The Students’ Association: An Authentic Partner Enabling Student Success At and Beyond University

Oral, Students as partners

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Abstract:
In our presentation, we will illustrate authentic collaboration between the student body and the university via the conduit of a students’ association providing support for student voice.

In the initial part of the presentation, we will concentrate on how the students’ association lobbied the university to improve institutional buy-in for student representation on committees and as class representatives, and how a rigorous training programme for the students by the students’ association improved the information flow. We posit that students being recognised and valued as a partner will have long-term beneficial benefits for the university.

We will also present a case study on how neglecting the partnership principle can create havoc, lasting ill-will and be detrimental to successful collaboration between students and university.

We will conclude our presentation with clear examples of what we consider best collaborative practice in identifying the importance of listening to student voice, understanding and addressing student concerns and acknowledging that without students, a university would be a research institute only.

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