

Going Far, Together: The Proceedings of AALHE's 2026 Annual Conference "Assessment in Action: Real Work, Real Community"

Note from the Editorial Leadership, By *Rebecca E Gibbons*

Welcome to the 2026 Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education (AALHE) Conference Proceedings (Volume 7, Issue 4) in *Intersection: A Journal at the Intersection of Assessment and Learning*. This issue presents perspectives that were shared at the 2026 AALHE Virtual Conference, a gathering of more than 300 assessment professionals from across the world where experts showcased the value of assessment as embedded institutional work. Leaders shared new ideas, expressed hope for the future of the field, and pushed the boundaries of how to conduct assessment well using tools like relationships, AI, efficiencies, and meaning-making. These manuscripts detail work presented at the Conference, including insights from Indigenous ways of knowing, faculty engagement and AI integration.



When institutions seek ways in which their targeted populations can thrive in their classrooms, they can unleash student and faculty success. This issue of the Proceedings is fortunate to share manuscripts that outline strategies for progress in serving unique mission-driven groups of students. [Okamura and colleagues](#) introduce a strategy for faculty development in Indigenous ways of knowing in assessment. This work solidifies a model through which assessment offices, too frequently associated with reporting burdens and bureaucracy, can build human capacity for genuine program improvement through exploring assessment in the lens of story rather than only the lens of reporting. [Miranda](#) furthers the depth with which this issue explores this topic by describing an international lens of ways to best serve Indigenous populations through specific strategies for classroom assessment.

The unique structure of institutions of higher education are designed to honor subject matter expertise, which unfortunately has resulted in siloed institutional assessment work that does not always feed into improvement inquiries. Focusing on faculty's role and impact, [Lull & Ball](#) present a successfully applied framework for developing assessment in complex, but increasingly relevant, interdisciplinary programs. Their work emphasizes incorporating varied faculty and student voices in program and assessment development, which is especially important in a context where faculty don't frequently interact such as across departments. Furthering the conversation on faculty and assessment professionals engaging across contexts to build plans and to build capacity, [Strickland-Hughes and colleagues](#) investigate the depth of expertise emerging from leading assessment committees. They balance highlighting the valuable ways in which different types of institutions interpret the value and execution of assessment work, and share how individual assessment professionals (and faculty tasked with assessment work), can use

committee work as an opportunity to develop and persons and professionals.

Our Conference and its Proceedings would not be complete without detailed discussions of generative AI and its use in classrooms and assessment processes across diverse institutional types. [De La Cruz](#) centers the human side of AI adoption with three frameworks for identifying rich evidence of student learning, providing in-depth guidance on redeveloping assignments through a human-centered assessment philosophy. [Hadjisolomou & El-Haddad](#) showcase a model with practical solutions to overcome one of the greatest challenges of assessment in 2026: identifying who completed the work that a student submits in the face of AI agents that can successfully complete entire courses. Their agent demonstration provides evidence that these tools can go beyond what even most assessment professionals considered possible when navigating and completing tasks in online courses and provide design change strategies to navigate these new waters of higher education. [Morrsion](#) provides insight into this same concern using a Process Education framework, providing both a rubric and applicable coaching strategies to create assessment that is resilient beyond GenAI. Be on the lookout for the forthcoming Special Issue of *Intersection* focused on the future of assessment in the age of GenAI to learn more from experts like these!

I was fortunate to serve in an editorial review role for all the manuscripts in this Issue. The *Intersection* leadership team is grateful for the AALHE Conference Committee and its volunteers who conducted peer review of all abstracts for the conference and led a wonderful, meaningful event that brought a wide group of the community together in virtual space. We look forward to future AALHE Conferences, including in-person in Milwaukee, WI June 14-16, 2027 and sharing more scholarly work through this venue to relentlessly pursue AALHE's mission of community, advocacy, and service.