Multi-Stakeholder Socio-Educational Co-Learning: From Student-Centred to Ecosystem-Centred Education

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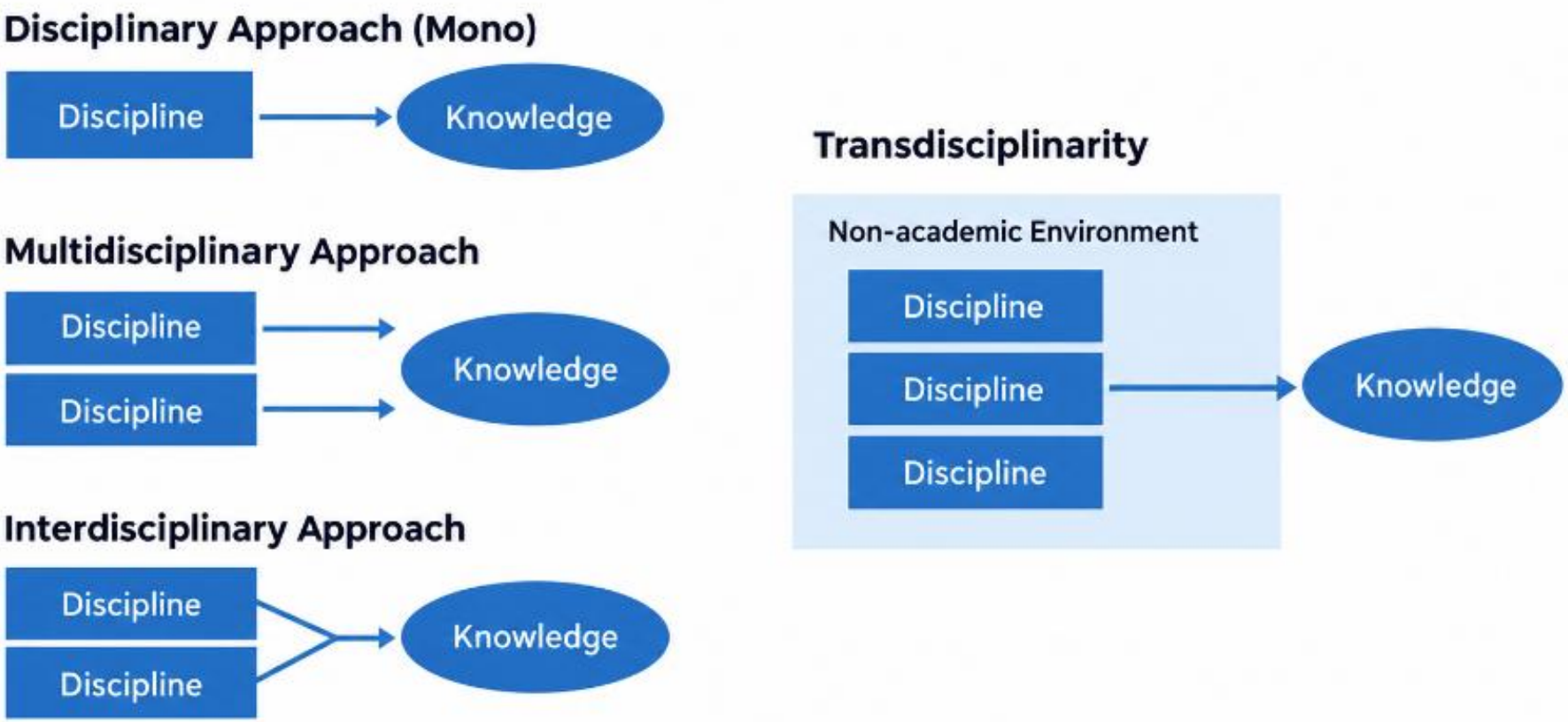
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KNOWLEDGE FRAMEWORKS

Logic of Transition to Transdisciplinarity



Transdisciplinarity in Practice: From Established Approaches to Ecosystem-Centred Co-Learning

Why Work-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning and Service-Learning Remain Underused

External Organisational Barriers

- **Known Frameworks, Low Adoption:** Faculty are familiar with WBL, PBL, and Service-Learning, yet practical implementation remains extremely low.
- **Heavy Administrative Load & KPIs:** Excessive reporting and rigid performance metrics drain time and creative motivation.
- **Rigid Curricular Standards:** Strict course structures and accreditation rules prevent flexible, inter-departmental experimentation.
- **Off-Campus Logistical Complexity:** Establishing and maintaining structured learning spaces inside external companies is labor-intensive and friction-heavy.

Internal Cognitive and Behavioural Barriers

- **Limited Awareness of Benefits:** Educators may be familiar with innovative teaching approaches without fully understanding their potential value for teaching, learning, and ecosystem-level collaboration.
- **Cognitive and Behavioural Inertia:** Established routines and discipline-bound mindsets make educators reluctant to reconsider familiar practices and adopt new collaborative roles.
- **Reluctance to Invest in Change:** New approaches require time, effort, and professional commitment. Without a clear understanding of the potential returns, educators may prefer familiar practices over investing in new competencies and collaborative formats.

Key Insight: Faculty must be engaged not merely as recipients of professional development, but as investors in knowledge and educational change—investing their time, expertise, creativity, and professional commitment in co-creating a learning ecosystem that generates value for all stakeholders.

From Student-Centred to Ecosystem-Centred Co-Learning - the Conceptual Shift

Redesigning How Learning Is Organised Across the Educational Ecosystem

Traditional Paradigm: Student-Centred Approach

Learning takes place within established educational boundaries:

- Students are sent to external workplaces for practical experience.
- Learning outcomes focus primarily on students.
- External stakeholders contribute through placements, assignments, or consultation.
- Faculty coordinate learning activities within existing curricular structures.

New Paradigm: Ecosystem-Centred Co-Learning

Learning becomes a shared activity across the educational ecosystem:

- The university becomes a hub for multi-stakeholder interaction.
- Students, faculty, employers, schools, and administrators learn through shared projects.
- Learning outcomes are designed for all participating groups.
- Faculty learn to design the organisational and pedagogical conditions for ecosystem co-learning.

Core Shift: The focus shifts from organising learning opportunities for students to designing an ecosystem in which all stakeholders contribute to and benefit from shared learning.

The Primary Catalyst: Student Ambassadors (10–15% Core)

Building Responsibility Through Student Autonomy and Project Ownership

Student Ambassadors as Ecosystem Builders

• **From Passivity to Responsibility**: A motivated core of students initiates action, takes responsibility for decisions, and follows through on commitments. Their example can encourage wider student participation **The objection 'students won't take initiative' is false.** A highly motivated 10–15% core inspires and pulls the remaining 85% into active participation.

• **Student-Led Career Guidance**: Student ambassadors return to their former schools, share their educational experience, and help prospective students explore university and career pathways.

• **Bottom-Up Stakeholder Engagement**: Students identify real-world project opportunities, initiate contact with employers and community partners, and help bring them into the university learning ecosystem.

• **Learning Through Project Ownership**: By planning and delivering socio-educational projects, students develop autonomy, responsible decision-making, leadership, and the ability to turn decisions into results.



Key Insight: Student ambassadors are not merely representatives of the university.
They are initiators of action who learn to take responsibility for decisions, commitments, and outcomes.

Designing the Co-Learning Ecosystem

Organisational and Pedagogical Design for Multi-Stakeholder Transdisciplinary Learning

Organisational Design

Creating the conditions for collaboration

- **Multi-Stakeholder Engagement:** Bringing students, faculty, employers, schools, and community partners together around shared initiatives.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Assigning meaningful roles, decision-making authority, commitments, and expected results to each participant.
- **Gamified Interaction**: Creating an engaging environment with challenges, role-based interaction, team tasks, and opportunities for initiative and collaboration.
- **Student-Led Initiative:** Empowering student ambassadors to identify opportunities, initiate connections, and mobilise participants around real-world projects.
- **Peer-to-Peer Networks**: Enabling senior students to guide less experienced peers and share practical knowledge through collaborative action.

Pedagogical Design

Creating the conditions for shared learning

- **Transdisciplinary Project Design:** Framing real-world challenges that require different disciplines and stakeholder perspectives.
- **Shared Learning Outcomes:** Defining what each participant learns through contributing to the common project.
- **Game-Based Learning by Doing**: Using simulations, scenarios, and collaborative challenges to engage participants in decision-making, responsible action, and tangible project outcomes.
- **Action Before Understanding**: Engaging participants in unfamiliar tasks before they fully understand the underlying principles, allowing them to discover the logic through experience and reflection, and from peers.
- **Reflection and Knowledge Formation**: Helping participants make sense of their experience, recognise underlying principles, and develop knowledge they can apply in new situations.

Key Principles: Organisational design creates the roles, relationships, and rules of interaction. Pedagogical design engages participants in meaningful action first, allowing understanding and knowledge to emerge through experience, peer-to-peer learning, and reflection.

Multi-Stakeholder Co-Learning Architecture

Role Transformation and Shared Learning Outcomes Across Stakeholder Groups

1. Students (Ambassadors)

From passive learners to responsible project initiators and leaders

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Project ownership and accountability
- Independent decision-making
- Peer leadership and mentoring
- Project delivery

2. Faculty — Knowledge Investors & Ecosystem Facilitators

From knowledge delivery to investing expertise in shared learning and value creation

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Organisational and pedagogical design
- Transdisciplinary project development
- Facilitation of gamified co-learning environment
- Strategic Knowledge Investment
- Value Creation

3. Employers (Industry partners)

From recruiters to contributors to shared learning

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Mentoring and project co-design
- Engagement with emerging talent
- Contribution to authentic learning challenges

4. Administrators (University)

From administrative oversight to ecosystem coordination

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Stakeholder network management
- Adaptive quality assurance
- Coordination of collaborative educational initiatives

5. High School Students

From prospective applicants to active participants in university learning

Key Learning Outcomes:

- Career exploration
- Early project participation
- Collaboration with university students, faculty and employers

Key Innovation: Learning Outcomes are not isolated to students — value creation and role evolution happen synchronously for all ecosystem actors.

Socio-Educational Project: From Real-World Challenge to Shared Learning

Designing Multi-Stakeholder Socio-Educational Projects

Empowering Quality Ambassadors

- **A Shared Real-World Challenge:** Start with a challenge relevant to several stakeholder groups, connecting educational goals with community, institutional, or industry needs.
- **Complementary Roles and Responsibilities:** Students initiate and coordinate activities; faculty design and facilitate learning; employers contribute professional expertise; administrators enable collaboration; school students participate as researchers and contributors.
- **Learning Through Joint Action:** Teams investigate the challenge, exchange perspectives, make decisions, develop solutions, and deliver a tangible result.
- **Visible Results and Shared Value:** Projects produce something meaningful: an event, exhibition, prototype, community initiative, or practical solution. Each stakeholder group gains relevant experience and value.
- **Reflection, Feedback, and Continuity:** Participants review outcomes, reflect on their contributions, and use feedback to improve the next project. Successful initiatives can become recurring activities and lasting partnerships.



Key Takeaway: A project is not an academic assignment that a student completes for a lecturer. It is a collaborative activity centred on a real-world problem, in which different participants take action, learn from one another and produce a shared outcome.

Strategic Comparison: Traditional WBL/PBL vs. Co-Learning Ecosystem

From individual student learning to shared value creation

Dimension	Traditional WBL/PBL	Co-Learning Ecosystem
Project Setting & Scope	Learning organised around student placements or defined projects with external organisations.	Projects connect students, faculty, employers, schools, and other stakeholders around shared challenges.
Organisation & Coordination	Coordination often depends on individual placements, agreements, and faculty arrangements.	Roles, responsibilities, resources, and interaction are designed as part of a shared project environment.
Learning Outcomes	Primarily focused on student competencies and academic requirements.	Designed for all participating groups, alongside the project's shared practical outcomes.
Faculty Role	Subject expert, supervisor, or coordinator of student learning.	Ecosystem designer, knowledge investor, and facilitator of shared learning.
Stakeholder Participation	External partners provide placements, tasks, expertise, or mentoring.	Stakeholders co-design activities, contribute expertise, make decisions, and learn through participation.
Learning Process	Learning through work experience or project completion, with reflection varying by design.	Learning through joint action, role-based interaction, peer exchange, reflection, and feedback.
Societal Value Creation	Students gain work experience or complete a project addressing a real-world task.	Stakeholders jointly address a social need, combining their resources and perspectives to create value for the wider community.

Key Takeaway: The shift elevates faculty from external task consultants to true Ecosystem Architects while creating value for all stakeholders.

From University Promotion to Career Exploration

How a recruitment challenge evolved into a multi-stakeholder project

1. The Problem

Faculty were expected to promote their programmes through repeated school visits and recruitment

2. The Turning Point

Instead of advertising the university, we set a different goal: help school pupils discover the world of professions and make more informed career choices.

3. The Unexpected Expansion

Students became career guides. Parents became interested in young people's professional futures. Among them were employers who could bring real-world experience, professional contacts, and insight into career opportunities.

4. The Project Design

We connected these interests in a shared initiative: students, schools, parents, faculty, and employers contributing to a meaningful career exploration experience.

5. The Resulting Shift

University promotion became a by-product of creating genuine value. The university gained visibility and prospective students, while participants gained experience, knowledge, and new connections.

Key Insight: Start with a meaningful social need, not with the institution's need to promote itself.
When people recognise their own interest in the project, they become participants rather than an audience to be persuaded.

Co-Learning Sandbox is about Quality of Education

A Space for Experimentation, Shared Learning, and Continuous Quality Improvement

DESIGN

Create the stage: define roles, rules, shared goals, and meaningful challenges.

PLAY & CO-LEARN

Bring stakeholders together to experiment, take responsibility, exchange knowledge, and create shared value through projects.

REFLECT & FEEDBACK

Explore what each participant learned, what value was created, and what could work better.

IMPROVE & REPEAT

Refine project design, strengthen learning outcomes, and apply successful practices in new projects.



Key Takeaway: The Co-Learning Sandbox turns joint projects into a space where all stakeholders learn through action and contribute to the continuous improvement of educational quality.

READY TO BUILD YOUR CO-LEARNING SANDBOX?

From faculty development to ecosystem design in practice

CO-LEARNING ECOSYSTEM DESIGN WORKSHOP

Turn one real challenge into a shared learning project.

A hands-on workshop for university leaders, educators, and quality improvement teams.



01

IDENTIFY

Choose a meaningful real-world challenge.

02

CO-DESIGN

Define shared value, roles, responsibilities, and learning outcomes.

03

BUILD THE SANDBOX

Use gamified interaction to learn through action.

04

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Plan a first project and improve it through feedback.

START WITH **One meaningful challenge. One jointly designed project. A new way to learn with your ecosystem.**

Don’t just prepare students for the real world. Design projects in which the real world learns with them.