Assessment Principles for Student Learning

Executive Summary for Consultations

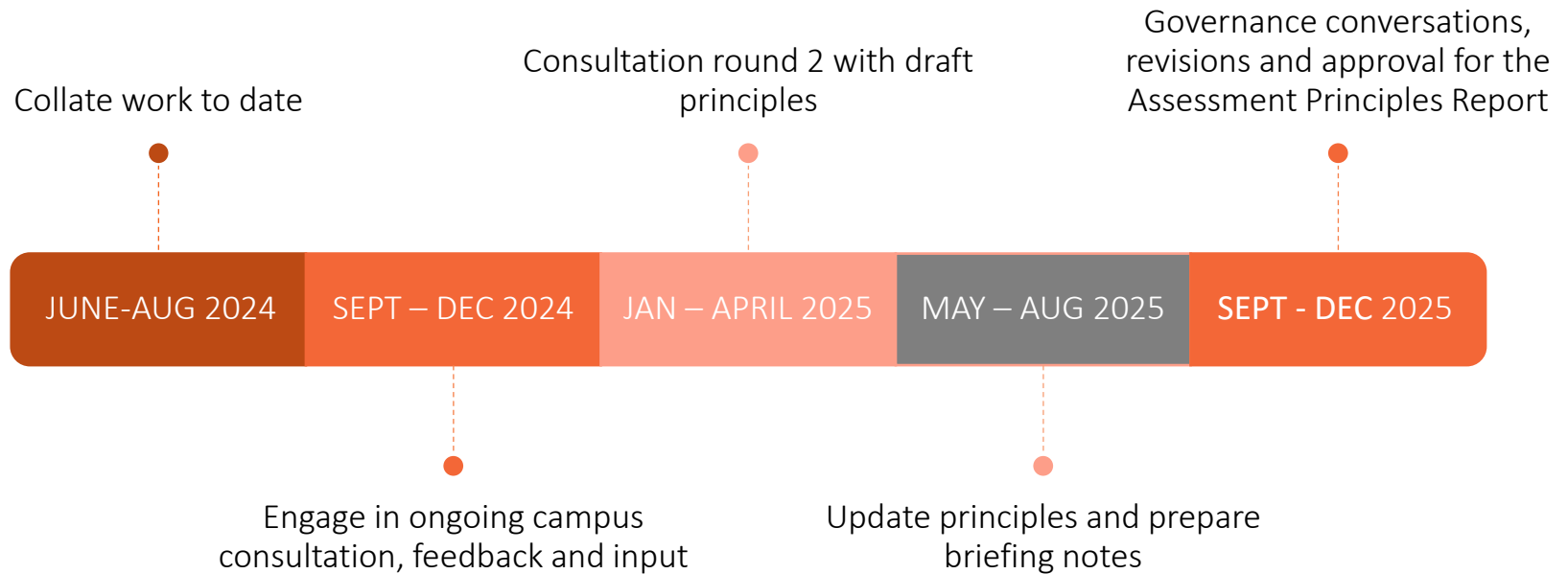Dr. Natasha Kenny
Dr. Barbara Brown
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Context and Purpose

- Increased focus and attention on assessment of student learning across higher education

- Opportunity for UCalgary to develop research-informed assessment principles most relevant to our context
  - Frame and guide future conversation and decision-making

- Bring together individuals with interest, expertise and experience in the assessment of student learning to help guide this work

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TIMELINE / Assessment Principles Group

Collate work to date

Consultation round 2 with draft principles

Governance conversations, revisions and approval for the Assessment Principles Report

| JUNE-AUG 2024 | SEPT – DEC 2024 | JAN – APRIL 2025 | MAY – AUG 2025 | SEPT - DEC 2025 |

Engage in ongoing campus consultation, feedback and input

Update principles and prepare briefing notes

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Learning from Research – the Environmental Scan and the Literature Review

✓ To learn how principles and practices for assessing student learning are conceptualized, developed, and shared in the higher education settings, we conducted the environmental scan and the literature review.

   ✓ **Environmental scan:** We mapped the development and articulation of the principles of assessing student learning at Canadian U15 universities through a detailed review of institutional websites. We focused our search on institutions where this documentation was posted in English (excluding UCalgary).

   ✓ **Literature Review:** We conducted a comprehensive review of the literature to identify the current and dominant trends, discourses, and directions related to student assessment practices. We focused on literature sources published in English between January 2016 and January 2024.

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Environmental Scan – Findings

✓ **Four** universities have outlined a list of principles related to the assessment of student learning. A few key commitments include:

    ✓ Assessment reflects high academic standards.

    ✓ Course instructors are primarily responsible for the assessment of student learning in academic courses.

    ✓ Assessment practices provide provisions for the accommodation of student needs.

    ✓ Resources are available to support course instructors in developing expertise in student assessment, and to assess student learning in meaningful ways.

    ✓ Assessments are intentionally designed and aligned with learning outcomes.

    ✓ Assessment strategies provide equitable opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning.

    ✓ Criteria, methods, and expectations for assessment are clearly communicated to students.

    ✓ Assessment practices emphasize the importance of feedback, progressive and authentic learning, and both formative and summative assessments.

-    Please review the *Environmental Scan Report* for additional information.

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Environmental Scan – Findings

- A few gaps and missed opportunities were identified in the environmental scan:
  - ✓ Generative artificial intelligence (AI),
  - ✓ Student/educator well-being and mental health,
  - ✓ Indigenous ways of knowing,
  - ✓ Equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility,
  - ✓ Graduate student assessment practices,
  - ✓ Multiple instructional modalities (e.g., online/blended learning)

- Please review the *Environmental Scan Report* for additional information.

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Literature Review – Findings

- **Conceptualizations and Approaches of Assessment***
  - ✓ Assessment as a learning practice
  - ✓ Assessment as a collaborative and empowering practice
  - ✓ Assessment as an equitable practice
  - ✓ Assessment as a sustainable practice

- **Purpose(s) of Assessment***
  - ✓ Assessment serves to motivate and engage students in learning. It should present an appropriate challenge for students instead of threat.
  - ✓ Assessment assists in measuring student performance, generating grades, and awarding credentials and certifications.
  - ✓ Assessment provides the opportunity for various forms of feedback: self-reflection, teacher-to-student, student-to-student, and student-to- teacher.

Selective information included here - please review the _Literature Review Report_ for further details.

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Literature Review – Findings

- **Trends and Discourses on Assessment Practice***
  - ✓ Rise of authentic assessment practices
  - ✓ Engaging "students as partners" in assessment
  - ✓ Utilizing online and digital assessments
  - ✓ Rethinking feedback practices
  - ✓ Considering student well-being and mental health in assessments
  - ✓ Exploring Generative AI and Academic Integrity guidelines for assessments
  - ✓ Prioritizing inclusion, accessibility, and social justice principles in assessments

*Selective information included here - please review the Literature Review Report for further details.

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Next Steps

- Campus Conversations and Consultations (Fall 2024)

- Draft Principles for the Assessment of Student learning (Winter 2025)

- Governance Discussions and Approval (Winter/Spring 2025)

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