

**Gen Ed as Bridge:  
Linking School, Job, Career,  
and Life**

**ASSOCIATION FOR GENERAL & LIBERAL STUDIES**

**2024 CONSTITUTE**

**SHERATON AIRPORT HOTEL**

**PORTLAND, OREGON**

**OCTOBER 4 & 5**



# Education is all a matter of building bridges.

~Ralph Ellison (American Author)

Gen Ed, as most of us refer to our work, is known by many names across colleges and universities. Liberal arts or studies, core courses or curriculum, shared experiences, etc. Gen ed is foundational, ever-changing, amorphous, central, exploratory, complement, and any other number of adjectives. It is a part of every college student's journey to the world of employment, yet often feels invisible, forgotten, or at best secondary to those of us who work every day to make it the basis for every student's future life.

Portland, Oregon is the perfect location for us to meet in 2024. The city has numerous monikers that describe its history and many facets. Commonly known as the 'City of Roses,' it is also known as Riptown, Stumptown, Biketown, and Bridge City, among others. Portland embraces the uniqueness and sustainability-mindedness of its population, entrepreneurship, and nature.

Our work is so important as the bridge we build must not simply teach work – it must teach life. It must be an education that is a beginning by producing graduates that have essential skills for work, citizenship, and social responsibility. It must be an educational desire that is lifelong providing the tools and skills for those as they go through the distinct phases of life can adapt, grow, and move across careers. It must be an education that opens the world to all its possibilities and people, serving as a bridge to deeper understanding of our humanity and of our place in the world. The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows. Obstacles to bridges.

In 2024, we want to explore how general education is the conduit that links beyond the liberal arts and the sciences. To play off a quote by Erid Kandel: general education bridges the sciences—concerned with nature—with the humanities...connecting them with the meaning of human experience.

How does or can your gen ed program serve as a bridge to the major, professional training, job, career, and life?

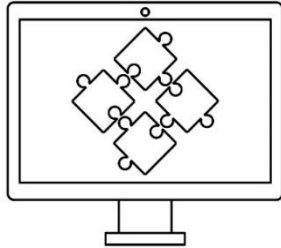
## WHO ARE WE?

AGLS 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. Our goal is to create an interactive, two-day experience devoted to matters practical that gets all participants engaging, sharing, and leaving each session with concrete 'take-aways.'

## OUR 2024 TRACKS

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

### 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 and liberal education programs. It is important to share the why, what, and how of general and liberal education revision work so we can learn from each other and avoid reinventing the wheel as we all move forward in general and liberal education. Works-in-progress are welcome!

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

- How are you integrating innovative, high-impact, practices, or pedagogies into your Gen Ed (for example, study abroad, undergraduate research, service learning, civic engagement) that are designed to connect disciplines, connect gen ed to major, connect gen ed to career?
- How are institutions using internal or external current events and issues to prompt or guide general and liberal education revision or reform?
- What are examples of meaningful ways you have incorporated or are incorporating access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice in general and liberal education that can make a difference for our students?
- How are diverse voices involved and valued in general and liberal education reform or revision?
- How has your understanding of stakeholders in general and liberal education changed in response to recent disruptions in higher education and how can you utilize this information for successful revision or reform?
- How are you aligning access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice in general and liberal education? What challenges or resistance have you encountered with incorporating these elements? What approaches have you used, or could you use to address these challenges or resistance?
- In what ways are access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice illuminated and acted upon in student transfer plans (e.g., 2yr to 4yr, statewide articulation, etc.)?
- How do two-year and four-year institutions work collaboratively to build bridges for students to transfer as effectively as possible? How are two-year and four-year institutions communicating about general and liberal education requirements, outcomes, high-impact practices? What creative ways are educators aligning liberal learning experiences across institutions?

- What strategies are you using to communicate the value and significance of general education to various stakeholders?

## Assessment in General and Liberal Education



Assessment of student and program learning outcomes is an ongoing focal point for colleges nationwide. Good assessment practices can lead to authentic and meaningful improvement in general and liberal education, highlight areas of strength, and illuminate areas for growth.

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

- How is your institution meeting the challenges posed by technology and advances in AI?
- How can we assess students' growth over time as they encounter, and address issues related to access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice?
- How can we use assessment to build bridges across disciplines to increase student understanding of the value of liberal arts/general education?
- How are you aligning access, equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice in general and liberal education with program learning outcomes designed to foster students' personal growth?
- How is your institution using data (institutional or external, such as NSSE or CSSE data, NCES, or SAM) to understand the connection between general education and career readiness?
- How are assessment practices within general education courses and/or programs considering diverse student populations and learners? What practices is your institution following to ensure equitable assessment of student learning?
- How is student data used to illuminate issues of inequity, injustice, and a lack of access to create the best that a general and liberal education program has to offer?
- How have you used assessment to respond to and/or drive changes in your program?
- What strategies have you used to increase campus-wide participation and engagement in assessment of general and liberal education? Have you found innovative ways to help faculty and staff members find value and importance in this process?
- What approaches have you used to build bridges with your communities in embedding the development of learning outcomes and assessment processes into general and liberal education?
- How do you assess the effectiveness of communication/messaging around the value of general education to students? To members of your institutional community? To external stakeholders?

## Building Bridges from Gen Ed to Career (“It takes more than a major!”)



General education’s impact spans beyond the immediate needs of workforce readiness, but the two are indelibly connected. There is a continued need to connect our general education curriculum to the touch points of students’ professional and personal success to address concerns from external agencies and stakeholders. Higher education institutions are not facing a dilemma or a conflict, but an opportunity to build a bridge to establish public trust and demonstrate return on investment.

- How does your gen ed program communicate with external stakeholders regarding the true value of general education?
- How does your institution support curriculum development between general education and career coursework?
- How does your institution help students from marginalized populations understand general education as a bridge to possibilities beyond the major?
- How does your institution encourage faculty to engage in discussions linking career competencies to learning outcomes of general education?



## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

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:** a campus presents a final or preliminary summary of a new program, initiative, or project. The purpose of this presentation should be designed to generate discussion or feedback on the development of said work. This format is especially well-suited for works-in-progress, complete with in-depth reasonings, and/or asking for feedback or collaborations.



**60-Minute Interactive Session:** one or more people present an interactive learning opportunity similar to a workshop but focused. The goal of these sessions is to demonstrate a useful tool or best practice used at the presenting institution and spark conversation and ideas for attendees to take back to their campuses. Sessions should focus on innovation and integration of specific 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.



**60-minute Discussion Round Robin:** Institutions are encouraged to develop a quick summary that will prompt a discussion with those at their table. This format is perfect for emerging projects and challenging scenarios. This is not a 'presentation' but a way to get people to share ideas, experiences, and even questions on your gen ed work. Each 25 minutes, participants will be asked to switch tables to engage in a new topic/discussion. Each session will have no more than three topic tables.

Participants will be able to 'attend' no more than two discussions within a 60-minute session.

## PROPOSAL DEADLINE IS APRIL 26, 2024

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

- 1) Type/format of presentation you want
- 2) Title of proposal
- 3) Name, institution, email address, and day phone number of primary proposal contact



4) Abstract of proposal (limited to three hundred words)

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

**Note on AV:** 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. No technology will be available in round robin sessions.



**Have a question about session types, topics, or technology?**

Contact our office by phone at (812) 390-6912 or by email at [execdir@agls.org](mailto:execdir@agls.org).

**Proposal Portal Opens February 5, 2024**

**Proposal Deadline: April 26, 2024**

**Registration Opens: April 1, 2024**

Full conference information will be available on February 5, 2024

**[www.agls.org/agls-annual-conferences](http://www.agls.org/agls-annual-conferences)**

## **REGISTRATION**

All presenters must register for the constitute unless otherwise notified.

Online registration will open April 1, 2024.

The full registration fee is \$365 and one day only registration fee is \$250, if registered before

September 15, 2024. Registration includes annual membership in AGLS.

Memberships paid for with registration will have a term of October 2024 through August 2025. Full registration includes constitute resources, access to event app, as well as morning coffee, lunch on Friday and Saturday.

Refunds are available if requested in writing before September 15 (less \$50 processing fee).

Campuses with an institutional membership (paid for 2024-25 year prior to September 1, 2024) will receive a 15% discount code for constitute registrations. Contact the AGLS office for complete details.

## ACCOMMODATIONS



**Sheraton**  
PORTLAND AIRPORT HOTEL

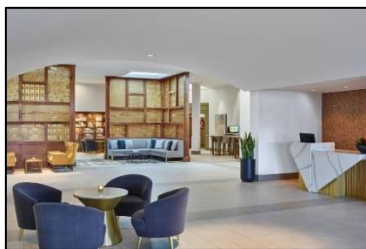
Experience comfort and convenience at the newly renovated Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel. The Sheraton is just a few minutes FREE shuttle drive from PDX Airport. We have secured a block of rooms for the evenings of Thursday, October 3 through Saturday, October 5 at the rate of \$149 per night plus tax.

Guest room rate includes high speed internet access in all guest rooms and complimentary overnight self-parking for overnight guests.

Room rates are guaranteed through September 18, 2024, or until the room block is fully reserved. For those driving to Portland, parking is available at the hotel.

Phone and online reservation lines will open May 15, 2024. Visit our website for information.

Located in the hotel lobby, the Rose and Compass is the perfect place to grab a bit to eat, socialize with colleagues, and relax with our Local Wines and Microbrews.



## EASILY ACCESS ALL THAT PORTLAND HAS TO OFFER

Situated on airport grounds, the Sheraton offers 24-hour complimentary shuttle service. The shuttle will take you to Portland International Airport (PDX), Cascade Station Shopping Center (a wide variety of tax-free shopping and diverse restaurants for all tastes), and easily explore the surrounding area. The shuttle also will take guests, on a regular basis, to the MAX light rail station for a ride straight into downtown Portland.

There are several nearby eateries that are accessible via the hotel's complimentary shuttle.



- ☯ ParkStone Wood Kitchen & Taps: Wood burning pizza oven and an extensive tap list
- ☯ Red Robin: Family Restaurant Serving Gourmet Burgers and Unlimited Fries
- ☯ Famous Dave's: Classic BBQ-Ribs, Chicken, Burgers and BBQ Sandwiches
- ☯ Buffalo Wild Wings: Restaurant and Sports Bar with 16-Different Wing Sauces
- ☯ Stanford's Restaurant and Bar: Fresh Seafood, Steaks, Gourmet Hamburgers and a Popular Happy Hour
- ☯ Hot Pot 'N Sushi: Conveyor Belt Wide Variety of Sushi and Hot Pot Items
- ☯ and many more within a 7-mile drive



What makes Portland so unique is the distinct neighborhoods that surround the city. As we are near the airport, it is extremely accessible and quick to get a cab or ride to explore this one-of-a-kind city! Many local attractions, including the majestic Mount Hood, offer a variety of leisure activities.

**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.



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