Practical Frameworks and Techniques for Promoting Anti-Racism in Student Learning Assessment

Tenth Annual AMCOA Assessment Conference
April 29, 2022
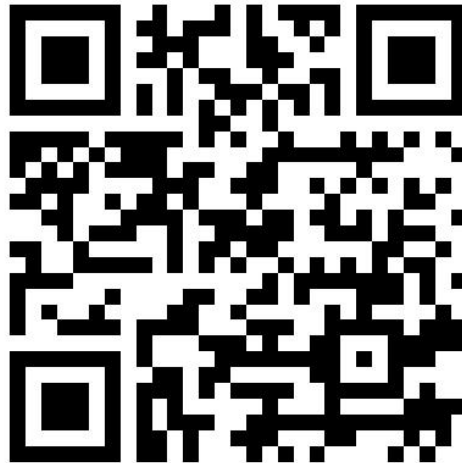
Jennifer Hill, Ed.D.
Director of Assessment, Trinity College
Duke University

"Many people are craving a concise message on how to be an antiracist at this time, in this very moment. **People are searching for candid directions** *about how to pour their passion into building an antiracist society."*

- Dr. Ibram X. Kendi

Slides available at

https://bit.ly/antiracism_assessment

What is your learning or development goal(s) for today?
You can respond multiple times.

Text **JenniferHill462** to number **22333**. Wait for the acknowledgement, then text your selection. Wait for the next view to see the response options.

Responses are confidential. The application includes the last four digits of your phone number in the system's report, but I will delete the poll as soon as the session ends. No identifiers will be posted in the results.

A. Learn about the principles assessment, the anti-racism movement, and/or their interaction
B. Understand better how anti-racist principles and practices might operate in my work and life
C. Exercise anti-racist principles and practices in some realistic contexts
D. Deconstruct and evaluate my organization's anti-racist commitments, actions, and operations
E. I really just want a thoughtful space to listen and think, and maybe take some notes to reflect on later.
F. Something else.

Acknowledgements and commitments

I am white woman giving a presentation about topics directly related to race.
I benefit from knowledge and insights shared by friends, colleagues, communities, and leaders of color.
The ideas presented here are informed directly and indirectly by others.

I commit:

To sharing my insights
To learning from my mistakes and being open to feedback
To providing an inclusive space for conversation without judgment
To curating resources for topics covered in this presentation

You commit:

To open-minded, active listening
To practicing inclusive conversation, dialogue, and reflection
To providing feedback
To learning from any mistakes of understanding or application

Special thanks to collaborators:

Alessandra Dinin, Ph.D., Duke University

Emily Hadley, Duke '15, RTI International

Racism

Homophobia

Misogyny

Ableism

Ageism

Nativism & ethnocentrism

Linguistic bias

Racism

Homophobia

Misogyny

Ableism

Ageism

Nativism & ethnocentrism

Linguistic bias

Compounded by the current crisis of mental and emotional unwellness on college campuses

Agenda

Part 1: The Duke University example

Part 2: Blind spots (implicit bias)

Part 3: Assessment as an opportunity for disruption

Part 4: Application, Analysis, Synthesis

Part 5: For ongoing discussion…

If someone were to ask you,

"Is your organization anti-racist?"

What would you say?

Part 1

The Duke University example
Anti-racist work within an institution

The founding of Duke University by slave-owning family

https://humanrights.fhi.duke.edu/who-we-are/history-of-human-rights-at-duke/slavery-and-segregation/

Noose found on West Campus

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2015/04/01/noose-is-found-hanging-from-tree-on-dukes-campus

Homophobic and racist graffiti

https://www.wral.com/homophobic-and-racist-graffiti-found-on-duke-campus/19933926/

Neo-Nazi graffiti

https://www.npr.org/2018/11/20/669321036/swastika-defaces-duke-university-mural-honoring-synagogue-shooting-victims

Aftermath of the George Floyd murder

https://www.dukechronicle.com/article/2021/03/duke-university-racist-printout-brown-discipline-discrimination-harassment

"Recognizing that the work of anti-racism begins with education, we are advancing training and education for all."

President Vince Price's message October 2020

https://president.duke.edu/2020/10/15/an-update-on-dukes-anti-racism-efforts/

Duke
OFFICE *of the* PRESIDENT

November 18, 2021

To the Duke Community,

I write today with an update about our efforts to advance racial equity at Duke.

Duke recently engaged in our first-ever campus-wide survey of all students, faculty, and university staff regarding equity and inclusion. I am grateful to the more than 12,700 members of the Duke community who responded,

The results of the survey are telling, and some are deeply troubling. The findings show that different members of our community experience a very different Duke. More than half of Black, Hispanic, Asian, female, and LGBTQ+ members of the Duke community report having experienced microaggressions in the past year. Furthermore, Black and Hispanic members of the community are less satisfied relative to their white counterparts with opportunities for advancement.

https://anti-racism.duke.edu/campus-survey/

anti-racism.duke.edu / resources

Students Faculty Staff Health System Community Alumni

- Duke Office for Institutional Equity's Resources for Understanding and Confronting Racism and Its Impact
- Kenan Race Fellows
- Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture Training offerings

- Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity
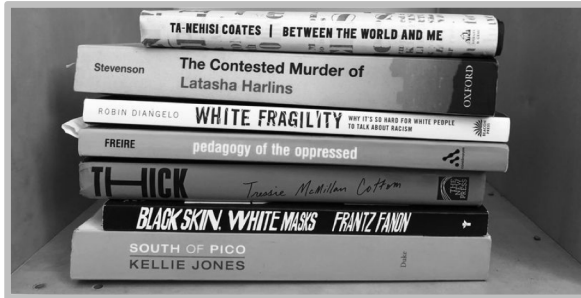- Student Affairs Center for Multicultural Affairs anti-racism resources

Faculty Staff Health System Community Alumni

- Request for Proposals for New Projects
- Duke Black Think Tank
- 2021 Faculty Advancement Seed Grants: "Confronting Racism and Bias: Fostering an Inclusive Community"
- Duke Civic Engagement Racial Equity Learning Arc
- Duke Office for Institutional Equity's Resources for Understanding and Confronting Racism and Its Impact
- Faculty Advancement Anti-Racism Resources

- Faculty Advancement and Success (FAS) Workshop Series 2020–2021
- Leading an Academic Unit at Duke (LAUD) Workshop Series 2020–2021
- Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture Training offerings
- Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity
- Teaching for Equity Fellows Program

Staff Health System Community Alumni

- Duke Civic Engagement Racial Equity Learning Arc
- Duke Office for Institutional Equity's Resources for Understanding and Confronting Racism and Its Impact

- Mary Lou Williams Center for Black Culture Training offerings

Increasing numbers of academic department, programs, and centers are building equity, inclusion, and diversity initiatives into their strategic plans and mission statements.
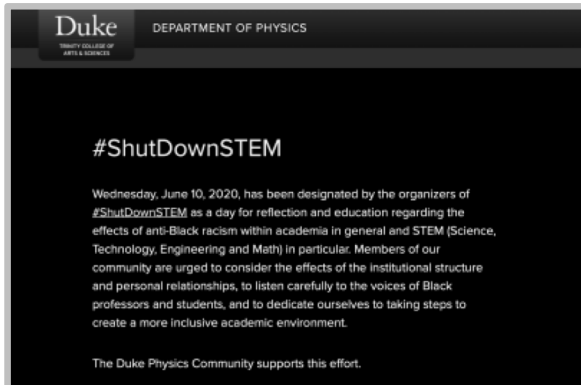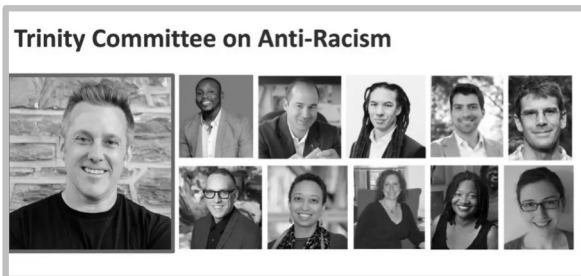
Recent examples of our steps forward:

Living While Back Symposium (June 2020)

Dismantling Racism at Duke series (January 2021)

Anti-racism in Academic Advising (February 2021)

Moments to Movement (M2M)
"Duke Health's collective stand against systemic racism and injustice."

anti-racism.duke.edu / actions

A sample of the initiatives underway

Faculty Diversity Dashboard

Our diversity hiring and retention efforts will be tracked through a new dashboard of faculty diversity data, which will be available to the entire Duke community.

IN PLANNING

Implementing Hate and Bias Working Group Recommendations

The Office of Student Affairs and Office of Undergraduate Education have begun implementing revised recommendations of an undergraduate Hate and Bias Working Group to make that work more transparent, concrete, and responsive; graduate and professional students are undertaking similar work.

ACTIVE

Support for Students in Durham

We are deepening support for educational equity through a lead contribution to the Durham Public Schools Foundation campaign for digital equity for Durham students, partnerships on internet connectivity with the city, and broadening connections between Durham students and Duke students.

IMPLEMENTED

The founding of Duke University

Noose found on West Campus

Homophobic and racist graffiti

Neo-Nazi graffiti

Aftermath of the George Floyd murder

But what about the <u>covert</u> racism we can't see or address as easily?

Those unconscious actions and habits of mind that undermine opportunities & outcomes among our underrepresented or minoritized students.

Part 2

Our blind spots, or implicit bias

Implicit bias

The unconscious influence of stereotypes and prejudices on everyday actions and behaviors.

Reflection

How does implicit bias play out in your work or on your campus?

Text **JenniferHill462** to number **22333**. Wait for the acknowledgement, then text your selection.

Free response!

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A brief mention of
epistemology and constructivism

Learning and learning outcomes are constructed out of the student's lived experience in the world.

Established systems of evaluation, when used uncritically, can contribute to inequities of learning outcomes, especially among historically underrepresented or minoritized students.

What do we know?
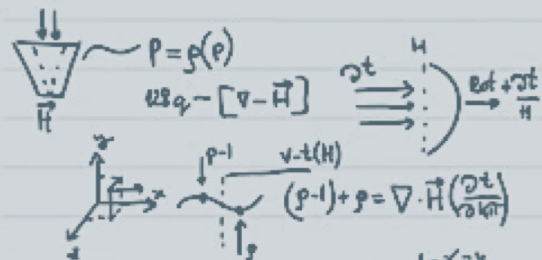
How is knowledge acquired?

What does it mean to say we know something?

What justifies one's claims to knowledge?

Are there hegemonies of "knowledge"?

What types of knowledge & experience *count*?

Constructivism considers:

- Do student have different educational experiences which influence how they approach mathematical problem-solving?

- Have their math competencies been evaluated in ways that either support or undermine individual confidence, creativity, persistence, and more?

The traditions of "the academy" may reinforce systemic bias, discrimination, racism.

Peer review

Poor design of group projects

Grading high-stakes exams on curves

Perpetuation of institution-readiness models

Neglecting inequities within the K-16 and graduate education pipelines

Can a critical examination or reformulation of assessment practice disrupt these patterns?

A learning environment may:

Be race-neutral: Omits race from discussions of curriculum, assessment, or student success. Focuses on individual background characteristics, rather than systems. Seeks mission without acknowledging racial disparities; ignores their persistence. Ignores structural inequalities in learning opportunities and support services. Educational data by race and ethnicity are not collected.

Be race-conscious: Argues for race/ethnicity as important variables in curriculum design and assessment planning. Programs and courses consider how inequality affects learning and well-being. Does not address root causes of inequity and exclusion or consider intersectionalities.

Seek diversity & inclusion: Focuses on diversifying the learning and research space. Defines *diversity* as culture, experiences, and points of view; diversity is understood to enable creativity, innovation, prosperity. Focuses on most salient categories: race & gender. Emphasis on diverse faculty and student populations.

Address structural racism: Explores, decomposes, proposes remedies for historic systems of economic, political, social inequality. Seek to understand and address distributions of power in learning spaces as antecedent to inequalities of academic outcomes. Sharpens focus on outcomes as a results of long-standing patterns.

Stages of anti-racist orientations in assessment ?

Race-neutral: Assessments are designed to be objective, evaluating all learners equally. They do not take into account differences in students' experiences or perspectives. Rubrics, grade curves and other interpretive devices are intended to mitigate bias. Instructor does not consider differences in outcomes by race or ethnicity.

Race-conscious: Is aware of possible racial inequalities in learning outcomes, but it does not use race or ethnicity as considerations in curriculum design and assessment planning. Instructors seek training and understanding, but established models and traditions persist. Course assessments do not address the structural inequalities in students' pre-college preparation or across a college curriculum.

Seek diversity & inclusion: The departmental culture tries to diversify faculty and student bodies, seeks representation in curriculum, and pursues vibrant, diverse, and inclusive curricula. Individual faculty and program officers may need help understanding how assessment tools and structures themselves can perpetuate inequalities of learning outcomes or insufficiently capture some students' learning.

Address structural racism: Individual faculty and the department as a whole proactively and holistically evaluate how assessments of learning may impact students unequally. Instructors experiment with new techniques to empower learner autonomy in the classroom, possibly challenging assessment conventions. Members of the department share examples of authentic, inclusive assessment practice with colleagues.

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Address structural racism: Individua... ...istically evaluate how assessm... ...experiment with new techniques to empower learner autonomy in the classroom, possibly challenging assessment conventions. Members of the department share examples of authentic, inclusive assessment practice with colleagues.

> The last stage requires vigilance against the heavy inertia of…
>
> routine, fatigue, burn-out, high workloads, and entrenched "standard operating procedures".

The slow creep of implicit bias/racism in assessment

Selection of measures. What are we asking, how, and why? Do these measures, questions, or outputs create risk or disadvantage for any members of our community? Does measurement make room for essential *stories*?

Assessment non-response. Among optional assessment tasks, who is participating? Whose voices or experiences are being excluded? Why?

Data codes, aggregations, and disaggregations. How are we making decisions about appropriate levels of data specificity (or coarsening)? How do operationalize variables to best understand the diversity of students' learning experiences?
https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/race-ethnicity-reporting-changes

Outreach. Are we discussing assessment findings with affinity and cultural groups? Are we seeking students' interpretations of our evidence? Are we talking with disciplinary experts about our findings? Who is helping us translate findings into action?

Part 3

Assessment as disruption?

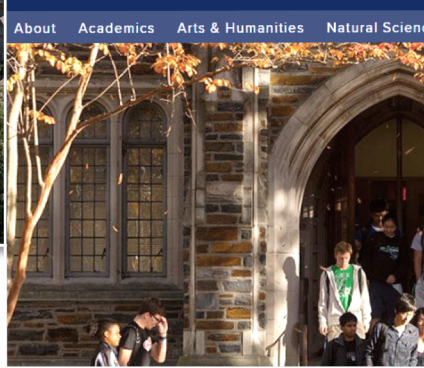# What is learning outcomes assessment?
Where does it happen? What is its scope?

The institution
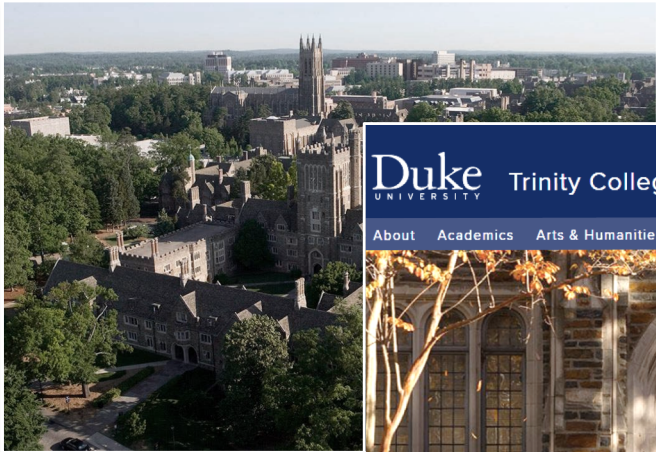
The college

The program

The course
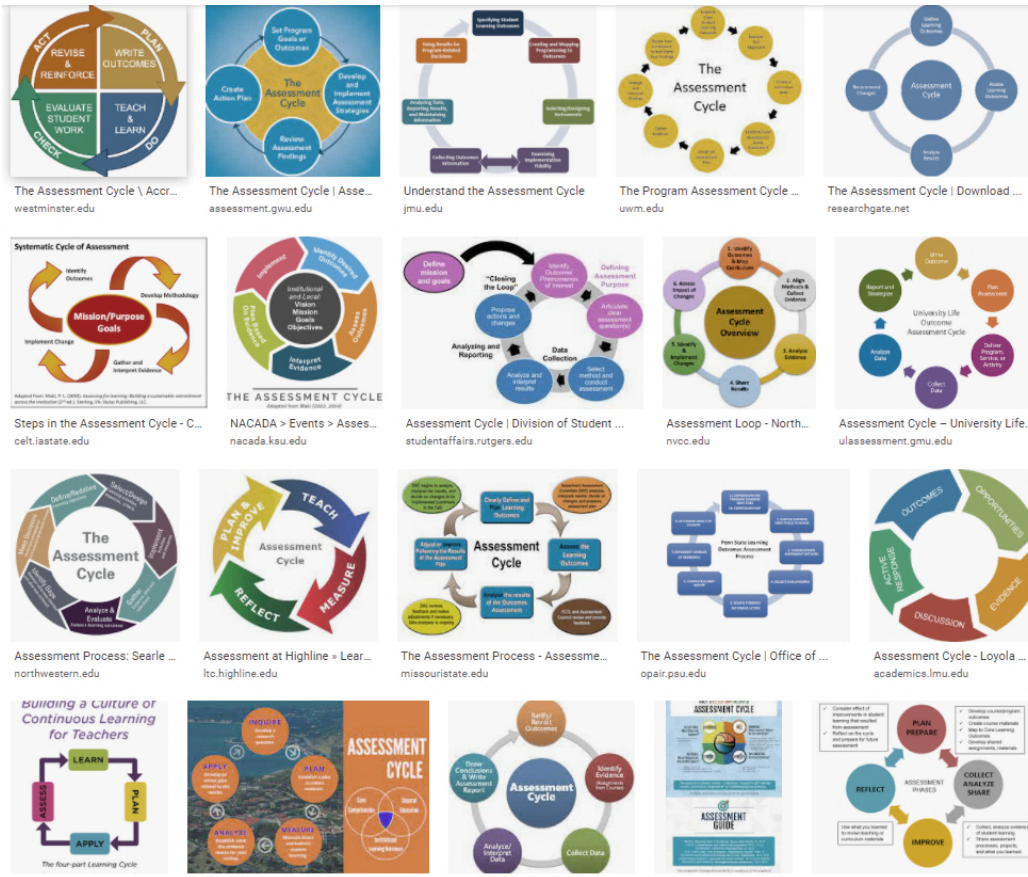
Try a Google image search for "assessment cycle"

1. Identify outcomes & map curriculum
2. Develop methods & collect evidence
3. Interpret & make sense of evidence
4. Share results
5. Identify and implement changes
6. Assess impact of changes

	Identify outcomes	Choose methods, collect evidence	Interpret information	Share and discuss results	Implement changes	Evaluate their impact
The institution						
The college						
Academic program						

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The institution						
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Academic program						

	What do you want your students to learn?	**When** and how is that taught?	**How** will you evaluate learning in each area?	**How can students use** the results to understand their learning? **How do you use** the results to understand your teaching practice?		**Implement** changes for next time.
A course						

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A course					

Invoking an anti-racist perspective:	**Does the course material represent diverse human experiences and expertise?** **Do we introduce and celebrate the diversity of people contributing to the field?**

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| **Invoking an anti-racist perspective:** | Does the course material represent diverse human experiences and expertise? Do we introduce and celebrate the diversity of people contributing to the field? | **Is the pedagogy inclusive and equitable?** **Are all students fully engaged?** | | | |

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Do we introduce and celebrate the diversity of people contributing to the field? | Is the pedagogy inclusive and equitable?

Are all students fully engaged? | **Does the type of the assessment accommodate a plurality of learning styles and human experiences?**

Do assessments assume any privileged experiences or understandings that were not available to all class members? | | |

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Invoking an anti-racist perspective:	Does the course material represent diverse human experiences and expertise? Do we introduce and celebrate the diversity of people contributing to the field?	Is the pedagogy inclusive and equitable? Are all students fully engaged?	Does the type of the assessment accommodate a plurality of learning styles and human experiences? Do assessments assume any privileged experiences that were not available to all class members?	**Do students feel the grade represents their learning and ability? Could they be their authentic selves in the assignment, and carry it into future work?** **Are there systematic differences in outcomes across subgroups?**	

	What do you want your students to learn?	**When** and how is that taught?	**How** will you evaluate learning in each area?	**How can students use** the results to understand their learning? **How do you use** the results to understand your teaching practice?	**Implement** changes for next time.
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Do assessments assume any privileged experiences that were not available to all class members? | Do students feel the grade represents their learning and ability? Could they be their authentic selves in the assignment, and carry it into future work?

Are there systematic differences in outcomes across subgroups? | Seek practical advice from colleagues and others.

Make changes to your course plan, assessment plan, or delivery method.

Talk with students about what you learned. |

There are some great prompts on the previous slide.

How do we get faculty and instructors to engage with them?

Part 4

Application, Analysis, Synthesis

Initial ideas for faculty and instructors

Seek anti-racist perspectives in course design workshops[1]	Invite a diversity of guest speakers to join your class.[2]
Seek consultations with accessibility specialists to understand impacts of the learning environment.[3]	Collect baseline information about students' levels of competency as the course begins.
At the end of the term, ask students whether their course assessment captured their learning.[4]	Ask assessment personnel for help interpreting course-level data.[5]
Seek opportunities to publish equity-minded practices within your discipline's SoTL.[6]	Join or advocate for a Teaching for Equity-style fellowship program.[7]

[1] https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/resources/art-and-science-of-teaching/creating-an-inclusive-and-equitable-course

[2] https://keepteaching.iu.edu/strategies/communicating-facilitating-activities/zoom-guest-speaker.html

[3] https://bluebook.duke.edu/parents-family/learning/academic-resources-support/student-disability-access-office/

[4] https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/course-evaluation-questionnaire

[5] https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/consultation-support

[6] https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/research-evaluation-development/about-teaching-and-learning-research/

[7] https://facultyadvancement.duke.edu/teaching-equity

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2017). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. John Wiley & Sons.
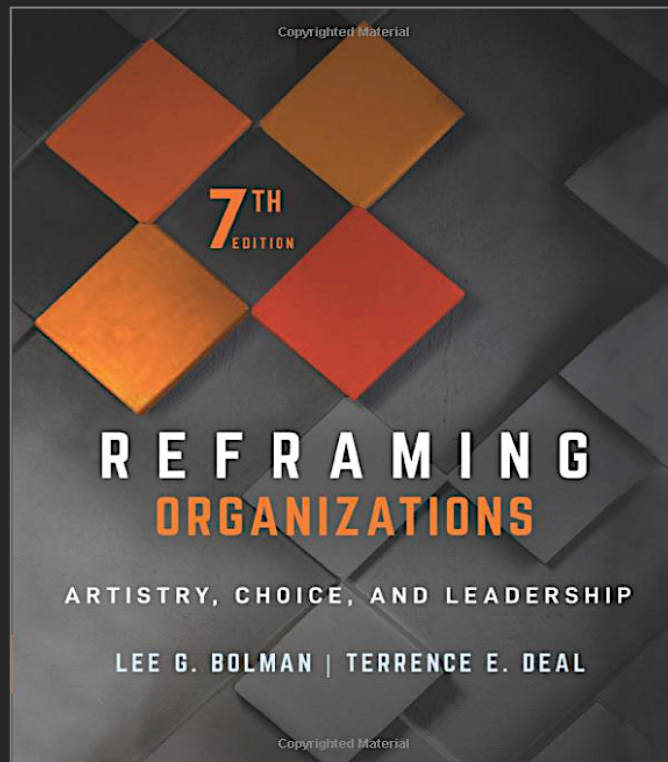
‣ **Symbolic**
Invokes purpose, meaning, tradition, values, rituals

‣ **Human resources**
Understands people's needs and the role of relationships

‣ **Political**
Works through conflict in the face of tough choices and resource scarcity

‣ **Structural**
Focuses on tasks, systems, compliance, strategic planning

Structural ideas for leadership:
Provide clear expectations and frameworks

- Empower assessment personnel to create data dashboards to increase accessibility of essential metrics (bearing student and faculty confidentiality in mind)

- Include expectations for engagement in DEI work within the requirements of internal program reviews.

- Design assessment management tools/templates to elevate the visibility and discussion of anti-racist curricula and pedagogies.

- Consider how APT processes recognize professional service. Be cognizant of the service roles often borne disproportionately by faculty of color and women.

Structural ideas for leadership:
Provide training, time, and incentives

- Communicate the institution's anti-racist priorities in new faculty orientation, faculty meetings, strategic plans.

- Provide seed funds or mini-grants to jump start DEI-oriented programs or research projects.

- Develop teaching awards that recognize inclusive teaching.

- Encourage risk taking in the design of assessment. Create resources to support authentic or experiential assessment.

- Provide funding for retreats, events, speakers to facilitate deep discussion of diversity, equity, inclusion in course design and learning assessments.

Assessment-focused case studies and simulations
Examples for workshops, trainings, retreats

>> STUDENT ATTRITION

Many first-year students take our gateway '101' course to meet general education requirements. We noticed that BIPOC and female-identifying students are less likely to take another course in our discipline after that gateway course. Does this matter? What should we do?

>> CLIMATE WITHIN A PROGRAM

A departmental climate survey suggests experiences of isolation and disaffection among students. Where do we go from here?

>> COURSE PEDAGOGY

We've noticed that the flipped course format produces higher levels of learning on average (measured by exam performance). Later, anecdotal conversations with underrepresented students reveal they feel excluded within class teams. How do we salvage the benefits of the flipped classroom while also supporting and encouraging authentic engagement for these students?

Happening around Duke University this spring

Program-level climate surveys

Redesigning curriculum to introduce texts authored by BIPOC academics

More guest speakers in classrooms (thanks, Zoom)

Rethinking how assessments are graded

Connecting with campus experts on equity implementation for faculty and staff training programs

Monitoring and evaluating students' access to and use of learning resources

Monitoring alignment/divergence of midterm and final grades by student subgroups.

Reflection

Of these initial ideas, which are most likely to advance anti-racism in your organization?

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A. Offer more or better course design workshops from the lens of anti-racism
B. Rethink course evaluations to ensure we're hearing students' experiences
C. Facilitate research and publications on anti-racist teaching practice
D. Enable more guest speakerships, campus guests, discussion panels
E. Make data reports more useful or accessible
F. Create or promote DEI-oriented fellowship programs
G. Require faculty meetings address DEI-oriented teaching and assessment practices
H. Provide seed funds or mini-grants to jump start DEI-oriented programs or research projects
I. Develop teaching awards that recognize inclusive teaching
J. Create resources to support authentic or experiential assessment
K. Evaluate whether APT service requirements disproportionate impact faculty of color

Part 5

For ongoing discussion

Evaluate your institution's position with respect to
student-readiness vs. institution-readiness models
of educational programs

Many faculty and staff accept the assumption that the student must prove their academic *bona fides*. Students will sink or swim, and there are few plans to support first-generation or low-income students. By contrast, an institution-readiness framework recognizes that, once admitted, the institution has a responsibility to meet individual students where they are.

- Recognizes systemic, historic educational barriers
- Seeks the student's perspective, and understands the influence of social/cultural norms
- Understands students' learning needs and provides suitable supports
- Might require rethinking how we assess learning

https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-the-education-system-exacerbates-inequality

https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2016/03/21/instead-focusing-college-ready-students-institutions-should-become-more-student

McNair, T. B., Albertine, S., Cooper, M. A., McDonald, N., & Major Jr, T. (2016). *Becoming a student-ready college: A new culture of leadership for student success*. John Wiley & Sons.

Consider the insights of the scholarly literature on

Research utilization

Authentic, lasting change may be slow and requires multiple parallel strategies.

- There are obstacles to the immediate use of evidence to guide action.

- Decision-making authority can be distributed.

- Often there are multiple possible courses of action.

- Decision-making can be non-rational.

- Stakeholders may not know what evidence is useful.

- Many are comfortable with the status quo or feel threatened by change.

Weiss, C. H. (1980). Knowledge creep and decision accretion. *Knowledge*, *1*(3), 381-404.

Weiss, C. H. (1986). The circuitry of enlightenment: Diffusion of social science research to policymakers. *Knowledge*, *8*(2), 274-281.

Weiss, C. H. (1997). Theory-based evaluation: past, present, and future. *New directions for evaluation*, *76*, 41-55.

Be alert to the use of data in
appointment, promotion, and tenure processes

We value evidence, but data are not neutral. Results are influenced by the questions we ask and the population we study. For example, course evaluation results may include coded bias towards instructors of color, especially if the student is White. Apply them to APT with care.

Dade, K., Tartakov, C., Hargrave, C., & Leigh, P. (2015). Assessing the impact of racism on Black faculty in White academe: A collective case study of African American female faculty. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, *39*(2), 134.

Matthew, P. A. (Ed.). (2016). *Written/unwritten: Diversity and the hidden truths of tenure*. UNC Press Books.

Ramaley, J. A. (2019). *Covert discrimination and women in the sciences*. Routledge.

Equity-minded assessment asks that we:

1. Check biases. Ask introspective questions about assumptions and positions of privilege throughout the assessment process.

2. Use multiple sources of evidence appropriate for the students being assessed.

3. Include and respond to student perspectives.

4. Increase transparency in assessment results, decisions, and actions.

5. Ensure collected data can be disaggregated and interpreted in a meaningful way.

6. Make evidence-guided changes that address issues of context-specific inequities.

Adapted from National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment
www.learningoutcomesassessment.org / equity

Some references for equity-minded assessment

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Knight, S., Shum, S. B., & Littleton, K. (2014). Epistemology, assessment, pedagogy: Where learning meets analytics in the middle space. *Journal of Learning Analytics*, *1*(2), 23-47.

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McArthur, J. (2016). Assessment for social justice: The role of assessment in achieving social justice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 41*(7), 967–981.

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Montenegro, E., & Jankowski, N. A. (2020, January). A new decade for assessment: Embedding equity into assessment praxis (Occasional Paper No. 42). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois and Indiana University, National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA).

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I welcome your thoughts, questions, dialogue!

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