

The Scholar's Academy:

From Evidence-Informed Inquiry to Knowledge Dissemination

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(with Katie Busby and Mark Nicholas joining a panel discussion later this morning)



Learning Goals for Our Time Together

- Promote the use of evidence-informed perspectives in teaching, learning, assessment, and improvement
- Equip participants with the frameworks, resources, and networks to support their growth as evidence-informed professionals
- Encourage the dissemination of promising practices, lessons learned, and ideas for consideration, replication, or adaptation through conference presentations and articles in publication outlets



Agenda

- Initial discussion/report-outs and introductions
- Promoting a culture reliant on excellence, equity, and evidence
- Contexts, interests, topics/research questions, and resources
- Foundations, prior knowledge, and perspectives for the topic/research question
- Methodologies to investigate the topic/research question
- Analyses, interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations
- Opportunities for dissemination, collaboration, and further investigation
- **Break**
- Moderated panel discussion, including audience Q&A
- Conclusion and adjournment



Initial Discussion/Report-Outs and Introductions

What does it mean to be evidence-informed in our work?

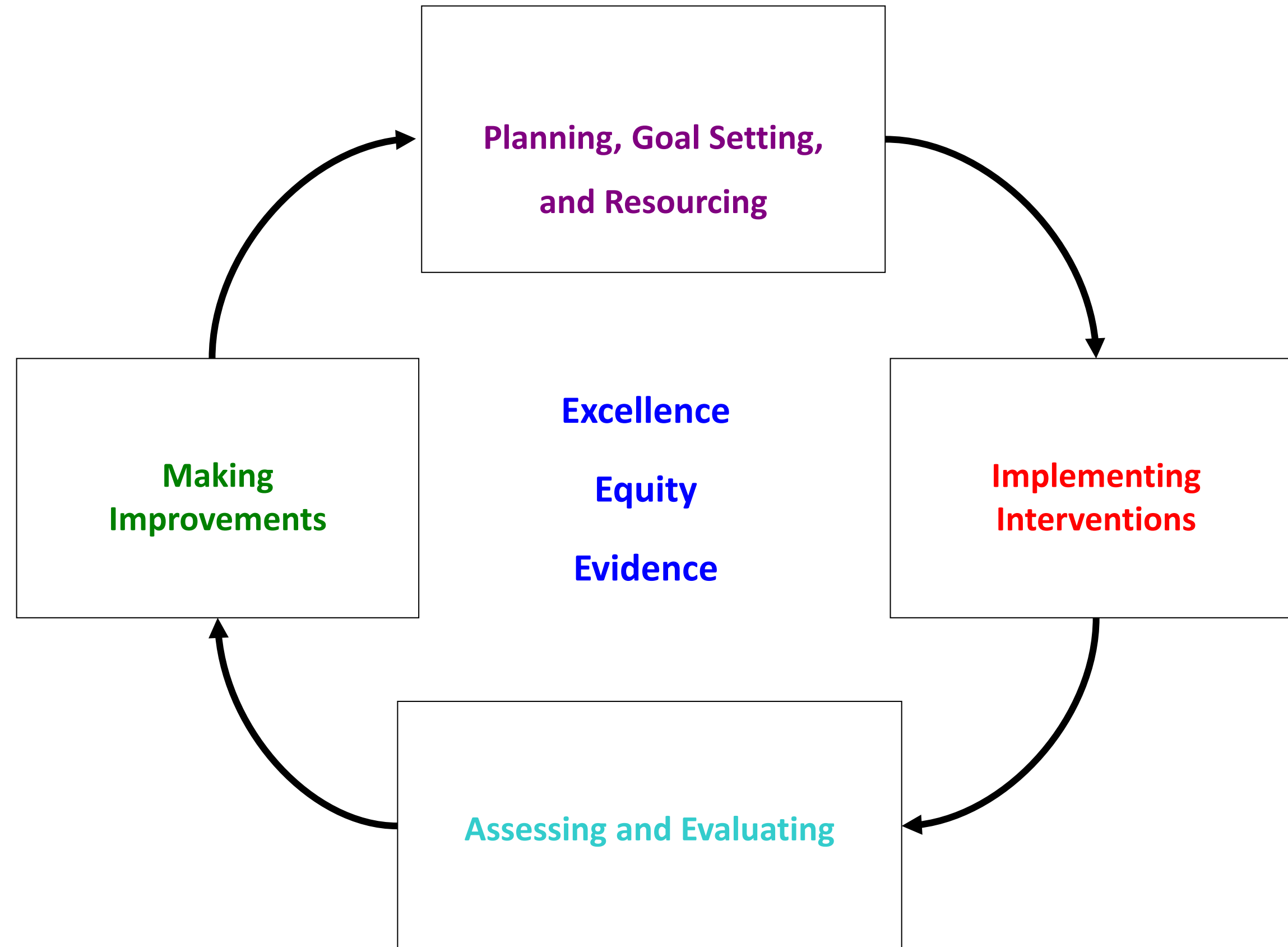
Why is this important for instructional, assessment, and improvement processes?

How do we use information that has been disseminated in various outlets?

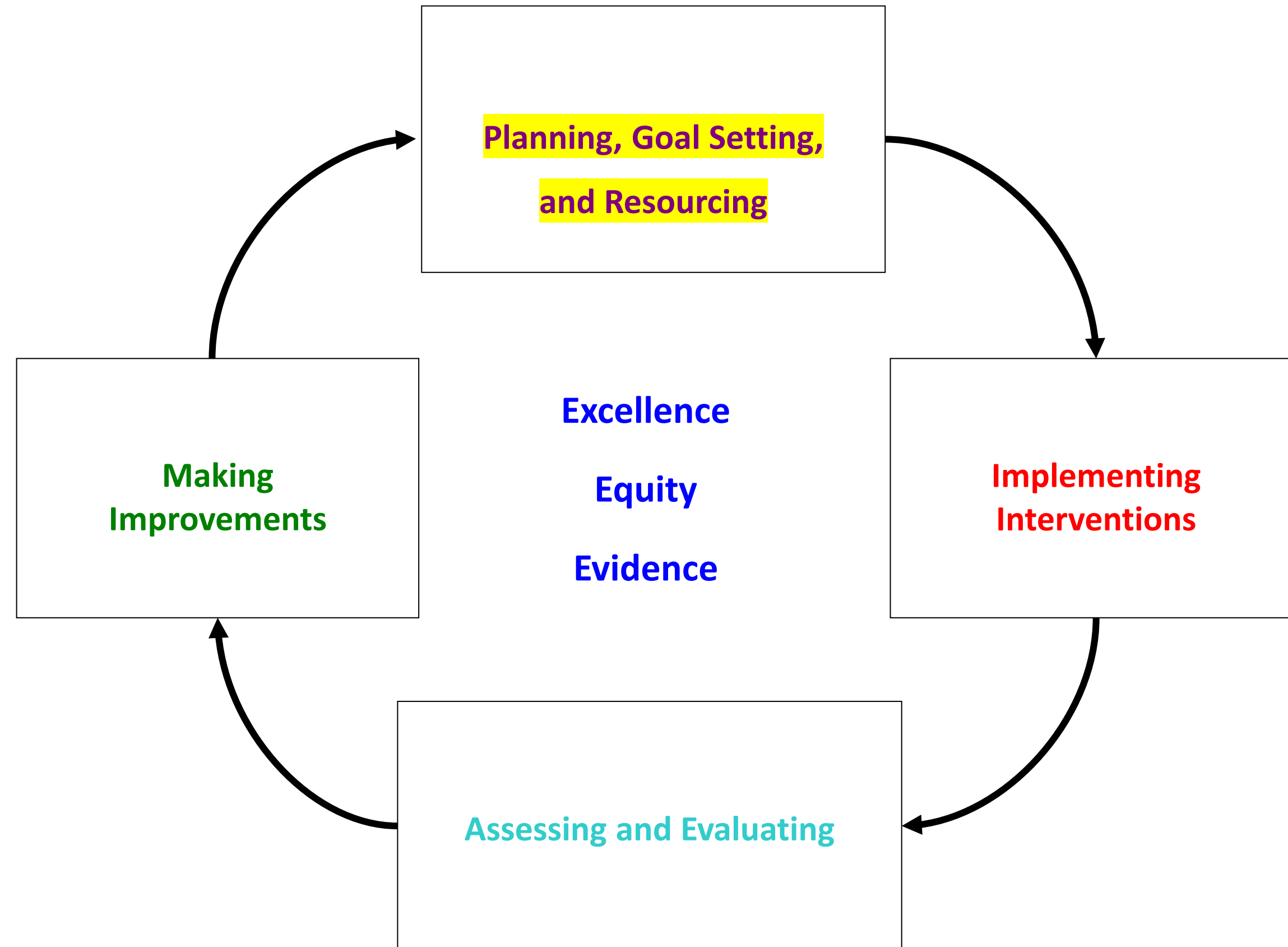
During the report-outs, please **briefly** introduce yourself: name/affiliation/role



Promoting a Learning-Centric Culture through Excellence, Equity, and Evidence



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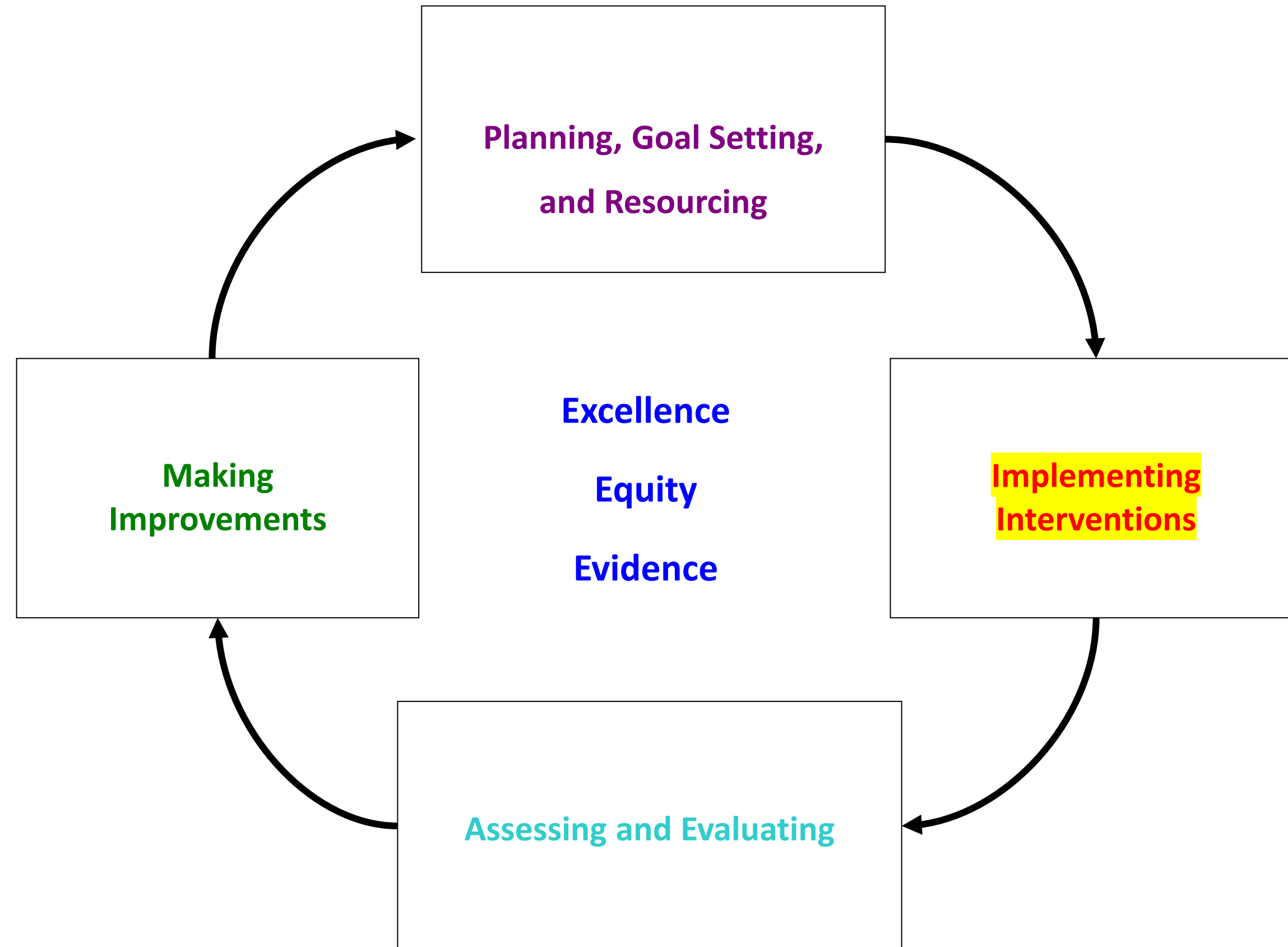


Planning, Goal Setting, and Resourcing

- Mission, vision, and values statements
- Strategic, academic, enrollment management, and other plans
- Learning goals/student learning outcomes at multiple “altitudes”/contexts
- Curriculum maps and learning journeys/pathways
- Assessment plans, including program reviews/accreditation cycles
- Resources to support plans and goals



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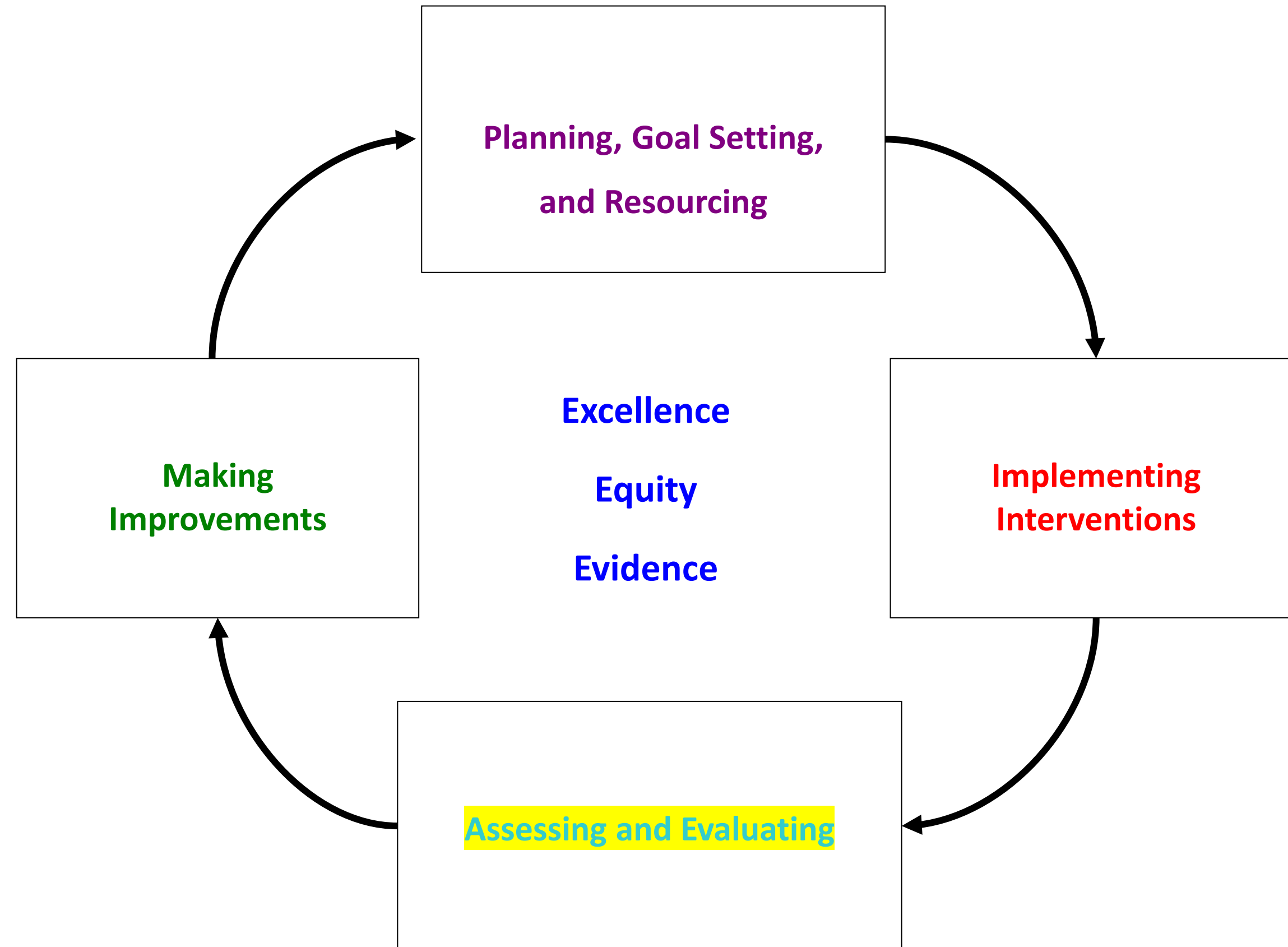


Implementing Evidence-Informed Interventions

- Implement goals for learning using evidence-informed interventions
- Interventions can come from:
 - Faculty, staff, and subject matter experts locally
 - Disciplinary or professional standards
 - Trends in higher education (e.g., HIPs, TiLT, VALUE rubric use)
- Informed by a review of:
 - Assessment findings and other internal sources of evidence
 - Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
 - Discipline-Based Educational Research



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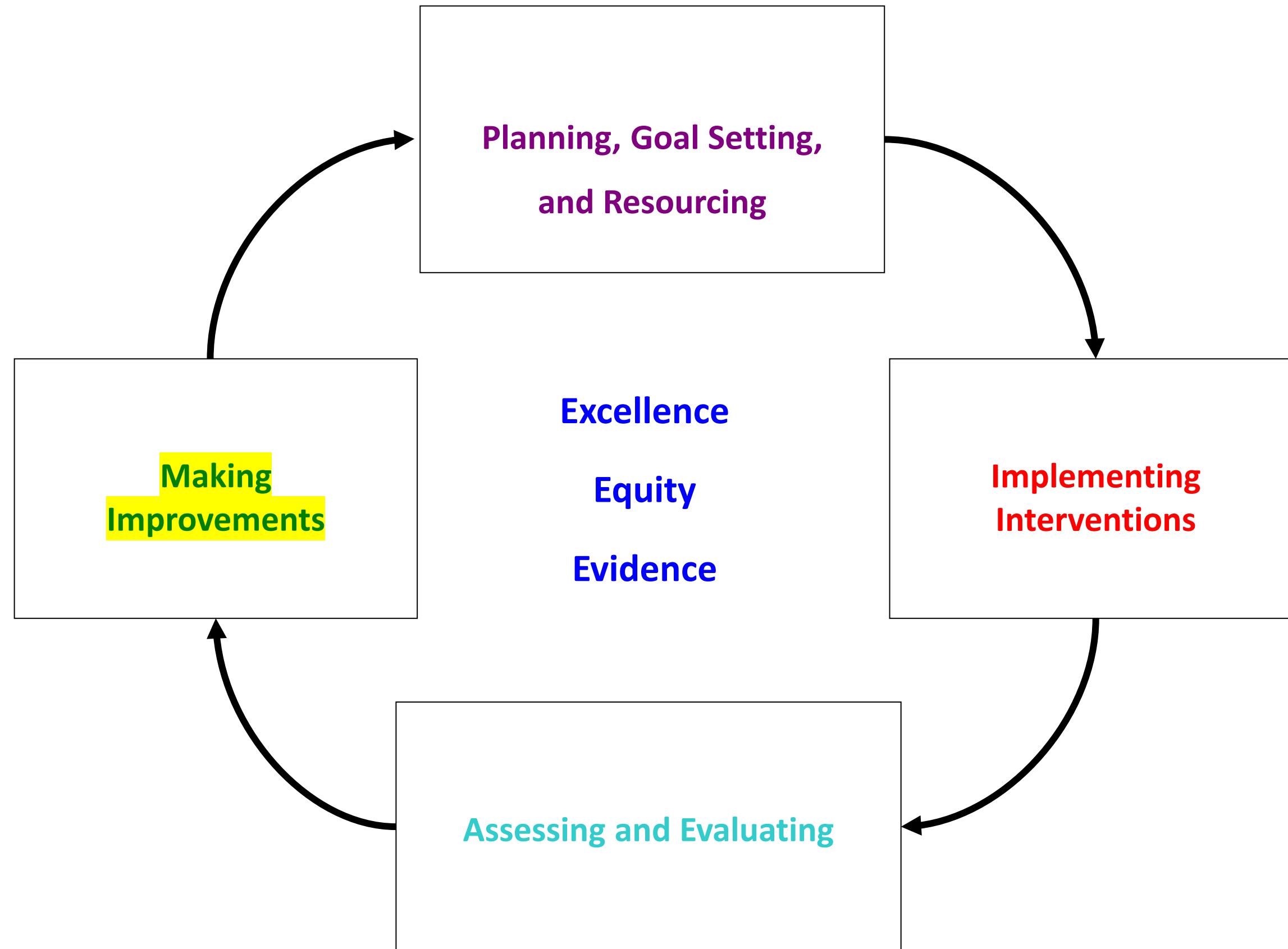


Assessing and Evaluating Progress and Outcomes

- Assessment tends to focus on group or cohort performance
 - Understanding strengths and weaknesses to identify trends over time
 - Collaborating across courses, programs, and the institution
 - Applying professional judgement to evaluate findings and plan actions
- Assessment measures need to be *relevant* to goals and employ a blend of:
 - *Direct* evidence of learning
 - *Indirect* evidence of learning
 - *Quantitative* sources
 - *Qualitative* sources



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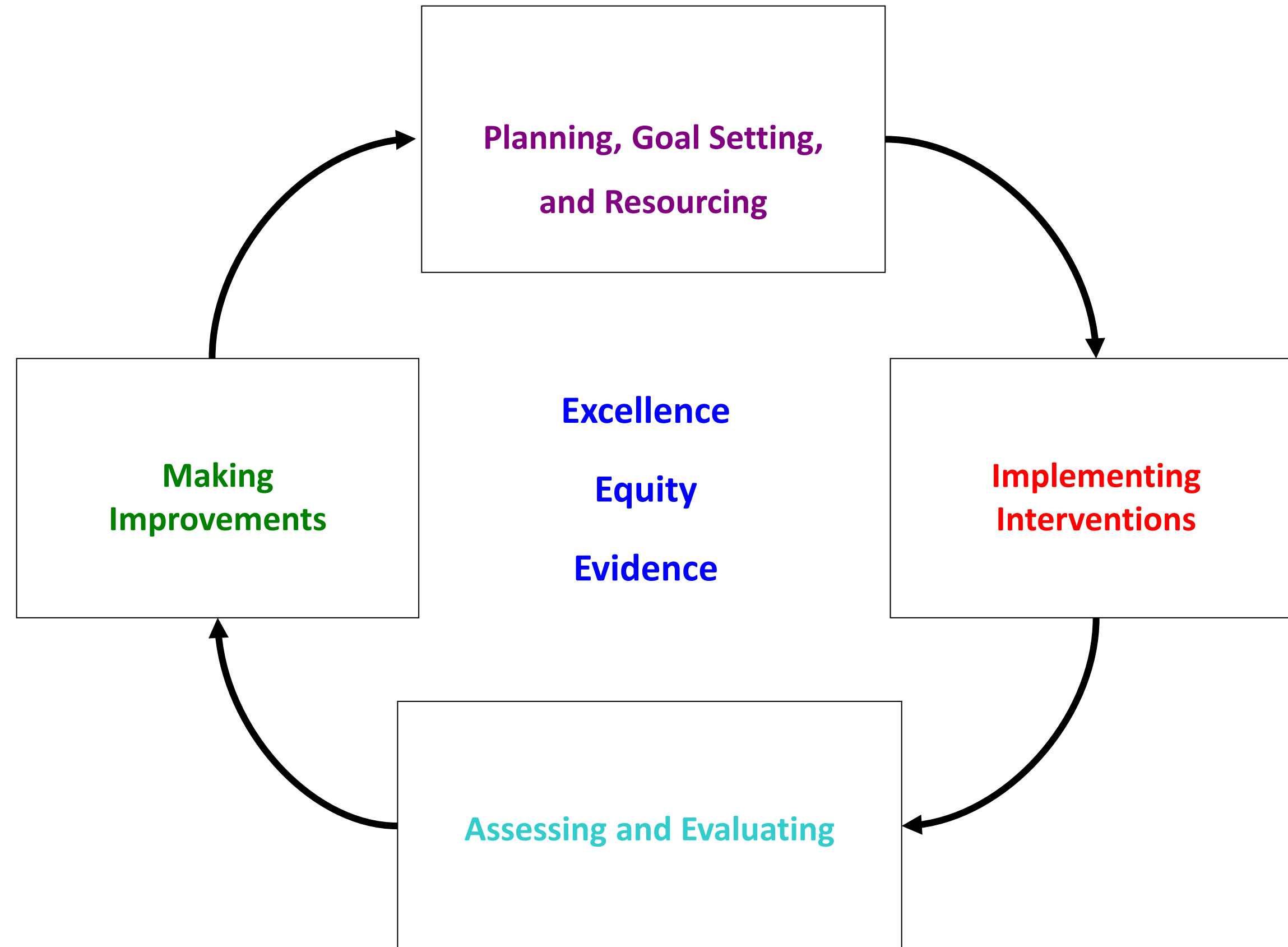


Making Ongoing Improvements

- Reporting internally and demonstrating accountability externally
- Improving instructional contexts and assessment methods
- Using results of improvement to inform subsequent planning, goal setting, and resourcing activities (a recursive cycle)
- Answering 4 key questions:
 - What did you do? (*process*)
 - What did you learn from it? (*assessment results*)
 - What changes did you make because of your findings? (*improvement*)
 - What were the results of those changes? (*closing the loop*)



Promoting a Learning-Centric Culture through Excellence, Equity, and Evidence



Toward Knowledge Dissemination

- ***5 Key Considerations:***
 1. Contexts, interests, topics/research questions, and resources
 2. Foundations, prior knowledge, and perspectives for the topic/research question
 3. Methodologies to investigate the topic/research question
 4. Analyses, conclusions, and recommendations
 5. Opportunities for dissemination, collaboration, and further investigation



1. Contexts, interests, topics/research questions, and resources

- How/why are you coming to this work? For what purpose/audience? To what end?
- Scoping the inquiry:
 - Optimizing vs. satisficing
 - Rigor/fussiness vs. utility
- Resource implications/availability:
 - People, time, money, space, intellectual effort, competing priorities, etc.
- Narrowing, broadening, and refining the topic/research question



1. Contexts, interests, topics/research questions, and resources

Reflection and Planning Questions:

- What are some potential ideas for research topics/questions in your context?
- Why are these important/significant to your work?
- In what ways do they connect to, or build on, prior or current initiatives?



2. Foundations, prior knowledge, and perspectives for the topic/research question

- Determine models, conceptual frameworks, philosophical orientations, etc.
- Consider a blend of approaches for topic/research question identification:
 - Promising practices from institutional/disciplinary/professional sources
 - Literature reviews
 - Assessment findings
 - Network of peers
- Position the research investigation appropriately:
 - Ethical, practical, professional, and political considerations
- Leverage existing infrastructures, systems, processes, tools, and technologies



2. Foundations, prior knowledge, and perspectives for the topic/research question

Reflection and Planning Questions:

- How would you describe your personal philosophy of, or approach to, engaging in research?
- What are some existing sources of information you can leverage in your potential investigation?
- Where do you have potential sources of support for your work? Any potential roadblocks or other dynamics to face?



3. Methodologies to investigate the topic/research question

- Data sources:
 - Pre-existing, locally available, commercially or externally available, and/or collecting your own data for the purpose of the investigation
- Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches
- Opportunistic/emergent design considerations
- Integrative with instructional, assessment, and improvement processes
- Alignment of topic/research question to/for/with specific populations/contexts:
 - Consider culturally relevant/responsive approaches



3. Methodologies to investigate the topic/research question

Reflection and Planning Questions:

- What data sources do you have available to potentially aid in your scholarly investigation?
- Are there potential sources from which you will need to collect data to enhance or expand your investigation?
- What type of methods or approaches do you feel are most appropriate and suitable for both your topic/research question *and* specific population/context?



4. Analyses, conclusions, and recommendations

- Using the topic/research question as a guide for analyzing/interpreting data
- Explain how you know what you know based on data collected:
 - Establishing evidence of knowledge creation and democratizing findings
- Alignment of conclusions and recommendations to topic/research question:
 - Presenting findings, including being truthful and disclosing any limitations
 - Recognizing/appreciating *modest vs. transformational* knowledge gains
- Audiences for recommendations, including how they may perceive findings:
 - Internal/external, political/power dynamics, partnerships with others, etc.
- Implications and considerations for policy, practice, and future research



4. Analyses, conclusions, and recommendations

Reflection and Planning Questions:

- As a *consumer* of scholarly information, what do you appreciate about how findings and recommendations are conveyed?
- In what ways could you envision a use for findings emerging from your potential topic/research question?
- Which internal and external constituencies are most likely to be interested in your work?



5. Opportunities for dissemination, collaboration, and further investigation

- Identify the range of potential venues for dissemination
- Determine the purposes and audiences for your work
- Consider the level of “maturity” of the investigation:
 - Work-in-progress, formative assessment, summative assessment, etc.
- Develop internal and external dissemination strategies
- Reflect on professional considerations, practices, and responsibilities
- Outline next steps in using current findings and planning further investigations



5. Opportunities for dissemination, collaboration, and further investigation

Reflection and Planning Questions:

- Based on what you know about your potential topic/research question, where are some specific venues for dissemination?
- In what ways might your potential topic/research question be disseminated at various stages (idea/concept, pilot results, summative findings, etc.)?
- Who are potential partners or collaborators with whom you might engage—either in the future or from the outset of your scholarly investigation?



Toward Knowledge Dissemination

- *Recap and Q&A / Discussion Before Break:*
 1. Contexts, interests, topics/research questions, and resources
 2. Foundations, prior knowledge, and perspectives for the topic/research question
 3. Methodologies to investigate the topic/research question
 4. Analyses, conclusions, and recommendations
 5. Opportunities for dissemination, collaboration, and further investigation



Break Time



Dissemination Outlets

- Consider these potential dissemination outlets for your work:
 - Assessment Institute in Indianapolis
 - International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education
 - Assessment and Improvement in Higher Education Book Series
 - *Assessment Update*
 - *Research & Practice in Assessment*
 - *Journal of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness*
 - *Journal of Student Affairs Inquiry, Improvement, and Impact*
 - Disciplinary and professional societies, associations, conferences, journals, and research/scholarly networks



Moderated Panel Discussion and Audience Q&A

- Katie Busby
- Erica Eckert
- Stephen P. Hundley (Moderator)
- John V. Moore III
- Mark Nicholas



Conclusion

- Action Planning Questions for Consideration:
 - What am I interested in doing?
 - Why is this important to my work and professional growth?
 - With whom do I need to consult or collaborate?
 - How will I get started or continue with my scholarly investigation?
 - What resources will I need to secure or (re)allocate for this purpose?
 - How will I hold myself accountable for progress and outcomes?
- Zoom-based Follow-up Supports:
 - Post-Workshop “Office Hours” (we will send an email with some options)
 - Scholarly highlights from the 2024 Assessment Institute and affiliates:
 - Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 3:00-4:00 p.m. (Eastern)

