

What's Equity got to do with it?: Equity-centered assessment in context

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Objectives of this presentation

- Walk away with at least one idea that sparks you.
- Understand equity as integral to assessment.
- Inspired to continue assessment work.

Context



As we look to the future, this moment provides an excellent opportunity to reflect upon our practices, to determine which were effective and which require revision, and to ask ourselves if these practices serve quality learning and further our equity goals or if they serve to erode those aspirations.

~AAC&U 2021 Virtual conference on General Education, Pedagogy, and Assessment website

Narratives surrounding assessment

A word cloud centered around the word "Assessment". The word "Assessment" is the largest and most prominent. Other words include "tool", "data", "measure", "improvement", "us vs them", "external accreditation", "unnecessary", "outcomes", "requirements", "quality", "learning", "teaching", "students", "burden", "success", "proof", "testing", and "continuous". The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern around the central word.

tool
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Why assessment?

The assessment of student learning begins with educational values. **Assessment is not an end in itself but a vehicle for educational improvement.** Its effective practice, then, begins with and enacts a vision of the kinds of learning we most value for students and strive to help them achieve. Educational values should drive not only what we choose to assess but also how we do so. **Where questions about educational mission and values are skipped over, assessment threatens to be an exercise in measuring what's easy, rather than a process of improving what we really care about.**

~ American Association for Higher Education (1992)

Quality

- Reliability
- Validity
- Awareness of bias
- Practicality
- Clear purpose
- Action

Equity

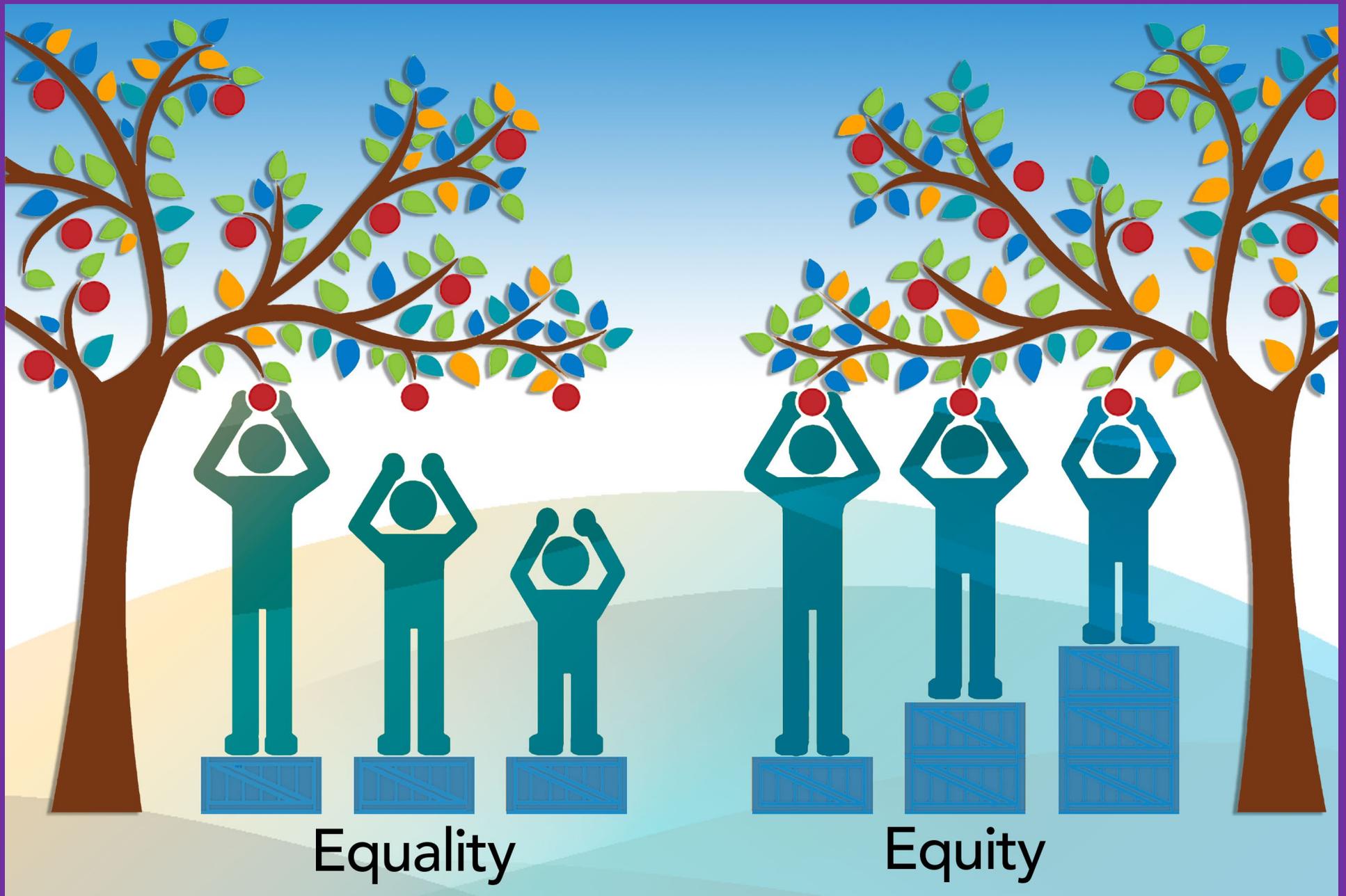
EQUALITY



DOESN'T
MEAN

EQUITY





Equality

Equity

Equity-mindedness

Equity as a two dimensional concept: One axis represents institutional accountability... and the second axis represents a critical understanding of the omnipresence of whiteness at the institutional and practice levels

~From Equity Talk to Equity Walk, 5-6

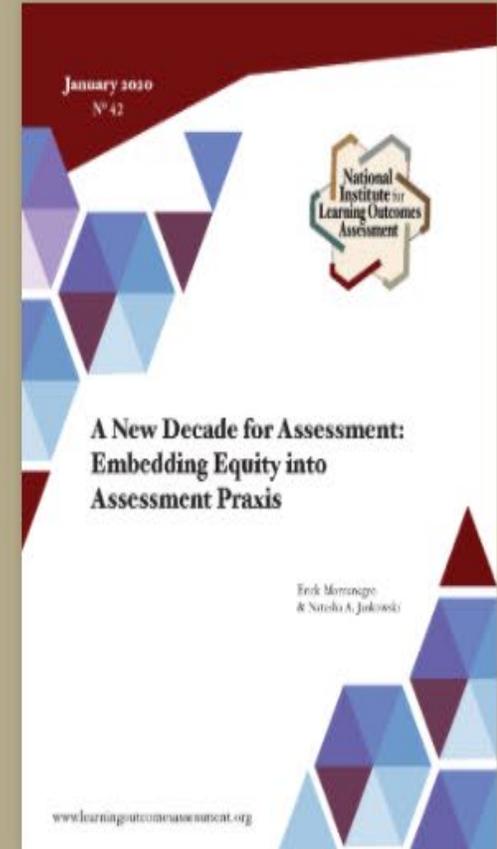
Equity-mindedness

...the authentic exercise of equity and equity-mindedness requires explicit attention to structural inequality and institutionalized racism and demands system-changing responses.

~From Equity Talk to Equity Walk, 5-6

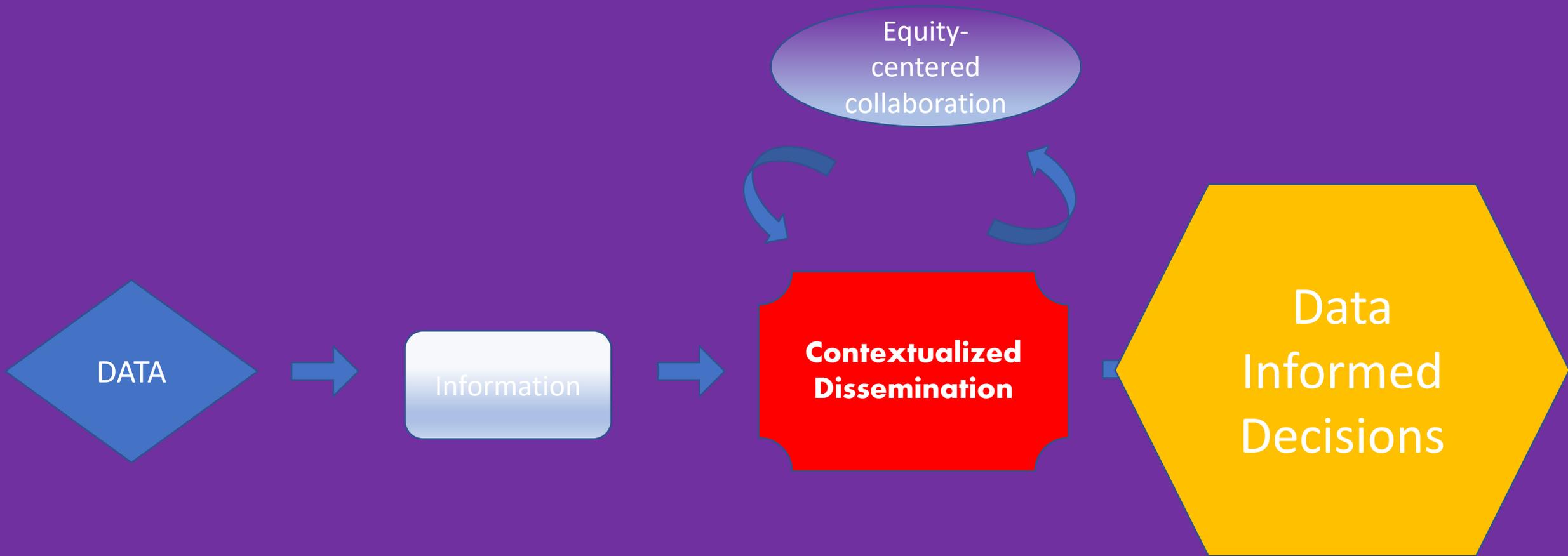
**Equity-minded
assessment
entails the
following
actions:**

1. Check biases and ask reflective questions throughout the assessment process to address assumptions and positions of privilege.
2. Use multiple sources of evidence appropriate for the students being assessed and assessment effort.
3. Include student perspectives and take action based on perspectives.
4. Increase transparency in assessment results and actions taken.
5. Ensure collected data can be meaningfully disaggregated and interrogated.
6. Make evidence-based changes that address issues of equity that are context-specific.



What does equity-minded assessment look like (practically)?

- Collaborative
- Leadership
- Learning
- Action



DATA

Information

**Contextualized
Dissemination**

Equity-
centered
collaboration

Data
Informed
Decisions

Reflection & authenticity

- Reflection: Looking out and looking within
- Authenticity: Bringing our true selves and experiences to the conversations and the work
- Activity: Take a few moments to think about your approach to your work. What is the narrative in your head about assessment? Now, think about how you think about diversity/ equity/ inclusion in relation to assessment.

Challenges

- Resources
 - Human capital/capacity
 - Technology
- Cost
- Culture
- Competing priorities/reasons for assessment
- Perceptions
- Data collection
- Closing the loop



Opportunities

- Collaboration
- Closing the Loop
- Culture
- Changing the perception around assessment

Takeaways

- All Assessment is local
- Practical significance
- Be clear about equity goals of your organization/ unit
- Take every opportunity to shape the perception/ culture of assessment
- Language matters
- At its core assessment is about students

MUCH TO LEARN,

WE ALL STILL HAVE.



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Questions



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