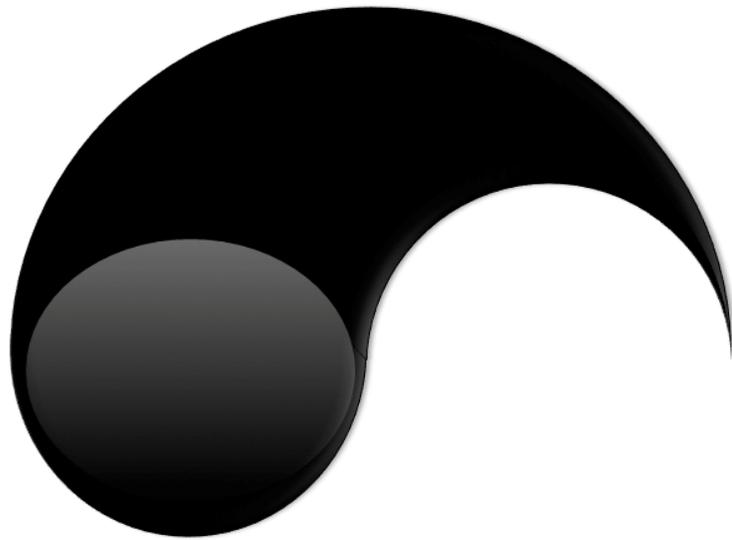
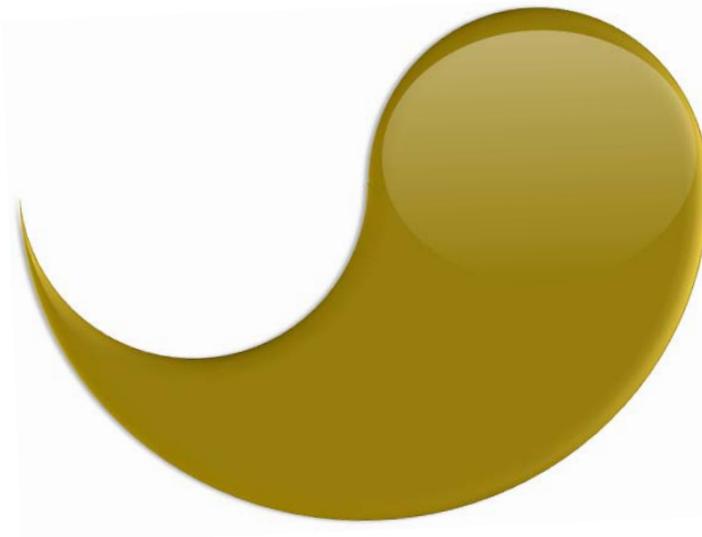


# Annual Conference



## The Yin Yang of Higher Education



Association for General & Liberal Studies

**54th Annual Conference**

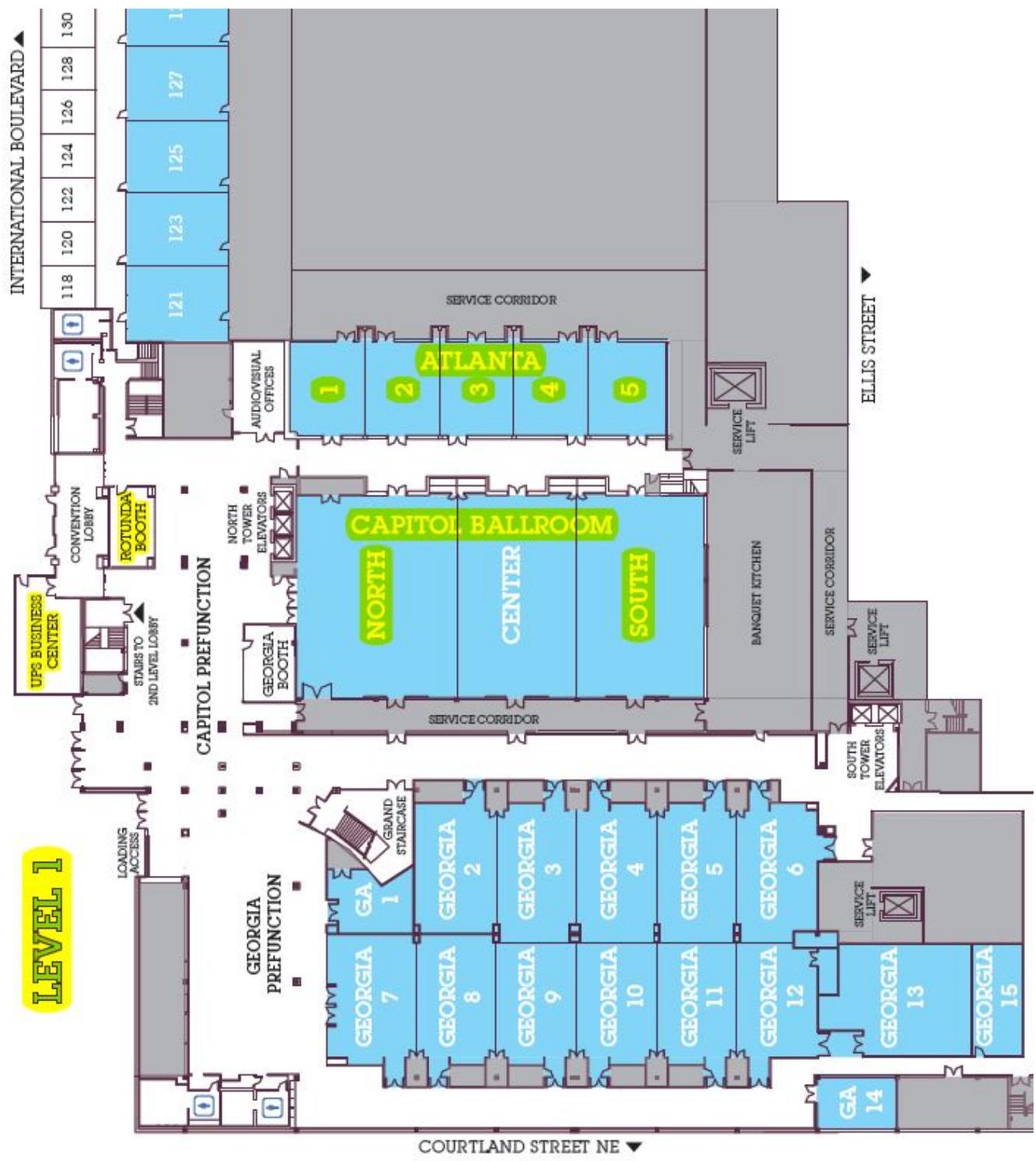
September 25-27, 2014

Sheraton Atlanta

165 Courtyard Street NE

Atlanta, Georgia

# LEVEL 1





# The Yin Yang of Higher Education

Do you feel pummeled by opposing forces? Consider some examples of current tensions facing higher education:

- external pressures to homogenize or standardize versus internal efforts to preserve institutional identity and heritage
- a vocational view of college that competes with a belief in “education for its own sake”
- demands for “hard” skills like accounting procedures or computer proficiencies that vie with the need for “soft” ones like critical thinking or communication
- the dialectics that exist between traditional, face-to-face modes of instruction and online or hybrid versions
- institutional practices regarding hiring full-time, tenured faculty versus increasing reliance on NTTFS
- STEM versus the Humanities

What if we stopped viewing these tensions as oppositional? What if, inspired by the Chinese concept of yin-yang, we saw them as complementary, interconnected, interdependent forces that interact to form a dynamic system in which the whole is greater than the parts? Is that even possible or desirable?

The 54th conference sessions will address this yin-yang duality, including:

- assessment-based needs for uniformity and alignment versus the academic freedom of individual instructors
- inviting non-tenure track faculty into decision-making processes of the university (such as curriculum design, committee functions, co-curricular programming, etc.) while also trying to ensure equity of non-tenure track workloads
- facilitating transferability of credits versus maintaining a “core curriculum”
- how minority-serving institutions (specifically HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs) maintain their unique identities within national conversations emphasizing transferability
- work-life balance (for faculty who teach in liberal education programs or for program administrators)
- fostering innovation and creativity versus celebrating tradition and heritage.



## **2013-2014 AGLS Executive Council**

Past President	Larry Kaptain, University of Colorado, Denver
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## ***The Path Less Travelled***

# **Terrel Rhodes**

**Vice President, Office of Quality, Curriculum  
and Assessment**

**Association of American Colleges  
and Universities**

Liberal education is a way of learning and teaching as well as a curriculum. There is much talk in higher education about pathways for students that enhance their learning and ability to integrate their experiences – whole person education. Yet, we live so little of what we advocate through the formal higher education frameworks we have constructed and cling to. What would happen if we focused more on what we know works to achieve greater integration of learning; greater equity in outcomes for all of our students; and more engaged learning for students and faculty? What if we placed in the forefront of what we value, the practices that are highly effective in linking formal and informal learning; general and disciplinary learning; and faculty and student collaboration around guided learning? What if we practiced in the classroom what we practice in our research venues – making assessment a high impact practice for learning? In short, this plenary will explore some of what we know in answer to these questions, some of what we accept, some of what we model, and some of what is working against creating the whole person approach to learning found in the theme of this conference.

Dr. Rhodes received his B.A. from Indiana University at Bloomington and his M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Before moving into national higher education work, he was a faculty member for twenty-five years. Dr. Rhodes is currently Vice President for the Office of Quality, Curriculum and Assessment at the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) where he focuses on the quality of undergraduate education, access, general education, and assessment of student learning. He is also director of the annual AAC&U General Education Institute.

Rhodes brings to his position many years of experience leading undergraduate curriculum development efforts, teaching public policy at the graduate and undergraduate levels, developing learning outcomes assessment plans, and forging inter-institutional collaborations with community colleges and high schools. In addition to his prior position as Vice Provost for Curriculum and Dean of Undergraduate Programs at Portland State University, Rhodes was



Professor of Public Administration. Prior to assuming his positions at PSU, Rhodes served in several roles at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, including Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs and Special Assistant to the Provost for Assessment.

At AAC&U he is working with a project on faculty driven assessment of student learning supported by the Fund for Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE) and the State Farm Companies Foundation entitled Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE). VALUE faculty teams are developing rubrics for the full range of essential learning outcomes that can be used with authentic student work to demonstrate quality student learning. Continuing the work of the Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College project, his office furthers the importance of clearly articulating the qualities of a well-educated person, creating coherent educational programs that cultivate those qualities, and assessing to determine if they have been achieved through general education, the majors, and co-curricular work.

He has received grant support from the National Science Foundation under the Carl Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Program; the U.S. Department of Education for the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program; and FIPSE for projects related to the use of e-portfolios for transfer among and between two and four-year colleges, as well as collaboration on a Lumina-funded project on barriers to transfer students.

Rhodes has published extensively on both undergraduate education reform issues and in his academic field of public policy and administration. His many books and articles cover such issues as integrative learning, e-portfolios, high school-college connections, and public policies affecting urban American Indian communities. He is member of the Ethics Section of the American Society for Public Administration.

Dr. Rhodes has been an educational consultant and outside evaluator at numerous colleges and universities, with a special interest in curriculum development and assessment of student learning outcomes, and has served as a reviewer and outside evaluator for the U.S. Department of Education.



**Association of American Colleges  
& Universities**

**We are proud to be a partner of the AAC&U**

**Look for our session at the January 2015  
conference in Washington DC**



## 2014-2015 Institutional Members

Dar Al-Kekma College  
Keene State College  
James Madison University  
St. Bonaventure University  
St. Edwards's University  
St. Mary's University (Texas)  
University of South Carolina

An Institutional Membership provides support to an institution's general / liberal studies program and allows institutions to support the involvement of their faculty and staff in the work of AGLS.

Benefits include:

- ◆ Three individual professional memberships to AGLS, assigned by the member institution. Each membership carries all the benefits of individual membership
- ◆ A hot link from the AGLS website to your institution's general education web site
- ◆ Listing of the member institution in AGLS newsletter, programs, website, and other appropriate publications
- ◆ Three representatives from campus may register for the annual conference at a \$50 discount
- ◆ Up to three additional campus representatives may register for the annual conference at a \$25 discount
- ◆ Member institution will be given three copies of the AGLS Guide and three copies of the Judgments of Quality publication
- ◆ 20% discount on advertising rates for the AGLS website, the printed conference program, or placing inserts in the conference attendee packet
- ◆ Free placement of general education online job postings in the members only section
- ◆ If the member institution has five or more attendees registered for the annual conference, option to sign up for 90-minute access to a work room onsite at the conference
- ◆ Discounts on the AGLS consultancy program

Institutional memberships are \$350 per year, running September 1 to August 31.



## **AGLS PRESIDENTS**

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1964-1965	Edwin T. Martin, University of South Florida
1966-1969	Malcolm Correll, University of Colorado
1970-1971	Robert Limpus, Western Michigan University
1972-1973	Douglas Dunham, Michigan State University
1974-1975	H. C. Kiefer, University of South Florida
1976-1977	A. J. Carlson, Austin College
1978-1979	Paul Bernstein, Rochester Institute of Technology
1980-1981	Carol J. Guardo, Drake University
1982-1983	Brendan Gilbane, Boston University
1984-1985	Candadai Seshachari, Weber State University
1986-1987	Theodore Kiffer, Pennsylvania State University
1988	L. Jackson Newell, University of Utah
1989	Janice Green, Bradford College
1990	Karen Spear, University of South Florida
1991	Marshall W. Gregory, Butler University
1992	Ronald W. Carstens, Ohio Dominican College
1993	John J. Romano, Pennsylvania State University
1994	Beverley J. Pitts, Ball State University
1995	Victor L. Worsfold, University of Texas
1996	Karl Schilling, Miami University
1997	Beth Casey, Bowling Green University
1998	Bruce Busby, Defiance College
1999	Robert Frankle, University of Memphis
2000	Robert Levy, Indiana State University
2001-2002	John Nichols, Saint Joseph's College
2003-2004	Rob Mauldin, Shawnee State University
2005-2006	Margaret J. Downes, University of North Carolina, Asheville
2007-2008	Michael Gress, Vincennes University
2009-2010	Stephen Bowen, Oxford College of Emory University
2011-2012	Lawrence Kaptain, Louisiana State University
2013-2014	Lenore Rodicio, Miami Dade College
2015-2016	Margaret Mulrooney, James Madison University



# AGLS Award for the Improvement of General Education

## Exemplary Program Award



Increasingly national and international education officials, accreditors, and faculty leaders associate “quality” education with student learning outcomes and continuous quality improvement processes. Academic leaders and accrediting bodies discourage viewing education as a simple act of passing a static body of knowledge from faculty to students. Instead, they value education practiced as a commitment to a set of collectively-practiced, ongoing activities: making *institutional choices* about the most important goals for student learning and defining the learning in terms of desired outcomes; developing a shared faculty commitment to *actions* such as high impact, active learning strategies and faculty development designed to increase student achievement; making informed *judgments* about student achievement; and ensuring continuous *improvements* in the educational program. Despite the commitment of academic leaders and accreditors to these processes, too few institutions have succeeded in applying systematic improvement processes to the general education program. As a result, higher education accountability and improvement discussions assume higher education can benefit from models of innovative and effective general education program assessment.

The Association for General and Liberal Studies is the national organization whose mission is singularly committed to quality general education programs and their central role in the liberal education of students. Each year, the organization invites institutions to apply for the AGLS Award for Improving General Education: Exemplary Program Processes. The Award promotes institutional commitment to continuous quality improvement processes, recognizes faculty and institutions that practice these quality behaviors, and provides much needed examples of effective improvement processes. The Award will recognize institutions committed to a specified systematic improvement that is driven by learning assessment. The Award will recognize institutions using assessment to reconsider learning goals, develop a shared commit to improved learning strategies, and determine the success of these efforts. AGLS may recognize as many as three institutions in a given year. Applicants are asked to limit their focus to assessment of just **one** goal, general education outcome, or area of learning. The Award presentation is made during the Annual Conference.

### Previous Recipients

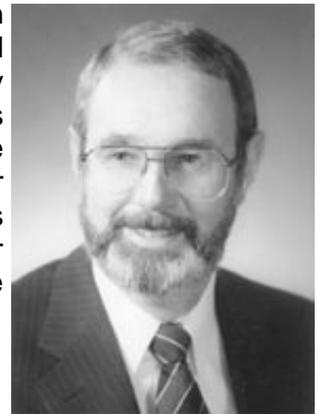
2014	University of South Carolina, St. Mary’s University
2013	no award given
2012	Wofford College
2011	George Mason University and Stetson University
2010	Carleton College, Champlain College and Wright State University
2009	James Madison University
2008	Miami Dade College and University of North Dakota
2007	Portland State University, Eastern Michigan University and University of North Carolina at Asheville



## Jerry G. Gaff Faculty Award for Faculty Excellence in General and Liberal Education

The Gaff Award is given annually to those who have demonstrated leadership on their campuses in the area of general and liberal education; who have shown evidence of outstanding teaching in general and liberal education courses; and who have a record of achievement in curriculum development, innovation, or implementation in general and liberal education.

The award is named for Jerry Gaff, retired Senior Scholar of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, is a respected advocate for general and liberal education for over thirty years. Gaff, who received a Ph.D. in psychology from Syracuse University, previously served on the faculties of five institutions and was dean of the College of Liberal Arts and acting president of Hamline University. He also served as Vice President of AAC&U and directed their Preparing Future Faculty Program. He has authored numerous books including *Toward Faculty Renewal*, *General Education Today*, and *New Life for the College Curriculum* and co-edited the *Handbook of the Undergraduate Curriculum*.



### Previous Recipients

- 2014 no award given
- 2013 Amy Stackhouse, Iona College
- 2012 Norm Jones, Utah State University
- 2011 Joan Hawthorne, University of North Dakota
- 2010 David B. Gowler, Oxford College of Emory University
- 2009 Margaret E. Martin, Eastern Connecticut State University  
Daniel Silvermintz, University of Houston, Clear Lake
- 2008 no award given
- 2007 no award given
- 2006 no award given
- 2005 Edward J. Katz, University of North Carolina, Asheville
- 2004 no award given
- 2003 Tony Edmonds, Ball State University  
John Habel, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee
- 2002 Mary Dickson, Broome Community College  
Fred Albertson, University of Memphis  
Gail Schiffer, Kennesaw State University



## **Joseph Katz Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Practice and Discourse of General and Liberal Education**

Since 1992, upon identifying a stellar candidate, the AGLS Council selects a person in the United States to receive the Joseph Katz Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Practice and Discourse of General and Liberal Education. This is a person whose commitment and activity has contributed greatly to the improvement of the educational experiences of students on campuses nationally and to the understanding of the theory and practice of general and liberal education at the national level.

### Previous Recipients

- 2013 Linda Cabe Halpern, James Madison University
- 2010 Julie Thompson-Klein, Wayne State University
- 2007 J. Scott Lee, Association for Core Texts and Courses
- 2005 Carol Geary Schneider, Association of American Colleges & Universities
- 2003 Karen Schilling,
- 2001 John Hinni,
- 1999 John Nichols, St. Joseph's College
- 1996 Richard Weeks
- 1994 Jackson Newell
- 1993 Kathryn Mohrman
- 1992 Jerry Gaff, Association of American Colleges & Universities

Friday, September 26

Katz Plenary

11:45am

Dr. Linda Cabe Halpern

*The Art of General Education*



# Journal of GENERAL EDUCATION

A Curricular Commons of the Humanities and Sciences



JEREMY COHEN, EDITOR  
PATTY WHARTON-MICHAEL,  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

*Journal of General Education: A Curricular Commons of the Humanities and Sciences* is devoted to the ideas and ideals of scholarship that enlighten the understanding of curriculum that reaches beyond disciplinary and professional concentrations to provide an undergraduate educational commons. The journal's research, essays, forums and reviews engage academic communities and others in deliberations about general education experiments and innovation, as well as considerations of general education assessment, history, philosophy and theoretical perspective. The journal values general education as a cornerstone of the arts of liberty and social justice and as a conservator of enlightened engagement.

#### Quarterly

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**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25****11:30am to 5:00pm REGISTRATION DESK OPEN [Rotunda Booth]****2:00pm to 5:00pm PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS****[Atlanta 2] *A Guided Tour through a General Education Program's Many Processes***

Mike Gress (Vincennes University), David DiMattio (Montgomery County Community College), Leon Book (College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Southeast Health), Cory Lock (St. Edward's University, and representatives from institutions who have received the AGLS Exemplary Program Award

In 2006, AGLS published *Improving Learning in General Education: An AGLS Guide to Assessment and Program Review*. One purpose of the Guide is to provide general education program leaders with an essential set of systems analysis questions that can be used to evaluate a program's quality and "guide" thinking about program fundamentals. This workshop will use a group discussion format to clarify the meaning of the Guide questions, and then, using specific examples from AGLS Exemplary Program Award recipients, offer details on how institutions successfully address the processes. Workshop participants will collaborate with the presenters by doing a systems analysis of their program, considering how well their program addresses the questions, and sharing their experiences with processes assumed in the Guide questions.

**[Atlanta 1] *CAGLS' Welcome to the Neighborhood: A Primer for Those New to General Education Programs***

Larry Peterson (North Dakota State University), Margaret Mulrooney (James Madison University), and Paul Winterhoff (Meredith College)

New or recently appointed as an administrator, staff or faculty of your campus' general education program? Think of this workshop as your introduction to key issues, resources, and national network of colleagues to help you ease into the world of general education.

**[Atlanta 4] *Unpacking General Education Outcomes for Deeper Student Learning and Success***

John Frederick (University of North Carolina at Charlotte), Jamie Bestard (Miami Dade College) and Miriam Frances Abety (Miami Dade College)

Defining general education outcomes is difficult—keeping the process going presents even more challenges. One of the problems, no matter how committed faculty, staff and administrators are to general education, is how to sustain momentum and engagement in general education while simultaneously maintaining or starting other college or discipline initiatives. So, how do we continuously engage faculty in the general education outcomes as time marches on? Since there is no magic bullet, colleges need strategies for overcoming such challenges. The purpose of this workshop is to share an interactive approach to overcoming such challenges. Participants will engage in deconstruction activities designed to empower faculty to find greater ownership of the general education outcomes. Participants will be guided through the process of deconstructing general education learning outcomes statements into specific learning targets. This strategy highlights what instructors are already doing to foster disciplinary thinking in their courses and creates a stronger connection the general education outcome that will promote deeper student learning. This session will provide a practical approach to building the interconnection, intentionality and interdisciplinary perspective to mastering general education outcomes through several deconstruction activities. Participants will engage in small group activities as well as share lessons learned.

**[Atlanta 3] *Coming to Terms with your Assessment Disorder: How to embrace assessment to improve liberal education pedagogy***

Gretchen Hazard (James Madison University), Kathy Clarke (James Madison University) and Jeanne Horst (James Madison University)

Are you afraid of the A-word? You might be suffering from Assessment Anxiety. Perhaps you have Testing for Testing's Sake Syndrome where you are "doing assessment" but haven't started using assessment results. If your data are lost in unread reports you could be suffering from Result Delivery Underperformance Disorder. Many of us have experienced the dreaded Assessment Fatigue when there are too many instruments and too many reports. Let us put you on the road to assessment wellness by helping you confidently embrace the assessment learning cycle, turn assessment imperatives into meaningful experiences that improve pedagogy and meet reporting requirements, learn where to find campus partners with investment in useful assessment work, and meaningfully share results. This workshop will walk you through a mini-assessment cycle. We will set objectives, measure outcomes, analyze data



<b>THURSDAY/FRIDAY</b>
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and report out our findings. Through a series of hands-on activities, we'll provide real life examples of what has worked, what hasn't, what we'd like to try and we'd love to hear your ideas as well. Bring along your assessment woes, we may just have the cure!"

**5:30pm to 6:30pm**      **WELCOME RECEPTION** [Capitol South]  
cash bar and light appetizers

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

**8:00am to 5:00pm**      **REGISTRATION DESK OPEN** [Rotunda Booth]

**7:45am to 8:30am**      **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST** [Capitol South]

**8:30am to 9:00am**      **CONFERENCE OPENING SESSION** [Capitol South]

*Welcome to Atlanta*, Lenore Rodicio, AGLS President

*What's Happening in AGLS*, Joyce Lucke, AGLS Executive Director

**9:00am to 10:15am**      **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

[Atlanta 1] ***Organizing Your Supplementary Materials so the Students will Actually Use Them***  
Peggy Hohensee (Kaplan University) and Michelle Lis (Kaplan University)

For nearly three years, the Math Department has been using a free service called Live Binders to organize supplemental materials that are created within the university, provide by publishers, and located from external sources. The free service allows instructors to organize the materials by unit quickly and efficiently and embed the static URL for the Live Binder in the course. What makes the Binders so exciting to use is that although the URL is static, the Live Binders are dynamic and instantly display changes made by the department for revisions, additional resources, etc. With an average of nearly 10,000 hits per month, the Binders have significantly increased usage of supplemental materials. What's more, students comment regularly on end of term surveys how helpful the materials were. Come learn how you too can use this free service to organize supplemental (or any) materials for your courses.

[Atlanta 2] ***Success in Integrating Learning within and Beyond the Classroom: Deconstructing one model to consider what will work for you***

Irma Van Scoy (University of South Carolina) and Damara Hightower-Davis (University of South Carolina)  
**University of South Carolina is a 2014 Exemplary Program Award Recipient**

This session will share the story of the development and implementation of a comprehensive, initiative across academic and student affairs to integrate within and beyond the classroom learning. The initiative, entitled USC Connect, emphasizes the university's Carolina Core (i.e., general education) outcomes of analysis, communication, problem solving, and application by supporting and assessing students in making cognitive connections between their beyond the classroom experiences and disciplinary content. The model for implementing USC Connect includes five components: consensus on experiences that add educational value; collaboration with existing offices and programs; resources to encourage students' purposeful selection of experiences; support for faculty to develop integrative learning opportunities; and a clear message and official recognition on the significance learning within and beyond the classroom. Specific examples will be shared. Participants will be encouraged to consider the challenges and benefits of the model's components in relation to their own work.

[Atlanta 3] ***The Ongoing Dialectic, One Year Later: Lessons learned from the implementation of a new, undergraduate general education program***

Patricia Campion (Saint Leo University), Philip Hatlem (Saint Leo University), Mary Spoto (Saint Leo University) and Shawn Weatherford (Saint Leo University)

Hegemonic dichotomies define the problematic, Western metaphysic. Two such often-discussed binaries include those of success and failure, with the winning preference given to success. What if, as twenty-first century, forward-thinking educators, we first recognized the uncomfortable interdependence of binaries, and then, sought balance, rather than hegemony? This would mean re-interpreting and redefining the middle ground, or interplay, between the concepts of success and failure as "opportunity." In other words, is it possible to be open-minded enough to both



accept the challenges that real change often presents, and, consequently, improve in light of them? That is exactly what the faculty developers of Saint Leo University's "University Explorations" program have attempted in their recent execution of a brand new undergraduate general education program. One full academic year later, this group's AGLS representatives describe the initial outcomes of that vast undertaking, and shares early successes, and on-going initiatives undertaken to address the challenges faced by the faculty and student stakeholders in the first year of implementation. Highlights include curriculum adaptations, opportunities for dialogue around the implementation of QEP embedded assignments, the development of a comprehensive student feedback system, and the overall reception of the program by students, faculty, and administrators.

## 10:30am to 11:45am CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### [Atlanta 1] ***Creating a State GEM: A new approach to general education in Idaho***

Vicki Stieha (Boise State University), Margaret Johnson (Idaho State University), Rodney Frey (University of Idaho), Mary Flores (Lewis-Clark State College) and Larry Briggs (North Idaho College)

The Idaho public colleges and universities began a process of statewide "core" reform in February 2012 when one of the universities radically changed its general education program. Faced with the tension to reconcile the need for statewide transferability with the desire for distinctive institutional programming, the resulting approach provides a way to balance both needs and desires. The resulting plan, developed around 6 LEAP-type learning outcomes, shifts general education from a checklist of disciplines and courses to outcome criteria. Individual institutions define the courses that they will develop or certify to meet the criteria. The accompanying statewide policy establishes the system wide rules each institution will uphold for general education. Unlike many statewide plans, Idaho's reform was not legislatively directed. It was at the request of the academic leaders from several institutions that a General Education Task Force was convened to consider how the state could accommodate institutional variation in the General Education Core as well as ensure intrastate transfer of college credits. This session will feature the story of statewide reform told through 4 voices. Each of four very different institutions (a community college, an undergraduate college, a high research university, and a metropolitan research university) offers what it means to both adhere to state policy and provide a program that is unique to the institution. It is our intention that through these stories participants will take away ideas to apply to their own campuses and systems and to find reconciliation between the competing tensions that they face.

### [Atlanta 2] ***Balancing Student Services and Academic Faculty for a Successful First Year Seminar Course***

LaTonya Holmes (Governors State University), David Rhea (Governors State University) and Ann Vendrely (Governor's State University)

This presentation will describe the extensive planning and implementation of a new first year seminar course. It was a collaborative effort between faculty and student services to design a successful course. Academic faculty were involved in course design, approval, and recruitment of faculty to teach it. Student services staff have worked to recruit and train peer mentors and assemble an extensive support team for each class section. The first year seminar is an interdisciplinary humanities course that will be fully transferable to any other state public institution with the class size limited to 30 students. It is required for all first year students and focused on a particular theme that relates to other courses they are taking. Each first year seminar will have a trained student (peer) mentor/influencer to assist the first year students. These mentors are upper division students who are recommended by staff or faculty and have completed a leadership course in preparation for their role. In addition, each seminar course will have a student support team made up of a counseling intern, writing center consultant, library liaison, and math and science tutors. These teams will work closely with faculty and students to provide the support they need for success. The course will demonstrate the integration of high impact practices from both academics and student services as recommended by research and required by accreditation. The new first year seminar will start in August 2014 with all new incoming students. We will discuss our preliminary findings on student success in the course and plans for the future.

### [Atlanta 3] ***Finding a Place for Liberal Education in Engineering: Cases from the US and Germany Liberal Education in the New Engineering Curriculum***

Pangratios Papacosta (Columbia College Chicago)

Numerous professional organizations in the USA have recently re-examined the curriculum requirements for students in engineering and issued reports that list recommendations for the education of future engineers. What these reports have in common is an emphasis on specific elements of Liberal Education that are now regarded as essential. Some of these new necessities stem from the impact of globalization, a fierce competition and a need for new set of skills required in the wider collaboration with professionals of different disciplines. According to these reports the new engineering curriculum must now address a broad range of concerns, including the environmental, political, social, international, legal and even the ethical ramifications of engineering. Although the scientific and technical courses will



<b>FRIDAY</b>
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remain as the foundation of engineering education, the economic, political, social and environmental context of engineering practices need to be also explicitly addressed. Besides communications and leadership skills, future engineers must be well versed in the humanities and social sciences. They must be aware of the potential social, economic and environmental impact of their work and even be cognizant of its aesthetic appearance. The liberal education components to engineering are being proposed in numerous reports such as Body of Knowledge for the 21st Century by ACSE (American Society for Civil Engineers), Engineering for a Changing World by the Millennium Project of the University of Michigan, Adapting Engineering Education to the New Century by the National Academy of Engineering etc. The Liberal Education components proposed in these reports will be outlined and discussed.

### ***An Experiment that Went Wrong***

Manfred Hampe (TU Darmstadt, Germany)

In 2008 AGLS and TU Darmstadt organized a conference "Integrating Engineering and Humanities in Higher Education" that took place in Darmstadt, Germany. At that time the Mechanical Engineering Department at TU Darmstadt had a course "Philosophy for Mechanical Engineers" established for its 450 students in the final year of the undergraduate degree program. Four professors of the Institute of Philosophy of TU Darmstadt offered a weekly lecture (90 min) on philosophy with an emphasis on the theory of knowledge and ethics. The students had an additional 90 minutes of seminar each week in small groups supervised by graduate students of the Humanities Department of TU Darmstadt. The students learned to reflect on the topics presented in the lecture hall, and each student wrote an essay that was graded. The course was evaluated each year and slight corrections were made according to the recommendations extracted from the evaluations. Of all the courses offered by the Institute of Philosophy, our course was the one with the highest number of participants. It was considered to be exemplary and received some attention from outside the university. The course continued each summer semester until its sudden death in 2013 when the Institute of Philosophy informed the Department of Mechanical Engineering that the course would not be taught any longer by the professors of philosophy. The experiment had gone wrong. As the course was mandatory for 450 students, the Department of Mechanical Engineering was obviously facing a major problem: our students would not be able to graduate unless an immediate solution could be found. Well, engineers are problem solvers, and the solution that we found was more interdisciplinary than we had ever dreamed of when the philosophers were responsible for the course. The solution was "co-teaching." Each week a different professor of the Mechanical Engineering Department invites a specialist from the Humanity Departments of other universities, the judicial court, or the federal parliament to co-teach on a topic related to "The Engineer in Society." The experiment that had gone wrong eventually led to a concept that has scored better in the student evaluations than the former course.

### [Atlanta 4] ***A Core Curriculum or a Core Commitment? The Role of Philosophy in the Development of the Core Curriculum at St. Mary's University***

William Buhrman (St. Mary's University)

**St. Mary's University is a 2014 Exemplary Program Award recipient**

Like many liberal arts institutions, St. Mary's University seeks to help students enlarge the meaning of human experience while also conveying some of the essential knowledge and skills of a college education. This session explores the way in which a common philosophical vision of truth and ethics that helped shape the development of the St Mary's Core curriculum also produced a positive tension between the goals intended to be shared across core courses and the necessarily specific student learning outcomes within each course. The session will also explore the how this tension was central to the organic development of the courses within the core, the faculty development opportunities for those who teach within it, and the role envisioned for the Director of the Core Curriculum.

**11:45am to 1:00pm KATZ PLENARY WITH LUNCH [Capitol South]**

### ***The Art of General Education***

Linda Cabe Halpern (James Madison University)

Dr. Linda Cabe Halpern, winner of the 2013 Joseph Katz award, offers some reflections on the professional journey that led her to become an ardent supporter of the role of general education in U.S. higher education. She will explore the utilitarian case for liberal and general education in the context of her own background as an art historian, and, in keeping with the conference theme, she will discuss the convergences and tensions between liberal education and general education as currently understood within the academy.

**1:15pm to 2:30pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS****[Atlanta 1] *The Multilevel Challenge of Designing and Implementing a Campus-Wide General Education Assessment Regime: Obstacles overcome and lessons learned***

Thomas Doleys (Kennesaw State University) and Margaret Baldwin Pendergrass (Kennesaw State University)

There is perhaps no greater challenge for those tasked with assessing General Education than to design a campus protocol that produces valid, useful data while simultaneously respecting the autonomy of, and minimizing the burden placed upon, teaching faculty. In this session we explain how we are seeking to accomplish this Herculean (Sisyphian?) task at Kennesaw State University—a 20,000+ student regional comprehensive university in suburban Atlanta, Georgia. We detail how a dedicated cohort of faculty—possessed of a collection of vaguely worded program learning outcomes, confronted with a General Education curriculum whose connection to those outcomes is tenuous, and faced with a profoundly ambivalent faculty—embraced the challenge. Our presentation illuminates the macro-, meso-, and micro-level challenges we faced and details our efforts to address them. We begin by explaining the genesis of KSU's "campus action plan" and the role it plays in addressing the macro-level challenge of how to fashion a university-wide assessment scheme that builds on existing curricular and institutional structures. We then detail the meso-level challenge of how to effectively link the action plan to individual disciplines. We highlight how discipline-linked coordinators have played an indispensable role in designing instruments, collecting artifacts, and generally promoting faculty participation. Finally, we illuminate—through one department's experience—the micro-level challenge of crafting course-specific instruments that both satisfy university-level assessment objectives while respecting faculty sensitivities, concerns and desires. Our presentation concludes with a structured discussion of how similarly situated institutions might learn from our successes...and our failures.

**[Atlanta 2] *From Distribution to Integration: A process of liberal education reform***

Tim Dolan (Westminster College)

In April 2014, after three years of effort, the faculty at Westminster College unequivocally approved a new Liberal Education plan. For a small comprehensive college, this effort was dramatic—the first major shift in thinking about liberal education on our campus in over 25 years. Although we have much work ahead of us, the major hurdle of changing how we think about LE has begun. This reform was accomplished in the midst of a new president, a new strategic plan, a new dean, a new LE Committee, financial concerns, an accreditation visit, and a rising number of adjuncts. As a Committee we had to balance many opposing factors. Previous LE reform had been blocked because of turf wars and the notion that "this is how we have always done it." We had to balance the cost-benefits of making minor tweaks versus huge change. Eventually we proposed a model that completely overhauled our LE program; the new program is integrated across four years, allows all Schools, including the professional schools, to participate, and uses high impact practices to create student learning. In this session, we will discuss our process for bringing this change to fruition. We will talk about the different obstacles we had to overcome and the various dynamics we had to balance. Finally, we will provide ideas on how to get buy in from different departments and key stakeholders across your campus.

**[Atlanta 3] *Qualitative Narrative Assessment: ACTC, AGLS and signature programs of institutions***

William Jason Wallace (Samford University)

After several decades of neglect "core texts" and "great books" courses are making a resurgence in general education curriculums. Faculty and administrators recognize the value in having undergraduates read authors and works that have stood the test of time and speak to perennial questions regarding human nature, the natural world, religion, and political community. Still, despite the perceived usefulness of such courses, professors and administrators are often stumped as to how to evaluate the effectiveness of their signature core texts course. Practical assessment rules the day even when the benefits of such a course may take a lifetime to comprehend. This presentation seeks to offer meaningful strategies for evaluating and assessing the purpose and outcomes of core texts and great books courses in the general education curriculum.

**[Atlanta 4] *(Re) Building A Gen Ed Program without the Pain or Scars Persistence Pipeline versus Preparation?***

Riley Caldwell OKeefe (Boise State University)

Onslaughts of recent articles, initiatives and hallway conversations address the seeming tension between student (and parent) desires for a high return on the college investment and the value of a liberal arts education. The Boise State University transfer student general education course has become a curricular canary highlighting this tension. Transfer students who have completed their core requirements or have an associates' degree must complete



the time they complete the course, there is broad initial student resistance and a smaller consistently resistant contingent. This conflict stems from the feeling that one more core course impedes their goals to obtain a degree and begin their lucrative career. Understanding students' professional interests, the course was initially designed to hone "21st century skills." On paper this seemed to meet the persistence pipeline-to-degree need, however, our recent course assessment of students' ability to grapple with complex ethical issues from diverse perspectives indicates that they need additional skills, dispositions and knowledge to become engaged citizens in a work force which spends less time training new employees and expects independent, flexible creative thinkers who will make good decisions within complex, quickly changing work environments. This paper engages the competing desires of pipeline versus preparation through explaining how we drew upon assessment and student feedback to re-design UF300.

### ***Revising General Education--by Stealth***

Matthew Schneider (High Point University)

At the same moment that the value of liberal and general education is increasingly questioned, employers report that graduates—more than ever—need the skills imparted by these components of a college degree. Our rapidly-evolving, information-dominated economy demands a workforce with excellent communication, analytic, and people skills. Today's general education curricula, therefore, must be relevant, flexible, and continuously re-examined and adjusted to keep up with the quickly changing world. But academic culture and politics militate against the creation of such general education curricula. Nothing tears a campus apart like general education revision, with its unwieldy committees, long-winded town hall meetings, and tiresome turf battles over the indispensability of this or that course in the core curriculum. By recounting my experience leading High Point University through a "stealthy" gen ed revision, this presentation shows how to use AAC&U's LEAP outcomes to change gen ed relatively painlessly and quickly. Using LEAP as a template for clarifying and—where necessary—re-conceptualizing gen ed outcomes enabled real improvements to be made to the curriculum without disturbing the distribution of courses (and the faculty positions those courses support). Even more important, though, changing the outcomes rather than the courses enabled us to build the general education program properly—by starting with the attributes and abilities we want our students to acquire, and then altering (where necessary) the courses so that they more effectively help students reach those goals.

### ***A Brave (New) World: Professional competencies***

Jodene DeKorte (Kaplan University), Michele Hinton Riley (Kaplan University), Kerrie Houchens (Kaplan University) and Michael Keathley (Kaplan University)

In "It Takes More Than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success," nearly all the surveyed (93%) agree, "a candidate's demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major" (Hart Research Associates, April 2013). Professionalism is the one skill needed in all careers, ranging from healthcare to information technology, and all that falls in between. It includes those behaviors that contribute to a positive, productive, and cohesive work environment. At Kaplan University, we believe that professionalism is the key to career success. This belief has driven us to implement these skills into our curriculum. We have a goal that every one of our students will be able to demonstrate professionalism as part of their degree program. The competencies we include under the banner of professionalism are communication, teamwork, leadership, problem solving and critical thinking, personal presentation, and multiculturalism and diversity. To help us accomplish this goal, we will include a professionalism project in each of our core courses. Through repeated practice and study throughout their program, students will understand and learn to exhibit professionalism in their work life. During this presentation, the presenters will discuss how the outcomes were developed for the university and the process for implementing such a large project across all schools and programs at all levels.

## **2:45pm to 4:00pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

### **[Atlanta 1] *Instructional Technology and the Liberal Arts: Two sides of the same coin***

Bernard Lewis (Murray State University) and Lilia Murray (Murray State University)

Can we find a balance between innovation and tradition? Can new instructional technologies be used to enhance teaching and learning in the liberal arts classroom? Some have already blended these two seemingly opposite forces and called the new form the digital liberal arts. Technology and the liberal arts can, in fact, become complementary—causing a new state of 'ultimate potentiality' to exist, especially in online education. In this session, the presenters will share several technology tools, describe their use in projects, and reflect on their experiences. Web applications shared include screencasting (Jing, Screencast-o-Matic, Tegrity), blogging (Blogger), and virtual walls (Padlet). Participants will learn how they were used in face-to-face and online Humanities courses by both the instructor and the students. Compared to previous courses, the addition of instructional technology helped strengthen students' critical thinking, information organization, and writing skills. In addition, students learned digital and transferable skills for when they leave campus. Technology education and the liberal arts can be seen as two sides of the same coin—not in opposition to each other. A proper application of technologies in a liberal arts program can promote a common currency in which all can benefit.



[Atlanta 2] ***Dualities of Liberal Education Reform: We don't have all the answers but we have a damn good story***

Ronald Daniel (Webster University, Geneva) and Bruce Umbaugh (Webster University, St. Louis)

Webster University's mission is to "...transform students for Global Citizenship and individual excellence." With an international network of nearly 100 campuses across four continents, developing a coherent, current and complete transformation of liberal education that met our mission seemed formidable. Establishing a balance between the major and liberal education while marrying global citizenship content with twenty-first century essential skills presented both challenge and opportunity. Webster reached out to colleagues across the nation and indeed the world to engage organizations and individuals devoted to Liberal education reform. Success has required: 1) securing support from diverse colleagues and executive leadership, including funding four annual "collaboratory" events for faculty and curriculum development; 2) making visible the gains, challenges, and future of the GCP; 3) developing a realistic assessment plan drawing on the VALUE rubrics, and involving all participating departments; and 4) partnering with advising, admissions, and marketing, articulating the distinctiveness of GCP while insuring transferability (including IB, AP, articulation agreements with two-year institutions, European 13th year programs, and high school dual enrollment courses. This interactive session will engage the audience using our story to elucidate the yin-yang balances of thematic areas such as in-major versus liberal education, insuring consistency versus leveraging diversity across a global network, and incorporating high-impact practices versus having limited resources. Each campus path toward liberal education transformation is naturally unique, including the dualities, dichotomies, and sometime collisions of recurrent yin-yang types of themes. This session with our AGLS colleagues should yield a rich conversation for all.

[Atlanta 3] ***The FEED Initiative: A faculty/student inquiry to address the "wicked problem" of retention to graduation***

David Hume (Northern Kentucky University) and D. Kent Johnson (Northern Kentucky University)

The FEED Initiative is designed to help students develop and demonstrate critical thinking skills through an inquiry based project aimed at investigating challenges students face in completing degrees. The first cycle of the project was completed in Spring 2013. The inaugural investigation was led by faculty from anthropology and sociology. One faculty member engaged students in a course and the second faculty member worked with a team of students from a student organization. The faculty and student teams partnered in an action research project that: 1) framed an investigation around identifying specific barriers to completion on from a "student perspective"; 2) evaluated commonly held campus perceptions of why students do not complete degrees; 3) examined evidence to develop arguments on how the likelihood students graduate might be improved; and 4) developed a presentation that explored implications of their findings to shape potential campus actions to improve student retention and graduation rates. The FEED Initiative was highly successful and will continue next fall in partnership with Student Affairs in two models: a course based inquiry based learning experience and a co-curricular partnership between a faculty member and student affairs. This presentation reports findings from two studies and discusses the challenges and benefits of engaging students in applied inquiry into challenges to student success at a regional public university. The group presentation features the faculty members who led the research and the faculty administrator who designed and sponsored the project.

[Atlanta 4] ***Educating for a Changing Job Market and the Views of Low-income and Minority Students regarding Holistic and Liberal Arts-related Requirements***

Isabel Del Pino-Allen (Miami Dade University)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has trumpeted the fact that education pays in higher earnings and lower unemployment rates. It stands to reason that students—especially low-income students, who make up the bulk of the Miami Dade College student body—would equate getting a tertiary education with being able to find high-paying jobs. To these students, a college education implies one that delivers "how to" skills applicable to specific occupations. But whereas colleges with large low-income student populations have traditionally focused on disseminating skill-based curricula that allowed students a quick entry into professional fields, changes in the market place are imposing revisions of curricula. For one thing, some projections stipulate that 30% of college graduates today will work in jobs that do not yet exist. Our globalized knowledge economy and rapidly changing technology calls for employees with a broader knowledge base and liberal arts-related skills emphasized in MDC's 10 Learning Outcomes. These include, among others, the ability to communicate well, to think critically, to have an aesthetic appreciation, to demonstrate an understanding of ethical behavior, and to exhibit knowledge of cultural and historical perspectives. This presentation will relate the findings of an ethnographic study involving 20 MDC graduating students and their views regarding the pragmatic utility of learning outcomes that aim to provide comprehensive liberal arts instruction. Participants will leave better understanding the seemingly dichotomous views of low-income/minority college students and "academia" regarding academic preparation for the acquisition of employment-related skills.



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## 4:15pm to 5:30pm      **KEYNOTE PLENARY [Capitol South]**

### ***The Path Less Travelled***

Terrel Rhodes, Vice President, Office of Quality, Curriculum and Assessment (AAC&U)

Liberal education is a way of learning and teaching as well as a curriculum. There is much talk in higher education about pathways for students that enhance their learning and ability to integrate their experiences—whole person education. Yet, we live so little of what we advocate through the formal higher education frameworks we have constructed and cling to. What would happen if we focused more on what we know works to achieve greater integration of learning; greater equity in outcomes for all of our students; and more engaged learning for students and faculty? What if we placed in the forefront of what we value, the practices that are highly effective in linking formal and informal learning; general and disciplinary learning; and faculty and student collaboration around guided learning? What if we practiced in the classroom what we practice in our research venues—making assessment a high impact practice for learning? In short, this plenary will explore some of what we know in answer to these questions, some of what we accept, some of what we model, and some of what is working against creating the whole person approach to learning found in the theme of this conference.

## 5:30pm to 6:30pm      **POSTER SESSION AND RECEPTION [Capitol North]**

cash bar and light appetizers

### ***Connecting the Dots for Non-science Majors Using a Global Approach***

Annissa Furr (Kaplan University), Tyra Hall-Pogar (Kaplan University) and Amy Smith (Kaplan University)

In a General Education Science Department there is a great need to offer science classes to students from very diverse backgrounds. All students need to develop a basic understanding of scientific principles. Many of our students are non-science majors, and we have made it our goal to bring science to their level, and engage them in activities and assignments that would connect their everyday lives to science in an effort to show them that science is all around them. The development and implementation of science-rich education has proven to provide students with valuable tools to help make them innovators and leaders in their own fields. The use of this simple and specific goal has shaped how courses have been designed and revised to ensure that students are able to participate, have fun and there is no sacrifice in the content that is being offered. Examples of activities and assignments from our classes that were specifically created to engage the non-major and encourage students to use their personal experiences will be examined. For example, we have assignments that encourage students to trace the origin of a meal from farm to table, to analyze the air quality in their neighborhood, and to explore their own energy usage at home and work. It is important to address how to articulate and assess these outcomes and incorporate them in undergraduate experiences. We have had great success with these assignments, finding that students are able to make solid connections between science and their everyday lives.

### ***Fine-Tuning a Culture of Learning***

Richard Murray (Wayne State College) and Suzanne Sydow (Wayne State College)

This poster session will provide the opportunity for discussion on how instructional factors have been aligned to improve student learning and enhance a student learning campus environment. Alignment of strategies to the general education goals will be shown. Wayne State College has a peer recommended group of faculty selected to serve on a Student Learning Team (SLT). The SLT's outcomes include creation of sharable products and learning with other institutions and evidence of a sustained commitment to and sustainable processes for assessing, confirming, and improving student learning. The team works to improve student learning through the four goals of the General Education Program. Those goals strive for students to gain competence in expression, knowledge, inquiry, and civic virtue. Processes to provide faculty, adjuncts and graduate assistants opportunities to develop tools to increase student learning have been strategized and will be shared. Also, students' opportunities to expand their knowledge of the process of learning will be conveyed. This SLT team developed an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved survey. The faculty survey was used to determine what instructional factors were used on campus to improve student learning. The presenters will share results from the survey and how the survey aided in determining how instructional methods were used on campus and which methods faculty wanted to learn more about to improve student learning. A key to success was having collaborative discussions with faculty, staff, and students from all areas of the institution to gain student participation and access in and outside of class.

**Liberal Arts and Education Attitudinal Survey at a Health Sciences College**

Lena Frennborn (Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences)

Although healthcare professions emphasize technical skills, employers value graduates who also have a broad, liberal education. This research describes student appreciation of liberal arts at a health sciences college, where the vocational is emphasized at the expense of the liberal arts. The researchers administered the Appreciation of Liberal Arts Scale—Revised (ALAS-R) to 616 health sciences students using a census of programs with fewer than 30 students and a random sample of students in larger programs. The response rate was 54%; the mean ALAS-R score was 3.66 on a five-point scale. The following variables did not contribute to significant differences in the mean ALAS-R score: gender, division (Health Sciences vs. Nursing), prior college experience, prior college degree, or IPIP Optimism Scale. Bachelor's students scored significantly higher on the ALAS-R compared with associate degree students, with means of 3.96 versus 3.57 ( $P = 0.000$ ). More than half of the sample was 24 years or older and their ALAS-R mean was significantly higher than students younger than 24, with means of 3.80 versus 3.51 ( $P = 0.000$ ). Because older students and students seeking higher degrees had a greater appreciation of liberal arts, life experience may contribute to that appreciation. Although general education faculty members recognize the lack of appreciation of general education when they are teaching, discovering that students develop an appreciation in time reassures them that their efforts have a positive impact in the long-term. Future research will examine faculty members' views of general education as measured by the ALAS-R.

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 27****8:00am to 4:00pm**      **REGISTRATION DESK OPEN** [Rotunda Booth]**7:45am to 8:30am**      **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST** [Capitol South]**8am to 10am**      **CAMPUS TEAM WORKROOM** [Atlanta 5]  
Miami Dade College**8:30am to 9:30am**      **AGLS GUIDE UPDATE** [Capitol South]  
Michael Gress (Vincennes University)**9:30am to 10:45am**      **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**[Atlanta 1] ***Why College in the 21st Century?***

Amy Stackhouse (Iona College)

**Dr. Stackhouse is the 2013 Jerry Gaff Award recipient**

With student debt increasing exponentially and job prospects looking grim, the question has become: why should students go to college at all? After all, apprenticeship is a viable option in other developed countries. With increased desires for accountability, the belief that students are consumers, and the prediction of the bursting of the higher education bubble, the question has also become: what do colleges offer? In this session we will explore what a college education offers in the 21st century, the connections between General Education requirements and the major, and the hidden harmonious relationship between hard vocation skills and the idea of "education for its own sake."

[Atlanta 2] ***Propelling E-Learners into Lifelong Achievers***

Michael Keathley (Kaplan University)

The liberal studies and job training dichotomy is especially evident in community and career colleges. A chief concern has been the diminishing return on investment with vocational education tending to provide short-term benefits while general education seems to offer long-term success. This presentation will provide an overview of how the School of General Education at Kaplan University has resolved this dilemma. First, general education is taught through a set of core interdisciplinary courses, introducing students to the basic concepts, terminology, and methodology of each subject area. Each course also includes: 1) a writing assignment and the use of technology, reinforcing the communications and technology literacies; and 2) a unit of study based on one additional subject-specific General Education Literacy (GEL). In addition, professional competencies are incorporated throughout all programs. The GELs have also been aligned with research-based recommendations such as the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing and the Statement of WAC Principles and Practices. Composition courses provide students



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with conventional writing skills within a construct of the “Eight Habits of Mind,” and a “transformative” Writing Across the Curriculum initiative includes Professional Competencies. Similarly, a Social Sciences framework is used to examine core content area concepts; students learn how different styles of communication are employed and convey meaning in career-directed situational contexts. The Humanities provide an opportunity to apply knowledge within career settings. Both General Education and professional skills with the integration of knowledge are critical concepts for developing students with a wide understanding of the human experience.

### [Atlanta 3] ***The Yin Yang of Civic Engagement: Moving from charity to social change by creating successful models of civic engagement and service learning projects***

Laura Hernandez-Ehrisman (St. Edward's University), Jennifer Jefferson (St. Edward's University) and Amy Nathan Wright (St. Edward's University)

This interactive panel will consider the yin yang of civic engagement pedagogy. Civic engagement and service learning programs and assignments can often provide meaningful, even transformative, experiences for students. Civic engagement can be effective in engaging students in both “hard skills” required for their professional and personal lives and “soft skills,” like critical thinking, that are central to a liberal arts education. But there are many factors to consider when creating and assessing civic engagement projects. We will begin with a brief presentation on how recent scholarship defines terms like civic engagement, service learning, and volunteerism. Many researchers have critiqued approaches that unintentionally re-enforce stereotypes of communities with which students are working. In response, recent civic engagement and service learning pedagogy seeks to move students away from a charity framework toward a solidarity, or community-based framework, from “doing for” to “doing with.” We will explore different paradigms, assignments, and methods of assessment and highlight ways to engage apathetic students when doing this work. We will consider how our own cultural frameworks and assumptions shape the ways we frame, structure, and assess our assignments. What assumptions do we make about our students’ experiences with and views on civic engagement? How do we assess student learning through civic engagement? How do we critique students who are doing service but don’t seem to be “getting it?” We will discuss strategies we have used and encourage participants to discuss the issues they and their students face while doing civic engagement and service learning work.

### [Atlanta 4] ***The Development of Innovative Core Curriculum Tradition, Change, and Improving the Core Curriculum***

Patricia Terry (Gonzaga University)

In seven years of work on general education revision, our campus has certainly seen change and tradition pitted against each other. However, due to the interaction of tradition and change, the outlook for improving general education for our students is positive. Our “Thought and Expression” program, in which students are enrolled in composition, speech, and logic courses in the same semester, is an almost 40-year-old university tradition which is also based on the classical rhetorical tradition and important in the Jesuit educational tradition. For some years, several “linked” versions of the courses have created learning communities, with the same cohort of students enrolled in all three courses. Lacking agreed-upon program learning outcomes until now has posed a challenge for direct assessment, but results from 8 years of a student survey clearly show that students believe the linked classes helped them learn and helped them integrate and apply concepts and skills across classes. Using this indirect evidence helped us make the case to carry some features of Thought and Expression into the new core as well as argue for the need to address some significant problems as we look toward implementing a revised curriculum.

### ***Using Alternative Credit Acceptance to Facilitate Transfer of Credits while Honoring the Core Curriculum***

Peggy Rosario (Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences) and Rebecca Smith (Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences)

Students with life experience can achieve their academic goals more quickly if they are able to transfer credit for that experience. At the same time, accepting transfer credits is a challenge for colleges that want to ensure their students meet the core curriculum requirements. Alternative credit acceptance can enable colleges to evaluate whether students have learning that is equivalent to required coursework to ensure students are achieving the required core learning. This presentation will describe the alternative credit acceptance policy developed at the Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences to enable students to demonstrate they have required learning for transfer credit in the absence of taking an equivalent course. Forms of alternative credit that will be discussed briefly include national standardized exams, application review and transcript review; the course challenge process will be explained in-depth. The following aspects of the alternative credit acceptance process will be described: how best practices identified by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning are integrated; alternative credit acceptance policy; steps



in course challenge process illustrated by a flowchart; forms used in course challenge process; types of course challenges; and real-life examples of course challenges. Participants will leave this presentation with tools and strategies that will enable them to implement or enhance alternative credit acceptance at their institutions.

***Just This Side of Civil: Discourse on creating uniform alignments while fostering individual faculty development***

Riley Caldwell OKeefe (Boise State University)

Discussions aiming to create uniformly aligned course goals and outcomes while honoring academic freedom and fostering individual faculty development contain a thought-provoking richness. The most productive reside somewhere between just-this-side-of-civil verbal sparring and blind embrace of common assessments. Individual faculty freedom is necessary to foster sustainable investment in general education courses while some semblance of commonality ensures that stakeholders can fully understand what is being taught as well as achieved in each classroom. Boise State faculty designed the new general education curriculum to include “common experience” classes. Civic and Ethical Foundations for second-year students (UF200) and Transitional Foundations for transfer students (UF300) are two of the three resulting courses. At their core, both courses have a set of University Learning Outcomes and a theme. However, faculty passions, expertise and pedagogical style impact the resulting interpretation of these core aspects. Additionally, the faculty teaching these courses have developed two distinct group personalities. The UF300 faculty yearn for signature assignments, common assessments and regular faculty collaboration. The UF200 faculty regularly push back against uniformity and speak out for their own perspectives as well as the academic freedom of their students. This paper explores the ways in which course content, disciplinary backgrounds, and group dynamics continually impact our specific approaches to developing and sustaining a common experience course. I will explain the various strategies we utilize and the resulting alignments.

**11:00am to 12:15pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

**[Atlanta 1] *CALIPER: Linking teaching practices to learning outcomes assessment in general education***

Vicki Stieha (Boise State University)

Faced with a public call for more STEM graduates and an array of lower division general education (GE) STEM courses that pose a great hurdle for many students, a team of faculty and academic leaders at our University sought strategies to simultaneously strengthen teaching and highlight learning outcomes assessment as an essential function of effective teaching. The team secured NSF grant funding to explore the connection between faculty teaching practices and learning outcomes assessment focusing on GE science and mathematics courses that are in the STEM curriculum. A primary goal was to first describe current teaching practices and then to support the development of active learning strategies. Secondly, we wanted to connect active learning with authentic assessment of University Learning Outcomes (ULOs). The first year of the project involved teaching observations using the Reformed Teaching Observation Protocol (RTOP) and gathered course-based assessment data demonstrating students' achievement of the ULOs. In the second year a faculty development workshop was added to the observation and assessment gathering. After both cycles, interviews (one-on-one semi-structured and then focus group) were conducted to gather faculty feedback. Although we will report on the study findings and explain the methods we used, this session is designed to foster conversation about the practices and insights that can be applied in other courses and settings. With the attendees, we will share and collaboratively examine faculty perceptions of the project activities to glean broadly applicable insights about these faculty development, observation, and assessment methods.

**[Atlanta 2] *Breaking the Rules to Maximize Student Success through Collaboration***

Susan Marnell Weaver (University of the Cumberland) and Thomas Fish (University of the Cumberland)

This session presents an institutional model with Gen Ed as central through multiple options in a two-tier set of courses including very traditional courses plus a second set of faculty developed courses marked by creativity, interaction, critical thinking, and writing. Based on the a premise that engaging students from day one requires highly competent professors whether senior or new, faculty development with emphasis on assessment and our critical thinking initiative have reinforced our collaborative environment.

**[Atlanta 3] *Progressive Learning in Undergraduate Studies: Finding your PLUS advantage***

Anne Birberick (Northern Illinois University), Edward Konoski (Northern Illinois University), Michael Kolb (Northern Illinois University), Robert Sabala (Northern Illinois University) and Thomas Steen (University of North Dakota)

Working between the tensions of a traditional state-mandated compact and the institutional desire to foster curricular creativity and synergy, Northern Illinois University is in the midst of transforming its general education program into



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one of regional and national distinction. Our panel of faculty reformers and one outside observer will share their approach of employing a continuous feedback loop of vetting potential changes to stakeholders rather than the traditional institutional strategy of creating a singular plan of curricular reform and bringing it forth. Such an approach has resulted in the transformation of a broad and tumultuous exchange of community ideas into an interconnected force that serves to guide curricular innovation.

### [Atlanta 4] **Round Table Discussions**

#### **Challenges in “Closing the Loop” in Assessment**

Barika Barboza (Miami Dade College) and Yahern Baeza Dager (Miami Dade College)

A fundamental tenet of general education assessment is to improve student learning through actionable assessment results. However establishing mechanisms to “close the loop” in the assessment cycle is a task that confronts us constantly. The purpose of this roundtable conversation is to share experiences of using assessment results and the most common struggles that faculty and college administrators encounter in this process. The table facilitators will engage participants by using different assessment results scenarios that will simulate the various techniques and strategies for using the assessment results, developing improvement plans, improving teaching and learning strategies, identifying gaps in curriculum, and reviewing the assessment process. Scenarios from varied general education disciplines will provide the opportunity for participants to reflect on the diverse data and information collected in assessment as well as to use it to impact student achievement of the general education outcomes. The following discussion questions may guide the conversation about how to close the loop: 1) are the assessment results meaningful to make informed decisions about the improvement of student learning; 2) what results or observations should be acknowledged as strengths/weakness; and 3) what challenges are encountered by faculty, staff and administrators in the process of closing the loop?

#### **The Power of Opposites**

Nancy Linden-Sioufi (Savannah State University)

The use of comparing and contrasting information is essential for evaluating concepts. Critical Thinking involves the use of quick assessment of thoughts expressed from the speaker to the listener. To expedite the active listening process, a grid of opposing ideas are used to help the listener understand what is being expressed by the speaker. This adds significant clarity to the listener to infer and reflect upon the new concepts that are introduced by the speaker. By using a graphic tool with "opposites," the listener can begin to make inferences, reason and judge the/a scenario more accurately, thus giving more output for problem solving contributions. Dr. Nancy Linden-Sioufi, an Instructor of Critical Thinking at Savannah State University, presents this method of teaching that work very well in the college classroom and in grades K-12 also.

#### **Using Servant Leadership to Embrace the Yin Yang of Leadership**

Peggy Rosario (Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences)

Leading a general education program requires serving multiple masters- the students, the faculty teaching the courses, the major programs, the accreditors, and upper administration. Servant leadership provides an approach that enables all masters to be honored by using a service orientation. Conceived by Robert Greenleaf in 1970 and applied to contemporary higher education by Daniel Wheeler in 2012, servant leadership provides a compelling approach for leadership effectiveness. Servant leadership is based upon the idea that service to others is the most important priority. Service is often misunderstood as the leader doing others' work; in reality, it is engaging everyone in the work. It involves facilitating meeting others' needs, fostering problem-solving and taking responsibility, and promoting emotional healing. Servant leaders recognize that how things get done is as important as the end result and that balancing efforts for effectiveness in the present and future is critical. In servant leadership, paradoxes are embraced as an opportunity to explore creative solutions. Servant leaders are also concerned about the greater good and modeling servant leadership to develop future leaders. The purpose of general education and liberal studies to benefit the lives of students and the larger world aligns perfectly with the goals of servant leadership. Nurturing servant leadership in faculty makes them better teachers and motivates them to assume leadership positions. Join the discussion to learn about the characteristics of servant leadership and explore how general education leaders can engage others to meet competing priorities, while improving organizational effectiveness, faculty retention, and job satisfaction.

**12:15pm to 1:45pm AWARDS CELEBRATION WITH LUNCH [Capitol South]**

**2:00pm to 3:15pm      CONCURRENT SESSIONS****[Atlanta 1] *GE Assessment Week: A way to get more data, increase participation, and do better assessment***

Thomas Skeen (University of North Dakota)

We propose this session to “tell the story” of the development and implementation of a general education assessment activity that helped our campus address several persistent and important problems. We also want trigger discussion of some of these problems with other session participants since we believe that most institutions struggle with them as well. The activity—GE Assessment Week—is actually a sequence of assessment events that involved a large number of students and instructors who volunteered to participate in three different GE assessments. The students’ work products were assessed by a faculty/staff team in a scoring session with locally-designed rubrics. Although this was not the first time we assessed our students’ GE work using scoring sessions, it was the first time we used a common assessment assignment to elicit the students’ work. Furthermore, the Assessment Week helped us to improve our GE program’s assessment system. First, AW helped us increase participation in GE assessment: we tripled the number of students who contributed work, and we doubled the number of GE courses that we drew the work from. Secondly, with use of common assessment assignments (“performance tasks”), we increased the assessment reliability, and we also tightened the alignment between the targeted learning outcomes and the assessment work. Finally, AW engendered enthusiasm among the faculty and staff who were involved. At our campus—and likely many others—this is a significant benefit. Capturing the attention and involvement of participating instructors and students was a special and unintended outcome.

**[Atlanta 2] *Faculty Ownership and Engagement in Assessment***

Yahemn Baeza Dager (Miami Dade College), Adrienne Thompson (Miami Dade College), Patricia Nation (Miami Dade College) and Barika Barboza (Miami Dade College)

Assessment plays a critical role in improving general education in colleges; therefore, it is imperative for institutions and disciplines to align the process of assessing student-learning outcomes. To establish this alignment, student-learning outcomes need to be identified, a performance-based method and rubric need to be applied, and data need to be collected and analyzed. Professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators needs to be easily accessible to assist and support a culture of assessment. This interactive session focuses on how a group of faculty from the Department of World Languages/English for Academic Purposes (EAP) adapted an institutional rubric to assess the written communication of their EAP students. The presenters will share their assessment experience, which includes professional development opportunities, the engagement of faculty and administrators across the college in action planning, and a strong data driven process. The goal is for faculty to work collaboratively across campuses, build a consensus in the assessment process, and identify teaching and learning strategies that impact student learning. Data was used to support teaching and learning recommendations that will further help students attain those skills required in general education courses. As a result of this workshop, participants will be able to identify challenges and strategies that will foster faculty assessment engagement on their own campuses.

**[Atlanta 3] *Using Pedagogy Best Practices to Achieve Desired Gen Ed Outcomes******Harmonizing the Whole with Project Based Learning***

Ted Remington (University of Saint Francis)

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a pedagogical tool used at an increasing number of K-12 schools. Colleges and universities, however, have been slower to experiment overtly with PBL. Yet, PBL not only offers a variety of benefits to higher education broadly defined, but can potentially blend many of the yin and yang dynamics particular to liberal and general studies into productive wholes. This presentation will describe how and why the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne, Indiana, has begun to incorporate PBL into its curriculum, and why it is seen to be a promising way to not only teach courses in the general education curriculum, but to provide students with object lessons in the value of the liberal arts. Specifically, the presentation will focus on how PBL can bridge the apparent gap between STEM and the humanities, make concrete the promise to students that the liberal arts matter in “the real world,” productively blur the distinction between education for its own sake and vocational training, and demonstrate the connection between hard and soft skills to students through concrete learning experiences. Such harmonization of apparent tensions is not only possible through PBL, but is inherent to the pedagogy. Moreover, PBL doesn’t necessarily require additional resources or a massive “buy-in” from the entire institution. Using it in just a single course is a way to start. The presentation will describe the motivations and evolution of the PBL movement at USF, but will emphasize its applicability to any institution.



## SATURDAY

### ***Yin-Yan of Equitably Assessing Collaborative Projects***

Joanne Crossman (Saint Leo University)

This paper features successful practices for equitably assessing collaborative projects as based on an institutional case study, review of the literature, and pedagogical practice. The presenter will briefly describe supported and confirmed benefits of collaboration, now among the most robust principles of teaching and learning. Participants will be invited to complete a very brief survey to guide discussion of various formative and summative assessment models. The models discourage social loafing, critique major features of effective writing and course content, and critique increasingly important teamwork skills. This session targets general and liberal studies educators and course designers who currently engage students in collaborative projects across-the-curriculum. The session will also be valuable for faculty struggling to determine if they want to assess a team's final end-product, their group processes, or both.

### ***Online Instruction: Tensions and opportunities***

Robert Blumenthal (Georgia College)

Having taught mathematics in traditional format for many years, I wanted to get a sense of just what it would be like to teach in a hybrid and/or fully online format. Since the college I was teaching at did not have the facilities for this type of course delivery, I obtained a position as an adjunct faculty member at another institution. I went through their training program, became a certified online instructor, and taught a variety of courses over a period of several years in blended/hybrid format and in a strictly online format. Looking back, there are many aspects of the training process which I wish had been done differently. In this presentation, I will discuss some of my experiences in this regard. In addition, I will address some of the pedagogical opportunities and challenges with which I was confronted when I taught my first few online courses. I will also discuss the challenges faced by the students as well as the ways in which the online format provides students with opportunities that are often lacking in traditional course formats. In this fashion, I hope to provide some helpful information and perspectives to those faculty who are just beginning to explore online teaching or who are contemplating a move into that realm.

### [Atlanta 4] ***CAGLS Meeting***

Larry Peterson (North Dakota State University)

The Council for the Administration of General and Liberal Studies (CAGLS) works to support administrators of general and liberal education programs throughout higher education. Please come and share your ideas about how we can better meet that goal.

**3:30pm to 4:30pm**

[Capitol South]

**CLOSING SESSIONS AND ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

**5:00pm**

[Atlanta 5]

**AGLS FALL COUNCIL MEETING AND DINNER**





*We hope you found a balance of networking opportunities, useful pedagogical tools, interesting case studies, and inspiration during your time in Atlanta.*

*As an AGLS member, there are several ways you can become an active part of the association. Watch for our e-newsletter throughout the year to discover how you can become involved.*

*Copies of Judgments of Quality are on sale at the registration desk (Rotunda booth) for only \$10 per copy. Save \$3!*

*Institutional members receive 3 copies with their paid 2014-15 fees.*



*Are you a blogger or just have something on your mind?*

*Consider writing a guest piece for the AGLS blog **Gen Ed on My Mind.***

*1,000 word limit.*

*Interested? Contact AGLS offices at [execdir@agls.org](mailto:execdir@agls.org).*

**Make a note!**

**Upcoming AGLS Conferences**

**2015**

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

**2016**

**Salt Lake City, Utah**

**Become a campus partner for a meeting near you!**

2015 Annual Conference  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
September 24-26



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