Transformation is a Homonym: Critical Assessment in a Time of Crisis

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Transformation

Surface Transformation

Changing the appearance of a thing.

Fundamental Transformation

Changing the nature or structure of a thing.

Fundamental Transformation

- Requires a deep analysis of the structure itself

- Acknowledges the social and political forces at play

- Rejects the myth of choice

Crisis

Pathology

"the turning-point of a disease for better or worse"

Figurative

"a vitally important or decisive stage in the progress of anything; a turning-point"

"a state of affairs in which a decisive change for better or worse is imminent"

Oxford English Dictionary

Crisis…

- Is inherently about change

- Acknowledges that the trajectory of change is not necessarily positive

- Signifies a moment or stage of vital importance

Fundamental Transformation & Critical Assessment

Assessment for Whom?

- Part of a broader push to reorient "higher education's duty to serve learning for the public good with an increased emphasis on serving the needs of the market"

- "University research and student learning have been increasingly placed within national interests associated with economic development and global market competitiveness"

Wall, Hursh, & Rodgers, 2014, p. 6

Five Foundational Responsibilities

- Acknowledge the ethical nature of the work
- Transparent about the purpose assessment serves
- Make transparent the stakeholders
- Align methods with ethical and value commitments
- Engage in interpretation of findings

Wall, Hursh, & Rodgers, 2014

A New Decade for Assessment

Equity-minded Assessment Practices

- "are rooted in the same core notion of being mindful of equity and actively working to address inequities"

- are conscious of "how assessment can either feed into cycles that perpetuate inequities or can serve to bring more equity into higher education"

Montenegro & Jankowski, 2020, p. 9

Elements of Equity-Minded Assessment

- Meaningful student involvement
- Data disaggregation, exploration, and action
- Context-specific approaches and responses
- Equity embedded in all things assessment

Montenegro & Jankowski, 2020

Critical Assessment, Crisis, & Libraries

Critical Assessment Requires…

- Interrogation of bias

- Investigation, starting from a place of discovery

- Work with and through others

- Foundation in values

- Commitment to equity and justice in analysis and enactment of this analysis

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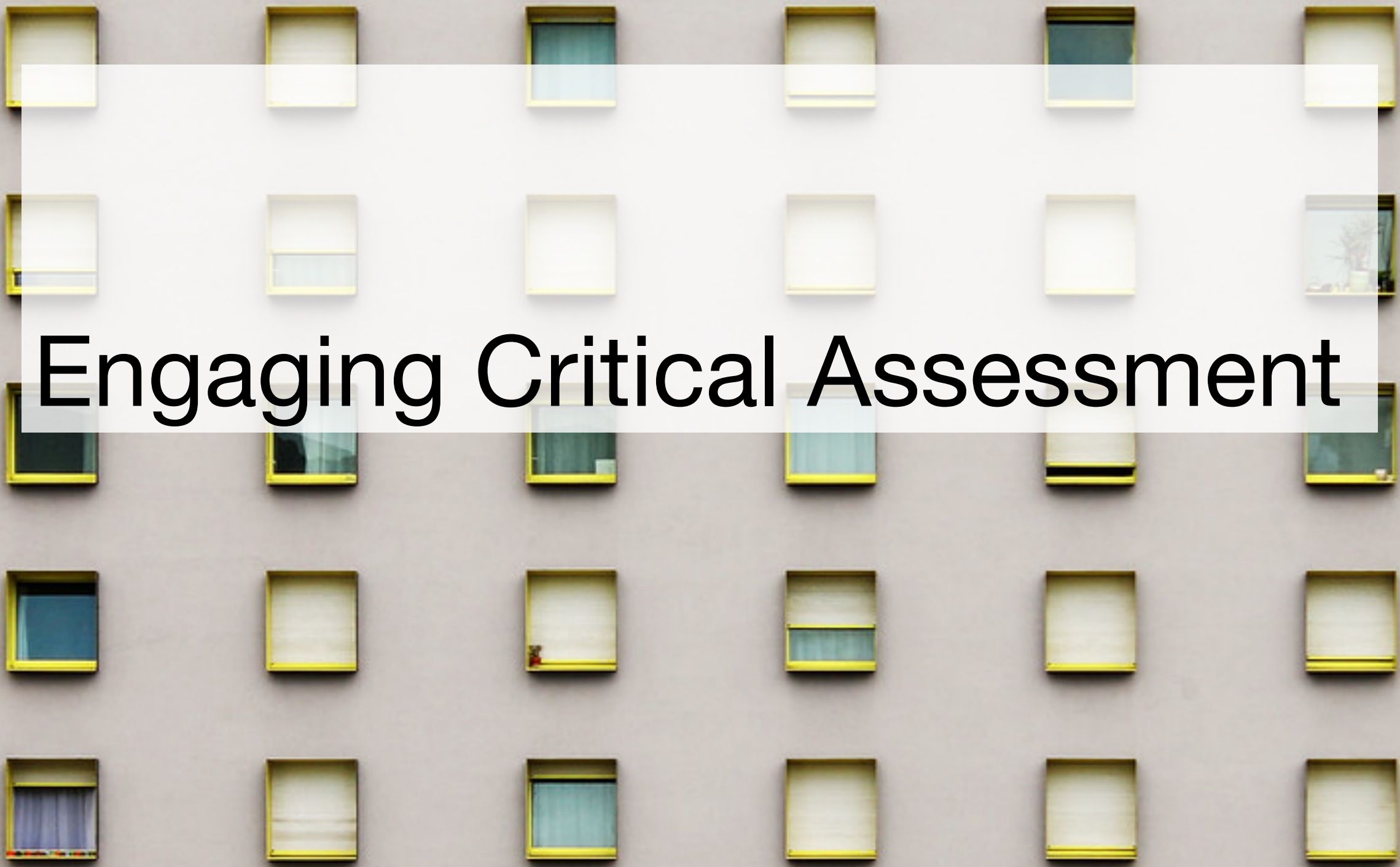
Engaging Critical Assessment

Reorient interpretations of value

Center equity of student learning

Engage critical approaches to data

Build alliances and work with and through others

Ending/Beginning

Thank you.

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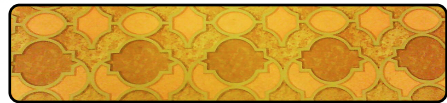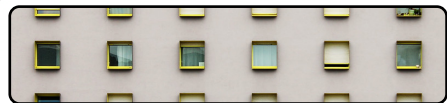All images creative commons licensed. Thanks to Flicker users:

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