Re-imaginging the Future of Higher Education: exploring the co-operative university

We Build the Road as we Travel: routemaps to a co-operative university
Professor Rebecca Boden, Roehampton University

Social Science Centre, Lincoln: a new type of dissident institution
Professor Mike Neary, University of Lincoln

The Co-operative University: who pays for what?
Mr Dan Cook, University of Bristol

Thursday 19th June 2014
14.00 – 16.30
Room 410
Graduate School of Education,
35 Berkeley Square, University of Bristol

Booking: To book a place or for further information, please contact:
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SWHE Co-ordinators:
Dr Lisa Lucas (University of Bristol) and Professor Rajani Naidoo (University of Bath)
Abstracts and Biographies

We Build the Road as we Travel: routemaps to a co-operative university

Abstract: In the reformation, marketisation and commercialisation of higher education, the primary governance, financial and organisational model deployed has been capitalist and corporate—universities are urged to become more like revenue-seeking private firms. But universities are organisations that are important in social, economic and cultural terms and which produce significant public and common knowledge goods. The revenue-seeking corporate form is ill-suited to such a mission. Co-operative forms offer viable alternatives to the conventional corporate model which might enable universities to more effectively fulfil their social, economic and cultural mission. However, they have, as yet, only rarely been deployed as the organising principle of universities. This paper offers the beginnings of a routemap for the co-operativisation of higher education.

Professor Rebecca Boden is professor of critical management at the University of Roehampton Business School. An accountant by training and inclination, Rebecca researches and publishes extensively on how regimes of governance, financial and management control constitute universities as sites of knowledge creation. She is currently a partner on the UNIKE project—a major EU-funded Initial Training Network programme on universities in the knowledge economy.

Social Science Centre, Lincoln: a new type of dissident institution

Abstract: The Social Science Centre, Lincoln provides free co-operative higher education. I will describe the processes through which the Social Science Centre came into being, the way in which it operates and some of the theoretical ideas on which it is based. The final part of the paper will look at challenges for the Centre as well as plans for the future.

Professor Mike Neary is the Professor of Sociology at the University of Lincoln. From 2007-2014 he was the Dean of Teaching and Learning at the University of Lincoln and from 2011-2014 the Director of the Graduate School. Before taking up his post at Lincoln he taught Political Sociology at the University of Warwick (1994-2007). Prior to becoming an academic Mike worked in youth and community education in South London (1980-1994). In 2007 he was given a national award for his teaching by the Higher Education Academy. Mike is a founder member of the Social Science Centre, Lincoln, which provides free, co-operative higher education.

The Co-operative University: who pays for what?

Abstract: Against a backdrop of increasing inequality, opportunity and risk, we need a higher education that addresses the pressing concerns faced by society. The Co-operative University potentially offers a distinctive and radical model of mainstream higher education with the potential to provide a peerless higher education, secure public benefits and increased access, with affordable fees, and provides an institutional form to address the concerns and ambitions of the ‘the great age of participation coming’. What do we want the co-operative university to achieve? Which models of the co-operative university might we therefore follow? How much funding is needed and where will it come from? What legal considerations are relevant? In the tradition of the Rochdale Pioneers, this session will look at the practical implications for business planning pregnant within the idea of a co-operative university, and will explore a range of possible futures.

Mr Dan Cook has worked in managerial roles at the universities of Exeter, Southampton and Bristol, and will shortly be joining the Higher Education Statistics Agency. Dan is a student of Higher Education and a recent graduate of the MBA in Higher Education Management at the Institute of Education, University of London, where his major project was titled ‘Realizing the Co-operative University’. Dan blogs at http://coopuni.wordpress.com/