

# **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

## **STUDENT TRANSFORMATION**



### **PEDRIO CRITICALLY INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGIES RESEARCH NETWORK**

**International Seminar - 10 September 2015**

Exploring culturally responsive pedagogy and shifting inclusive pedagogy -  
crossing borders with international voices

This symposium aims to share and explore aspects of social justice matters within Higher Education discourses. The speakers are part of an international network of academics exploring and engaging with questions regarding diversity, inclusion and effective pedagogies in Higher Education.

'Widening participation', 'inclusion', 'inclusive pedagogy', 'access', 'diversity', 'retention', 'raising aspirations', are widely-occurring policy terms and academic discourses within the international education community. They are drawn on when referring to, or engaging with, questions of social justice and equality within and across international university institutions. What translates into practise is known to be problematic, in many cases unsuccessful, and can reflect mis-interpreted notions of inclusion. This symposium draws on the expertises of five academics working in the international higher education sector with undergraduate and graduate students.

We look forward to welcoming you to our international network of scholars and friends. Arguments will be made and stories told around the body of work known as 'culturally responsive pedagogy'. Research will be shared and conversations encouraged on the ubiquitous and complex matter of 'inclusion'. Examples of successful inclusive education stories will be provided alongside input which challenges our status quo thinking about 'widening participation' and its so-called social justice driver. We invite your stories, thoughts and your challenges for it is only through critical forms of dialogue and debate that Education as a medium and a process for learner transformation can be enabled.

## PROGRAMME

**10.00 - 10.30** Registration

**10.30 – 10.45** Welcome and Introduction  
Professor Pauline Kneale, PVC of Teaching and Learning (Plymouth University, UK)

**10.45 – 11.30** Divided and dividing discourses: conflicts with and for Inclusion. Getting down and dirty!  
Dr Suanne Gibson (Plymouth University, Devon, UK)

**11.30 – 12.15** In Pursuit of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Aotearoa NZ  
Ms Delia Baskerville (Victoria University, New Zealand)

**12.15 - 1.15** Lunch

**1.15 – 2.00** Developing Culturally Responsive Urban Instructors: The Urban Learning Program  
Dr Margaret D Clark (California State University, Los Angeles, USA)

**2.00 - 2.45** Meeting the needs of diverse students in higher education: it depends on the master you serve  
Drs Kathleen Norris EdD and Ann B Berry PhD (Plymouth State University, New Hampshire, USA)

**2.45 - 3.00** Refreshments

**3.00 – 4.00** Discussion Forum  
Back by demand - Guest Appearance: Professor Penny Jane Burke (University of Roehampton)  
Plenary Discussion Advisor/Facilitator

**4.00 - 4.30** Close & Networking Dr Suanne Gibson, Plymouth University



# ABSTRACTS



**Dr Suanne Gibson, Plymouth University**  
**Divided and dividing discourses: conflicts with and for**  
**Inclusion.**  
**Getting down and dirty!**

In the past 20 years the world of HE in the UK has experienced many changes, not least those linked to the ubiquitous term: 'inclusion'. My paper will historically locate this expression, reflecting on why it became such a popular reference in the world of education. Its growth in use, as partly linked to policy's misuse, its colonisation and various revisioned forms will be articulated. Stemming from the critical disability studies field, a critique of 'inclusive' teaching toolboxes or 'almanacs' will be made alongside an invitation to re-consider previously held views that the connected discourse of widening participation (WP) is steeped in socially just values.

In finding a way forward I suggest a more contemporary definition of inclusion: 'a community of diversity becoming a community of equals'. I also argue educators, as learners and with learners, need to get down and dirty. We are living in changing and challenging times, even more so if we openly connect ourselves and our work to that of 'social justice'. If that is your stance then your journey is and will be a political one, a difficult one of conflicts and divisions yet also rich in connections and relationships. Giroux (2003, 11) argues any form of education intent on addressing social justice is both 'a moral and political practice'. The work of Ahmed (2012) moves this on, suggesting such practices involve pushing against the flow of institutionalised, top down misinterpreted forms of inclusive thinking and/or practice.

In my view, a fresh political discourse for inclusion is needed, one that enables HE stakeholders to reflect on and re-consider how 'other' is constructed, the problematics of a 'diverse' and 'normal' binary and the way in which these terms become manifest in our work alongside the impact they have. Published research will be drawn on throughout and the paper will end asserting 'Inclusion' is about 'a community of diversity becoming a community of equals' as opposed to the current scenario- 'a community of diversity which reinforces a community of division, of haves and have nots, in the name of 'WP'- a 'just imaginary' for social inclusion' (Gale and Hodge 2014).

**Ms Delia Baskerville, Victoria University Wellington**  
**In Pursuit of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Aotearoa**  
**NZ**

Through the analysis of three experiences, this presentation highlights a journey: a quest for culturally responsive pedagogy. In all instances inclusive leaning environments were built to promote wellbeing for students in these New Zealand settings. A full immersion marae professional development experience, an approach emerging from a storytelling process, and a collaborative performing arts project situated in an indigenous Māori immersion schooling system (Kura Kaupapa Māori) contribute to this understanding. A recent case study then provides a focus to contextualise these findings and identify future concerns.

The foundations of this research are situated in the three principles of our bi-cultural Treaty of Waitangi: protection, partnership, and participation. This Treaty, signed in 1840 between the British Crown (the Monarch) and more than 500 chiefs foreshadowed New Zealand becoming a colony of Britain, and Maori became British subjects. It is in the pursuit of honouring this treaty that this journey began, and continues to gain momentum.

**Dr Margaret D Clark, California State University, Los Angeles, USA**  
**Developing Culturally Responsive Urban Instructors: The Urban Learning Program**

The Urban Learning Program is a baccalaureate degree program offered by the Charter College of Education at California State University, Los Angeles. Its mission is to prepare elementary education and special education teachers to teach in highly diverse, inclusive public schools in urban communities. The program is one of its kind in the United States, with core values that espouse inclusivity, collaboration and educational equity. ULRN differs from traditional graduate teacher preparation programs in California in that it infuses major depth and breadth coursework with teacher preparation coursework in a developmental sequence. Students in the program study issues that provide the context for teaching, such as diversity, critical thinking, community literacy and contemporary urban society paired with courses in the social sciences addressing critical race theory, intercultural communication, development of urban society, and child welfare law. Taken together, this course of student, paired with content knowledge and methodological preparation required for teacher preparation allow us to develop culturally responsive elementary education and special education teachers who come from, study in, and return to the urban schools of greater Los Angeles.

**Drs Kathleen Norris EdD, and Ann B. Berry, PhD**  
**Associate Professors, Plymouth State University, New Hampshire, USA**

**Meeting the Needs of Diverse Students in Higher Education: It Depends on the Master You Serve**

As faculty in Higher Education, we perceive many distinct and, at times, competing factors that demand our time and energy: holding students to high standards, serving and accommodating the diverse needs of our students, and institutional mandates to retain and ultimately graduate as many students as possible. Some students who are challenged by 'otherness' place demands on our time and stretch our abilities to meet their needs. We want to support and accommodate them so they can be successful, but in some cases this may seem to require a modification of course requirements, and raise concerns about holding high standards. Other demands relate more directly to the policy and procedures of the institution and the competing demand to have a profitable service delivery model. In addition, most university faculty have not had specialized training to prepare to work with the increasingly diverse students in our classrooms.

University faculty can find themselves in the middle of philosophical and practical conflicts that are not often openly discussed. We are left with a central question: which one of these "masters" should we serve? During this presentation we will put forth the argument that as instructors in higher education, we have more power than we might think or it might appear. In fact, we will argue, we have a more important role to play to advance social justice. It is our responsibility to advocate on the behalf of all students and to provide a socially just education, and to adjust our practices to meet this goal. But it is also our responsibility to orientate our students to social justice and guide, or challenge, them to define their part in a socially just society. During this presentation we will describe several courses we teach in the graduate programs at Plymouth State University that meet this overarching objective.

# NOTES

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Thank you for attending this event.

If you'd like to tweet about this event @PU\_PedRIO #socialjustice

Website: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning>

