

Keynote 1 **Thérese Skoog**

Sustainable and accessible learning environments in higher education

Abstract

Higher education institutions, and psychology departments in particular, have a responsibility to prioritize student health and an inclusive learning environment. As a field that studies the human mind, behaviour, and mental health, psychology departments should set an example by prioritizing the well-being of their students.

In recent years, the prevalence of stress and mental health issues among students has become a growing concern and can lead to burnout and a host of health problems. It can also lead to dropout and low achievements. By prioritizing student health, higher education institutions can help students to thrive academically and in life, and psychology departments can play a leading role in addressing this challenge. This includes not only teaching about psychology, but also promoting healthy habits, providing access to mental health services, and creating a supportive learning environment that promotes well-being.

Furthermore, psychology departments must prioritize creating an inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity and encourages collaboration. This includes providing accommodations for students with disabilities, creating safe spaces for underrepresented groups, and fostering an environment that embraces different perspectives and backgrounds.

By prioritizing student health and an inclusive learning environment, psychology departments can create a more supportive and productive academic environment. This will benefit not only students but also faculty and staff, who are likely to feel more motivated and fulfilled in their roles.

In conclusion, psychology departments, and higher education institutions in general, must prioritize student health and an inclusive learning environment to support the success of their students. By doing so, we can create a more equitable, resilient, and prosperous society, and ensure that the field of psychology remains at the forefront of promoting mental health and well-being.

The case used in this presentation is an initiative at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden, which has the aim to help build and promote sustainable and accessible environments for students that promote not only learning but also mental health.