

12th Annual
AMCOA
Conference



**The Work of Assessment Remains
Critical to Creating Improved &
Equitable Learning Experiences**

**Statewide Conference
on Assessment in
Higher Education**

MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education

Friday, April 26, 2024
8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Fitchburg State University
Hammond Hall
160 Pearl Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Morning Agenda

	Location
8:00 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast	Hammond Main Lounge, 3rd Floor
9:00 a.m. Greetings & Welcoming Remarks <i>Robert J. Awkward, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner for Academic Effectiveness, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education</i> <i>Patricia A. Marshall, Ph.D., Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, Fitchburg State University</i> <i>Richard Riccardi, Sc.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education</i>	Hammond Main Lounge, 3rd Floor
9:30 a.m. Plenary Session Morning Plenary Session: Dr. Jillian Kinzie, Associate Director, NSSE, Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University <i>The Work of Assessment Remains Critical to Creating Improved & Equitable Learning Experiences</i> <i>Jillian Kinzie, Ph.D., Associate Director, NSSE, Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University</i> <p>To ensure success for today's students and improve educational effectiveness, assessment and accreditation activities must adopt a more holistic view of students and the undergraduate learning experience. Even more, the greater influence of external forces and new pressures to demonstrate value, equitable outcomes, and betterment, is prompting assessment practice to shift. This session highlights emerging trends in assessment that hold promise for generating more actionable insights for equitable student learning and success.</p>	Hammond Main Lounge, 3rd Floor
10:45 a.m. Transition Time	
11:00 a.m. Morning Breakout Sessions Advancing a Culture & Climate for Equity in Assessment	
Session A. Implementing Equity-minded Assessment: Our Institution's Story <i>Kelly Duarte, Director of Institutional Research & Data Analytics and Jennifer Mandel, Ph.D., Associate Director of Assessment, University of New England</i> <p>Beginning in 2021, the University of New England's assessment, institutional research, and teaching and learning offices set out to bring equity-minded assessment to the institution. Our offerings – a Faculty and Professional Learning Community and a mini-grant program – launched projects in seven curricular and co-curricular areas. We will share our methods for fostering equity-minded assessment and our discoveries in the data.</p>	G19, 2nd Floor
Session B. Co-Curricular and Curricular Combine to Communicate the Student Experience <i>Jane Boyland, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Department Chair of the International Hotel School and Jennifer Adams Galipeau, Ed.D., Associate Provost of Academic Affairs, Johnson & Wales University</i> <p>Engagement in co-curricular activities plays an important role in students' academic and life experiences. However, these activities are often planned outside of an institution's established assessment process resulting in missed opportunities for curricular and co-curricular synergies. This presentation focuses on modifications that can be made so that curricular and co-curricular outcomes can be developed and measured in a cohesive system.</p>	G01B, 2nd Floor



Session C. Assessing High-Impact Practices (HIPs) for Quality and Equity

G01, 2nd Floor

Jillian Kinzie, Ph.D., Associate Director, NSSE, Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University

High-Impact Practices (HIPs), such as service-learning, internships, and undergraduate research, are widely accepted as beneficial learning experiences. Yet, we should expect benefits only “when done well.” This means addressing questions of access, quality, assessment, and equity. This session presents results from the new National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) HIP Quality Topical Module to gain a more nuanced understanding of quality. Findings about eight essential quality measures and variation by student identities will be shared as a context for considering how instructional practices and expectations could be redesigned to ensure the twin perspectives of quality and equity.

12:15 p.m. **Transition Time**

12:30 p.m. **Lunch**

Hammond
Main Lounge,
3rd Floor

1:15 p.m. **Transition Time**

1:30 p.m. **Afternoon Plenary Sessions | Operationalizing Assessment in a Changing Environment**

Session A. Take a Walk on the Wild Side: Empowering Assessment Practices with Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

G01, 2nd Floor

Peter Shea, Director of Professional Development, Middlesex Community College; Ruth Slotnick, Ph.D., Director of Assessment, Bridgewater State University; and Devan Walton, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, Northern Essex Community College

Are you curious about the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in higher education assessment but feeling a bit overwhelmed? Join us for a 75-minute crash course on using generative AI tools like Claude 3 to design more effective and inclusive assessments! In this hands-on workshop, you’ll learn:

- **Prompting basics:** Discover the art of crafting clear, specific prompts that elicit the desired responses from AI tools.
- **Iterative prompt refinement:** Practice progressively refining your prompts based on AI-generated outputs to achieve optimal results.
- **Inclusivity prompts:** Learn to use AI to generate prompts that mitigate bias and are accessible to diverse learners.
- **AI-assisted rubric creation:** Explore how AI can help you quickly develop comprehensive, objective rubrics for various assessment types.

By the end of the session, you will have a solid foundation in prompting techniques and a practical understanding of how tools like Claude 3 can simplify and enhance your assessment design process. You will be equipped with a starter kit of prompts and strategies you can immediately apply in your work. No prior technical expertise is needed - just bring your curiosity, readiness and your iPad or laptop to learn!

Session B. Can We Use Artificial Intelligence to Promote Equity in Assessment? G019, 2nd Floor

David M. DiSabito, Jr., AI Coordinator & Professional Educator; Lisa Hansen, Ph.D., Professor of Mathematics & Computer Science and Director of Assessment; Thomas Mennella, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Biology; and Josephine Rodriguez, Associate Provost; Western New England University

In this session, we will present our pioneering efforts to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into assessment at Western New England University. Our focus is on understanding how AI can help promote equity in assessment and encourage inclusive practices. By considering faculty research, we aim to shed light on how AI may enhance future assessment methods, as well as discuss how this might impact faculty engagement and buy-in of the assessment process.

Session C. Operationalizing the Quest for Equity G01B, 2nd Floor

Kathleen Vranos, Ed.D., Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and William Berry, Ph.D., Professor of English and an Assessment Coordinator

Cape Cod Community College will explain how equity has been operationalized at our institution using an evolving equity matrix. Participants will learn how to assess equity actions across their institutions to discover both strengths and weaknesses. Participants will be presented with our live model, rooted in our operational plan for the institution, and see how an equity matrix works in real-time. Following a presentation, participants will have the opportunity to discuss, in small groups, how they might envision an operationalized equity matrix at their own institutions and share ideas. There will also be time for questions and answers.

2:45 p.m. **Transition Time**

3:00 p.m. **Closing Remarks**

Robert J. Awkward, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner for Academic Effectiveness, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

3:15 p.m. **Program Ends**

Presenter Bios

William Berry, Ph.D., is a Professor of English at Cape Cod Community College where he has worked with assessment off and on since 2008. He is currently one of three assessment coordinators, and is a member of the college's Racial Equity and Justice Institute (REJI). He has provided feedback on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives at the college since 2022, and focuses on invisible, intersectional identities. He is currently engaged in reframing the institution's assessment practices for an even more inclusive, ground-up approach.

Jane Boyland is an Associate Professor and serves as the department chair of The International Hotel School at Johnson & Wales University. She is actively involved in the university's assessment initiatives and is currently working on projects focusing on co-curricular and online lab course assessment. Her passion is internationalization, whether it be for personal enrichment, becoming a better-informed global citizen, or increasing her working knowledge of the competitive international environment of the hospitality industry. She has integrated this passion throughout her work at Johnson & Wales in all aspects of her teaching and research. Prior to coming to JWU, Jane worked in a variety of operation management positions in the hospitality industry.

David M. DiSabito, Jr., serves as the AI Liaison and Professional Educator in Business Analytics and Information Management at the College of Business, Western New England University. He has developed Walter, a Generative AI-powered assessment refinement tool that can analyze hundreds of student artifacts in minutes to identify areas for curriculum and rubric improvement. His research interests include applying AI in evaluation, improving information literacy to combat disinformation, and future workplace dynamics. Alongside his team, he has shared Walter developments and insights on using generative AI for assessment at academic conferences. Through participating in university committees on assessment, curriculum, and improving student outcomes, he demonstrates his commitment to educational excellence and student achievement.

Kelly Duarte serves as the Director of Institutional Research & Data Analytics at University of New England (UNE). Prior to joining the IR office at UNE in 2012, Kelly worked as the Associate Director for Admissions Information Systems at Hofstra University, a role that worked with both the admissions and financial aid offices in providing reports and creating operational systems for the day-to-day work of the offices. She has a BS from New York University and an MEd from Hofstra University.

Jennifer Adams Galipeau, Ed.D., is Associate Provost of Academic Affairs at Johnson & Wales University and has primary oversight of faculty affairs, accreditation, curriculum and academic assessment including academic program review across the institution's campuses. Since joining the Office of the Provost in June of 2013, Jenn's work has focused on establishing assessment practices to foster and sustain faculty engagement, building institutional commitment to evidence-based decision-making, and ensuring assessment initiatives are manageable, meaningful and sustainable.

Lisa Hansen, Ph.D., is Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science and the Director of Assessment at Western New England University (WNE). With over 30 years of teaching experience, her approach integrates active learning with a focus on challenging students to think critically about theory in the context of real-world applications. Since 2012, she has coordinated the assessment process for general education at WNE and has supported faculty and administration in other assessment efforts. At regional assessment conferences, Lisa has presented on topics such as inter-rater reliability, continuous improvement in general education, fostering a culture of assessment, and using NSSE data to engage faculty and staff. With her fellow researchers, she has been inspired by their collaboration and discussions regarding the use of AI to support assessment.

Jillian Kinzie, Ph.D., is Associate Director of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) at the Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University. She conducts research and leads project activities on the use of student engagement data to improve educational quality and issues of teaching and learning and serves as senior scholar with the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA). She currently leads a Strada Foundation funded assessment of college students' career and workforce preparation. She is co-author of *Radical Reimagining for Student Success* (2023); *Delivering on the Promise of High-Impact Practices: Research and Models for Achieving Equity, Fidelity, Impact, and Scale* (2022), *Assessment in Student Affairs* (2016), *Using Evidence of Student Learning to Improve Higher Education* (2015) and *Student Success in College* (2010), and is a peer reviewer for accreditors and consults with colleges and universities about assessment, effective educational practice, inclusive excellence, high-impact practices, and support for student success.

Kinzie earned her PhD from Indiana University in higher education with a minor in women's studies. Prior to this, she served on the faculty of Indiana University and coordinated the master's program in higher education and student affairs. She also worked in academic and student affairs at Miami University and Case Western Reserve University.

Jennifer Mandel, Ph.D., serves as Associate Director of Assessment and adjunct history faculty at the University of New England (UNE). Since 2015, she has been facilitating UNE's University Assessment Committee and the university-wide annual assessment and regular program review processes, first as assessment program manager, and then beginning in 2018 in her current role. She teaches history, previously at Granite State College, Mount Washington College (formerly Hesser College), and the University of New Hampshire, and since 2009, at UNE. Dr. Mandel writes on the history of African Americans in Los Angeles, California, as well as on assessment practices. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the New England Educational Assessment Network. She has been awarded many grants and fellowships, and has presented at history, assessment, and higher education administration conferences. Dr. Mandel earned a Ph.D. in United States history at the University of New Hampshire.

Thomas Mennella, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Biology at Western New England University. As an instructor and professor in higher education for over fifteen years, Tom was an early-adopter of the flipped classroom format and is intimately involved in active learning research and innovation in the classroom. Tom has given training on the flipped classroom format to faculty across the US and internationally and has presented the flipped classroom approach at regional and national conferences. More recently, Tom has turned his attention to ChatGPT and related generative AI platforms and is exploring their impact on, and integration with, the college classroom experience for students and instructors.

Josephine Rodriguez is the Associate Provost at Western New England University (WNE). In this role, she oversees institutional assessment and accreditation efforts, faculty grants, and the Institutional Review Board. Her involvement in assessment and accreditation endeavors has included strategic planning for and assessment of general education requirements, university-wide implementation of a data analytics platform making annual department assessment reports and program reviews more meaningful, faculty and chair assessment training and support, and promotion of a culture of assessment and data transparency. She has presented at regional and national conferences on topics such as assessing general education, measuring inter-rater reliability, program assessment, and assessing co-curricular learning outcomes. She has served as a peer evaluator on a couple of NECHE site teams, and recently was one of the co-chairs of the NECHE self-study process at WNE. Josephine's academic background is in Mathematics, and she continues to enjoy teaching in the Math Department at Western New England University when time permits.

Peter Shea is a learning professional with extensive experience as a designer, instructor, editor, writer, and professional development manager. He has been presenting on AI in education since 2019. He is co-editor *Transforming Digital Learning and Assessment: A Guide to Available and Emerging Practices and Building Institutional Consensus* (Stylus Publishing, 2021).

Ruth Slotnick, Ph.D., is Director of Assessment at Bridgewater State University (BSU) where she has been working for over a decade. She has developed a culture of assessment on her campus, leveraging her experience from Mount Wachusett Community College with field testing and developing the DQP and AAC&U LEAP VALUE rubrics. Ruth is dedicated to advancing AI in higher education assessment through Java Jams, an unhosted webinar series for practitioners. Her forthcoming piece in *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* explores generative AI in survey methodology. Ruth serves as an adjunct faculty member in BSU's Higher Education Master's program and holds a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of South Florida and an M.Ed. in Art Education from Pennsylvania State University.

Kathleen M. Vranos, Ed.D., serves as the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs for Cape Cod Community College after previously serving as Dean of Arts, Humanities, and Adult Education for nearly two years. Kathleen has been a visiting accreditation team member for the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). She also has extensive experience overseeing assessment, program-level accreditation, new program development, institutional strategic planning, and application of educational technologies and professional development to support new instructional modalities. Kathleen's passion for advancing social and economic justice by creating equitable, transformational, educational experiences for all students has found its deepest fulfillment in the community college sector. Dr. Vranos earned her doctorate in education with a higher education administration concentration from Northeastern University in 2019.

Devan Walton is an Assistant Professor of Computer Science at Northern Essex Community College. He focuses on generative AI tool development and aims to democratize access to advanced AI technologies. His work primarily revolves around lowering the barriers to utilizing AI and unraveling its potential affordances within academic settings and the modern workplace.

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Special Thanks to:

Dr. Richard Riccardi, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Student Success

Dr. Lane Glenn, President, Northern Essex Community College
and Assessment Advisory Council Chair

Assessment Advisory Council

AMCOA Team

And the Presidents, Chancellors, Vice Presidents, and Chief Academic Officers
of the Massachusetts Public Higher Education System