

***EQUITABLE ASSESSMENT IN  
ACTION:  
CASE STUDIES OF  
IMPLEMENTATION***

AALHE 2020

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# LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Examine conversations unfolding on equity and assessment
- Describe current efforts unfolding within a series of short institutional examples
- Identify available resources and ways to get involved





# EQUITY AND ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

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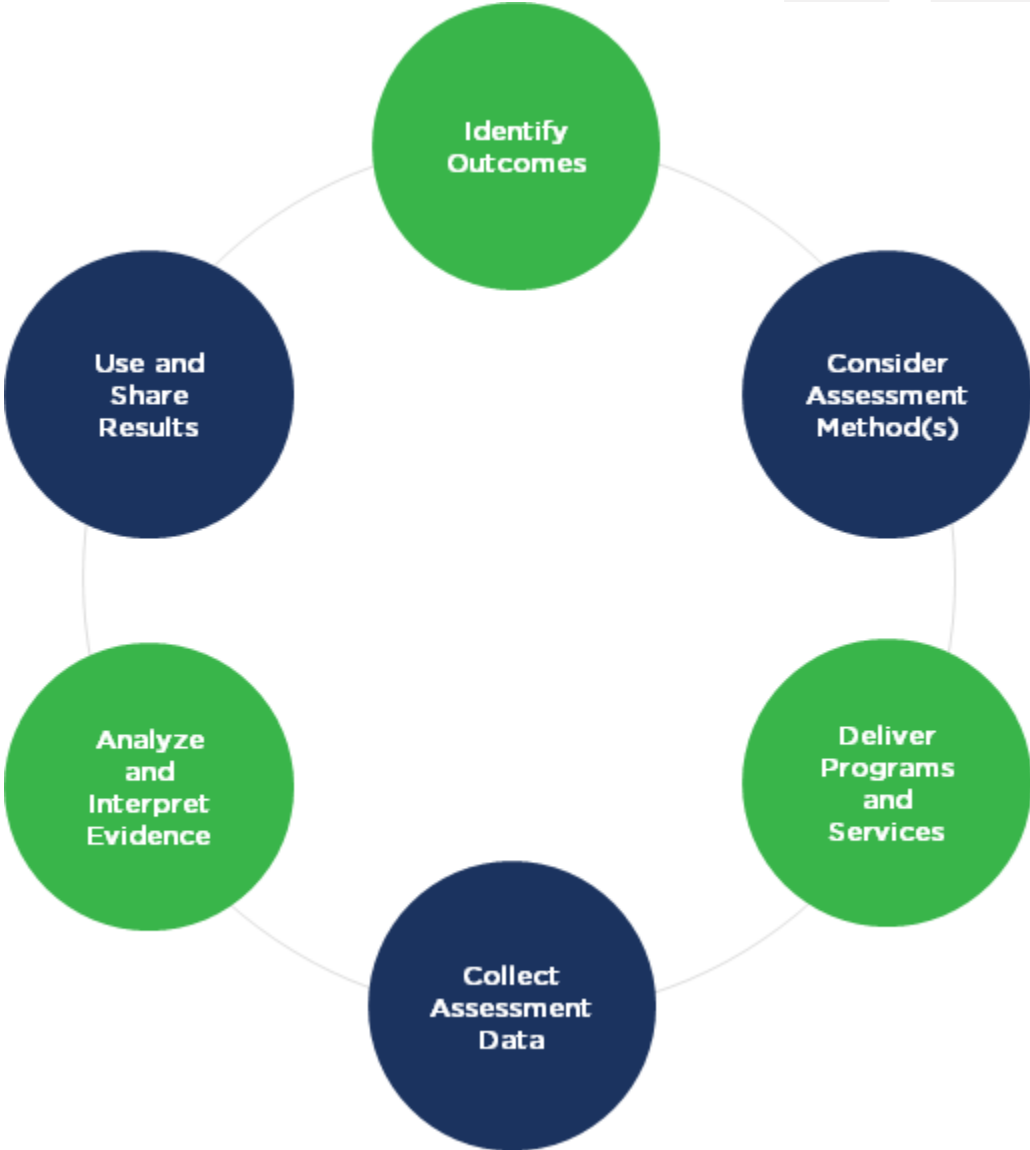
**Assessment**



**Diversity,  
Equity and  
Inclusion**



**CONTEXT:**  
Societal Culture  
Institutional Context  
Positionality  
Power  
Privilege  
Agency



**IMPACT:**  
Institutional Effectiveness  
Student Learning  
Societal Culture



# Continuum of Practices for equity-minded assessment



# WHAT DOES “EQUITY-MINDED ASSESSMENT” ENTAIL?

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



# Culturally Responsive Assessment is...

1. Mindful of the student population(s) being served and involves students in the process of assessing learning
2. Uses appropriate student-focused and cultural language in learning outcomes statements to ensure students understand what is expected of them
3. Develops and/or uses assessment tools and multiple sources of evidence that are culturally responsive to current students
4. Critical of structures, demonstrations of learning, and supports which may privilege some students' learning while marginalizing others



# Equitable Assessment

At its core, equitable assessment calls for those who lead and participate in assessment activities to pay attention and be conscious of how assessment can either feed into cycles that perpetuate inequities or can serve to bring more equity into higher education.



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## A New Decade for Assessment: Embedding Equity into Assessment Praxis

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[www.learningoutcomesassessment.org](http://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org)

»  
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Ignacio Hernández  
Juan G. Berumen EDITORS

Assessment and  
Social Justice:  
Pushing Through  
Paradox

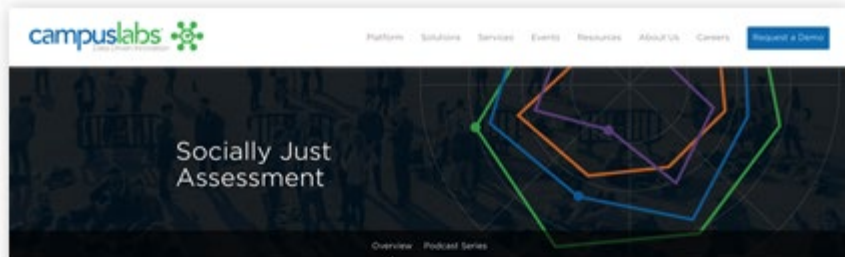


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NEW DIRECTIONS FOR  
INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

WILEY



### Socially Just Assessment

In higher education, it's important for there to be a cross-campus focus on equity, diversity, inclusion, and intercultural competence in our approach to developing impactful programs and services. However, it's equally important to be intentional in ensuring cultural responsiveness and avoiding bias in assessment work—with a commitment to implementing socially just assessment practices. Campus Labs, in partnership with NACADA and other like-minded higher education organizations, has gathered resources focused on socially just assessment, including a series of webinars and podcasts on the topic.

Campus Labs recently partnered with other organizations to survey assessment professionals in both student and academic affairs to learn what current perspectives, knowledge and practices exist regarding the intersection of equity, inclusion and assessment. Approximately 120 assessment professionals responded, with a first look at initial results below.

How important is the effective intersection of equity, diversity, and inclusion and assessment practices on your campus?



Note: Respondents were asked to rate how important they believed the effective intersection of equity, diversity and inclusion and assessment practice was to themselves, senior campus leadership and students.

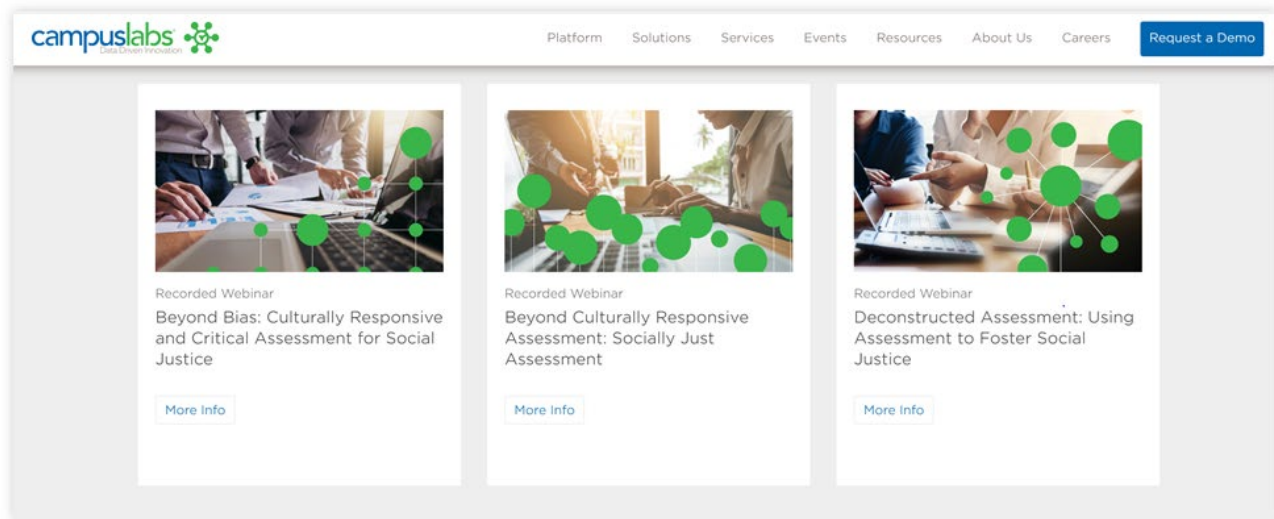
I have the necessary background, training, and skills to conduct appropriate diversity, equity, and inclusion practices in my role.



Note: Broader results and implications from this survey are being presented at the ACRA and NASPA annual conferences, and will be made available online soon.

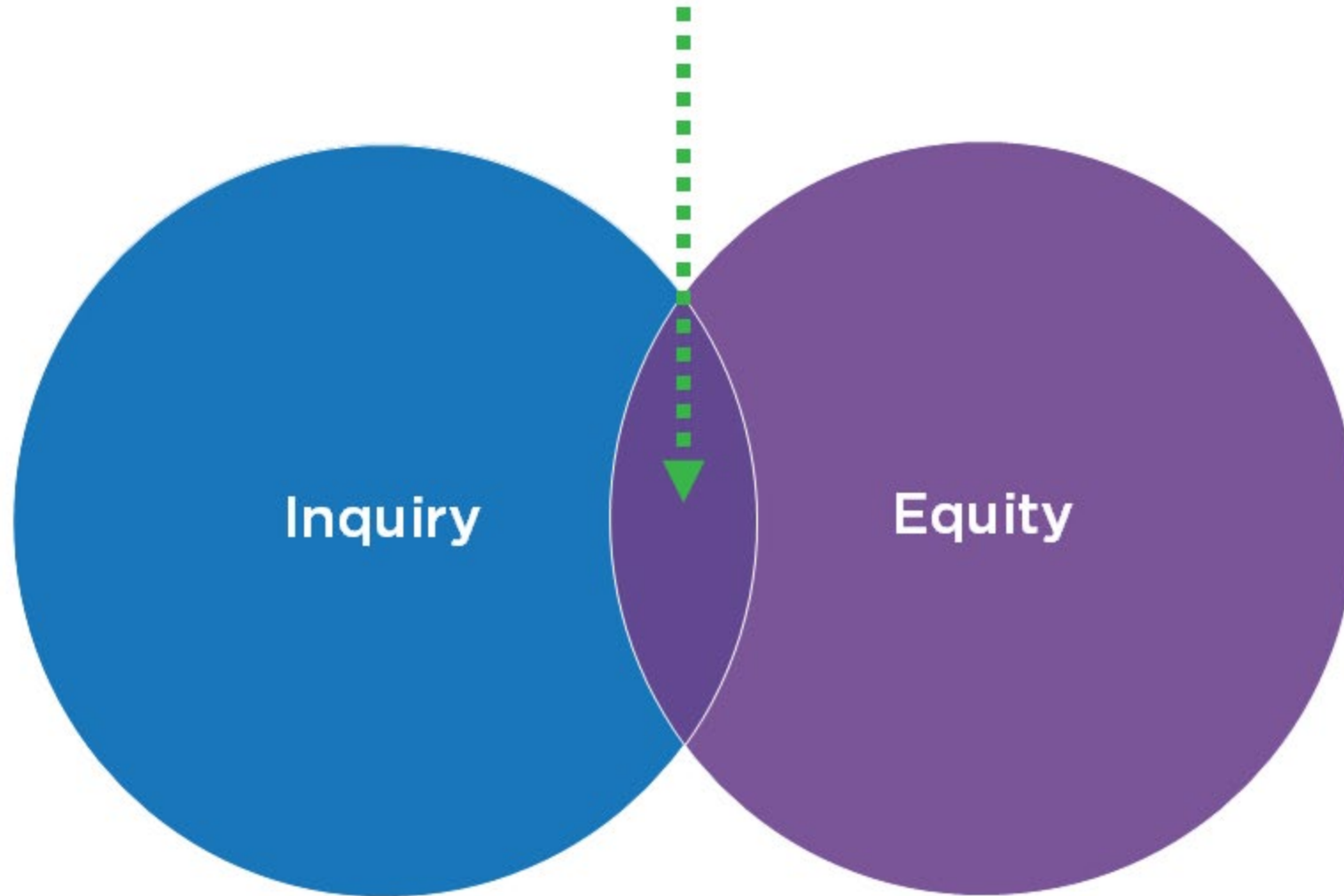
## Socially Just Assessment Podcast Series

- EP 1 Culturally Responsive Assessment
- EP 2 Critical Theory as a Framework to Advance Equity Through Student Affairs Assessment
- EP 3 Socially Just Assessment
- EP 4 Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Assessment: Graduate School Preparation for Future Student Affairs Practitioners
- EP 5 The Connections between Decolonization, Social Justice and Assessment



[campuslabs.com/socially-just-assessment](https://campuslabs.com/socially-just-assessment)

# The Conversation Continues to Evolve





# CASE STUDIES

# Capella University: Transparency for Equity

“Equitable assessment practice means that learners in courses have an equal and unbiased opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and achievements in every phase of the assessment process. Beginning with transparency, learners should know what is being assessed, how it is being assessed, as well as how they can achieve the assessment expectations.”

Transparency for Capella entails clarity and clear communication in each course and every assignment on alignment to competencies and evaluative criteria to understand how performance on assessment will be evaluated for students such that they have all the information needed to be successful in navigating the educational terrain.

Transparency is needed for the diversity of types of demonstrations allowed - which is visually documented through Competency Maps.



# Capella University: Competency Map

The screenshot displays the 'Competency Map' page in the iGuide system. The page includes a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'MY CAPELLA', 'THE UNIVERSITY', 'LIBRARY', 'LEARNING RESOURCES', 'SUPPORT SERVICES', and 'COMMUNITY'. A search bar and 'LOG OUT' link are also present. The main content area is titled 'Competency Map' and includes a 'Competency Map Tutorial' link. Below this, there are dropdown menus for 'Select Term' (Spring 2013) and 'Select Course' (BUS3020), along with a 'REFRESH' button. A 'PRINT' button is also visible. The page shows progress for 'Fundamentals of E-Business - Spring 2013' with 22 of 40 criteria completed and 5 of 10 assignments completed. A section titled 'YOU HAVE 6 COMPETENCIES in this course' lists six competencies with their respective completion status and performance levels. Callout boxes highlight various features: 'FAQ, Tools, & Resources' and 'Instructor contact' on the left; 'Tutorial', 'Access to previous courses', 'Print', 'Course-level progress', and 'Competency status and progress' on the right.

**FAQ, Tools, & Resources**

**Instructor contact**

**Tutorial**

**Access to previous courses**

**Print**

**Course-level progress**

**Competency status and progress**



# Portland State University: Diversity in Demonstrations

“Equitable assessment practice includes space for all students and faculty to participate in ways that are meaningful to them and that are grounded in an appreciation of their strengths and in the understanding that it is assessment’s job to find ways to support them in improvement. At its best, equitable assessment processes consider multiple pieces of evidence of student learning, ideally curated by the student so that their understanding of their learning is part of the assessment process. Equitable assessment seeks to understand whether there are groups of students who may be underserved by the institution and takes into account multiple intersecting identities whenever possible.”

1. Adopt principles of universal design because not all students are able to show their learning in the same way.
2. Consider role of eportfolios in reflecting upon and building the case for different examples including from inside and outside the classroom.
3. Disaggregate data by subgroups and intersections of subgroups





# Cornell University: Ripple Effect Mapping

Try different approaches and techniques to engage multiple voices and perspectives and see things differently

“Ripple Effect Mapping (REM) is a group participatory evaluation method that engages program and community stakeholders to retrospectively and visually map chains of effects resulting from a program or complex collaboration”



# Wake Forest University: Professional Development and Awareness

Campus life assessment committee reviewed theory and practice in equitable assessment to increase Campus Life-specific staff awareness and implementation of equitable assessment practices.

The Assessment Committee has an Equity and Research subcommittee that advances efforts around equity-minded assessment throughout the division through a devotion of research and advocacy. Projects include regular research on and revision of best practices in demographics collection, review of measures for equitable and inclusive language, review of survey sampling and recruitment practices, and providing support for conducting and interpreting disaggregated data analyses.

The Campus Life Assessment Committee sponsors regular Data Dives where participants have an opportunity to dig deeper into an assessment project. Data Dive presentations involve disaggregating data across demographics or other variables, highlighting the need to understand problems from an equity lens increasing awareness of assessment projects and methods for understanding the differential impact of programs across diverse perspectives and identities.

# Capital University: Campus Climate through Critical Race Theory

Use a Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework for examining questions, in this case, about climate. “By utilizing this framework, we went into the approach not assuming that the climate was already equitable for all students, but instead asked the following questions.

1. What are the actual experiences of students of color?
2. Do students of color have different experiences than White students?
3. Are students’ perceptions of diversity and inclusion different by race?

Each of the five tenets of CRT informed methodology including: (1) permanence of racism, (2) counter-storytelling, (3) critique of liberalism, (4) interest conversion, and (5) Whiteness as property (Hirald, 2010).





# REFLECTION

# Questions to Consider

1. Does the institution have a shared definition of equity-minded assessment to inform stakeholder involvement?
2. Is the language used regarding learning outcomes and assessment understandable to various stakeholder groups, including students?
3. What processes are in place for critical data disaggregation?
4. What processes exist for different communities to express their needs, voice concerns, and adapt policies and processes accordingly?
5. What assumptions about how students learn, where they learn, and how that learning can be demonstrated need to be examined from an equity lens?



# INVITATION



## Invitation to Join the Conversation

Share your own processes and practices

Write a response

Talk with a colleague

Ask others within your institution

Get involved in making a difference



# THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

