

# Cultivating a *Students as Partners* mindset: Learners and teachers as agents of change

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# Students as Partners Initiative



- Students as partners initiative
  - Process of student and teacher engagement
  - Partnership approach to co-develop an evaluation process
  - Students as change agents
- Transforming Practice Program (TPP)
  - Small, collaborative teams including a student representative
  - Cross-institutional collaboration
  - Evidence-informed approach which empowers change
- TPP team at USC
  - 3 Course Coordinators
  - 3 students
  - 2 staff from C-SALT (Centre for Support and Advancement of Learning and Teaching )
  - 1 staff member from Student Services and Engagement

# TPP Project Overview



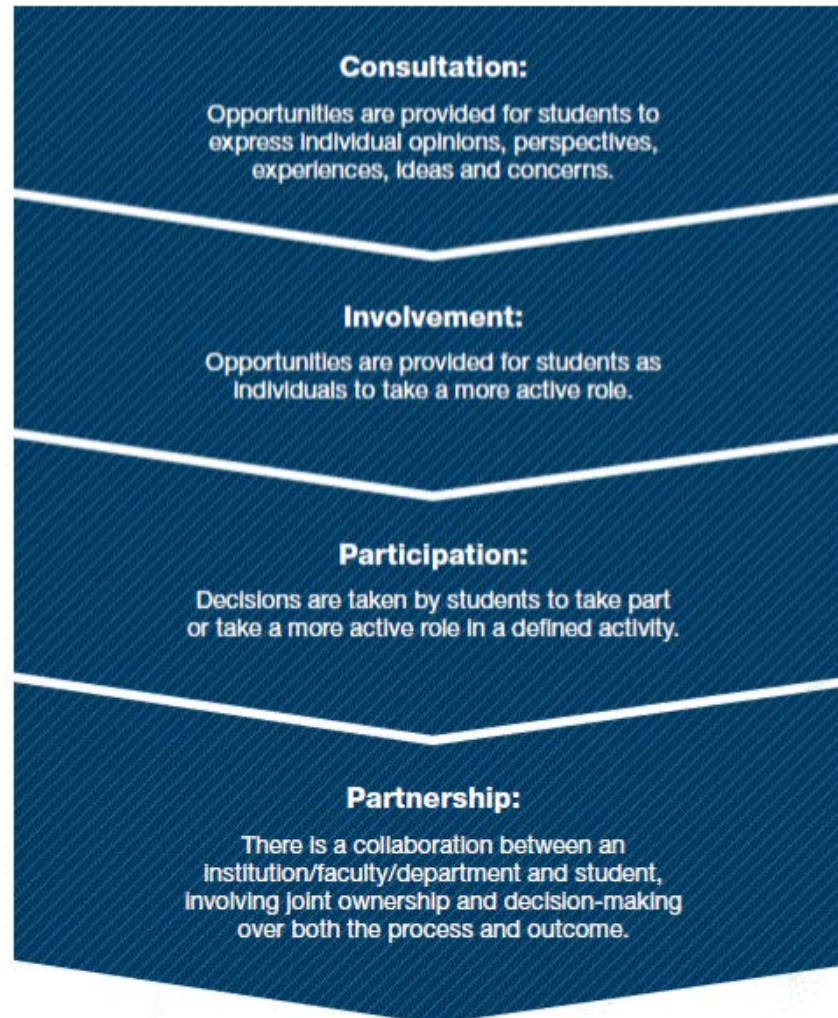
Timeframe	Student engagement activity
<b>Prior to Semester:</b>	Students designed an alternative set of five (5) quantitative and two (2) qualitative evaluation questions to trigger reflective dialogue during the experience of learning.
<b>Week 4/5: (feedback loop 1)</b>	Teachers (course coordinators) trialled the alternative questions, negotiating the meaning, intent, purpose of the questions collaboratively with students to create a sense of learning together for authentic engagement.
<b>Week 6:</b>	Teachers reviewed students' feedback and implemented responsive, timely and meaningful enhancements to the learning, teaching and assessment processes to address the students' learning needs.
<b>Week 6/7:</b>	Teachers facilitated an open dialogue about purposeful and meaningful changes based on students' feedback.
<b>Week 8: (feedback loop 2)</b>	Teachers had the option to use the alternative questions again as a means to encourage critical reflection and foster ongoing open dialogue about how students were engaging in their learning.
<b>Final week(s): (feedback loop 3)</b>	Teachers re-used the alternative questions as part of the practice of a collaborative partnership, where students had the opportunity to reflect on their deeper understanding of the elements of learning, and teachers had the opportunity to raise their awareness of ways to enhance the elements of learning (based on the students' feedback).

# Students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education – an overview model (Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014)





# The four stages of student engagement (Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014)



- Establishing partnership and collaboration
  - Composition of team
  - TPP workshop
  - Meaningful objectives
- Challenges
  - A new process
  - Developing a common language
  - Recognising diversity of staff and student experiences
- Sense of identity
  - A better understanding of the USC context – my community
  - My engagement with the university



# Values for Partnership

(Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014)



<b>Authenticity</b>	All parties have meaningful rationale for investing in partnership, and are honest about what they can contribute and the parameters of partnership
<b>Inclusivity</b>	Partnership embraces the different talents, perspectives and experiences that all parties bring, and there are no barriers (structural or cultural) that prevent potential partners getting involved
<b>Reciprocity</b>	All parties have an interest in, and stand to benefit from, working and/or learning in partnership
<b>Empowerment</b>	Power is distributed appropriately and all parties are encouraged to constructively challenge ways of working and learning that may reinforce inequalities
<b>Trust</b>	All parties take time to get to know each other, engage in open and honest dialogue and are confident they will be treated with respect and fairness
<b>Challenge</b>	All parties are encouraged to constructively critique and challenge practices, structures and approaches that undermine partnership, and are enabled to take risks to develop new ways of working and learning
<b>Community</b>	All parties feel a sense of belonging and are valued fully for the unique contribution they make
<b>Responsibility</b>	All parties share collective responsibility for the aims of the partnership, and individual responsibility for the contribution they make

- Opportunity to move on from tokenistic consultation models
- Work on a priority area for the university collaboratively
- Students and staff had distinct responsibilities
- Need to work with more students!





# Recommendations



**Empower students to take more responsibility for their learning**



**Empower teachers to take control of designing for active student engagement partnerships in learning**



**Use the mechanisms within the university governance structure to balance formal and informal, top-down and bottom-up processes for the evaluation of learning and teaching**