Interdisciplinarity – Creating space to push the disciplinary boundaries in academia

Abstract: This panel examines the challenge of interdisciplinarity in education at Lund University drawing on the experiences from multiple perspectives. The invited panelists will share their knowledge and experiences in this domain of crossing traditional academic disciplines. Starting from the question of why we need interdisciplinarity at Lund University, the panel will also explore what we understand by the concept; how it is practised in different settings at LU and some of the challenges and opportunities faced. In an increasingly complex and inter-connected world, interdisciplinary education can be a powerful approach to pedagogy that prepares students, teachers and researchers to engage the wicked problems of our time.

MODERATOR
Vasna Ramasar is an Associate Senior Lecturer in the Division of Human Ecology, Lund University with a research focus on sustainability and the interactions between humans and natures from a systemic perspective focused on justice. She teaches across several interdisciplinary programmes as well as herself, having been a member of an interdisciplinary doctoral research school, LUCID. She has a multi-disciplinary background spanning from geology to development studies with environmental sciences, health studies and political economy along the way. Vasna is constantly seeking to understand how we best balance disciplinarity, inter-disciplinarity and trans-disciplinarity in the work we do for sustainability.

PANEL PARTICIPANT
Kristina Jönsson is Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science and promoted Excellent Teaching Practitioner in 2012. She is the coordinator of the newly established Graduate School Agenda 2030, which has an interdisciplinary approach with PhD students from all eight faculties at Lund University and offers interdisciplinary research courses.

PANEL PARTICIPANT
Åsa Lindberg-Sand is Associate Professor at Division for Higher Education Development (AHU). She has taught educational sciences at Lund University since the 1990’s. Besides teaching and research in higher education, she has held a row of different positions as director of study, university quality coordinator and as the head of the Centre for Educational Development (now: AHU). Her research interests focus student assessment, supervision and doctoral education.
PANEL PARTICIPANT
Mikael Sundström is a senior lecturer in Political Science, and the Director of Studies at Graduate School, a “virtualised department” at the Faculty of Social Sciences that manages four interdisciplinary master programmes.

PANEL PARTICIPANT
Karin Steen has a PhD in Sustainability Science from Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS), where she works as researcher and teacher. She teaches at interdisciplinary international Masters at Lund University. She is the Director of studies for Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science (LUMES) and the Director for the Master of Science in Development at Graduate School at the Social Science Faculty. She is a part of the Pedagogic Academy at the Social Science Faculty with the title excellent teacher. She is interested in interdisciplinary and feminist pedagogic practice, focusing on the democratic classroom.

PANEL PARTICIPANT
Matilda Byström is the vice president of Lund University Student Unions Association (LUS). Within Lund University there are nine student unions who all works with monitoring the education given to the students and working for the goal to make the sure that all the students gets the most, and the best, out of their time at the university. Her job is, along with her colleague, to make sure that the student unions voices, and through them the students, are heard within the universities central organisation. She mainly focuses on the educational matters and while working with all student unions she have the privilege to encounter a broad student-perspective concerning pedagogics and quality in education.