaged with for the majority, despite different approaches to attract this interdisciplinary interaction which we will outline as a prompt for discussion.

Jess Grundy is a Professor of Health Professional Education and Development, with 20 years experience working in the NHS as a doctor. She is the Unit 2 Lead of PGCert MHE having been one of the initial team to develop and write the programme, and part of the team since. She also is Associate Programme Director for Staff Development for the Manchester MBChB which is the largest medical student programme in the UK. She has a Masters in Clinical Education and is Principal Fellow of AdvanceHE.

Dianne Burns RGN, MSc (Clinical Leadership), BSc Nurse Practitioner) PGCert T&L, PFHEA, Programme Director: PGCert Medical and Health Education, is a Senior Lecturer in Nursing and Midwifery at The University of Manchester, and has over 20 years teaching in higher education. As a Registered General Nurse, she has worked in a variety of clinical and community settings, including working as a Nurse Practitioner and Nursing Team Coordinator. She has a keen interest in healthcare education, educational leadership, change management and service improvement.

LSE GROUPS: outside the curriculum, across the social sciences

Ellis Saxey – London School of Economics and Political Science

Theme: Places for Interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Target Audience: Those who are new to interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate

LSE GROUPS is an intensive research opportunity for undergraduates, running full-time for two weeks at the close of each academic year. GROUPS unites students from across the social sciences to work on projects of their choice. Despite their contrasting disciplines (and end-of-term exhaustion) the participants relish the experience, and produce high-quality research papers. This talk asks: What supports the interdisciplinarity? When does it falter? And could your institution offer a similar opportunity?

Ellis Saxey works as a Senior Academic Developer at the Eden Centre in LSE. They have particular interests in the politics and ethics of pedagogy; they support LSE staff development programmes related to learning and teaching, and the student partnership project Change Makers. Ellis has facilitated LSE GROUPS, and undergraduate interdisciplinary research experience, since 2016.

Developing UCIL's online *Introduction to Interdisciplinary Learning*

Maria Kopsacheili – University of Manchester

Theme: Creating opportunities for Interdisciplinary activities

Target Audience: Those with some experience of interdisciplinary learning and teaching

Level of Study: Undergraduate/Postgraduate

At the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL), appr. 3000 undergraduate students annually complete an interdisciplinary course unit offered in different formats (online, blended, and face-to-face). Student feedback indicates the development of skills typical of interdisciplinary learning (e.g. the ability to analyse complex problems and collaborate within teams). At the same time, it highlights persistent challenges, such as students feeling overwhelmed at the start of the learning journey and lacking confidence in articulating the value of their experience.

To support student engagement and metacognition, the UCIL team is developing a new online resource: the *Introduction to Interdisciplinary Learning*. The resource—a plug-in to all units in UCIL's portfolio—is being co-created with students and unit convenors. This talk provides an overview of the structure and components of the resource, outlines lessons learnt from the development process, and invites delegate feedback and ideas for empowering the interdisciplinary learner.

Maria is a higher education professional and academic with a record of publications in my home discipline, Ancient History and Archaeology. In 2021, Maria joined the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning at the University of Manchester as a Learning and Assessment Developer. In this role, Maria collaborates closely with academic staff to develop online and blended interdisciplinary course units, providing expertise in pedagogy and innovative assessment. Recent projects include the blended unit Philosophy in Action and the online unit Creating a Sustainable World for postgraduate students. Maria is currently leading the development of an online Introduction to Interdisciplinary Learning. Maria's research and teaching background is in Archaeology and Ancient History (DPhil, University of Oxford). Prior to joining UCIL, Maria was a teaching-focused Lecturer at the University of Manchester.

Panel 1 - Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning at British Universities: Theory and Practice

Our forthcoming edited collection explores how teachers and students can (and do) collaboratively construct and practice interdisciplinary teaching and learning. Its starting point is the conditions in which these efforts take place - and are responding to. As HE institutions, the HE sector, and broader socio-economic conditions evolve, the authors argue that the arrangement, enactment and co-construction of authentic interdisciplinary classrooms must be subject to ongoing collective renegotiation and reworkings. Of particular concern, the ongoing commodification of knowledge can serve to ever narrow the scope of teaching and learning and entrench the very power structures that interdisciplinary education is well placed to critique and dismantle.

Within a neoliberalising HE sector, the collection considers the kinds of arrangements that can offer meaningful interdisciplinary experiences. Positioning the interdisciplinary classroom as a potential site of resistance, the authors advocate for its reclamation as a place to nurture critical thinking, empathy and creativity. Whilst advocating for the broader decommodification of knowledge, the authors also offer diverse practical strategies for educators to best foster interdisciplinarity that are both productive and disruptive. These include embracing productive discomfort and unlearning, reclaiming the knowledge commons, integrating creative and embodied practices, fostering relationship-rich teaching, and being attentive to the 'things in common' in interdisciplinary classrooms. By doing interdisciplinarity in ways that empower students to challenge systematic injustices and forge new relationships with the world, we open the possibility to imagine and enact sustainable, just and liveable futures to those in the classroom and beyond.

Dave Ashby is a Lecturer in Education at King's College London having developed and taught LSE100 as a Fellow at the London School of Economics 2021-2024. With a background in human geography, their interdisciplinary research draws on political ecology, anthropology and psychology to explore emerging climate politics across the axis of age. Maintaining a focus on inclusivity, material conditions and the politics of transformation, they apply methods and theories from their research to education scholarship. Their research has been published by the Leicester Institute of Advanced Studies.

Daniel Frost was an LSE100 Fellow at the London School of Economics from 2021 to 2024 and is now an independent scholar. They are a co-convenor of the Institute of Historical Research's Contemporary British History seminar, and an editor for the independent publishing house Ebb Books. Their academic research interests include the history of left-wing activism, urban and suburban studies, and pedagogy. His work has been published in Twentieth Century Communism and Daniel is the co-editor, with Dr. Evan Smith, of In solidarity, under suspicion: The British far left from 1956 (Manchester University Press, 2025).

Lukas Slothuus is Postdoctoral Research Fellow in International Relations at the University of Sussex and Visiting Fellow in Government at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His interdisciplinary research brings together environmental politics, political theory, and international political economy to understand processes of social change with a current emphasis on the politics of the transition away from fossil fuel production. His research has been published in journals including Political Studies, Energy Research & Social Science, Contemporary Political Theory, Historical Materialism, and Global Intellectual History.

Panel 2 - Interdisciplinarity in the social sciences: students' perspectives

Dr Danielle Cameron – LSE100, LSE

Adam Ahmed-Mekky, Department of International History, LSE

Krishav Arora, Department of International Relations, LSE

Madison Bryan, Department of Government, LSE

Hui Lim Chong, Department of Management, LSE

Mariam Habib Matta, Department of Government, LSE

Kyumin Lee, Department of Management, LSE

This panel will feature undergraduate students from the LSE in conversation with Dr Danielle Cameron, LSE100 Student Experience Administrator. The panellists will reflect on their experiences of completing LSE100, LSE's flagship interdisciplinary course taken by all first-year undergraduate students as part of their degree programme, as well as on interdisciplinary learning opportunities during their studies more widely. The conversation will focus on the impact of interdisciplinary learning for students – how has it shaped students' experiences of university, and what can students take from interdisciplinary courses to enhance their skills and expertise in their more discipline-focused degrees? What are the tangible benefits of interdisciplinary opportunities for students as they enter a competitive job market? What does it mean to engage in interdisciplinary learning at a specialist social science university like LSE? Panellists will consider these questions in addition to Q&A from conference attendees.

Danielle Cameron recently completed a PhD in American Studies at the University of East Anglia. Her thesis examines constructions of adulthood and childhood, age-based relationality and space in post-1980 American literature. She currently works at LSE, where she delivers communications and events to support student experience on LSE100, the School's flagship interdisciplinary course for all undergraduate students. Danielle is experienced in working with undergraduate and postgraduate students, and she has taught at the University of Hertfordshire, the University of East Anglia and LSE.

Closing plenary - Introducing TILT: a Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching

David Overend and Jenny Scoles – University of Edinburgh

Recognising the inherent challenges and immense potential of interdisciplinary education, TILT provides a structured approach to fostering successful collaborative learning. This collection of ideas, methods and resources was developed to support learners and educators interested in the possibilities of working across, and beyond, disciplines. From 2022-2024, a team of interdisciplinary education researchers at the University of Edinburgh observed, documented and critically reflected on the inaugural delivery of a new undergraduate programme at Edinburgh Futures Institute (EFI). The MA (Hons) Interdisciplinary Futures launched in September 2023, preceded by a suite of pre-honours elective courses. A mixed method approach was employed to understand the holistic experience of students and tutors on a wide range of courses, as they came together to develop skills in interdisciplinary collaboration. The key output is an online resource, which includes insights from the interdisciplinary classroom, references to educational literature and teaching theory and teaching resources. The aim is to promote and create opportunities for interdisciplinary activities within existing curricula, as well as supporting the design and development of new courses and programmes. Students were closely engaged in the process of conceptualising, reflecting and practising interdisciplinarity as TILT was developed, with a series of development workshops and input at every stage of the process. This plenary introduces TILT and each of its six sections: What is interdisciplinarity?, Working with challenges, Collaboration, Interdisciplinary methods, Assessment strategies, and Ethical practice. Elements from most, if not all, of these categories need to be in place to make interdisciplinary activities successful. TILT is now available at blogs.ed.ac.uk/tilt/.

David Overend is a researcher in interdisciplinary education, art and performance. He is currently working with Edinburgh Futures Institute as Programme Director of the MA(hons) Interdisciplinary Futures. Books include Performance in the Field: Interdisciplinary practice-as-research (Palgrave Macmillan 2023), Making Routes: Journeys in performance 2010-2020, co-authored with Laura Bissell (Triarchy Press 2021), and an edited collection, Rob Drummond: Plays with participation (Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2021). As a director, David has worked for the National Theatre of Great Britain and has toured internationally with award-winning productions.

Dr Jenny Scoles is an Academic Developer (Learning & Teaching Enhancement) at the Institute of Academic Development at the University of Edinburgh. She is Chief Editor of Teaching Matters blog and podcast, provides pedagogical support for University course and programme design, and leads the University's Learning & Teaching Conference. Her research interests include student-staff co-creation, climate pedagogy, interdisciplinary learning & teaching, professional learning, and sociomaterial methodologies. She is a Senior Fellow HEA, Affiliate of Edinburgh Futures Institute, and a Visiting Fellow at Edinburgh Napier University.