1

The Key Concepts in the Study of Student Politics and Representation in Higher Education

Manja Klemenčič

Introduction with Definition of Key Terms

Since the emergence of the first mediaeval universities, students in higher education (HE) have always been a distinct social category, with distinct social identity, social roles, and rights.[1] A right for free access to HE or favorable taxation for student work or government-subsidized student loans or discounted public transportation are some examples of such rights. Students have also been regarded a distinct consumer group. Commercial companies offer students discounts on products and services. Companies devise targeted marketing strategies for student consumers, such as employing "student ambassadors" on college campuses to market their products or employing "student influencers" for online marketing. Students emerge also as a distinct political group with common political orientations and group-based political behavior, which is especially visible in student movements with protests and other forms of contentious collective action. The propensity to collective student political engagements lies in the characteristics of studentship as a life stage, which is (for most but not all) that of "being free and becoming" (Barnett, 2007, p. 3). Developmentally, studentship (as emerging adulthood) has been associated with higher levels of cognitive, emotional, and practical maturity and with nurturing idealist (and abstract) ideas (Jensen, 2008). HE institutions with multiple and overlapping social networks and culture of free and critical inquiry and exchange of ideas are fertile grounds for the cultivation and organization of student interests.

Students have emerged as a distinct social and political class with various forms of *student capital* (Altbach, 1989, 1991, 2006; Lipset, 1967; Lipset and Altbach, 1969) as a currency for student representation and having effects on HE. *Student capital* includes: (1) students' expert knowledge and first-hand information about HE students which can be valuable as input to decision processes in HE; (2) political resources to legitimize adopted HE decisions and policies, exercise social control over member students and perform accountability checks; and (3) provision of services to students (instead of or on behalf of HE institutions).

The notions of students as a distinct social and political class lead us to the conception of *a student estate* (Ashby and Anderson, 1970) as a set of rights, roles, and authority, and forms of organization of student interests that are common to collectives of students within HE institutions or HE systems. Student estate is a part of the political organization of HE institutions and HE

systems which is manifested in governance and management arrangements. Student estate is itself a political institution. Student estate as a political institution is depicted in the existence of formal documents that stipulate *rights of students*, be that national HE laws and regulations and/or statutory or other formal documents of HE institutions. This is the case even if students are not organized into representative student associations, that is, even if student estate is not incorporated into an organizational form of a representative student association.

Students' collective rights, roles, and authority are derived from the legal position of students stipulated in the HE laws and regulations and translated into institutional statutory and strategic documents. Legal provisions also regulate the formation and operations of representative student associations, either explicitly or implicitly with the regulations on non-governmental civil society organizations. The same formal documents that stipulate rights of students typically also discuss expectations of students' behavior as students, that is, their roles and responsibilities.

The most common definition of *students* is that these are persons that are enrolled at a HE institution in a study program pursuing a degree at that institution. This definition distinguishes HE students from other learners who are following a professional development program or are involved in other educational activities, such as microcredentials, short from pursuing a degree study program. These learners and other individuals in HE institutions too have rights and roles, but these are different from the HE students' rights and roles.

Since the mediaeval universities, students have engaged in student politics through collective action in movements and organizations through which they have enacted their political agency, sustained their social and political lives, and built their social and political worlds. *Student politics* refers to the students' political activities associated with the organizing of the student body and its influences on the HE institution, HE systems, and wider society (Klemenčič and Park, 2018). Student politics has also been defined as the set of organizational structures, action repertoires, and master frames used by students to promote their claims (della Porta, Donatella and Guzmán—Concha, 2020). Student politics is both a manifestation and source of students' political agency. *Student agency* refers to students' capabilities to navigate and influence HE and broader social environments. Student politics is a specific kind of politics that is embedded in politics of HE institutions and politics within national and transnational HE systems. Student politics has connections to broader national political developments. In mass and high-participation HE systems, students are a large (and expanding) and potent political group. These connections are further accentuated in countries where student representatives and organizations have explicit party-political affiliations or where they have close ties to the trade unions. Student representation and student activism are two distinct yet interlinked facets of student politics.[2]

Through *representation*, students engage in claim making through collective action by way of their democratic *student governments* (as proxies) and formal representational structures (such as having a seat in the university governing body or membership in the National Higher Education Council). Students have for centuries organized into representative student associations, "nations" in mediaeval universities and student governments, student councils, student boards, student advisory committees, student parliaments, and other forms of representative student bodies in contemporary HE. These *representative student associations, or student governments* as they are referred to in this Handbook, are a distinct form of political institutions which organize, aggregate, and intermediate the interests of HE students, provide services for students, and

organize student activities. Their core purpose is to advocate for student interests and fight for student rights—both within the realm of HE and within society at large.

The typical strategies of representation involve participation in "board politics": attending and contributing to meetings of governing bodies, task forces, and committees, as well as the activities around lobbying and issue advocacy (Klemenčič and Park, 2018). Students elect their representatives to student governments to advocate for their interests and fight for their rights. Student representatives do so through formal representational structures, such as participating in governing bodies of HE institutions, or if "board politics" fails, they resort to activism. Student governments typically present an overarching framework of *student governance* within a HE institution or a HE system.

Student governance refers to the structures and processes of decision-making on the strategic agenda and the operational programming of the organized collective of students which shape student politics. Through a system of rules, norms, and organized practices, student governments effectively provide a framework for student political and social activities. Student governance is integrated into the broader HE governance. Student estate as a set of students' rights, roles and authority, and forms of organization of student interests is inherent to student governance. *Student authority* refers specifically to formal students' rights for co-decision in the context of shared governance in HE, and specific governing structures and processes implementing these student rights. As will be discussed later in the chapter, these rights can range from being consulted on need-basis, to having a permanent seat in governing bodies without a vote to having voting rights equal to other members of governing bodies. Student authority varies across different contexts and is an inherently dynamic concept.

Student governments are also one of the prime intermediate organizations that constitute *civil society* in a country or in a transnational political regime. As part of the civil society student governments depict institutions outside direct government control. In fact, student governments and student movements have often been sources of political dissent and oppositional politics against governing regimes (Altbach, 1989, 1991, 2006; della Porta, Donatella and Guzmán—Concha, 2020; Klemenčič and Park, 2018). Student activism is sometimes initiated by student governments, sometimes by students outside student representation and sometimes also by students outside student governments and against student governments.

Through *activism* students engage in claim-making outside of formal decision structures. In most of the older literature, activism has been associated with contentious politics and noninstitutionalized forms of claims making, of which protests are one of the main forms, and others include boycotts and campaigns. While most of the work on student activism portrays it as antagonistic relations between students in opposition to university or state authorities and synonymous with contentious politics, this conception has changed since the 1990s. In democratic countries, student activism has been associated with much of progressive political and social change that occurred throughout history, including civil rights movements, independence movements, and movements against authoritarian rule. In many countries, the historic role of student activists in driving these social changes has depicted student activism in a positive light. It has also secured students political rights for association into representative bodies and decision rights in governance of HE. This has been the case, for example, in Eastern and Central European countries after the transition to democracy and in African countries after they gained independence from the colonial rule. This is not to forget, of course, that throughout history

student activism was also associated with oppressive social movements and regimes, such as, for example, the Nazi regime in Germany and Maoist cultural revolution in China.

In democratic countries today, nonviolent student campus activism is recognized as a legitimate form of student political behavior and even acknowledged as a form of civic learning for students (Broadhurst and Martin, 2014). The definition of student activism has also changed. From being defined as deviant behavior that must be controlled and sanctioned, student activism is increasingly conceived as any political engagements of students to bring about political and social change. Thus, volunteering in public service roles or participation in student organizations which have some political or social agenda can often be referred to as forms of student activism. The violent and destructive forms of student activism continue to be regarded as deviant and illegal behaviors and are sanctioned. The conception of student activism (in any form) as deviant behavior continues to prevail in authoritarian regimes, while attempts to repress activism also exist in illiberal democracies and in countries experiencing an erosion of democratic values.

- - -

This chapter offers an overview of the key concepts in the study of student representation as the less explored facet of student politics compared to student activism. Essentially, "representation as a form of student politics presupposes the simultaneous existence of two conditions: first, that student representative or other student interest associations exist; and second, that formal channels of representation and interest intermediation are instituted" (Klemenčič and Park, 2018, p. 468). Most of empirical chapters in this Handbook address these two conditions of student representation. They focus on the organizational side of student representation and explore the organizational characteristics of student governments. And they explore student authority in HE governance as legitimate rights of students to participate in decision processes impacting students and the representational structures and processes that enable them to do so.

This theoretical chapter and the following empirical chapters are grounded in the *theory of student impact on HE* which challenges and corrects the existing one-directional perspectives of the effects of HE on students. *The theory of student impact on HE* seeks to explain the overarching mechanisms of students' effects on HE through student political agency. The chapters highlight students enacting their *political agency* to challenge and change the existing structures and practices of HE and instigate broader political and social changes in their societies.

Student political agency refers to students' capabilities for influencing policies and decisions in governance of higher education institutions or national and supranational policies through direct interactions with authorities such as institutional leaders, the government, and international organizations and collective political action. The concept of student political agency is related to student civic agency. Student civic agency refers to capabilities that students direct to civic engagements within their university communities or local communities and other institutions and spaces within civic society. These students' engagements, such as, for example, volunteering in student groups or student civic initiatives, too can have an impact on higher education and possibly even instigate political changes, but these are not necessarily their primary objective.

The chapters in this Handbook are also grounded in and advance the proposition that "*new policies create a new politics*" (Schattschneider, 1935) and that "policy choices are highly consequential for political life" (Hacker and Pierson, 2014, p. 1). With new policies comes

"policy feedback" (Pierson, 1993) signaling policy objectives and resources, that is, expected policy benefits or burdens, which stakeholders interpret into political opportunities to pursue their interests. HE policies not only influence HE practices that are object of these policies, but also intentionally or unintendedly shape a wide range of political forces from the organization and mobilization of (student) groups, to the formation of (student) political identities, and to the strategies of students as political actors (cf. Skocpol, Weir and Orloff, 1989). In other words, changing HE policies, change formal and informal powers of students as political agents, their political identities, and political agency (Raaper, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023).

This chapter provides theoretical foundations to the chapters featured in this Handbook. It is divided into four sections. The first section discusses student political agency and presents the theory of student impact on HE. The second section explores the key concepts in the study of student governments as organizations. The third section explores student authority in HE governance and management, including the arguments in favor or against students having rights to co-decide on HE decision processes. The chapter concludes with a discussion on development of student representation until present times.

Student Agency and Theory of Student Impact on HE

Student agency refers to students' capabilities to navigate and influence their learning and education pathways and environments. These capabilities are conditioned by agentic opportunities that emerge for students from the external environment, from the HE "structures and processes" and agentic orientations that are internal responses of the student to the HE environments. In interactions with and engagements in the HE environment, students enact their agency toward specific goals. Depending on these goals, we differentiate between *student self-formation agency* and *student political agency*. Students' self-formation agency is enacted for purposes of individual self-formation, such as gaining a degree or getting a job. Students enact political agency—individually, collectively or through proxies—toward changes in HE environments (i.e., institutional changes) or toward changes in society (i.e., societal changes) which serve collective/public good (not merely an individual interest). In the case of instigating institutional changes, students' objective is to transform situational constraints and opportunities for agency achievement. In simpler terms, students often enact political agency to demand more rights for student representation. Stronger representation in HE governance can, in turn, enable students to better advocate for their interests, such as for quality, access, and social welfare provisions, which in turn create better conditions for students to study and achieve desired self-formation.

In the case of social changes, students' goals are in agency achievement for general (societal) well-being (cf. Sen, 1985) as a precondition for agency achievement in other areas of functioning, such as for agency in HE. In other words, in authoritarian regimes, students enact agency toward societal changes in terms of respect for human rights and civil liberties. These societal changes, in turn, contribute to academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and democratic governance of HE institutions. In both cases, enactments of students' political agency toward institutional or societal changes can also result in improved study conditions for all students, and in student leaders' self-formation, possibly even at an accelerated rate. In other words, through campaigning

for institutional changes or through activism, student leaders are "learning-by-doing" important political lessons on citizenship, political campaigning, teamwork, etc. These lessons can diffuse also onto students not directly involved in student representation or activism. This is how students' self-formation is facilitated even when they enact agency for public good.

Student agency is premised on agentic possibilities and agentic orientations. The *student's agentic possibilities* are positive freedoms and opportunities within structures and processes of HE or broader societal ecosystems for the student to do and to be what they have reason to value (cf. Sen, 1985). These structures and processes also contain students' rights and responsibilities which determine student autonomy. *Student autonomy*, as a student's freedom to be, think, and act, implies the degree to which the student's behavior is experienced as willingly enacted. If student rights for co-decision are equal to those of other members of governing boards, and if students are conceived as partners and equal members of the university community, such structural conditions grant students a greater freedom to act as student representatives. In contrast, if student rights are severely limited, if students are considered as potentially disruptive or even dangerous to the "peaceful state" of the university, if student representatives fear disciplinary action or retaliation in case of dissent with university leaders, their autonomy is severely curbed.

The *student's agentic orientations* reflect human diversity along a range of variables, such as gender, personality traits, cognitive abilities, and intellectual, political, and civic dispositions, prior academic achievement, and socio-economic background. These are endogenously constructed—they represent the student's internal responses to external state of affairs. The student's will to action for a set goal is derived from these background characteristics and a specific lens through which the student interprets own role in the given social situation or setting and acceptable ways of behavior. This is what Bourdieu (1984, 1988, 1996) refers to as "habitus." Swidler (1986, pp. 280–4) highlights the importance of cultural repertoires that help individuals navigate their social contexts, make decisions about their actions, and make predictions about the future. Swidler (1986, p. 280) refers to these individuals' "toolkits for action" as a "set of knowledge, skills and symbols which provide the materials from which individuals and groups construct strategies of action."

Addressing orientations relevant to students' political engagements, Altbach (1991, pp. 252–253) suggests that politically engaged students tend to come from: (1) upper-middle-class, urban families with educated and liberal parents; (2) minority groups; or (3) social sciences, humanities, and mathematics concentrations (rather than professional fields). The scholarship that followed Altbach continues to investigate the socio-demographics of politically engaged students (see Fisher (2012) for the US context). What is undoubtedly common to students enacting political agency through representation, activism, or volunteering (civil service) is that *all tend to display a heightened sense of civic responsibility and civic consciousness*. They differ, however, in their attitudes toward authorities. *Student representatives have more cooperative orientations toward authorities and student activists have more antagonistic orientations towards authorities.* The differences may also be in their political ambitions. Student representatives and activists are more politically ambitious than those in civic service—volunteering roles. In other words, student representatives, activists, and students in service and leadership roles all enact political and/or civic agency, which refers to student capabilities to act in collective interest toward public good. Sense of citizenship, belonging, efficacy, and public service dispositions shape student agentic orientations to having impact on learning and educational pathways and environments.

Agency is not something the student possesses once and for all. Rather, student agency refers to capabilities that the students can develop from their agentic orientations in interaction with "structures" in HE environment: the student's capabilities can be extended or constrained by these structures, and the student can also—by enacting agency—have effects on these structures and processes. Again, student agency can be enacted individually (by an individual), collectively (as part of movements or groups), or by proxy (by conferring rights onto elected student representatives to act on behalf of individual students and the collective body of students).

The "HE structures" referred here are those that enable persistent patterns of behavior and interactions within HE institutions (Hurtado, 2007, pp. 99–100) and as such have "treatment effects'' on student outcomes. These social structures include (Hurtado, 2007): (1) formal academic context, (2) informal academic environment, (3) formal social context, including structural features of HE institutions, and (4) informal social context. Formal academic structures include institutional rules and procedures recorded in statutory documents and policies concerning institutional mission, study programs, student rights, and responsibilities, etc. Informal academic structures are often referred to as the "hidden curriculum," that is, implicit rules that govern academic life. Formal social structures refer to structural features of colleges such as institutional size, residences, student organizations, etc. Informal social structures include peer groups, social nature of student behavior and interactions, such as personal friendship groups. As suggested by Swidler (1986, p. 273), culture does not influence action by simply prescribing values or end goals; instead, it provides a "toolkit" of skills, habits, rituals, and views that enable individuals to navigate these various HE structures, situations, and scenarios.

A Theory of Student Impact in HE

A theory of student impact on HE seeks to explain the overarching mechanisms of students' effects on HE through student political agency.[3] This theory challenges the one-directional scholarship on the "college effects on students" which is one of the most prolific and influential domains of inquiry within sociology of HE and HE studies more broadly. The entire field of inquiry on "college effects on students" is devoted to the question how HE processes and structures impact student outcomes, such as student graduation rates or student employability. Yet, this scholarship tends to ignore that students also have agency which they enact toward their own learning and educational goals, their own "self-formation" or to bring about changes in HE environments and societies.

Students are agents of political changes in HE and societies. Although HE structures and processes have effects on students, students do not only passively adapt to the evolving HE policy regimes, and do not only react to the political opportunities and political resources afforded to them. Students are also agents, that is, political actors within HE politics that initiate and drive HE transformations. Students exercise their political agency to instigate policy changes.

If successful, policy changes may also expand students' agentic opportunities by granting them extended roles and authority in HE. Drawing on Archer's (1995, 2000, 2003) social realist explanation, the relations between student estate (as a social institution) and HE (as another social institution in which student estate is embedded) are thus one of alternation between the conditioning of student estate by "structures of HE" and the elaboration of "structures of HE" by

student estate (cf. Archer, 2003). Students enact their agency when demanding more rights for student representation or fight, for example, against tuition fee increases. Their political action might be directed at different causes. Yet, as in the case of student activism in the 1960s and 1970s, if successful, student political action, regardless of the cause, also strengthens student estate.

Student impact theory explains student political agency as enacted toward HE authorities in the context of HE institutions. It includes four propositions:

(1) *HE institutions do not only have effects on students but students directly and purposefully co-shape social structures, social life, and institutional decisions of HE institutions. The "high student impact roles," i.e., roles with high potential for students to have direct effects on HE institutions, exist in student representation, voluntary service and leadership roles in student groups, on-campus jobs, and through student activism.*
Students join representative student associations, run for leadership positions in student groups, or join student movements with an expectation that these roles will afford them political agency to serve in the interest of others. In contrast, students that seek campus employment do not necessarily do so with motivations of public service; however, campus jobs can also present opportunities for enactment of political agency. In these various roles that afford students opportunities for enacting political agency, students may also have indirect effects on political developments beyond HE institution.

(2) *Students influence social structures and institutional changes also indirectly: through expressions of individual and collective (consumer) preferences and through patterns of individual and collective (consumer) behavior.*
Students have effects on institutional decisions and practices through signaling enrolment preferences and enrolment choices. For example, HE institutions invest into luxury housing or recreational facilities if they have reasons to believe that students have preferences for such amenities and having such facilities will attract (fee-paying) students. Market research is performed to understand prospective HE student (consumer) preferences and institutional research to understand preferences and satisfaction of enrolled HE students.

(3) *Student impact occurs along a continuum: different roles afford different (potential) degrees of impact, and the same student role affords different (potential) degrees of impact at different times.*
Student groups and organizations may have either more service or more political (advocacy) agenda. Depending on the agenda of these groups, students have motivation and potential for effects on institutional decisions and practices. Student representation presents high-impact roles in HE. Campus jobs too can grant students voice in decisions. Consumerism as such is not a role that students choose purposefully but it is students' social status which comes with consumer rights, especially notable in the institutions that harbor the conception of students as consumers.

(4) *Degree of student impact depends on student agency—agentic opportunities and agentic orientations.*
Institutional structures (including rules, processes, and culture) can enable (empower) or limit student impact opportunities. HE institutions where student voice in decision processes is appreciated and affirmed as an important aspect of that institution's mission tend to offer more opportunities for students to contribute to decision processes across

the different operations. In contrast, the opportunities for student voice and thus students' effects on HE tend to be limited in authoritarian-paternalistic settings where students have limited rights for political participation and/or fear disciplinary sanctions or retaliation for voicing dissent. Sense of citizenship, belonging, efficacy, and public service dispositions shape student agentic orientations toward enactment of political and civic agency.

Representation offers, arguably, one of the most high-impact roles for students to have effects on HE institutions or HE systems. Student representation, per definition, exists for students to co-shape social structures, social life, and institutional decisions of HE institutions (or HE policies in (trans)national polities in the case of (trans)national representative student associations). Student representation is a formalized, and institutionalized form of student voice enabled by two conditions: first, that there exists a representative (democratic and autonomous) student government, and second, that formal channels of representation and interest intermediation are instituted within the HE governance (Klemenčič and Park, 2018). As presented in the empirical chapters of this Handbook, the practices of student representation in the governance of HE institutions vary significantly across countries, and across private and public HE institutions. By comparison to student representation, student effects through campus jobs are confined to the units where students work, and effects through student leadership are limited to issues and members of the respective student group. Depending on the political context, student governments resort to activism to pursue their political goals or use expert or administrative roles to exert influence.

In HE contexts where students are conceived as consumers and there is a presumption of a symbolic contractual relationship formed between the individual students enrolling and the institution providing education services, student political agency tends to rest stronger in (individual) student consumer rights than within (collective) student representation (cf. Raaper, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023). Typical for such context is the adoption of New Public Management principles to HE governance. In such governance arrangements, decision authority rests less in democratic internal governing bodies (such as academic senates) and more in external boards of overseers where students are either not represented at all or are represented in small shares along with many other external stakeholders. Furthermore, authority, as the legitimate right to decide, tends to be concentrated in the hands of HE administrators (managers) who can delegate it to academic staff, and possibly students, but retain the final say. As in the case of many private HE institutions following this model, students might be consulted, but do not hold any decision authority in governing bodies. The neoliberal policies that reinforce student-consumer conceptions thus have significant implications on student political agency within HE (Raaper, 2020, p. 202, 2022, 2023).

Student Authority in HE Governance and Management

Students as a collective body have *authority* in the context of HE management and governance. Authority is the legitimate, that is, socially approved right of individuals to (co)decide on issues with impact on others (cf. Christiano, 2020). In the case of students, authority then implies students' legitimate right to representation in governing bodies and/or in management decision-processes at HE institutions and/or in (trans)national HE political processes. Authority is a

separate, but related concept to power. Whereas authority is inherent in a particular position or function and gives rights to the holder to act, power is relational capacity or ability to act. Authority bears with itself responsibilities to act, power (unlike a right) does not imply such responsibilities.

Critical condition for authority is *legitimacy*. Authority gets legitimated by (1) rules and regulations ("bureaucratic authority") as described by Weber (1918), by (2) the rulers ("conferred authority") when those in authority decide to share authority with others and thereby confer certain rights to others; and (3) by invoking certain social norms and values common to the organization or system (cf. Christiano, 2020). In case of student representation, legitimate right comes from the belief of both students themselves and belief of other HE stakeholders that students have rights to be represented in governing structures and processes (cf. Peter, 2017). Such belief is distinct but often related to the perceived legitimacy of representative student associations which is discussed in the section on student governments.

Governments typically define the extent to which student representation is "formally secured through legislation, or whether their involvement is more dependent on traditions, culture and informal arrangements" (Stensaker and Vabø, 2013, p. 259). The more formalized the rules, the stronger is the legitimate power of student governments and the higher is the propensity for students to influence policy process. Lack of formal provisions on student representation implies that each new generation of student leaders needs to rely on informal arrangements and potentially (re)negotiate the terms of student representation.

There are two overarching approaches to understanding the legal position of students. These two approaches are embedded in the conceptions of HE as a public or private good. They define the practices of student representation in institutional context and in national HE politics. One approach is common to countries which conceive HE as a public good and thus hold it a right (in some countries even constitutional right) for students to access HE. There is an implicit social contract between state and students evident in HE legislation, which stipulates that access is granted to all that are academically apt and aspire to HE. The presumption here is that HE not only confers private benefits to graduates in terms of employability and earnings, but that there exist also significant societal benefits of HE (Teixeira and Klemenčič, 2021). One notable implication of such a social contract is democratic governance of HE institutions with student representation as its integral part.

Largely a consequence of 1960s protests calling for the democratization of university governing structures, the democratic governance model places significant decision authority in the hands of academic staff and students as key internal constituencies of HE institutions. In such a model, significant decision authority rests with senate-type bodies that always include representatives of the academic staff and typically also students. On a (trans)national level, such an approach is also reflected in more neo-corporatist arrangements in state-society relations with more direct civil society engagement in public policy processes. Furthermore, the state establishes, possibly owns, and necessarily provides funding to public HE institutions with the expectation that HE institutions will deliver expected socio-economic outcomes. In turn, public HE institutions are held accountable to deliver quality education by the state that funds them and all other relevant stakeholders including students. Accordingly, enhanced accountability measures are a generic practice across public HE institutions and are also required of private HE institutions to gain accreditation to provide higher education services.

The second approach is built on the notion of HE as a private good and HE provision as a service to fee-paying student customers. It is built on the premise that upon a student enrolling in a HE institution an implicit contract is created between the student and the institution through which the HE institution has obligated itself to provide a certain standard of quality of education provision to the student and the student has committed to payment of necessary fees for this education provision (Buchter, 1973). Even if no specific contract document is signed at the time of admission, the admission itself can be regarded as a formation of a symbolic contractual relationship between an individual student and the HE institution as a corporate body. This contractual relationship is in the sense a promise of providing quality educational experiences to the student; however not a promise of necessarily conferring that student a degree in case the student does not fulfill academic obligations. This symbolic contractual relationship is implied in the various university publications, such as course catalogues, student handbooks, institutional policies, and websites. These publications include disclaimers of obligations of the institution toward students and the requirements and expectations of the student.

Implied in this approach is that the institutional governance and management arrangements tend to follow the managerial–corporatist model. In this model, considerable executive powers are in the hands of HE professionals which are not necessarily academics, nor are they necessarily elected from among the academics (and students). In many countries, board-type governing bodies do not include students. If student representatives are appointed to the governing board, they tend to be *ex officio* without voting rights. Rationales for student representation in this model are based on student capital as valuable for efficient decision making. Students tend to be engaged through advisory, expert, and service roles. Common initially to the Anglo-American context and to the private HE sectors worldwide, with New Public Management doctrine implemented by many countries, this model is diffusing also into the public HE sectors worldwide.

Arguments in Favor and against Student Representation in HE Governance

Arguments in Favor of Student Representation in HE Governance

Four overarching arguments in favor of student representation in HE governance emerge from the literature (Lizzio and Wilson, 2009; Luescher-Mamashela, 2010, 2013; Menon, 2005; Pabian and Minsova, 2011; Zuo and Ratsoy, 1999).

Student Democratic Right for Representation

First, in line with democratic ideals of HE governance, students are the primary benefactors of the education provision and as such, they are the main internal constituency, indeed the main stakeholder. This position gives students a democratic right to be represented in the decisions that will ultimately affect them. Thus, institutions must ensure that students can safeguard their interests in decision processes, which is important both for the legitimacy of these decisions and for community building and student sense of belonging. This rationale for student involvement in HE governance is typical for the HE systems with the democratic governance model as

described above and especially for public HE institutions in social welfare countries and countries where HE is considered a public good. This democratic right for representation tends to be reflected also in national public policy processes which have neo-corporatist type of state-society relations.

Student Input Useful for Effective Decision-Making and Service Delivery

Second, as far as students are the primary beneficiaries of the education provision and are also directly affected by the quality of the education provision, students have first-hand information on the effectiveness of institutional practices and policies. A better understanding of the demands and experiences of students yields better decisions to meet these demands. Hence, student representation is helpful for effectiveness of decision-making and public policy processes and their implementation. This rationale is evoked in board-based institutional governance and management arrangements and precludes student advisory, expert, and professional/administrative type of involvement without democratic rights of co-decision. This argument is also used to justify (or at least does not preclude) students offering services to other students and otherwise participating in activities set out by the authorities.

Both two arguments affirm the case of student involvement as important or necessary for the legitimation of decision processes and outcomes. Whereas the latter allows for weaker forms of involvement only seeking student data or consultation with students for efficient decision-making, the former makes the case for necessary democratic involvement.

Student Representation as Deterrent of Student Oppositional Forces and Unrest, also Relevant in Authoritarian and Totalitarian Regimes

Third, student representation exists also in authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. In these regimes political power is centered around a dictator or a party leadership. These tend to establish their own student bodies or take control over the existing bodies with hand-picked students to serve as student representatives. In other words, in such systems it is common for the authorities (at the national level and/or within institutions) to—in corporatist fashion—establish or facilitate establishment of a student body with limited or no autonomy, that is, fully controlled by the authorities.

These regime-controlled student bodies are used to suppress oppositional student movements or discredit democratic student organizations. The regime-controlled student bodies have political power in decision processes, whereas democratic student bodies, if these even exist, do not—they are either suppressed or their activities restricted to service-provision without political powers. This is a well-rehearsed political strategy of autocratic regimes to curb any social developments that might eventuate in oppositional movements and challenge the regime in power and the regime's absolute power. Student representation in such regimes is to control the student body, suppress oppositional forces and/or deter unrest. The appointed student representatives participate in governance also to maintain the appearance of legitimate decision making. The

narrative of students having formal channels of voicing their concerns—through the puppet student representative bodies—is also to serve as a deterrent for student unrest.

Regime-control student governments are more possible within authoritarian than totalitarian regimes since totalitarianism tends to suppress any form of traditional social organizations of special interests, including student governments. In contrast, authoritarian regimes allow for limited social organization of special interests and seek to control it. However, totalitarian regimes often copy governance structures in non-autocratic regimes, including some form of student representation, to create the appearance of legitimate structures of HE governance. They seek to create a facade of student representation through student governments without autonomy. Student representatives are controlled by and pledge allegiance and loyalty to the regime, be that institutional leaders and/or regime rulers. Student governments are effectively an extended instrument of the ruling political party or dictator for social control, political indoctrination, and recruitment for members and/or future officials (i.e., future political elites).

Student Representation as Form of Citizenship and Civic Education

Fourth, student representation in HE governance contributes to the learning objectives of developing students' dispositions toward and skills for active citizenship and civic involvement. When HE institutions create pathways for student representation in HE governance, they effectively enable students to exercise active citizenship and learn from these lived experiences. In other words, democratic forms of student representation are for the elected student representatives, and by association for the student electorate, a democratic citizenship education in practice; which is, arguably, much more effective than teaching democratic citizenship education through courses. Student representation in HE governance reinforces the conception of HE institutions as sites of citizenship and civic involvement.

Both the third and fourth arguments are premised on the notions that student representation in HE governance gives students a sense of efficacy in institutional matters and thus can strengthen students' sense of ownership of and of belonging to the HE institution.

Arguments against Student Representation in HE Governance

There exist *several arguments against granting students the authority* to be represented in institutional or national decision processes as well as arguments that favor weaker forms of student representation in HE governance.

Student (Lack of) Expertise, Self-Interest, and Short-Time Perspectives

First, students' ability to effectively contribute to decisions has been questioned on several grounds. The transient nature of studentship prevents students from having the expertise that is gained with experience and results in a lack of a long-term institutional vision. Students have, it has been argued, difficulty in understanding the complexity of factors that affect institutional performance and the multiple demands coming from various stakeholders. Furthermore, students'

preferences in institutional decisions might be clouded by their immediate self-interest, which can go against the need for long-term quality improvements.

Student Threat to Consensual Decision-Making

Second, students often hold adversarial positions that disrupt or stall the consensual mode of institutional decision-making. The more formal powers student representatives have, the more disruptive to decision processes they can be.

Lack of Legitimacy

Third, student governments often lack external legitimacy to represent the student body. The voter turnout in student elections is typically low. Student governments can be tainted by poor governance practices, financial mismanagement, or lacking autonomy from being "domesticated" by institutional leaders or political parties or the state. The more domesticated student representatives appear vis-a-vis institutional leaders, and the less internal legitimacy student representatives have vis-a-vis the student body the less engaged student body is with the student government and the student representatives.

Student Representation in HE: Institutional, National, and Transnational Levels

Student Representation in HE Institutions

There exist two main models of student representation in institutional governance (and management) of HE institutions. First, *the democratic participatory governance model* places crucial decision authority in the hands of academic staff and students as key internal constituencies of HE institutions. In such a model, significant decision authority rests with senate-type bodies that include representatives of the academic staff and typically also students. There might be a prescribed share of student members, and students have either full voting rights or no voting rights or only voting rights on issues directly relevant to students. Students can also have a vote in the election of academic leaders, such as rectors or deans. Public institutions in most parts of the world tend to broadly follow this model, and in many countries, such arrangements are stipulated in HE legislation. This model is a consequence of 1960s protests calling for the democratization of university governing structures (De Groot, 1998; Luescher-Mamashela, 2010, 2013; Klemenčič and Park, 2018).

Second model exists in *the corporate type of shared governance arrangements* common to private HE institutions. In such governance arrangements, the authority lies in the board-type bodies, such as board of overseers or board of regents, which appoint academic and professional administrators. Academic ("faculty" in the United States) councils and student representative bodies have only consultative roles. In some cases, the executive leaders delegate authority to academic committees and these can further decide to involve students. However, the executive leaders retain authority for final decisions on the recommendations or policies prepared by the consultative

bodies. While such HE boards tend to have more diverse membership, which often also includes external members, student participation is, however, not a given. In many countries and institutions, board-type governing bodies do not include students. If student representatives are appointed to the governing board, they tend to be ex-officio to inform the decisions but without voting rights.

In terms of *degrees of intensity of student representation in institutional governance*, we distinguish four levels:

(1) There is no involvement of students in decision-processes.
(2) In need-based consultation, student representatives are invited to voice student concerns in a departmental academic meeting or to university leaders. Such consultation can be initiated by either party, but the ultimate decision for involving students in governance rests with the departmental or institutional leaders, not the student representatives.
(3) Structured dialogue is a form of student representation whereby formalized procedures for student representation in governing bodies and processes exist. This means that there exist some agreements—written or informal—that specify the rules for student representation. However, students are typically only observers, asked for input but do not hold voting rights.
(4) Students are considered full partners in shared governance arrangements when they are given seats and voting rights in decision-making processes, and when they can introduce issues to the agenda like any other members of the governing bodies. Such rights are typically formalized in legal and statutory documents.

Student Representation on National Level

National HE policy governance is becoming more like "policy network": less hierarchical, with policy decisions being negotiated and mediated among several stakeholders rather than simply imposed by the authorities. Within such policy networks, student governments have opportunities for representation as one of the key stakeholders. The core assumption of policy network governance is resource dependency: political resources are dispersed over several public and private actors, thus forcing a government or university leaders to include these actors in decision-making in the interest of effective policy formulation, legitimation of adopted policy, and accountability (de Boer, Enders, and Schimank, 2007; Olsen, 2005). Student governments stand in implicit or explicit exchange relationships with authorities whom they seek to influence. In this relationship, student governments possess and can supply important resources: professional expertise, legitimation of policy outcomes, social control of their members, and services valued by the authority. Authorities in turn provide funding and other material or symbolic resources. They also define the relational structures through which student governments can formally and informally intermediate their interests.

The role of national student associations in national level HE governance is typically less formalized and less institutionalized than student representation on institutional level. The *systems of student representation* and *systems of student interest intermediation* on national level largely depend on the nature of state-society relations as well as existence on national level (or in federal systems, state-level) representative student associations. *The system of student representation* depicts the number of representative associations active on national (or state)

level and whether the state has granted any of these representational monopolies. The distinction here is made between *neo-corporatist, pluralist, corporatist, and statist/clandestine* systems of student representation (see Table 1.1). The *system of student interest intermediation* reflects the characteristics of public policy processes, and whether there exist formal structures and/or processes for student interest intermediation, that is, student representation in public policy processes. The distinction here is made between *more formalized and informal systems of student interest intermediation* or *systems exclusively based on contentious politics*, that is, protest as the main form of political action by students.

In *neo-corporatist systems of state-student interactions,* one or few privileged intermediary student associations are involved in public decision-making concerning student issues. Here student representation is based on informal agreement or simply unquestioned tradition, or it can be formalized in national legislation. A formal stipulation of these organizations' representational monopoly is typically backed by compulsory or automatic membership of the entire student body, and with specified state financial provisions ensuring financial sustainability of representative student associations. These associations typically also have the exclusive right to nominate their representatives to the permanent governmental consultative structures and are invited to participate in ad hoc working parties. Hence, such organizations not only possess significant legitimating resources and formal channels of influence, but typically also sustained financing and well-established institutional structures.

There are two extensions of this model. In one model, two or more *functionally different* but complementary student associations share representational monopoly over student representation. Most notable examples are associations representing university students and associations representing students from other types of higher education institutions in binary HE systems. Another model depicts federal HE systems in which different territorial subunits (province or state) have their own (*territorially distinct*) representative student associations. In federal policy processes, these student associations share representational monopoly.

In *pluralist systems of state-student interactions*, the state does not grant official recognition for student representation to one organization, but there may be several organizations (national-based or institutional-based and sometimes party-political) that claim such representation and compete for access to policymaking and financial resources provided by the state. The Schmitter and Streeck's (1999, p. 48) description of pluralist associational systems is valid also for systems of student representation: "the number of constituent units is unspecified; identical functions are performed simultaneously by several associations in competition with each other; associations determine their tasks independently without taking into account the tasks performed by other associations; and no association is in a position to exercise hierarchical control over others."

In *corporatist systems*, typically in countries run by authoritarian regimes, one compulsory, non-competitive national student organization with a deliberate representational monopoly is imposed and controlled by the regime (cf. O'Donnell and Schmitter, 1986). The main characteristic of such system is that student representation associations exist and may be involved in public policy processes, but they are not autonomous from the regime. In countries that transitioned to democracy the state corporatist arrangement was changed to societal neo-corporatism, which allowed for autonomous student organizations. However, there are some countries in which institution-based student governments and/or political-party based student organizations failed

Table 1.1 National systems of student representation (further developed from Klemenčič, 2012)

National systems of student representation				
	Corporatist	**Neocorporatist**	**Pluralist**	**Statist/Clandestine**
Number of student representative associations in national-level politics	One compulsory, non-competitive national student organization with a deliberate representational monopoly is imposed and controlled by the regime.	One or few privileged intermediary student associations are involved in public decision-making; autonomous from the state; functionally differentiated or territorially differentiated	The state does not grant official recognition student representation to one organization, but there may be several organizations (national-based or institutional-based and sometimes party-political) that claim such representation.	The state does not recognize representative student associations or explicitly prohibits and threatens national-level student associations. If these exist, they operate in hiding.
State - formally or informally - grants or monopoly of student interest representation	Yes, and the association is controlled by the state.	Yes. Often accompanied with secure administrative funding arrangements	No. Administrative and funding arrangements can exist, but associations compete for access to policymaking and financial resources.	No. State does not recognize and may explicitly prohibit national-level student representative associations.
Membership is national-level associations	Automatic or compulsory for all students	Automatic or compulsory for all students.	Typically, voluntary.	Typically, voluntary and clandestine.

to organize into a united national representation. This resulted in a fragmented pluralist system of student representation lacking a national representative association.

The fourth model is a statist/clandestine model in totalitarian regimes in which representative student associations are neither recognised nor involved in policy making (statist model) or are explicitly prohibited and operate in hiding (clandestine variation of the statist model). In such systems policy making on higher education is exclusively controlled by the state and students have no formal involvement in decision processes (Luescher and Klemenčič, 2016).

While intermediary student associations are largely focused on influencing policy outcomes or bringing issues of student concern onto the political agenda, there are notable differences in the structures underlying the political process and formal channels of student influence. Neo-corporatist, pluralist, and corporatist systems of student representation can display

more *formalized or more informal arrangements* depending on whether and which legal and constitutional mechanisms of student representation in policymaking are employed. In general, the most common legal or constitutional mechanisms of student representation in national policy making are: (i) laws on the representation of students within a national HE council or other decision-making, advisory or evaluating bodies relevant to HE; and (ii) rules governing consultation procedures or meetings with the Ministry responsible for HE (Persson, 2004). A more formalized and institutionalized model of student interest-intermediation in the policy process is through a government council which serves as a consultative body to the government, typically presided over by government representatives and includes government officials as well as representatives from institutions, industry, and students.

In contrast, *the informal state-student interactions* are conducted predominantly through informal consultations and seminars, representation on non-permanent working groups or projects of the Ministry, informal contacts with Ministry officials, written or oral contact with members of parliament and representation in national councils, agencies, or committees in charge of student affairs, and quality assurance (Persson, 2004). Student party-political associations often use informal channels—via political parties—as a way of interest intermediation.

The level of formalization cannot, however, be understood as indication of actual student influence. A governmental advisory council for student affairs with a high share of student representatives may not have any real influence in the policy process. In contrast, student representatives working primarily through a dense web of regular and frequent informal interactions, for example through political parties, might indeed be very influential.

Finally, state-student interactions can also be solely characterized by *contentious politics*. In statist/clandestine systems where the state does not recognise student representative associations or explicitly prohibits these, students resort to protest, and boycotts, and similar forms of contentious political action. Such political actions are typically repressed by the regime, and student activists sanctioned for their activism (Kapit, 2023).

Student Representation in Transnational Governance of HE

Student representation exists within the multilevel governance and management of HE and thus also within supranational and transnational HE policy governance regimes. The involvement of transnational student associations in transnational HE policymaking can be attributed to the evolving nature of transnational governance regimes in which participation of transnational student associations not only brings expertise to but also aids the legitimacy of the policy processes and outcomes.

Student representation in supranational polity resembles the systems of student representation and systems of student interest intermediation discussed earlier. Like on national level, in transnational governance, student representation too is conditioned on resource dependency and student governments' student capital. International organizations or other bodies facilitating intergovernmental policy processes engage stakeholder associations to aid the efficiency of policy-making processes and policy implementation. Student associations possess specialized knowledge, information, and implementation agency. To gain access to the policy processes, students also tend to appeal to the principles of participatory democracy, representation, and democratic accountability as relevant for the legitimacy of public policy processes in transnational context.

As in national policy processes, there exist some structures or processes through which student representatives funnel student interests into policy processes. These structures and processes can be formalized, that is, defined in statutory documents of policy regimes or established through informal practices, for example when student representatives get routinely, but informally invited to meetings. The differences in formalization of pathways for student interest intermediation can be significant between different policy regimes, and these can privilege some associations over others. Furthermore, the structures and processes that allow for student interest intermediation can change over time. This is especially the case in international regimes, in which the traditional "bureaucratic idea of organising" with state actors as rule-setters is dissolving toward the policy-networks governance (Gustafsson and Hallström, 2014, p. 2). As the rules of governance continue to evolve, this creates conditions for stakeholders, such as students, to try to influence "rules of the game" in a way that would allow them to partake in policy decisions.

Student Involvement in Quality Assurance

Apart from governing bodies, student representatives are often involved in quality assurance (QA) structures and processes within HE institutions but also in national and transnational QA bodies. QA structures and procedures have been strengthening across the world. They have always been an important aspect of private HE with a more corporate-managerial type of governance. In the public HE sectors, the state has been granting HE institutions more autonomy, but imposing more accountability checks for these institutions to demonstrate that they fulfill the "societal" expectations for students being able to access quality HE and complete such education. Given the implicit social contract between the state and the students, the accountability checks necessarily require some form of student involvement. The key questions here are in which domains of QA students are involved and in what role, for example, in QA committees within HE institutions, in evaluation panels evaluating HE institutions, in policy processes defining standards and guidelines for QA, etc.

There exist *four degrees of intensity of student involvement in quality assurance*:

(1) to provide information, that is, students serve as data source for data collected through student surveys;
(2) to conduct quality assessment, that is, students serve as expert evaluators in QAA panels;
(3) to contribute to quality improvements, that is, students serve as consultants in institutional QAA bodies; and
(4) to develop QAA systems, that is, students serve in a political role in developing HE policies and strategies.

In practice, these degrees of intensity of involvement are interlinked and students can also be simultaneously involved in several of these processes albeit in distinct roles and with different degrees of authority.

Given the increasingly important role of QA in HE, the question emerges who the students are serving in QA bodies: are these elected student representatives delegated from the student

governments or these are student experts or student professionals selected and appointed into these roles by the HE authorities (bypassing the student governments' involvement). These questions are at the forefront of the evolving governance and management regimes, and relevant for the future involvement of students in QA in HE.

Student Governments

Student governments are a distinct type of student organizations. *Student organizations* are enduring collectivities of students that are autonomously governed and managed by students, have different degrees of formalization and institutionalization of governing structures and processes, and are established with the primary purpose of serving students. There is a vast array of student organizations active in HE institutions across the world. The most common types include:

(a) representative student associations, that is, student governments (e.g., student parliaments, student councils, and student unions);
(b) advocacy and affinity groups (e.g., first-generation student associations or undocumented students' associations);
(c) religious and political party groups;
(d) social clubs (e.g., fraternities and sororities);
(e) athletic and cultural and art groups;
(f) pre-professional groups (e.g., computer society or medical students' association);
(g) community service groups (e.g., student volunteer groups in schools, homeless shelters, or in natural disasters);
(h) student newspapers and publishers; and
(i) student-run campus business organizations (e.g., student cafes, travel agencies, printing service).

These organizations can be distinguished according to their purpose and formalization, institutionalization of their decision-making processes, and organizational forms. According to their purpose, student organizations can be more political or more service-oriented. Most often they have a mix of purposes that change based on the makeup of their membership and political developments within their institution or beyond. Second, in terms of formalization and institutionalization of cooperation, student organizations range from informal student groups with minimal formalization of decision-making to highly formalized and institutionalized student organizations, such as student governments or student-run business organizations. Formalization means that students make decisions on how their collectivity will be governed and managed and the purposes it will serve, that is, they formally adopt governance procedures and record these in statutory documents. Defining governing procedures can further lead to institutionalization of procedures whereby students agree on and establish governing structures and other organizational structures, such as an executive board or a presidency and task committees, to enable them to take decisions collectively and implement agreed-upon activities. Accordingly, these organizations display different levels of organizational stability and continuity. The more

formalized organizations typically also have better organizational resources including offices and paid employees, and more stable and larger financial resources obtained from their universities or other income.

Student governments are the most common and most prominent type of student organizations. *Although they exist in different forms and designations—for example, student unions, councils, parliaments, board, guilds, committees, associations—student governments effectively operate as "governments"; they present a system of rules, norms, and institutions by which the student body within an institution or nation is organized and indeed governed*. They are political institutions through which collective student interests are aggregated and intermediated to other actors within the higher education or wider political context. Their primary aim is to represent and defend the interests of the student body. They do so especially by seeking representation in governing bodies and processes of HE institutions (or within national-level or supranational HE governance structures). Student governments provide a framework for student social and political activities within the academic community. They also have a professional function: they provide academic and welfare support services to students and manage student facilities and sometimes business operations (for example, travel agencies, publishing houses, clubs, and restaurants). In short, student governments organize, aggregate, articulate, and intermediate student interests in the context of a HE institution or a HE system, along with providing numerous services and organizing student activities.

While the existence of student governments at HE institutions is almost universally accepted, the existence of national (or regional) platforms of student representation is much less widespread. Governments are aware of the political potency of organized student interest groups on the national level. History offers ample lessons of organized students forming an influential oppositional force and bringing about regime change. Therefore, in countries under totalitarian or authoritarian rule, national student associations have been either prohibited or—in a corporatist fashion—fully controlled by the regime. In transitional countries, governments tend to opt for a pluralist approach: addressing several student groups, prompting them to compete against each other for influence, thus deterring possible mass collective action through the principle *"divide et impera."* However, there also exist countries with powerful national student associations, who hold a long tradition of student unionism, automatic or mandatory student union membership, and ample financial and other organizational resources. These national student associations are powerful political institutions that cannot easily be ignored by authorities. Through various social networks, they are often also closely connected to different actors within the government and political parties. National student associations have a tradition of being the training ground for future political leaders (Luescher—Mamashela and Mugume, 2014).

Finally, closest to student governments, and sometimes competing with them for representative voice are other student groups with political agenda, such as sectorial (discipline-specific), party-political, affinity and religious, and other types of student interest or advocacy groups. Yet, the student governments are distinct in terms of their openness to represent *all* students. There are also many other primarily service-oriented student organizations which can at times also have political agenda, such as social clubs (e.g., fraternities and sororities), athletic, cultural, and art; pre-professional, and community service groups, student newspapers, and publishers; and student-run campus business organizations. These other types of student organizations often

have some formal relationship to the student governments. For example, the student government manages and distributes funding to other student organizations, or the student government owns student-run campus business organizations.

Purposes of Student Governments

Student governments organize students in different domains and on different levels of multilevel governance of HE: from student dormitories to study programs, within departments, faculties, and schools, or within university alliances, to national-levels and supranational HE policy making. Student governments within HE institutions can be organized either within the university governance structure (effectively as a unit of higher education institutions) or as legally independent entities. In some countries, these two types of student representation co-exist, whereby the councils have a role in governance of HE institutions and unions are responsible for student social welfare, including funding student groups and student activities.

National student associations are formed by the collective action of institution-based student governments which choose to cooperate and coordinate their activities in national HE politics. Similarly, transnational student associations are formed by national student associations and target supranational HE policy processes and institutions (Klemenčič and Galan Palomares, 2018). There exist also transnational representative student associations that are active in global regions.[4] Transnational student associations are "meta-associations" founded by national associations. They operate in transnational HE governance regimes: their political activities are targeted toward supranational and transnational organizations and institutions, and their geographic level of mobilization is transnational.

Student governments aggregate students' interests. They do so by a way of descriptive representation vested in the elected student representatives. There exists an implicit expectation that student representatives reflect the social characteristics of the student body that elected them, understand students' interests and are willing to act on behalf of students. How students are elected to the positions of student representatives matters for the alignment between political preferences of the student body and those of the elected representatives. Student elections create incentives for the candidates to fully understand the interests of the student body and commit to act on behalf of the student body. However, student-elected representatives' tenure tends to be relatively short, that is, for one or two years. This is due to the limited nature of studentship. Limited time as students is also the reason why student representatives often do not seek re-election. Student governments also aggregate student interests directly through polling or surveys, referenda, or town halls.

Student governments intermediate student interests to HE authorities and into HE decision processes through formal and informal channels of student representation or expert or professional-administrative roles or activism.

Student governments also provide services to students (Cuyjet, 1994). Student governments' activities range from organizing social events, to tutoring services, organizing student travel, offering printing and publishing services to managing and distributing funding for student groups, programs, and activities in cultural, educational, social, recreational, and other domains. They also manage student facilities and operate student-run businesses.

Key Organizational Capabilities of Student Governments

Student governments, by the very nature of their role, must balance between what Schmitter and Streeck (1999) call the "logic of membership" and "logic of influence." The organizational characteristics and political agenda of student governments are inevitably defined by and determined through both logics.

Membership is a defining characteristic of student governments as associations of members. Student governments exist to serve their constituency, the collective student body which founded them. The student body elects student representatives to student governments and mandates them to act on their behalf and in their interest. Members define the governance arrangements of the student government. These members have made a collective choice to cooperate and coordinate their collective action through joint institutions. Members also supply funding and delegate political authority to elected representatives to represent them toward HE authorities and act on their behalf in decision processes in HE.

Membership structures of student governments are relevant for student representation since they define student associations' mobilization potential, determine their representativity, and may influence their financial resources. Student governments are essentially associations of individual students and/or of student groups and organizations. Membership in student governments is hence one of the essential features of student governments' organizational capabilities. Within HE institutions, members of student governments are students enrolled at that institution.

Membership in a student government can be universal (every student enrolled at the institution is automatically a member), mandatory (by default students are members but they can opt-out), or voluntary membership (students opt-in to become members). Tied to membership is payment of membership fees which is a crucial revenue source for operations of the student governments. Revenue streams play an important role not only in organizational capabilities of these organizations but also in maintaining organizational autonomy. National and transnational student associations typically have voluntary membership and selection procedures with predefined criteria for candidates to be accepted as members. They are funded through membership fees and seek external funding through administrative grants or projects to fund their operations.

Membership defines the student government's governing bodies (such as an assembly or board or parliament) consisting of elected student representatives or delegates from member student governments. This is the highest decision body in a student government which decides on governing structures, political agenda, and modes of action. These decisions are implemented by an executive body which is formed from elected representatives, and, if resources enable this, by an executive office which includes (non-elected, paid) staff members. Governance structures impact efficiency of decision procedures and democratic legitimacy. Executive offices and permanent staff are important for maintaining institutional memory which is relevant given the relatively high turn-over among student representatives. Employed staff in the secretariat aids institutional memory and professionalization. Budgets determine financial resources available for political activity and condition sustainability of student governments.

Next, student governments exist to intermediate the interests of the student body to an authority, a HE institution or a government. Therefore, student governments inevitably must relate to that

authority, engage with its structures and agenda, and engage in its policy networks. Student governments' organizational capabilities are also defined by the conditions in the political context in which student governments seek to exert political influence: within HE institutions or HE systems. This is how *logic of influence* shapes organizational structures of student governments. Student governments adapt their structures and processes to better perform their representative function. For example, they create working groups or committees to address a particular policy issue.

The success of stakeholder associations in establishing legitimate power to participate in policy processes and to successfully influence policy outcomes depends largely on the exchange resources that the different actors can bring to the table, that is, student capital. Student governments claim monopoly over student capital. In turn, student governments expect access to decision-making, funding, and other material or symbolic resources (Klemenčič and Galan Palomares, 2018). As discussed above, organizational resources such as membership, financial resources, employed staff, and governance structures are significant for student governments' capabilities, that is, capital for interest intermediation, as well as for the provision of student services and activities. Significant are also student associations' capabilities to generate expertise, gather information, and send informed and competent representatives to meetings with university or national officials. Interest intermediation depends on internal policy processes to formulate policy positions and policy papers. These processes in turn depend on organizational capabilities to generate expertise, gather information, conduct policy implementation, and be able to publicize political activities through effective public relations.

Student representatives act simultaneously in *"two-level" games* between members whom they seek to represent and with HE authorities whom they seek to influence. In HE contexts where student governments have direct links to political parties or youth organizations (e.g., are members of national youth councils) or other political actors (such as trade unions), negotiations on their policy positions happen also in those contexts. These affiliations or close relationships add *a "third-level game*" to policy processes of student governments. Intense socialization between student representatives and the HE authorities they seek to influence or other organizations (e.g., political parties) raises challenges to autonomous student representation. Like other political institutions, student governments too are a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of the turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing circumstances (March and Olsen, 2008, p. 3). However, given the rapid turnaround of elected officials and the transient nature of studentship, student governments tend to be more susceptible to change under the influence of individual "agents" or external circumstances.

Student governments' political potency, especially if validated through high election turnout or activist mobilization, gives these representative bodies strength in claim-making on behalf of students. However, student governments also face numerous challenges to their internal and external legitimacy, which limits their ability to perform the representative function. Again, as featured in this Handbook, the organizational resources of student governments as well as their bureaucratic structures vary significantly across, and within countries. New HE policies and resulting changes in the institutional governance arrangements can alter both the formal and the symbolic authority of student representatives to partake in institutional decision processes. Key premise of the theory of student impact in HE is that students can enact political agency to change

HE institutions, for example, demand more rights for student representation. Hence, the relations between students (or student governments) and HE institutions are one of *alternation between the conditioning of student representation by structures of HE and the elaboration of structures of HE by student representation*.

The relations between student representatives and student governments are also one of *alternation between the conditioning of student representatives' actions by structures of student government and the elaboration of structures of student government by student representatives*. Student governments house resources that enable elected student representatives to act on behalf of students and distribute resources (typically funding) to student organizations and various student initiatives and activities. Their purpose and mission, structures, processes, and rules are stipulated in statutory documents and their political agenda is recorded in policy papers. As political institutions, student governments develop their own cultural frames, that is their own interpretative lenses about the social world around them and their own narratives. Furthermore, they encompass distinct repertoires of action as toolkits of habits, skills, and styles which shape the strategies of those students who wish to run for positions in student government (cf., Swidler, 1986). For example, in many countries, it is common for political parties to be involved in student politics, especially through funding candidates in student elections. Those students who aspire to serve in student representation thus need to understand how to engage with political parties as an essential "toolkit for action" to get elected. In contrast, if a student body is against party-political involvement, or if party-political involvement is prohibited in student politics, this context presents a different cultural repertoire for aspiring student leaders to navigate.

Like any social institution, student governments incorporate symbolic boundaries, that is, visible barriers between those who can serve as student representatives and those who cannot. The inclusion of students from minority groups among the elected student representatives is one relevant issue here (Goodman, 2021). Another issue pertains to gender balance among elected representatives and, in some contexts, the underrepresentation of women in student politics (Miller and Kraus, 2004). Yet another issue is whether students from lower socio-economic backgrounds have access to public service roles in student representation. This issue is related to the question of whether student government roles are remunerated (or not) or whether students can obtain course credit for such public service roles. Serving in student government has several benefits for personal and professional development (Downey, Bosco and Silver, 1984; Kuh and Lund, 1994; Rosch and Collins, 2017). However, voluntary public service roles in student government inevitably present significant opportunity costs to paid student jobs. Consequently, these roles can be less accessible to students who need earnings to support themselves or their families while they are studying, which is a vast majority of students across the world. Cultural capital and social capital can present barriers to access to student governments and how well the elected representatives reflect the diversity of the student population (Brooks, Byford and Sela, 2015). If calls for candidates are not open and transparent, and if it depends on whom you know to get into the student representation, these practices present barriers to access.

Student representatives can be co-opted to support the agendas of others by socializing into the values, norms, and interests of the communities of practice they have joined or simply out of self-interest expecting personal benefits for cooperative behavior. Rules on preventing a conflict of interest in student representation are important in addressing these challenges. The positions advanced by student representatives need to be checked against the mandate they obtained from

their constituency to ensure that student interests are represented truthfully and competently. Finally, students with public service and civic dispositions are drawn to student leadership roles. Their sense of citizenship and belonging to the university offers further motivation for enactment of political agency. Students' sense of efficacy, that is, the sense that they can effect change through their action, can also add to motivation to act against feelings of powerlessness and futility.

Typologies of Student Governments

In the first existing typology of national student association, Klemenčič (2012) distinguishes between two ideal types of student associations on a spectrum. Interest-group-like student organizations are characterized by hierarchically ordered organizational structures with strong centralized coordination, secure funding, political agenda focused on HE issues and lobbying and political advocacy as the main mode of political action. Student-movement-like student organizations tend to be organizationally more network-like, loosely integrated, with less secure administrative funding, transversal political agenda, and non-institutionalized forms of claim making, such as protests.

Jungblut and Weber (2015) added a hybrid organizational type to capture student governments which transition from student-movement-like to a more professionalized form of an interest-group-like student organization. Vespa et al. (2024) have since developed a more comprehensive depiction of the "student politics system" which reflects six axes of student collective actors' orientations: 1) relationship with political parties (affiliation vs. independence); 2) relationship with non-youth stakeholders (integration vs. isolation); 3) organizational structure (movement vs. organization); 4) conception of representation at the national level (unitary vs. plural); 5) mode of action (institutional representation vs. activism); 6) nature of the set of claims (corporatist vs. political). This typology can be applied both to (neo)corporatist systems with only one representative student association as well as pluralist systems with many representative student associations. These organizational characteristics, especially funding, legal status, and relationship to third parties, are relevant for the autonomy and legitimacy of student governments.

Autonomy and Legitimacy of Student Governments

Autonomy of student government refers to student representatives within the student government having full decision-making competences and being exempt from external interference and constraints on the actual use of such competences. Autonomy of student governments pertains to policy autonomy (ability to decide on its own political and professional agenda); governance autonomy (ability to decide on internal structures and processes), and managerial autonomy (discretion over financial matters, human and other resources). The latter includes financial autonomy (conditions imposed through funding), legal autonomy (legal status), and "symbolic" autonomy (in particular, relations to political parties). In the case of student governments, external interference typically stems from the state, political parties, and/or HE institutions in which they are located.

The state can (and often does) regulate through legislation the terms of the relationship between student governments and their home institutions. The sticking points in such formulations are

several: whether membership in student governments is automatic (or mandatory) or voluntary, how student governments are funded (through mandatory student fees or through voluntary contributions of students), and what the legal status of student governments is (are student governments legally independent or integrated into governing structure of the university they belong to). The expectation here is that the less dependent student governments are on their home institutions, the freer they will be from possible intervention and control from the institutional leadership. As discussed earlier, the state can create its own representative student associations and/or exerts direct control over such associations. External interference can come from political parties through funding of political candidates, as it is the case in many African countries (Luescher and Klemenčič, 2016; Luescher and Mugume, 2014). In some countries, student groups have overt party-political designations and thus direct links to political parties. In Italy, for example, this is reflected in a pluralist system of student representation with many competing party-political student groups both within the institutions and at national level (Vespa et al., 2024).

Autonomy of student governments relates also to the student rights to organize, to assemble and to peacefully demonstrate, and to voice student grievances and interest through advocacy and research, representation, and lobby, and through nonviolent activism. Violations of student rights can also occur through more covert actions by HE institutions or governments, such as implicit threats, intimidation, or coercion, or other ways of discrimination or through retaliation, including withholding opportunities to student leaders. However, student governments too can take measures to prevent student representatives from acting in representative roles when there exists a possibility for conflict of interest. For example, student representatives should not seek letters of recommendations, internships, or other personal benefits or opportunities from the institutional leaders or government officials with whom they interact in an official capacity as representatives of students. This is to prevent these representatives from entering situations where they could be co-opted by others to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity as student representatives.

The perceived autonomy of student governments affects student governments' internal and external legitimacy. *Legitimacy* of representative student associations refers to the belief of the student body that the student association is representing their interest truthfully and effectively, is governed democratically and according to the principles of good governance. If students hold such beliefs, then they are willing to trust it, engage in it, and obey the rules set by it. This is the *internal legitimacy* aspect of student representative associations. *External legitimacy* of student representative associations is reflected in beliefs of stakeholders other than students, that is, university leaders, academic staff, government officials, that student associations can truthfully and effectively represent student interests, are governed democratically and according to principles of good governance and can effectively contribute to the decision and policy processes. External legitimacy is often assessed by representativity, structural and procedural democracy, but also expertise, constructiveness, reliability, and trustworthiness of elected student representatives. Relationships to external actors, in particular political parties, are also relevant to legitimacy (Luescher and Klemenčič, 2016; Luescher and Mugume, 2014). While student governments may form alliances with political parties or other actors, or sympathize with some informally, the contentious question is whether their structures and processes are strong enough to prevent their primary locus of interest and activity to be moved from students to the

outside actor. This would, of course, undermine student governments' unique ability to perform representational functions.

Conclusion

This chapter offers an overview of the key concepts in the study of student representation as the less explored facet of student politics compared to student activism. It discusses student authority in HE governance as legitimate rights of students to participate in decision processes and the organizational characteristics of student governments. Both are conditions for student representation in HE.

The chapter is grounded in the *theory of student impact on HE* which challenges and corrects the existing one-directional perspectives of the effects of HE on students and seeks to explain the overarching mechanisms of students' effects on HE through student political agency. It also advances the proposition of the dynamic nature of student representation in HE which is highly conditioned on "*new policies [which] create a new politics.*"

The chapter provides theoretical foundations to the empirical chapters in this Handbook while noting that many empirical chapters also offer theoretical propositions advancing, complementing, or correcting those submitted in this chapter.

Notes

1 This chapter draws from and builds on the following individually authored publications by the author: Klemenčič (2012, 2014, 2015a,b, 2017, 2018, 2020a, b, c, d, e, f, 2023a, b, 2024). Any references to the author's co-authored publications are cited in the text.

2 Scholars have used different terminology to draw the same distinction: such as the institutionalized and noninstitutionalized forms of student politics (Weinberg and Walker, 1969), ordinary and extraordinary student politics (Pabian and Minksová, 2011), and associational politics and protest politics (della Porta, Donatella and Guzmán—Concha, 2020) (cited in Klemenčič and Park, 2018).

3 Student enactment of political agency can also result in students' self-formation, possibly even at an accelerated rate, but self-formation is not the purpose, only a possible consequence of enactment of political agency.

4 In 2020, five regional student associations have formed the Global Student Forum: All-Africa Students Union (AASU), European Students Union (ESU), Commonwealth Students Association (CSA), Organizing Bureau of School Students Unions (OBESSU), and Organización Continental Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Estudiantes (OCLAE).

References

Altbach, P.G. (1989). Perspectives on student political activism. *Comparative Education* 25(1): 97–110.

Altbach, P.G. (1991). Student political activism. In Altbach, P.G. (ed.), *International Higher Education: An Encyclopedia* (pp. 247–60). New York, NY: Garland.

Altbach, P.G. (2006). Student politics: Activism and culture. In Forest, J.F. and Altbach, P.G. (eds.), *International Handbook of HE* (pp. 329–45). Doredrecht: Springer.

Archer, M. (1995). *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511557675

Archer, M. (2000). *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. (2003). *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139087315

Ashby, E., and Anderson, M. (1970). *The Rise of the Student Estate in Britain*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Barnett, R. (2007). *A Will to Learn*. Berkshire, UK: Open University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1984 [1979]. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1988 [1984]. *Homo Academicus*. Translated by Peter Collier. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1996 [1989]. *The State Nobility: Elite Schools and the Field of Power*. Translated by Lauretta C. Clough. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503615427

Broadhurst, Christopher and Martin, Georgianna L. (2014). "Part of the 'Establishment'? Fostering Positive Campus Climates for Student Activists." *Journal of College and Character* 15(2): 75–85.

Brooks, R., Byford, K. and Sela, K. (2015). Inequalities in students' union leadership: the role of social networks. *Journal of Youth Studies* 18(9): 1204–18. doi:10.1080/13676261.2015.1039971.

Buchter, J.F. (1973). Contract law and the student-university relationship. *Indiana Law Journal* 48(2): 253–68.

Christiano, T. (2020). Authority. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2020 Edition). Edited by Edward N. Zalta. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/authority/&gt

Cuyjet, M.J. (1994). Student government as a provider of student services. *New Directions for Student Services* 1994(66): 73–89. doi:10.1002/ss.37119946608.

de Boer, H.F., Enders, J. and Schimank, U. (2007). On the way towards new public management? The governance of university systems in England, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany. In Jansen, D. (ed.), *New Forms of Governance in Research Organizations. Disciplinary Approaches, Interfaces and Integration* (pp. 137–52). Springer.

de Boer, H.F. and File, J. (2009). *Higher Education Governance Reforms across Europe*. Brussels: ESMU.

De Groot, G.J. (1998). *Student Protest: The Sixties and After*. Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.

Della, Porta, Donatella, Lorenzo Cini and Guzmán- Concha, César (2020). *Contesting Higher Education Student Movements against Neoliberal Universities*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

Downey, R.G., Bosco, P.J. and Silver, E.M. (1984). Long-term outcomes of participation in student government. *Journal of College Student Personne*l 25(3): 245–50.

Fisher, Dana (2012). Youth political participation: Bridging activism and electoral politics. *Annual Review of Sociology* 38(1): 119–37.

Goodman, M.A. (2021). Openly gay undergraduate men in student government: Out, visible, and elected. *The Journal of Diversity in Higher Ediucation*. doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000273

Gustafsson, I. and Hallström, K.T. (2014). Constructing authority in transnational governance: Rationality, hierarchy and state involvement in the world of certification standards. Paper presented at The Phenomenology of Organizations: A SCANCOR Celebration of the Work of John Meyer. September 25–27, 2014, Boston, MA.

Hacker, J.S. and Pierson, P. (2014). After the "Master Theory": Downs, Schattschneider, and the rebirth of policy-focused analysis. *Perspectives on Politics* 12(3): 643–62. doi:10.1017/S1537592714001637.

Hurtado, S. (2007). The study of college impact. In Gumport, P. (ed.), *Sociology of Higher Education* (pp. 94–112). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Jensen, Arnett Jeffrey (2008). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist* 55(5): 469–80. doi:10.1037/0003- 066X.55.5.469.

Jungblut, J. and Weber, R. (2015). We are one, but we're not the same: Explaining the emergence of hybrid national student unions. In *Student Engagement in Europe: Society, HE and Student governance* (pp. 269–81). Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Kapit, A. (2023). Activism Under Attack. Understanding the Repression of Student Activism. Oslo: SAIH – the Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund.

Klemenčič, M. (2012). Student representation in Western Europe: Introduction to the special issue. *European Journal of HE* 2(1): 2–19.

Klemenčič, M. (2014). Student power in a global perspective and contemporary trends in student organising. *Studies in HE* 39(3): 396–411.

Klemenčič, M. (2015a). Student involvement in quality enhancement. In Huisman, Jeroen, de Boer, Harry, Dill, David and Souto-Otero, Manuel (eds.), *The Handbook of HE Policy and Governance* (pp. 526–43). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Klemenčič, M. (2015b). What is student agency? An ontological exploration in the context of research on student engagement. In Klemenčič, M., Bergan, S. and Primožič, R. (eds.), *Student engagement in Europe: society, higher education, and student governance*. Council of Europe Higher Education Series No. 20. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Klemenčič, M. (2017). From student engagement to student agency: Conceptual considerations of European policies on student-centered learning in higher education. *Higher Education Policy* 30(1): 69–85.

Klemenčič, M. (2018). The student voice in quality assessment and improvement. In Hazelkorn, Ellen, Coates, Hamish and McCormick, Alex (eds.), *Research Handbook on Quality, Performance and Accountability in HE* (pp. 332–43). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Klemenčič, M. and Galán Palomares, F.M. (2018). Transnational student associations in the European multi-level governance of HE policies. *European Educational Research Journal* 17(3): 365–84.

Klemenčič, M. and Park, B.Y. (2018). Student politics: Between representation and activism. In Cantwell, B., Coates, H. and King, R. (eds.), *Handbook on the Politics of HE* (pp. 468–86). Cheltenham: Edward.

Klemenčič, M. (2020a). Student activism and student organizations. In David, Miriam E. and Amey, Marilyn J. (eds.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of HE*, 5v. Washington, DC: SAGE Publishers.

Klemenčič, M. (2020b). Students as actors and agents in student-centered HE. In Hoidn, S. and Klemenčič, M. (eds.), *Routledge International Handbook on Student-Centered Learning and Teaching in HE* (pp. 75–92). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429259371-7

Klemenčič, M. (2020c). Student governments. In Shin, J.C. and Teixeira, P. (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of HE Systems and Institutions*. Doredrecht: Springer.

Klemenčič, M. (2020d). HE institution governing boards: Student board members. In David, M.E. and Amey, M.J. (eds.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of HE* (5 volumes). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Klemenčič, M. (2020e). Student employees. In Shin, J.C. and Teixeira, P. (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of HE Systems and Institutions*. Doredrecht: Springer.

Klemenčič, M. (2020f). Student politics. In J.C. Shin and P. Teixeira (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Higher Education Systems and Institutions*. Doredrecht: Springer.

Klemenčič, M. (2023a). The rise of the student estate. In Amaral, A. and Magalhães, A. (eds.), *The Handbook on Autonomy and Governance of Higher Education Institutions*. Chapter 29, Cheltenham: Edgar Elgar Publishing.

Klemenčič, M. (2023b). A theory of student agency in higher education. In Baik, C. and Kahu, E. (eds.), *The Research Handbook on the Student Experiences in Higher Education*. Chapter 3. Cheltenham: Edgar Elgar Publishing.

Klemenčič, M. (2024). Student agency and student impact through representative student associations. In Conner, Jerusha, Raaper, Rille, Guzmán-Valenzuela, Carolina and Gauthier, Launa, *The Bloomsbury International Handbook of Student Voice in Higher Education*. Chapter 18. London and New York: Bloomsbury Publishers.

Kuh, G.D. and Lund, J.P. (1994). What students gain from participating in student government. *New Directions for Student Services* 66: 5–17.

Lipset, S.M. (1967). *Student Politics*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
Lipset, S.M. and Altbach, P.G. (eds.) (1969). *Students in Revolt*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
Lizzio, A. and Wilson, K. (2009). Student participation in university governance: The role conceptions and sense of efficacy of student representatives on departmental committees. *Studies in HE* 34(1): 69–84.
Luescher-Mamashela, T.M. (2010). From university democratisation to managerialism: The changing legitimation of university governance and the place of students. *Tertiary Education and Management* 16(4): 259–83.
Luescher-Mamashela, T.M. (2013). Student representation in university decision making: Good reasons, a new lens? *Studies in HE* 38(10): 1442–56.
Luescher-Mamashela, T. M. and Mugume, T. (2014). Student representation and multiparty politics in African HE. *Studies in HE* 39(3): 500–15.
Luescher, T.M., Klemenčič, M. and Jowi, O.J. (eds.) (2015). Special issue: Student power in African HE. *Journal of Student Affairs in Africa* 3(1): 1–116.
Luescher, T.M., Klemenčič, M., and Jowi, O.J. (eds.) (2016). *Student Politics in Africa: Representation and Activism*. Cape Town and Maputo: African Minds.
Luescher, T.M. and Klemenčič, M. (2016). Student power in twenty-first century Africa: The character and role of student organising. In Brooks, R. (ed.), *Student Politics and Protests* (pp. 166–86). Abingdon: Routledge.
March, James G. and Olsen, Johan (2008). "Elaborating the 'new institutionalism'." In Rhoades, R.A.W., Binder, Sarah A. and Rockman, Bert A. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions* (pp. 3–20). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Menon, M.E. (2005). Students' views regarding their participation in university governance: Implications for distributed leadership in HE. *Tertiary Education and Management* 11(2): 167–82.
Miller, C. and Kraus, M. (2004). Participating but not leading: Women's under-representation in student government leadership positions. *College Student Journal* 38(3): 423–7.
O'Donnell, G.A. and Schmitter, P.C. (1986). *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
Olsen, J.P. (2005). The institutional dynamics of the (European) University. Arena Working Paper No. 15, University of Oslo: Arena.
Pabian, P. and Minksova, L. (2011). Students in HE governance in Europe: Contrasts, commonalities and controversies. *Tertiary Education and Management* 17(3): 261–73.
Peter, F. (2017). Political legitimacy. In Zalta, Edward N. (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2017 Edition). https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2017/entries/legitimacy/.
Persson, A. (2004). Student participation in the governance of higher education in Europe: Results of a survey. In Bergan, S. (ed.), *The University as Respublica: Higher Education Governance, Student Participation and the University as a Site of Citizenship* (pp. 3182). Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
Pierson, P. (1993). When effect becomes cause: Policy feedback and political change. *World Politics* 45(4): 595–628.
Raaper, R. (2020). Students' unions and consumerist policy discourses in English HE. *Critical Studies in Education* 61(2): 245–61.
Raaper, R. (2021). Students as "animal laborans"? Tracing student politics in a marketised HE setting. *Sociological Research Online* 26(1): 130–46.
Raaper, R. (2022). Freedom, fragmentation and student politics: Tracing the effects of consumerism in english students' unions, in R. Watermeyer, R. Raaper and M. Olssen (eds.), *Handbook on Academic Freedom* (pp. 288–303). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
Raaper, R. (2023). *Student Identity and Political Agency: Activism, Representation and Consumer Rights*. London: Routledge.
Rosch, D.M. and Collins, J. D. (2017). The significance of student organizations to leadership development. *New Directions for Student Leadership* 2017(155): 9–19. https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.20246

Sen, A. (1985). Well-being, agency and freedom. The dewey lectures 1984. *Journal of Philosophy* 82: 169–221. https://doi.org/10.5840/jphil198582466

Schattschneider, E.E. (1935). *Politics, Pressures, and the Tariff: A Study of Free Private Enterprise in Pressure Politics*. Old Bridge, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Schmitter, P.C. and Streeck, W. (1999). The organization of business interests: Studying the associative action of business in advanced industrial societies. MPlfG Discussion Paper, 99/1.

Skocpol, T., Weir, M.M. and Orloff, A.S. (1989). *The Politics of Social Policy in the United States*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Stensaker, B. and Vabø, A. (2013). Re-inventing shared governance: Implications for organisational culture and institutional leadership. *Higher Education Quarterly* 67(3): 256–74. doi:10.1111/hequ.12019.

Swidler, Ann (1986). Culture in action: Symbols and strategies. *American Sociological Review* 51(2): 273–86.

Teixeira, P.N. and Klemenčič, M. (2021). Valuing the civic role of university education in an age of competition and rapid change. In H. Van't Land, A. Corcoran and D.C. Iancu (eds.), *The Promise of HE* (pp. 145–51). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-67245-4_23.

Vespa, M., Sguazzini, M. and Pratissoli, R. (2024). Inspired by student politics in Italy: A proposal for a new typology to classify student collective actors. In Klemenčič, M. (ed.), *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Student Representation*. Chapter 30. London: Bloomsbury Publishers.

Weber, M. (1918). Politics as a vocation. In Gerth, H.H. and Mills, C. Wright (eds.), (1970), *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (pp. 77–128). Abingdon: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Weinberg, I. and Walker, K. (1969). Student politics and political systems. *American Journal of Sociology* 75(July): 77–96.

Zuo, B. and Ratsoy, E. (1999). Student participation in university governance. *Canadian Journal of HE* 29(1): 1–26.