# Framing Assessment | Banks & Bensimon

When equity pedagogy and empowering students are priorities (Banks), the development of equity-minded assessment practices requires consideration of the response to and impact of assessment on different individuals and groups. We ask:

In what ways do you and your department address achievement gaps in your assessment practices in the following areas?

* formative classroom assessments
* summative classroom assessments
* grading practices
* Student learning outcomes (SLO) assessments
* Program learning outcomes (PLO) assessments

Developing equity-minded assessment practices also requires thorough consideration of practitioners’ implicit theories of student success (Bensimon) and a clear differentiation between diversity content integration and equity pedagogy (Banks). The dominant paradigm of assessment has been student-centered, assuming that success is student-authored (Bensimon). However, that paradigm may further marginalize the very students we wish to reach. We ask:

How do our assumptions about program assessment and student assessment privilege student-authored notions of success?

How do our departments and campuses discuss, use, and share information about student learning outcomes achievement?

How can we challenge those assumptions and discussions at the classroom and program level as we work to create a more equitable ENGL&101?

**For your consideration…**

*Equity-minded individuals are more cognizant that exclusionary practices, institutional racism, and power asymmetries impact opportunities and outcomes for Black and Latina/o students. Equity-minded individuals attribute unequal outcomes among Black and Latina/o students to institution-based dysfunctions, while deficit-minded individuals construe unequal outcomes as originating from student characteristics. Thus, equity-minded individuals reflect on their own and their colleagues’ role in and responsibility for student success. (Bensimon, 2007).*

*Evaluating the progress of students from diverse racial and ethnic groups and social classes is complicated by differences in language, learning styles, and cultures. Hence the use of a single method of assessment will probably further disadvantage students from particular social classes and ethnic groups. (Banks, et al., 2001)*

*Finally, change happens in a classroom, not a boardroom. Faculty and staff must be key players in the dialogue on student success and be empowered to address barriers to success. Broad-based campus involvement, data-based improvement plans, and accountability measures grounded in meaningful data analysis are solid ingredients for a good start. Campus culture must be transformed to one where the community truly believes in the right to succeed. (Baldwin, Bensimon, Dowd, Kleiman, 2011)*

## Differentiating Diversity & Equity with Banks

# Content Integration

Content integration deals with the extent to which instructors use content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, generalizations, and issues within the discipline.

[This] is how we got started. . . . we got started putting African Americans in the curriculum, Mexican Americans in the curriculum, Asian Americans in the curriculum. But while that’s important, that’s really only one dimension (Banks, 1998).

# Knowledge Construction

Knowledge construction refers to how instructors help students learn metacognitive strategies while understanding, investigating, and determining how the biases, frames of reference, and perspectives of a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it. Students learn how to build knowledge themselves.

# Equity Pedagogy

An equity pedagogy exists when instructors modify their teaching methods in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students with diverse backgrounds and abilities.

We define equity pedagogy as teaching strategies and classroom environments that help students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups attain knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively within, and help create and perpetuate, a just, humane, and democratic society (Banks & Banks, 1995).

# Prejudice Reduction

Prejudice reduction describes how instructors actively reveal and address implicit biases in both themselves and their students. Lessons, activities, and teaching strategies help students develop inclusive and democratic attitudes toward other students and individuals of different backgrounds and abilities.

# Empowering School Culture and Social Structure

An empowering school culture and institutional structure is created when the culture and organization of the school are transformed through equity-minded practices to enable students from diverse groups to experience equality.

James Banks’s *5 Dimensions of Multicultural Education* adapted from “Multicultural Education: Goals & Dimensions” at UW’s College of Education webpage. <https://education.uw.edu/cme/view>

References

Banks, James A. (1995). Equity pedagogy: An essential component of multicultural education. *Theory Into Practice, 34*(3), 152–58.

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Bensimon, Estela M. (2007). The underestimated significance of practitioner knowledge in the scholarship on student success. *Review of Higher Education, 30*(4), 441–469.

McGee Banks, Cherry E. and Banks, James. (1995). Equity pedagogy: An essential component of multicultural education. *Theory Into Practice*, vol. 34, no. 3, College of Education, Ohio State University, pp. 152–58.

# Fill in the B(l)anks

Knowledge Construction

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Curriculum & Instruction | Assessment Practices |

Equity Pedagogy

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Curriculum & Instruction | Assessment Practices |

Empowering School Culture

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Curriculum & Instruction | Assessment  Practices |

**ENGL&101**

Content Integration

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Curriculum & Instruction | Assessment  Practices |

Prejudice Reduction

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Curriculum & Instruction | Assessment  Practices |

# For Reflection & Discussion

1. In what ways do you and your department address achievement gaps in your assessment practices? Areas for discussion: formative classroom assessments / summative classroom assessments / grading practices / student learning outcomes (SLO) assessments / program learning outcomes (PLO) assessments
2. How do our assumptions about program assessment and student assessment privilege student-authored notions of success?
3. How do our departments and campuses discuss, use, and share information about student learning outcomes achievement?
4. How can we challenge those assumptions and discussions at the classroom and program level as we work to create a more equitable ENGL&101?

# Looking Forward

1. What questions or areas of focus do you want to see covered in our next session on assessment?

formative classroom assessments

summative classroom assessments

grading practices

antiracist writing assessments

SLO assessments

PLO assessments

Other:

1. What additional resources / readings regarding assessment should the group consider? Jot down titles or ideas, or, if you have stuff you could send us, provide your email address, and we’ll follow up with you.