Higher Education in Transition - HOT Manifesto

Imagine....

What if your development was more important than your achievements at the university?

What if education prepared us for an unknown future?

What if learning was driven by intrinsic motivation?

What if ...?

Do you also see the need to ask and explore these kinds of questions within the UvA?

This is a call to unleash the imagination about the future of Higher Education to meet the challenges of our time. This requires imagination, administrative time, guts, money, cooperation and a sense of adventure. Under the banner HOT - Higher Education in Transition - students, faculty and policy staff together are trying to imagine a UvA where such questions are central. We don't have a solution with HOT. We are together seeking new perspectives on better Higher Education for the Future. We don't have a better system, we don't represent anyone, but we hope you'll be inspired and want to explore with us. Consider this an invitation to join us in thinking creatively about our education system. If you are touched by any of the questions think with us: what opportunities for rethinking current education do you see for yourself, your immediate environment and the broader education system?

What if education was a shared expedition with unknown destinations?

These times and the state of the world constantly demand new knowledge, skills, attitudes and perspectives. These cannot be fixed all at once, but must be reinvented again and again. Imagine teachers and students together acquiring new knowledge, skills and perspectives. They decide together what and how to learn, developing through interactions and shared curiosity. Learning becomes dynamic and stimulates creativity and innovation to which everyone actively contributes.

What if the UvA was our favorite hangout?

Imagine if the university were the ideal hangout. Then education would have a lively and inviting atmosphere where students and faculty enjoy spending time. Spaces would be flexible and comfortable, conducive to both formal classes and informal conversations. Technology and other resources would be accessible everywhere, encouraging spontaneous brainstorming and collaborative learning. The campus would act as a community center, where art, culture, creative making and recreation come together with academic exploration. All of this would transform education into a continuous, interactive and social process.

What if we were allowed to choose our own learning path?

Every student and teacher is different, comes with different questions, and has different needs. Imagine if you could shape your own study or subject, focus yourself on the learning goals you find important, and shape education together with your fellow students, teachers or colleagues inside and outside the university. That you learn what you find important, where your interests lie. Together with your fellow students and teachers you co-create where education is going and develop new knowledge. That you can be surprised by new things.

What if learning was driven by intrinsic motivation?

Imagine that everything you learn or teach you really want to know or be able to do. That you always know why you learn something, and that you also have the space to choose for yourself what you learn, study or teach. Of course, you do not make these choices on your own, but coordinate them with (fellow) students and teachers. That there is room for your curiosity and motivation to learn and that you also learn something that you are confident will be useful and important in the future.

What if learning was about living together?

Imagine if learning focused more on living together. Then education becomes more than just imparting knowledge and skills. Instead of pursuing our individual successes, we can contribute to the well-being of us as a community, and the natural and human systems around us. That education contributes to connection in a learning environment where diversity of perspectives and approaches can flourish.

What if we never stopped learning?

Learning remains essential, even after college and during your teaching career. Imagine if there were room to continue learning throughout your life. Finished with your education or basic education qualification as a teacher too often means finished learning. Educational institutions are opportunities for us to emphasize learning, but these opportunities need not be limited to formal training. An openness to seeing education as a thread running through our lives, what would that require of ourselves, our educational institutions and our collaborations with partners in the social field?

What if there were no diplomas, tests, grades?

Imagine if subjects, performance and merit did not require extrinsic assessment, but focused on intrinsic pillars of quality and development. That faculty and students receive the opportunities and guidance to work on their development from intrinsic motivation

and reflective power. What if college was not a tool for resume-building, but helped you become the person you would like to be in the world?

What if our development was more important than our achievements?

Sometimes education seems to be only about achievement. Imagine if education were about your growth, learning and development as a student, teacher or teaching assistant. Even if this meant not always getting the best results right away. That more value would be placed on the process of progress and reflection rather than achieving goals or immediate successes. Where failure is possible, because then you learn.

What if learning was play?

Imagine if education were like a game, with enough challenge to learn further, but also enough freedom to choose the direction and form. Coming up with ideas, trying out possibilities, seeing what happens with them, with the goal of coming up with new ideas and possibilities. Just because it's fun and exciting, both for students and teachers. Together. What specifically could education inspired by these principles look like?

What if we learned in the midst of society?

Imagine that precisely what you learn or teach feels important to share with others. With other students or colleagues, with your roommates, with your neighbors. Learning is there to make the world a better place, to solve important questions facing society and the world today. Precisely because you learn and are really curious about something, you are the one who can think along to make society a better place for everyone. By learning from each other, exchanging knowledge and asking innovative questions.