



# SASC Instructional Assistants as Pedagogical Partners in Course Design

Just and Equitable Teaching Microcredential  
Capstone Presentation - Spring 2024  
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# The Student Academic Success Center at CU Boulder: Framing The Gap

The Student Academic Success Center (SASC) at CU Boulder speaks to 'the gap':

- Through decades of *asset-based* support for historically excluded students at CU Boulder

Predominantly first generation, lower SES, Students of Color

- By offering academic courses, advising, and programming to enhance success, connection, and pathways

McNeill Academic Program, TRiO Student Support Services, McNair Scholars Program, White Antelope/First Nations Program, SASC course sections

- In hiring an average of 40 undergraduate students each semester as Instructional Assistants in SASC classes

STEM and Humanities/Social Sciences courses, including Leadership Studies

# JET Capstone Project: SASC Instructional Assistants as Student Pedagogical Partners

- Expand the scope of SASC Instructional Assistant (IA) influence as leaders in the classroom
  - Adapt components of the CU Boulder [Students as Partners](#) model, to\*:
    - Improve teaching and learning through shared partnership
    - Challenge deeply held beliefs about the traditional roles of teachers and learners
    - Provide spaces for equity-seeking individuals to improve teaching and learning
- Amplify the ongoing success that comes from the SASC IA role in cultivating connection, belonging, and a sense of purpose among and between students who are persistently less visible on a PWI, with integration of the Students as Partners model to further “signal the inclusion of a group of people traditionally excluded from educational analysis and practice” (Cook-Sather, 2018)
- Implement components of the Students as Partners model in collaboration with the IAs for the fall 2024 SASC section of ARSC 2000: Constructions of Knowledge/Ways of Knowing course

\*the three objectives listed are outlined on the CU Boulder Students as Partners webpage

# Context within the Scholarship of Just and Equitable Teaching

*"Whoever teaches learns in the act of teaching, and whoever learns teaches in the act of learning"*

~ Paulo Freire (1996, 2000)

from *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*

Bringing together the concepts of *self esteem* and *belonging* (e.g., hooks, 2009 and Artze-Vega et al., 2023) as well as adding dimension to "*high opportunity engagement zone[s]*" (Artze-Vega et al., 2023), the Students as Partners model expands on the SASC IA framework through the intentional centering of student knowledge, experience, and voice in course design

Specific to the highly diverse SASC demographic, the Students as Partners model resonates with Yosso's framing of *community cultural wealth* (2005) with relation to the *capital* that students who have been historically excluded bring to education contexts and supports their critical role in shaping course design as well as just and equitable presence in teaching and learning spaces

# Aligning SASC IA Hiring and Students as Partners Practices

Adapt the current process of hiring for IAs who apply for the SASC section of ARSC 2000: Constructions of Knowledge/Ways of Knowing course:

- Currently, potential IAs are nominated by faculty, peers, or by self-nomination and must have successfully completed the course for which they are applying to be an IA
- The existing IA hiring model is contingent upon the relationship between faculty who are hiring and potential/returning IAs, which facilitates the SAP approach
- For fall 2024, ARSC 2000 IA recruitment/interviews will include openness to learn more about Students as Partners in course design

# Pilot Action Plan and Timeline

Review SASC section of the ARSC 2000: Constructions of Knowledge/Ways of Knowing course goals with Academic Director	May 2024
Communicate Students as Partners vision with potential ARSC 2000 IAs	May 2024, in preparation for fall
Course design sessions with ARSC 2000 IAs during training week and in weekly meetings through the semester	Beginning August 2024
Implement fall 2024 SASC section of the ARSC 2000 course with 'liquid' syllabus and Students as Partners approach	Fall semester 2024
Assessment - beyond assignments and FCQs - with representative stakeholders, to co-generate the experience and efficacy of the SASC IA<>Students as Partners initiative	AY 24-25

# SASC IAs and Students as Partners Collaborative Network and Resources

- **Jacie Moriyama, Student Services Portfolio Manager, ASSET/CTL  
Student Technology Consultants and Pedagogical Consultants**
- **SASC Student Leaders, Instructional & Administrative Team**
- **Learning Assistant Program - Pedagogy Course**
- **Center for Teaching and Learning, CU Boulder  
JET Cohort  
Growing Community of Practice**

**Sincere Thanks to All  
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resources and support!**