

NEGOTIATING POWER DYNAMICS IN ASSESSMENT—WHO IS AT THE PLANNING TABLE?

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INTROS

NAME, PRONOUNS

INSTITUTION

ROLE

NEW FAVORITE QUARANTINE HOBBY

OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Discuss the idea of power dynamics and drivers of assessment
- ▶ Consider how power dynamics impacts equity in assessment practices
- ▶ Develop ideas to bring more stakeholders to the planning table for assessment

WHAT IS THE POWER DYNAMIC?

GOOD PLANNING “ANTICIPATES THE ROLE OF POWER IN PLANNING AND REQUIRES A STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO SUBSTANTIVE DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING”

Wilson & Cervero, 2010, p. 84



**EVERYONE AT THE
TABLE HAS POTENTIAL**



OUTCOMES OF THE PLANNING TABLE

**AS ASSESSMENT PROFESSIONALS:
“EQUITY WORK IS NOT SOMEONE
ELSE’S RESPONSIBILITY. WE EACH
PLAY A ROLE IN EQUITY-MINDED
ASSESSMENT”**

Montenegro & Jankowski, 2020, p. 14

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE POWER DYNAMICS IN ASSESSMENT?

- ▶ DATA

- ▶ Ownership
- ▶ Access
- ▶ Conflicting data

- ▶ Culture!

- ▶ Sociopolitical dynamics

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Credentialing
- ▶ Length of employment

- ▶ Assessment design vs research design

- ▶ institutional hierarchy (admin/faculty/staff/students)

- ▶ Faculty vs assessment folks

- ▶ Leadership - Who is listening/talking

- ▶ Tenure vs NTE

- ▶ Pre-determined assessment purpose

- ▶ Accreditation!

- ▶ RESOURCES!!!

- ▶ Reporting/acting on disaggregated data

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DRIVERS OF ASSESSMENT?

- ▶ Accreditation
- ▶ Government agencies
- ▶ Improvement
- ▶ STUDENTS
 - ▶ Learning (evidence)
 - ▶ Success
 - ▶ Learner experience
- ▶ Funding
- ▶ DONORS
- ▶ Campus leadership
- ▶ Purpose of assessment
 - ▶ Weeding out vs maintaining status quo
- ▶ Documentation
- ▶ TRENDS IN ASSESSMENT (shout out Book Club)
- ▶ Research and published evidence
- ▶ Media
- ▶ Serving the community (HONESTLY!)

HOW DO POWER DYNAMICS IMPACT EQUITY IN ASSESSMENT PRACTICES?

- ▶ reinforce (or break down!) existing inequities
- ▶ determine which voices are heard, validated, acted upon
- ▶ We only assess what makes us comfortable
- ▶ how we choose to interpret data
 - ▶ Transparency
 - ▶ Similarly - we choose which data to share. Like the COVID data shared.
 - ▶ Which instruments
- ▶ Reward vs punishment
- ▶ Who do we share data with
- ▶ Budgets and hiring
- ▶ Which data
- ▶ What questions we ask

IDEAS TO BRING MORE STAKEHOLDERS TO THE PLANNING TABLE:

- ▶ Feeling safe
- ▶ Engaging students in assessment planning
 - ▶ Student participation
- ▶ Recognize that assessment work is labor and reward participants appropriately (\$, course releases, tenure/promotion)
- ▶ Transparency of process
- ▶ Connect assessment work, outcomes, and findings with other units- advising, learner support, marketing, enrollments. We can always learn something about what students need in terms of learning and curriculum from each one of these groups
- ▶ (Food...lets be honest)
- ▶ Being okay with letting go of what we've traditionally always done. Doing the "uncomfortable"
- ▶ RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

**“LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF THOSE
HISTORICALLY SILENCED IS AN
ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF EQUITY
MINDED ASSESSMENT”**

Montenegro & Jankowski, 2020, p. 10

ASSESSMENT PLANNING OCCURS “IN A SOCIAL WORLD STRUCTURED BY HISTORICALLY DEVELOPING SETS OF POWER RELATIONS” AND IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO “WORK OUT WHOSE INTERESTS WILL BE REPRESENTED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS”

Cervero, R. M., & Wilson, A. L. (1995). Responsible planning for continuing education in the health professions. *The Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 15, 196–202.

QUESTIONS?



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