

# Steps and Tools for Equitable and Effective Assessment

*Welcome & we'll get started soon.*

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# Workshop Structure


1. **Background, Definitions, and Importance**
2. **What can we do?**
3. **Breakout Groups**
4. **Feedback and Discussion**
5. **What now? Taking it Forward**



# Participants responses on the Microsoft Whiteboard to “What do we mean by equity?”

Uhlig, Mindy

everyone gets what they need to succeed...

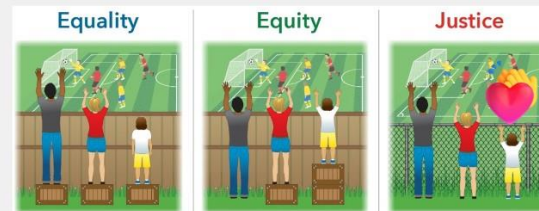


Taking action to make sure that everyone has what they need to succeed rather than everyone having the same thing

everyone has access to resources to be successful

Providing the necessary tools/support so that everyone has the same opportunity to succeed and belong in society

ensuring that everyone has the tools they need to succeed



Levin, Jessica

Folks get what they need to be successful - sorry for posting twice - NEW to this fun tool!

Folks get what they need to be successful!

confronting structural barriers that may be impacting someone's access

Everyone can succeed at their level; needed tools are supplied.

We all have equal opportunities and resources

What do we mean by equity?

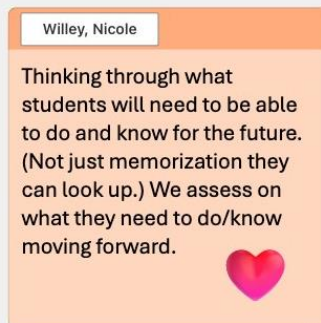
# Participants responses on the Microsoft Whiteboard to “What do we mean by assessment?”

a way to evaluate whether the students learn the material and meet our course outcomes



Multiple forms of assessment

evidence we need to know how much students learn



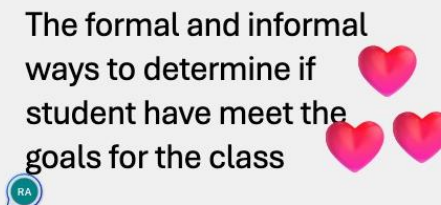
Feedback (student learning & teaching)

checking in with students to see if they are understanding content; seeing if the instructor needs to make adjustments accordingly

Grade

What do we mean by assessment?

Measuring how well we have helped others learn a concept.



Assessing the learning materials and the level of understanding



# Interviewee Definitions of Equitable Assessment

*“student-centered course design... as opposed to faculty centered.”*

*“trying to develop a classroom and then assessments that allow for all students to show and demonstrate what they understand.”*

*"everyone has the chance to do their best."*

*"takes into account that students are facing a variety of compromising circumstances in their lives that affect their ability to perform or deliver on assessments and provides ways for students to complete the assessments that takes into account their widely divergent circumstances..."*

Department/Discipline	Position	Campus	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Art History	Adjunct Professor	Ashtabula (2)	F (6)	BIPOC (3)
Business	Assistant Professor (2)	Kent (6)	M (6)	White (9)
Chemistry and Biochemistry	Associate Professor (5)	Stark (4)		
History	Full Professor (3)			
Management	Lecturer			
Marketing				
Philosophy				
Physics				
Public Health				
Social Work				
Special Education				

equitable  
assessment  
*is*  
effective  
assessment





What can we do?

# Center the Student's Learning

*“instruct the students we get, not the students we [may imagine we] want”*

*“tradition is actually like one of the worst reasons to keep doing things in education. We want to be much more thoughtful and strategic about how we're using our assessment practices, whether it's simple things like multiple choice quizzes or assessing more applied skills in a demonstrated setting, or putting students in a novel situation... [we] really need to be thoughtful, really be strategic, and then follow what existing research says makes for good quality assessment practices.”*

# 1. Designing Equitable Assessment

*"So if you weren't a good writer coming into my class, you were unlikely to do very well on the major assignment, because it was a written assignment and I didn't teach writing."*

*"what is it that I want students to be able to do that they couldn't do when they walked into class?"*

*"ensure that our assessment is measuring what we want it to measure"*

*"how do you assess that [a student's learning] against itself and against the course's objectives and against their own abilities instead of assessing them against each other, knowing that they come from different backgrounds?"*

*"give them different opportunities to show what they've learned"*

*"multiple choice questions, but they are questions asking them to think rather than memorize"*

## 2. Equitable Grading Practices

*"they do have essay questions, but structure, grammar, spelling, none of that is included in their grade. As long as I can understand what they're saying... they get credit for that." This allows students to "show in their own words... that they have learned..."*

*"if I expect as a professor for people to give me grace, then I should be trying to give the same back... I have to pause a couple times when I think about how I respond to students because I think about the formal answer to things versus what is the student really asking me and how can I just be accommodating to this?"*

### 3. Preparing Students for Assessment Success

*"I want do this because I really want know what you're learning. I don't just want give you one shot on a test to write something down and hope that it matches what I wanted."*

*"So we talk a lot about preparation for the exam, and I have study sessions for them, and I try to draw for them like different ways to study, different ways to think holistically..."*

## 4. Post Follow Up and Review

*if 20% of students are getting something wrong, did I assess something I didn't teach? Was it a bad question? Did I not do a good job at teaching it?"*

*"looking at how many, how much time students spent, how many attempts they actually had."*

*"if I see a student who seems to be really struggling... I will try to [see] that they might be receptive to talking to me so that I can get a better sense of what's happening and what's going on and how best to help them so that they have a better shot, because, for me, that's what equity is giving: everybody as equal a playing field as you can so that they can then make the most of it."*

*"I don't think I've had a syllabus or a course curriculum in exactly the same format two semesters in a row. I change it all the time based on the feedback that I get."*

# Approaches to Equitable Assessment Breakout Groups

1. Designing Equitable Assessment
2. Equitable Grading Practices
3. Preparing Students for Assessment Success
4. Post-Follow Up and Review

# 1. Designing Equitable Assessment

1. Pedagogy 101 but maybe we forget: make sure **course learning outcomes & modes of assessment** line up. Am I teaching what I am assessing, and vice versa? I use a table to make sure they match up side by side, one interviewee said they use a checklist.
2. Reconsider the **weighting of assignments** when (re)designing them: make sure no single assessment can sink a student for the course.
3. Think about shifting to more **frequent, low-stakes assignments** e.g. weekly deadlines.
4. **Scaffold projects.** Producing projects in increments with opportunities for feedback and reworking across the semester enables student improvement and growth.
5. **Provide options** for assessments.
6. Use **self-assessment**- can then be no stakes for them.
7. Use **peer-assessment**, both approaches can really empower students (and can save you time)
8. Be intentional about **question design**.
9. Incorporate **practical assignments** which help students apply what they are learning and prepare for the future, such as: building a portfolio; service learning. Relate assignments to their lives where possible.
10. **Co-creation** of assignments can really lead to more student buy in and commitment: they feel empowered with ownership of their learning e.g. creating their own exam questions in groups which are then actually are included in the exam if they meet specified criteria (also saves you time). You can offer a slate of options that work for you that they pick from at the start of the semester.

## 2. Equitable Grading Practices

1. Create **clear rubrics** that align with the intended learning outcomes for the course. Using rubrics in Canvas can speed up grading and can help you provide **clear feedback**, which is essential. Can you share the rubric ahead of time for an assignment so that students know how they are going to be graded?
2. **Focus on content** when grading. One interviewee said: *"they do have essay questions, but structure, grammar, spelling, none of that is included in their grade. As long as I can understand what they're saying... they get credit for that."* This allows students to *"show in their own words... that they have learned..."*
3. **Completion grading** - either submit the work or you don't. This can save you time and shift a student's focus from a grade to the learning. It can be appropriate for practice assignments and provide a space for students to take risks without penalty.
4. Do you have the time and resources to let students turn in drafts for feedback only: **practice**?
5. Do not just give a 0 for late assignments. Students and instructors need **deadlines**. Yet, **flexibility** is also important. Being late on an assignment ought not to jeopardize a student's ability to succeed in a course.
6. Allow **multiple attempts** for quizzes. This creates the opportunity to learn and try again. Quiz grading and feedback can be automated in Canvas.
7. Can you provide opportunities for students to redo assignments?
8. You may like to consider **specifications grading** for how you grade the course as a whole.

### 3. Preparing Students for Assessment Success

1. Have a very clear, **regular assessment schedule** that students know and you explain at the outset. Send reminders (which can be automated): *"Hey, it looks like you haven't taken the test. Don't forget to take it."* early on in the semester as they get into the routine of the class.
  2. At the start of the semester **find out through a survey what students are bringing to the course** and their expectations. This can be an opportunity to identify any particular areas of concern students have with a form of assessment e.g. writing or Math.
  3. **Repeat key material** you need them to demonstrate learning of via assessment throughout the semester in different ways.
  4. Provide **clear instructions and examples** – of complete and incomplete work – for assignments. Perhaps have students present back to you what they perceive the assignment as requiring. **Explain your rationale** to them.
  5. **Do study sessions as part of class:**
  6. Provide **study skills handouts** e.g. how to write an essay; essential Math for class.
- Bring Kent State resources into your course:**
7. Use the **Writing Commons**. You can [schedule for a tutor](#) to come and talk to your class.
  8. Liaise with your [subject librarian](#) to provide resources on how to do research, etc.
  9. Get Academic Success Center in to do a workshop in class - success coaching - <https://www.kent.edu/asc/studyskills> OR Success Coaching (get referred to when submit an Early Alert for a student struggling (worth doing as sure know: <https://www.kent.edu/success/earlyalert>) - run by Pamela Jones - [pjones@kent.edu](mailto:pjones@kent.edu)
  10. If you think your course is very hard - have consistent low-performance and feedback that students struggle - consider requesting it be added as one of those courses for extra tutoring Email Chris Tankersley [ctankers@kent.edu](mailto:ctankers@kent.edu)



## Academic Success Center

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# COURSE SUPPORT REQUEST

Kent State University faculty and staff members may submit a request for course support here.

COURSE SUPPORT REQUEST

## ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

University College »

### STREET ADDRESS

Center for Undergraduate Excellence - Suite  
169; 975 Lefton Esplanade Kent, OH 44242

### MAILING ADDRESS

### CONTACT US

330-672-3190  
asc@kent.edu



### INFORMATION

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## 4. Post Follow Up and Review

1. Post-assessment **review the data**.
2. **Reteach and reassess** – communicate to students that this is what you are doing and so model learning and growing.
3. *"there's a bunch of different ways that you can intensify instruction so that students will be able to learn it when they didn't learn it the first time through."* Like, a guided post-exam active learning session in class where students can reflect upon their work.
4. **Pay attention to students not performing well.** It is not your role to be the support resource for a student, but you can reach out, acknowledge, and show empathy if they are going through a tough time, and provide them with resources.
5. Optional extra credit is not equitable. It rewards students with more resources e.g. students who do not need to work to afford college. **Give opportunities to redo assignments instead.**

### FEEDBACK

6. You can gain some valuable information on how effective assessment was from **student evaluations**.
7. Create assignments which prompt students to undertake **metacognitive reflection** about their learning from the course. These help them and provide you with important feedback.
8. **Review course data for patterns** over time e.g. is there a high DFW rate? If so, why? Do certain groups of students perform better?

**Taking it Forward**



## The CATS Meow: Classroom Assessment Techniques

Tuesday, October 31, 2023  
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM

### Register

Registration open through 10/31/2023 8:00 AM EST  
[Register Now](#)  
Microsoft Teams

### Details

Classroom assessment techniques (CATS) offer a real-time way for you to gauge student preparedness, comprehension, skills, and attitudes. In addition to exploring quick, easy strategies like minute papers or exit-tickets, we will explore more summative strategies including alternatives and helpful modifications to essay writing and multiple-choice examples.

For questions regarding this event, contact the Center for Teaching and Learning [ctl@kent.edu](mailto:ctl@kent.edu).

#### **Special Accommodation Requests:**

Kent State University is committed to making its work environment, programs and activities accessible to those individuals with disabilities.  
For employee, faculty and staff accessibility needs contact the Office of Compliance, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, at 330-672-2038 or [aa\\_eeo@kent.edu](mailto:aa_eeo@kent.edu).  
For student accessibility needs contact the office of Student Accessibility Services, at 330-672-3391 or [sas@kent.edu](mailto:sas@kent.edu).

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**Center for Teaching**

## Recommended Resources

**Accessibility tools:** <https://www.kent.edu/equalaccess/news/accessibility-tool-roundup>

### Resources to connect students to:

- Urgent financial assistance support: <https://www.kent.edu/carescenter/cares-center-emergency-mini-grant>
- Broader financial help information: <https://www.kent.edu/carescenter/financial-empowerment-resources>
- Food security resources: <https://www.kent.edu/carescenter/food-security-resources>
- Federal Affordable [Internet] Connectivity Program: <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>
- Women's Center Emergency Fund: <https://www.kent.edu/womenscenter/womens-center-emergency-fund>
- LGBTQ+ Center financial resources for students: <https://www.kent.edu/lgbtq/financial-support#:~:text=Three%20financial%20aid%20options%20are,the%20MJ%20Eckhouse%20Memorial%20Scholarship>
- Student Support Services for first generation, designated income, and students registered with Student Accessibility Services: <https://www.kent.edu/student-support-services>
- Student Accessibility Services (SAS): <https://www.kent.edu/sas/new-sas-get-connected>
- Mental health resources: <https://www.kent.edu/mentalhealth#mental-health-support>
- The Academic Success Center: <https://www.kent.edu/asc>
- The Writing Commons: <https://www.kent.edu/writingcommons>
- Application for the [McNair Scholars Program](#) for first generation college students who meet income guidelines OR are from an ethnic group underrepresented in doctoral programs (African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American/Alaskan or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander): <https://www.kent.edu/mcnair/apply>

### Further Kent State resources for assessment:

- <https://www.kent.edu/asc/course-support-request>
- <https://www.kent.edu/assessment>
- <https://www.kent.edu/success/earlyalert>
- <https://www.kent.edu/ctl/assessing-learning>



**Thank You!**

*“Have fun.”*



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