

The Return of the Witches: A Class That Motivates the Analysis of Gender Bias in Engineer

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Abstract : The Faculty of Mines, of the National University of Colombia, Medellín Campus, is a faculty that has 136 years of history and represents one of the most important study centers in the country in the field of engineering and scientific research, as well as a reference at a global, national, and Latin American level in this matter. Despite being a faculty with so many years of history and having trained a large number of graduates under the traditional mechanistic and androcentric paradigm, which reproduces the logic of the traditional scientific method and the differentiated and severe look between subject-object of research among other binarisms, has also been the place where professors and students have become aware of the need to transform this paradigm into engineering, and focus on the sustainability of diversity and the well-being of the natural and social systems that inhabit the territories and has opened possibilities for the implementation of classes that address feminist pedagogical theories and practices. The class: The return of the witches, is an initiative that constitutes an important training exercise that provides students with the study of feminisms, the importance of closing gender gaps and critical readings on the traditional paradigm of engineering. The objective of this article is to present a systematization of the experience of design, implementation and development of this elective class, describing the tensions that arose at the time when a subject of this style was created and proposed in the Department of Geosciences and Environment, from the Faculty of Mines in 2022; the reactions of the groups of students who have taken it and their perceptions and opinions about ecofeminism as proposals for critical analysis and practices in relation to the environment and, above all, how their readings of the world have changed after having studied this subject for a semester. The pedagogical journey and the feminist methodologies that have been designed and adjusted over two years of work will be explained based on the sharing of situated knowledge of the students and the two teachers who teach the course, who pose challenges to the dominant ideology in engineering since one of them is trained in human sciences and feminist studies and the other, although trained in civil engineering and geosciences, is a woman with diverse sexual orientation and is the first professor to have assumed the position of dean in the 135 years of history of the Faculty. The transformations in the life experience of the students are revealing since they affirm that the training process is forceful and powerful to outline a much more qualified and critical professional profile that contributes to the transformation of gender gaps in the country. This class is therefore a challenge in this Faculty of Engineering that still presents a dominant ideology on gender that has not been questioned or challenged before.

Keywords : feminisms, gender equality, gender bias, engineering for life Manifesto.

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