

Using a Lens of Trauma-Informed Principles: An Approach Towards Equitable Assessment Practices in Teacher Education

Shannon Welbourn, Anjali Khirwadkar, Catherine Susin, and Ruth McQuirter

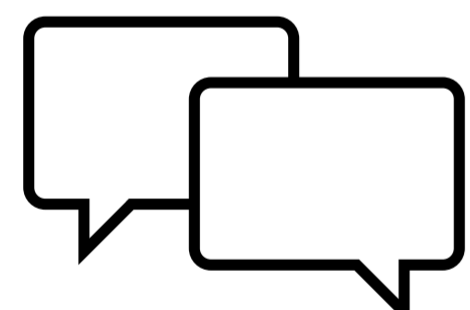
Introduction

In 2021, teacher candidates expressed feeling overwhelmed with the number of assignments across all courses, causing anxiety and mental-health issues for many. In response to this issues, the project was designed to explore assessment practices in a teacher education program through a trauma-informed lens (considering SAMHSA, 2014) to promote equitable and inclusive learning environments.

Methods



Course Syllabi Review
 • Review of assessment criteria



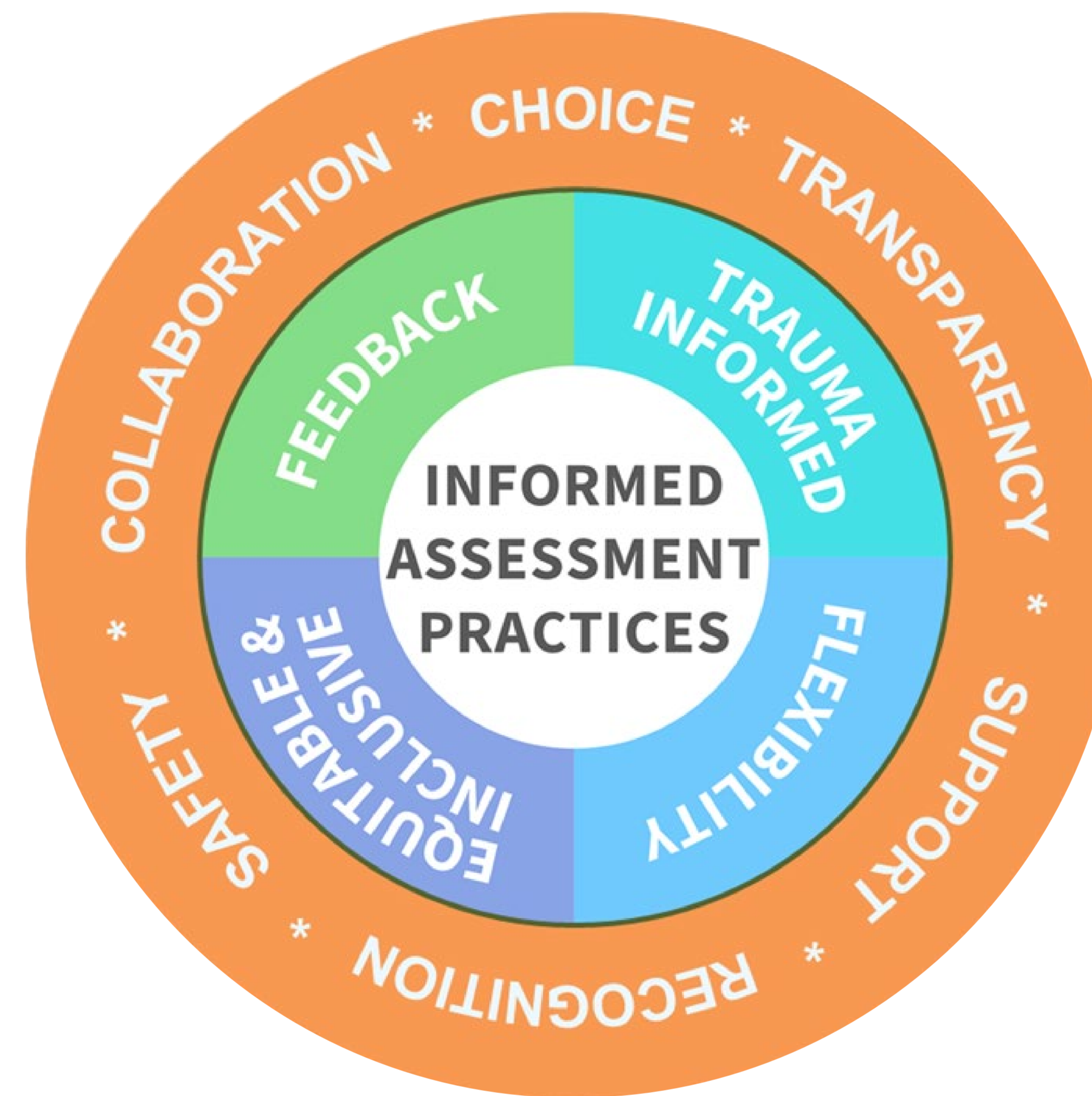
Team Lead Survey
 • Open-ended questionnaire completed by PJI Team Leads



Qualitative Analysis
 • Thematic data analysis

Key Findings

- ✓ Clear and transparent criteria, & open communication
- ✓ Flexible deadlines and multimodal submissions
- ✓ Relevant and reduced number of assessments
- ✓ Fostering peer collaboration, and individual options



Trauma-Informed Principles Defined

Safety	Feeling physically and psychologically safe; having safe physical setting and a sense of safety in interpersonal interactions.
Trustworthiness & Transparency	Decisions are conducted with transparency, building and maintaining trust with everyone involved in the organization.
Support	Peer support establishes safety and hope, building trust, enhancing collaboration, and utilizing stories and lived experience.
Collaboration & Mutuality	Importance is placed on the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making.
Empowerment, Voice & Choice	Individuals' strengths and experiences are recognized and built upon.
Cultural, Historical & Gender Issues	Actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases; is responsive to the racial, ethnic and cultural needs; recognizes and addresses historical trauma.

Conclusions

Team leads emphasized the importance of establishing a physically and emotionally safe environment. Strategies included clear communication about assessment criteria and flexible deadlines. Many courses implemented collaborative projects and peer feedback mechanisms, fostering a sense of community, and enabling students to support one another through shared experiences and challenges

Implications

Equity issues arise due to the large number of assignments, which could disadvantage students juggling workload with outside jobs for financial reasons. Understanding how our assessment practices affect our students is essential for safeguarding the learning process. By proactively infusing trauma-informed principles in our classrooms, we can provide supportive and equitable opportunities for all learners to participate fully in education.

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