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### Developing lab activities for an introductory anatomy course: Reflections and recommendations from a faculty/student partnership.

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# Developing lab activities for an introductory anatomy course: Reflections and recommendations from a faculty/student partnership

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# Background

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The students as partners approach (SaP) is commonly utilized to adapt curriculum for future students

Spencer et al. (2021)

Mutual trust and respect results in a decrease in power imbalance and thus, a shift in university culture

Matthews et al. (2018)

Shared responsibility: in terms of contributing to the learning experience but also in overcoming challenges

Cook-Sather et al. (2014); Bonney (2018)

Mutually beneficial: increased sense of belonging, empathy, and confidence reported in both students and faculty

Matthews et al. (2019)

Institutions often demonstrate resistance to the idea of SaP; addressing such barriers is crucial

Curran & Millard (2016)

Self-reflection is encouraged: it allows for members to evaluate their work and improve upon it

Pedrosa-de-Jesus et al. (2017)

# Method

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- Independent reflections were guided by questions relating to:
  - What was learned about curriculum development and course design by being involved in the partnership
  - How working together on the lab activities impacted the wellbeing of the group
  - The value the partnership held for themselves, the group, and for higher education



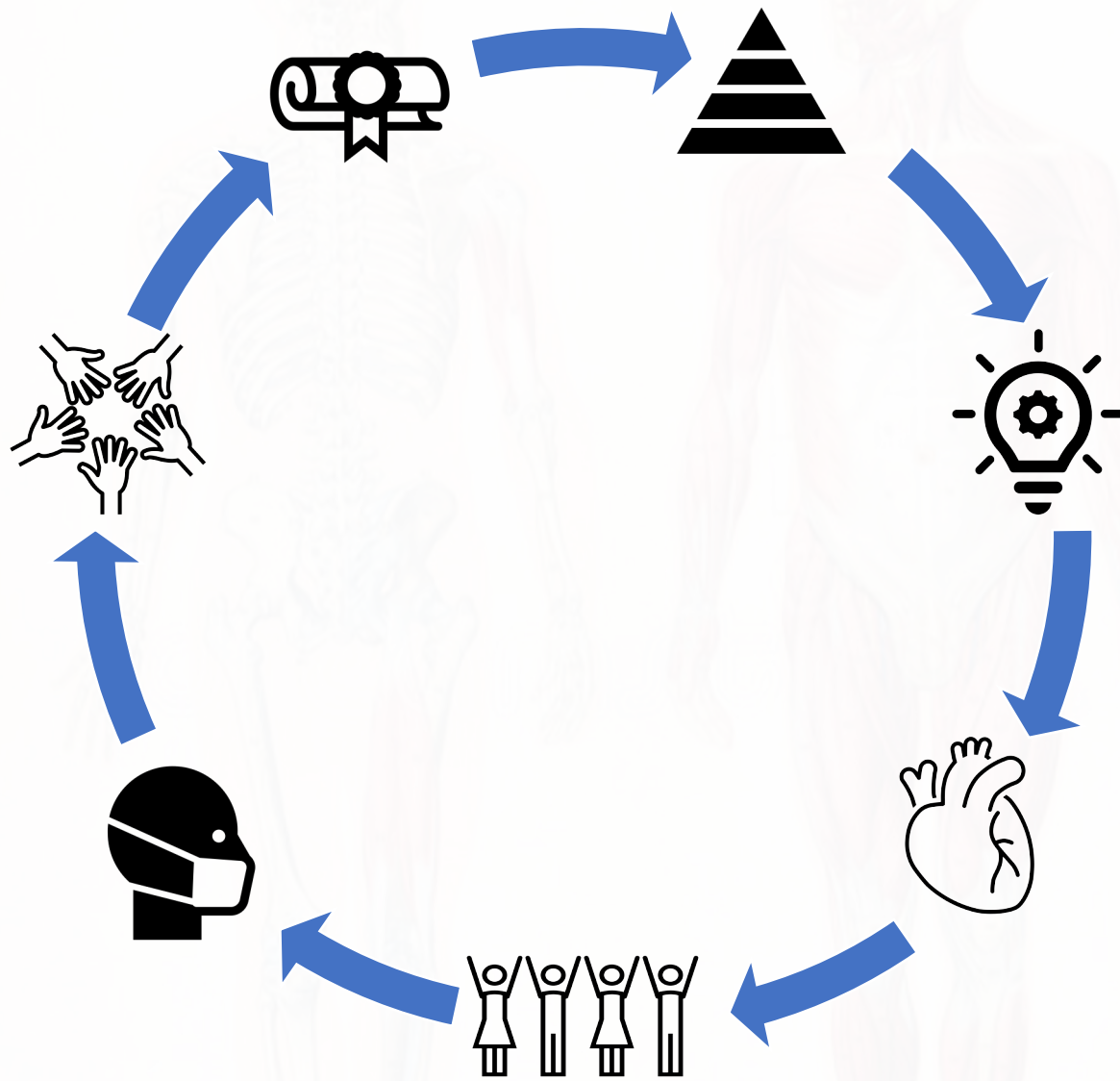
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# Themes

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- Benefits of varying levels of experience
- Creativity and autonomy
- Passion for the subject area
- Value of group interaction throughout the pandemic
- Adverse pandemic effects
- Collaborative team environments
- Positive contribution to higher education





# Recommendations

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**Integrate** informal socialization to build cohesion

**Encourage** open communication and sharing perspectives

**Provide** loose structure, but allow creativity to emerge

**Involve** students who have passion for the subject area

**Establish** a knowledge transfer plan with clear objectives

**Reflect** on the experience and share beyond the group



# Summary

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Overall a rewarding experience for all involved



Enthusiastic group members with diverse perspectives allowed for a positive contribution to higher education



The pandemic hindered group communication, but also forged opportunities for team collaboration and forming meaningful partnerships



Reflections were key to the success of the partnership



Recommendations for those who wish to engage in similar partnerships

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