

Reframing Assessment to Center Equity



Gavin Henning | New England College | gghenning@nec.edu

Resources



bit.ly/Resources_ECA

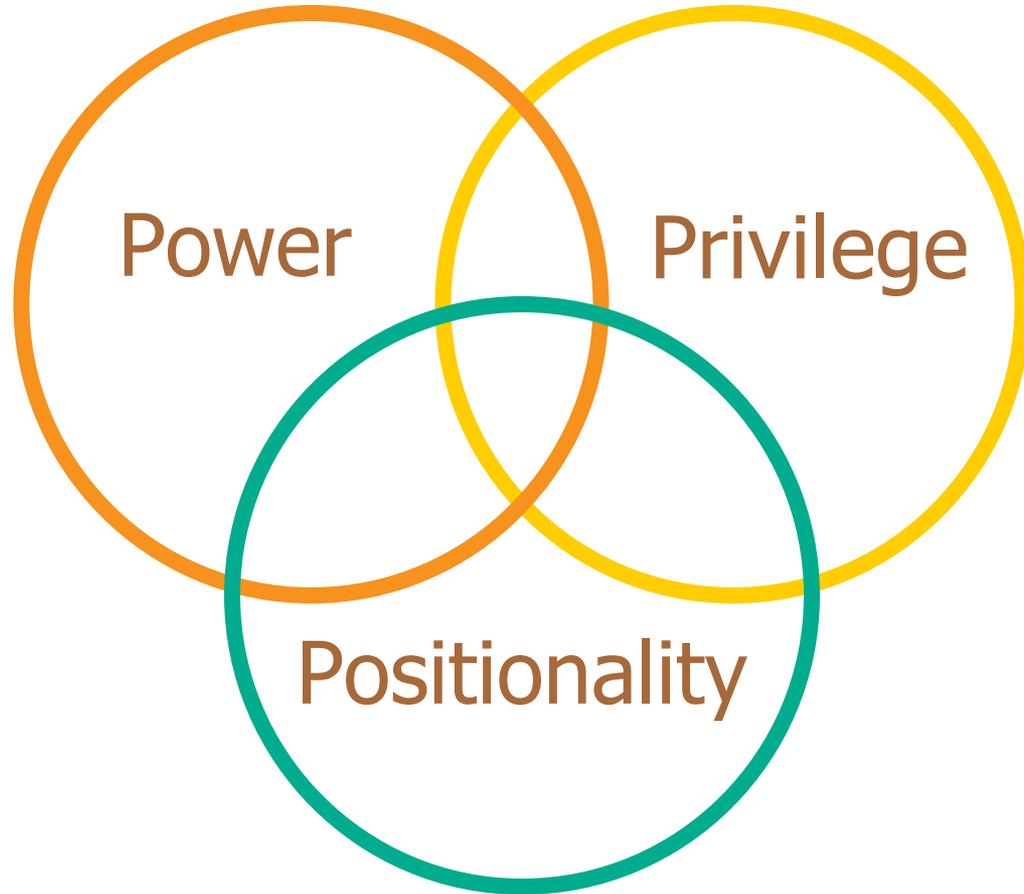




Familiarity with the Topic

1. This is the first time I've heard it
2. I've heard of it before, but not exactly sure what it is
3. I've attended a workshop/presentation on the topic
4. I'm quite familiar but don't yet use it in my work
5. I use equity-centered assessment strategies

3 Ps





Why?



Disparate 6-Year Graduation Rates

- Asian American (74%)
- White (64%)
- Hispanic (54%)
- Pacific Islander (51%)
- Black (40%)
- American Indian/Alaskan Native (39%)



Long Term Impact

- \$35,000 – median annual salary with high school degree
- \$55,700 – median annual salary with bachelor's degree

- \$207,000 difference in 10 years
- \$828,000 difference in 40 years



Long Term Impact

- More likely to hold a job
- More likely to be healthy
- More likely to vote
- Less likely to be on public assistance
- Pay more taxes

Assessment

Diversity,
Equity, &
Inclusion



“Often, assessment follows non-justice based paradigms, serves neoliberal external mandates, and reflects research practices that further marginalize underserved students.”

D. Zerquera, I. Hernández, & J. C. Berumen (Eds). (2018). *Special Issue: Assessment and Social Justice: Pushing Through the Paradox* (New Directions for Institutional Research, no. 177, pp. 57-71). <https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.20256>



Equity and Assessment





Assumptions

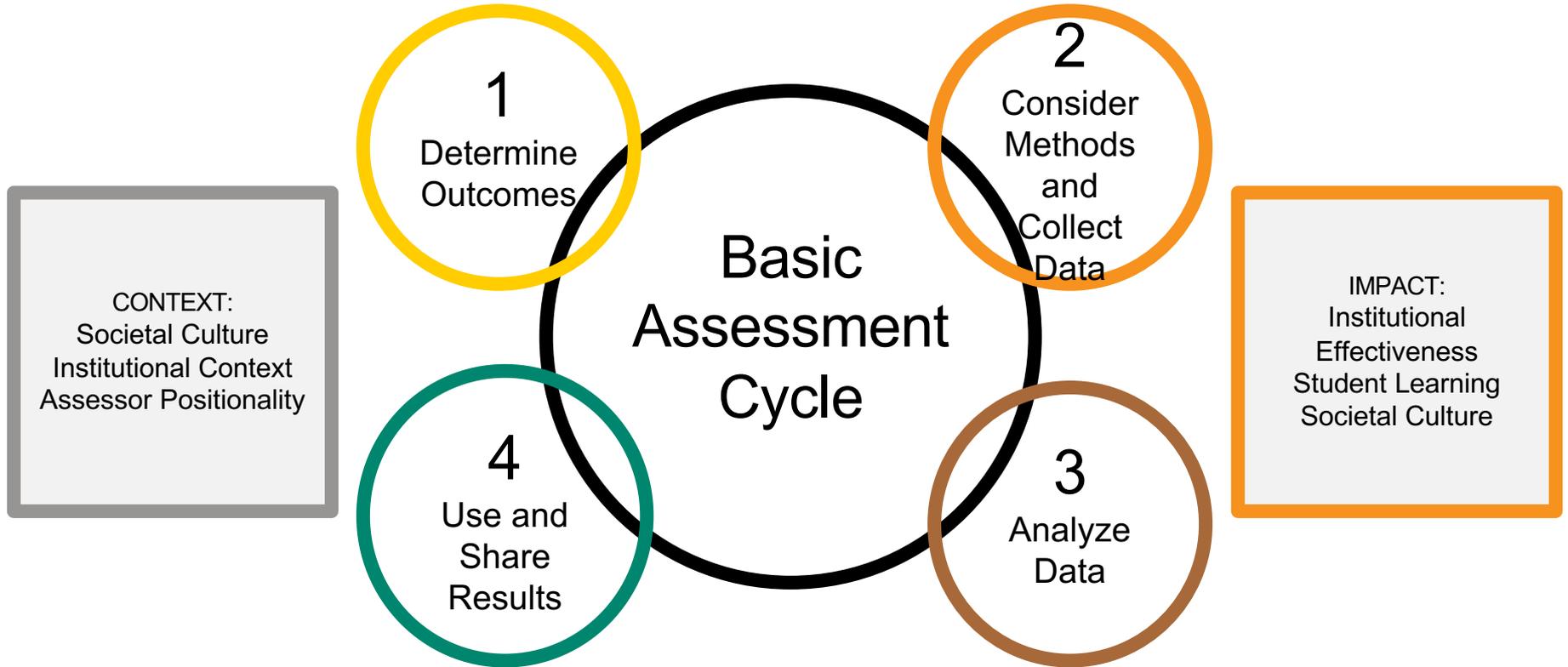
- We all live in a dominant, colonized culture that affects us all.
- We all have internalized systemic racism (and all the other isms).
- Systemic oppression impacts privileged and marginalized peoples differently.
- Systemic oppression is woven into the fabric of other institutions and educational practices—including higher education and assessment.



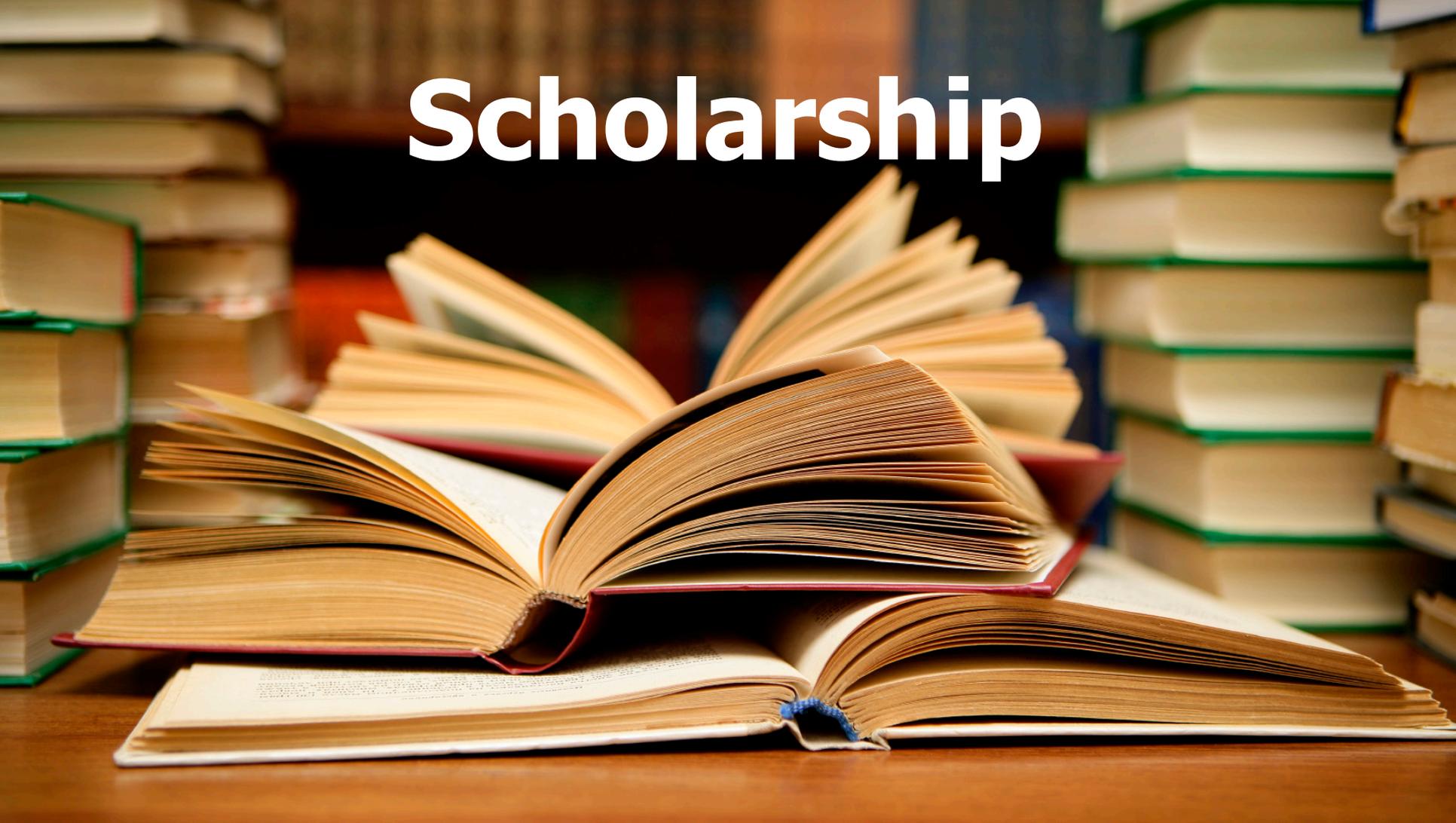
Assumptions

- Not being aware of privilege, place, and identity and their differential impacts causes harm.
- We must notice, reflect, and train to develop skillful action to alleviate, prevent, and restore harm and live into communities of liberation and freedom.

Assessment Is Not In A Vacuum



Scholarship





Overview of Scholarship

- **Responsive evaluation** (Jackson, 1935)
- **Culturally competent evaluation** (Merryfield, 1985)
- **Feminist assessment** (Shapiro, 1992)
- **Inclusive evaluation** (Mertens, 1999)
- **Multicultural evaluation** (Hopson, 2004)



Overview of Scholarship

- **Culturally responsive evaluation** (Hopson, 2009)
- **Decolonizing assessment** (La France & Nichols, 2010)
- **Bias-free assessment** (Popham, 2012)
- **Critical assessment** (DeLuca Fernandez, 2015)
- **Socially just assessment** (McArthur, 2016)



Overview of Scholarship

- **Mindful assessment** (Watts, 2016)
- **Culturally responsive assessment** (Montenegro & Jankowski, 2017)
- **Culturally relevant assessment** (Singer-Freeman et al., 2019)
- **Anti-racist assessment** (Inoue, 2019)



Overview of Scholarship

- **Healing-centered assessment** (Jankowski, 2020)
- **Equity-centered assessment** (Lundquist & Henning, 2020, 2021; Henning et al., 2022)

Equity-Minded

vs

Equity-Centered



**Equity-minded
assessment
is a lens**

A shallow stream flows over smooth, rounded rocks. The water is clear, revealing the rocks beneath. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**Equity-centered
assessment is
both a process...**



**...and a
product**

**Assessment
Methods and
Procedures**

**Culture,
Knowledge Systems,
Philosophical Paradigms,
Structural Bias**



Considerations

- Our identities impact our work.
- Higher education is colonized and privileges Western ways of knowing and paradigms.
- Bias is inherently part of the process, because it is socially situated.

**“We must learn how to expose,
navigate, and/or dismantle oft-hidden,
insidious, systemic, and
institutionalized forces of oppression”**

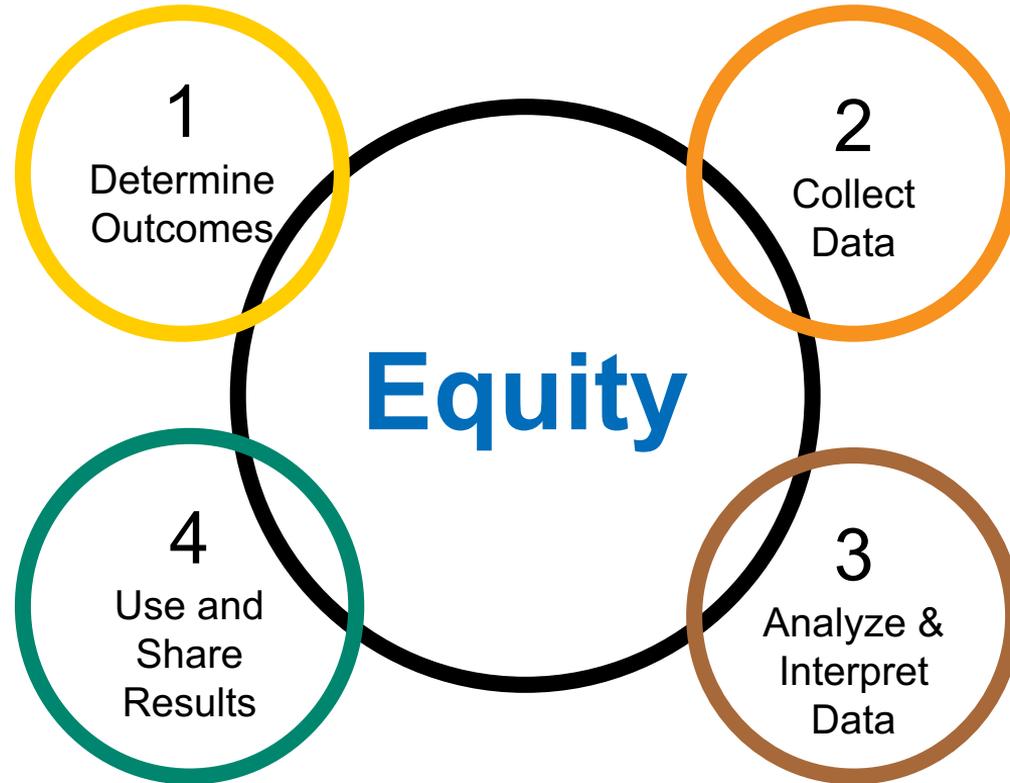
Bheda, D. (2022). The assessment activist. In *Reframing assessment to center equity: Theories, models, and practices*, p. 24)



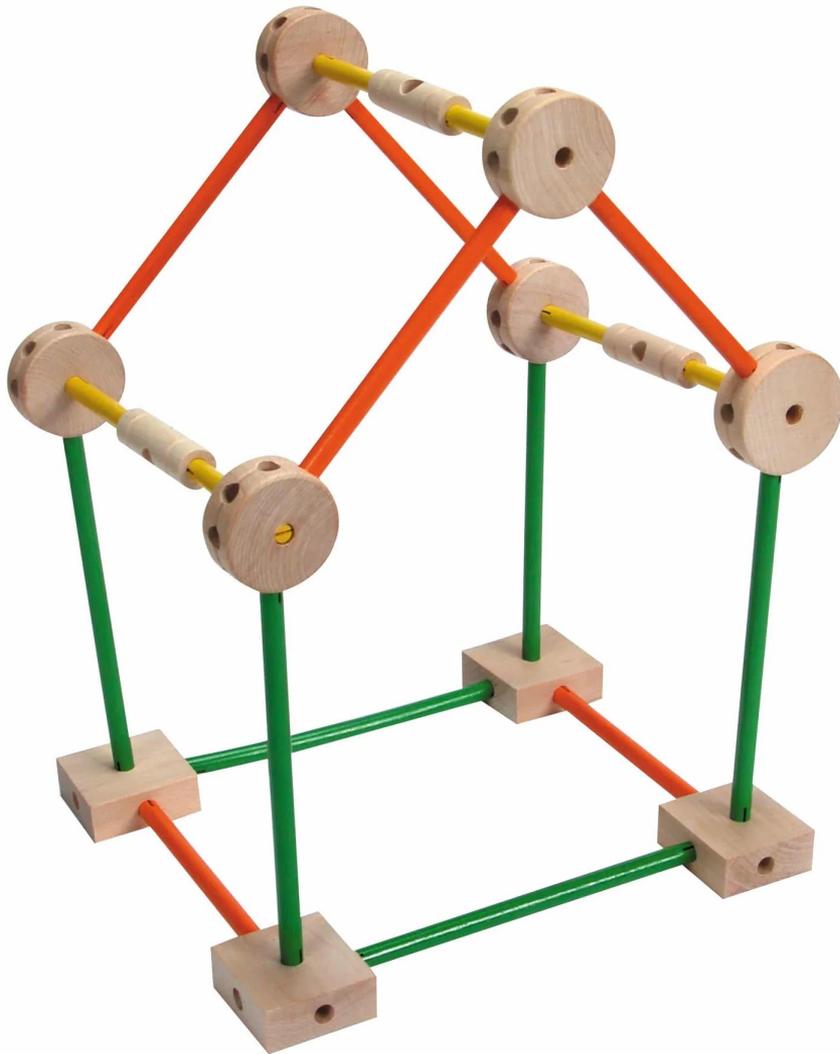


**Think in
New Ways**

Equity-Centered Assessment



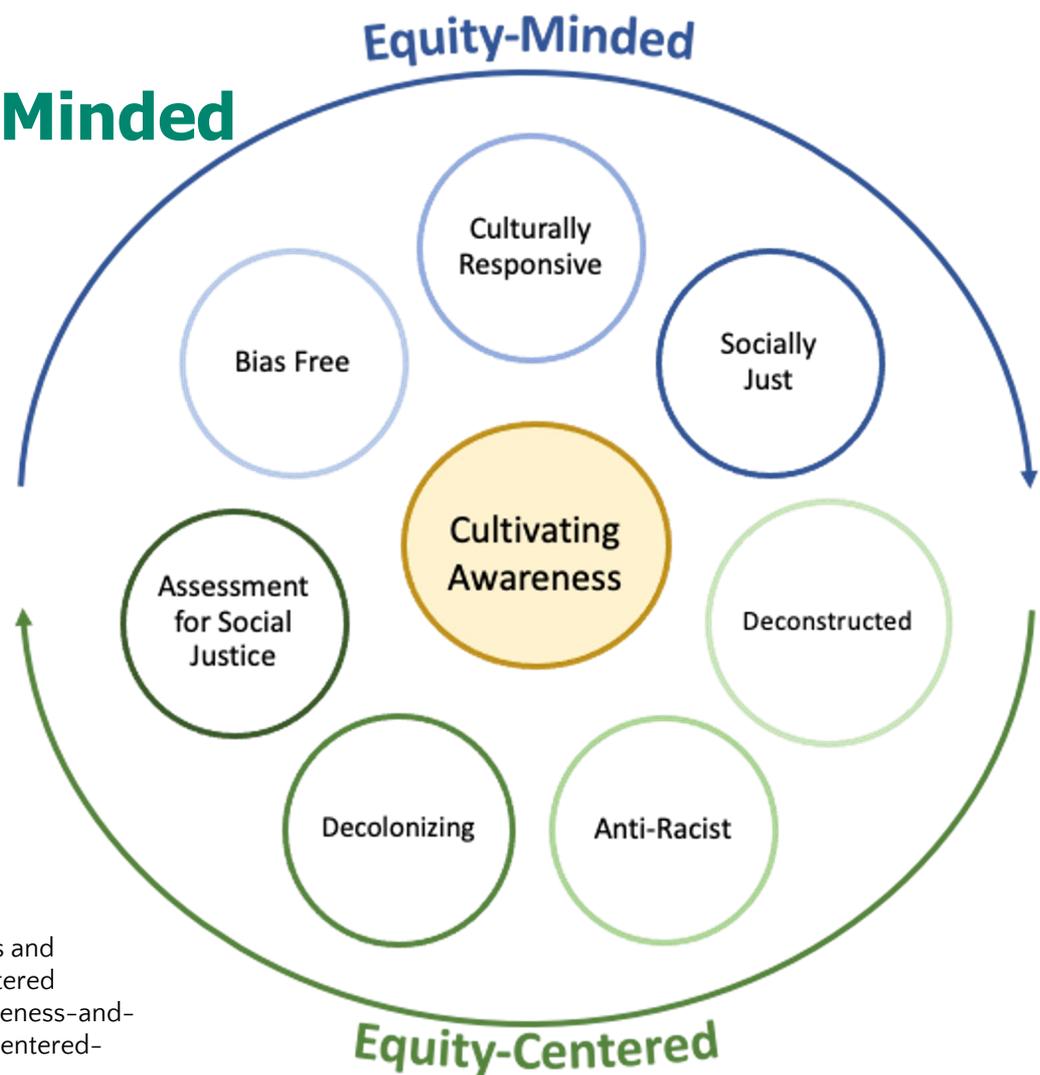




Framework

Framework for Equity-Minded and Equity-Centered Assessment

Causing Harm



Lundquist, A. & Henning, G. (May 14, 2021). Increasing awareness and reducing harm: A framework for equity-minded and equity-centered assessment. <https://www.anthology.com/blog/increasing-awareness-and-reducing-harm-a-framework-for-equity-minded-and-equity-centered-assessment>

Strategies





Cultivate Awareness - Self

- Explore and critique one's own worldview, biases, and cultural assumptions
- Sit with discomfort
- Adopt an inquisitive, compassionate approach to growth and self-awareness
- Actively engage in learning from and with others different from oneself



Cultivate Awareness – Assessment Process

- Realize that assessment is influenced by many things: identity, culture, Western paradigms
- Place a pause when more inclusion, dialogue or reflection is needed
- Recognize and address the extent to which assessment work prevents social justice and structural transformations



Assessment Design

- Decolonize and Indigenize design
- Recognize underlying paradigms
- Assess to understand, not just to demonstrate
- Understand harm in measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode)
- Realize how validity reifies power structures
- Involve students



Outcome Development

- Consider using alternative learning taxonomies
- Get student feedback on outcomes
- Invite students to help development/revise outcomes
- Collaborate with students to map outcomes



Course Design

- Apply UDL principles
 - Multiple ways to motivate learning
 - Multiple ways to share content
 - Multiple ways demonstrate learning
- Align course elements
- Implement transparency in teaching and learning (TILT) concepts



Assignment Design

- Review wording and phrasing in assignments, exams, rubrics, etc. for bias
- Consider how students' cultural backgrounds affect their learning
- Discuss assignments in class or via video, not just in in the syllabus



Assignment Design

- Provide students options for how they demonstrate their learning
- Provide open-ended response options for tests so students to explain/clarify answers
- Consider portfolios for program and course outcome demonstration



Grading

- Consider contract or bundle grading
- Use mastery grading
- Don't grade all assignments
- Discuss grading tools/processes with students
- Share examples of good and poor work



Grading

- Consider weighting grades lighter earlier in the term
- Perform test-item analysis and disaggregate results by student demographic groups
- Provide flexible deadlines
- Scaffold large assignments
- Rethink grading participation



Data Collection

- Ensure demographic items are inclusive
- Review standardized instruments for bias
- Use multiple methods
- Co-create assessment measures
- Ensure inclusion of students from small populations



Analysis & Interpretation

- Disaggregate data
- Pay attention to outliers
- Use multiple data sources
- Use multiple analysts/interpreters
- Engage stakeholders in interpretation



Data Reporting and Use

- Avoid deficit-based reporting
- Avoid using dominant identity groups as norm for comparison
- Use data to identify barriers for equitable outcomes
- Use data to advocate for structural change



Program Review

- Build in expectation that program will explore and address equity issues
- Disaggregate success factors by student demographic groups
- Involve students in various steps in the program review process





REFRAMING ASSESSMENT TO CENTER

EQUITY

*THEORIES, MODELS,
AND PRACTICES*

EDITED BY GAVIN W. HENNING,
GIANINA R. BAKER, NATASHA A. JANKOWSKI,
ANNE E. LUNDQUIST, AND ERICK MONTENEGRO

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