

KEYNOTE by Klara Bolander Laksov



As Director of the Centre for the Advancement of University teaching, www.su.se/ceul I strive to support the university as an organisation to develop good conditions for learning, both for students and staff. This is done in collaboration with colleagues at the department of Education and distributed all over Stockholm University and in constant dialogue with the management of the university. I am also a researcher in higher education and medical education. Part of the time I am also the director of a research group on learning in clinical contexts at Karolinska Institutet.

Knotworking as Approach to Academic Development – a collaborative story

As higher education continues to evolve and adapt to societal changes and requirements, academic development is in a constant state of motion, seeking new spaces, arenas, and collaborations to aid, support, and enhance teaching and learning in higher education. The sustainability of academic development initiatives, however, is often hindered by factors beyond our control, such as shifts in funding allocations within the university, collaborators retiring or transitioning to new positions, and organizational changes.

In this keynote, I will explore how the concept of "knotworking" - a concept which depicts the interaction between systems, their practices, actors and elements as threads in a 'knot' - can empower academic developers and educators to create more favorable conditions for sustainable academic development. By revisiting Yrjö Engeström's activity theory and some of his key concepts, I will provide a framework for understanding academic development and its activities within the ever-changing landscape where it must interact and collaborate through activities aimed at both pulling and pushing within the intricate web of engagements that define our work.