

12:10 start time. While we wait...

Feel free to share in the chat:

- Introduce yourself (name, department, role)
- What interested you in this topic?





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Assessment of Learning Series:

Educational Assessment Practices and Student Identity Formation

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Land Acknowledgement



Art by Christi Belcourt

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cia4T9euYUu/>

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Access Check

Encourage you to check, identify, and question your learning environment for any of the following and welcome comments if there are elements that we can support to reduce barriers.

- Technology
- Resources
- Pace
- Sound



Assessment of Learning Series

This series has two main goals:

- To engage instructors in critical discussions about their current educational assessment practices
- To connect educational assessment scholarship with current teaching and learning practices in support of evidence-based pedagogy





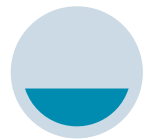
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“Traditionally understood as the systematic evaluation of student learning, assessment spans a continuum from gauging knowledge and skill acquisition to understanding changes in attitudes and beliefs; in short, assessment drives learning”

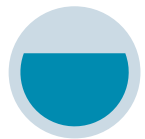
- (Rust 2002 as cited in Chan and Colloton, 2024).

Defining Educational Assessment

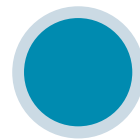
- Traditionally thought to be an objective measure of student learning at certain time-points
 - Fairness and low bias are prioritized due to the use of some assessments for comparability



Assessment *as*
Learning
(Self-agentic)



Assessment *for*
Learning
(Formative)



Assessment *of*
Learning
(Summative)





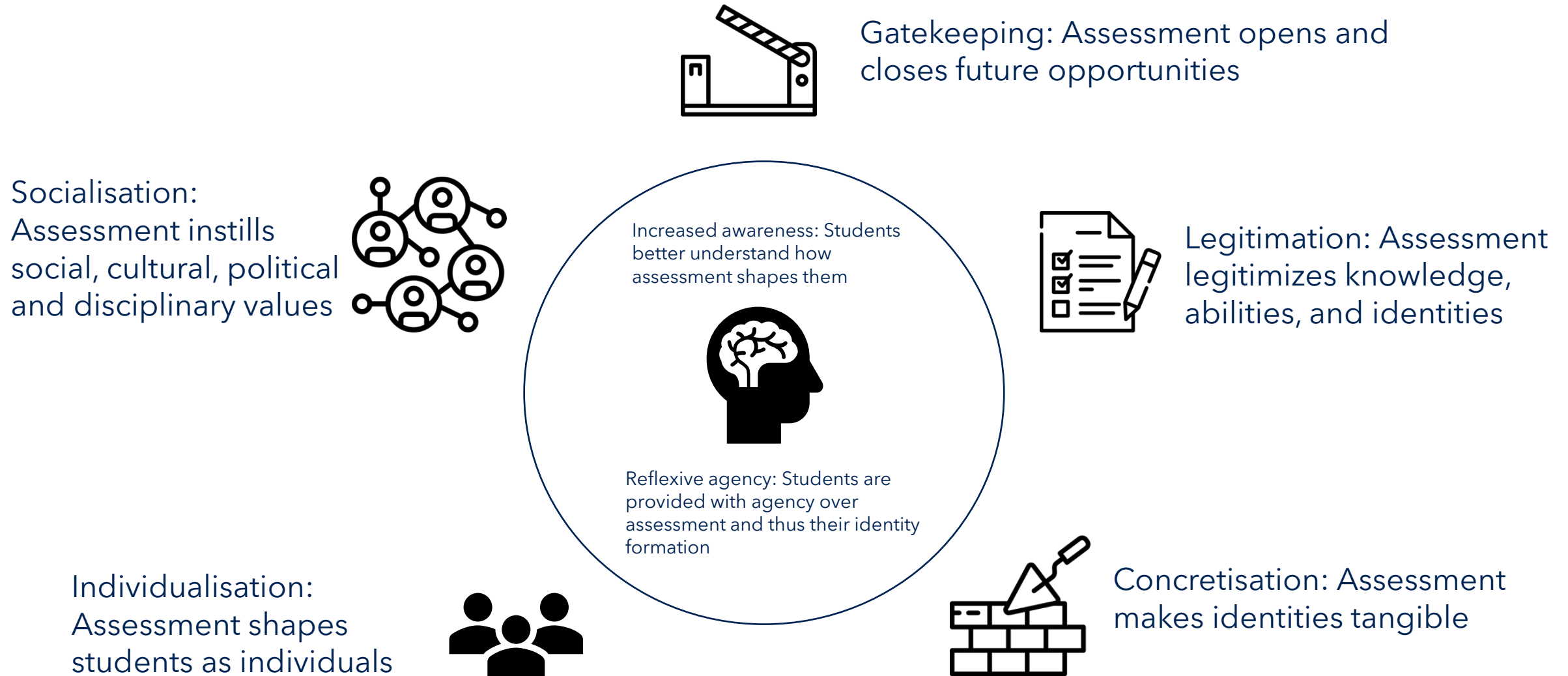
“

...unlike many measurement practices, *assessment changes its target*. While assessment research has largely explored the effects of assessment on learning, research has also acknowledged that assessment shapes how individuals and groups see themselves” (p. 2, Nieminen, 2024)

Student formation (Nieminen and Yang, 2023):

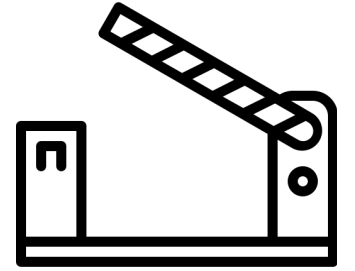
- Students are transformed by others, and transform themselves in higher education (Nieminen, and Yang, 2023)
 - Other formation: The importance of the environment in this transformation (institutions, teachers, peers, etc.)
 - Self formation: Students are consciously reflexive agents who actively engage with the environment, navigate resources
- There is an interacting relationship between “other” and “self”

How Assessment Shapes Student Identity: Nieminen (2024)



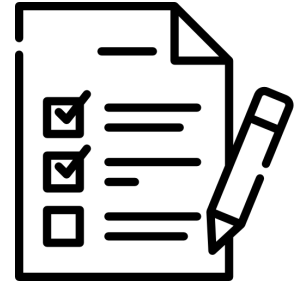
Adapted from Figure 2. The technologies through which assessment shapes students identities

Gatekeeping



- Assessment shapes students' identities in that it 'opens' and 'closes' spaces/future opportunities for students
 - GPA and grades can regulate students future opportunities in national and international contexts (job opportunities)
 - Splitting moment of assessment can impact student identities: pass/fail; A/B/C/D/E/F (Cabral and Baldino, 2019)
 - Attaching self-worth and value to grades: Being an "A+ student"

Legitimation



Assessment has particular legitimacy in shaping students

- Can signal which goals, abilities, and forms of knowledge are deemed “legitimate”
- Certain kinds of assessment are **deemed as more legitimate** than others
 - “objective” measures in the form of final exams are deemed more legitimate than student centered assessment (self and peer assessment) in the natural sciences (Nieminen and Lahdenpera, 2024).
- Inaccessible assessment practices can shape student identity narratives (Nieminen and Pesonen, 2020)
- Assessment practices centering student’s personal identities, cultures and histories can make student’s sense of self a legitimate form of knowledge (Hein and Miller, 2004; Munday, Sajid & Reader, 2014)



Please share:

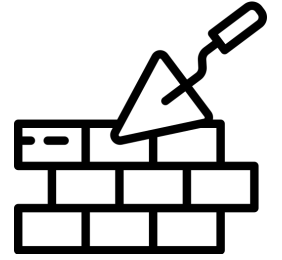
Think about the discipline that you teach in, work in, or have been a student of.

1) What are some implicit ways that assessment practices have acted as gatekeepers?

2) What are some ways that assessment seems to legitimize/delegitimize certain kinds of knowledge, experiences, and skills?

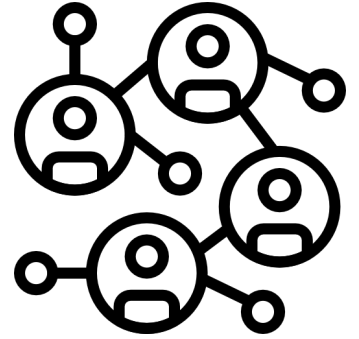


Concretisation



- Assessment makes skills, knowledge, and abilities 'tangible' for students
 - "Only when an ability is assessed can its development be planned, mapped, and predicted; only then can interventions be directed towards it"(Nieminen, 2024).
- Examples: Teaching writing, teaching lab skills, math, etc.
- Others note this can feel reductionist and dehumanizing, noting complexity of human identity is reduced to data, grades, skills (Skyrme, 2007 as cited in Nieminen, 2024)





Socialization

Assessment is used to socialize students into social, cultural, political and disciplinary norms, values and ideologies.

- Professional programs: medicine, teaching, etc.
 - Often done through assessments of practicums, reflection, portfolio assessments, etc.
- Student also socialized as academics (assessing critical thinking, academic integrity, etc.)



Please share:

Think about the discipline that you teach in, work in, or have been a student of.

1) What are the benefits of and drawbacks of making skills, knowledge, and abilities “concrete” through assessment?

2) From your past experiences, how has assessment socialized you and/or students in your discipline?



Individualization



- Assessment shapes students as individuals
 - Grades and assessment practices center individual learning, not communal learning
 - Can create competition, impede collaboration, and identifying as part of a larger community
 - Group work and assessment practices:
 - What's being assessed? Who is given credit?





Self Formation:

Increased awareness: Students better understand how assessment shapes them

- Self reflection, self assessment, peer learning, etc.

Reflexive Agency over Identity Formation:

- Active participants in the assessment design (rubric criteria; choice-based assessment, etc.)





**Final
Thoughts?**



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Thank you!

Any further question, please feel free to email:
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