

# Ground Effective Data Use

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## **ASSUMPTION 1**

Making significant progress in improving student learning (and closing achievement gaps) is a moral responsibility. It is not student's poverty or race or ethnic background that stands in the way of success. It is college practices and policies and the beliefs that underlie them that pose the biggest obstacles.

## **ASSUMPTION 2**

Data have no meaning. Meaning is imposed through interpretation. Frames of reference, the way we see the world, influence the meaning we derive from data. Effective data users become aware of and critically examine their frames of reference and assumptions. Conversely, data can also be a catalyst to questioning assumptions and changing practices based on new ways of thinking.

## **ASSUMPTION 3**

Collaborative inquiry — a process where faculty, staff, and managers construct our understanding of student learning problems and invent and test solutions together through rigorous and frequent use of data and reflective dialogue — unleashes the resourcefulness and creativity to continuously improve instruction and student learning.

## **ASSUMPTION 4**

A college culture characterized by collective responsibility for student learning, commitment to equity, and trust is the foundation for collaborative inquiry. In the absence of such a culture, college may be unable to respond effectively to the data they have.

## **ASSUMPTION 5**

Using data itself does not improve teaching. Improved teaching comes about when faculty implement sound teaching practices grounded in cultural proficiency — understanding and respect for their students' cultures — and a thorough understanding of the subject matter and how to teach it, including understanding student thinking and ways of making content accessible to all students.