

Principles for the Assessment of Student Learning Feedback Summary / June 2025

The Assessment Principles Group presented a set of eleven draft principles and an accompanying report for discussion, through recommended General Faculties Council governance committees in Spring 2025. These included the Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC), the Calendar and Curriculum Subcommittee (CCS) and the Graduate Academic Program Subcommittee (GAPs). The same information was also shared with *ii' taa'poh'to'p* Working Circle 4 (Academic Programs) (WC4) and Working Circle 6 (Policies, Procedures, and Practice) (WC6). In addition, the draft principles and report were shared back to all individuals (students, academic staff, leaders and support staff) that contributed over the last 6 months of campus consultations. They were invited to share their feedback about the principles through a drop-in “talk and tea” (T&T) and/or a Qualtrics form (QF) in May. A summary of this feedback is presented below and has been incorporated into the draft assessment principles and report or will be used to shape future recommendations for the assessment of student learning at the University of Calgary (UCalgary).

Positive Feedback

People communicated an overall sentiment of excitement to see the institution supporting the transformation of student assessment with comments like, “impressive,” “transformative and comprehensive,” “head to heart – phenomenal,” and “stunning.” (TLC)

Academic units expressed interest to start using the principles immediately and requested resources and support on how to bring these into their disciplines: “Would love examples of assessment for high and low enrolment classes; and in each level, from 1st year through to 4th year, and graduate students. How do principles look different for each context?” (CCS). Although the principles are intentionally meant to *guide* assessment practice, people were keen to implement and wanted examples to put them into use. Several faculties suggested using a model of co-creation to build example assessments (TLC, CCS) asked about the creation of a community of practice: “Partner with faculties to build out resources together.” (CCS)

There were significant acknowledgement and encouragement given for including mental health and wellbeing for students and academic staff: “I appreciate the comprehensive approach that supports both academic success and student wellbeing.” (CCS, T&T, QF). People also repeatedly remarked on the inclusiveness of the principles, and that “The emphasis on inclusion and cultural respect also made me feel more seen and supported in my learning journey.” (QF)

Areas Noted for Improvement

There were a few minor improvements noted to the wording of the principles to ensure they were clear and understandable. There was a need to communicate more clearly about what a principle

is (a guide to help incrementally work towards something) versus a strategy (which puts the principle into practice) (TLC). More clarity included the suggestion of a glossary specifically to help define words used to describe Indigenous perspectives and meaning, along with teaching and learning terminology (ex. formative vs. summative; 'professional accreditation standards'). (CCS, T&T).

There were a few suggested revisions to the principles which included adding 'Accessibility' in Principle D (T&T) and adding 'Modality' in Principle B. (TLC). There was one revision to Figure 2 to change 'Continuous Improvement' to 'Continuous Enhancement.' Revisions to Figure 1 included adding the word 'Reciprocity' (CCS, T&T); adding 'Self-Actualization' (T&T); changing 'Holism' to 'Wholism (T&T);' revising 'Human (more than human)' to 'Humanity' and 'All our Relatives.' (T&T). The APG notes an ongoing need to consult with Indigenous Elders about these terms.

It was also noted that the APG should reach out to all Indigenous Elders, academic staff and community members to confirm how they would like to be acknowledged in the report and to include a statement around Natural Law when discussing Parallel Pathways and Ethical Space. We also heard to ensure the report addresses the ongoing need to highlight anti-Indigenous racism, ensure Indigenous scholars are not overburdened by this work, and the need for a long-term implementation plan and systemic change (WC6).

Overall, all groups expressed a desire for additional resources and supports to help implement the principles into practice and wanted clarity about connection and alignment to institutional priorities, strategic plans and policies. (T&T)

Future Recommendations

Several recommendations emerged that focused on the next stage, mainly, putting the principles for the assessment of student learning into action. Overwhelmingly, people said they want clear examples of strategies for each principle within varying contexts, that take into consideration class size, discipline, modality, and course content. (TLC, CCS, T&T). One suggestion to support this initiative was to build a generative AI tool to create these scenario-ready assessment strategies for each or all the principles.

Questions came up around professional development for instructors to evolve and help improve their assessment literacy (T&T); and what possibilities existed (or could be built upon) to educate and train on teaching/assessment for GTAs/graduate students and post-doctoral scholars. (WC4). People also wanted a single location for information and guidance on processes available for instructors or programs to implement assessment changes (specific to Principle K about organizational policies) (CCS). Other suggestions to enact the principles more broadly include partnering with academic units and with the UCalgary Teaching Academy. It was recommended that the principles remain as a living document, and that it has a Spirit, with a purpose and will continue to change and grow. (WC4)