1. Join a table based on your interests [see table signs]
   - How students are thriving, learning and succeeding
   - How faculty & staff are contributing, developing and achieving
   - How well my institution is contributing to the community,
   - How successful our university-community partnerships are in building community capacity and supporting positive change.

2. Share a personal assessment story in 6 words or less
   - Post your story to: bit.ly/APPSPAACU
   - Monitor story wall on screen to see what others in the room are saying about their own experiences with assessment.

3. Meet your table partners and share your stories.
   - Each member shares.
   - What themes about assessment are emerging from your table stories and the story wall?
Democratically Engaged Assessment [DEA]:
A New Framework for Reimagining Assessment

Julia Metzker, Mary F. Price, Georgia Nigro, Erica Kohl-Arena
AAC&U National Meeting, Atlanta, GA
January 25th, 2019

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Something we have?
Something we learn?
Something we do?
A way of making knowledge?
Public work is

“self-organized efforts by a mix of people who create things, material or symbolic, whose value is determined by a continuing process of deliberation.”

[Boyte 2014]
The Public Work of Democracy

- **NAMING**, setting and framing a problem or positive goals
- **IDENTIFYING** options and consequences of alternatives
- **DECIDING** what should be done
- **ACTING** to implement solutions and create something of public significance [includes evaluating, reflecting on and learning from the experience]

adapted from Peters et al 2010
Overview

- Values in Assessment
- Democratically Engaged Assessment [DEA] – a brief intro
  - Core Values
  - Core Concepts
  - Sample Case Examples
- Working with DEA in your assessment work
- Ways to join the national conversation

White Paper on Democratically Engaged Assessment
http://hdl.handle.net/1805/17729
Values and Assessment: Locating Ourselves
Assessment/evaluation is...?

- **value free**
  - free from imposed values, purely objective

- **value neutral**
  - doesn’t take sides

- **value laden**
  - derived from a particular set of values

- **value engaged**
  - grounded in, informed by and in dialogue with values
Think back to your 6 word stories…

▪ What are the values visible in your story?
▪ Are these values yours?
▪ What tensions, if any, emerge in your story?
"I have come to understand that the deep heartbeat of assessment and evaluation is actually justice, not justification."

"I don't want to simply keep reporting the retention rate; I want to identify the interventions we can put in place to break the cycle of injustice."

“Don’t ask them what to assess. Tell them.”
Introduction to Democratically Engaged Assessment
DEA defined:

“assessment explicitly grounded in, informed by, and in dialogue with the (contested) values of democratic engagement.”

[Bandy et al. 2018]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technocratic Civic Engagement (TCE)</th>
<th>Democratic Civic Engagement (DCE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>For</strong></td>
<td><strong>With</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficit-based</td>
<td>Asset-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uni-directional flow of knowledge from credentialed academic experts; distinction between knowledge producers and knowledge consumers</td>
<td>Multi-directional, synergistic flow of ideas and questions within a web of knowledge centers; co-creation of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement is apolitical</td>
<td>Engagement facilitates inclusive, collaborative, deliberative democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At best transactional exchanges</td>
<td>Potentially transformative partnerships (transformative of self, others, organizations/institutions, systems, paradigms); change result from co-creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchical power dynamics</td>
<td>Power-shifted dynamics that disrupt hierarchy and position all partners as co-educators, co-learners, co-generators of knowledge and practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Values of DEA

- **Full Participation**: Are the full range of stakeholder perspectives included, respected, valued, and supported?
- **Co-Creation**: Are participants working together and contributing at each phase?
- **Generativity**: Does the assessment open up new possibilities and document unexpected outcomes?
- **Practicability**: Is the assessment feasible and are available resources equitably and responsibly managed?
- **Rigor**: Does the assessment inspire trustworthiness and confidence across the full range of stakeholders?
- **Resilience**: Is the assessment adaptable in changing conditions and durable enough to promote sustained learning?

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DEA Phases of Assessment

1. Deliberate & Define
   - Values, Goals, Audiences

2. Determine Design & Methods

3. Implement

4. Report and Disseminate

5. Learn from and Act on Results

Why assess? What values and goals are particularly important, and for whom?

How do we improve our work? What are next steps forward?

How do we communicate and share results?

How do we find and interpret evidence?

What do we collect and how?
## Phase 1: Deliberatively Defining Values, Goals and Audience

### Full Participation

- Who should be included?
- How is participation equitably enabled?
- Who decides what will and will not be assessed, why and for whom?

### Co-Creation

- Does the full range of participants feel empowered to contribute at each phase of the assessment?
- Are participants’ assets and capabilities engaged to full advantage?
- Do decision-making processes require reciprocity and power-sharing?
- How are historical and current power differentials addressed?
- Is risk equitably shared?
Working with DEA
Engaging Values of Full Participation and Co-Creation:
Sylvia’s and Anna’s stories

At your tables, select one of the vignettes in your packet.

Take two minutes to read through the story.

Then as a group, complete the table in your packet.

**Prompt:** Where do you see evidence of full participation and co-creation expressed in this assessment story?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Participation</th>
<th>Anna’s Story</th>
<th>Sylvia’s Story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Including many different others</td>
<td>• Who decides what will and will not be assessed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Place that is comfortable for different groups</td>
<td>• Faculty perspectives included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Equitably enable full participation through childcare and transportation assistance</td>
<td>• Faculty impacted by the assessment of student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Students impacted by the assessment of student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Creation</td>
<td>Anna’s Story</td>
<td>Sylvia’s Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Describes the decision-making approach of multiple stakeholders</td>
<td>• Took advantage of faculty assets and capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Certain amount of power sharing in the decision making</td>
<td>• Empowered faculty to discern what constitutes learning in CEL courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Power sharing between center and institution?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applying DEA to your own work

Scenario: Imagine you are developing an assessment plan for a course, grant, program or other activity. (Or think back to a time when you have developed an assessment strategy).

Prompt: Use the questions for full participation and/or co-creation to think through how you might engage these values throughout your assessment plan.

INSTRUCTIONS
• Take two minutes to jot down some notes about your plan.
• Work in pairs—preferably someone you don’t know.
• Explain your story/struggle to your partner.
• 5 min for discussing each story.

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What tensions and opportunities emerged in your case?

Post your 6 word story to: bit.ly/APPSAACU
Parting thoughts and joining the national conversation
Imagining America creates democratic spaces to foster and advance publicly engaged scholarship that draws on arts, humanities, and design. The organization works to catalyze change in campus practices, structures, and policies that enables artists and scholars to thrive and contribute to community action and revitalization.
Ways to connect

- Dialogue
- Campus Visits
- Join at the 20th Anniversary – IA conference in Albuquerque, Oct 18th-20th, 2019
- Work with ideas in the White Paper on Democratically Engaged Assessment; http://hdl.handle.net/1805/17729
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