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**Abstract**

It is higher education's responsibility continuously to challenge and critique value and knowledge claims that have prescriptive tendencies. Part of this responsibility lies in engaging students in socio-scientific disputes. The ill-defined nature of sustainability manifests itself in such disputes when conflicting values, norms, interests, and reality constructions meet. This makes sustainability its need for contextualization and the debate surrounding it pivotal for higher education. It offers an opportunity for reflection on the mission of our universities and colleges, but also a chance to enhance the quality of the learning process. This article explores both the overarching goals and process of higher education from an emancipatory view and with regard to sustainability. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Wals, Arjen E. J., E-mail: arjen.wals@alg.vlk.wag.ur.nl