Call for Proposals

MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS

AGLS 2020

Gateway to Equity: Making Good on the Promise of General Education

September 25 & 26

Constitute 2020

Association for General & Liberal Studies

60th Annual Conference

September 25-26

Drury Plaza Hotel St. Louis at the Arch

St. Louis, Missouri
Access to higher education has expanded considerably over the last half century and colleges and universities increasingly reflect the growing diversity of the U.S. population. However, improved access and greater inclusion has not resulted in equitable outcomes for all students. Academic achievement rates for students from underserved populations (students of color, low socioeconomic status, first-generation) stubbornly trail those of their classmates.

- White students are overrepresented as bachelor’s degree recipients relative to their representation in the general population, while both Black and Hispanic students are underrepresented.
- Bachelor’s degree attainment rates are 5 times higher for those in the highest income quartile than for those in the lowest income quartile.
- First-generation students are more likely to enroll in for-profit schools, attend two-year schools, and have lower enrollment and graduation rates than their peers.
- Students who are both low income and first generation who enter college have a 21% chance of earning a bachelor’s degree in six years. Their peers who are not low-income nor first generation have a 57% chance.

Academic equity, wherein all students have an equal opportunity to succeed regardless of their background, personal characteristics or individual circumstances, requires institutions to identify and take responsibility for eliminating barriers faced by both individual students and students from particular populations. Many of the those barriers are found in the classroom and general education classes present prime opportunities to address academic inequity. Their disciplinary breadth makes them ideally suited to make substantial contributions to the inclusion and equity discourse; they typically have larger enrollments than major studies courses; are taken by more first-year students; and, often serve as gateway courses for admission into numerous academic programs.

General education is critical to a well-rounded college education and equity is central to the Promise of General Education.

**WHO ARE WE?**

The Association for General and Liberal Studies is a national organization designed to provide General Education faculty and administrators with practical knowledge and experiences for creating, revising, and running a quality program. We have helped individuals, programs and institutions with everything from communication and marketing to day-to-day administrative operations to innovations in the classroom. In 2020, our goal continues to be to create a conference experience devoted solely to matters practical that gets all meeting participants engaging, sharing, and leaving each session with concrete ‘take-aways’—ideas you can use!

Our conference/institute or ‘Constitute’ is organized around three thematic tracks of interest. Session formats include traditional concurrent, interactive, panels, workshops, and project working sessions. Attendees will leave St. Louis with concrete action plans, techniques, strategies, and ideas that can be taken home from our time together.

Our 2020 theme is meant to call attention to the need for ongoing and creative efforts to provide equal college opportunities to all members of society, and to ensure that our institutions and general education programs specifically fulfill their common mission of serving the needs of all of our students, our communities, and society at large.
GATEWAY TO EQUALITY

While campuses may acknowledge and proclaim equity and inclusion as part of their mission, we all struggle to fully achieve the dream of equity in higher education. For this year's conference—taking place just steps from the St. Louis Gateway Arch—AGLS invites proposals that consider how higher education can provide a ‘gateway’ to equity through General Education. We look forward to conversations on how we may address the needs for equitable and compassionate classrooms, programs, curricula, policies, and assessments practices.

We invite proposals that address and incorporate the rich dynamism offered within General and Liberal Arts Education. In addition to our traditional thematic tracks of General Education Reform and Program Assessment, this conference will introduce a new track on Pedagogy. Our new track specifically calls for examples from the classroom that create and promote equity for and between students.

Please note that instead of a specific track on Diversity, Inclusion and Equity, we have interwoven those themes throughout our established tracks, thereby communicating the need that diversity and inclusion be considered as integral to General Education work.

We ask that proposals be focused on highly interactive presentations, sharing high-impact take-aways, and considering how your work supports one of our thematic tracks.

Here are the three thematic tracks and suggestions for presentation topics:

I. General Education Revision and Reform

We are all always at various stages of planning, organizing, implementing, and/or revising sustainable, innovative, and high-impact general education programs. And as universities welcome students of more diverse backgrounds, life experiences, or academic trajectories, our general education programs need to be responsive to these students. With that in mind, we are especially interested in proposals that address diversity, equity, and inclusion in gen ed reform efforts.

Some potential questions for this theme include, but are not limited to:

- How are institutions using internal or external events to prompt general education revision or reform? How are state mandates or regional accrediting standards incorporated into general education revision or reform?
- How are institutions creating program learning outcomes that not only align with the university mission and foster student learning and growth, but also address diversity and inclusion?
- How are institutions connecting with employers to reform or re-envision general education?
- What are best practices for effectively messaging general education revision and/or reform?
- How does assessment data drive revision?
- How do two-year and four-year institutions work collaboratively to create and/or revise general education curriculum? How are two-year and four-year institutions communicating about general education requirements, outcomes, high-impact practices? What creative ways are educators aligning liberal learning experiences across institutions?
- How are two-year and four-year institutions designing quality programs that support transfer student populations?

II. Assessment in General Education

As the assessment of student and program learning outcomes is an ongoing focal point for colleges nationwide, some in in higher education question the value of assessment itself and offer pointed critiques of its practices. Along with responding to these critiques, let’s also take stock of our own practices, consider the value of program assessment work (for both internal and external audiences), and share best practices so we can plan, organize, and implement effective assessment strategies in general
education. This track invites proposals that promote equity in assessment so that assessment systems can be more comprehensive, and less disparate.

Some potential topics for this track include, but are not limited to:

- What factors—especially equity—do you weigh in considering your assessment options?
- How have you maximized the latest and greatest tools (e-portfolios, etc.)?
- What strategies you used to get campus-wide buy-in?
- How have you created successful strategies and avoided pitfalls?
- How do you get an assessment initiative up and running?
- How do you respond to those who resist assessment—what are their arguments against it? How do we counter those arguments?
- How can assessment efforts provide important foundations to go beyond assessment for the sake of accreditation, and dive deeper into uncovering and correcting implicit bias within assessment practices?

III. General Education and Pedagogy

If general education in the 21st century is to be truly transformative, we must imagine, develop and adopt pedagogical approaches that promote equity and inclusion, embrace interdisciplinary approaches to real-life problems, encourage self-reflection and meta-cognition, and foster a sense of belonging as active and engaged local, national, and global citizens. How do we best develop effective pedagogies that meet these demands?

Questions related to this track include, but are not limited to:

- How do we best develop an equitable and inclusive pedagogy? How do we complement this pedagogy with an equity-focused and equity-practiced curriculum?
- How do we employ pedagogies that prepare students for their roles as local, national, and global citizens?
- What is the relationship between our pedagogy and the students’ development of their academic, professional, and personal goals?
- How do we employ digital technology and multimodal learning in thoughtful and productive ways?
- In what ways does our pedagogy engage students in problem-solving of relevant, real-life issues?
- How do we develop meaningful experiential, co-curricular, and/or community-based learning?
- What best pedagogical practices can we draw upon to connect general education to the majors?
- How do we incorporate pedagogical theory into our practice?

We are particularly interested in hearing from programs, disciplines or courses that have developed and have successfully used materials, activities, testing methods/formats, etc. to create a more equitable atmosphere for students to thrive and succeed.

Proposal Deadline: May 15, 2020
PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

AGLS welcomes presentations on program reform, pedagogy, curriculum development, assessment, program management, messaging, and other topics central to general and liberal education. Proposals directly related to one of our three Constitute thematic tracks will be given priority consideration.

AGLS encourages participation from faculty, students, staff, and administrators, as well as proposals that relate successful collaborative efforts between two and four-year campuses. Sessions that actively engage the session audience and/or provide usable ‘Monday morning’ ideas and activities are especially encouraged. We pride our conference on providing hands-on experiences for the attendees.

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

60-Minute Single Campus Presentation: one or more persons present a final or preliminary summary results of a new program or project. The purpose of this presentation should be an designed to generate discussion or feedback on the development of said the program or project. This format is well-suited for an ongoing or recently completed work, complete with in-depth analysis and/or asking for feedback or collaborations.

60-Minute Panel Discussion: an individual topic or question is introduced by a facilitator. Two to four panelists will provide their perspectives and discuss differences. This should be followed by an open discussion with the audience.

20-Minute Timed Papers: single presenters (or pairs) will give a traditional 20-minute presentation based on a project, paper, or topic they are pursuing as research. This also is an excellent format to share an assessment tool or project your campus is developing or using. Two presentations will be scheduled for each 60 minute session, giving plenty of time for Q&A.

60-Minutes Interactive Session: one or more persons present an interactive learning opportunity very similar to our longer workshops but limited to 60 minutes. The goal of these sessions is to initiate conversation and spark ideas to take back to home campuses. Sessions should focus on innovation and integration of particular processes, practices, and pedagogies that have proven meaningful at the home institution. Proposals should include the learning goals and take-away(s) and indicate how participants will be invited to engage in the material.

135-Minute Workshop (our most competitive format—at most three proposed workshops will be accepted for placement on the Constitute program): longer, hands-on, interactive learning opportunity designed to provide attendees with take-away solutions and tips for use on their home campus. This format should provide a more thorough examination of a complicated process or multiple, related topics. Successful workshops serve as models for engaged learning and participants will be able to apply the theories and concepts developed through the experience to their home campus.

What information should you have on-hand prior to going online to submit your proposal?

1) Type of presentation
2) Title of proposal
3) Name, institution, email address, and day phone number of primary proposal contact
4) Abstract of proposal (limited to 300 words)

Additional information will be requested once proposal is accepted onto the program, e.g. co-presenter information, etc.

Note: Computers/laptops will not be available in session rooms, but LCD projectors and internet access will be available for presenters to bring their own hotspot and laptops.
OTHER CONSTITUTE HIGHLIGHTS

[WORKSHOP] Welcome to the Neighborhood: A Primer for Those New to General Education Programs Join us for a nuts-and-bolts welcome to general education leadership and administration: learn more about general education and what it means to be a general education administrator, network and share with others, collaboratively tackle a gen ed case study, explore resources that can support your efforts, then leave with an inventory and action plan to take back to campus. This workshop is ideal for those new to general education administration like coordinators, directors, curriculum committee chairs, and anyone else responsible for supporting, facilitating, and/or reforming the general education program on your campus.

[AGLS Working Session] Developing a Playbook of Good Responses to Gen Ed FAQs: Second round of our facilitated working session to develop handouts of good responses and best practices for those working in gen ed programs. Each sheet will be a set of quick yet concise responses to the most common questions and critiques we hear all too often in our work.

Have a question about session types, topics or technology?
Contact Joyce Lucke by phone at (812) 376-7468 or by email at execdir@agls.org.

Proposal Portal Opens February 1, 2020

Submit proposals at
www.agls.org/agls-annual-conferences/2020constitute/submit-proposals/

Proposal Deadline: May 15, 2020
HELP STOP PRESENTATION-INDUCED CEREBRAL NECROSIS

Everyday, thousands of people die from boring, monotonous and unbearable presentations. Help us stop the needless killing.

How often have you suffered ‘death by PowerPoint’ at a conference?

Don’t we tell students how well they speak and their content is what makes for a powerful presentation – not how dynamic, colorful or animated their PowerPoint may be?

MAKE YOUR CONTENT THE HIGHLIGHT, NOT YOUR POWERPOINT!

Design a highly interactive session infused with conversation and activity!

❖ Be low or no tech: you are the presentation, not your slides
❖ Share stories: stories help people to relate to you and your work, and make a bigger and longer lasting impression
❖ PowerPoints should not ‘be’ the presentation: whatever is on the screen should enhance what you are saying
❖ Images make a bigger impact than text and helps recall of your point
❖ Interaction is key: providing structured, relevant, but brief activities gives your audience a chance to move — and allows the mind to directly engage in what you have been saying
❖ Make personal connections and help others connect with those that have already or are undergoing similar challenges
❖ Let them share: allowing people to not only ask questions but share their stories helps everyone relate to the main points of the presentation, find mentors, and feel a part of a larger community
❖ Share your contact information at the session and encourage others to do the same
❖ Provide a take-away: what best practice, idea or lesson can you share that others can take to heart and use in their everyday work
❖ Share resources: you likely have a number of tools, resources or tricks up your sleeve that you will not discuss during your session. Have a means to share those resources (like a link to a Dropbox folder) or collect emails to send materials once back on campus
REGISTRATION
All presenters must register for the conference unless otherwise notified. **Online registration will open March 15, 2020.** The full conference registration fee is $320 and one day only registration fee is $225, if registered before September 10, 2020. After September 10, the full fee is $350 and one day fee is $250. Registration includes annual membership in AGLS. Memberships paid for with the conference will have a term of September 2020 through August 2021. Full registration includes conference packet, lunch on Friday and Saturday, Friday evening reception, and beverage breaks. Refunds are available if requested in writing before September 10 (less $50 processing fee).

Campuses with an institutional membership (paid for 2020-21 year prior to August 15, 2020) should contact the AGLS office to receive discount code for conference registrations.

ACCOMMODATIONS
Our conference hotel is the **Drury Plaza Hotel at the Arch**, right on the St. Louis Riverfront. We have secured a block of rooms for the evenings of Thursday, September 24 through Saturday, September 26 at the rate of $149 per night. Room rates are guaranteed though August 20, 2020, or until the room block is fully reserved. For those driving to the conference, parking is available at the hotel. $10.00 parking fee for self parking. Valet parking is not available.

The Drury Plaza is a smoke-free property. Smoking is not allowed within restaurants, meeting rooms, guest rooms, or any public area. There are designated smoking areas along the perimeter of the hotel property.

**Phone and online reservation lines will open April 15, 2020.**

ABOUT OUR CONFERENCE HOTEL
On 4th Street between Market and Walnut in downtown St. Louis, the Drury Plaza Hotel at the Arch is comprised of three buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. Careful renovation restored some of the original building features like matching millwork, Italian marble and Waterford crystal chandeliers. In 2017, an eighth floor terrace was added, providing guests to enjoy stunning views of the Gateway Arch and downtown St. Louis.

Each guest room includes free Wi-Fi, TV, microwave, refrigerator, iron/ironing board, hairdryer and coffee maker.

Guest room rate includes:
- Free Wi-Fi throughout the hotel
- Daily ‘Fresh and Free’ hot breakfast from 6AM to 9:30AM weekdays and 7AM to 10AM weekends
- Free 5:30PM Kickback® in the lobby bar held daily. Enjoy a quick drink and appetizers before dinner.
- Later in the evening, grab a free soft drink and fresh popcorn for those late night hunger pangs.

Don’t feel like venturing out for food? Our incredible lobby bar and dining room are open to serve up food that is oh so good.
When asked, this is what conference attendees have said why AGLS is distinctive and why they return each year:

I get considerable ‘bang for my bucks’ in that belonging and participating in AGLS is affordable, especially compared to other professional development organizations for general education personnel.

AGLS represents a consistent opportunity to interact with like-minded people who do what I do and who understand my role at my institution.

AGLS provides opportunities to discuss general education ‘administrivia’ with folks ‘who’ve been there, done that’.

I can seek and find solutions to especially knotty problems regarding gen ed reform, development, administration.

AGLS provides outlets for resume building through service to the profession, conference presentations, and publications.

AGLS is a COMMUNITY of people dedicated to general and liberal education and thus provides support to faculty and administrators who may not find such community or support at their home institutions. Yet is small enough that I can develop relationships with those people.

Nuts and bolts! AGLS is the place to discuss how to apply a wide variety of general education ideas.

AGLS develops me both as a faculty member and an administrator.

AGLS provides guidance through the thorny problems of general education program revision and assessment.

AGLS is large enough to include faculty from a wide variety of types of institutions, but small enough so I can get to know people well enough to collaborate on projects.

AGLS focuses on the day-to-day, problem-solving end of general education that we all share.

AGLS is grass-roots organization, driven by concerns of faculty and staff on campuses.

AGLS is proudly and properly diverse in its council members, general membership and conference participants—geographically, institutional types, diversity of student bodies and diversity of disciplinary backgrounds.

Every year I meet someone new who understands the reforms and changes I face on my campus. Having the opportunity to talk with colleagues from around the country provides a sense of ‘I’m not doing all that bad as everyone is facing similar challenges and frustrations—and successes!’

I’m inspired by what I learn is possible hearing what others have managed to accomplish on their campuses.
OUR MISSION: The Association for General & Liberal Studies is a community of practitioner-scholars that provides strategic, effective and innovative support for peers engaged in the day-to-day work of general and liberal learning in 21st century higher education.

OUR VISION: The Association for General & Liberal Studies aspires to be the leading organization that enhances the day-to-day work of those engaged in general education.

PERFECT FAMILY VACATION OR QUICK WEEKEND

St. Louis is a place where history and imagination collide, and the result is a destination like no other. With a vibrant, revitalized downtown and ever-expanding options for riverfront entertainment, you’ll come to love the Gateway to the West and want to return again and again.