

Anti-racist Pedagogy Workshop – Assessment Practices
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I had many revelations over the course of the workshop, particularly as we discussed assessment practices and policies. I found myself often thinking about ideas expressed by Linda Suskie in the “Fair Assessment Practices” article (AAHE Bulletin, May 2000). She discusses strategies for allowing students equitable opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. The idea that we want to use assessments that are as fair as possible for as many students as possible means that we can’t treat all students exactly the same. The idea of custom-tailored assessments is really appealing to me but I just can’t see a way to make it a sustainable practice. I do plan to remind myself of the seven steps to fair assessment as much as possible.

I think one of the key takeaways from some of the discussions we had in the workshop time was the idea of trusting students. This is difficult because math, the subject I teach, has been perceived as a barrier for many students and cheating is something we deal with regularly. Trusting students to be honest in completing their own work is essential to building strong student/faculty relationships.

I also like the ideas expressed by Roopika Risam regarding power-sharing, shared norms, self grading and, in particular, contract grading or un-grading. These are ideas I would like to investigate further by finding examples of faculty who teach math or science have used them.

The particular area of my classes that I mentioned I wanted to work on was syllabus policies...are they equitable to all populations I have in my class? I appreciated the discussion we had around late policies because I am a stickler about those and I think my main take away from that discussion is: when a policy has reasoning behind it that applies fairly to all students then it is more likely to be equitable. The idea that we can make exceptions is something that’s hard for me to think about with the equity lens but when we discuss that the key questions there would be: who will benefit? and who will be harmed? I believe that using those as guiding questions and decisions about late work would be beneficial to my thinking.

I truly wish I would have had more time to spend investigating these ideas during the workshop and I hope in the future that I will be able to spend some time really digging into assessment policies and practices rather than the actual assessment itself, which tends to be fairly objective in the discipline of mathematics.