

REWRITING THE RULES OF CREDIT

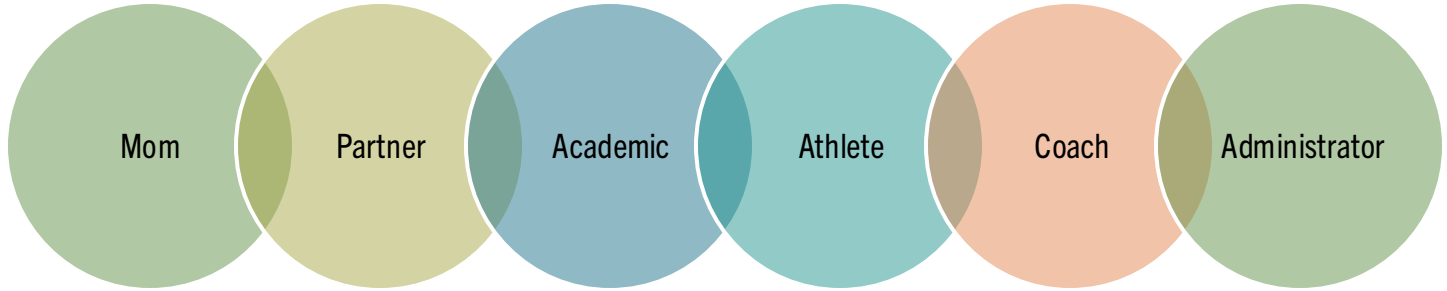
How prior learning assessment and competency based learning are redefining the value of lived experience

BUILDING OUR FOUNDATION



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- Associate Dean of Academic Planning, Assessment, Improvement and Impact at Colorado Mountain College (2012-2025)



Today we will rethink what counts as learning—and who gets to decide

WHERE DOES MOST MEANINGFUL LEARNING HAPPEN?

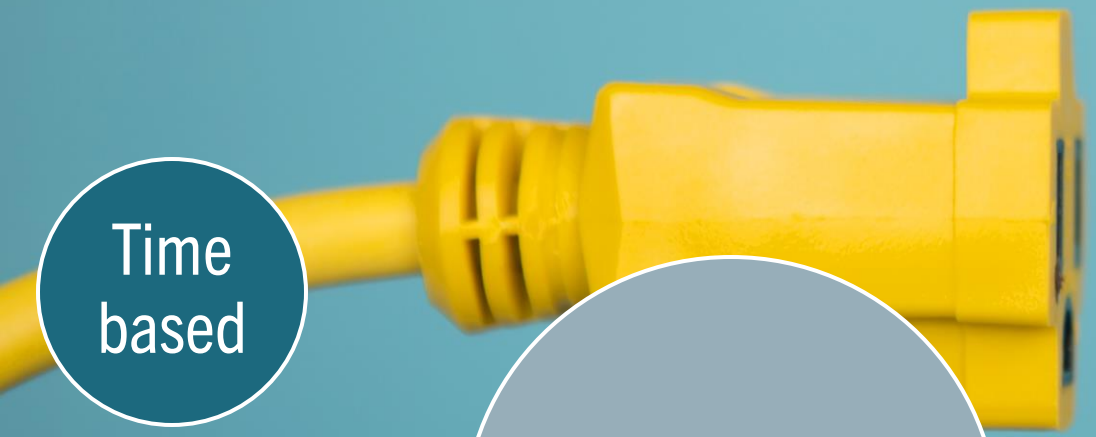


- Classroom
- Workplace
- Community
- Life experience
- All equally

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WE DON'T LACK LEARNING, WE LACK RECOGNITION SYSTEMS



Time based

+

Course bound

Traditional Credit

Experience

Recognition



Learning

Credentialing

Underserves adult & historically excluded learners



WHOSE KNOWLEDGE IS VALUED?

Whose is invisible?

- Caregiving
- Community leadership
- Bilingual at work
- Justice Impacted
- Recovery



LEARNING IN PUBLIC

Equity Centered Prior Learning and Competency Based Model

Treats lived experience as credit-worthy

Uses reflective portfolios

Aligns learning to competencies, not courses

CORE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Lived Experience **IS** a valid site of knowledge
- Reflection **IS** evidence of learning
- Competencies **ARE** a measure of rigor
- Transparency plus structure IS an equity practice

FROM TRANSLATION TO INTEGRATION



Traditional PLA	LIP Model
Course equivalency	Competency alignment
Credit for past	Learning made visible
Static	Iterative
Isolated	Integrated into curriculum

THE PROCESS



Student Experience

Evidence

Reflection

Competency alignment

Faculty assessment



PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS ACTIVITY (15 MINUTES)

Instructions: Participants review a short sample

In small groups (3–4):

What learning is present?

What competencies are demonstrated?

What evidence makes it rigorous?

DEBRIEF

- What counted as evidence?
- What surprised you?
- What challenged your assumptions?

Rigor is not about where learning happens—it's about how it is demonstrated and assessed

Each LIP portfolio includes this section of reflection. You do not need to answer every question, but should respond in depth to questions of growth and development from the past and as you see it moving in the future.

Reflecting Backwards

What skills and knowledge did y… …e roles? What made these roles a good or not so good…

What are you most p…

What has been m…

Of the respon… …atest challenges fo…

What, if any…

Which Big1…

Reflecting on…

Have any parti… …area?

What has been th… …onal or professional develop…

DEEP DIVE: LIP PORTFOLIO STRUCTURE

Reflecting Forwards

How do you plan to apply what you've learned moving forward?

What new skills, perspectives, or interests have you developed as a result of your experiences?

What new challenges or questions have arisen for you as a result of these experiences?

What additional learning would you like to pursue as a result of these experiences, and why?

Part 1: Learning Experience and Demonstrated Outcome

Experiences demonstrating learning outcomes

LIP Portfolios allow you to earn credit for experiences often marginalized in our society. This work, wisdom, and depth is seldom credited or it is devalued because of capitalism, patriarchy, and/or white supremacy, but CU has created these LIP Portfolios to honor and mark these formative experiences.
Experiences such as: Family Caregiving, Multilingual at Work, Immigrant Experience, Reentry/Justice Impacted, Recovery

(Add Evidence and context below. Add a row for each additional piece of evidence.)

Experience/Role	Timeframe	Evidence	Brief context for evidence
Insert data...	Insert data...		

Part 2: Expository Q & A

Please answer most of the questions for each learning outcome. You do not need to answer every question, but you might choose to do so in an effort to showcase as much of your learning journey as possible.

[GPD] Power & Difference

General Learning Outcome: Can identify, analyze, and transform structures and systems of privilege, power, and difference.

Potential & Specific Learning Outcomes: In your role as a _____, identifies, analyzes, and works to transform structures and systems of privilege, power, and difference by {enter the specific actions you took} _____

How do you define privilege, power, and difference as it relates to this learning outcome? Can you provide examples of each from your own experiences in your listed roles?

REFLECTION FRAMEWORK

Students demonstrate

- Meaning making
- Transfer of knowledge
- Critical analysis
- Identity & Agency development

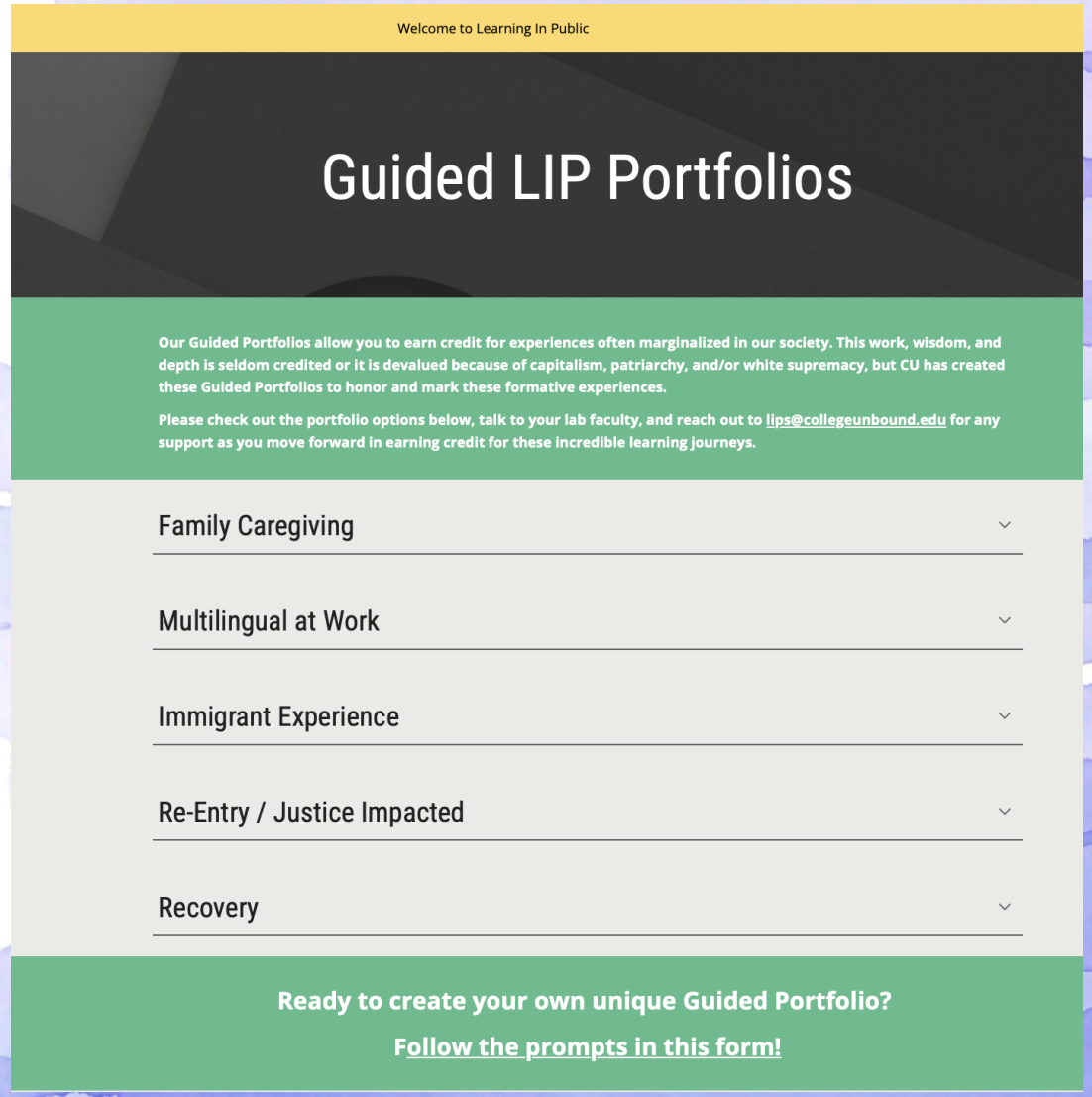
COMPETENCY DOMAINS

- GPD – Power & Difference Rubric
- GGC – Global Citizenship Rubric
- GCE – Civic Engagement Rubric
- GCX – Creative Expression Rubric
- GLA – Interpreting Literature, Art, or Philosophy Rubric
- GHR – Historical Reasoning Rubric
- GSR – Scientific Reasoning Rubric
- GST – Using Science & Technology Rubric
- GQR – Quantitative Reasoning Rubric
- GIG – Individual and Group Dynamics Rubric
- SBS – Social and Behavioral Science Rubric
- MOS – Organizational Studies Rubric
- MLS – Leadership Studies Rubric
- MCS – Change Studies Rubric
- ELT – Elective Credit Rubric

GPD – Power & Difference Can identify, analyze, and transform structures and systems of privilege, power, and difference

Dimension	No LIP Credit (Introductory)	200-Level (Developing)	300-Level (Proficient)	400-Level (Advanced)
Identification	Can identify basic concepts of privilege, power, and difference.	Can identify and describe specific examples of privilege, power, and difference in various contexts.	Can identify and explain complex relationships between privilege, power, and difference in various contexts.	Can identify and critique nuanced and intersecting structures of privilege, power, and difference in multiple contexts.
Analysis	Can describe simple ways in which privilege, power, and difference affect individuals and groups.	Can analyze specific instances where privilege, power, and difference influence social dynamics and outcomes.	Can analyze and compare different theoretical frameworks for understanding privilege, power, and difference.	Can critically analyze and evaluate systemic structures of privilege, power, and difference using multiple perspectives.
Transformation	Shows basic understanding of the need for change in systems of privilege, power, and difference.	Can propose simple strategies for addressing and mitigating privilege, power, and difference.	Can develop detailed plans or projects aimed at transforming structures of privilege, power, and difference.	Can implement and assess comprehensive and sustainable strategies for transforming structures of privilege, power, and difference.
Application	Can apply basic concepts of privilege, power, and difference to personal experiences.	Can apply knowledge of privilege, power, and difference to case studies or real-world scenarios.	Can apply advanced concepts and theoretical frameworks to complex real-world problems involving privilege, power, and difference.	Can apply and integrate advanced concepts, theories, and practices to professional and societal contexts to foster equity and inclusion.
Critical Thinking and Reflection	Demonstrates initial awareness of personal biases and perspectives regarding privilege, power, and difference.	Demonstrates ability to reflect on and critique personal biases and assumptions.	Demonstrates advanced critical thinking in reflecting on personal and societal implications of privilege, power, and difference.	Demonstrates deep critical reflection and articulates strategies for continuous personal and societal improvement regarding privilege, power, and difference.

EXAMPLE ALIGNMENT



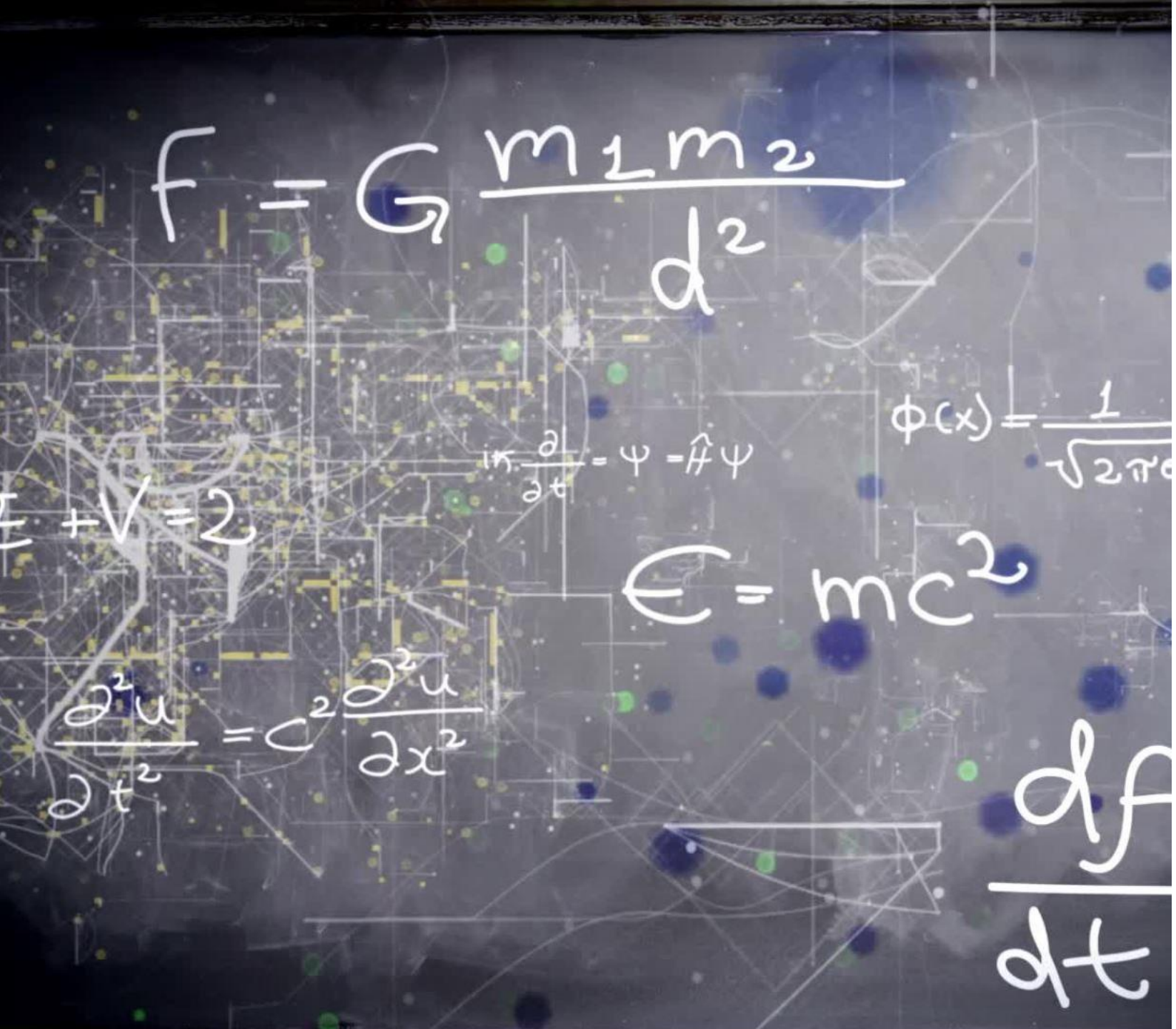
Family Caregiving

This is a great option if you...

- Have cared for a sick and/or aging parent or loved one
- Have raised a child with or without special needs
- Have been an integral part in raising siblings or other loved ones

You can submit to earn credit in up to three of the following requirements:

- Individual & Group Dynamics
- Using Science and Technology
- Power & Difference
- Global Citizenship
- Scientific Reasoning
- Quantitative Reasoning
- Elective credits



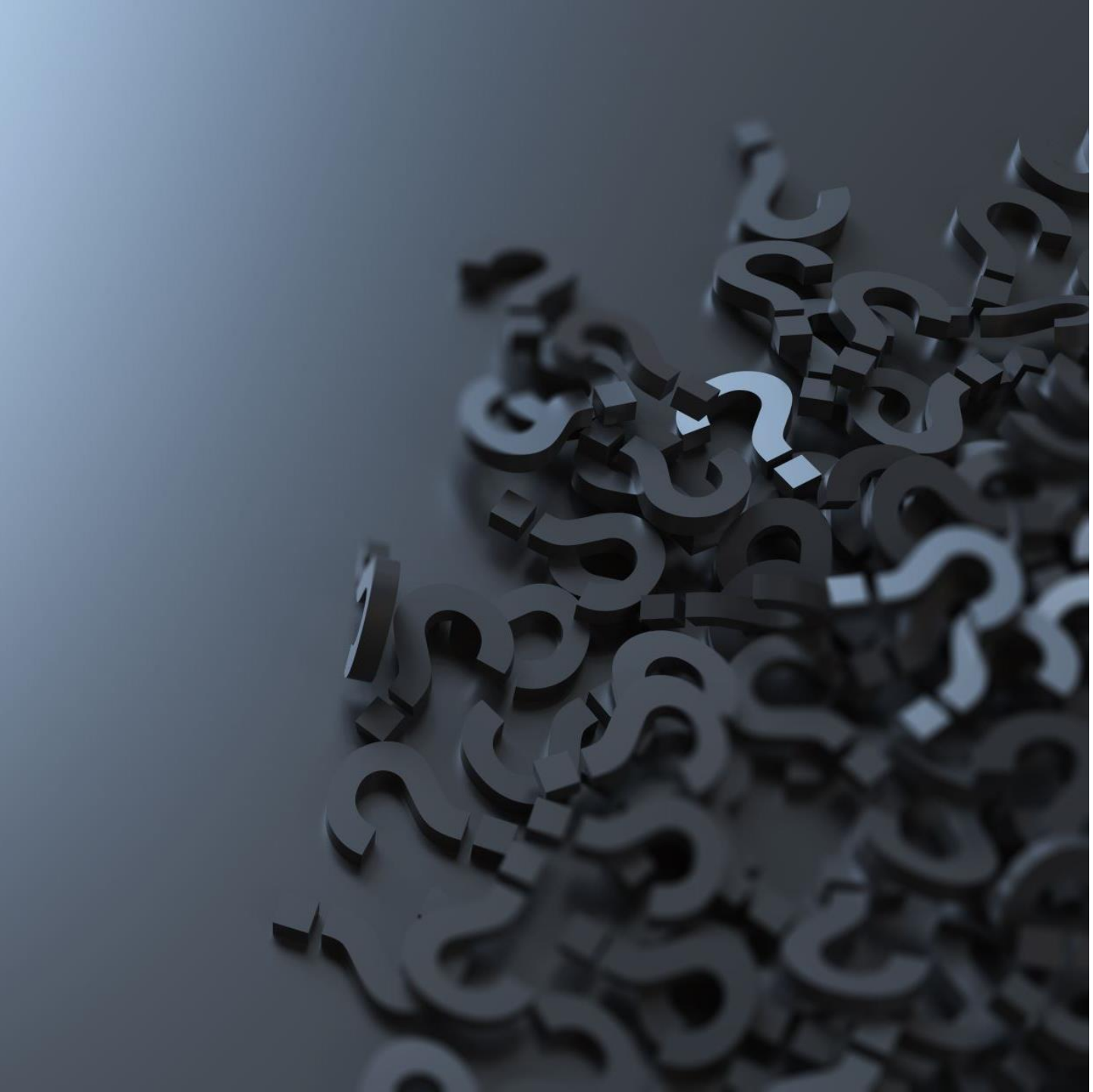
SCAFFOLDING

Students are supported through:

- Guided Prompts
- Iterative Drafts
- Feedback Cycles
- Clear criteria
- Performance descriptors
- Evidence based evaluation
- Considering AI coaching

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY #2 (10 MIN)

1. Design Sprint
   - Design a small LIP-style assignment for your context
     - Include:
       1. Experience prompt
       2. Reflection question
       3. Competency alignment



SHARE OUT

- What did you design?
- What competencies did you prioritize?

WHY THIS MATTERS: EQUITY AND IMPACT

STUDENT IMPACT

Students gain:

- Confidence
- Agency
- Clarity of learning
- Transferable skills

INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT

- Scalable PLA model
- Stronger retention
- Alignment with workforce + community needs

- Expands access
- Validates diverse knowledge
- Reduces time to degree

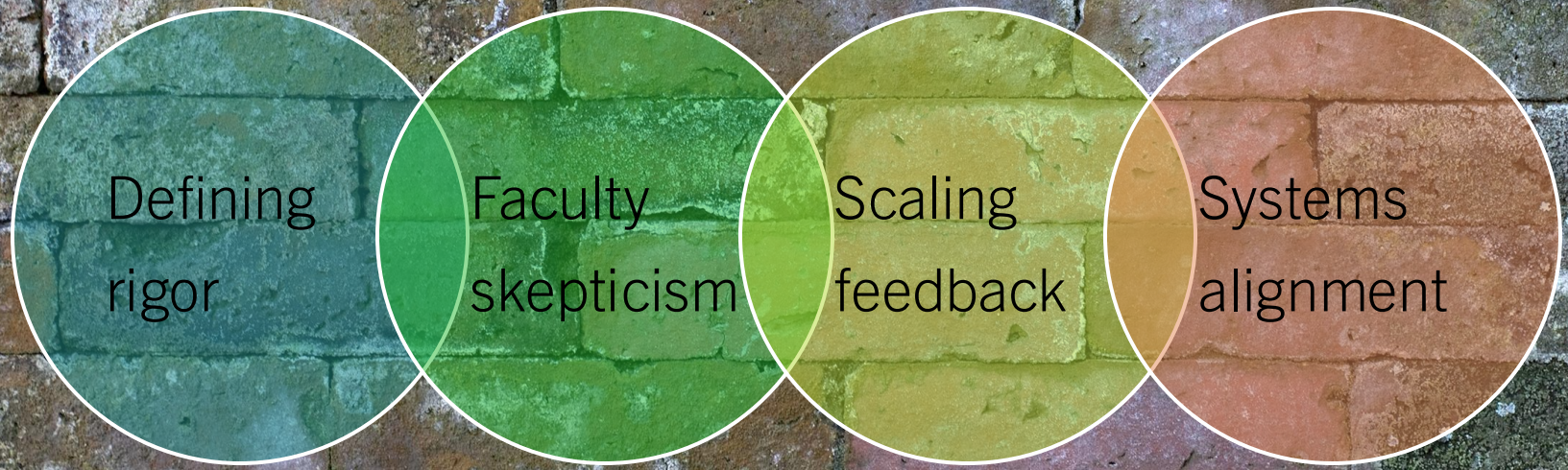
IMPLEMENTATION INSIGHTS

Structured scaffolding and support

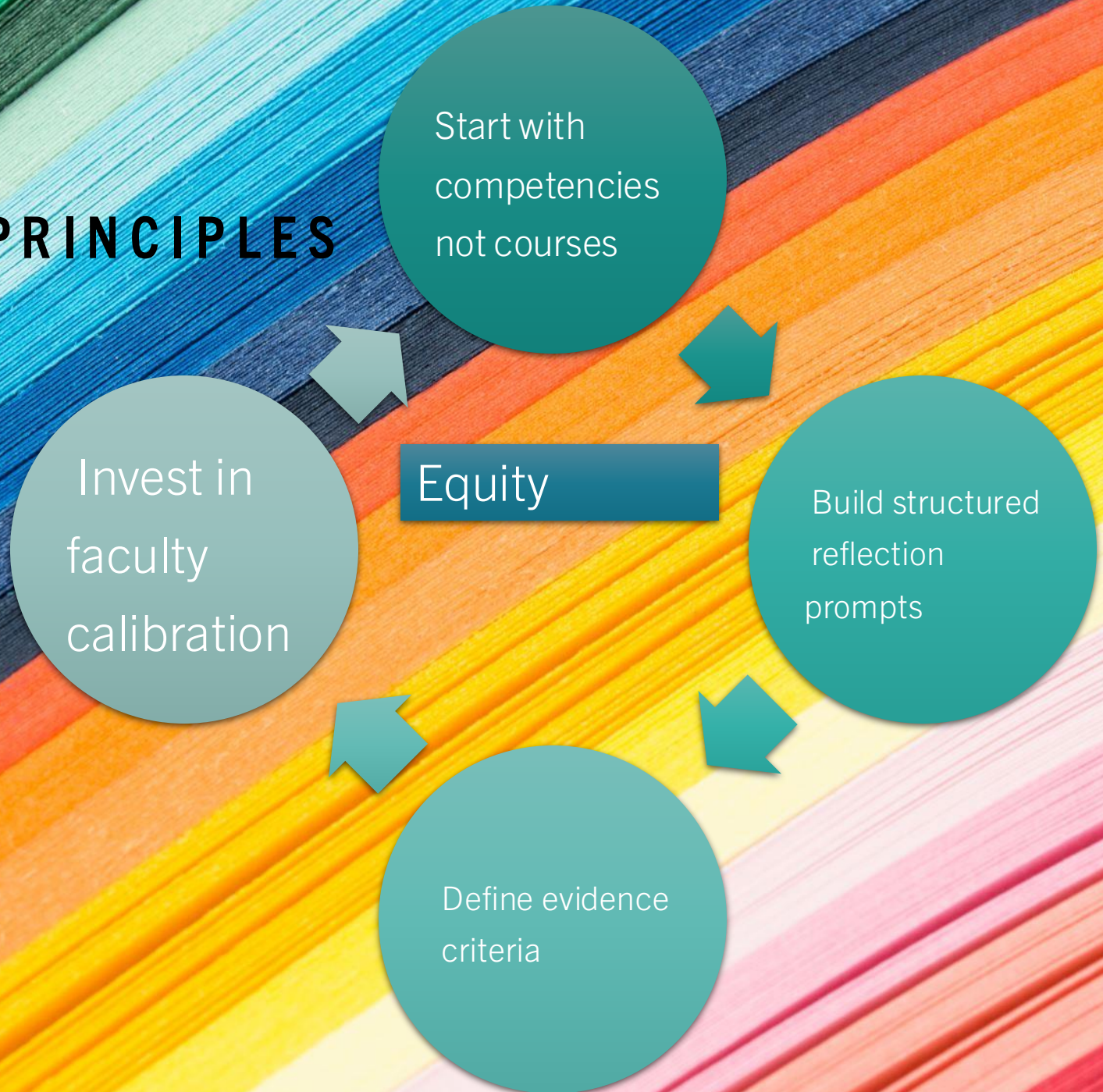
- Required Learning from Experience course in portfolio writing
- Dedicated office and mentors to support student submissions
- Clear rubrics
- Norming and scoring sessions for assessors
- Semesterly calibration sessions
- Institutional alignment



COMMON CHALLENGES



DESIGN PRINCIPLES



FINAL REFLECTION

What is one way you could rethink credit in your context?



If we redefine what counts as knowledge, we redefine who belongs in higher education

