

ELEVATING HIGHER EDUCATION: A Cutting-Edge Roadmap for Quality, Equity, and Inclusion With a Focus on Student and Instructor Mental Health in Multimodal Learning Environments



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innovative pedagogical practices
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OBSERVATOIRE INTERNATIONAL
SUR LES IMPACTS SOCIÉTAUX
DE L'IA ET DU NUMÉRIQUE

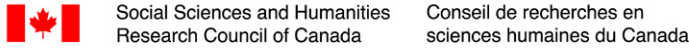


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This white paper presents a comprehensive synthesis of definitions, practices, and recommendations to help instructors, course designers, and developers from a variety of disciplines, as well as policymakers, create and support high-quality, equitable, and inclusive learning and assessment experiences in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities that are sensitive to the well-being and mental health of their students in the post-pandemic era.

To achieve the research objective, we first conducted a purposeful literature review of scholarly articles and professional papers that focus on quality, equitable, and inclusive education in higher education and student well-being and mental health in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities. The goal of our review was to extract promising course design elements that can be adopted and adapted for the post-pandemic era to ensure high quality, equitable, and inclusive education that promotes student well-being and mental health (HQEIE). A variety of factors influencing pedagogical decisions were considered, including geographic location, pandemic outbreak level, public health guidelines, educational contexts, technology access, student socioeconomic status and financial constraints, time zones, and student population characteristics and vulnerabilities.

Second, we conducted 90-minute virtual one-on-one interviews with 23 instructors from 11 postsecondary institutions and five 120-minute focus groups with leaders of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTL) from 16 postsecondary institutions in five countries (Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Lebanon) for a purposive sample to represent a spectrum of contexts that varied in the level of COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and public health guidance. This variation influenced educational institutions' decisions about teaching modalities and campus access. We also sought to recruit instructors from different disciplines, as pedagogical needs vary and are often discipline-specific, and at different levels of their academic careers and workloads, and as support and resources for pedagogical innovation needed by instructors or provided by institutions also vary depending on instructor status and workload.

Third, we navigated the websites of each of the 23 postsecondary institutions and searched for their definitions of quality education, equitable education, inclusive education, well-being, and mental health using a targeted search to determine their perceptions of HQEIE. We intentionally extracted content found through a basic search of keywords (equity, inclusion, quality education, mental health) and site navigation to highlight content related to our research focus that was quickly accessible. We chose not to do extensive searches, assuming that institutions will highlight their priority messages on their website to ensure that it reaches their audience in the first few minutes of their visit and with a minimum of clicks.

In the first section of the white paper, we present definitions of quality education, equitable education, inclusive education, and well-being and mental health in the context of higher education. We begin with definitions found in the literature, followed by definitions or related content made publicly available by various higher education institutions in the five countries included in our research project, namely Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Lebanon. Finally, we present a synthesis of the definitions shared by CTL leaders and faculty who participated in our study.

In the second section, we begin with a synthesis of the challenges to ensuring high-quality, equitable, and inclusive education that promotes students' well-being and mental health, as reported by CTL leaders and instructors. We then present a snapshot of HQEIE practices that might address these challenges as reported in the literature, followed by concrete examples of practices reported by participants.

From the 300 hits from the scientific literature and 2025 hits from the grey literature, we retained 35 scientific papers and 20 professional resources. From the 55 results, we extracted definitions of our target concepts and concrete examples of how to promote them in higher education. However, our findings confirmed a significant lack of research on concrete and evidence-based approaches to ensuring high quality, equitable and inclusive learning experience designs, let alone those that consider students' mental health and well-being. In essence, the literature suggests that a multifaceted approach is needed to achieve high quality, equitable and inclusive education that is supportive of students' mental health and well-being. This includes adopting an inclusive curriculum, recognizing, and accommodating cultural and linguistic realities, using inclusive language, designing culturally responsive learning experiences, prioritizing course accessibility, designing quality interactions with and among students, rethinking quality assurance and evaluation, and offering flexible learning modalities.

To achieve these goals, institutions must provide adequate training for instructors to ensure the quality of the learning experience, improve their skills in using technology, and address their misconceptions about quality education, EDI, and mental health. Quality assurance processes should ensure flexibility and diversity in program delivery and consider the inclusive and culturally responsive nature of the courses offered. Policies can be set at both institutional and governmental levels, and data collection and political engagement are needed to support these strategies and inform policies that promote quality, equitable and inclusive higher education.

The white paper also highlights the need for postsecondary institutions to adopt a more holistic approach to education, one that recognizes the interconnectedness of equity, inclusion, and student well-being and mental health and promotes their integration into all aspects of teaching and learning. Indeed, the websites of the postsecondary institutions we reviewed recognize the importance of these concepts in promoting academic excellence and professional competence. They emphasize the need to address historical and contemporary inequalities in higher education in order to create a more equitable society in which everyone can participate and has an equal opportunity to achieve their potential. They also recognize that mental health problems can significantly impact an individual's daily functioning, academic work, and relationships, and that it is important to prioritize mental health and wellness services for students. However, these institutions did not explicitly define quality education, and mental health and wellness were not always considered aspects of the educational model, but rather regarded as separate and in need of targeted and specific interventions.

Further, the report highlights other challenges voiced by the participants in ensuring HQEIE. These challenges include a lack of common understanding of what constitutes HQEIE, resistance to change among faculty and staff, lack of preparation and training or professional learning, restrictions imposed by unions and contractual agreements, turnover of leadership and professionals, limited resources and recognition for instructors who promote equity and inclusion, and the need for ongoing dialogue and reflection. Addressing student mental health also presents several challenges, including resistance from various academic sectors and stakeholders, faculty unprepared to address trauma, limited budgets, CTL staff who are unqualified or fearful of exacerbating the problem, and lack of clear policies. CTLs face challenges due to unrealistic HQEIE goals, understaffing, lack of a clear mandate or role, and limited resources and funding. These challenges can make it difficult to create a unified approach to improving education and hinder the ability of CTLs and instructors to effectively address the mental health and well-being of their students. A key challenge was the need to recognize that there will never be a break from the ongoing demands, needs and pressures of both students and instructors, which will continue to change due to the situation outside our windows and around the world. Institutions must continue to move forward, finding efficiencies, reducing barriers, and changing expectations to meet students and instructors where they are.

Nevertheless, participants shared that there are practices that have already been considered or implemented by instructors. These include recognizing students' cultural and linguistic realities, using inclusive language from the syllabus onward, adopting culturally responsive course design, considering students' representation in course content, exploring the social annotation approach, not assuming students' familiarity with the academic world, prioritizing course accessibility, designing quality interactions with and among students, rethinking quality assurance and evaluation, and offering flexible learning modalities. More specifically, participants viewed pedagogical approaches as a critical factor in determining the level of quality, equity, and inclusiveness of learning experiences. These approaches included 1) connecting with students, 2) establishing communication channels and expectations, 3) discussing why a subject or a skill needs to be learned or developed, 4) challenging students, 5) learning and using innovative and engaging approaches enhanced by technology, 6) diversifying resources, 7) making the learning experience fun, 8) providing real-world, tangible experiences, that promote socio-cultural learning, 9) integrating students' experiences and student representations, 10) coaching students and providing constructive and formative feedback, 11) incorporating student feedback, 12) using breakout rooms and chat to check in with students in real time, 13) remembering that visuals matter and 14) highlighting student strengths and creating opportunities for students to showcase their work.

The final section of the report provides recommendations for instructors and institutions of higher education to support quality, equitable, and inclusive education that is sensitive to students' mental health. The recommendations urge instructors to seek out experts with diverse perspectives, engage with campus resources, learn about EDI and student well-being, collaborate with colleagues, and regularly update and improve their courses. They should also prioritize accessibility, focus on students and their learning experience, and provide a safe, from a psychological perspective, and ergonomic virtual learning space. Institutions are advised to foster collaboration and equity on campus, promote an inclusive learning environment, and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of technology and its implementation to enhance students' experiences and instructors' facilitation of learning. Decision makers should prioritize the needs and experiences of students however, not at the expense of instructors' well-being, adopt a unified institutional vision and direction, and provide resources for strategies to implement HQEIE. They should empower student and instructor individual technology choices, while encouraging coherence in choices to mitigate any negative effect on the collective, as multiple systems would need to be learned by multiple people, embrace faculty diversity, and provide resources and time for instructors to design their courses. In addition, they should create professional development and mentoring opportunities to support instructors in their roles and allocate funds to provide instructors with resources to improve student engagement and learning outcomes. Finally, university policy should ensure that students and instructors have access to 24/7 online psychological services. Instructor mental health should be considered as important as student mental health.

Inequity and mental health problems in education limit the opportunities for success of all students, especially those who are economically and socially disadvantaged, and thus limit their quality of life and well-being and their potential to become productive members of society. The knowledge generated by our study and shared in this white paper will contribute to course designs that reduce barriers stemming from inequality and exclusion in all their forms, shapes, and intensities.

Students will benefit from courses and modalities that promote their inclusion and take into account their mental wellness. Educational institutions can use this guide to plan how to address and support the design of future online courses and programs as part of their strategic directions, particularly with regard to equity, diversity and inclusion, and student well-being and mental health. The wealth of strategies and approaches presented in this guide can also benefit policymakers by informing their policies to support instructors and institutions as they transition from traditional classroom experiences to various types of multimodal interactions while addressing issues of equity and mental health.

In conclusion, this white paper emphasizes the critical need for a comprehensive and collaborative approach to addressing HQEIE and mental health in postsecondary institutions. The recommendations provided throughout the report demonstrate the interdependencies between various strategies and highlight the necessity for holistic solutions that acknowledge and address the complexity of these challenges.

Leaders and stakeholders in postsecondary institutions are called upon to engage in open dialogue, prioritize resource allocation, and work together to create inclusive, equitable, and mentally healthy learning environments. The focus should be on fostering a culture of continuous growth and improvement, with a commitment to evaluating and adapting policies, initiatives, and support systems to better serve the diverse needs of students, faculty, and staff.

To achieve meaningful progress, it is essential that academic and service leaders jointly address the interaction effects between learning and well-being, while challenging established norms and practices in learning design. By embracing a collaborative spirit and fostering a shared vision, postsecondary institutions can pave the way for a brighter future that benefits all members of their communities.

Ultimately, the insights and recommendations presented in this white paper serve as a catalyst for reflection and action. By working together and harnessing the collective power of all stakeholders, we can create a transformative educational environment that supports the well-being and success of every individual in our higher education institutions.



Teaching and Learning Centre, Teaching and Learning Services, Centre for Teaching Excellence, Observatory of Educational Innovation, Teaching and Learning Support Service, and other titles that share an equivalent mandate in an educational institution are hereafter called Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTLs).

Professors, instructors, lecturers, adjunct faculty, limited-term appointment (LTA), extended term appointment (ETA) are hereafter called instructors.

This white paper uses the Canadian English spelling.

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OBJECTIVE AND CONTENT OF THIS WHITEPAPER

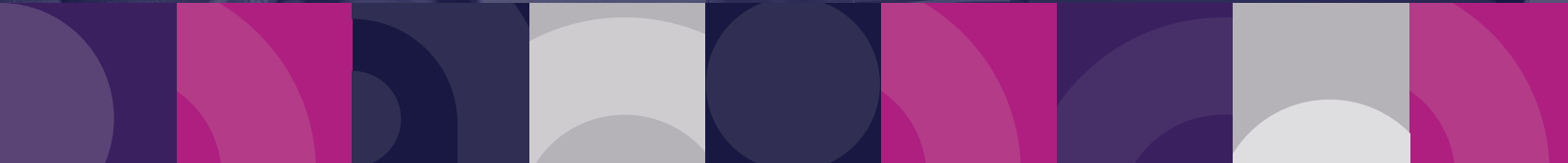
This white paper spotlights course design and evaluation strategies that promote high-quality, equitable and inclusive education, and take into consideration students' well-being and mental health, in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities in higher education for the post-pandemic era and unexpected crises.

In the first section, we first present examples of definitions of quality education, equitable education, inclusive education, and student well-being and mental health in education found in the literature. Second, we present definitions or related content made publicly available by various postsecondary institutions in the five countries included in our research project, namely Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Lebanon. We intentionally examined content found through a basic search of keywords (equity, inclusion, quality education, mental health) and site navigation to simulate typical visitor navigation and to highlight content related to our research focus that was readily accessible. We did not conduct extensive or exhaustive searches, assuming that institutions will highlight their priority message on their website and ensure that it reaches the audience in the first few minutes of the visit and with a minimum of clicks. Finally, we present a synthesis of the definitions shared by the Centres for Teaching and Learning directors and instructors at postsecondary institutions who participated in our study through individual interviews or focus groups.

In the second section, we begin with a synthesis of the challenges to ensuring high-quality, equitable, inclusive education that considers students' well-being and mental health (HQEIE), as reported by the participants. We then provide a snapshot of HQEIE practices reported in the literature, followed by an in-depth discussion of examples of practices reported by CTLs and instructors.

In the last section we share participants' recommendations to support HQEIE. These were aimed at two levels: a) to instructors and b) to educational institutions to better support their instructors in creating HQEIE.

The appendices contain 1) examples of quotes either directly or indirectly addressing quality education retrieved from the websites of the represented postsecondary institutions; 2) examples of quotes about equitable education retrieved from the websites of the represented postsecondary institutions; 3) examples of quotes about inclusive education retrieved from the websites of the represented postsecondary institutions; 4) examples of quotes about mental health and well-being retrieved from the represented postsecondary institutions' websites; 5) the methodology used for the literature review; 6) the methodology used for the individual interviews; 7) the methodology used for the focus groups; 8) the data analysis of the data collected from the interviews and focus groups; and 9) the methodology used for the content search within the postsecondary institutions' websites.



**DEFINITIONS OF HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION,
EQUITABLE EDUCATION, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION,
AND WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH
IN HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXTS**

Quality education, equitable education, inclusive education, and well-being in education are flexible concepts that can be adapted to different environments, realities, and contexts. Therefore, it would be presumptuous to attempt to provide a linear definition for each. In this section we present examples of definitions shared in the literature for each concept.

Second, we present definitions or related content that have been publicly shared by several postsecondary institutions in the five countries included in our research project. Please note that we intentionally examined content found through a basic search of keywords (equity, inclusion, quality education, mental health) and site navigation to simulate typical visitor navigation and highlight content related to our research focus and that is quickly accessible. We decided not to do extensive or exhaustive searches, assuming that institutions will highlight their priority message on their website and ensure that it reaches the audience in the first few minutes of their visit and with a minimum of clicks.

Finally, we present a synthesis of definitions shared by leaders of Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) and by instructors who participated in our study.

HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION IS DEFINED AS ...

Various definitions of what constitutes quality teaching practice have been proposed in writings that appeared before the pandemic. Bates (2019) posits that quality education is: “teaching methods that successfully help learners develop the knowledge and skills they will require in a digital age” (p.478). According to the author, the following criteria are the best guarantees for quality education:

Well-qualified subject experts also well trained in both teaching methods and the use of technology for teaching; highly qualified and professional learning technology support staff; adequate resources, including appropriate teacher/student ratios; appropriate methods of working (teamwork, project management); systematic evaluation leading to continuous improvement. (p. 431)

Mollenkopf et al (2020) agree with this view of quality education based on learner-centred teaching and support techniques, especially in the context of distance education. The authors state that:

Online learning requires instructors to actively learn about their students, match delivery modes to their needs, provide resources for learning that support student autonomy, make sure assignments are meaningful, offer students opportunities to improve and master learning, and provide clear feedback and positive interactions (p. 69).

Another criterion to consider is student-teacher relationship, established by Terosky and Conway (2020) as the primary determinant of a quality education:

Report highlights that the primary factor in a quality education is the teaching and learning relationship between faculty and students, noting that these relationships result in increased retention and completion rates, better grades and standardized test scores, and higher career and graduate school aspirations (p. 12).

In addition, the authors posit that a quality education is driven by the ambition to bring about and instill change: “In short, a quality education prepares students for change, even as it, too, changes in seeking to meet this aim” (p. 442).

The massive shift from face-to-face to online courses caused by the confinement measures put in place during the COVID pandemic has led many institutions to revise their definition of high-quality education to include practices that are “student-centred, aligned with programmatic learning outcomes, accessible to all learners, and effectively designed and delivered” (EDUCAUSE, 2021, p. 30). Victoria L. Mondelli, founding director of the University of Missouri’s Teaching for Learning Center states that high quality teaching is not only evidence-based, but also inclusive and equitable (EDUCAUSE, 2021). According to Røe et al. (2022), “[s]tudent-centredness is a multidimensional concept that encompasses the involvement of students in course decisions (including the selection of content and assessments), in the development of learning skills, and in shaping the [higher education] teacher’s role” (p.2).

Finally, a last criterion for defining high quality education is the primacy of pedagogy over digital tools, which are only elements of mediation /mediatization of content. To this end, Peimani and Kamalipour (2021) emphasize that “effective teaching and learning strategies in higher education involve giving primacy to pedagogy over technology” (p. 3).

In sum, our review of the literature confirmed the fact that definitions of quality education are contextual and constantly evolving, which led us to actively examine how the postsecondary institutions represented in our study publicly defined this concept on their websites. The following section summarizes our findings.

High quality education as per represented postsecondary institutions.

We scanned the websites of the 23 postsecondary institutions represented in our project and searched for how they defined or mentioned *quality education*. Very few had an explicit definition of the concept, although many addressed it in their strategic plan, their vision for the future of teaching and learning, or when describing their values and community.

According to these institutions, high-quality education in its broadest sense is *a multifaceted concept that involves a comprehensive approach to teaching and learning, which aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to succeed in their personal and professional lives*. At its core, high-quality education involves a commitment to excellence in all aspects of the educational process, from curriculum development and delivery to student support and engagement.

The focus on providing students with up-to-date, research-based curricula and instruction, delivered through a range of face-to-face and virtual interaction is at the heart of high-quality education. This includes the use of a state-of-the-art physical and digital infrastructure to ensure that students have access to the resources and technologies they need to succeed. High quality education also involves a commitment to lifelong learning, with opportunities for continuing education and skill development available to students throughout their lives.

In addition to providing a strong academic foundation, high-quality education emphasizes the development of skills and competencies beyond the classroom. This includes opportunities for real-world experience and community engagement, all designed to prepare students to tackle the major challenges facing society and to contribute to their communities locally, nationally, and globally. High quality education also focuses on promoting leadership, innovation, and entrepreneurship, with programs that meet market demands and provide students with a competitive edge in the job market.

At its core, high-quality education is a values-based approach that emphasizes the importance of personal integrity, civic responsibility, and leadership. It is grounded in a commitment to academic excellence, disruptive thinking, student centredness, and the formation of leaders in a diverse world. This includes a focus on inclusiveness and diversity, with a commitment to an environment where respect and tolerance prevail over all forms of discrimination. Direct quotes from the postsecondary institutions’ websites are listed in Appendix 1.

High quality education (HQE) as per participating postsecondary centres for teaching and learning.

When we asked directors of Centres for Teaching and Learning or similar entities to define High Quality Education (HQE), two characteristics stood out among the definitions participants provided: 1) educating the whole person for responsible global citizenship, and 2) responsiveness to students' personal and academic needs.

According to the participants, higher education "educates the whole person" to prepare students to be critical thinkers, "because they're the ones who are gonna save this world It equips them to "deal with problems in the world and problems that may not even exist yet", "to learn how to face the world, the world of tomorrow."

[T]his is really where the quality comes in. Anybody can just teach somebody some content. But to me, it's not about the content, of course, as well. But it is about the future and about thinking for the future. Because the future genius is somebody who figures out something we don't, can't even touch yet. So that, to me, is a quality, it's far more than the actual subject.

HQE is about guiding students and giving them the "opportunity to be ethical human beings, contributing members of society", as one participant uttered:

[O]bviously there's a content knowledge and a disciplinary aspect to it, but I think there's also the human piece, that I think is very important as well, and we're building, you know, humans, the next generation, we're not building, but we're allowing them to be built, [...] I think a lot of those things get overlooked many times in many programs for sure.

In the same line of thoughts, one participant shared their definition:

[H]igh quality education develops global citizens. So beyond just the employability, and what does that mean and look like. And that is where you get your EDI embedded and you enter the cultural differences. And that's high quality because it's looking at the world as a whole and looking at sustainability as a reflection of high-quality education. So, the Sustainable Development Goals are quite key now, how do we embed those? And again, that's part of developing global citizens as well as global employees.

Several participants defined HQE as being flexible, international, decolonized, and incorporating long-life learning. It adopts a learning perspective instead of a teaching one, shifts from a content delivery model to a knowledge construction one, collaborates with students and embeds their lens in designing their learning experience. More specifically, one participant shared that:

It empowers students to feel like they can access the information that they need, they can assess and evaluate it and sort it, for themselves, they can form an opinion that is well grounded in not only facts, but you know, they understand the framework or the perspectives from which they express that opinion. Understanding that there are other possible variations or whatever. They get to a point where they understand that knowledge is contextual.

HQE helps students to develop equally the soft and hard skills expected from them once they reach the job market. It develops their creativity and prepares them to "thinking out of the box, to listen, to be involved."

Many participants linked HQE to inclusive education, for instance, one participant explained:

[...] high quality, it's closer to inclusive education. [It] ensure[s] that most of the students are there to succeed and to meet the outcomes, not to compare students between them and then to have the elitist kind of ranking. [...] where everyone has a chance to succeed.

HQE is active and experiential learning. It “develop[s] learner agency” through authentic collaborative learning that weaves together theory and practice. It is a situation where “students are engaged, they’re participating, ... they’re involved, ... they’re solving problems, and ... our faculty members and students are working as partners and collaborators.”

HQE also presupposes understanding the student’s actual needs and goals, especially the real world in which they live. That world can include “working three jobs, taking care of your siblings, helping to support the family, and figuring out how to have an education at the same time”, while for others it is the greatest time of their life, and “it’s gonna just all be fun.”

When defining HQE, a participant nevertheless provided the *caveat* that its definition differs depending on the interlocutor and the programs. From different perspectives, HQE prepares an effective workforce; is about the capacity to graduate and to acquire transferable skills, and or is about developing global citizens or more prosaically allows students, “to move up the economic chain From a program perspective, HQE depends on the intention the program has for its students, as explained by one participant:

So, for example, if we’re looking at the top postgraduate level, we have some postgraduate programs that are aimed as research preparation, you know that for people who then go into a PhD. We also have programs that are highly vocational but are specialists within a particular discipline area. So, they’re about getting people up to the level where they can operate at very high levels and an international standard within the sector that they’re connected to. And we have other programs, which are much more interdisciplinary, and they’re almost around people making that transition from one career to another, or there are thematic areas like we’ve got a carbon management master’s program, for example, which draws in students from engineering, social science, business, to kind of skill them up to the situation where they could then work within that commercial sector. [...], defining and judging ourselves in terms of that quality, would be around the achievement of our program, learning objectives - now institutional graduate attributes, and looking very carefully at what our external examiners say, for example, as well as employers and students as well.



High quality education (HQE) as per participating postsecondary instructors.

In essence, participants defined HQE as multifaceted because it requires: 1) high content knowledge expertise, 2) prior practice and preparation, 3) mastery of pedagogical strategies, 4) ongoing formative feedback, and 4) meaningful relationships.

It includes 1) putting students first, 2) creating engaging experiences, 3) collaborating with students, 4) providing an inclusive and participatory journey, 5) being available and responsive to students, and 6) equipping students for the future.

High content expertise refers to faculty members who know their subject matter and extend it to provide real-world and tangible examples. Practice is seen as an investment in quality education; as one participant explained, "The more you prepare, the more you realize what you don't know [about a subject] Preparation is expressed as a comprehensive process that includes preparing quality visuals, content, structure, and organization, as well as strong, creative, and reciprocal engagement." Preparation also includes "identifying the learning outcomes of the course and then working backwards from there." As one participant explained, "all education is learning, so quality education should be measured by learning outcomes."

According to participants, HQE also requires having and mastering a toolkit of pedagogical strategies to provide "professional quality instruction that integrates [...] diverse and creative ways of communicating concepts to students [and] allows students with different backgrounds, needs, and strengths to benefit from the course and be successful These pedagogical "tricks" can be adapted to the size and modality of the class. Formative feedback is also a must, as it "allows students to reflect and think Feedback can also be collected so that instructors can improve their courses.

Participants added that HQE is also about building meaningful relationships, as one participant points out:

Quality education must have a relationship. At the core, myself as a learner, if I don't feel that I have a relationship with my instructor or with my peers and with the material that I'm learning or interacting with, it feels meaningless and kind of heartless.

In fact, many participants defined HQE in terms of the relationships that instructors develop with their students. Participants stated that HQE requires keeping students' needs at the centre. One participant defined student centredness as providing structure, formulas, and content that changes based on where students are. It is about ensuring that students can learn and accept their individuality in terms of learning. It also requires creating engaging experiences for students. One participant explained that a course should be "fun" and that students should "enjoy it." Another stated that "students should look forward to coming to a classroom, real or virtual, they should leave a classroom preferably with a little buzz, or with thoughts in their head, [...] maybe [about] something they've never thought about before."

In addition, HQE involves collaborating with students by creating a co-teaching environment. One participant saw himself as "learning alongside the students" and is "open to the mutual learning that can happen and to building the education that the students receive together." In this example, the participant is "a captain of a team or a coach" and shares a "journey together." It is about moving away from top-down, one-way, or unidirectional teaching to sharing and discussing how students take responsibility for their learning. To this end, one participant mentioned the "learning equation," where learning depends on student effort and how efficiently they learn.

Returning to the idea of a journey, participants shared that HQE must be inclusive and participatory by providing a modular and, to some extent, individualized path. As one participant explained, "It is an inclusive journey that everyone will participate in. The classroom should also be a place where students can grow."

In this sense, HQE enables students to “demonstrate their learning in the best way they feel is necessary to exemplify their learning growth.”

Several participants emphasized the urgency of being available and responsive to students. One participant described the importance of being “respectful of students and the way [faculty members] respond to them and give them feedback” in a timely and responsive manner. HQE also includes equipping students for the years to come after graduation. One participant mentioned:

I always choose to focus on skills that might become very useful. I don't care if they liked me at the time of teaching, but if they remember the things that we discussed in class five years after they graduate, that's when I think I have accomplished my job.

Another participant explained that HQE is about learning “from something that you can apply to the real world and to your own life.” The goal is to equip students to live in society and to empower “students to develop competencies as well as knowledge and the necessary skills and understanding to continue learning on their own.”

Finally, HQE champions asking questions. Instructors should be explicit about the “why” and the “how.” For example, “Why are we learning this model or topic? What might be the most important implications for [students'] professional lives?” One participant pointed out that it's very important “that students always know why they're doing something, so they can ask questions” and think about “how should students find information? How should they critique that information rather than just teaching them what to think?”

EQUITABLE EDUCATION IS DEFINED AS ...

UNESCO (2021d) broadly defines equity in education as “about ensuring fairness, where the education of all learners is seen as having equal importance” (p. 10). More specifically the OECD (2021) focuses on ensuring that students' achievement of educational potential is not the result of or hindered by personal and social circumstances, “including factors such as gender, ethnic origin, immigrant status, special education needs and giftedness” (p. 83), “bullying, sexual orientation (LGBTQI+), socioeconomic status, migrant background, national minorities, indigenous backgrounds, and special educational needs (further divided into learning disabilities, mental disorders, and physical impairments)” (OECD, 2021, p. 147).

Equitable education (EE) embraces “humanity's many forms of knowledge and expression” (UNESCO, 2021b, p. 26), such as indigenous knowledge and learning systems and responds to their realities and aspirations in all settings (UNESCO, 2021b). It aims to identify inequities, interrogates, and then dismantles the racism and systemic poverty that reproduce historical and persistent inequities in teaching and learning contexts through resources and supports that address the specific needs of students (Gunder, 2021b).

The practices of EE are embedded in “teaching and learning, assessment, admission policy, discipline and expulsion policy, class composition, communication with students and parents, student support programs, work responsibilities or communication among staff, and school facilities or infrastructure” (OECD, 2021, p. 148).

Thus, equitable course design considers technology, students as individuals, course design, and course pedagogy (Gunder, 2021b). More specifically, Brian Beatty, Professor of Instructional Technologies in the Department of Equity, Leadership Studies, and Instructional Technologies at San Francisco State University, explains that:

Equity in higher education means that all students are able to achieve equal learning outcomes as they are supported by institutions, faculty, and other systems to engage in the learning process. All students are able to receive the financial, social, and academic support and guidance they need to succeed in the institutional programs, thus enabling lifelong success as well. All students are given access to appropriate and effective learning opportunities - instructional resources, activities, interactions, and evaluative assessment - which are differentiated according to their unique sets of characteristics and needs (Naffi et al., 2020, p. 15)

Equitable education (EE) as per represented postsecondary institutions.

Equity in education was most often presented in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategies, if institutions had one. For those that did, equity in higher education is broadly defined as the fair treatment of all community members through the elimination of institutionalized barriers, biases, and obstacles that impede access or jeopardize opportunities for all to reach their full potential. This includes recognizing historical and current inequalities in the higher education community and taking action to end discrimination. It requires ongoing, rigorous examination of established norms and practices and the assumptions and values that underlie them.

An equitable education (EE) welcomes and values the knowledge, experience, and culture that each person brings to teaching and learning. It is dedicated to fostering a community where all members feel a true sense of belonging and where their identities are affirmed and honoured.

EE means that every student, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income, has access to the resources and educational rigour they need at the right time in their education. It recognizes that students' needs are sometimes met in different ways and acknowledges that the status quo has historically led to inequitable outcomes for minority staff and students.

In sum, EE in higher education is about making higher education available and accessible to all, without exception. It is about creating a more just society in which everyone can participate and has an equal opportunity to fulfill their potential. It is consistent with and necessary for the achievement of the principles of academic excellence and professional competence and is an ongoing process of development to which postsecondary institutions should be committed.

Direct quotes from the postsecondary institutions' websites are listed in Appendix 2.

Equitable education (EE) as per participating postsecondary centres for teaching and learning.

When we asked CTL leaders to define equitable education (EE), they all agreed that a first key step is to “know who our students are, and even if we don’t, assume that they have a variety of needs, problems, issues, realities.”

On the one hand, some associated EE with equal education or inclusive pedagogy. For example, one participant shared, “It’s about equality of opportunity”, and two others stated:

We tend to focus on equality of opportunity as a kind of baseline because that covers different types of students. And it’s about recognizing that everybody comes from different places and has different needs, and you can’t meet them all, but you can give them that equality of opportunity to the best of your ability.

Equality and equity, in French it would be “égalité” and “équité” are very much the same, I mean, when we talk about having an inclusive pedagogy and providing an inclusive environment for students, we always talk about those two things meaning that they are related.

Another participant stressed the importance of “decolonizing, de-whitifying everything [and] designing our courses and our institution so that all students feel safe and welcome and secure. Another added, “starting to consider multiple modes of representation and multiple modes of expression and what that actually means in the classroom, a lot more choice and learning autonomy within courses.”

On the other hand, several noted, “It means that one size doesn’t fit all.” One participant recalled Craig Froehle’s equity illustration of the children, the boxes, and the fence to explain the difference between equality and equity. Another shared that her institution turned to the definition provided by the American Association of Colleges and Universities, which advocates for the creation of opportunities for historically underserved populations to have equal access to and participation in educational programs that are capable of closing achievement gaps in student success and completion.

Similarly, one participant focused on “not seeing a difference in student outcomes,” while others focused on access to financial resources, technology, and course content.

Interestingly, one participant reminded the focus group that equitable education is not just about reacting to a problem, but about going to the source of that problem and addressing it from the roots:

I have a colleague at another institution that’s just down the road, who describes different things in terms of upstream, downstream. And it’s an incredible analogy. And she talks about how if you go to a stream that you love when it’s a beautiful place, and then suddenly you find there’s a bunch of pollution, your downstream, your downstream goal is to pick that up and clean up that space. But if you really want to address something, then you need to walk up the river and say, okay, where’s this pollution coming from? How is it finding this spot? And then addressing that. And then if you’ve hit that you hit the midstream. If you really want to address the issue, you need to then say what is the systemic situation that is enabling people to toss things in the river upstream, so they flow downstream so that I must collect them and clean them up here? And so that’s kind of the approach that we’ve taken with equity.

Equitable education (EE) as per participating postsecondary instructors.

The OECD (2021) states that equity in education “means that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, are not obstacles to achieving educational potential (fairness) and that all individuals reach at least a basic minimum level of skill (inclusion) Similarly, Beatty (2020) posits that equity in higher education requires that all students are given access to appropriate and effective learning opportunities - instructional resources, activities, interactions, and evaluative assessment - which are differentiated according to their unique sets of characteristics and needs.

The instructors’ interviews revealed that their personal definitions of equitable education aligned with both the OECD and Beatty’s definitions. Interestingly, participants began by mentioning what was not considered equitable education. For example, participants shared that EE is not about “treating everyone the same. As one participant explained, “Equality and equity, equal and equitable are not the same thing. It doesn’t mean to treat everyone equally, just to treat everyone with the same level of fairness. Others argued that EE is not about lowering standards. One insisted on the fact that:

if you expect nothing of your students, that’s what you’re going to get from them, and then you’re just encouraging them to do badly. That’s not right. I mean, that’s just terribly wrong. What you want to do is set them up so that they’re successful.

For participants, EE was about empowering students by “levelling up rather than levelling down.” It was not about accommodating for any reason, as accommodations should not be a disservice to students. One participant explained that students need to understand that employers have requirements, so he would expect them to do things in the classroom that he would expect them to do in the workplace.

After sharing what EE “is not”, participants were able to state their definition of EE more clearly, mostly through concrete actions. For them, EE is about 1) being accessible and reducing barriers, 2) being flexible, 3) being responsive to students’ needs, 4) building reciprocity, 5) highlighting students’ strengths, 6) paying attention to students’ behaviours and ensuring that education fits their lives.

Participants affirmed that EE is first and foremost accessible education, meaning that it “supports students who come with or from diverse learning experiences and diverse lived experiences. One participant shared that “a truly incredible course will be a truly accessible course where no accommodations are needed. Another explained that “equity can be determined by who’s got the power to limit access. It was about instructors “getting rid of unnecessary challenges or barriers” or “making them as minimal as possible” to give everyone a chance to learn and succeed.

In further reflection, participants shared that EE is a flexible education that ensures that “students have some flexibility in how they achieve their learning goals so that they’re able to do so regardless of their life circumstances.” Strategies included having flexible deadlines so that students have extra time without being penalized if, for instance, they have a mental health crisis or caregiving responsibilities.

In addition, EE tailors education to students' needs by offering "more help to people who need more help" and by "going to where the learners are" and "meeting them there to try to help them achieve the goals of a course." It's about "understanding where they're coming from and giving them the opportunity to engage more fully."

Participants emphasized reciprocity and relationship as imperative to EE. In indigenous teachings, for example, "they talk about the idea of giving and taking, and the idea of giving first. This is a relational thing that reminds us to give first before we take from people." This reciprocity can be achieved by "building relationships as quickly as you can find something to connect with the students. It means being willing to be vulnerable and sharing your own stories."

Highlighting students' strengths is another must. One participant told the story of students who thought they were not college material. The students thought they did not belong because they did not see themselves as good writers, even though their writing was brilliant and only their grammar needed work. It is about "being able to separate [the unrelated barriers] and help them get the right resources." For the study participants, EE requires paying attention to student behaviour, including noticing students who are not reaching out or not attending class. It "starts from the perspective of how do we make this education fit [the students'] lives; not how do we make [their] lives fit the education."



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION (IE) IS DEFINED AS ...

UNESCO defines inclusion as “a process that helps overcome barriers limiting the presence, participation and achievement of learners” (UNESCO, 2021b, p.24). It aims to welcome and support every student in their diversity (UNESCO, 2021b; Digital Promise Global, 2021) and “every learner matters and matters equally” (UNESCO, 2021b, P.10).

IE It is not limited to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in a mainstream educational setting, but rather is a broader principle that aims to welcome and support all students from diverse backgrounds, especially those who experience social isolation, which, in itself is a consequence of attitudes and behaviours toward diversity of race, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, migrant status, and ability (UNESCO, 2021d). Thus, the description of inclusive education is not one-sided, but multiple and diverse (UNESCO, 2021d).

Educators who adopt an inclusive approach create environments that reflect a broad vision of teaching and learning to meet the unique needs of all students (Loya, 2021). They are open to differences and welcome them into their classrooms. They encourage students to become creators and disseminators of knowledge (Loya, 2021). An undergraduate student at Columbia University argues that:

[Inclusive teaching is] ensuring that the different identities that are brought into the shared space - be it physical or virtual - are respected, addressed, incorporated, and celebrated [...]. It focuses on facilitating the space needed for learning to be multidimensional, intentional, and critical. Inclusive teaching makes students feel seen and heard and allows them to think more critically about their interactions with each other and with faculty. (Kachani et al., 2021, p. 5)

Inclusive design in education is also based on the involvement of students and their experience in the co-creation process, as explained by Thomas and Bryson (2021)

This approach to inclusive design [is] informed by dialogue and reflection and reflect[s] a process informed by rapid planned improvisation. Part of this process include[s] adjustments during the delivery of the module as part of a student/teacher co-creation process. A dialogue [is] encouraged between all students to inform alterations in the learning design as the module [is] delivered over the four days. This [is] a form of action-based teaching improvisation focused on enhancing the student experience focusing on quality and equality (pp. 452-453).

Access to adequate infrastructure is a must, as explained by Peimani and Kamalipour (2021a): “Addressing diversity and the inequality of access to infrastructure, such as suitable hardware and required software as well as a stable internet connection, is critical for enabling a more inclusive online teaching and learning in the first place .” (p. 13)

Inclusive education (IE) as per represented postsecondary institutions.

Like equitable education, the concept of inclusive education was presented in the institutions’ EDI strategy, if they had a published one. For those that did, inclusive education refers to the action of creating and promoting a climate in which all students feel respected and valued for their unique identities, backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives so that they can fully participate in all learning activities. It involves the active, intentional, and ongoing management of diversity, including students with different backgrounds, unique lived experiences, and varying abilities, to create a culture where individual distinctiveness and a sense of belonging drive excellence in learning, research, and teaching.

Inclusive education requires the identification and elimination of barriers that hinder student participation and contribution. These can be physical or procedural, visible or invisible, intentional or unintentional. It is a responsibility shared by all members of the community and involves effective teaching that considers students in the design and delivery of instruction. Inclusive education recognizes and values diversity as the representation of different knowledge, worldviews, practices, and experiences within the community, allowing for richer cognitive processing and exchange of information that enriches the higher education learning environment.

Direct quotes from the institutions' websites are listed in Appendix 3.

Inclusive education (IE) as per participating postsecondary centres for teaching and learning.

CTL leaders concur that inclusive education (IE) is an approach that acknowledges and embraces diversity and multiple perspectives while ensuring that all students feel a sense of belonging in the learning environment. It involves designing and delivering learning experiences that are sensitive to students' different socioeconomic conditions, sexual orientations, races and ethnicities, and family and work situations, to name only a few characteristics.

One participant emphasized that inclusivity is not just about accommodating the minority of students with disabilities, but rather about recognizing the diversity of all students. Further, in an ideal inclusive environment, everyone in the classroom, including instructors and students, is equal and there is a willingness to hear and listen to different perspectives. This means that everyone is respectful as they share, collaborate, and debate ideas. As one participant put it, "It's about sharing and collaborating and debating ideas in a respectful way from a diverse perspective."

IE also means recognizing and respecting Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding. This is particularly significant in Canada, where the education system faces systemic challenges in its relationship with the country's Indigenous population. It is therefore important to include Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding and to address these systemic challenges. "Only by recognizing these biases can we move forward and incorporate and understand the real challenges of inclusivity and diversity from a learning and teaching perspective," said one participant. In addition, one participant argued that inclusiveness requires the educational institution and instructors to understand that not every student should meet the established measures. Inclusive education is not just about ensuring that every student graduates, but rather about creating a learning environment that is useful and supportive for all students, as he outlines, "Sometimes it can come across to some teachers, maybe the university, I mean, it's not for everybody, and the goal is not that every student meets the measure and meets the goal."

Inclusive education also means designing and delivering learning experiences that support students who may not fall into any of the formal equality, diversity or protected characteristic categories. This includes students who are carers, parents, or working part-time. "It also fits in with the connection between this kind of accessibility and inclusion, and a focus on trying to support community and belonging as well," observed one participant.

Finally, inclusive education is about creating a welcoming environment where everyone feels included in academic and extracurricular activities. This includes ensuring that students develop a sense of belonging to the community and feel welcome. "Inclusion means more, you know, are they fully included, and a sense of belonging while they're here and successful outcomes," declared another participant.

In essence, according to the participants, inclusive education is an approach that values diversity, recognizes biases, and creates a welcoming environment where all students feel included and supported. It involves designing and delivering learning experiences that are responsive to different backgrounds, cultures, and circumstances, while respecting Indigenous ways of knowing and understanding. Inclusive education is not just about ensuring that every student meets the standard, but rather about creating a supportive learning environment that leads to successful outcomes for all students. As one participant put it, “It’s more about diversity, not so much about disability or accommodation.”

Inclusive education (IE) as per participating postsecondary instructors.

Faculty members defined inclusive education (IE) as education that incorporates the following actions: 1) empowering students, 2) fostering a sense of belonging, 3) connecting with and recognizing everyone’s strengths, 4) using inclusive language, modes of communication, and strategies, 5) highlighting diverse perspectives, and 6) responding to feedback and behaviours for improvement.

According to the participants, “Inclusive Education is about empowering and enabling people to live their [personal and] professional lives that they want and can lead” and fostering a sense of belonging in the classroom where everyone feels they “belong and contribute” and affirm who they are to be “accepted in the classroom.” One participant shared that IE is also about connection, a space where “everyone’s hearts and thoughts are valid” and where “everyone has strengths.” Furthermore, these strengths are seen as gifts they have to offer. Students need to feel “valued, trusted, challenged, or brought into the course.”

Participants discussed using inclusive language as part of IE, using preferred pronouns, being sensitive to students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and making a genuine effort to get the message across clearly. Inclusivity can also be achieved through student representation and the images or videos used or produced for instructional purposes. Participants went further and included examples such as providing many perspectives or broader examples and acknowledging our own biases in defining IE.

However, one participant pointed out that some subjects will be easier to be inclusive than others, and there will be cultural differences depending on where in the world learning takes place. Nevertheless, instructors should get to know their students and pay attention to their feedback and behaviours. One participant pointed out that the concept of “one size fits all” is not feasible. Inclusivity is about “trial and error,” “never getting there completely,” and always losing something along the way. Finally, one participant shared that “inclusivity is a goal we can’t achieve, but we have to keep working toward it because there will always be new barriers and we just have to keep working to do what we can to remove them.”

MENTAL HEALTH (MH) IN EDUCATION IS DEFINED AS ...

According to the Government of Quebec (2022),

A person’s appreciation of his or her well-being is based on the perception of his or her existence and on the comparison he or she makes between his or her living conditions and the values and social norms present in his or her environment. (Free translation)(p. 8).

Functional and emotional well-being contribute to flourishing mental health (Government of Quebec, 2022). While student well-being is a prerequisite and essential condition for academic and social engagement (Kahu & Nelson, 2018 in Andrew et al., 2021), it appears that this “well-being is logically and intrinsically linked to their sense of belonging and the support networks around them” (Andrew et al., 2021, p. 15). For Weis et al. (2021), the notion of well-being is associated with a state of mindfulness that increases “awareness in the present moment” (p. 9), helps “regulate distressing thoughts and feelings” (p. 9) and leads to an acceptance of self and others “and the world in non-judgmental ways” (p. 9).

Furthermore, the OECD (2021) state that:

Well-being of all types is important to equity because it has significant impacts on the learning outcomes of students, as well as their progression and graduation rates [and] academic well-being concerns the learning progress of students, as well as actions and behaviours that promote learning (p. 150)

They explain:

Physical well-being encompasses students’ health status, safety and security, and ability to interact with each other, whereas psychological well-being revolves around the students’ evaluations and views about life, engagement with school, and extent to which they feel a sense of agency, identity, and empowerment. Lastly, social well-being comprises the quality of students’ social lives and their relationships with family, peers, and teachers (p. 150)

Mental health, however, is seen as an outcome and part of well-being. In this sense, the World Health Organization defines it as “a state of well-being that enables people to appreciate their abilities, to cope with the normal stresses of life, to work productively and fruitfully, and to contribute to their communities” (WHO, 2022). The Government of Quebec also notes that an individual’s mental health can change depending on the challenges they face and the resources available to deal with them, suggesting that the absence of mental disorders that produce clinically recognizable symptoms is not necessarily synonymous with mental health (Government of Quebec, 2022). Finally, the OECD (2021) confirms that “none of the domains [of well-being] can be fully addressed by school programs alone but ensuring that well-being programs touch on all of them increases the chances that problems will be identified, mitigated, or avoided” (p. 150).

Mental health (MH) as per represented postsecondary institutions.

Mental health and well-being were mostly presented on pages related to the institutions’ support services for staff and students. Rare are the institutions that explicitly include either concept in their description of quality education or strategic goals.

In short, examined institutions shared that mental health and well-being in higher education refers to the state of an individual’s emotional and psychological well-being, including their ability to cope with stress and the challenges of everyday life, to work productively and effectively, and to contribute positively to their communities. Well-being is influenced by a variety of factors, including physical health, community support, financial stability, and personal, social, and academic pressures. While occasional difficulties in responding to academic, personal, social, financial, or health issues are normal, persistent mental health problems or significant functional impairment due to frequent mental health problems can significantly impact an individual’s daily functioning, academic work, and relationships. Mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and others can cause difficulties with concentration, memory, planning, organization, fatigue, sleep disturbances, mood instability, sensitivity to stress, and suicidal thoughts.

They emphasized that positive thinking, effective stress management, and coping strategies can help improve students' mental health and well-being, even in the face of challenging life events such as bereavement, stress, and traumatic events. However, if mental health problems persist, more serious mental health conditions can develop, such as substance abuse or eating disorders.

Many institutions mention that students often experience high levels of stress due to leaving home, moving to dormitories, academic failure, loss of loved ones, job loss of close relatives, and other potential high stress events. As mental illness is the leading cause of absenteeism in post-secondary classrooms, it is important to prioritize mental health and wellness services for students. These services can help individuals with relationship problems, family issues, adjustment to academic life and problems, identity issues, anxiety, low self-esteem, substance abuse, and eating disorders, among others.

Direct quotes from the institutions' websites are listed in Appendix 4.

In sum, it was rare occurrence, for the institutions we examined, to consider mental health as an aspect that is influenced (and can be influenced) by the educational model, although many stated that poor mental health would lead to poor academic performance. Per our observation, institutions' descriptions of excellence on their websites did not mention student mental health and well-being as a criterion. Most institutions targeted equity and inclusion as a key goal; student well-being was implicit, rarely explicitly stated as a goal or strategic objective. Indeed, while we were looking for elements of course design and assessment approaches that prioritize quality, equity, and mental health in hybrid, flexible, or 100% online modalities for the post-COVID-19 pandemic era, we found instead that academic institutions typically view these aspects as distinct and requiring targeted and specific interventions: for mental health, psychological services and counseling must be provided; for equity and inclusion, accommodations must be provided.

Mental health (MH) as per participating postsecondary centres for teaching and learning and instructors.

Participants had much to say about student mental health, though proportionately less than about quality and inclusive/equitable education. In contrast to these issues, both CTL leaders and individually interviewed instructors found it challenging to provide the same kind of elaborate definitions of mental health, as the following quotes illustrate: "Just wellness, I guess, I mean, I don't know. A quick definition. I know. Yeah. I don't really have a specific definition, I guess," "I don't know how to define it yet, I'm afraid. Sorry,"

Mental wellness and mental health are often used interchangeably. But they're not. And it has never been clear to me. But mental health really does require professional intervention. But I think everybody can support mental well-being by their behaviour, by the way the curriculum is designed, the environment is designed, etc.

I don't know if we defined it. But we looked at it from the perspective of student anxiety, what it might look like, well, you know. But just sort of, like, we had a resource around it and, you know, a paragraph about what it can look like and why it's important to keep that in mind when looking at student learning.

Others brought up student anxiety, like test anxiety, COVID-related anxiety, or any kind of anxiety, regardless of the cause.

The focus group discussions we led focused primarily on the mental health issues that arose during the pandemic, and instead of definitions, participants shared actions they took. During this time, some members of CTL advocated for students by suggesting that faculty be more flexible and accommodating with assessments:

And so, encouraging the faculty to, you know, rethink their, reduce their, first they put on loads and loads of small assessments, and... So, yeah, just being patient with students and being gentle with students and trying to, you know, not overwhelm them with assessments, these tests. So, you know, consider that students are in all different places in terms of their well-being and their mental health and their stress levels.

[A]|| I could do is encourage everyone to really take care of their own mental health. And, you know, from the centre's side, just highlighting how anxious students are and what that might mean for, you know, making accommodations in different ways in one's courses so that students can cope with whatever happens. Yeah, I mean, we really don't know what to do about it.

Participants indicated how students' struggles outside the classroom translate into the classroom, as one explains:

[F]or our population, this is live right now, you know, we have a, you know, pretty diverse population, and also that we have, like, such a large queer population, and a lot of those students experience a lot of harm in the community. And that shows up in the classroom.

One participant mentioned that equity and mental health go hand in hand, as she explained:

I just see them as so intertwined that I don't know if I could, like, think about it, like - could I think of a situation where it's just about mental health and it's not about equity, or a situation where it's just about equity and it's not about mental health, and I have a hard time making that distinction.

Interestingly, while our question was about student mental health and how to design learning experiences that are sensitive to students' well-being, most participants brought up faculty mental health: "We talked about student mental health, but a lot of instructors have been through a lot as well," "Our faculty and staff have really struggled as well." One participant mentioned that CTL members found themselves in the position of being listeners for faculty who were overwhelmed by the situation: "I think we've almost become counselors or just listeners, I guess, in our roles. And, you know, we don't have the capacity to help everybody."



**PRACTICES TO ENSURE HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION,
EQUITABLE EDUCATION, INCLUSIVE EDUCATION,
WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH
IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS**

This section begins with a synthesis of the challenges higher education faces to ensure high-quality, equitable, inclusive education that promotes student well-being and mental health, as reported by Centres for Teaching and Learning (CTL) leaders and instructors at postsecondary institutions. It follows with a snapshot of HQEIE practices that could address these challenges as reported in the literature, followed by concrete examples of practices reported by CTL leaders and instructors who participated in our study.

LET US START WITH A SYNTHESIS OF HQEIE CHALLENGES

Ensuring high quality, equitable and inclusive education that considers students' mental health and well-being (HQEIE) can be a daunting task because of several inherent challenges. These challenges include different understandings of what constitutes a quality, equitable, and inclusive education, resistance to change from faculty and staff, lack of preparation and training, restrictions imposed by unions and contractual agreements, turnover of leadership and professionals, limited resources and recognition for educators who promote equity and inclusion, and the need for ongoing dialogue and reflection. Addressing student mental health (SMH) also presents several challenges, including resistance from various departments and stakeholders, faculty not being prepared to address trauma, limited budgets, CTL staff not being qualified or fearing to exacerbate the problem, and lack of clear policies. CTLs also face challenges due to unrealistic HQEIE goals, understaffing, lack of a clear mandate or role, and limited resources and funding.

The participants we met agreed that not everyone working in education has the same definition or understanding of high quality, equity, and inclusion. This leads to different priorities and goals for different stakeholders and makes it difficult to create a unified approach to improving education. Another significant challenge is resistance to change from instructors and staff who may not see the need for change or feel it does not apply to them because, for instance, they teach science and use "objective" assessment measures. They may also not understand the diverse needs of students or feel adequately prepared or trained to make changes. Lack of time and concerns about the integrity of the discipline, assessment, and online testing are also issues raised by instructors. In addition, some are concerned about student accommodations and students using the changes to gain unfair advantage.

Participants also noted the lack of preparation and training as a barrier to providing HQEIE. This leads to a lack of clarity about reasonable accommodations, making it difficult to determine what is reasonable for individual students. They also shared that unions and contractual agreements in some contexts also limit the ability to make changes or make it difficult to reach consensus on important issues.

The constant turnover of leadership and professionals was also identified as a challenge, leading to a lack of consistency in approach and a lack of progress when new leadership does not prioritize equity and inclusion in education. In addition, the lack of rewards and recognition for educators who promote equity and inclusion can be demotivating for many. Without incentives, it can be difficult to motivate educators to invest time and effort in making changes.

Addressing SMH in course design also presents several challenges. One of the main challenges is getting different departments and stakeholders to address SMH, as there may be resistance from some groups. Instructors are not prepared to deal with trauma in the classroom and may not address it simply because they do not know what to do or say.

In addition, some institutions lack the budget to address SMH, leading them to refer their students to external support, as one participant shared:

There's no place to send them, right? That's, that's where the budget cuts come in, right? Like we have this beautifully new Wellness Center that is not staffed because we can't afford to staff it. And the resources in the community are tapped out. And so, what ends up happening is they send the student away, the student doesn't get support, and either they don't show up again, or they come back. And now it's escalated.

Those responsible for addressing SMH may not be qualified, may not know how to address it, or may be concerned about potentially exacerbating it, as one participant uttered:

I think it's one of those topics, though, that we know, is important but we don't know what to do about it. I mean, we're not therapists. Yeah, it's a vulnerable space, we don't have the tools, the expertise to help.

Finally, the lack of established policies can create confusion and uncertainty, making it difficult to address SMH effectively.

CTLs play a vital role in supporting instructors in their teaching and learning practices, but they also face several challenges. One of the primary challenges is that, according to several CTL leaders, their institutional leadership is overly idealistic in its goals, making it difficult for CTLs to achieve institutional objectives. Many CTLs are understaffed and lack the capacity to work one-on-one with instructors, which limits their reach and effectiveness.

Participants shared that they lack a clear mandate or role within their institution. While they may have the autonomy to choose their direction, they are not always at the forefront of policy changes, which can make it difficult to influence change. Even when they have the resources to provide a wide range of support to faculty, they may be told that faculty are overwhelmed by the amount of information they receive. Others expressed dissatisfaction that the voice of the CTL was still ignored, despite all the work that has been done during the pandemic. In fact, despite changing attitudes about the importance of teaching and learning, resources and funding do not always follow suit, limiting the impact of CTLs. Because CTLs have no power to make changes and are limited to an advisory role, their recommendations may not be implemented or adopted, and decisions may be made without consulting them. This hinders their ability to work across departments and units.

The following quotes express the CTL leaders' frustration and concerns:

[It]'s a hard dance, to move to dance. But we don't have a faculty status either. So, we're staff, and that changes things too. So, we're not always informed, let alone involved in policy decisions. But I mean, those policy decisions, or just you know, guidelines type of things take-coming way too late. I'll give you a specific example. I reached out recently to my AVP Teaching and Learning and the Vice Provost Academic to say we need guidance from you guys about how to advise people, programs, about how to move forward, and how to help them decide the way they want to structure their programs in the future with online, blended, HyFlex and this and that, and we have nothing. So, I'm asking for help here. And I haven't gotten it.

I wish that we had a stronger, more credible voice at some of the decision tables, as opposed to being, you know, asked to implement whatever was decided behind closed doors. And sometimes, you know, [...] we are being consulted, but feels like it's just for good measure, or something. I don't know. And, you know, so I don't know whether I can do anything about that, but I certainly feel like there's a lost opportunity to tap into all the expertise of the knowledge of any teaching and learning centre to help inform in a somewhat, you know, structured or principled manner, what decisions are made.

When we don't have a concrete voice, or we don't have a place at the table, and we can't really move things, things will continue to be as they are.

We don't have the capacity, or much capacity to accompany individual instructors to through the changes that they might want to see in their courses.

The support that we provide is essentially up to us and we're not at the forefront of policy changes or, you know, even adopting a particular framework or anything like that. So, it gives us a little bit of freedom maybe but also frustration because the needle doesn't move too fast.

If we want to be strategic about teaching and learning, essentially, we need a lot more people.

Time. They need time. I mean, I think that's really the honestly. Which is the most limiting resource, which I think is why they want those quick and dirty things because they don't have the time to sit back and think and really talk and learn about, you know, so what, how they can make it better for their students.

I think we're in the reaction phase still. We're everything. We're still reacting, and I think what we must do, as a centre as probably all of us, maybe I don't know if it's common across, I think we need to sit back and reflect and take time to plan and think strategically about what our next steps are. And I don't feel that we've had that time at all. Because another thing keeps getting piled on, and another thing keeps getting piled on. And it's, yeah. And then you know, staff leave, you must hire new staff or whatever. And it's I think that's where I think I see the biggest challenge right now. For me and our centre, I mean, we, we have a strategic plan. Sure, we're trying to move to, but I think we just really need to reset, to rethink which things we can prioritize, first, give ourselves time to process what has happened, and how we really want to go forward.

We're asking faculty members to innovate and try to talk about EDI, and you know, like mental health and all this stuff. But it's like they're trying, but we're, you know, giving them more, more than doing whatever they need to do. So, this is why they're discouraged. And then we blame them, why you're not innovating, why you're not doing but in reality, it's not, in general, you know, like, you have so many factors within the system that are affecting them, right?

Trauma are showing up in the classroom and the ways in which faculty are just wholly unprepared to manage that. And often, well not often, but we've had quite a few examples of faculty unwittingly, like not intentionally escalating students' trauma, because they're not prepared to manage it in the classroom. And there tends to be this, this reaction, like, "this is not my job. So, I'm going to send you off."

Thinking about mental health, and including it in our course design, it's not like, you can't just have recipe, you need really an attitude of change, right?

It's massive explosion and students reporting and self-reporting, issues in relation to mental health and also self-diagnosing. And it's a total explosion. And it's actually quite a concern in terms of how to respond. And we have looked at how to respond in the online learning environment over the past two years. But it was I would say, make do rather than quality. And I think good enough was a mantra that I was using over the last two years.

A SNAPSHOT OF HQEIE PRACTICES SHARED BY THE LITERATURE

[T]he principle of equity means that there [] has to be a focus on the thinking that lies behind actions and the impacts of such thinking on practices. In particular, there has to be a concern with the attitudes and assumptions that influence what [instructors] do, some of which may be unconscious, and how these can be modified through dialogues with others, especially with learners themselves. (UNESCO, 2021b, p. 56)

HQEIE practices that consider students' mental health and well-being are numerous and varied across regions and even within the same institution. They include recognizing students' cultural and linguistic realities, using inclusive language from the syllabus onward, adopting culturally responsive course design, considering student representation in course content, exploring the social annotation approach, not assuming students' familiarity with the academic world, prioritizing course accessibility, designing quality interactions with and among students, rethinking quality assurance and evaluation, and offering flexible learning modalities. The following sections summarize HQEIE practices identified in the literature.

Starting with an inclusive syllabus and moving toward designing a culturally responsive learning experience

Recognizing and accommodating the plurality of students' cultural and linguistic realities in the design and delivery of online courses is imperative, especially as most universities and educational centres are becoming increasingly cosmopolitan. As a result, there is a need to find ways to include students who come from different backgrounds, have different experiences, and have different interests in order to break out of the Eurocentric framework in which institutions have traditionally been thought of (Gunder, 2021b). The use of inclusive language in lesson plans and curricula is essential to creating an inclusive learning environment. The Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California provides a list of examples of inclusive and non-inclusive language found in course syllabi (Gunder, 2021a). Vickiana Supriana, a student at Valencia College, shares her perspective on this issue: "Language in a syllabus is important! I use it to guide me on whether I want to be in that instructor's class." (Gunder, 2021a, p. 10).

Given that certain groups of individuals have historically been unfairly excluded from access to higher education, a course syllabus that makes explicit the meaning of institution-specific language, such as details about effective work and study habits, definitions of terms such as office hours, and locations of important places such as the bookstore and tutoring centre, would be more welcoming to these groups of individuals (Centre for Urban Education, n.d.). An instructor at the Iowa College of Education included this statement in each of his lesson plans to illustrate his inclusive approach:

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives are well served by this course, that students' learning needs are addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements for you. (Biondi, 2021, p. 40)

Pedagogy is encouraged to be culturally responsive, especially since education aims to enable everyone to participate in cultural life and to broaden their understanding and worldview (UNESCO, 2021b). A culturally responsive pedagogy promotes cultural pluralism (Boyko-Head, 2020). A culturally responsive pedagogy “draws from, and honours, the cultural knowledge and understandings that students bring into the classroom” (Public School Forum of North Carolina, 2021, p. 8). This approach recognizes that:

Students bring [valid and useful] pre-existing knowledge and attitudes to campus and the classroom and emphasizes the social capital and cultural knowledge that diverse students bring to the learning experience [to prioritize] the message that everyone can learn and succeed (Achieving the Dream, 2020 in Biondi, 2021, p. 35).

It requires instructors to adapt course content, assessments, and materials to meet the needs of their students in the program in an inclusive and representative manner (Biondi, 2021; Boyko-Head, 2020; Gunder, 2021a). Instructors integrate the culture of their students into their classroom, and everyone, educator, and student, becomes responsible for the learning in the course: each learns from the other’s perspective (Biondi, 2021; Boyko-Head, 2020). In addition to strengthening racial and ethnic identity, fostering a sense of belonging, and increasing engagement and motivation, this approach can improve students’ processing, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills (Public School Forum of North Carolina, 2021). It also allows students to independently transfer skills to real-world situations they will face (Boyko-Head, 2020).

In addition, the use of social annotation as a tool for sharing student experiences and feedback emerges as a practice to consider in the process of ensuring quality, equitable, and inclusive virtual higher education that considers students’ mental health and well-being. Brown & Croft (2020), describe, “Social annotation [as] the use of collaborative technologies to help students draw meaningful connections to texts in-line alongside their peers, practicing the strategies of academic writing in context [...]” (p. 1). Social annotation invites all students to respond to the same texts with annotations that are visible to all. Students can respond to their peers’ annotations and add knowledge to bring out the different perspectives that may come from different groups of people in the class and their respective experiences (Brown & Croft, 2020). This practice supports equity in courses because the contributions of historically marginalized groups of people are central to the process. The knowledge presented in course texts is annotated by students, who can then intervene based on their knowledge and experiences of inequitable content (Brown & Croft, 2020).

Finally, according to Biondi (2021), students should not be assumed to know how academia works, at the risk of inadvertently marginalizing them. Rather, care should be taken to define the habits and customs of the academic world. Indeed, “the assumption that all students come with a general understanding of the academic world unintentionally places some students even further on the margins of the institution” (Jack, 2019, p. 75).

Prioritizing accessibility of courses

Our review of the literature identifies access to digital content as an essential factor in promoting HQEIE. Depending on their socioeconomic, geographic, and health status, students may face challenges in accessing educational content. According to a study by the National Center for Education Statistics (2019), 19% of undergraduate students reported living with a disability, which is likely an underestimate because an estimated 60-80% of students do not disclose their condition (Gunder, 2021a). Providing materials (audio, text, video, etc.) that are accessible would therefore benefit not only those students who have disclosed their special condition (Kathuria & Becker, 2021; Kocdar & Bozkurt, 2022), but also all students, including those whose first language is not the language of the course being taught or those who do not have access to the technologies necessary to read certain media (Gunder, 2021a; Kathuria & Becker, 2021). Most importantly, designing an effectively accessible course requires addressing accessibility issues from the beginning of the design process (Gunder, 2021a).

Accessible courses offer a variety of materials and media that adhere to the principles of universal design for learning (Kathuria & Becker, 2021; Kocdar & Bozkurt, 2022). These principles include, but are not limited to, the use of headings to structure materials, accessible tables, alt text or transcripts for images and graphics, and captions for videos (Gunder, 2021a; Kathuria & Becker, 2021). Colours are carefully chosen to ensure sufficient contrast between background and text (Gunder, 2021a), and delivery platforms allow for colour customization, effective magnification of text and images, keyboard navigation, and text-to-speech reading (Kathuria & Becker, 2021; Sarju, 2020). There is also value in sharing course materials in advance so that students can identify accessibility issues and instructors have time to make necessary adjustments (Sarju, 2020).

Similarly, reducing cognitive load has been identified as one of the strategies that should be employed in an HQEIE. In the case of an online chemistry course, for example, this included highlighting important information, varying the audio and video media used, and removing extraneous content. Special attention was paid to the design of the content to avoid a divisive effect. Information was presented in bite-sized chunks, again with the goal of reducing the cognitive load of the course (Sarju, 2020).

Thomas and Bryson (2021) made some recommendations for recording demonstrations given simultaneously to a face-to-face and a remote group: "A properly equipped cart ensures that the instructor can remain on camera [...]. [...] it is best if the instructor is dressed in clothing that contrasts with the background ... and that a dark white board marker is used." Furthermore, according to Ricardo Rivero Ortega, Rector of the University of Salamanca in Spain, teaching large groups should be avoided to provide personalized learning paths (Davy & Quane, 2021, p. 2225).

Designing quality interactions with and among students

Instructors are encouraged to communicate with students on a regular basis through a pre-established communication plan and to contact students to remind them of

how to access available resources providing help with the course and other kinds of student support, provide clear statements and illustrations of criteria for success, and provide specifications for when and how they will personally reach out to students who are struggling or not participating (Means et al., 2020, p. 28).

To build a harmonious relationship between instructors and their students, it is recommended that instructors adopt a friendly, informal, and even humorous tone (Sarju, 2020). Instructors can share personal information, such as academic interests or personal experiences, to provide a context for human interaction (Sarju, 2020). Students, in turn, may be able to connect with each other based on their preferred mode or platform of communication. Thomas and Bryson (2021) reported how students in their group created a WhatsApp group to chat with each other, an initiative that helped facilitate cohesion within the group.

According to the Community of Inquiry model, a quality learning experience is facilitated by three elements: 1) social presence, which is characterized by social cohesion and opportunities to be oneself and contribute through one's personality; 2) instructor presence, which consists of designing a course that supports a bosom climate in the classroom and assuming the stance of a guide for students; and 3) cognitive presence, which occurs when knowledge is constructed together through sharing and collaboration among students (Gunder, 2021b). Breakout rooms were one solution that incorporated the three elements and was presented in several studies of synchronous online courses.

The results of the Survey of Student Perceptions of Distance Teaching and Learning, which Digital Promise used in 2020 to measure the student learning experience, showed higher levels of satisfaction among students who participated in online courses that incorporated breakout activities (Digital Promise, 2020). The use of breakout rooms allowed students to interact in small groups during synchronous class sessions held on video conferencing platforms. Students participated more in this setting because they felt more comfortable speaking in these rooms than in the main videoconferencing room (Borowiec et al., 2021). This practice also fostered some social cohesion in the group and a sense of community as students were able to get to know each other and speak more informally (Borowiec et al., 2021; Means et al., 2020).

Randomly assigning rooms could be an effective way to allow students to interact with a greater number of different students, thereby strengthening the social cohesion of the group and leading students to discuss the topics at hand in greater depth (Borowiec et al., 2021). In fact, some instructors used breakout rooms to get students to work together and solve course-related problems to reinforce and deepen learning. Some students even used whiteboards to record the results of their discussions (Borowiec et al., 2021; Kurniawan & Budiyo, 2021). In addition, instructors navigated between breakout rooms, as they would during small-group activities in face-to-face courses, to take the pulse of student learning and facilitate discussions (Kurniawan & Budiyo, 2021; Turner & Merrill, 2021). It is recommended that instructors 1) always tell students that they will be moving between rooms to answer questions to ensure that discussions in each group run smoothly; 2) keep their camera and microphone closed unless they wish to intervene to maintain the flow of the ongoing discussion; and 3) tell students that subgroup activities will be discussed in the larger group (Turner & Merrill, 2021).

Breakout rooms provide interesting possibilities to conduct assessment activities with small groups of students. For example, faculty at the Palliative Care and Oncology Stream Faculty at the Aga Khan University conducted a tele-simulation activity to measure students' skills in delivering bad news to a patient (Kurji et al., 2021).



The use of cameras in online courses has been highlighted in several studies. According to a survey sent to students on the postgraduate MA Urban Design course at Cardiff University, more than half of the respondents felt that the presence of cameras had a positive impact on their learning experience, while some felt uncomfortable with them being activated, making it an important issue in student interactions (Peimani & Kamalipour, 2021b). Turner and Merrill (2021) advise inviting students to activate their cameras, rather than imposing or demanding it, and explaining the importance of this practice to their learning experience, as some students may have valid reasons for keeping their cameras off. Giving students the freedom to activate their cameras or not, and the ability to anonymize their names in peer feedback activities, can create a less anxious and more productive environment where everyone is allowed to make mistakes (Caldes, 2020). The key is for faculty to set clear expectations, open the door to discussion, and allow for accommodations for students who may have connection quality issues or other personal issues that prevent them from keeping their camera on (Borowiec et al., 2021). Conversely, faculty in the Palliative Care and Oncology Stream Faculty at Aga Khan University asked student observers to turn off their cameras and microphones in a tele-simulation to avoid distractions (Kurji et al., 2021).

Rethinking quality assurance and evaluation

Many postsecondary institutions have reviewed their quality assurance processes to ensure that courses are student-centred, aligned with learning objectives, accessible to all learners, and effectively designed and delivered (EDUCAUSE, 2021). Some organizations have suggested that this quality assurance process should consider the inclusive and culturally responsive nature of the courses offered to students (Public School Forum of North Carolina, 2021). According to UNESCO, a quality assurance process should essentially ensure flexibility and diversity in program delivery (2021a). However, staff training, instructional design support in terms of resources, access to technology, and an appropriate learning environment are essential for these proposals to be realized. Thus, institutions must provide adequate training for staff to ensure the quality of the learning experience (International Association of Universities, 2020). They must provide opportunities to improve their skills in using technology and to address their misconceptions about education (Røe et al., 2022).

We found various examples in the literature of how institutions are doing this. The University of Florida offers an online workshop on the basics of accessibility (EDUCAUSE, 2020). Indiana University offers an online course quality checklist for faculty to use as a guide for designing their online courses, based on best practices in distance education and pointing to resources already available at the university (Kathuria & Becker, 2021). The benefits of such a checklist are many. First, it is a just-in-time resource, meaning that it meets the needs of instructors at the time they need it. It is adaptable to instructors' needs because it includes many optional resources, and it guides instructors through the course design process at their own pace (Moon, 2020). The Technology-assisted Learning Community at Stanford University's Department of Mechanical Engineering (ME-TLC), formed to help faculty transform their online courses, developed a newsletter to inform faculty about best practices in distance learning. It also sent out surveys to gather data on the emotional state and experiences of students and instructors. (Sheppard, 2020).

Rethinking quality assurance also involves 1) rethinking assessment, 2) access to technology, and 3) the availability of an appropriate learning environment. First, the pandemic prompted faculty to rethink the assessments they offered their students and, in some cases, how they assessed across disciplines (Yerly & Issaieva, 2021). They provided them with more authentic, meaningful, and transparent activities:

At a distance, the modalities, instructions, assessed skills (or objectives), evaluation criteria, levels of success, etc., need to be clearer. In times of crisis, it is even more important to discuss and even negotiate the conditions of assessment with the students and to be flexible according to the students' conditions (emotional, family, logistical, etc.). The same is true of courses that have offered students the opportunity to co-construct the criteria and tools for their evaluation (e.g., evaluation grid)(free translation, p. 97).

According to the same authors, the formative aspect of evaluation was similarly reinforced and prioritized during the pandemic. Gunder (2021a) suggests using the following questions to reflect on assessments that support the success of all students:

Do students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge throughout the course? Does the course provide opportunities for students to reflect on their learning through the use of assessments? What strategies do I use to provide students with feedback on their learning?(p. 23)

In other words, assessment must be aligned with students' learning goals and needs, offer a variety of assessment types, and provide students with regular feedback and the opportunities to revise previously assessed content.

Second, according to Peimani and Kamalipour (2021), equitable access to software and infrastructure must be achieved before even thinking about training students to use technology for learning. While some institutions offer discount or scholarship programs for the purchase of computer equipment, Daniel Phelan, President, and CEO of Jackson College, explained the Laptop Academic Incentive Program, which consists of lending a laptop to students enrolled in at least 6 hours of classes. Upon completion of their program, these students could keep the computer loaned to them by the institution (Jisc & EDUCAUSE, 2021). Sally Dicketts, CEO of Activate Learning and President of the Association of Colleges shared her initiatives: "We handed out hundreds and thousands of computers. We bought WIFI for students. But we couldn't buy them housing." (Jisc & EDUCAUSE, 2021, p. 11). Similarly, the UK government has changed the status of vulnerable learners so that they can be provided with equipment and workspace in colleges to ensure that students in need have access to the technology and environment they need to pursue their learning activities (Jisc & EDUCAUSE, 2021). On another front, one could look at the implementation of hybrid and flexible classrooms that allow students to take courses face-to-face or asynchronously at a distance.

Offering flexibility in learning modalities facilitates an equitable learning experience, as does the hybrid-flexible model. Beatty posits that:

Equity in higher education means that all students are able to achieve equal learning outcomes as they are supported by institutions, faculty, and other systems to engage in the learning process. All students are able to receive the financial, social, and academic support and guidance they need to succeed in the institutional programs, thus enabling lifelong success as well. All students are given access to appropriate and effective learning opportunities- instructional resources, activities, interactions and evaluative assessment- which are differentiated according to their unique sets of characteristics and needs. (International Observatory on the societal impacts of AI and digital technology, 2020, p. 15)

More precisely, the University of San Francisco describes the Hyflex model as follows:

HyFlex is a student-driven learning mode which grants student autonomy to complete the course requirements by engaging in-person or online, synchronously or asynchronously, at their own discretion throughout the term. In the course design, the instructor teaches in-person and presents equivalent, though not necessarily identical, learning experiences that support student achievement of learning outcomes outside of the in-person experience. (San Francisco State University, s. d.)

Other higher education leaders advocate a hybrid modality, such as Ko Hasegawa, former executive director, and vice-president of Hokkaido University in Japan, who argues that the choice of teaching modality, online or face-to-face, should depend on the topics and content to be covered. Introductory content could be offered online, while face-to-face instruction should be preferred for in-depth learning experiences (International Association of Universities, 2020).

Third, it means providing a technological environment that is conducive to running courses smoothly, so that technical problems and inequities are minimized. For these reasons, institutions have developed guidelines on netiquette for online teaching and learning to ensure the well-being and safety of all (Jisc & EDUCAUSE, 2021). However, there are prerequisites for creating these opportunities, including data collection and political engagement in the process.

Given the importance of providing equitable learning experiences through flexible learning modalities and hybrid models, institutions must also recognize the role of innovation in fostering educational equity. This involves not only implementing effective teaching and learning practices but also measuring and analyzing their impact to inform policy and decision-making. The OECD (2021) highlights the value of obtaining statistical data on innovation activities to support policies, inform organizations about good practices, and aid academic research on factors associated with successful outcomes.

Assessing the impact of innovation on educational equity is crucial for institutions to identify opportunities and challenges, allowing them to develop and refine policies at both institutional and governmental levels. For example, the Government of Quebec, “Plan d’action et cadre de référence sur la santé mentale” in 2021 aimed “to offer as many students as possible accessible, flexible training paths adapted to their needs [...]” (Government of Quebec, 2021, p. 21). Through this initiative, the ministry identified the mental health needs of students and proposed measures to address them. In a similar vein, Université Laval that adopted a policy that defined the modes of distance education and the responsibilities of the various actors involved in teaching and learning these courses, i.e., the institution, the faculties, the instructors, and the students (Université Laval, 2022). As for Raritan Valley Community College, its mission emphasizes the urgency to “foster diversity by developing and maintaining curricular and social programs that infuse the contributions of all people and by preparing students to excel in a global society” (Biondi, 2021). This is also the case at County College of Morris, whose mission proposes three elements:

- 1. A commitment to providing a secure, supportive environment responsive to the needs of students.*
- 2. A commitment to diversity that respects individual differences and upholds the dignity of every person.*
- 3. A commitment to providing access and services to all regardless of financial, academic, educational, or physical challenges (Biondi, 2021, p. 29).*

In the next section, we present the HQEIE practices, as reported by leaders of CTLs .

HQEIE PRACTICES REPORTED BY LEADERS OF CENTRES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (CTL)

Focus groups with CTL leaders revealed how their work varies across institutions. All CTLs work with faculty in a variety of capacities. Among their responsibilities, participants mentioned overseeing the learning management system and other technical aspects; implementing policies on diversity, equity, and inclusion; offering mandatory and optional training on inclusion; supporting instructors whose teaching evaluations show problems; and providing funding for individual projects on the scholarship of teaching. In addition to working with faculty, the CTLs also interacted with other entities or units at the institution. For example, one participant mentioned that their CTL was spearheading curriculum revisions. Another talked about meeting regularly with the student government, in addition to serving on some institutional task forces related to digital learning. One participant explained how her CTL is perceived as a haven for some faculty members:

[S]ometimes the centre is that place to go when your department's not on board, right? And sometimes it's the place to go when you want to shield, you know, you need to have additional sort of support, which always cracks me up; it's like, that you're a director, you have power. Really? That's news.

The pandemic also saw some CTLs fill gaps left by other instances or take new roles:

And during the pandemic, especially, I mean, we shifted a lot of our programming, I mentioned all the things we were doing, by the EDI, we also did a lot of just plain mindfulness, and just some casual get-togethers and just trying to maintain contact, and a lot more advocating for the faculty members themselves.

Several participants spoke of the positive impact the pandemic had on faculty perspectives on quality education. One participant noted that during this time, faculty became more aware of their role as educators. As a result, they began to “look at the student more holistically, rather than focusing on the numbers and the instructor’s performance. Similarly, one participant talked about the success of a mentoring program that pairs a faculty member with two or three students. About 90 percent of the faculty participates in the program, which the participant described as:

[A] tremendous learning experience for faculty about how students experience everything. And that has fed directly into their teaching. It's been incredibly powerful. And it's kept their morale up, it's changed their motivation, it's changed their willingness to experiment and their commitment. It's just been a phenomenal program.

Another participant noted that faculty do not have enough time to think about improvements in course design and yet he observed that despite the perception that faculty were exhausted by the pandemic, a summer program at the institution designed to support course redesign quickly ran out of space:

[W]e had a course transformation initiative. We had received \$250,000 from the University to support course transformation. And I was like, there's no way any faculty members will want to do anything at all. Any course transformation is, it's to address courses where there might be challenges from students' success perspective, it could be that you do modality change, but it could be curriculum, assessment, you name it, it doesn't matter. I was like, there's no way anyone's gonna participate in this. It's \$8,000. Like, why would you commit a summer to doing this? It's oversubscribed. We had 30 really high-quality applications come in within two weeks, and we've had to shut the application phase. And it was intended, just, I was so pessimistic and thinking there would be no interest in this, I said it like, applications will be considered on an ongoing basis. If we kept this open, we probably would have 60 applications at this point. That's an element of positivity and surprise. So, in all of the conversations, yes, we're hearing faculty members and students and staff members are tired. But there are individuals with capacity and interest to do innovative things to support, whether it's equity or diversity, challenges within their classroom, whether it is aspects of flexibility, or whether it's aspects of where they're trying to incorporate or address student success. There's clearly appetite of care, and a willingness to innovate or to do things differently. And it's finding who and how to support them.

Changes in small increments are more feasible in many cases. For the folks that are really, really tired, I try and remind them, you don't have to do it all at once. Change one thing now. See how it works, assess it, if it works, great, keep it, change another thing right after that, you know, and allow your class, allow your perspective to evolve. Don't get overwhelmed with the idea that suddenly your class has to become completely and totally different. If you can move it along bit by bit.

A participant explained how the pandemic prompted many instructors to rethink how they were doing learning assessment and to broaden the means of doing it, but they reverted to their old ways once they were back in the classroom:

[S]ome faculty started using authentic assessments, and we're thrilled with the way the students responded and the learning and how sophisticated the work products were that they were getting, I interviewed one and I asked her, "So are you going to take this back when we returned to in person?" And she was stunned, she said, "I never thought of that. I never thought of doing that. I just figured I'd go back."

Despite the progress made during the pandemic, the participants' comments indicate that academic assessment still needs attention in their institution as a tool to achieve HQE. Besides, some participants remarked that assessment is also a means to achieve inclusive and equitable inclusion:

[W]e're really trying, encouraging teachers to provide different types of evaluation, because to reach different types of students as well, and to make sure that everyone can, ... have an area where they are comfortable, and they can succeed, whether it's presented as an oral presentation and exercise that they do by themselves, work, groups, project, etc.

According to the participants, inclusive education is also a milieu where every student feels fully included and has a sense of belonging. It can impact the diversity of representation in the student government:

In terms of the inclusion piece of it, there's been a tremendous amount of work done in the past couple of years to make it a more welcoming environment so that everyone feels included in the academics and the extracurriculars and so on. And it's been really interesting to watch, because five years ago, the student government was almost entirely black students. And now that has really broadened out to include Latino students, white students, Asian students. And some of the academic programs were heavily Asian, Indian-Asian, and now we're trying to broaden those out, although that's harder, because that depends on applicants. But it's just been a very interesting road seeing people become more comfortable having the conversations, I think, I would say, and the equity aspect of it really has come to light in the last three years with our provost turnover.

As equitable education, inclusive education is about giving access, access to people from various socioeconomic conditions, sexual orientations, races, and ethnicity. To these aspects, a participant explains that a willingness to be exposed in a respectful way to a diversity of perspectives including indigenous perspectives pervades an inclusive milieu.

The sociocultural context of institutions influences their views and practices of inclusive and equitable education. In the U.S., the death of George Floyd during his arrest on May 25, 2020, and the Black Lives Matter movement it spawned, provided postsecondary institutions with a mirror through which to view themselves in terms of racial justice. These events allowed them to see more clearly the enduring trauma that slavery has inflicted on African Americans. One participant captured the impact of this event and the Black Lives Matter movement:

Particularly in the U.S., with the pandemic came huge racial unrest. And this was a big deal for our students. Understanding the trauma, the generational trauma that they were experiencing. Understanding that the, you know, the idea that you can step into a learning space, step into a classroom, and suddenly everything else goes away. And knowing that that's not the case. Understanding that, you know, we were having to, truly had to come to grips with the fact that our educational systems were racist in nature.

In the same vein, a participant spoke of how concerns about Canada's relationships with native populations have prompted the institution to incorporate "indigenous ways of knowing" and to acknowledge that:

Canadians, our education systems, our political systems, and our other systems have systemic challenges, and we need to continue to work and navigate these and that understanding that our systems at the institution also have these biases. And only by recognizing those biases are we able to, to move forward and incorporate and understand from a learning perspective and a teaching perspective of the true challenges of inclusivity and diversity.

In the United Kingdom, recent legislation has created a framework for implementing aspects of inclusive and equitable education. In essence, the UK's Digital Accessibility Act, which originated in 2018, stipulates that the websites of public organizations, including schools and colleges, must be accessible to users with disabilities. One participant commented that this top-down approach to inclusion -from the government to public organizations- has helped to implement inclusive policies in the institution. The participant even noted that university staff have started to do this spontaneously. Another participant acknowledged that the new law has been a positive force. However, it has created more stress for the staff, especially during the pandemic, even though they were very committed.

Finally, in Lebanon, private schools can refuse admission to people with disabilities, making the issue of inclusive and equitable education moot. One participant reported that his institution had included three principles in the collective bargaining agreement that bind the institution and the faculty: (1) to engage in ongoing professional development rooted in inclusive and culturally responsive teaching; (2) to create an inclusive, supportive, and culturally responsive learning environment; and (3) to use inclusive and culturally responsive teaching strategies. Two institutions have made training in either equity or diversity, inclusion, and equity mandatory for the entire faculty:

[W]e have an equity training requirement for faculty that came out of that 2017. [...] But it really impacts the kind of everything that's happening on our campus. But it's part of the bargain contract that faculty engage in some kind of annual equity training.

In our institution, we have, it is now mandatory to follow a "parcours" yes, some sort of training, let's say a program of EDI in inclusion, diversity and equity. Yeah, I mean, you get to a point. And basically, it is different people that work on different aspects of it talking about inclusion, diversity, etc. in the workplace, so and with your colleagues, etc. We are involved in how you do it in the class, so inclusive pedagogy. There's also another workshop about inclusion, diversity in research, applying for your research. So we have some formal things that are done to make the focus on inclusion and making sure that it is a theme that we want to talk about, and they're rigorous, they're fair, and they're transparent, because that, I think, is a really important motivator for a lot of academic colleagues.

Several participants described CTLs as instrumental in promoting inclusive and equitable education. For example, one institution has made training on inclusivity and equity mandatory. The CTL is responsible for the inclusive education portion of the training. It also provides more extensive optional training on this aspect.

In some cases, CTLs take a leadership role in institutional teams dedicated to inclusive and equitable education:

[O]ur approach to managing or making change around equity outcomes has been by asking individuals and groups to create equity action plans.

[W]e're creating that framework for what is sort of EDI course design. So, I've got a group of faculty members and professional learning community is working on that. We have another faculty professional learning community working on equity driven assessment. And so those are groups of faculty that are working as teams from individual departments and they're working on assessment within their departments, and how to make that much more equitable. And looking at data from you know, who's succeeding in their programs and who's not. As I mentioned, we've got a couple of teaching scholars that are working on diversity, equity inclusion, and we've had a lot of faculty go through. We use Cornell's diversity in the classroom, their open edX course, and a lot of faculty went through that when we had meetings around that.

In this regard, one participant noted that the CTL sometimes helps the institution better articulate what it means by equity. In addition, CTLs advise instructors who want to design inclusive and equitable courses. In one case, this includes helping faculty design case studies that reflect the diversity of the student body:

We're also moving toward ... with case studies that represent the diversity of the students, you know, trying to have an example from other countries or other cultures, that other people are represented and those kinds of things.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a guiding principle to advance inclusive and equitable education in several institutions:

[W]e provide our instructors with free workshops, nine-hours where we go into details about what it means to be inclusive in the classroom. We focus on the resources that as the teacher I develop, making sure that it's accessible for my students, what I do in my classroom regarding methods, activities, and providing the best experience for my students, the relationships that I deal with students making sure that it's inclusive, also. And last but not least, assessment, evaluation. So we cover lots of different things in order to prepare them to be more inclusive in the classroom, basically. And it's inspired by the universal learning guidelines. I'm sure you're familiar with it. And so, a, yeah, tend to address the question of equality, equity, inclusion, diversity, you know...

[T]he whole design for that is universal design. The several million pounds building, the new learning hub that was built, totally inclusive design. So universal design, inclusive design, where you stop looking at, okay, this is what we normally do.

[T]he universal design, [...] It's really the heart, of course, like we are, we are training the teachers to implement but I'm not so happy so far. I mean, we did great, great things, but I'm not happy with the results because we can do much more, you know.

We take a universal design approach to our online and flexible learning opportunities. In other words, we don't consider accessibility just being captions; it is all elements associated with accessibility, whether it's colour choices, formatting, text size, etc., as also as well as providing a variety of methods for students to engage with the content, particularly and what we strive to do to address some aspects of accessibility and inclusivity is recognizing that some individuals find it really challenging to participate in synchronous type online activities, that we would, we would encourage more asynchronous approaches, but also thoughtfully, integrating synchronous approaches to support engagement, but not necessarily making the requirement because there are certain challenges that some students in some areas have challenges participating in those modalities, whether it's connectivity issues, time zones, or personal circumstances, a parent looking after a family member, for example.

Mental health has remained a top concern at all institutions, for both students and faculty. As a result, instructors are talking to their students more frequently and openly about it. One CTL is developing a "wellness widget" to inform the community about wellness resources available on campus, online course modules are being created to support student mental health, and wellness is being discussed with student governments. The importance of mental health has not yet had a profound impact on course and curriculum design, given the small number of actions identified by participants. For example, toward the end of the pandemic, one institution trained the entire faculty in HyFlex course delivery, recognizing that students were reluctant to return to face-to-face classes:

[W]e wanted to accommodate students with mental health problems, ... who didn't want to come to class, they were afraid to come to class. And students with disabilities can come - whatever. And we trained all our faculty to be ready to do hyflex. So, at the beginning of the fall, there was a lot of hyflex in all courses, all programs just to accommodate students. So, I think in the institution, there are some little initiatives like that that are, we can just think about now, but there's a lot of consideration for students' wellness.

At another institution, some faculty members promoted “trauma- and resiliency-informed teaching and learning.” In response to requests from instructors to “think about [mental health] and try to incorporate ... things into their design,” one CTL collected and made available mental health resources.

Finally, one participant shared:

I think this is a realization that has also come to staff members and leaders like me at other teaching centres, there's like, there's not going to be a break. Right? We keep pretending that right, things will get quiet for a bit and that we'll recover, and we'll have that time and energy to recover both from a mental health and tiredness face. Well, we've been we've been saying that for how long now? For, oh, the pandemic is going to last six weeks, like well, we'll be back. No, oh no, they last a month or a term. And like, no. And the reality is, organizations and institutions need to continue moving forward, they're there, you can't stay still. Because the world is continually changing and the demands and pressures from our learners are continually changing because of the situation outside our window, and around the world. So as soon as we come to that realization, and I am, it's, it's truthfully, this realization probably only happened about five minutes ago, as I was thinking about this is like, no, there's never going to be a break. There are just potentially different rhythms and how we adapt to those rhythms. And so, once you start to realize that, and then you're working with a cohort of individuals who are tired, and you need to adjust your expectations, and you need to meet them where they are. And then you need to find ways to support the way we're doing things right now. It's not meaning that we can sustain necessarily the same energy level. And I would argue we're not sustaining anywhere near the same energy level of what we were in an emergency situation. But it's recognizing things both from the way we work, and the way we support our faculty members and students must change. And that means finding efficiencies where there are efficiencies. It's finding and making sure that we're reducing barriers to allow instructors to teach in ways that make sense. And it could be that our approaches from our teaching and learning perspective, need to be simpler. And our expectations around what is sophisticated or appropriate ways for teaching online, need to change both from a design perspective, a support perspective, the types of media and how we work that way. And, not, I don't have answers of what that looks like, I would like to be clear, right? Don't look to me for guidance on this one. It's just, I think that that's the like, there's an efficiency perspective and a simplicity, that I think that is critical.

Finally, in one institution, the link between HQE and critical thinking resulted in creating a required interdisciplinary undergraduate course:

[W]e now have a team of faculty building a required freshmen course, called Making Sense of a data-oriented society, because we watched our students look at all this COVID data and not know what to do with it. And we went through the elections, and there was all this data and the voter fraud. And so, the idea is that the course will use statistics as a lens and not teach how to do a standard deviation. But what is that concept? And why does it matter? Use current data sets from multiple disciplines and examine it to find all the points where bias can come into play by how you write the questions, by how you gather the data, by your sampling, the whole thing. And the goal is that students can look at data that's going to hit them and ask the right questions and begin to see that it might not be true just because it's on the web, or in the New York Times for that matter. And this committee has faculty from across the institution that's being led by computer science and management, and there's so much excitement. It's like this groundswell, and there are about 20 people who want to spend this summer building resources and curated datasets that we can hand to freshmen, so that they really can pull some meaning out of it.

The next section discusses HQEIE practices shared by postsecondary instructors.

HQEIE PRACTICES REPORTED BY HIGHER EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS

Participants shared several practices they use to ensure high quality, equitable, and inclusive education in their classrooms while considering students' mental health and well-being, including 1) planning effective interactions with and among students, 2) being sensitive to students' situations, 3) ensuring that students' needs are met, 4) ensuring accessibility of courses and resources, 5) exploring a variety of teaching approaches and strategies, 6) ensuring inclusive learning experiences, 7) ensuring focused, equitable, and inclusive assessment of learning, and 8) continually reflecting on their teaching approaches and practices.

Planning effective interactions with and among students

Participants planned effective interactions with and among students by interacting with their students in a human way, creating a space for students, creating opportunities for sharing ideas among and with students, acknowledging what's happening in the world and how it might affect students, valuing reciprocity with students, and fostering a sense of a community among students.

Participants believed that having a real human connection with students is an effective strategy for removing the traditional power structure that usually exists between instructors and students. For them, this approach helps students feel comfortable with instructors, communicate, ask questions, and basically open up and share where they are in the course. For example, at the beginning of each course, several participants set aside enough time for students to ask them any question about themselves with limited boundaries. One participant shared:

During our introductions, I actually set aside 10 to 15 minutes, and give them the chance to ask me whatever they want to ask about me. And I tell them as anthropologists, there's very little that you can't ask me. And we always start with, you know, what's your research about, how well is your dog. But eventually we get to the questions that start to make us kind of get past the visible identities and connect in a different way. And we start talking about things like gaming. Right, we start talking about things like where I grew up, and they're often surprised to hear that I have a rural upbringing, because I came from a major metropolitan university. So, there's a certain sense of humaneness that I think gets overlooked in, in exchange for a perception of authority. And that really causes I mean, that means that you're walking into the room with those power structures on your shoulder as a safety blanket, right, instead of just being human with your students.

As a result, as the traditional wall between faculty and students was broken down, participants created a safe space among students for mental health concerns related to personal and family issues. One participant shared:

In terms of student mental health, I created a space with all my students where they have the most, they have ability to be very open. And I've read and heard and seen lots of different issues, personal issues, family issues, like all the types of issues that I know that if I was a different person, my students would not be comfortable telling these to me.

In the process, opportunities to exchange ideas among and with students were created. For instance, one participant mentioned:

It's about defining a lot of opportunities to exchange ideas, or maybe discuss the topics not necessarily a one way or unidirectional teaching, but also like an exchange. So, these are the examples that I come up with that might be related to the subject. Do you know anything else, that you think what we're talking right now could be applied?

To create an interactive environment among and with students, participants found it important to acknowledge world events and how they affect students. One participant explained:

Incorporating what's happening in the world to the courses that we are teaching I think that's also very important. So, for so many days or weeks or months, I was also frustrated because no one was acknowledging that we are going through a global pandemic, and we were being expected to deliver at high quality and everything is if nothing was happening. So, that was like very frustrating for me. I thought it was very frustrating for students too if nothing was happening, they were exposed. So, I opened up about this multiple times in the classroom, like acknowledging that I know. Like, at least I know that we are going through this, I know that things are not the same for you, and they're not same for me. So, like, this acknowledgement thing I used to think that is just for, you know, like, like, service contributes to nothing. And I realize it's not the case. The same thing happened with Ukrainian and Russian war. So, when we talk about this in the classroom, I get very positive feedback afterwards from students, because there were other professors apparently, were talking about the same issue, but they were like more like, okay, let's talk about what are the implications on the businesses without acknowledging that this may create a lot of anxiety or it's a military crisis, first of all, and then have some implications on the businesses, obviously, and we will discuss about those but acknowledging that you might feel really nervous, you might be feeling unwell. And me too, I'm not feeling well, because there's a war because there's a pandemic, because there's something happening. So, that I think that is something that I will always keep in mind, even after COVID-19.

Participants shared that acknowledging that world events have affected them and their students, and talking about them with students, has helped in the healing process.

This leads to the adoption of behaviours that value the reciprocity of goodness and generosity toward each other as human beings and fosters a sense of community among students. One participant recalled:

I think when you're focusing on relationships, there's always in the indigenous teachings, they, they talk about reciprocity, and the idea of, you know, giving and taking and the idea of, of giving first, as an idea, so in indigenous teachings, we learn to put down tobacco on the land when we ask for help in a prayer. And that's a relational thing to remind us to, to offer first, before we take from people and so I'd say, in my classes, I try to have that kind of relationship, even online to kind of put out the, the handshake you know, of relationality, even with my online students, so that they can see that I'm, I'm willing to be vulnerable, and I'm willing to share my own stories.

Participants felt that it was important to make sure that students were involved in helping each other. For example, in order to get an A in a course, one participant shared that her students had to contribute ideas to the group, noting that everyone came with a different perspective, background, and richness, and that all of this was a gift for the classroom community to share.

Being sensitive to students' situations

Being sensitive to students' personal situations is another strategy that participants emphasized. Participants made sure to be sensitive to students' situations by a) warning about sensitive topics, b) sharing mental health and opportunity resources with students, c) taking initiatives to connect students with appropriate services on campus, d) being available to students and allowing flexibility, e) being mindful of students' discomfort, f) discussing options with students, and g) planning ahead for difficult times during the semester.

Because students come from different backgrounds and are likely living in different daily realities, participants warned students about sensitive topics before discussing them in the classroom and announced steps to take if someone was sensitive about certain issues. Many shared mental health resources on campus with students. Telehealth, for example, has grown significantly since COVID began. Instructors shared this option with their students so that they could receive medical care and mental health counselling when needed. They have also connected students with appropriate services on campus that address other social needs, such as food insecurity or other issues that are not easily talked about, as one participant shared:

I'm really careful to align a lot of the mental health related resources, whether it be counselling, whether it be food bank, if we're talking about you know, food sharing, food insecurities, those kinds of things, so that students know where they can go, if this is something that's a concern for them.

Another participant opened-up about her efforts to assist students the best way she could, as she shared:

I don't know if I'm always good at it, but I try really hard to let [students] know that if anything is happening in their life, they can contact me, so that I can at least help them find the resource that they need. We have a care reporting system, and I'm sure many universities have something like this, where if we do notice the student is struggling, we can submit the report. And that goes through a team that includes some of the counselors from our counselling centre and our mental health centre. So, that at the very least somebody's checking on them, right. And I've actually had students reach out and thank me for submitting that. It's funny because I'm always worried like, oh, they're gonna think I'm being a nosy busybody and I, when I was a younger faculty member, I didn't want to do it. But I've had students thank me for the fact that they were in need but were afraid of the stigma of reaching out to somebody so.

Several participants argued that being available to students on their own time and allowing flexible modes of communication with them was a beneficial strategy to help them feel supported and heard. For instance, a couple of participants shared their personal cell phone numbers with students. They stated:

often find myself if I say to my students that, you know, here's my cell phone number, you can call or text me whenever, and if I'm available, I'll pick up and if I'm not, I'll get back to you as soon as possible. So, rather than holding office hours, I do that because I know, again, some students might work during the day or might not be able to attend the set office hours. So, I try to allow for flexibility there. [T]hat certainly helped some students who were having a harder time emotionally.

I always offer that students can text me like I'm a little more okay with those boundaries. Like, you know, some professors wouldn't do that [but because] I'm not a full-time professor, I think I can have a bit more relationality with my students because it doesn't zap me the same as if I was full-time.

One participant even mentioned that considering students' situation also meant being empathetic toward students who felt reluctant to participate orally in class. He explained:

[W]e were in a kind of a group conversation, one of the recommendations that someone had was calling on students if they haven't raised their hand to participate. And I'm still very uncomfortable with doing that. Because, like, I remember as like a student, if I didn't know the answer, right? You know, I don't want to ever put anyone on the spot, but you know, so rather than saying, hey, Vanessa, tell us what you think I might say, okay, I'd love to hear from someone I haven't heard from yet. Does anyone else, right?

Another advocated listening to the student's explanation of his or her situation and discussing options that would be convenient for the student and acceptable or fair to the other students in the class. He cited instances where students were unable to function because of their situation and were considering dropping the course because they could not meet deadlines.

Finally, one participant emphasized the value of planning ahead for anticipated difficult times during the semester. He shared:

But having these moments in a semester, where I address mental health, not in any kind of big formal way that because it's, well, it's a tough week, but because I know it's a tough week. I know that, you know, there's that curve with their studies. But we know that [week], Thanksgiving, Easter, those moments are difficult for students, partly because they step away and they take stock and they're exhausted. And when you stop running, that's when you really notice how out of breath you are. So tiny moments to acknowledge that, but also to make sure that I don't have assignments on that time.

Ensuring that students' needs are met

Participants agreed that quality education requires that instructors 1) know their students' characteristics, such as their cultural backgrounds, identities, vulnerabilities, and disadvantages, to name a few; 2) assess their prior knowledge or lack thereof; and 3) pay attention to their responses. The goal is to ensure a personalized learning experience that meets students' needs.

Participants made an effort to find out who their students were before the first day of class, as participants explained:

I do things like before I, before I go to the first day of class, I try to look through my roster. And it's not just looking for ethnic names, but I'm looking at what is the array of majors coming into my class. And what might that tell me about their exposure to some of the content that we're going to cover.

I had every student introduce themselves [in the forum]. And I really pushed them hard to make sure they all went and introduced themselves. And then I responded to every one of the introductions, so that they would know that I know that they were there. And that gave me some idea of who was there.

Several instructors also encouraged students to share their needs with them at the beginning of the semester, because once they knew the needs or problems, they could find solutions to address them. They then reminded students throughout the semester that they could come to the instructor with any problem.

One participant shared:

I told them, if you let me know what you need, I will do my best. But if you don't, there is no way for me to know. Actually, I asked about them, like, if there's anything that I can help, if there's anything I need to know, at the beginning of the semester, like as the class welcome survey. So, sometimes they open up about the individual challenges that they anticipate participating in the class. So, I make necessary adjustments.

Instructors also discussed the importance of assessing and building on their students' prior knowledge, or lack thereof, whether it be in terms of theories and concepts related to course objectives or technological skills needed to perform in their course. One instructor explained that because it is difficult with many cohorts to have a clear idea of the level or extent of their knowledge, he often breaks down a concept without having to do a review for everyone, so that "students who may be a little disadvantaged in terms of quality of education or life experience don't feel like they have to ask for it, because it's already covered."

As the semester progressed, several instructors made sure to take the pulse of the class through polls such as Poll Guru, and to pay attention to student reactions or comments.

Ensuring accessibility of courses and resources

Instructors shared four actions needed to ensure accessibility of courses and resources to students, a mandatory factor if the goal is to provide an equitable education to all groups without exception. These actions are 1) considering accessible open-source textbooks to minimize financial challenges, 2) offering flexible modalities to students so they can choose how to attend classes or meet with instructors based on their situation, 3) allowing for alternative exams, 4) using affordable, accessible, and intuitive technologies to support flexibility in courses.

Several instructors shared that they are moving away from expensive textbooks, "trying to avoid [students] having to buy books, which is probably not popular with publishers, but trying to keep the cost down and make it accessible," and are actively looking for articles that are available online, through the institution's library, or are open access that would cover the content they need for their courses. One participant shared that while using used copies is an option, these copies are outdated and with the accelerated development of knowledge, current texts are more relevant, except for those that cover basic concepts and theories. Even then, finding the texts through an open access venue was ideal. Blogs and professional articles, such as those published on the Conversation platform, were among the resources that instructors asked students to read.

Given the heterogeneity of students in many of the classrooms, their schedules, Internet connections, access to devices, to name a few, instructors advocated for offering flexible modalities to students, whether it was attending their classes or meeting with them outside of class. The benefits of such flexibility were experienced by both students and faculty. Some examples of what participants shared were:

It's most important to me that students can attend class. And so, I allow them to choose the modality that they're most comfortable with. And I encourage them to be in person and the vast majority are, but what this allows for someone who isn't feeling well, or if they need to travel for personal reasons or work, they're still able to attend class. And so, both the rooms I teach in are equipped with cameras and interactive features. And so, I'm able to communicate with the online students and then the students can see each other both those in the classroom can see those online and vice versa.

I thought that face-to-face office hours were great. And now starting from now until the end of my teaching career maybe I will never have a face-to-face office hour anymore. I will always have them remotely because I think this is more flexible. We are in a three-campus situation. Students might have been taking courses in any of these campuses and expecting them to be present in my office within my office hour is not reasonable. So, I'm having like this policy of having remote office hours, which is something I learned from the pandemic.

Stable Internet connection and accessibility to proper and performing devices were not a given for all students, which compromised students' performances in online exams. Several instructors opted for making sure that their online course materials and activities are accessible and adaptable for students with lower quality internet, such as providing alternative assignments or ensuring that online resources and activities can be accessed on a cell phone in case their computer cannot run it. This is particularly important in Saskatchewan, for example, where half of the population is in rural settings and may face connectivity issues that can negatively impact their academic performance and create inequitable outcomes compared to in-person learning. According to instructors, it's important to take into account not only the university's infrastructure but also the students' infrastructure and internet connection quality.

The use of technology to support faculty efforts to provide accessible and flexible learning experiences for students was raised by instructors. They discussed providing transcripts and captions when using videos, whether the videos were created by professors, captured via web-conferencing (such as Zoom), or viewed on YouTube or other online platform. One participant noted that "for me, in the age of masks, it's helped me make sure that I'm actually speaking in class and that my words are coming through clearly. Another professor shared the different applications and platforms he uses when teaching online:

I think the most interesting one was the intro course, what I did was I had roughly half of the students online, half in person. And I was teaching online. So, I was, I was basically online, presenting the class and the TA was in the classroom, projecting my stream, basically. And I simultaneously streamed it on Zoom and Twitch, if you're familiar with Twitch, and that gave me a lot more functionality, which I can bring in different elements. So, like, I can switch, you know, like, in my lecture I have my picture. I have my chat right on the stream and on the screen. Right now, there's no chat. So, you know, it would show up if I say write something. Yeah, so there's my chat. And then I also have the Twitch chat here. And so, that is basically this class has a lot of team activities. And so, the students go into teams based on their preference to be in person or online.

While the flexibility of participation might suggest or predict that most students would choose to participate online, one participant noted that the design of the class experience is an important factor in determining student choice and motivation to participate in person.

I said, watch these videos; have these slides. And if, when you feel good, if you don't have any symptoms, come to class, otherwise, you will not miss anything. I will post the practice questions, the answers and everything. Come to class, if you want to do the hands-on experience, we can solve the questions together, I will answer your questions. And I will use the rest of the class like the rest of the two hours as an open office hour. And I was thinking that since I'm giving this many flexibilities, no one will show up, because everything will be available, these videos or the questions or the practices. And every week, I had an attendance, I don't take attendance; there's no in class participation points anymore. And the class averages were 85 to 90%. They were all showing up even though they don't have to. Because they think that, like it's important to have the experience in class. And I can fix the issues about the models and the way that they approach it, right, so that they don't have to figure these out by themselves.

Exploring a variety of pedagogical approaches and strategies

Pedagogical approaches were a critical factor in how participants determined the level of quality, equity, and inclusiveness of learning experiences. These approaches included 1) connecting with students, 2) establishing communication channels and expectations, 3) discussing why a subject or a skill needs to be learned or developed, 4) challenging students, 5) learning and using innovative and engaging approaches enhanced by technology, 6) diversifying resources, 7) making the learning experience fun, 8) providing real-world, tangible experiences, that promote socio-cultural learning, 9) integrating students' experiences and student representations, 10) coaching students and providing constructive and formative feedback, 11) incorporating student feedback, 12) using breakout rooms and chat to check in with students in real time, 13) remembering that visuals matter and 14) highlighting student strengths and creating opportunities for students to showcase their work.

From day one, participants planned strategies to connect with students, as one participant expressed:

In all the courses I teach, I do this. I call it launching and landing. And so, we launched the course together, and then we land together. And I always have a launch question that's unrelated to course content or anything. And just to kind of allow us to connect, something like what are you doing right now to push your comfort zone? And I'll say, you know, it could be in your personal life or professional life.

Setting expectations from the outset for both students and instructors was another strategic element that faculty members used, especially to facilitate communication, taking into account their other responsibilities in the process besides teaching and their mental health. For example, some participants kept the chat window of their courses open, which many students used to ask questions, so that they could provide answers in a timely manner and in a way that worked for them. Instructors were also concerned with finding ways to manage the flow of messages, as one participant explained:

Being a [] head, having other responsibilities, I mean, children, my own mental health and all this as well, having so many meetings all the time, I just couldn't [have continuous back and forth short messages with students]. So, modelling what I want to see from them and lowering expectations in that way as well helps a lot.

Although instructors had their own preferences when it came to communicating with students, they stressed the importance of recognizing that students now have access to different and multiple digital communication tools and that they should not impose their communication tool preferences on them.

Participants emphasized the value of discussing with students why they need to learn a subject or develop a skill and how it will affect their performance once they enter the workforce. This sharing not only influences students' motivation, but also encourages them to ask questions, as one participant noted, "It's very important to me that students always know why they're doing something so that they can ask questions" and that learning "becomes a practical matter because they know why they're learning things" [] "they're going to have to use these skills and competencies to answer these questions [identified at the beginning of the course] and then be able to use [them] in other settings. So that is very clear to me at the very beginning." Challenging students in the right way also motivated them to find answers based on informed choices.

Instructors shared that using innovative and engaging instructional approaches, most often supported by technology, required relinquishing control and learning.

Now students live as children live digital lives inside, okay. So, we must be open to other experiences, I think that a lot of people just aren't. So, if we have actual pedagogical reasons, and we're not just projecting our own preferences, or desires or past, our own expectations on what we believe is best for people, then things will be a little different. And this is where, you know, thinking through pedagogy, and what we're able to offer, given who we are, where we're at right now, and given the research, that the research has been done in education departments, for the most part, then making decisions on that basis. That would require learning and giving up some control.

Some instructors used flipped classrooms. They provided students with pre-recorded videos and materials that they could watch or review at their convenience. One participant shared that, once in class, whether online or in person, he asked students to complete online quizzes individually, then put them in groups where they had to discuss the answers and resubmit the quiz answers as a team. They had the opportunity to discuss, argue, and try to convince each other about what the answers should be. This practice helped students to construct their knowledge collectively while dealing with uncertainty in their answers. To encourage discussion and sharing of ideas, one participant used Google Jamboard, where the group gave their input, although not all of them liked the platform and preferred to use a different platform.

In some classes, students had their laptops open and in many cases were also on their phones. Instead of chastising them for being distracted, one participant shared that she intentionally pretended to miss some information and asked students to Google it for her. This got the students' attention back.

Several instructors began including a variety of content resources, as one, as one participant shared:

For example, for my intro psych class, I teach my lecture, the asynchronous and synchronous components, but I also include a bunch of resources for each week. So, some videos like Crash Course Psychology, I'll include some science videos, just things to get students interested and maybe understand the concepts better. Or also some TEDx stuff or TED Talks. It doesn't necessarily cover the exact material that I cover or the exact way that I would cover it. But it provides more of a different perspective and additional things to help someone who's struggling.

Instructors emphasized the importance of providing real and tangible experiences, including experiential work, to promote cultural learning. They suggested creating mixed groups or hybrid opportunities to encourage interaction with people from different backgrounds so that students can learn to understand and adapt to different cultural contexts. Instructors also recommended engaging people emotionally through small, eye-opening experiences that take them out of their comfort zone, as shared by one participant:

If you don't have an international audience, then I usually make games that take people out of their comfort zone. And then it's like, okay, what did you just do? How did that make you feel and stuff like that? So, this is exactly how you're going to feel, or this is how you might feel when you're in a different context. A very simple thing that I think most of my colleagues and intercultural people do is ask people to write with the wrong hand. And then you can say, okay, when you rent a car and you happen to be in Japan, well, then they drive on the other side of the road and the wheels on the other side. So, it's the same thing. The act of driving is the same, but you'd have to unlearn and relearn. And that is what cultural learning is all about. And so having these little eye-opening experiences that engage people emotionally, that's very important.

In addition, they stressed the importance of knowing the subject well enough to not only teach what's in the textbook, but to expand on it and provide real-world and tangible examples.

Instructors valued integrating students' experiences and representations into the learning experiences they created. By allowing students to reflect on their own experiences and apply skills in the context of their own lives, instructors aimed to make their classes more interesting and relevant to students. In addition, inclusivity in terms of the authors, topics, and subtopics chosen, as well as awareness of different backgrounds and religious holidays, was critical to ensuring that all students felt represented and that their lived experiences were acknowledged, as the following example illustrates:

Inclusivity is so important in terms of the authors that I choose, the themes that I choose, and the subtopics, so that students can all feel that I'm talking about them at some point. I think that what is being promoted is their experience, that they know that it is reaching their lived experience. So that's the right way to look at it as a community. I think the other part is being inclusive of a lot of different backgrounds. So being aware of other religious holidays, for example, that I've included in my curriculum instead of just the Christian ones, which most of the time are already accounted for. So that would be another piece, I think.

Instructors believed that providing feedback was an essential part of the learning experience, and they encouraged students to take risks and make mistakes. They also believed in providing opportunities for revision and resubmission, and in helping students set goals and guiding them toward completion of their projects. They structured their assessments to be largely participatory, focusing on the process of engaging in the activity as much as the task itself. They were also mindful of their students' mental health and tried to remove any barriers that might prevent them from engaging with the material. One instructor shared:

I try to structure it so that the formative assessments are largely participation grades, like if you do it, you try to get credit for it. Because I want everybody to feel comfortable taking risks. A lot of times if people don't get full credit because they just missed partial instructions or whatever, I'll leave them a note like, hey, email me, you didn't answer question four. Email me, question four, I'm going to change that grade. And I think that's the mental health part of it. All right. Is that I don't want like somebody missing a sentence to be the thing that causes them not to do well in class; I want them to engage with the question so they can give their cognitive piece, but I think in the merits to my formative assessments along the way, I really try to structure them to be things that like, yes, they help me check for understanding. But the process of engaging in that activity is just as much of a learning experience as everything that came before it. So, it's not just an assignment at the end, it's part of the learning experience.

Another instructor mentioned the importance of coaching and being available to students even if they don't seek help themselves, but also listening to students and incorporating their feedback as mentioned by one instructor:

Last spring, I was teaching a class and the students pointed out that I wasn't using inclusive language. And that was really helpful to me. And I just don't do it automatically, even when I introduce myself today. They wanted me to use the pronouns that I prefer when I introduce myself. I tried to do that with this class because I understand that it's important to them and it allows people to feel included and to be able to say who they are without fear of, you know, not feeling included, I guess.

Several instructors advocated the use of breakout rooms to check on students and facilitate group discussions in online classes. By using breakout rooms, instructors can easily drop in and check on student progress during group activities. According to the participants, breakout rooms help students interact and build relationships virtually while providing an effective way to understand where students are by paying attention to their conversations.

Instructors shared ideas about creating opportunities for students to showcase their work and highlighting students' strengths. One instructor changed the final deliverable of the course to a showcase event where students presented their findings to community partners and university leaders. Another created a leadership team where everyone had a different role and contributed equally, highlighting their strengths and the importance of inclusivity.

Interestingly, several instructors insisted on making the learning experience "fun", both for themselves and for their students, through using animations and videos to engage students, and incorporating different filters and sound effects to add variety and interest to lectures. One participant shared his practice:

With Snap Cam, you can have a lot of different filters. So, for example I can change my filter to whatever you want, you can be a mad scientist, we talked about sustainability and dinosaurs and stuff. So, I had to be a dinosaur for a minute. I'm Daft Punk sometimes and I can do the Daft Punk voice. So sometimes Daft Punk would come in and introduce the lecture. Or another one was Gollum, I was talking about the iron ring, which is unique to engineering. So, I had to bring in Gollum to talk about rings. I added the filters, I added the sound effects, which is just another filter, so it's not really a big deal.

Some also went into the details of visuals, reminding us that visuals matter and deserve special attention.



Ensuring focused, equitable, and inclusive assessment of learning

Instructors agreed that quality teaching goes hand in hand with quality assessment of learning that is focused, inclusive, and equitable. They shared the following actions to ensure this: 1) opting for knowledge transfer rather than knowledge testing, 2) allowing flexibility in the type, format, medium and modality of assignments and their due dates, 3) promoting ownership through allowing for choice, engaging students in real authentic projects and encouraging their creativity, 4) using and explaining grading rubrics and innovating with criteria, 5) holding review sessions, scaffolding for the summative assessment and co-assessing work with students, 6) viewing assessment as a shared responsibility and staying away from assessment designs that lead to policing students, and 7) tailoring the design of exams to adapt to the mental health situation of students and their initial level, even going with an ungraded assessment.

Participants believe that closed-book exams are outdated because students always have access to phones and technology. Instead, they prefer to test their students' ability to apply knowledge rather than their ability to memorize it.

One idea that was frequently mentioned by participants was the need for flexibility in course policies and assignments. Providing flexibility in deadlines and assignment formats, such as offering a variety of ways for students to assess their knowledge, was suggested as a way to accommodate diverse learning needs and support the mental health of students who may be experiencing challenges outside of the classroom. One participant explained:

I also think that this policy or practice that I have in my classes for flexible deadlines really helps with mental health because I've had students email me and say, "I'm just having a really hard time with my mental health. Can I have an extra extension, and I just automatically give them two days, 48 hours at least, depending on their situation. And I think some students will write me a whole list of what's going on in their lives. And why they can't make the deadline. I don't ask for that. I don't tell them that I need to know that. So, I think it's nice not to have to disclose all that information if you don't have to. So, yeah, I like it when they can just say, hey, I'm just going to need more time.

Instructors emphasized that flexibility is beneficial not only for students, but also for instructors, as it can reduce the number of emails and requests for extensions. In addition, participants noted that providing flexibility can create a more equitable learning environment that takes into account the different circumstances and needs of students. Participants explained:

The flexibility issue that I mentioned, it helps both the instructor and the student in terms of mental health. So, it's not reasonable to keep demanding things from instructors, because I think they're always in a tight spot. But for example, how these flexibilities helped me to reduce the number of emails I got about, you know, excuses about, you know, can I handle this late and stuff. So it helped the students and it helped me as well. And I hope to believe that this is also a more equitable environment for everyone.

Building in some flexibility, like some easy outs for certain assignments, maybe like dropping the ones they're doing the worst, or picking and choosing the ones they want to turn in as long as they turn in enough. I think that helped me a lot as well. So instead of me being the judge of who needs that extension, why, it's just up to the students and it's already defined in the syllabus and stuff.

Another idea that was mentioned was the importance of promoting different types of assessment that support mental health. For example, reflective and meditative assignments were suggested as alternatives to traditional academic papers, which can be stressful for some students. Providing opportunities for acts of kindness and incorporating themes of equity and justice into the curriculum were also suggested as ways to promote mental health and support an equitable learning environment.

Instructors also suggested balancing synchronous and asynchronous learning to promote equity and support mental health. Asynchronous learning, such as recorded lectures and assignments, can provide flexibility for students who may have competing responsibilities, such as caregiving or work obligations. At the same time, synchronous learning can provide opportunities for engagement and collaboration with peers and instructors.

One participant shared:

Basically, online is also a balance. For me. It's a balance between synchronous and asynchronous work, right. So, you are online with people as we are talking now. This is live. We didn't rehearse this. But you could have sent me the questions and I could have made a video and then maybe I didn't like the first take, I would have done the second take. So that's asynchronous. And so, the evaluations when you do it online can be both as well. So, it can be a live performance. We had, well, maybe the craziest evaluation, we asked students to perform online and stage it. And so, they chose different backgrounds and everybody else who was not performing was asked to turn off the cameras so that all the people who were a group they were playing, so they were in the middle. So that's a live performance. But we also allowed people to pre-record it. So, we gave them a choice, and then we looked at videos. So basically, online gives you those two options.

Instructors suggested that allowing choice and creativity in assessments, while promoting practical skills and relevance, can give students a sense of ownership and engagement in their learning. In addition, authentic tasks and projects can better test students' skills and knowledge and prepare them for real-life situations.

One participant emphasized the importance of choice in assessment, as it allows for students to try different things. He noted that giving students more time to think about a project or assignment can help them mobilize their ideas and creativity around a specific project, such as writing a dialogue, letter, journal entry, or lesson plan. Another participant noted the importance of demonstrating skills in a relevant context, suggesting that students should be able to apply their knowledge in real-world settings. She pointed out that exams may not be the appropriate form of assessment and that authentic tasks, such as handling a situation in a case study, may better test students' skills and knowledge. One participant focused on promoting practical skills and employability through project-based assessment. He recommended that students should be able to create a teaching portfolio, which would enhance their employability and allow them to add to their CV. In addition, he suggested that students should have the opportunity to participate in live briefs or competitions with real companies, which can provide valuable practical experience.

Some examples of what participants said included:

I want them to be able to apply that knowledge in a way that's meaningful to them. So, I'm going to have them basically take on the role of the training administrator. And every week they get a new challenge, which is, how does this relate to whatever the textbook chapter is? And then the assessments would ask, you know, can they handle those challenges if they were to walk in the door.

In this class they had to do a portfolio because they're going to be applying for jobs, I want them to do this. I said, look, you're going to be graded on it, because the grade, you want it. But the truth is, you have to do it, you're not going to do it on your own unless you're forced to do it the first time, where if you're applying for a job, in which case you're going to do it now or before it's due, when it would be nice if you could improve it instead of actually having to throw it together when you apply.

So, they can actually create something that they can put on their resume and it increases their employability. So, if they go to work for somebody, you know, in the athleisure wear industry and they go, if I actually did this report on the night advertising campaign, it gives them a story to tell. And we make all that clear to them.

Participants shared ideas about the use of grading rubrics in assessing student work. One participant emphasized the importance of being creative with the criteria and considering various aspects such as teamwork, creativity, and initiative when grading, noting that in some cases, failure is only possible if a student does not engage in the assignment. Other participants stressed the importance of having clear grading rubrics to ensure equitable grading. They explained that they create rubrics for each assignment, from participation in a discussion board to a semester-long project. The rubric includes a point system and various criteria for evaluation, each of which is described in detail so that students understand what is expected of them and how they can meet the course objectives. Overall, participants believe that the use of rubrics is critical to ensuring transparency and fairness in grading, and that clear communication of expectations and criteria can help students achieve their academic goals.

Instructors highlighted the value of scaffolding and co-assessment in facilitating student learning and improving assessment outcomes. One participant described a method of conducting review sessions designed to scaffold student learning. She uses a variety of question formats, such as changing true/false questions to multiple choice, to help students prepare for exams. She also records the sessions so that students who cannot attend live can access them later.

Similarly, another participant who emphasized the importance of scaffolding for summative assessments introduces the assessment early and makes sure to connect it to what students are learning throughout the course. This ensures that the assessment is not just a stand-alone activity, but part of the overall learning experience. He explained:

It's really important to me that it's really clear to students how the summative assessment is aligned with everything else they've learned, so that they know how to apply the skills throughout. And so, it's scaffolded. So, usually, whatever the summative assessment is for the class, I introduce it at the very beginning, I can think about it for 10 weeks, just so they have a little bit of context in the back of their mind. And I keep bringing it up, like, you know, we're learning about this week. No, when you get to the assignment at the end, this is how you're going to apply it to make sure that they see how we're building to that. So, it's not just an activity that's tacked on at the end.

A third participant co-assesses student work by conducting half-hour interviews with each student to determine their final grade. She has a conversation with each student to arrive at a mutually agreed upon grade that takes into account the student's learning growth. The participant notes that the reporting system requires her to enter a numerical grade, but she prioritizes the student's learning growth over the number itself.

In a final example, a participant describes a method of co-assessing student work by having students anonymously assess each other's work. This helps students see a range of grades and defend their own grades based on their understanding of the assessment criteria. The participant then conducts an interview with each student to discuss their assessment and ensure that the grades are reliable and unbiased. Students enjoy the process and find it helpful to see how others approach the same assessment criteria.

Instructors shared the idea that assessment should be seen as a shared responsibility between students and educators, rather than focusing solely on policing and catching cheaters. The use of proctoring software was seen as problematic, as it can add unnecessary stress and burden to students who do not have a quiet and safe place to take exams. Participants suggested that the focus should shift to creating an environment that allows for intrinsic growth and documentation of progress, rather than punishment and reward. Educators have a responsibility to set a framework for assessment, but also to provide support and pressure when needed. As illustrated in the following examples, there was a call for a shift in mindset away from policing and toward a more collaborative approach to assessment:

I see assessment as a shared responsibility that they have to do, they're responsible for documenting, and they're inherently growing to determine their growth. And my responsibility is to set up the framework so that they can demonstrate it.

I don't want to be a cop. I go to supervised final exams with a book or with my laptop or wherever I work. And I just have questions where it's just impossible to cheat. I make it so I don't have to police the students. I don't think it would be that far-fetched for other disciplines outside of the humanities and social sciences to do the same thing. Really. It's just that the idea of having to police academic misconduct or various forms of cheating is so ingrained and naturalized. It's inescapable. So, I really think that assessment, right down to the red pen, is still a matter of policing for most departments. By and large, we have cops, professor cops. You want to catch the bad guys. They want to catch the cheaters. They're excited by the prospect of catching the bad guys, which by default makes them the good guys. It's protecting the institution, protecting the sanctity of the discipline, right? And we have disciplines, right? This is what we do. We do peer review; we do evaluations; not so much assessments. So, we go online and what do we do? We default to mandatory police surveillance software, proctoring software that makes students throw up in trash cans next to their desks.

I am outraged by the very idea of proctoring in this way. So, our default has been to add more policing, in society in general and in universities, which has added a burden to students who do not have a quiet, securitized space where they can be alone to study. It's as simple as I had a student who had to go back home, and his parents were upstairs, and his younger sibling was upstairs. What do you do when there's a lot of noise upstairs, you look up. But then they're afraid they're going to be accused of cheating.

We try to go to what we can control and try to control that. We can control the environment, so we're going to control their behaviour in their environment. So that's going to have a huge impact on certain groups. So, the kind of imagination that's needed, again, for us to get away from this assessment or this reproduction of the institution that forces us to sit in a certain way, write tests and answers in a certain way, show our compliance in a certain way. Our compliance and learning the right way and being formed and moulded. It's just perpetuated. And so, I don't think there's assessment in most courses. There is punishment and reward.

Instructors shared their experiences and ideas about tailoring exams and assignments to students' mental health situations. They emphasized the importance of building relationships with students, being aware of their concerns, and providing equitable and inclusive education that takes into account the individual needs of each student. They aimed for each student to understand and improve, regardless of their starting level, with the goal of progress for the entire group.

One participant shared how they changed the entire assignment for a student who had experienced a mental health breakdown. They changed the assignment format to be more therapeutic for the student, allowing them to use the course material and themes to speak more to themselves and their journey. The participant noted that the student did well and was able to complete the adapted assignment that was specifically tailored for him.

Another participant emphasized building relationships with students early on and being aware of their concerns in order to make necessary changes. They shared an example of a final exam in their class that had a time limit of four hours. A student expressed concern about the time limit, and the participant explained the purpose of the time limit and how they could make changes to address the student's concerns. The participant ultimately decided to remove the time limit, which reduced the student's stress level.

A third participant emphasized that every student deserves an individualized level of attention and that their starting points may be different. The goal is for the whole group to progress and for each student, regardless of their starting level, to understand and improve by learning something meaningful from the class, as they shared:

So, they are all students who somehow ended up in this class. So, they're all deserving of the same level of attention or maybe not even the same, sometimes more, depending on the backgrounds that they have. But so, the end goal where you're trying to align the students is one, but then their starting points may not be the same. So, for some students it may require more effort on their part and on my part, and for some students it's easier for them or for me, it's just not where they start, it could be completely different. I'm more interested in where they end up at the end of the class, like every single student, like at least they understood something about this class, why is it important? What are the specific techniques? What are some specific angles or skills that I want them to learn? Maybe not at the same level, but how, as a whole group, have we improved to some degree from where we started? Is there an improvement based on how compared to their own starting point?



Continually reflecting on their teaching approaches and practices

Instructors emphasized the importance of continually reflecting on their teaching approaches and practices. They discussed the importance of designing courses carefully, using an iterative process that takes into account learning outcomes, activities, and assessments. They recognized that trial and error is sometimes necessary to find out what works best for their students. In addition, instructors insisted on the need to revise courses regularly based on student feedback and to design activities that are authentic and applicable to real-world situations. Finally, they stressed the importance of being mindful of what they say to students to avoid unintentionally causing anxiety or demeaning them. In their own words:

When you create something, and you create it for the course. You are, it's you. It's who you are, and your heart is in it.

I do design, I spend a lot of time thinking about design in advance, you know, I don't make it up as I go. So, I like to think of the course as a whole and then break it down into, you know, I'm going to do each week or block, I don't always do it week by week, sometimes I do it in a couple of weeks as a block, that's the thing.

When I design the course, I tend to use a kind of iterative process, so I say, with the learning outcomes, the activity, and the assessment, so what are we trying to do, how are we going to do this thing? Or enable this thing to be learned? And then how are we going to know that we're there? So that's kind of the overarching, general kind of idea of the structure, but then within that it's going to be okay, what's going to be the best way to do it? So, if I'm trying to, I don't know, get them to practice and develop a skill, then what, what context do I need to create for them to do that?

I guess it's trying to figure out not only what I want to do but what's the best way to do it. And that's, sometimes that's trial and error. Because if I try this, it might fall flat, you know, and the students are hopeless, you know, they don't engage, or, you know, whatever it is that's expected doesn't work, or it might be really good. But I wouldn't have known, I wouldn't have, I wouldn't have come up with this on my own, you know, so trying to keep an ear out and see what other people are doing, following blogs and stuff like that.

I have to ask myself, why didn't they do it? Why didn't they get involved? And so on? Is it a problem with me or with the course design? Or sometimes I think we also have to accept that some people just don't want to do the work. So that's a reality.

And then there would be things that I would say to the students to try to reduce their anxiety and at the same time not make them feel like I'm demeaning them because sometimes you're trying to reduce the anxiety and I've said the wrong thing, I say I'll never forget, I told the student I've seen worse. And I was like that didn't go well, I'll never say that again.



RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of each interview, faculty members and focus group participants were asked to provide a series of recommendations to support a quality, equitable, and inclusive education that considers students' mental health. These recommendations were addressed at two levels:

- A) to instructors
- B) to educational institutions to better support quality teaching by instructors.

FROM INSTRUCTORS TO INSTRUCTORS

About instructors' practice

- Seek experts with different perspectives.
- Engage with campus resources.
- Learn about EDI and student well-being.
- Collaborate with your colleagues.

About course design

- Update and improve your courses regularly.
- Have the flexibility to do things differently.
- Explore virtual international experiences.
- Align your course with workplace expectations.
- Include diverse content that represents students.
- Develop awareness of student diversity as it is key when designing a course.
- Move away from Bloom toward critical pedagogy.
- Focus on students and their learning experience.
- Provide a safe and ergonomic virtual learning space.
- Prioritize accessibility.
- Set course learning objectives and align assessments with objectives.
- Redefine what is important and where learning actually takes place.

About technology

- Consider the affordances of technology and their impact on students, institutions, and societies.
- Explore and experiment with existing and new tools.
- Strategically plan the use of technology to best facilitate an inclusive learner experience.
- Choose technology that balances your needs with those of your students.
- Encourage community building through creative use of technology.
- Recognize the value of technology in reducing barriers to education.

About students

- Know your students.
- Focus on student individuality.
- Discover your students' expectations.
- Be human with your students.
- Respect your students and be mindful of your words and tone.
- Avoid false praise.
- Create a safe learning environment.
- Be responsive to your students.

FROM INSTRUCTORS AND CTL LEADERS TO DECISION MAKERS IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Toward a campus that meets the needs of HQEIE

- Foster collaboration and equity on campus.
- Promote an inclusive learning environment.
- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of technology and development approaches to ensure that they are meeting the needs of all learners.

Toward policies that address the need for HQEIE

- Prioritize the needs and experiences of students when making decisions related to university policies and practices.
- Adopt an institution-wide unified vision and direction with clear HQEIE policies.
- Allow departments time to develop HQEIE measures.
- Provide resources for HQEIE policies implementation.
- Emphasize HQEIE leadership.

Toward thriving students

- Implement a standardized system of support.
- Establish an effective online learning infrastructure.
- Prepare students for a diverse workforce.

Toward equitable and inclusive instructors

- Listen to instructors and capture their needs and the needs of their students.
- Empower individual technology choices: Provide options for technology use and support those who excel at it.
- Embrace faculty diversity. Recognize and leverage individual strengths for optimal learning.
- Provide resources and time for instructors to design intentional courses.
- Create professional development and mentoring opportunities to support instructors in their roles.
- Move from a culture of assessment to a culture of learning.
- Provide clear guidelines and scaffolding for alternative assessment methods.
- Allocate funds to provide instructors with resources that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.
- Evaluate instructor performance based on their ability to create a student-centred and inclusive learning environment.
- Support instructors in continually improving and learning from past experiences.
- Revise the staffing approach.
- Offer incentives beyond salary increases to encourage instructor engagement and retention.
- Create a supportive instructor community.
- Foster the growth of faculty leaders.
- Celebrate successes and efforts.
- Build resilient academic leadership.

**Toward
transformative
CTLs**

Engage CTLs in decision-making processes that affect teaching and learning.

Enhance the credibility of CTLs.

**Toward
a systemic
well-being**

Encourage the sharing of restorative practices.

Provide 24/7 online psychologist services for students and instructors.

Make instructor mental health a priority.



FROM INSTRUCTORS TO INSTRUCTORS

Recommendations addressed to instructors focused on a) instructors practice, b) course design, c) technology, and d) students.



About instructors' practice

○ **Seek experts with different perspectives.**

When designing your teaching activities, it's important to consider different perspectives and approaches. Seek out experts in your field who have different backgrounds, experiences, and ways of thinking. This can help you create more inclusive and diverse learning experiences for your students.

○ **Engage with campus resources.**

As an instructor, it's important to be familiar with the resources available to your students. This includes resources such as the CTL, psychological services, academic support services, diversity and inclusion offices, and student organizations. Take the time to explore these resources and incorporate them into your teaching as appropriate.

○ **Learn about EDI and student well-being.**

To better support your students, it's important to educate yourself on issues related to EDI and mental health and wellness. This may include reading articles and books on these topics, attending workshops or training, or simply having conversations with colleagues and students. By becoming more knowledgeable about these issues, you can create a more supportive and inclusive learning environment for all students.

○ **Collaborate with your colleagues.**

Instead of viewing your colleagues as competitors, work together to share best practices and improve your teaching. This can include sharing lesson plans, co-teaching courses, or simply having regular conversations about teaching strategies. By collaborating, you can benefit from the collective wisdom and intelligence of your colleagues and create a more cohesive and effective learning environment.

○ **Update and improve your courses regularly.**

Do not expect your courses to be perfect the first time you teach them. It is essential to refresh and improve your courses on a regular basis. Make sure your course content is up to date and relevant to current issues in your field. Keep your lectures fresh and ensure that your content is aligned with current workplace expectations. It is also important to consider the mental health of your students and promote a supportive learning environment. Keep in mind that it takes time, effort, and multiple revisions to provide high-quality, equitable, and inclusive education that considers students' mental health.

○ **Have the flexibility to do things differently.**

Be open to changing the course structure, deadlines, and accommodations, if necessary, to improve students' learning experience. Flexibility in course structure allows for improvement while the course is being offered to students. Keep deadlines flexible and consider the need for more accommodations or support for some students.

○ **Explore virtual international experiences.**

Online learning provides an opportunity to explore international collaboration and engagement. As an instructor, consider inviting guest speakers from other parts of the world to present to your students. This approach will broaden their perspectives and provide them with diverse experiences.

○ **Align your course with workplace expectations.**

Make sure your course content aligns with workplace expectations. Create a continuous link between what you teach in the classroom and what is expected of your students once they graduate and join the workforce.

○ **Include diverse content that represents students.**

Make sure that the examples and readings you include in your course are representative of your students. Use examples and readings that are diverse in terms of race, religion, gender, sexuality, and professional and economic justice.

○ **Develop awareness of student diversity as it is key when designing a course.**

Meet students where they are and ensure that they have equal opportunities to succeed in the classroom.

○ **Move away from Bloom toward critical pedagogy.**

Challenge traditional teaching models and consider alternative approaches that prioritize social justice, equity, and inclusivity.

○ **Focus on students and their learning experience.**

Design a course that is student-centred and focused on the needs of the learner. Engage students in active learning, and encourage them to participate actively in the learning process, through discussions, group work, and other interactive activities. Incorporate inclusive teaching practices that support diverse student populations, such as providing multiple ways for students to access and engage with course content. Foster a sense of community and belonging in the classroom through activities that promote interaction and collaboration among students.

○ **Provide a safe and ergonomic virtual learning space.**

Make sure that your virtual learning environment is safe, accessible, and user-friendly for all students, including those with disabilities.

○ **Prioritize accessibility.**

Make your course accessible to all students, regardless of their abilities. Explore the built-in accessibility features of educational software and tools to enhance the inclusivity of your learning environment. Promote awareness of these capabilities among colleagues and learners to encourage the continuous innovation of accessible educational technologies, fostering a more inclusive and equitable educational experience for everyone. Provide accommodations and resources as needed.

○ **Set course learning objectives and align assessments with objectives.**

Clearly define the goals and objectives of your course, and make sure that assessments and activities are aligned with those objectives.

○ **Redefine what is important and where learning actually takes place.**

Question traditional assumptions about teaching and learning and consider new approaches, situations, and spaces that challenge the status quo.

And there will be things that you didn't think of, and only get caught on the eighth time. That doesn't mean you were a bad instructor the other seven times. It's simply nobody noticed, including you and your students. There'll be issues of inclusion that you don't pick up on, because different people read the same words differently. There will be things you think are really, you know, very elegantly stated. And it turns out, somebody goes into tears by what you said. And it's like, I guess I won't use those words again. That's it, you avoid [those words in the future]. I think the opportunity that has not been explored is working internationally. So, if you do online learning, you can invite anybody around the world to do the session, right? So, people don't have to be in the classroom. So that can be anywhere. And you can also work with international groups, and you can make it more of a mixed experience.

In terms of inclusion and mental health, make sure that the examples and readings that you include in your course are representative. And I'm using the word really broad. Because what's representative I mean, that most people focus on, you know, colour, religion, gender, and sexuality, which I totally get. But believe it or not, there's a whole lot of occupational work and this is what I was trained to do. Look at occupational and economic injustice, and people don't talk about those things. And that's probably the ones that I get more fired up about, because I see them, I'm trained to see them better than I am trained to see other ones for some reason. And so, I do, and I know, most people don't talk about that.

Virtual spaces can be so abstract if we're not taking care of them. And so that's, I guess that my recommendation is to think of online spaces as physical spaces, to again, the word is aménager. Right? To set them up, to dispose objects or places in them, in an essence, particularly pleasant manner, like we would for physical spaces. So, they're also welcoming places where we can have interactions. So, they can facilitate interactions. To think of everything, we do as mediations. Same as in person, there are many issues in person: tables mediate; texts mediate; videos mediate, whatever it is. These are just different mediations for relationships. A lot about the attitude, I suppose in terms of practices, as far as EDI and the mental health will.

What is the impact of what I'm assessing on students' mental health? What am I really assessing? What are the learning outcomes that I wanted students to learn? What do I want students to know? What do I want students to do? What do I want students to become?

A graduate student is probably pretty good at student things. They can look at a syllabus and figure out on day one, here are the things I need to do to make sure I get that grade... So, making sure that your courses are not just about how well someone is a student.

You know, and to not just think school happens in these little boxes? I always call them holodeck. It's like Star Trek. Like, do we think education happens in the holodeck? You know, like, go outside? Like, there's, you know, things are happening all around us. And so, to worry less and care and care more. Like is that a thing? That is yeah, and that relationship is always first, and relationship isn't anti-academic. And spirit isn't anti-academic. It is the opposite. Relationship is excellence. Spirit is excellence. And it's, it's grossly missing from our old way of doing academics. And so, you know, so let's learn the lessons of the pandemic.

About technology

- **Consider the affordances of technology and their impact on students, institutions, and societies.**

Be attentive to the capabilities and limitations of the technologies you plan to use and how they can support or hinder learning. Do not rely on technology because it is "new and flashy" but because it has the potential to improve student engagement and your teaching approaches. Think about the broader implications of technology in education and how it can create new opportunities for accessibility and inclusivity.

- **Explore and experiment with existing and new tools.**

Be open to trying out different technological tools and platforms to enhance the learning experience. Don't be afraid to make mistakes and learn from them to find effective solutions. Be willing to learn and adapt to new technology and software, even if it seems daunting at first. The technology can be worth the effort you put into learning it.

- **Strategically plan the use of technology to best facilitate an inclusive learner experience.**

Use technology in an intentional and balanced way, considering the needs and preferences of all learners. Use technology to support a diverse range of abilities, and to foster active engagement and collaboration. Create a plan to address potential technological issues and troubleshoot solutions in advance.

- **Choose technology that balances your needs with those of your students.**

Consider your students' preferences and comfort levels when choosing the technology to use. Strive to find a middle ground between your comfort level and your students' preferences to optimize the learning experience for all. Ensure that the technology you choose is accessible and inclusive for all learners.

- **Encourage community building through creative use of technology.**

Leverage technology to foster connections and collaboration among students, both in and outside of the classroom. Experiment with new ways of incorporating technology to build a sense of community and belonging. Encourage students to actively participate in the online learning environment, such as through discussions, group work, and interactive activities.

- **Recognize the value of technology in reducing barriers to education.**

Recognize the potential of technology to create more affordable and accessible educational options. Use technology to reduce barriers such as commuting time and distance, and to connect with international students. Keep in mind the broader implications of technology in education and how it can create opportunities for a more equitable and inclusive society.

Some students, especially those with something like ADHD or some other learning challenge, sometimes they need that. I mean the fidgets spinner kind of disappeared. But sometimes they need that outlet. But they're still paying attention. They might be scrolling through looking at memes on their phone, but they're still listening. And giving them that space instead of trying to constrain them, I find actually really helps them thrive. I had a student who used to draw in class all the time, and she was really worried that I thought she wasn't paying attention and was bored. But I was like your scores show me that drawing is helping you somehow, right. So. So that's what I think the big thing is, know if you're going to use technology, know why you're using it.

I used to think that evening office hours like is a violation of my personal time and space. And I realized that before, with the typical on campus office hours I get completely exhausted answering many, many questions back-to-back. I realized that I'm like reducing my productivity during the day. Evening hours are more suitable and accessible for all the students, students who work and study at the same time, students who have courses on different campuses and stuff, and usually they work or study during the evening. So, when they're studying, you're there for them, and through Zoom. So, they don't have to even, you know, be in a specific place. I think this is also very equitable. And I hope to keep that for the rest of my life.

Technology is going to be very, very important, especially to reduce things like commuting time, the need to commute, you know. So, there are implications. There's ripple effect, right, in terms of how we build cities and campuses.

It is also fun for me, I use it to introduce new things, it keeps my interest high, you know, what new thing can I record? You know, so I'm like, I'm going to record little videos of all our staff, the staff that the students would encounter, right? And so, I have the dean and, you know, saying hi, I have our student centre director doing a little shout out to the services and stuff like that. I have the mental health person saying come see me. And so instead of just putting their name, if you have a little video of them doing it, you know, it's much more valuable.

I'm thinking about using the tools that are available and that you may not have been using to see how you can allow more flexibility in the classroom or remotely with learners.

Rather than asking them to conform to my way of doing things, I'm trying to find the middle ground between the technologies they're already very familiar with and what I can do with them.

You have to do your homework to figure out how things work and make sure that you have some kind of redundancy, you know, if something goes wrong, you have to be able to pivot to something else very quickly. You know, okay, this camera suddenly froze, okay, I need to do something else. So, you have to do enough to get comfortable. Like if you just try to bring it in a little bit, it's going to be more work than it's worth. But if you stick with it and get comfortable and, you know, learn enough about how to incorporate it. I think it could be very valuable.

I think people have different access to technology. So, in Saskatchewan, half of our population is in rural areas. And I know that some students have had trouble connecting or hearing because they're not connected properly. Even for things like when we did our exams online, when students had to go to the next question, so 60 multiple-choice questions. When you click next, some students it took them like a whole minute for the next page to load, that's really going to affect your ability to do well. So, it's almost going to lead to more inequitable results if you take that into account compared to somebody being in the class in person. That's not the issue. I think it's just making sure that we're aware of that. It can help.



○ **Know your students.**

Take a genuine interest in your students' motivations. Take the time to find out what is stressing them out and what is going on in their lives, as these factors can have a significant impact on their ability to learn. Design a course that is accessible to your target audience and adapt your teaching approach to accommodate different learning levels and needs. Keep track of your students' progress and talk to them if you notice any alarming indicators to find out what is happening.

○ **Focus on student individuality.**

Get to know your students beyond their academic backgrounds. Recognize that they come from different backgrounds and have different perspectives and experiences. This may include language, culture, race, socioeconomic status, and more. Being mindful of these differences and celebrating them can help create an inclusive and safe learning environment.

○ **Discover your students' expectations.**

Find out why your students are taking your course, what they want to get out of it, and what they expect from you. Their expectations may not always align with what you give them, so have an open discussion to set realistic goals and provide guidance.

○ **Be human with your students.**

Be humble, authentic, and real with your students. Connect with them by being yourself and letting them know who you are. Use friendly messages, humor, and personal anecdotes to create a relaxed and welcoming learning environment.

○ **Respect your students and be mindful of your words and tone.**

Treat your students with respect and avoid negative attitudes or behaviours. Remember that students are people, and you should never yell, scream, or demean them. Have a supportive attitude toward them and be transparent and honest in your interactions. Remember that your words and intonation can affect your students' self-efficacy so avoid language that undermines their confidence or makes them feel inferior. Use respectful language and explain why you are providing certain feedback.

○ **Avoid false praise.**

Give your students genuine, constructive feedback. Don't hand out As just to avoid conflict or to make your students happy. Instead, focus on providing feedback that will help your students grow and improve their understanding of the material. Remember, your job is to give your students feedback that will help them succeed in the long run.

○ **Create a safe learning environment.**

Recognize that many students are trying to survive a hostile environment and may face various barriers and obstacles. Allow students to feel safe and respected in your classroom by creating an environment that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion and where students can share their survival tips and create solidarity networks.

○ **Be responsive to your students.**

Be available and responsive to your students' questions and concerns. Show that you care about their progress by providing timely and constructive feedback and be willing to listen to their suggestions and feedback as well.

Approach teaching from the perspective of building a relationship with students, that learning is an interpersonal relationship. I liken it to apprendre auprès de, learning along with or close by with, alongside with.

Just sharing those expectations with students like it doesn't need to be a hidden agenda as to what we're doing, and we're all working toward. I think sometimes teachers feel like that's like, showing them how the sausage is made to excuse the expression. But like, if they know what the goals are, if they know why they're doing everything, you have more buy-ins, and they can file that knowledge in a way that has context. It lets them know, like, why they're working so hard at something.

Having clear goals. I tell students that I'm there to ensure their success. I want them to learn. Deadlines can work well toward that; they can also impede that. So, it's all about what are our actual priorities here.

Students are people, your co-workers are people, whether they are your faculty, colleagues and staff, everyone gets treated with respect, you don't yell at them, you don't scream at them. You don't demean them. I'll never forget, I heard a report of someone who's doing dissertation research on PhD supervision, and one faculty member told him this: don't bring this back to me until it's readable. You don't need to tell the students that. Instead, look, I'm about to tell you something. I don't mean to hurt your feelings. But it's a, you need to meet a certain level of clarity. My goal is for you to be understood. There's a challenge in that. And so, explain why you must give that kind of feedback. Be transparent, you know, answer students' questions today, and if you can't answer it fully, be honest. I mean because I think that's important. That's credibility.

You want to be aware of what's stressing people out, what's going on in their lives, because that's going to affect what they're able to put in afterwards. And so, you want to make sure that you design a course that is feasible for your intended audience. And the different levels are a little bit different.



Think about, well, why are they here? What do they want to get out of the course? What do they expect from you? What do you expect from them? What do they need to do? Well, in this class, you know, the things that they want are not always what you give them. And so, have a little fireside chat, you know, to say, you know, five years from now, you know, what do you think will be valuable.

I think this is something that we always do badly, that we don't know our students, you know, we either imagine that they're all useless and they don't learn anything in high school. Or they're just like we were, and we are surprised when they don't know certain aspects, but we don't realize all the things they know that we didn't know. So, when I say I get to know the students, I don't just mean that I don't have to speak English at home. Where were you educated? But also, things like, what are your expectations? What do you expect from this? What do you think your role is? Do you think you're a sponge and you just sit there? Or do you think you're in control of your own destiny and you have a growth mindset or, you know, whatever it might be. So just getting to know our students better.

Because for EDI, I think we just must, we have to recognize that people are trying to survive in very hostile environments and spaces with very hostile people who don't even recognize that they're hostile and, in fact, think that they're hostile.

Because for EDI, I think we just must recognize that people are trying to survive in very hostile environments and spaces with very hostile people who don't even recognize that they are hostile and actually think that they are being welcoming and allowing what we call EDI to be spaces of survival and safety and respect. To do their own work without having to explain themselves or discipline themselves, to share their survival tips, to create solidarity networks. To recognize that there are all these barriers and obstacles and obstacles that they must face. And at least let them deal with it and recognize that they're dealing with it. I think if we do that, we take care of a lot of problems. And then we can move toward, you know, accessibility in general, but we're not even there yet. We're a long way from there. We very often put the cart before the horse. And who am I to judge because I'm not doing the requests either.

The one thing that really pisses me off about our faculty, especially in undergraduate classes and lower-level master's classes, is that they give everybody an A, and the reason I have a problem with that is that your job is to give your students feedback, not what they want to hear. And oftentimes, if you're giving everybody an A, the bigger the class, the less likely it is to be an honest grade, and the student knows that. And the problem is that instead of making them feel better, you've actually fulfilled their insecurities. They're just waiting for the other shoe to drop. In fact, we are falsely praising people. And then the problem is that when reality hits them, it's worse because they've always had this nagging thought in the back of their mind. Something's not right. And then when we just say, oh, everything's great, everything's great, then you get this terrible grade. Nobody had the courage to tell you.

Just sharing those expectations with students like it doesn't have to be a hidden agenda as to what we're doing. And that's what we're all working toward. I think sometimes instructors feel like that's like showing them how the sausage is made, pardon the expression. But like, if they know what the goals are, if they know why they're doing everything, you have more buy-in, and they can file that knowledge in a way that has context. It lets them know, like, why they're working so hard on something.

Have clear goals. I tell students that I'm there to make sure they succeed. I want them to learn. Deadlines can help with that, but they can also hinder that. So it's a matter of what our priorities are.

FROM INSTRUCTORS AND CTL LEADERS TO DECISION MAKERS IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Toward
a campus
that meets
the needs of
HQEIE

○ Foster collaboration and equity on campus.

Promote collaboration and equity on campus by coordinating with the various entities on campus to develop common goals and plans rather than working in silos. Establish a through-line between academic student affairs, business and finance, the president's office, and other institutional initiatives related to equity. Ensure that all departments are working toward the same targets and goals and that everyone understands why those goals were chosen. Avoid working in pockets and sometimes across agendas, and instead, work to create a more collaborative and equitable campus environment.

○ Promote an inclusive learning environment.

Encourage collaborative learning practices and sharing challenges. Promote inter-institutional collaboration, sharing of resources, knowledge, and costs. Connect with national and international associations on inclusive and equitable education to learn about best practices at other institutions. Create more opportunities to connect with colleagues from outside your institution to share failures, not just successes. Emphasize the importance of sharing challenges to ensure that your institution is continually improving and providing the best possible learning experience for all students.

○ Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of technology and development approaches to ensure that they are meeting the needs of all learners.

What about coordination across institutional initiatives around equity? What I see a lot on our campus, and on the campuses that I work on, is a lot of people working in pockets and sometimes across purposes. So the thing that I think is really important for moving this work forward is for campuses to have some kind of through-line across academic student affairs, business and finance, the president's office, you know, what are the goals and objectives that you have set that everyone is working toward? And how are we being clear about that and why did we choose those?

There's not enough inter-institutional collaboration and sharing of things. Everybody wants to do their own thing, their own videos about X, Y, and Z. It's exhausting. And it's not needed. Right?

It's good to come and hear what colleagues are doing and so on and so forth. But if it's often just information sharing, right, that's what we're doing, and it's really highlighting what people are doing well, which is fine. But where we really need to share, I think, is where our challenges are and where we feel like we're failing but we don't talk about it very much.

Toward
policies that
address the
need for
HQEIE

○ **Prioritize the needs and experiences of students when making decisions related to university policies and practices.**

Recognize the unique experiences of international students or domain specific students and strive to create an inclusive environment. Ensure that research informs decision-making and supports staff members in their efforts to improve the student learning experience.

○ **Adopt an institution-wide unified vision and direction with clear HQEIE policies.**

Develop a framework that captures the institution's commitment to innovative HQEIE practices. Take a systemic approach to equity initiatives. Coordinate institutional equity initiatives across academic affairs, student affairs, business and finance, and the president's office. Encourage volunteer leadership and commitment to a more cohesive whole. Ensure that policies are clear and consistent across departments and initiatives. Set goals and objectives for everyone to work toward. Provide clarity and transparency about why those goals were chosen.

○ **Allow departments time to develop HQEIE measures.**

Require annual reports on HQEIE efforts. Include online learning modalities in HQEIE. Promote gradual change to avoid resistance.

○ **Provide resources for HQEIE policies implementation.**

Monitor the implementation of strategies and policies to ensure successful adoption. Provide resources, tools, and support for faculty and staff to implement innovative HQEIE practices. Ensure that team buy-in is valued.

○ **Emphasize HQEIE leadership.**

Appoint leaders who prioritize HQEIE and concrete actions for improvement. Identify and promote individuals who excel in HQEIE to leadership positions. Partner with potential agents of change who have effectively navigated the pandemic. Allocate or increase the budget for innovation in HQEIE. Provide funding for course redesign.

I think it's also important to understand the subtle differences between different kinds of universities and different kinds of disciplines because I think, you know, issues of inclusivity and equality are very different if you're doing medicine at Oxford University than if you're doing fashion at my university, we're not talking about the same kinds of students. We're not talking about the same kind of experience. Maybe a more uniform approach to these issues and start thinking in a more subtle, nuanced way about what that means. I think context, and then these universities that have high numbers of international students, for example, you know, you've got a whole different dynamic as well. So I think that a more detailed and nuanced approach as well as the kind of research that informs and supports the staff.

It's having a clear strategy that identifies those goals and then actually looking at how you actually implement them; but it's also very important to put some resources behind it as well, and some of the tools and support. If you don't have resources, you get frustrated. If you don't have an action plan, you get "treadmilled." So it's not just thinking about the strategy and the vision, but actually putting those other things in place. And the buy-in, you know, it's appreciated by the team.

People's commitment and passion to lead and volunteer for something should be part of a more cohesive whole, because the university as a whole needs to have that cohesiveness in order to move forward. Before it can enable customization.

Recognizing the individuals who have navigated the pandemic in a better way because of their circumstances, because of their personality, because of their situation and the support networks around them. And these are potentially agents of change that you can work with.

Toward thriving students

○ **Implement a Standardized System of Support.**

Create a system of standardized support for students to ensure a consistent and high-quality learning experience. Establish a clear framework for support with defined roles and responsibilities for instructors and support staff. Align support services to provide a consistent experience for all students. Establish regular check-ins and feedback loops to monitor the effectiveness of the system and make necessary adjustments. Ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation process to guarantee buy-in and support.

○ **Establish an effective online learning infrastructure.**

Create an effective online learning infrastructure to ensure student success. Provide the necessary technology and Internet connection so that students can access course materials and participate in online assessments without technical difficulties. Consider potential problems that students may encounter, such as a poor Internet connection, and provide the necessary support to address these issues. By doing so, you will create an environment that is conducive to learning, engagement, and success for all students.

○ **Prepare students for a diverse workforce.**

Provide students with comprehensive equity, diversity, and inclusion training to prepare them for the range of situations they will encounter in their professional environments. This includes addressing microaggressions related to ableism, gender and sexuality, religion, class, and other factors. Ensure that the curriculum is designed to provide students with the tools necessary to thrive in a diverse environment.

So rather than trying to put in place an intervention that helps a student with a particular disability with a learning accommodation for a particular course, we're trying to design our approaches to assessment and student support more broadly so that you've almost designed out some of these particular problems. And I think we are starting to see more of a focus on a kind of almost universal, holistic design around our approaches to supporting equity and equality. I think there's also a trend, and this would be kind of not unique, a lot of people in the university are definitely going to be talking about equity.

There have been a lot of students who have been incredibly vocal about some of the microaggressions that have occurred in the classroom and the need to address those. And that's a range of things from ableism to gender and sexuality, to religion, to class, to right, I mean, there are a lot of different things... And I don't think the curriculum is helping students to be professionally prepared to deal with that.

Our students are going to be hybrid workers. They have already been doing this kind of virtual teamwork if you look at the literature. So we have to hold on to the fact that some of this is the way. We have to, it's positive, it's expanding. But I'm trying to say, we need to build this and then get it recognized as one of our employability or graduate skills, which it's not now, and design specifically for it so that we use it appropriately.

Toward equitable and inclusive instructors

- **Listen to instructors and capture their needs and the needs of their students.**

Encourage instructor curiosity by asking questions rather than telling them what to do.

- **Empower individual technology choices: Provide options for technology use and support those who excel at it.**

Recognize and encourage those who are comfortable with technology, while providing face-to-face training for those who prefer it. Provide a safe environment for everyone who wants to improve their technology skills without fear of judgment. Encourage all instructors to use technology, while recognizing that different people have different comfort levels with technology.

- **Embrace faculty diversity. Recognize and leverage individual strengths for optimal learning.**

Recognize that instructors have unique talents that contribute to a diverse and enriching learning environment. Avoid overemphasis on technology, as some individuals may not excel in this area. Over-reliance on technology can be detrimental to mental health and well-being. Provide flexibility and opportunities for instructors to play to their strengths, whether through face-to-face or online instruction. Consider offering both highly flexible and traditional classes simultaneously to accommodate different teaching styles. Provide students with a well-rounded and effective learning experience.

○ **Provide resources and time for instructors to design intentional courses.**

Allow sufficient time and cognitive space for instructors to reflect on their teaching practices and design courses that are intentional and student-centred. Recognize the importance of preparation and provide resources for instructors to develop innovative teaching practices that engage students and enhance their learning experiences. Avoid overwhelming instructors with multiple course preparations and ensure that they have the resources they need to be successful in their teaching roles.

○ **Create professional development and mentoring opportunities to support instructors in their roles.**

Develop and implement a comprehensive HQEIE training program for instructors that prioritizes student learning and inclusivity. Provide ongoing support and resources for instructors to enhance their teaching skills and knowledge of diverse learning needs. Provide seminars, trainings, and webinars for faculty to learn how to implement HQEIE and understand equity measures. Create a culture of continuous learning and improvement by encouraging instructors to reflect on their teaching practices and receive feedback from students and colleagues. Encourage instructors to seek professional development opportunities, stay abreast of best practices in teaching and learning, and attend relevant conferences and workshops, and consider providing financial support for these opportunities. Allow time for professional development and continuing education. Emphasize the importance of active learning strategies and student engagement in all courses. Encourage instructors to experiment with new technologies and teaching methods in a supportive and constructive manner.

○ **Move from a culture of assessment to a culture of learning.**

Change the way instructors conceptualize their role as educators and help them see the student more holistically. Make learning fun again by emphasizing learning outcomes, not just assessment. Train instructors in evidence-based assessment practices and create alternative assessments that are more authentic and related to real-world experiences.

○ **Provide clear guidelines and scaffolding for alternative assessment methods.**

Create a checklist of evidence-based practices that support positive student outcomes. Implement alternative assessment practices that promote equity and diversity. Ensure that alternate forms of assessment are properly scaffolded. Provide evidence to support the robustness and rigour of alternative assessment practices.

○ **Allocate funds to provide instructors with resources that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.**

Recognize the importance of investing in resources and professional development to improve the quality of education.

○ **Evaluate instructor performance based on their ability to create a student-centred and inclusive learning environment.**

Create a culture of accountability by holding instructors accountable for providing quality support services that meet established standards. Include equity in the annual evaluation of faculty and staff. Ask instructors to report annually on their HQEIE goals and progress.

○ **Support instructors in continually improving and learning from past experiences.**

Encourage critical reflection on teaching practices and learning outcomes. Promote a culture of continuous improvement.

- **Revise the staffing approach.**

Prioritize hiring qualified instructors to support current workloads and ensure quality instruction. Hire EDI specialists and educational developers.

- **Offer incentives beyond salary increases to encourage instructor engagement and retention, such as flexible schedules or reduced workloads for high-performing instructors.**

Foster a positive work environment that values instructor input and feedback to improve the quality of instruction and address any issues that arise.

- **Create a supportive instructor community.**

Foster a culture of support and empathy by creating a safe space for instructors to share their frustrations and challenges, where instructors can seek advice, share experiences, and build relationships with colleagues.

- **Foster the growth of faculty leaders.**

Work with champions who are willing to transform their practice and engage in teaching and learning to move forward. Recognize that not everyone will be willing or able to change and focus on working with champions. Support new instructors and those who are passionate about improving their teaching practices. Encourage transparent design to make teaching easier and more efficient.

- **Celebrate successes and efforts.**

Celebrate instructors who are willing to make changes so they can become champions and encourage others to follow.

- **Build resilient academic leadership.**

Build resilience in staff and instructors. Define what resilience means and develop metaphors that can help foster a sense of balance. Focus on developing a sense of balance and an energy bank for academic leadership to maintain high resilience. Both bottom-up and top-down approaches are needed to be effective. Promote a collaborative approach to education and involve all stakeholders in decision-making.

I think we need to understand that different faculty members have different talents. And if we put too much emphasis on technology, some people will be left out. We had an incredible instructor. He was actually the chairman when I joined the institution. And this is a very sad story. This is somebody who was in his 60s, a fabulous lecturer, he was one of those people who was an orator, so you'd go to his class and you'd just sit there and listen to him. And when we went online, it just didn't do the same thing for him. He spent a year being miserable to the point where there are different versions of how his story ended. He died. There are different versions of how that happened. But suffice it to say that his last year as a teacher was one of the most miserable years of his life. He hated anything to do with technology. So, this is somebody who was taken out of his place, his arena was the classroom, and taken out and told that technology can offer you support. In his case, it didn't. In his case, he had a miserable last year and many would say that the stress and his own mental health during that year may have caused what ended up happening to him. So, the idea is, why can't we as an institution have different classes running at the same time, some of them high flex and some of them, quote unquote, traditional? Why should it be an either/or scenario when we're talking about equity, that's part of equity.

Some of the things that we're doing to try and carry this forward is much like it's been said, one, recognize not everyone's going to do it and for the person that hasn't changed things since 1972, I'm not going to spend my time trying to get him to suddenly integrate into some new magical world that he's never going to integrate. I'll wait for him to retire. Two, I'm going to work with the new faculty members, I'm going to work with the champions, I'm going to work with the folks that really do want to do it, and kind of carry that forward and say, thank you, what you're doing is amazing. Let's, let's get that out there. And three, push the idea that if you're truly working with transparent design, it does make your life easier, because you're taking care of the problems before they are problems, so that you don't have to answer all the emails at the end of the semester.

We need to build resilience in our staff and in our students. We tried to get a definition of resilience. We came up with metaphors like an energy bank, a sense of balance. So that's where I think we need to focus our energies, on this academic leadership. That's what we saw during the pandemic, the people who stepped forward, the people who transformed their practice, and they did it without knowing that's what it was called. We need to recognize that and build on that, because it's on that foundation of resilient academic leadership that we build resilient universities.

So many of us have created these resources, and we've promoted them, and then it comes out that they're just wrong. Right? That the evidence was just made up. I think it's really making sure that as somebody who's promoting different teaching techniques that you check and say, okay, wait a minute, is this supported? Or am I a person who is reading the latest thing in the airline magazine and I'm promoting it?

Whenever we're looking at an area of change, we have to look at it from the perspective of what the students need, but also what the staff need. So, it's both sides of the coin. I think when we look at EDI, it's that flip of the coin back and forth, what does it look like from a student perspective? What does it look like from a staff perspective? It's not necessarily the same.



We're introducing alternative forms of assessment, which I think we absolutely should do because it's a great way to support equity and diversity, we need to make sure that those assessment methods are properly scaffolded so that students have the opportunity to experience them and try them out in a way that they're comfortable with. But we also have to provide space and evidence. And by evidence, I don't just mean data and metric evidence, I mean evidence through the example of the professional judgment of colleagues that, you know, these alternative assessment methods are robust, they're rigorous, they're fair, and they're transparent, because I think that's an important motivator for a lot of academic colleagues.

I think giving some space to accept, you know, any innovation, it's hard, and we know about 30% follow because they say, wow, this is a great opportunity. 50% they resist and say, oh, I don't want to do it, maybe I won't get paid for it, you know, recognition. And you have in the middle like 20/25% who are watching. Either they move to the side or they move to the other side. So I think it's up to the institution to be aware of how we need to help. And transformation takes time. It's not like magically from one day to the next.

I think the first thing I would say from a kind of higher structural level is that people need time, we teach three courses a semester, you can't throw three new preps at somebody and expect them to do all three of them if you don't give them the time to intentionally build those courses. People would be willing; they just need the time and the cognitive space. The amount of time that's given, not just in my institution, but in all the other institutions that I've worked in, for preparation is not enough. And preparation is everything. If you get the preparation right, everything else should go smoothly. Give us time, I think there also needs to be an acknowledgement in terms of resources.

For the folks who are really, really tired, I try to remind them that they don't have to do everything at once. Change one thing now. See how it works, evaluate it, if it works, great, keep it, change another thing right after that, you know, and allow your class to allow your perspective to evolve. Don't get overwhelmed with the idea that all of a sudden, your class has to be completely and totally different. If you can move it along a little bit.

The best advice I would give to a centre director is to structure the programming around communities, because a 90-minute workshop is the glorified ad. And it doesn't create change, but a community of practice, a learning community, can create change and sustain it and create synergy. So, I would suggest structuring as much of the program as possible around that kind of construct and growing faculty leaders that way.

I think asking the question in the annual review is also a really important practice and piece of advice that I would give. And I had a predecessor who said her question was: What have you done for equity lately? I think that asking people to report annually on the goals they've set and the progress they've made is probably the number one thing that changes behaviour. And so, I can't recommend that enough.

If we could convince a critical mass of faculty to really rethink how they do assessment and do it in a way that's more authentic and related to how we think and do things in the real world, so that assessment is done more authentically, I think we might be able to get to a place where students are learning something that's more useful to them in the long run.

I think we've kind of lost the learning along the way, and even though it's learning outcomes, it's still all about assessment.

We are encouraging instructors to come forward with restorative practices they've used in their classrooms to help students cope with stress.

I'll be really honest with you, our main concern right now is staffing, the many sections that we have to teach. So I don't know to what extent I can make recommendations now, except recommendations like open lines for instructors to join and give them the opportunity to grow professionally. We used to have opportunities, like reading groups, we used to even have mentoring, like one experienced person mentoring two or three new people, but now we don't have the staff to even think about teaching overload to meet the needs of the many students who want to take the courses. It's been a while, and people are leaving.

I think it's important to have a balance, though, because academia, you know, being a traditionally patriarchal kind of environment and a highly critical environment, can be a really challenging place to share good practice because of that constant. Peer critique. And so I think that spaces for peer development and creating communities of practice where there's a supportive environment. And that's not to lose some constructive criticism, but not to push it over to that side. You know, everybody's had that experience when you send an article to a journal for peer review and you get these nasty, nasty reviewers, you know, and I think it's just trying to strike a balance between that and it's not about being soft, you know, and it's not about not trying to do a good job, it's quite the opposite. It's just trying to say that criticism for the sake of criticism doesn't always produce the best results. And you know, the best results are what we're interested in here.

I joined a group early on in COVID, it was a group for international faculty, I forget what the name of the group was. But at one point it was a group on Facebook. At some point it became a pressure group where people said, oh, but why don't you do this for your students? And why don't you do this for your students. And so a subgroup was formed called the Society for Stressed Professors. And this is a subgroup where professors could just share things that had happened in their class and their frustrations and you're not allowed to actually say, but you could have done this, you're not allowed, you're just supposed to join and say, oh, I feel for you. But that's it. You're just supposed to feel for the other person. And if they ever feel that one of the members is preaching, they're out.

○ **Engage CTLs in decision-making processes that affect teaching and learning.**

Ensure that CTLs have a seat at the table when decisions are made that affect them and their work. Provide a platform for CTLs to voice their opinions and suggestions on matters that affect teaching and learning. Consult CTLs early in the decision-making process to benefit from their expertise and knowledge. Ensure that the contributions of CTLs are given due consideration and weight in decision-making processes. Develop a structure or framework for involving CTLs in decision-making processes in a more structured and principled way. Establish a mechanism for collecting and analyzing feedback from CTLs on decisions made. Provide training for CTLs to develop their skills in EDI, effective communication, collaboration, and leadership to strengthen their ability to contribute to decision-making that promote and support HQEIE.

○ **Enhance the credibility of CTLs.**

Promote the value and impact of CTLs on teaching and learning outcomes. Share success stories and best practices of CTLs to showcase their contributions to the institution. Encourage instructors and administrators to actively seek out CTLs for advice and assistance in improving teaching and learning. Foster a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for decision-making among all stakeholders, including CTLs, instructors, and administrators. Recognize CTLs for their accomplishments and contributions to the institution, including through awards and other forms of recognition.

I think I'm realistic now about my circle of influence, but I wish it was bigger, I wish we had a stronger, more credible voice at some of the decision-making tables as opposed to, you know, being asked to implement whatever is decided behind closed doors. And sometimes we are consulted, but it feels like it's just for good measure or something. I don't know if there's anything I can do about that, but I certainly feel like there's a missed opportunity to tap into all of the expertise, all of the knowledge of a teaching and learning centre to help inform in a more structured or principled way what decisions are being made.

The other important thing for me is to celebrate. We don't do enough, we're like firefighting all the time. We need to take the time to celebrate.

○ **Encourage the sharing of restorative practices.**

Encourage instructors to share their best restorative practices to help students cope with stress. Advise instructors to address mental health in the classroom early in the semester. Encourage them to let students know that it's okay to feel stressed, depressed, or isolated, and to provide information about where to get help.

○ **Provide 24/7 online psychologist services for students and instructors.**

Consider having an online psychologist available 24/7 for students and instructors. This will give them easy access to professional help whenever they need it. The service should provide counselling and therapy to help them deal with academic, personal, and emotional issues that may arise.

○ **Make instructor mental health a priority.**

Provide support and resources for instructors who may be struggling with exhaustion or stress. Encourage open communication between instructors and administration regarding mental health concerns and provide necessary training and support to reduce stress and promote wellness.

For me, inclusivity and equity now means offering a seat to every student who needs to take these required courses. How will it affect the mental health of the instructors when there are not enough instructors? Well, I am not going to lie to you. It is exhausting. I mean, yeah, I wanted to take the summer off, really. But then there was no one to teach this like exit course. So, I thought, since I have this administrative role and I have to come to the department, I might as well teach. But you know, sometimes you don't think about how exhausting it is. And it is exhausting.

If I'm stressed as a professor, if my well-being is not being met, then that affects my teaching, and then it affects the students. Now it's not as demanding as it was when we started, you know, with COVID. It was needed. But now it's still needed, you know, faculty mental health, mental health is always needed. We're always under pressure. We are always under difficult circumstances. And sometimes we don't know how to channel, you know, these concerns and how to sort them out so that we don't have to deal with each problem separately. Sometimes everything is hateful to your mental health. And you have to sort things out.

Mental health is very important because you cannot teach if you are not mentally well. So, yes, and I believe that paying attention to the mental health of students and faculty is at the centre of what educational leaders should be looking at.



CONCLUSION

This white paper provides an in-depth analysis of the current state of quality, equity, inclusive education, and mental health in postsecondary institutions. By examining institutional definitions and practices, as well as the perspectives of instructors, CTL leaders, and decision-makers, we have gained valuable insights into the complexities and challenges faced in addressing these critical aspects of higher education.

A key issue that emerged throughout the white paper is the need for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to high-quality, equitable, and inclusive education (HQEIE) that considers students' mental health and well-being. While institutions have made strides in addressing these concerns individually, there is still significant room for improvement in terms of developing a cohesive strategy that addresses the interconnectedness of these aspects.

For instance, the relationship between equity, mental health, and well-being is an area where institutions could benefit from further exploration and collaboration among various stakeholders. Recognizing the impact of mental well-being on students' academic success and fostering a more inclusive learning environment that supports diverse needs are essential steps towards achieving a truly equitable education system.

Moreover, increased collaboration among instructors, support staff, and administration within postsecondary institutions is crucial. By fostering open dialogue and sharing best practices, institutions can better understand and address the various challenges faced by their diverse populations, both in terms of teaching methods and student support services.

Additionally, the mental health of faculty and staff members should not be overlooked. Faculty members have faced challenges during the pandemic, which has had a significant impact on their mental well-being. Institutions must prioritize support for faculty and staff members to ensure their well-being and, consequently, their ability to create a supportive learning environment for students.

The report offers a wide range of recommendations which reflect advice from peers and requests of those within postsecondary educational institutions who have leadership responsibilities. The emphasis in the report is neither on a prioritisation of these recommendations, nor on the feasibility of implementing them. It is recognised that substantial financial, technical and human resource commitments would be required for many, far less all, of them. However, what is evident is the interdependencies within these recommendations. Collectively, they evidence the need for holistic approaches to inclusive and equitable education, for strategies that intersect, and for leaders to engage widely when formulating approaches in order to understand how best to prioritise resource allocation, and to ensure effective integration of the efforts of key stakeholders. Much of what is outlined also sets out challenges to established cultures and practices around learning design which require sustained, committed, and visible leadership to change. Notably, for many postsecondary institutions, this means joint leadership by academic and service leaders if the interaction effects between learning and wellbeing are to be understood and addressed in the ways envisaged here. We do not deal in-depth in the report with such considerations but seek instead, to support awareness raising of the breadth and depth of consideration required if meaningful change and progress is to be made when engaging with the HQEIE. As such, we set out a call to reflection and action by those who are leaders and resource holders.

Finally, while the white paper has provided valuable insights, further research and ongoing evaluation of institutional practices are essential. By continually assessing the effectiveness of policies, initiatives, and support systems, postsecondary institutions can adapt and evolve to better meet the needs of their diverse populations, fostering HQEIE and mental health in the process.

In summary, this white paper underscores the importance of a holistic and collaborative approach to address HQEIE and mental health in postsecondary institutions. By reflecting on the insights shared and promoting collaboration among all groups of actors within the same institution, we can work towards creating an educational environment that supports the well-being and success of all students, faculty, and staff.



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THE RESEARCH TEAM**

LEAD RESEARCHER



Dr. Nadia Naffi is Assistant Professor of Educational Technology at the Department of Teaching and Learning Studies, Faculty of Education, Laval University, and holder of the Chair in Educational Leadership (CLE) in Innovative Pedagogical Practices in Digital Contexts - National Bank. She co-directs the Education and Empowerment axis of OBVIA, the international observatory on the societal impact of AI and digital technologies and chairs the Institutional Pedagogical Innovation Committee at Laval University. Naffi is affiliated with CRIFPE, CRIRES, GRIIPTIC, and IID - Institute Intelligence and Data

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Dr. Ann-Louise Davidson is a Professor of Educational Technology in the Department of Education at Concordia University. She is the Director of the Concordia University Innovation Lab, the Associate Director of the Milieux Institute for Art, Culture and Technology and she holds the Concordia University Research Chair in Maker Culture. She studies maker culture and learning in makerspaces, disruptive and radical innovation in pedagogy, and the ethical and social implications of AI and digital technologies in education. She is a member of OBVIA, the Institute of Applied AI and GRIIPTIC.



Dr. Laura Winer is the Director of Teaching and Learning Services (TLS) and Associate Professor (Professional) in the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology at McGill University. TLS was at the centre of McGill's pivot to remote teaching, providing critical support for instructors and students. TLS develops and delivers support and resources for both faculty development and student professional skills development programming, designs and supports digital and physical teaching and learning spaces and is deeply involved in policy work. She has published widely on a wide variety of teaching and learning topics, has received numerous grants, and collaborates extensively.



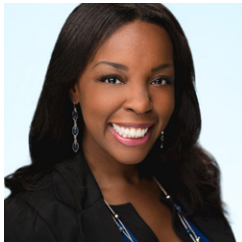
Teresa Focarile is the Associate Director for Educational Development at Boise State's Center for Teaching and Learning. Her scholarly work has focused on how educational developers can support institutional efforts such as program assessment and concurrent enrollment, as well as designing programs for adjunct faculty. At the CTL, she supports a variety of CTL and university-wide efforts, including the Course Design Institute, the Great Ideas for Teaching and Learning Symposium, and Program Assessment Reporting. She has taught at the college level for 18 years, the past twelve for Boise State, and the previous six for the University of Connecticut. She holds an MFA in Dramaturgy from Brooklyn College, and a BS in Theatre from the University of Evansville.



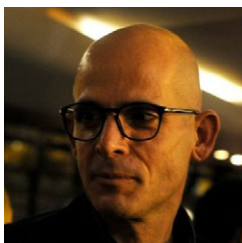
Dr. Brian Beatty is professor of Instructional Technologies in the Department of Equity, Leadership Studies and Instructional Technologies at San Francisco State University. Previously (2012 – 2020), Brian was Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs Operations at San Francisco State University (SF State), overseeing the Academic Technology unit and coordinating the use of technology in the academic programs across the university. Brian’s primary areas of interest and research include social interaction in online learning, flipped classroom implementation, and developing instructional design theory for Hybrid-Flexible learning environments. At SF State, Dr. Beatty pioneered the development and evaluation of the HyFlex course design model for blended learning environments, implementing a “student-directed-hybrid” approach to better support student learning.



Dr. Aline Germain-Rutherford is Vice Provost, Academic Affairs at the University of Ottawa, and Full Professor in the Faculty of Education. She is also Adjunct Professor at Charles University in Prague. Her research interests and publications include faculty development, speech technologies, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism in language pedagogy, and the design of culturally inclusive online learning environments. She is a member of the ICT-REV Training and Consultancy team of the European Centre for Modern Languages, which supports language education in Europe. She is a recipient of the 3M National Teaching Fellow Award, a Canadian award for teaching and leadership excellence in higher education.



Dr. Shantell Strickland-Davis is the Associate Vice President of Organizational Learning and Leadership Development at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, NC. She serves as the college’s chief talent officer and has the privilege of consulting with all units of the college in the design and development of faculty, staff, and leadership professional learning, programming, and resources that support a culture of institutional excellence. Strickland-Davis is the founding executive director of Central Piedmont’s first Center for Teaching and Learning; with a passion for faculty success, she continues to develop faculty from across the nation in best practices for teaching and learning excellence and teaches in an adjunct faculty capacity to ensure her connection to the classroom.



Danny Rukavina is Head of Academic Accreditations at the American Business School of Paris. He teaches Public Speaking, Theater & Improvisation for Business and Sociology. His research interests focus on emotional intelligence as a key part of learning outcomes in curriculum development. He was recently commissioned by the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) at the OECD to develop an overview of a course on an introduction to sociology that embeds the development and assessment of student creativity and critical thinking skills as integral student learning outcomes.



Dr. David Hornsby is a Professor in the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs and the Associate Vice-President (Teaching and Learning) Carleton University, Ottawa. Prior, to joining Carleton David held faculty positions at University College London and the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), Johannesburg South Africa. David's research interests pertain to the politics of science and risk in international governance, Canadian foreign policy in Sub-Saharan Africa, South African foreign policy, and the philosophy and scholarship of teaching and learning. David has published in both the biological and social sciences and is a recognized lecturer. David currently sits on the editorial boards of Canadian Foreign Policy Journal and Digital Policy Studies and is the co-editor of the Palgrave series – Political Pedagogies



Dr. Rula Diab is Associate Professor and Assistant Provost for Accreditation and Academic Operations at the Lebanese American University in Beirut, Lebanon. She teaches courses in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, and advanced academic writing. Dr. Diab is the founding director of the LAU Writing Center and the recipient of the LAU Faculty Teaching Excellence Award for the AY 2016-17. Her research interests include learner and teacher beliefs about second/foreign language learning; writing in the disciplines; in addition to socio-cultural and political factors in second/foreign language acquisition. Her research has appeared in journals such as System, Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education, TESOL Journal, Computer Assisted Language Learning Electronic Journal, and the International Journal of English Linguistics.



Dr. Saouma BouJaoude graduated from the University of Cincinnati, the USA in 1988 with a doctorate in science education. In 1993 he joined the American University of Beirut (AUB) where he served as Director of the Science and Math Education Center (1994-2003), Chair of the Department of Education (2003-2009), and Director of the Center of Teaching and Learning (2009 – 2021), Associate Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (2016-2021), and Interim Dean (January 2022- present). BouJaoude has published in the Journal of Research in Science Teaching (JRST), Science Education, International Journal of Science Education, Journal of Science Teacher Education, the Science Teacher, and School Science Review, among others. BouJaoude received the Kuwait Prize for contributions to education in the Arab World (2017), and the NARST Distinguished Contributions to Science Education through Research Award (2020).



Dr. Moira Fischbacher-Smith PhD is Professor of Public Sector Management and Vice Principal Learning and Teaching at the University of Glasgow. She leads the development and implementation of the University's learning and teaching strategy and has responsibility for quality and quality enhancement.



Dr. Alec Couros is a professor of educational technology and media and the Director of the Centre for Teaching & Learning at the University of Regina, in Saskatchewan, Canada. An award-winning educator, Alec helps his undergraduate and graduate students take up the incredible affordances of our connected world through the integration of educational technology in teaching and learning. Alec is also an internationally renowned speaker who has given hundreds of keynotes and workshops around the globe on diverse topics such as connected/networked learning, digital citizenship, social media in education, and critical media literacy, providing administrators, educators, students, and parents with the knowledge necessary to take advantage of and thrive in our new digital reality. Finally, Alec is a passionate advocate of openness in education and demonstrates this commitment through his open access publications, considerable digital presence and contributions, and highly successful MOOCs and open boundary courses.



Dr. Bart Rienties is Professor of Learning Analytics and programme lead of the learning analytics and learning design research programme at the Institute of Educational Technology at the Open University UK. He leads a group of academics who provide university-wide learning analytics and learning design solutions and conduct evidence-based research of how students and professionals learn. As educational psychologist, he conducts multi-disciplinary research on work-based and collaborative learning environments and focuses on the role of social interaction in learning, which is published in leading academic journals and books. His primary research interests are focussed on Learning Analytics, Professional Development, and the role of motivation in learning. Furthermore, Bart is interested in broader internationalisation aspects of higher education. He has successfully led a range of institutional/national/European projects and has received a range of awards for his educational innovation projects. He is President of the Society of Learning Analytics Research (SoLAR), the largest researcher community on learning analytics.



Dr. Annie Pilote is Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and Full Professor of sociology of education at Laval University. Her research interests revolve around students' paths and experiences in higher education, with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.



Nicolas Gagnon is the Director of the Teaching and Learning Services at Université Laval. He holds a master's degree of educational technology and is a EdD candidate in is a EdD candidate at the University of British Columbia. His teaching and research interests include pedagogical innovation with ICT, online learning, knowledge management, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching practices in higher education.

RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANTS



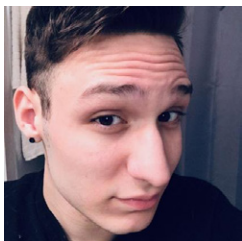
Stéphanie Côté holds a master's degree in education technologies from Laval University and a bachelor's degree in education, specializing in teaching French as a first language at the high school level. She cumulated over 5 years experiences as an instructional designer in private corporations and business school. She currently serves as an Education Specialist at TÉLUQ University.



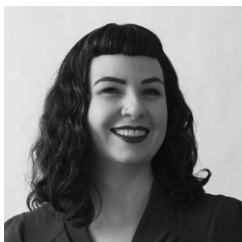
Valentine Kropf holds a master's degree in educational technology from Laval University and a bachelor's degree in "Primary Education". After a pandemic teaching year, she pursued her career as an Instructional Designer at the Ministry of Education in Luxemburg. Among her key roles she helps to design the national training program & shares advice to innovate and digitalize the national training offer during its digital transition.



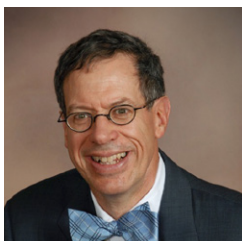
Nathalie Duponsel is a doctoral candidate in Educational Technology at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. Her research focuses on maker education and the benefits DIY, design, and maker activities have for student learning and the development of STEAM concepts and 21st century skills. Nathalie is currently researching how schools can optimize conditions to facilitate teachers' use of maker- and design-based pedagogues. Nathalie is also the coordinator of the Concordia University Innovation Lab.



Yannick Gallant holds a master's degree in the field of counseling sciences and a bachelor's degree in guidance counseling. He is pursuing a master's degree in public health and a doctorate in counselling sciences. He also has extensive experience in the political and administrative world of health and social services, first at the Ministry of Health and Social Services and then at the CHU de Québec – Université Laval.



Geneviève Raïche-Savoie is a PhD student at Université Laval. She works as an independent communication designer and teaches design at both college and university levels in Québec City (Graphic Design and Master of Design). As a result of this combination of experiences, she has taken on the role of a practitioner-researcher in the fields of Education, Design and Entrepreneurship. The goal of her current research is to cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset among graphic design students to promote the development of their agency.



Dr. Jean François Racine is an Emeritus Associate Professor at the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University, where he held the Shea-Heusman Chair of Sacred Scripture from 2019 to 2022. He specializes in ancient Christian texts, especially their narrative aspects and manuscript traditions. He has received the 2018 Graduate Theological Union Excellence in Teaching Award and is currently enrolled in the Graduate Diploma in Educational Technology at Université Laval.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1

EXAMPLES OF QUOTES ABOUT OR IMPLYING QUALITY EDUCATION, RETRIEVED FROM THE WEBSITES OF THE REPRESENTED POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Table 1		
Countries	Institutions	High-Quality Education
Canada	Concordia University	<p>“Next-gen teaching is about providing up-to-date, research-based curricula and instruction. This includes face-to-face meetings, virtual interactions and flipped classrooms, while establishing and maintaining a state-of-the art physical and digital infrastructure” https://www.concordia.ca/next-gen/learning/teaching.html</p> <p>“Next-Gen learning demands equipping students with opportunities that are open, flexible, experiential, and lifelong. It ensures student success by developing skills and imparting knowledge beyond the classroom” https://www.concordia.ca/next-gen/learning/student_learning.html</p>
Canada	McGill University	<p>“Together we contribute experiences, expertise, and knowledge to make substantial differences in our communities locally, nationally and globally.”</p> <p>“Engagement allows our students, professors and staff to become more aware and involved citizens. They use their learning, research and time to gain experience and improve the quality of community life.” https://community.mcgill.ca/about-us/</p>
Canada	Université Laval	<p>“Université Laval will provide a distinctive and memorable student experience in symbiosis with new technology and enriched by experimentation. Students will have access to a comprehensive ecosystem designed to boost skill development through increased opportunities for partnership- and research-based projects, internships, simulations, and explorations. The campus will be a space for meeting and interacting where digital tools go hand in hand with a student-centred approach fostering an active and revamped style of learning. Université Laval will assist and support its learners throughout their lives—from the moment they establish their first contact (in Québec City or abroad) or first set foot on campus to when they come back mid-career for additional training. And we will provide this support in an inclusive and egalitarian environment where respect and tolerance prevail over all forms of sexual violence and harassment.” https://www.ulaval.ca/en/about-us/strategic-plan/experience</p> <p>“Train engaged leaders to tackle the major challenges facing society.” “Rethink education. Make it an active endeavour that embraces both a digital and a human approach. Strengthen international mobility and student engagement in the world.” https://www.ulaval.ca/en/about-us/strategic-plan/projects</p>

Countries	Institutions	High-Quality Education
Canada	Simon Fraser University	<p>“We strive to give our students the tools and support they need to thrive by building a powerful sense of community and belonging from their first day on campus to graduation and beyond. And we work every day to promote a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment for the entire university community, with services and support that attend to the academic, health and well-being of every student from every background.”</p> <p>https://www.sfu.ca/about/student-experience.html</p>
Canada	Carleton University	<p>“The principle of equity refers to fair access to opportunity and services for all, recognizing that members come to the university with relative advantages and disadvantages. Equity considerations extend beyond issues of legal human rights compliance, take up issues of demographic representation and underrepresentation, and examine questions of power and resource allocation.”</p> <p>https://carleton.ca/equity/about-us/</p> <p>“It is a community that cares about and confronts some of the most challenging problems facing the world. Its successful capital campaign, “Here for Good,” underscores our commitment to make a difference in the world and to inspire and educate members of our community to be ambassadors for positive change.”</p> <p>https://carleton.ca/about/welcome/</p> <p>“Carleton offers many valuable opportunities to formally connect students’ career goals to their academics, all while enhancing the employability and learning for our students.</p> <p>Carleton offers extensive co-curricular opportunities that complement the academic experience, while also building the employability of our students and serving as meaningful experiential learning opportunities.”</p> <p>https://carleton.ca/career/wp-content/uploads/Employability-Framework-Narrative-Final.pdf</p>
Canada	HEC	<p>“Enrich and highlight the learning experience we offer, to properly meet the current and future needs of our students, the business community and society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer training, programs and courses tailored to the needs of our students throughout their careers allowing them to excel both here at home and on the international stage • Innovate in teaching, especially by drawing on new technologies, adopting new means of delivery and promoting multidisciplinary approaches • Structure and increase the range of experiential activities • Support student entrepreneurs in their learning and initiatives” <p>https://www.hec.ca/en/about/governance/strategic-plan/priorities-strategic-objectives/priorities-strategic-objectives.html</p>

Countries	Institutions	High-Quality Education
Canada	University of Waterloo	<p>“Students engage with problem-based learning.</p> <p>We foster teaching and learning of the highest quality at Waterloo, supporting the development of instruction by working collaboratively with departments and individuals at all career stages. We aim to inspire teaching excellence, innovation, and inquiry. Teaching at Waterloo has always been less about delivering knowledge, and more about opening doors to discovery.</p> <p>Our award-winning faculty bring diverse perspectives that shape the ways in which students think about the world around us.”</p> <p>https://uwaterloo.ca/about/who-we-are/our-differentiators/learning</p>
France	Groupe IGS	<p>“We are attentive to changes in the 8 industries in which we train numerous students and adapt our teaching methods in consequence. Academic and professional excellence is at the heart of our approach in order to ensure successful integration into the working world for all of the Group’s students.”</p> <p>“The Groupe IGS’s vocation is to give all its students the keys to employability, which are the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and the development of skills compatible with the current expectations of companies.”</p> <p>“We have set up innovative teaching methods that respond to the needs of the public with e-learning education, flipped classrooms, practical case studies and numerous medium-term projects.”</p> <p>https://www.igs-group-education.com/groupe-igs/values-missions</p> <p>“We encourage each of our students to surpass themselves and accept challenges as stimulating life moments. We want everyone to be able to transform challenges into professional and personal success stories.”</p> <p>https://www.igs-group-education.com/teaching-culture/educational-commitment</p>
United States	Clemson University	<p>“We provide students with the support services they need during their academic careers and as they develop into life-long learners. We also provide support to faculty and staff as they work to enhance the curriculum through clear academic policies and procedures, our shared general education curriculum, effective teaching and advising, and implementing engaged learning opportunities.”</p> <p>https://www.clemson.edu/undergraduate-studies/index.html</p>

Countries	Institutions	High-Quality Education
United States	New York Institute of Technology	<p>“As a dynamic, highly ranked, and accredited not-for-profit university, we’re committed to educating the next generation of leaders, inspiring innovation, and advancing entrepreneurship.”</p> <p>“By offering programs that meet market demands, our 100+ tech-focused degree programs and areas of specialization prepare students for jobs of the future, give them an edge in the marketplace, and help them grow as people, citizens, and professionals.”</p> <p>https://www.nyit.edu/about</p>
United States	University of La Verne	<p>“At the University of La Verne, our undergraduate curriculum focuses heavily on hands-on learning experiences and the crucial professional skills that you’ll need to become a success in the workplace and a leader in your community.”</p> <p>https://laverne.edu/admission/undergraduate/</p> <p>“University of La Verne is dedicated to the belief that a quality, values-based education enriches the human condition by engendering community engagement, scholarly accomplishment, and professionalism. Along with encouraging diversity, the university focuses on the individual as evidenced by its small class sizes. Professors are personally engaged and committed to helping students achieve their academic and professional goals.”</p> <p>https://laverne.edu/about/</p>
United Kingdom	Birmingham City University	<p>“Our projects provide opportunities for students and staff to design interventions that improve the student experience.”</p> <p>https://www.bcu.ac.uk/about-us/education-development-service</p> <p>“When you choose to study at Birmingham City University, you can be confident that your learning needs are our top priority. In addition to high-quality teaching and facilities specific to your course/subject, you’ll find a range of general learning support facilities which provide you with all the help you need to succeed.”</p> <p>https://www.bcu.ac.uk/student-info/learning-support</p> <p>“At Birmingham City University we are committed to transforming students’ lives and enhancing opportunity through education and advancement.”</p> <p>https://www.bcu.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/social-responsibility</p>

Countries	Institutions	High-Quality Education
United Kingdom	De Montfort University	<p>“Put together with continual input from leading employers, DMU’s undergraduate courses are designed with employability in mind and provide the professional skills and practical experience businesses are looking for.”</p> <p>https://www.dmu.ac.uk/Study/Courses/Undergraduate-courses/Undergraduate-courses.aspx</p> <p>“At DMU, it’s our goal to help every student reach their goal, so we have introduced a new course structure, known as Education 2030. The majority of you enrolling in September 2023 will learn in a focused ‘block’ teaching format, where you study one subject at a time instead of several at once. This has already proven popular with our first cohort of undergraduate students, with *93 per cent claiming they enjoyed studying one module at a time and 90 per cent of new students feeling they made the right choice in choosing DMU. Through Education 2030, not only will you have more time to engage with your learning, but you will also receive faster feedback through more regular assessment and have a better study-life balance to enjoy other important aspects of university life – meaning your new home at DMU is a supportive and nurturing learning community. Of course, one size doesn’t fit all, and there will be variations based on the professional requirements of your course. Rest assured you will still benefit from the same excellent experience, supportive environment, and friendships which last well beyond your time on campus – making university your new beginning.”</p> <p>https://www.dmu.ac.uk/empowering-university/edu2030/index.aspx</p>
United Kingdom	Buckinghamshire New University	<p>“During our 130-year history we’ve developed a high-quality, high-intensity approach to teaching, which focuses on real-world, practical learning and produces very high levels of student engagement.”</p> <p>https://www.bucks.ac.uk/about-us/quality-teaching-experience</p> <p>“The Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) is a national exercise, introduced by the government in England. It assesses excellence in teaching at universities and colleges, and how well they ensure excellent outcomes for their students in terms of graduate-level employment or further study. Participating universities and colleges can achieve a rating of gold, silver, or bronze – or provisional if they do not have enough data for a full award.”</p> <p>https://www.bucks.ac.uk/about-us/quality-teaching-experience/teaching-excellence-framework-tef</p>

Countries	Institutions	High-Quality Education
United Kingdom	Glasgow Caledonian University	<p>“At Glasgow Caledonian University we believe in exploring new and beneficial learning and teaching methods and technologies. Innovations in this area include our Going Digital framework and an on-site virtual hospital that helps train tomorrow’s nurses and midwives.”</p> <p>https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/learningteaching</p> <p>“The inter-professional simulation centre is fully equipped with state-of-the-art high fidelity simulators and recording equipment. Our simulated home environment provides a unique, adaptable learning space for community nursing scenarios, emergency ambulance callouts and occupational therapy assessments.”</p> <p>https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/academicschools/hls/aboutus/departments/nursingandcommunityhealth/interprofessionalsimulationcentre</p>
Lebanon	American University of Beirut	<p>“We are committed to providing quality, student-centred education that produces graduates with the knowledge and skills to become ethical leaders who contribute to our global society by building a sustainable planet with peace, dignity, justice, and opportunity for all.”</p> <p>https://sites.aub.edu.lb/transforminghighereducation/</p> <p>“Graduates will be individuals committed to creative and critical thinking, life-long learning, personal integrity, civic responsibility, and leadership.”</p> <p>https://www.aub.edu.lb/aboutus/Pages/mission.aspx</p>
Lebanon	Lebanese American University	<p>“Driven by the continuous change in the way our students learn and the implications for teaching, LAU shall build a culture that promotes innovative approaches to education; incentivizes educators to embrace disruptive thinking; and inspires students to become future leaders of innovation.”</p> <p>https://www.lau.edu.lb/about/strategic-plan/</p> <p>“Lebanese American University is committed to academic excellence, student centeredness, civic engagement, the advancement of scholarship, the education of the whole person, and the formation of leaders in a diverse world.”</p> <p>https://www.lau.edu.lb/about/mission.php</p>

APPENDIX 2

EXAMPLES OF QUOTES ABOUT EQUITABLE EDUCATION RETRIEVED FROM THE WEBSITES OF THE REPRESENTED POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Table 2		
Country	Institutions	Equitable Education
Canada	Concordia University	<p>“Equity involves the recognition of historic and current inequalities in the university community. Equity is the fair treatment of all community members through the removal of institutionalized barriers, biases and obstacles that impede access or jeopardize opportunities for all to achieve their full potential.”</p> <p>https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/provost/docs/Working-Group-EDI-Report.pdf</p>
Canada	McGill University	<p>“Equity, unlike the notion of equality, is not about sameness of treatment. Equity denotes fairness and justice in process and in results. Equitable outcomes often require differential treatment and resource redistribution so as to achieve a level playing field among all individuals and communities. This requires recognizing and addressing barriers to provide opportunity for all individuals and communities to thrive in our University environment. Several variations on the images shown below are sometimes used to illustrate the meaning and implications of equity.”</p> <p>https://www.mcgill.ca/equity/resources/definitions</p>
Canada	Université Laval	<p>“A principle that ensures that people, regardless of their identities and differences, are treated in a way that takes into account their particular characteristics in order to achieve the fairest possible outcome. This means ensuring that resource allocation and decision-making mechanisms are fair to all and do not introduce or perpetuate discrimination on the basis of identity. Equity is due to all persons, and particular attention must be paid to bias against historically disadvantaged groups. Steps must be taken to eliminate reported and documented discrimination and inequities and to ensure, as far as possible, equality of opportunity. This may mean allocating more resources to disadvantaged groups.” (free translation)</p> <p>“In terms of equity, under-represented groups are discriminated against and face systemic barriers in their daily lives, including in the areas of education and employment. At Université Laval, EDI-related measures, practices and initiatives are put in place to intervene in any situation or activity involving systemic barriers to the inclusion of people from these groups.” (Free translation).</p> <p>https://www.ulaval.ca/equite-diversite-inclusion/concepts-cles-en-edi</p>

Country	Institutions	Equitable Education
Canada	Carleton University	<p>“From the School’s perspective, education equity is a structural issue requiring an ongoing rigorous review of established norms and practices and the assumptions and values that underlay them. Education equity is consistent with, and necessary for, achieving principles of academic excellence and practice competence. The School of Social Work recognizes that is an ongoing process of development to which we are committed.”</p> <p>https://carleton.ca/socialwork/education-equity/#</p>
Canada	HEC	<p>“Equity guarantees fair treatment and equal access to employment or career advancement opportunities. It also refers to the efforts made to identify and eliminate barriers to inclusion.”</p> <p>https://www.hec.ca/en/about/equity-diversity-inclusion/understanding-edi/understanding-edi.html</p>
Canada	University of Waterloo	<p>“At the University of Waterloo, we recognize that diverse voices and perspectives enrich our teaching, learning and research. We are committed to creating a campus where everyone belongs, where we all work toward equity, and strive for a culture of authentic inclusion, even when it is complex and challenging.”</p> <p>https://uwaterloo.ca/human-rights-equity-inclusion/equity-office/equity-campus</p>
United States	Clemson University	<p>“Educational equity means that every student has access to the resources and educational rigour they need at the right moment in their education, across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income.”</p> <p>https://www.clemson.edu/otei/teaching-diversity.html</p>
United States	University of La Verne	<p>“...develops and improves collaborative relationships, cultivates a community that encourages and supports a climate that affirms diverse cultures, and advocates for equitable policies, procedures and opportunities for the University of La Verne campus community.”</p> <p>https://laverne.edu/diversity/</p> <p>“Equity in action being the intentional assessment to promote and ensure fairness within access, resources & opportunity while seeking to eliminate barriers that hinder the success of students, faculty, and staff.”</p> <p>https://laverne.edu/diversity/education-and-training/</p>

Country	Institutions	Equitable Education
United Kingdom	Birmingham City University	<p>“Equality is about advancing equality of outcome and eliminating discriminatory practices, allowing everyone to achieve their full potential. Equality is not about treating everyone the same; we need to recognise that at times people’s needs are met in different ways. Equality is supported by legislation in the form of the Equality Act 2010 and is defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission as ‘the state of being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities.’”</p> <p>https://bcuassets.blob.core.windows.net/docs/edi-strategy-2022-133052059348307679.pdf</p> <p>“Refers primarily to statutory compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the actions the University takes, through its policies and procedures, to prevent direct and indirect discrimination. It includes making sure everyone in the University has an equal opportunity to make the most of their talent and to ensure no one has a poorer chance because of where they come from, what they believe, whether they are disabled, including their age, sexual orientation or gender identity.”</p> <p>https://bcuassets.blob.core.windows.net/docs/equality-and-diversity-in-employment-policy-132272749792765655.pdf</p>
United Kingdom	De Montfort University	<p>“This is about ensuring that our processes, rules and regulations allow all to succeed, reviewing everything that we do and in doing that, recognising that historically the status quo has resulted in inequitable outcomes for minoritised groups of staff and students (...) understanding our students’ journeys and barriers and significantly reducing differentials between groups in continuation, attainment and progression.”</p> <p>https://www.dmu.ac.uk/empowering-university/edi-strategy/dmus-edi-strategy-equality-for-all.aspx</p> <p>“Equality for all will support the delivery of this strategy by enabling the four pillars to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create equitable opportunities to succeed by significantly reducing differentials between groups in continuation, attainment and progression. • Ensure diversity of researchers is sought and that research informs approaches to inclusion and equity - both nationally and globally. • Ensure dignity and respect are embedded in the DNA of the university and expect that the behaviour of our staff and students reflects this. • Work toward enabling diversity to be present at all levels in our decision-making processes.” <p>https://www.dmu.ac.uk/empowering-university/equality-for-all.aspx</p>

Country	Institutions	Equitable Education
United Kingdom	University of Edinburgh	<p>“Equity recognizes that each individual has different circumstances, this reflects the ethos of the WCB where we recognise, respect and value peoples differences and encourage everyone to contribute and realise their full potential.”</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/biology/wcb/about-us/working-environment-culture/equity-diversity-inclusion</p> <p>“Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and has the same opportunity to fulfill their potential. Equality is backed by legislation designed to address unfair discrimination based on membership of a particular group.”</p> <p>“The Equality Act introduced a new Public Sector General Equality Duty which requires the University to pay ‘due regard’ to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.”</p> <p>http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/EqualityDiversity/Strategy.pdf</p> <p>“Under the Equality Act 2010, the University is bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and must – in all its activities – have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act; • Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; • Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. <p>The ‘protected characteristics’ defined by the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.”</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/equality_outcomes_2021-2025.pdf</p>
United Kingdom	University of Glasgow	<p>“The University of Glasgow is committed to promoting and implementing equality of opportunity in the learning, teaching, research and working environments. (...) The University aims to ensure that all members of its community are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.”</p> <p>https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/humanresources/equalitydiversity/policy/equalitypolicy/#d.en.308440</p>

Country	Institutions	Equitable Education
Lebanon	American University of Beirut	<p>“Making higher education available and accessible to everyone, without exception, is one of our overarching goals at AUB.”</p> <p>https://www.aub.edu.lb/articles/Pages/International-conference-on-inclusive-education-held-at-AUB.aspx</p>
Lebanon	Lebanese American University	<p>“Providing access to a superior education for diverse undergraduate and graduate students and lifelong learners (...) Provides educational opportunities as one university with multiple campuses, each with distinctive gifts and attributes.”</p> <p>https://www.lau.edu.lb/about/mission.php</p>

APPENDIX 3

EXAMPLES OF QUOTES ABOUT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION RETRIEVED FROM THE WEBSITES OF THE REPRESENTED POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Table 3		
Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
Canada	Concordia University	<p>Inclusion is achieved when all members of a community are inherently valued and welcomed and feel a sense of meaningful belonging. An inclusive learning, working and living university environment embraces differences and offers mutual respect in words and actions for all. Responsibility for inclusion is shared across all members of the community.</p> <p>https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/provost/docs/Working-Group-EDI-Report.pdf</p> <p>Diversity is the representation of different knowledge, worldviews, practices and experiences within a community. Individuals may hold diverse, intersecting identities along dimensions of race, Indigeneity, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age and abilities. Diversity allows for richer cognitive processing and exchange of information, and enriches the learning, working and living environment of the university</p> <p>https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/concordia/offices/provost/docs/Working-Group-EDI-Report.pdf</p>
Canada	McGill University	<p>“Inclusion refers to the notion of belonging, feeling welcome, having a sense of citizenship, and the capacity to engage and succeed in a given institution, program, or setting. Inclusion calls for recognizing, reducing, and removing barriers to participation and belonging, sometimes entailing the change or reimagining of such institutions, programs, or settings. Inclusion means welcoming and valuing all members of our University community.”</p> <p>https://www.mcgill.ca/equity/resources/definitions</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
Canada	Université Laval	<p>“Through actions and policies create an environment where all people are respected for their uniqueness, valued equally, and have access to the same opportunities. At the organizational level, inclusion requires identifying and removing barriers (physical or procedural, visible or invisible, intentional or unintentional) that prevent people from participating and contributing. Inclusion is a shared responsibility.” (Free translation)</p> <p>“Distinction, exclusion or preference, fuelled by stereotypes and prejudices, whether conscious or not, that disqualify or stigmatize individuals on the basis of “race,” sex, gender identity and expression, pregnancy status, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion, political beliefs, language, ethnic or national origin, social and physical conditions, disability in any form, or the use of any means to palliate such disability. Thus, no one may discriminate in the exercise of his or her activities, whether it be studies, research or employment in any university activity. Discrimination is prohibited in Quebec by the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.” (Free translation)</p> <p>https://www.ulaval.ca/equite-diversite-inclusion/concepts-cles-en-edi</p>
Canada	Simon Fraser University	<p>“We strive to give our students the tools and support they need to thrive by building a powerful sense of community and belonging from their first day on campus to graduation and beyond. And we work every day to promote a welcoming, safe, and inclusive environment for the entire university community, with services and support that attend to the academic, health and well-being of every student from every background.”</p> <p>https://www.sfu.ca/about/student-experience.html</p> <p>“We believe that when everyone feels included at SFU, our campuses become more vibrant and alive with new ideas. That’s why SFU is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive community where all feel welcome, safe, accepted and appreciated in learning, teaching, research and work.”</p> <p>https://www.sfu.ca/about/equity-diversity-and-inclusion.html</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
Canada	University of Regina	<p>“Inclusive Education is a dynamic and flexible approach to supporting students with special needs in schools and communities.” https://www.uregina.ca/academics/programs/cce/extended-studies-inclusive-education.html</p> <p>“The University of Regina is welcoming. It’s inclusive and diverse, with international students making up 17.7 per cent of total students, and 14.7 per cent of students self-declaring as Indigenous. Our programs and resources on campus are here to help you succeed.”</p> <p>“The University of Regina is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and a strong Indigenous connection. The U of R is located on Treaty 4 and Treaty 6 territories, the ancestral lands of the nēhiyawak, Anihšīnāpēk, Dakota, Nakoda, and Lakota nations and homeland of the Métis/Michif Nation. The U of R Indigenous Career Education Department tailors its program toward First Nations, Métis, and Inuit University of Regina students.” https://www.uregina.ca/experience/index.html</p>
Canada	Carleton University	<p>“Inclusion refers to the ongoing process of proactively cultivating difference so that each individual can bring their whole selves and achieve their full potential in service of common objectives.”</p> <p>“For members to bring their whole selves in the pursuit of personal and institutional excellence, as much value must be assigned to their attachments to multiple potential identities and distinct lived experiences as to their sense of belonging to a common enterprise. This concept of Inclusive Communities therefore extends our understanding of Carleton University as a community of communities.” https://carleton.ca/equity/about-us/</p>
Canada	HEC	<p>“Inclusion is the action of creating and nurturing environments where each individual feels welcomed and respected in their differences, so that all people can participate fully in the School’s activities and their community.” https://www.hec.ca/a-propos/equite-diversite-inclusion/comprendre-l-edi/comprendre-l-edi.html</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
France	Groupe IGS	<p>"IGS Group works every day to make its training programs accessible to all. Irrespective of social or economic background, difficulties or previous experience, the IGS Group aims to include everyone in a training program adapted to their needs and to guide learners toward personal fulfillment and professional success." (free translation)</p> <p>https://www.groupe-igs.fr/actualites/depuis-2008-les-referents-handicap-du-groupe-igs-oeuvrent-pour-linclusion-paris-lyon</p>
United States	University of New England	<p>"Cultivating a community that respects each individual's unique lived experience and perspective is crucial to fostering the "healthy people, healthy communities, and healthy planet" that are the focus of our University's mission."</p> <p>"We believe the benefits of a richly varied campus community arise not only from the diversity of its people but also from a sense of belonging and the context this creates to explore and celebrate differences in backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, underpinned by a sense of cultural humility."</p> <p>"UNE strives to cultivate cultural literacy, empathy, and interconnectedness within our community."</p> <p>"UNE's undergraduate core/common curriculum is designed to provide students with a foundational social-global awareness as well as perspectives on citizenship that encompass ethics, diversity, and civic activity."</p> <p>https://www.une.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/our-values</p>
United States	Clemson University	<p>"The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions."</p> <p>"Inclusive teaching describes the range of approaches to teaching that consider the diverse needs and backgrounds of all students to create a learning environment where all students feel valued and where all students have equal access to learn."</p> <p>https://www.clemson.edu/otei/teaching-diversity.html</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
United States	New York Institute of Technology	<p>“At New York Institute of Technology, diversity is represented by a mosaic of unique individuals from a variety of racial, ethnic, religious, gender, gender presentation, sexuality, geographic, cultural, age, abilities, and socioeconomic groups. Each individual brings unique intellectual, artistic, and creative gifts to create a rich, vibrant campus community. New York Institute of Technology recognizes the strength that stems from a diversity of perspectives, values, ideas, backgrounds, styles, approaches, experiences, and beliefs. We aspire to continue to grow as a place that always welcomes and encourages individuals of all backgrounds to contribute to and be part of the university culture.”</p> <p>https://www.nyit.edu/about/diversity_equity_inclusion</p>
United States	University of La Verne	<p>“Diversity is an active and intentional commitment to support and embrace difference and multiplicity for the sake of expanding knowledge, educating capable citizens, developing the whole person, and serving our local and global communities (...) Inclusion being the intentional engaging of persons and groups while seeking to understand and support the entire ULV community.”</p> <p>https://laverne.edu/diversity/education-and-training/</p>
United Kingdom	Birmingham City University	<p>“Inclusion relates to our individual experiences and the extent to which we are included in different groups and structures. An inclusive environment is essential to creating a sense of belonging, which leads to greater physical and mental health and wellbeing.”</p> <p>https://bcuassets.blob.core.windows.net/docs/edi-strategy-2022-133052059348307679.pdf</p> <p>“Refers to the commitment by the University to embrace all people irrespective of race, gender, disability or any other protected characteristic. The University’s stated aim is to give equal access and opportunity to all and to eliminate discrimination and intolerance and to foster an inclusive workplace.”</p> <p>https://bcuassets.blob.core.windows.net/docs/equality-and-diversity-in-employment-policy-132272749792765655.pdf</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
United Kingdom	Glasgow Caledonian University	<p>“GCU is committed to providing a culture and environment which is inclusive of all sections of society and responsive to the needs of individuals. We do this by promoting equality, valuing diversity and communicating the importance of dignity at work and study.” https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/commongood/equality</p> <p>“A positive working and learning environment which supports dignity at work and study is vital to the success of the University. Therefore, we will take a Zero Tolerance approach to any form of unlawful discrimination, including harassment, victimisation, racism, sexism, gender based violence, homophobia, and any other unacceptable behaviour. Dignity and respect should underpin our day to day behaviours, and everyone has rights and responsibilities under this Policy.” https://www.gcu.ac.uk/aboutgcu/commongood/equality/equalityanddiversityatgcu/policy</p>
United Kingdom	University of Edinburgh	<p>“The University of Edinburgh is committed to equality of opportunity for all its staff and students, and promotes a culture of inclusivity. https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/about</p> <p>“Diversity is about recognising that everyone is different in a variety of visible and nonvisible ways. It is about creating a culture and practices that recognise, respect and value difference. It is about harnessing this potential to create a productive environment in which the equally diverse needs of the customer/client can be met in a creative environment. It is about creating a workforce who feel valued/respected and have their potential fully utilised in order to meet organisational goals. Diversity is not an ‘initiative’ or a ‘project’; it is an ongoing core aim and a core process.” http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/EqualityDiversity/Strategy.pdf</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
United Kingdom	University of Glasgow	<p>“(….) The University aims to create a learning and working environment based on fostering good relations between all people, with a shared commitment to promoting respect for all, and challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and harassment. (….) The University is committed to inclusiveness, which “embraces diversity by valuing and respecting the perspectives and contributions of all our colleagues and students” (1), to the benefit of the University community in respect of its learning, teaching, research, management, administration and support service activities (….) The University upholds the principle that, in their areas of expertise, relevant staff of the University shall have freedom within the law to hold and express opinion, to question and test established ideas and received wisdom, and to present controversial or unpopular points of view without placing in jeopardy their employment or any entitlements or privileges they enjoy</p> <p>The University will not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (hereafter referred to as the ‘protected characteristics’) in any decisions concerning student admissions, progression or support provision.”</p> <p>https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/humanresources/equalitydiversity/policy/equalitypolicy/#d.en.308440</p> <p>“The University of Glasgow Library aims to create an environment where all staff and students - regardless of any protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010* - are welcome and included. People should feel they are represented in our collections, study spaces and exhibitions, that UofG Library is their library, and that discriminatory attitudes and behaviour are not tolerated. We aim to develop an inclusive community. This is in alignment with the University of Glasgow’s Equality and Diversity Policy which states ‘The University aims to create a learning and working environment based on fostering good relations between all people, with a shared commitment to promoting respect for all, and challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and harassment’ and supports the recommendation that the University ‘strive to increase the racial diversity of students and staff’ as made by the University of Glasgow History of Slavery Steering Committee in 2018, and subsequently supported by the publications of the Understanding Racism, Transforming University Cultures report and associated Action Plan in 2021.”</p> <p>https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/library/diversity/</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
Lebanon	American University of Beirut	<p>“The university serves the peoples of the Middle East and beyond by sharing our common values of freedom of thought and expression, tolerance, honesty and respect for diversity and dialogue, and by providing opportunities for all of its community members, including those less fortunate.”</p> <p>https://www.aub.edu.lb/AboutUs/Pages/mission.aspx</p> <p>“We recognize that the diversity brought by our constituents (including faculty, staff, students, and alumni) enriches our teaching, strengthens our research and practice, and serves our local and global communities (...) The university shall strive to honor the diverse identities, backgrounds, and perspectives of its community members and promote an equitable, inclusive, and welcoming educational and working environment.”</p> <p>https://www.aub.edu.lb/AboutUs/Pages/dei.aspx</p>
Lebanon	Lebanese American University	<p>“Demonstrates dignity and respect for and from the Board, faculty, staff and students in word and in deed (...) Enables individuals to find their own spiritual and personal fulfillment while ever sensitive to the changing global village in which they live.”</p> <p>https://www.lau.edu.lb/about/mission.php</p>

APPENDIX 4

EXAMPLES OF QUOTES ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING RETRIVED FROM THE WEBSITES OF THE REPRESENTED POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Table 4		
Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
Canada	Concordia University	<p>“Well-being depends on the health of our bodies and minds, and the communities we live, work and study in.”</p> <p>https://www.concordia.ca/health.html</p>
Canada	Simon Fraser University	<p>“It is widely accepted that health and well-being are essential elements for effective learning (...) When we support well-being in our learning environments, we can better support our students in reaching academic success.”</p> <p>https://www.sfu.ca/healthycampuscommunity/learningenvironments.html</p> <p>“One of the main challenges that negatively impact graduate student well-being are problems relating to the supervisory relationship and misalignment of expectations (Pyhältö et al, 2012; Barry et al, 2018). Faculty mentors are perceived as the last resort for academic support, due to student concerns of possible repercussions on their standing and being viewed differently among their peers (Tompkins et al., 2016, Posselt, 2018).”</p> <p>https://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/healthycampuscommunity/PDF/Well-being%20through%20the%20Supervisory%20Process%20%E2%80%93%20Supervisor%20Guide%20for%20Action.pdf</p>
Canada	University of Regina	<p>“The University of Regina recognizes that the mental wellness of our students, faculty and staff is crucial in supporting their academic and career success, achieving our academic mission, and our commitment to our communities.”</p> <p>https://www.uregina.ca/mental-wellness/Mental-Health-Practices-and-Research/Guided-Documents.html</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
Canada	Carleton University	<p>“Every day stress. Occasional difficulties responding to academic, personal, social financial or health issues.</p> <p>Mild Mental Health Concerns. Experiences mental health challenges or levels of distress that often impact functioning, academics and/or social interactions.</p> <p>Moderate Mental Health Concerns. Significant functional impairment due to frequent mental health challenges or levels of distress that have a greater impact on daily functioning, academics and relationships.</p> <p>Complex Mental Health Concerns. Complex mental health challenges that limit daily functioning and require specialized care, a treatment plan and/or monitoring.”</p> <p>https://wellness.carleton.ca/mental-health/resource-guide/</p>
Canada	HEC	<p>“Mental disorders are problems that are persistent and have a significant impact on a person’s overall functioning (e.g., anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression, etc.). A mental health disorder significantly disrupts the way a person feels, thinks, and reacts to those around them. It can cause difficulties that have a direct impact on academic studies: difficulty concentrating, memory problems, difficulty planning and organizing, fatigue, sleep disorders, mood swings, sensitivity to and difficulty managing stress, suicidal thoughts, etc. Although each person’s experience is unique, people with mental illness share some common characteristics. Many take medications with side effects such as dizziness, nausea, tremors, fatigue, and difficulty concentrating. Because of the unpredictable and fluctuating nature of their illness, their academic performance may be inconsistent and may not reflect their true abilities. » (Free translation)</p> <p>https://www.hec.ca/daip/ressources_pedagogiques/SanteMentale.pdf</p>
Canada	University of Waterloo	<p>“Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”</p> <p>https://uwaterloo.ca/occupational-health/mental-health-resources</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
France	Groupe IGS	<p>“The goal of this philosophy of life [positive thinking] is to achieve optimal well-being, which is beneficial to your physical and mental health. Positive thinking allows you to gain benevolence, both toward others and yourself, but also to calm down and better manage stress. It is then easier to grasp the difficulties that arise and to face them without denying them. As a student, you are sometimes exposed to periods of stress (revisions, exams, job search, etc.). By practicing positive thinking on a regular basis, you will be better equipped to manage your emotions and take a step back from certain situations. In addition, this approach allows you to gain self-confidence and self-esteem, another good point to achieve your course in a serene way! »</p> <p>https://www.groupe-igs.fr/pensee-positive</p>
United States	Clemson University	<p>“At Clemson University we acknowledge mental health as an important element of student health and well-being.”</p> <p>https://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/find-support/shs/resources/mental-health/index.html</p>
United States	University of La Verne	<p>“(…) the full range of psychological issues that people may encounter, including: relationship problems; family issues; adjustment to university life; stress management; academic problems (including procrastination); identity issues (regarding age, culture, sexual orientation, etc.); anxiety (including test-taking anxiety); depression (including low self-esteem); substance abuse; and eating disorders.”</p> <p>https://laverne.edu/counseling/individual/</p>
United Kingdom	Birmingham City University	<p>“Concerns about your wellbeing – anything that is getting in the way of your studying and enjoying life at university, including concerns about relationships, sexuality and gender, accommodation difficulties, healthy lifestyle and homesickness. Emerging mental health issues – sleeping problems, feeling anxious or isolated, experiencing low mood, thinking about harming yourself.”</p> <p>https://www.bcu.ac.uk/student-info/student-support/mental-health-and-wellbeing/our-services</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
United Kingdom	Buckinghamshire New University	<p>“A distressing physical health condition. Difficulties with a bereavement process (due to the death of a friend/family member/pet/significant other). A challenging life event, for example, a relationship breakdown or work stress. Challenging feelings or emotions, such as anger or low self-confidence. Individuals who want to explore their identity, for example, sexual/gender identity, cultural identity.</p> <p>https://www.bucks.ac.uk/life/student-success-and-support/health-and-wellbeing/counselling</p> <p>“The term ‘mental health’ is a pretty general term, so what is it? And how do we know when we have good mental health? The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”</p> <p>https://www.bucks.ac.uk/life/student-support/health-and-wellbeing/living-well</p>
United Kingdom	Glasgow Caledonian University	<p>“At GCU we recognize that we all have mental health and like physical health, our experience of mental health can vary over time; for many of us, fluctuating between feeling well, happy and resilient to feeling stressed, overwhelmed or temporarily unable to cope. Our mental health impacts on our relationships, our home lives, and our ability to function at study or work. There are many factors which can impact upon our sense of wellbeing and mental health, and unfortunately there is a stigma in society surrounding mental health and wellbeing.”</p> <p>https://www.gcu.ac.uk/currentstudents/support/wellbeing/spotlightonmentalhealth</p>

Country	Institutions	Inclusive Education
United Kingdom	University of Edinburgh	<p>“Good mental health is essential to students’ academic success and to their participation in a high quality and rewarding student experience. Empowering students to participate in maintaining and improving their mental health sets the foundation not only for academic success, but also to support self-esteem, personal resilience and self-confidence, with increased ability to sustain good mental health throughout life.”</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/student-mental-health-strategy#:~:text=Student%20Mental%20Health%20Strategy%202021%2D2026&text=Our%20vision%20is%20for%20the,Mental%20Health%20Support%3B%20and%20Impact</p> <p>“(…) mental ill health is the leading cause of sickness absence across the University. Normal life experiences such as change, bereavement, stress, traumatic events and worry all have an impact on our mental health. With effective support and coping strategies, for many of us these difficulties will be short-lived. However, for some of us difficulties will persist, impacting significantly on our day-to-day lives and leading to the development of a more serious mental health condition (...) Prolonged periods of stress at work and/or in our personal lives can have a serious impact on our mental health. Although stress is not a mental health condition in its own right, it may lead to the development of a mental health condition or exacerbate an existing one. The Occupational Health webpages provide guidance and advice for managers with staff who are experiencing stress.”</p> <p>https://www.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity/disabled-staff-support/mental-health</p>
Lebanon	Lebanese American University	<p>“University students often experience high levels of stress. Any number of potential events leaving home and moving into the dormitory, academic failure, the loss of loved one, job termination of close relatives, and so on- may require students to make adjustments in the patterns of their daily living. Not all life transitions are negative, but even positive events, when accompanied by significant changes and demands, have the potential to be distressing.”</p> <p>https://www.lau.edu.lb/sustainability/files/engaging-lau-faculty-staff-mental-health-support-system.pdf</p>

APPENDIX 5

METHODOLOGY - LITERATURE REVIEW

We conducted a purposeful literature review of scientific articles and professional pieces that focus on high-quality, equitable, and inclusive education in higher education and student mental health. The objective of our review was to extract promising course design elements to be adopted in and adapted for the post-pandemic era to ensure high quality, equitable and inclusive education that considers students' wellbeing and mental health (HQEIE).

We identified the databases relevant to our focus, as described in tables 5 and determined specific search terms and Boolean programming adapted to each database, decided on the inclusion and exclusion criteria as detailed in table 7, test the search terms and inclusion criteria and adjust our strategy before performing the main review.

We compiled bibliographic records obtained for each database and created a data file containing all bibliographic records (including abstracts and whole articles) in Zotero, an open-source research management tool and platform, after elimination of duplicates. The entire double-blind selection and extraction processes was carried by two research assistances and validate by the lead researcher.

Furthermore, we purposely searched for recent and pertinent reports produced by renowned and credible organisations such as EDUCAUSE, UNESCO, OECD, the World Bank, and the World Economic Forum, as listed in table 6.

Table 5 - The examined scientific literature databases

Scientific Literature		
Database	Academic Search Premier X Education source (EBSCO) Eric (EBSCO) Psychology and behavioral Sciences Collection (EBSCO) PsycInfo X PsychNet Eureka Erudit CAIRN Google Scholar	
Search terms in English	Topics	Search terms
	Higher Education	("Higher education" OR College OR university OR "Post-secondary" OR postsecondary OR "educational institutions")
	Modality	("hybrid learning" OR "blended learning" OR Online OR Flexible OR Hyflex OR e-learning OR elearning "distance learning" OR "mobile learning" OR mlearning OR m-learning OR "multi-modal teach*" OR "multimodal teach*" OR "multimodal learn*")
	Course design	("Course design" OR "class design" OR "teach*" OR learn* OR Andragogy OR Pedagogy OR "pedagogical approach*" OR "pedagogical practic*" OR "adult learning" OR "educational technolog*" OR "instructional technolog*" OR "learn* experience design" OR "experience design" OR "LXD")
	Evaluation	("Evaluation" OR "assessment" OR "evaluation method*" OR "evaluation process*" OR "assessment method*" OR "assessment process*" OR "evaluation tool*" OR "assessment tool*")
	High Quality	("High quality" OR "Learner centred" OR "learner-centred" OR "user centered design")
	Equity	(Equity OR "equity in education" OR "equitable learn*" OR "equitable teach*")
	Inclusion	(Inclus* OR "inclus* education" OR "inclusive learning")
	Mental health	("Mental health" OR wellbeing OR "well-being" OR anxiety OR "social isolat*")
	Digital transformation	("Digital transformation" OR "digital transformation in education")
COVID	("COVID-19" OR Coronavirus OR Pandemic OR Epidemic OR Variant OR Delta OR Omicron OR "2019-ncov" OR "sars-cov-2")	

Search terms in French	Enseignement Supérieur	("enseignement supérieur" OR université OR postsecondaire)
	Modalité	(hybride OR bimodal OR mixte OR "en ligne" OR "à distance" OR flexible OR e-formation OR "apprentissage mobile" OR "formation multimodale")
	Conception de cours	("conception de cours" OR andragogie OR "pratique pédagogique" OR "approche pédagogique" OR "apprentissage aux adultes" OR "technologie éducative*" OR "conception d'expérience d'apprentissage*" OR "conception d'expérience" OR « LXD")
	Évaluation	("évaluation" OR "méthode d'évaluation" OR "approche évaluat*")
	Haute qualité	("haute qualité" OR "centré* sur l'apprenant" OR "centré* sur l'étudiant*" OR "centré* sur l'utilisat*")
	Équité	(équité OR équit* OR "équité en éducation")
	Inclusion	(inclusion OR "inclusion scolaire" OR inclusi* OR "approche inclusive")
	Santé mentale	("santé mentale" OR "bien-être" OR anxiété OR "isolement social")
	Transformation numérique	("transformation numérique" OR "transformation numérique en enseignement")
	COVID	("COVID-19" OR Coronavirus OR pandémie OR épidémie OR variant OR Delta OR Omicron)

Table 6 – The examined grey literature databases

Grey Literature		
Database	American Council on Education (site:acenet.edu)	Learning News (site:learningnews.com)
	Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in higher Education (site:aashe.org)	World Economic Forum (site:weforum.org)
	Association for the Study of Higher Education (site:ashe.ws)	LearnTechLib (site:learntechlib.org)
	Association of American Universities (site:aau.edu)	Observatory of Educational Innovation (site:observatory.tec.mx)
	Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) (site:acer.org)	Observatory on the Societal Impacts of AI and Digital Technologies (site:observatoire-ia.ulaval.ca)
	Campus technology (site:campustechnology.com)	OECD (site:oecd.org)
	Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan) (site:collegesinstitutes.ca)	OLC Insight (site:onlinelearningconsortium.org)
	Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) (site:cmec.ca)	The Chronicle of Higher Education (site:chronicle.com)
	EdSurge (site:edsurge.com)	The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (site:enqa.eu)
	EdTech magazine (site:edtechmagazine.com)	THE Journal (site:thejournal.com)
	Education Technology (site:edtechnology.co.uk)	UNESCO (site:unesco.org)
	EDUCAUSE (site:educause.edu)	University Affairs (site:universityaffairs.ca)
	e-Literate (site:eliterate.us)	Universités Canada (site:univcan.ca)
	Getting Smart (site:gettingsmart.com)	Universities UK (site:universitiesuk.ac.uk)
	Higher Learning Commission (site:hlcommission.org)	WISE (site:wise-qatar.org)
	Inside Higher Ed (site:insidehighered.com)	World bank (site:worldbank.org)
	Institute of International Education (site:iie.org)	World Economic Forum
	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (site:iea.nl)	Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) (site:auf.org)
	International Association of Universities (site:iau-aiu.net)	CAPRES (site:capres.ca)
		Formation et profession (site:formation-profession.org)
		LudoMag (site:ludomag.com)

Search Terms in English	Topics	Search terms
	Higher Education	("Higher education" OR College OR university)
	Modality	(Online)
	Course design	(design OR instructional OR experience)
	Evaluation	(Evaluation OR assessment)
	High Quality	("High quality" OR "Learner centred" OR "learner-centred" OR "user centered design")
	Equity	(Equity)
	Inclusion	(Inclusion)
	Mental health	("Mental health" OR wellbeing OR "well-being" anxiety OR "social isolation")
	Digital transformation	("Digital transformation")
	COVID	("COVID-19" OR Coronavirus OR Pandemic)
Search Terms in French	Enseignement supérieur	("enseignement supérieur" OR collège OR université OR postsecondaire)
	Modalité	("en ligne" OR distance)
	Conception de cours	("conception de cours" OR "expérience")
	Évaluation	(évaluation)
	Haute qualité	("haute qualité" OR "centré sur")
	Équité	(équité OR équitable)
	Inclusion	(inclusion)
	Santé mentale	("santé mentale" OR "bien-être" OR anxiété OR "isolement social")
	Transformation numérique	("transformation numérique")
	COVID	("COVID-19" OR Coronavirus OR pandémie)

The following details the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Our decision was guided by our goal to avoid reactionary works that emerged from the breakout of the COVID19 pandemic and focus on evidence-based results.

Please note that all inclusion criteria were required to retain a resource whereas only one exclusion criterion or topic was needed to disregard the resource.

Table 7 – The literature review inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria	Scientific Literature	Grey Literature
Date of publication	2020-2022	2021-2022
Language	English or French	
Access	Open access or through Université Laval library	
Full-text availability	Available	
Excluded topics	Elementary and secondary education; special education; K-12 students; learning styles; Face-to-face teaching	
Excluded types of documents	Books	Thesis and dissertations; opinion pieces; newspaper articles, multimedia resources

We searched for instances of online pedagogical approaches and elements of course and evaluation design that addressed quality, equity, and inclusion from each resource and planned to examine factors leading to the pedagogical choices including geographic location, level of pandemic outburst, public health guidelines, educational contexts, technology access, students’ socioeconomic status and financial constraints, time zones, and student population characteristics and vulnerabilities.

From the 300 hits from the scientific literature and 2025 hits from the grey literature, we retained 35 scientific paper and 20 professional resources. We used the 55 results to extract definitions of the concepts we were targeting and concrete examples of how to promote them in higher education, however our findings confirmed the significant lack of research on concrete and evidence-based approaches to ensure high-quality, equitable and inclusive learning experience designs that considered students’ mental health and well-being, let alone factors that guided pedagogical decisions.

APPENDIX 6

METHODOLOGY - INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

To reach our research objectives, we conducted one-on-one virtual interviews with 23 faculty from 11 postsecondary institutions located in 5 countries, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Lebanon, for a purposive sample to represent a spectrum of contexts that varied in the level of COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and thus public health guidelines. This variation influenced educational institutions' decisions about teaching modalities and campus access. We also aimed to recruit instructors from different disciplines, as pedagogical needs vary and are often discipline-specific, and at different levels of their academic careers and workloads, as support and resources for pedagogical innovation offered by institutions also vary depending on instructor status and workload.

We began with a purposeful snowball sampling at the co-researchers' respective universities, followed by a call for participation through our Twitter and LinkedIn accounts and professional organization listservs. Our main inclusion criterion was that participants should have changed their course design during the COVID-19 pandemic to (better) address issues of educational quality, equity, and inclusion, with a specific focus on student mental health.

The following table lists the represented institutions and the number of participating instructors from each country.

Table 8 - List of participating instructors' affiliations		
Instructors		
Country	Number of Participants	Postsecondary Institutions
Canada	10	Concordia University; McGill University, Université Laval; Simon Fraser University; University of Regina; York University
USA	3	Boise State University
France	3	Groupe IGS - 3 different schools
UK	2	Birmingham City University; De Montfort University
Lebanon	5	American University of Beirut; Lebanese American University
TOTAL		23

All interviews were conducted and recorded virtually using Zoom. The recordings will be kept private unless permission is given by individual participants to share publicly, in which case those specific segments of the videos will be edited for public sharing in a future phase of the project.

None of the members of our research team participated in any of the interviews that involved a participant affiliated to his or her institution.

We engaged each participant in a ninety-minute discussion about their pedagogical approaches, evaluation strategies, and methods for addressing issues of educational quality, equity and inclusion, and student mental health and risk of isolation, as well as their perceptions of elements or factors that support the transformation of their courses.

Individual interview questions

1. Please introduce yourself (country, educational institution, faculty, program, years on the job, topics you teach, levels, modalities of teaching, number of students in your classes, and any other pertinent information).
2. How do you define high-quality education?
3. How do you define equitable education?
4. How do you define inclusive education?
5. What does the phrase “high-quality, equitable, and inclusive education in your hybrid, flexible or 100% online classes while taking in consideration students’ mental health” mean to you?
6. Why is it important for you to ensure this goal?
7. How realistic is it to achieve this goal during the pandemic? Why? Will it be more realistic after the pandemic? Why?
8. How did you develop the knowledge and the expertise to create courses that ensure high-quality, equitable and inclusive education in your hybrid, flexible or 100% online classes and take in consideration students’ mental health?
9. In general, what elements of course design and evaluation strategies promote high-quality, equitable and inclusive education, and take into consideration students’ mental health, in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities?
10. More specifically, what pedagogical approaches or elements of course design do YOU employ in your course(s) to help support high-quality, equitable and inclusive education in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities that take in consideration students’ mental health? Please illustrate with concrete examples.
 - a. How do you make these choices? What challenges do you face while designing, developing, and implementing these approaches?
 - b. Please describe the concrete actions you take in order to overcome these challenges.
11. What evaluation strategies do you adopt/adapt to help support high-quality, equitable and inclusive evaluation in your hybrid, flexible or 100% online classes that take in consideration students’ mental health?
 - a. How do you make these choices? What encourages you to make these decisions?
 - b. What are the challenges you face in designing, developing, and implementing these strategies?
 - c. Please describe concrete actions you take to overcome these challenges.
12. What role does technology play in ensuring high-quality, equitable and inclusive learning experiences?
13. How does the mission/goal of your institution and faculty fit the reality of teaching and learning in the post-COVID-19 eras?
14. Does your faculty have the leadership, capital, and infrastructure to achieve its mission/goals?
15. What expertise does your institution/faculty/department have to support the pedagogical transformation of your courses?

16. How is this expertise put to good use to help you through the transformation of your practices?
17. How does your institution/faculty provide structures and policies to support the pedagogical transformation of your courses to ensure high-quality, equitable and inclusive education? Please describe these structures and policies.
18. What elements and factors within your institution or faculty support the goal to ensure high-quality, equitable and inclusive education and the transformation of your practices?
19. What resources are put in place to support your practices?
20. What role does your team dynamic, collegiality of your peers, faculty training, communities of practice play in supporting your practices?
21. What recommendations do you give to design and support high-quality, equitable and inclusive learning experiences in digital contexts, that take into consideration students' mental health, for the post-COVID-19 era?
22. Do you mind sharing pedagogical documents and artefacts you created in the context of your courses that illustrate your methods to address issues of education quality, equity and inclusion, and student mental health?

APPENDIX 7

METHODOLOGY - FOCUS GROUPS

We conducted 5 focus groups with directors or key representatives of Centers for Teaching and Learning (CTLs) from 16 postsecondary institutions in 5 countries, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Lebanon, as a purposive sample to represent a spectrum of contexts that varied in the level of COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and thus public health guidelines. Like the recruitment of instructors, we first targeted the CTLs operating in the educational institutions where our team members or participants worked, before using a snowball purposive sample. The size of the centres varied, however, to participate in this study, they had to have a high level of engagement with faculties and their access to the different approaches explored by instructors from different disciplines.

The following table lists the institutions represented and the number of participating CTLs from each country.

Table 9 - List of participating CTLs' affiliations		
Centres for Teaching and Learning		
Country	Number of Participants	Postsecondary Institutions
Canada	4	Carleton University; HEC; University of Waterloo; York University
USA	5	University of New England; Clemson University; New York Institute of Technology; University of La Verne; The Evergreen State College
France	1	Groupe IGS
UK	4	Buckinghamshire New University; Glasgow Caledonian University; University of Edinburgh; University of Glasgow
Lebanon	2	American University of Beirut; Lebanese American University
TOTAL	16	

We engaged directors or key representatives from Centres for Teaching and Learning in 120-minute focus group with two or three other participants online on Zoom to discuss pedagogical approaches, assessment strategies, and methods for addressing issues of teaching quality, equity and inclusion, and student mental health and risk of isolation, adopted by faculty at their respective institutions, and their perceptions of the elements or factors that support course transformation.

Focus group questions

1. Please describe your educational institution (country, programs, levels, modalities of teaching, number of students, and any other pertinent information).
 - a. How does your institution define high-quality education? How do you describe high-quality education in your institution?
 - b. How does your institution define equitable education? How do you describe
 - c. How does your institution define inclusive education? How do you describe
 - d. How much do you think your faculty agree with the institution's definitions?
2. What are the elements of course design and evaluation strategies that promote high-quality, equitable and inclusive education, and take into consideration students' mental health, in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities?
3. What impedes faculty in achieving the goal of ensuring high-quality, equitable and inclusive education, and take into consideration students' mental health, in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities during the pandemic? Why?
 - a. What elements and factors support or hinder the goal to ensure high-quality, equitable and inclusive education that take into consideration students' mental health?
 - b. What policies, interventions, infrastructure, resources (etc.) has your institution installed to support high-quality, equitable and inclusive education in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities that take in consideration students' mental health?
 - c. What is the expected value of each?
4. Please describe your Centre for Teaching and Learning's team or the team most involved in supporting faculty through the transition of their practice toward high-quality, equitable and inclusive education and evaluation in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities that take into consideration students' mental health.
5. How does your team develop the knowledge and the expertise needed to support faculty in creating courses that ensure high-quality, equitable and inclusive education in hybrid, flexible or 100% online classes and take in consideration students' mental health?
6. What faculty needs and "wants" did you identify in the process of practice transformation? What are your strategies or approaches to meet these needs?
7. Why are we failing? (Question added by a participant)
8. What are the elements or factors that faculty members consider supportive of the transformation of their practices?
9. What role do team dynamics, collegiality of peers, faculty training, and communities of practice play in supporting faculty practices?

10. What pedagogical approaches and elements of course design do faculty members in your institution employ in their courses to help support high-quality, equitable and inclusive education in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities that take in consideration students' mental health? Please illustrate with concrete examples.
 - a. How do faculty choose these elements?
 - b. What encourages them to make these decisions?
 - c. What challenges do they face, needs/wants that emerge while they design, develop, and implement these approaches?
 - d. Please describe concrete actions your team take to support faculty and their needs.
11. What evaluation strategies do faculty members in your institution adopt/adapt to help support high-quality, equitable and inclusive evaluation in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities that take in consideration students' mental health?
 - a. How do they make these choices?
 - b. What encourages them to make these decisions?
 - c. What challenges do they face, needs/wants that emerge while they design, develop, and implement these strategies?
 - d. Please describe the concrete actions your team take to support faculty and their needs.
12. What recommendations do you have for institutions (CTLs) that what to support faculty in ensuring high-quality, equitable and inclusive learning experiences in digital contexts, that take into consideration students' mental health, for the post- COVID-19 era?
13. Do you mind sharing pedagogical documents and artefacts faculty members created that present concrete examples of elements of course design and evaluation strategies that promote high-quality, equitable and inclusive education, and take into consideration students' mental health, in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities.
14. Are you willing to share documents and artefacts your team or institution created to support faculty in including elements of course design and evaluation strategies that promote high-quality, equitable and inclusive education, and take into consideration students' mental health, in hybrid, flexible or 100% online modalities?

APPENDIX 8

METHODOLOGY - DATA ANALYSIS OF THE DATA COLLECTED FROM INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS.

To transcribe the data into English, we used [Otter.AI](#), which is a speech-to-text transcription application. Two research assistants transcribed the data in French and then translated the transcription to English using [DeepL](#), which is a translation system powered by artificial intelligence. The transcriptions were thoroughly reviewed before being analyzed following the inductive approach outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994). We first immersed ourselves in the data, and then engaged in open coding according to Corbin and Strauss (2015). Open coding is “the analytic process through which concepts are identified and their properties and dimensions are discovered in the data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 101). We identified similar phrases, patterns, relationships between concepts, or themes and grouped those with similar properties. We isolated the patterns and processes as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) and ordered and reordered the categories until saturation as suggested by Creswell (2008). We then proceeded to layer the themes by identifying the levels into which they fit, guided by a more deductive approach based on our research objective, and examined the concepts, i.e., quality education, equitable education, inclusive education, and mental health, with a focus on elements of learning experience design that aim to achieve an education that combines all four concepts. Codes were validated by at least two coders. [MAXQDA](#), a qualitative data analysis software, was used to conduct the analysis.

APPENDIX 9

METHODOLOGY - WEBSITE RESEARCH

To triangulate data collection, we decided to target the postsecondary institutions represented in our project, either through instructors or CTL leaders. We navigated each institution's website and searched for their definitions of quality education, equitable education, inclusive education, and mental health, with a focused search to identify their perceptions of HQEIE.

Table 10 lists the institutions whose websites we examined.

Table 10 - List of higher education institutions whose website was examined		
Country	Number of Participants	Postsecondary Institutions
Canada	9	Concordia University; McGill University, Université Laval; Simon Fraser University; University of Regina; York University; Carleton University; HEC; University of Waterloo; York University
USA	5	Boise State University; University of New England; Clemson University; New York Institute of Technology; University of La Verne; The Evergreen State College
France	1-3 Schools	Groupe IGS
UK	6	Birmingham City University; De Montfort University; Buckinghamshire New University; Glasgow Caledonian University; University of Edinburgh; University of Glasgow
Lebanon	2	American University of Beirut; Lebanese American University
TOTAL		23

Please note that we intentionally extracted content found through a basic search of keywords (equity, inclusion, quality education, mental health) and site navigation to simulate typical visitor navigation and to highlight content that is related to the definition of the concepts and that is quickly accessible. We chose not to do extensive searches, assuming that institutions will highlight their priority message on their website and ensure that it reaches the audience in the first few minutes of their visit and with a minimum of clicks.

It is important to note that the absence of quotes does not mean that postsecondary institutions do not have specific HQEIE actions or policies, only that we were unable to find their definitions of the terms and concepts in our search. Visited institutions each had their version of health and well-being centre on their websites.

We then analyzed the collected data following the guidelines of content analysis and the open coding approach as per Corbin & Strauss (2015). That is, we conducted multiple readings of the data, we identified categories. We merged similar categories, deleted redundant categories, and created new categories to form a new set of data emergent codes. We re-read the publicly shared content and categorized it using the final approved codes.



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