Students as partners: launch of new national network

On Friday 23 October Dr Amani Bell and two of the Sydney Teaching Colloquium student ambassadors, Suji Jeong and Longen Lan, travelled to the University of Queensland for the first national roundtable on students as partners.

The roundtable was an activity of Dr Kelly Matthew's OLT Fellowship Students as partners: reconceptualising the role of students in science degree programme curriculum development.

For those unfamiliar with the term, students as partners means involving students as genuine contributors to all aspects of university life, and examples range from co-designing curricula to student-led peer mentoring programs. While Kelly's Fellowship has a particular focus on science, it also extends beyond this to all disciplines.

The roundtable participants discussed models, case studies, practical strategies and challenges associated with students as partners initiatives, guided by input from national and international experts, including students.

I took away from the day a paradigm shifting idea that educators are not necessarily the sole developers of curriculum, and that an integrated students as partners approach is a viable alternative to getting students involved in shaping their university experience. (Longen)

What I learned from the roundtable is that students are grappling with various issues and problems while academics are doing their best to address them. Ultimately students as partners initiatives will empower students to shape their learning experiences. (Suji)

Kelly has proposed a national network of students as partners practitioners and plans a conference at the end of her fellowship in late 2016. For further information and to join the network, please click here.

At the University of Sydney please contact Dr Amani Bell or Dr Tai Peseta for further discussion about