



RIDE THE RAPIDS:

Navigating General Education through Turbulent Times

ASSOCIATION FOR GENERAL & LIBERAL STUDIES

2026 CONSTITUTE

DoubleTree City Center

Charlotte, North Carolina

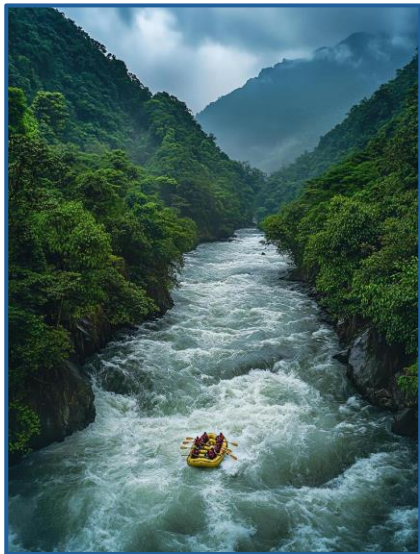
September 24, 25, & 26



Higher education is like a ride on whitewater rapids; it is fast-paced, unpredictable, and filled with sudden twists, but it ultimately steers you toward smoother, deeper waters of understanding.

Charlotte, the site for this year's AGLS Constitute, is the home of the National Whitewater Center, featuring the world's largest man-made whitewater river for rafting, kayaking, and canoeing. The Center offers rapids that range from Class II – exciting but manageable with some areas of smooth water to Class IV – with strong currents, big waves, and little calm water between rapids.

When life gets bumpy it sometimes becomes excruciatingly hard to wade through tough times. It is life's way of teaching you timeless lessons of steadfastness, patience and forbearance. Challenges and hardships are not meant to break you, but to build your willpower, patience, and strength. Just like rough waters test a raft's durability and rider's skills, in the same way, the hard times test your inner character. Every struggle is a profound lesson in disguise—shaping you into someone wiser, more flexible, and more capable of tackling all kinds of challenges.



In higher education, and in particular in general education programs, periods of uncertainty and disruption place particularly challenging demands on us. Rapid institutional change, shifting student needs, technological transformation, and contested public expectations require educators to make careful, often difficult decisions about purpose, design, and practice. Like navigating rough water, this work calls for coordination, judgment, and adaptability rather than endurance alone. In such moments, general education becomes a site for clarifying values, refining priorities, and developing approaches that help students and institutions remain oriented amid change.

Like white water rafting, leading general education requires agility, teamwork, and courage. This year's conference invites bold ideas and practical strategies that help leaders steer through uncertainty, overcome institutional rapids, and chart a course toward innovation and student success. We invite proposals that examine how general and liberal education can be intentionally shaped, strengthened, and sustained under these conditions.

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* Indicates person's term is ending



FRIDAY LUNCH KEYNOTE

Kevin Gannon

Director

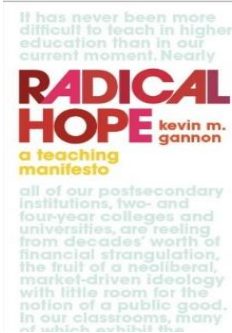
**Center for the Advancement of Faculty
Excellence (CAFÉ)**

Queens University of Charlotte

Author of the 2020 book, *Radical Hope: A Teaching Manifesto* (West Virginia University Press) and co-editor of *The Campus Crisis Toolkit: Strategy and Solidarity for the Rest of Us* (SUNY Press, 2026).

Making Higher Education Human/e

A list of all the difficulties we face in higher education would occupy the entire conference program, and we are all well aware of—and living through—they anyway. But the list of paths out of this morass is much shorter. Merely acknowledging the fact we occupy a new landscape is not enough; we need actual, tangible alternatives. And that's where liberal and general studies comes in. This talk will offer strategies grounded in the science of learning and the history of educational technologies that we might use not just for defending, but expanding, our curricular and institutional presence. In doing so, we will have the opportunity (obligation?) to create compelling models of a higher education that is both humane and eminently human.



Kevin Gannon is Director of the Center for the Advancement of Faculty Excellence and Professor of History at Queens University in Charlotte, in North Carolina. After an over 20-year faculty career, serving as a program coordinator and department chair along the way, he moved into faculty development full-time in 2014. Even in an administrative role, Kevin continues to work with first-year students (a particular passion of his) by teaching sections of Queens' new student seminar course, the Queens Roadmap, every fall semester.

The CAFÉ mission is professional development for faculty and academic staff throughout all of the phases of the life of their position,” Gannon said. “to be successful, we need to consider every aspect of faculty life – teaching and learning, scholarly activity, research, and service to the university, and make sure we’re providing effective support in all of those areas.”

Learn more about Dr. Gannon at his website, The Tattooed Professor: History, Teaching, and Technology with a Custom Paint Job (<https://thetattooedprof.com/>)

SATURDAY LUNCH KEYNOTE



← **Rowanna Carpenter**

Director of Assessment and
Research
Portland State University
and

Margaret Mulrooney →

University Historian
James Madison University



We are STILL the Leaders We Have Been Waiting For

Higher education is experiencing a leadership crisis: rapid turnover at the top; erosion of faculty governance; intrusive legislatures and boards; administrative ‘bloat,’ and debates over campus speech are just a few of the many indicators. What can those of us charged with leading General Education and Liberal Studies programs do about it? In this plenary, we propose replacing corporate, leader-centered models of leadership with egalitarian, group-centered approaches that are better suited to higher education. Join us to explore crucial principles and practices intended to help you find solidarity and build community on your campus and across the AGLS network.



THANK YOU
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Look for their sessions during conference hours.

Representatives from each will be present throughout the weekend.

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*"We're not just surviving the rapids,
we're choosing our line."*



Steering the Current

Shaping AI with Gen Ed Values to build durable skills

The AI current is fast and unpredictable. General education gives us the values to steer it. This session offers a steadying, practical answer: keep **reflection at the center** so students think **more, not less** and build the durable skills a future we can't yet picture will demand.

Reframe the moment

We get to shape what AI is *for*. Reflection is how we build durable skills instead of quietly eroding them.

Practice with intent

A small, repeatable set of reflection practices using conversational AI tools backed by **TORI: The Taxonomy of Reflective Inquiry**.

Connect to outcomes

Tie reflection to gen ed outcomes, producing continuous evidence of learning while preserving human mentorship.



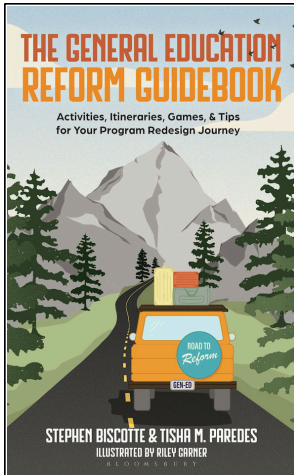
FIND US AT AGLS 2026

Scan for the full session details day, time, room, and presenters. We'll be sharing session resources for all AGLS conference attendees too!

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BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC



The General Education Reform Guidebook Activities, Itineraries, Games, & Tips for Your Program Redesign Journey

Stephen Biscotte & Tisha Paredes

Chocked full of activities, tips, games, scripts, and templates, this guidebook takes a gen ed leader on a metaphorical road trip through program reform. Designed to adopt or adapt, these components provide the reader with practical strategies to plan for and address the opportunities and challenges faced through the four major stages of reform: laying the foundation, designing the program, implementing the program, and sustaining community engagement.

20% off with this flyer!*

Paperback | 192 pp | May 2027 | 9798216275725 | \$34.95 \$27.96

General education reform is hard. It can feel overwhelming, particularly when many of us tasked with leading or supporting gen ed reform lack the experience and strategies to begin the process and keep it moving forward.

This book seeks to address common challenges that occur when building, revising, or enhancing general education or core curriculum including lack of community, unclear direction, unfocused discussions, meeting accreditation standards, developing an assessment plan, and navigating shifting institutional politics and priorities through vignettes, worksheets, tips, and reflections that can be used by the reader individually or brought to committees, departments, or task forces collectively. Designed to adopt or adapt, these components provide the reader with practical strategies to address these, and many more challenges faced through the four major stages of reform: laying the foundation, designing the program, implementing the program, and sustaining engagement.

The practical nature of the book, along with the fun and user-friendly activities that align with our road trip metaphor, allows the reader to execute the suggestions and activities to build a foundation for gen ed reform decisions, direction, and discussion at their institutions. It gives the people doing the work the skills needed to conduct a successful gen ed reform process from start to finish.

Dr. Stephen Biscotte has lived and breathed general education since 2013: supporting a full reform effort, serving as President of the Association for General and Liberal Studies (AGLS), completing a doctoral dissertation focused on general education teaching, as well as presenting, publishing, researching, and serving as external evaluator on all things general education.

Dr. Tisha Paredes is an accomplished leader in higher education, specializing in institutional effectiveness, accreditation, and assessment. Her roles at a university and as a consultant have been pivotal in shaping and reforming general education, developing rubrics for various courses and programs, and guiding institutions through accreditation processes.

*Use the following discount code to save 20% on [bloomsbury.com/9798216275725](https://www.bloomsbury.com/9798216275725).

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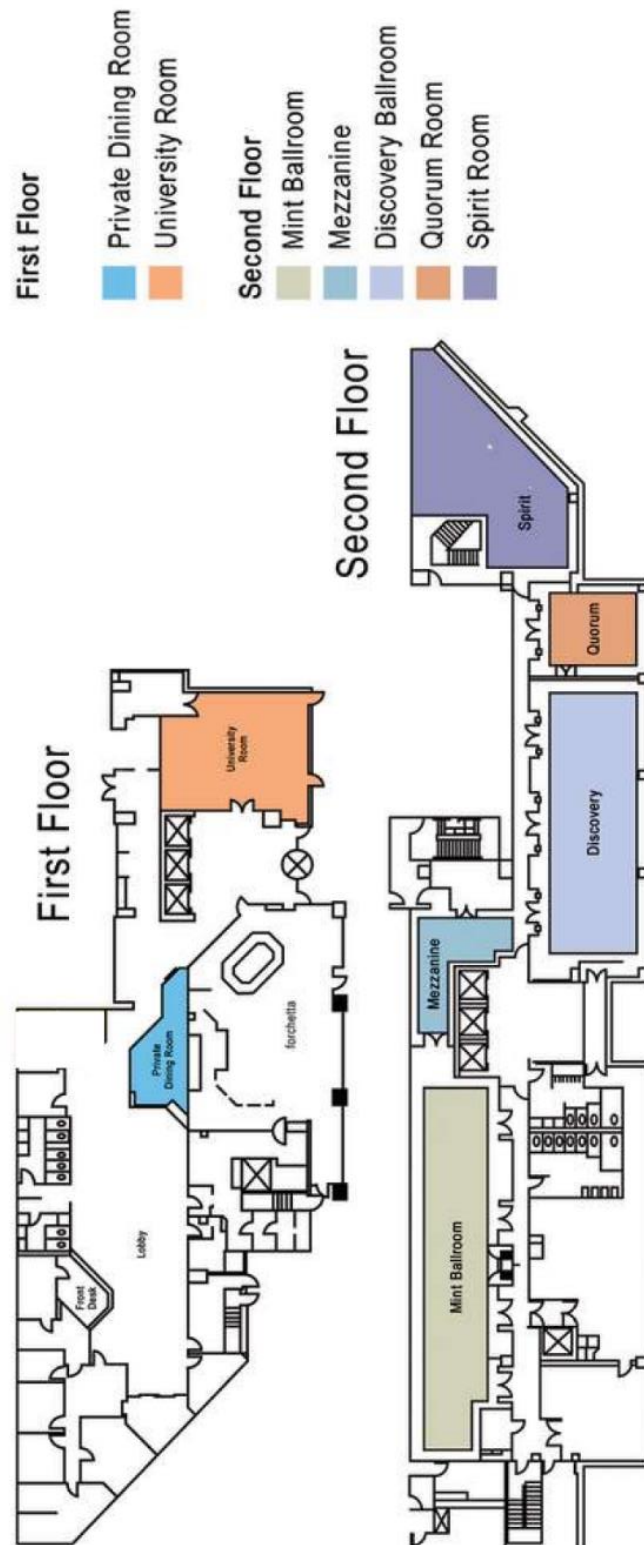
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MEETING SPACE IS LOCATED ON THE FIRST AND SECOND LEVELS OF THE HOTEL. BELOW IS A LAYOUT OF THE FLOOR.



ARE YOU NEW TO AGLS? WELCOME TO THE BEST GEN ED COMMUNITY!

Here are a few opportunities throughout the meeting to meet gen ed colleagues and learn more about AGLS

Thursday 9/24 [6pm to 7:30pm in Discovery] welcome reception for all – cash bar, hors d'oeuvres, and always expect something fun happening



Friday 9/25 [7am to 8am in the Mint Ballroom] coffee for all and newcomers meet council members

Saturday 9/26 [7:30am to 8:30am in the Mint Ballroom] coffee for all and newcomers meet council members

During lunch sit with people you have not met yet to broaden your network

HOW TO READ THE DETAILED SCHEDULE

- Time listed gives you the beginning and ending time of the session
- Letter in bracket indicates the track:

[A] = assessment

[R] = reform

[T] = teaching & learning

[P] = partner session

[Z] = all conference session

- **Red** words indicate the room of the session
- **Bold** indicates the session title if multiple presentations are within the session. NOTE: single presentation sessions will list the presentation title only
- *Italics* indicates the presentation title

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE AGLS 2026 CHARLOTTE

assessment

teaching/learning

revision/reform

partner

all conference

DATE	START/STOP TIME	ROOM	SESSION
Thursday 9/24	3pm – 5pm	Spirit	PRE-PAID WORKSHOP Beyond Oversight: Engaging and Supporting Instructors in General Education
	6pm – 7:30pm	Discovery	Welcome Reception with cash bar
Friday 9/25	7am – 8am	Mint Ballroom	Coffee Hour for Networking with New Attendee Coffee Corner
	8am – 9am	Mint Ballroom	AGLS is Your Guide through Rough Gen Ed Waters and award presentations
	9:15am – 10:15am	Mint 1	Gen Ed Reform in an Era of Distrust: Strategies for Navigating the Current
		University	Program-Level Assessment and Faculty Engagement in Reform
			Students' Perspectives on General Education: Going Beyond Class Assessment to Program Assessment
			Core Curriculum Assessment: Discussing Wholesale Revision and Early Piloting
	Spirit	Advancing Academic Decision Making: Real Time Dashboards for Course Outcomes and Student Support	
		Discovery	Riding the Rapids: Using Campus Partnerships to Smooth the Ride
		University	Charting a Course through the AI Current: Fostering Authentic Inquiry and Professional Skill Building
	Spirit	Navigating Structural and System Level Transformations	
		Paddling Two Canoes and Staying on Course: Merging a Core Curriculum	
	Quorum	Anchors in Rough Waters: Navigating Big Institutional Changes	
		Instructional Design, Pedagogy and Faculty Development	
		Participation, Persistence, Performance: How Simplified Instructions Transform Online Discussions	
	Discovery	Navigating the Currents of a New General Education Curriculum: Challenges and Opportunities for Faculty Development	
		Scaffolding Self-Authorship: Developing Student Agency along the Learning Journey through Books of Knowing & Unknowing	
11:45am – 12:30pm	Mint Ballroom	BUFFET LUNCH	
12:30pm – 1:30pm	Mint Ballroom	KEYNOTE: Kevin Gannon -- Making Higher Education Human/e	
	Mint 1	Ride the Rapids to the next AGLS Playbook Chapter: Aligning General Education with Transfer Success	
	University	Go for the Gold! Charting a Course toward Better Faculty Engagement and Higher-Quality Assessment	
	Spirit	'Read the River' Together: Teamwork in Leadership	
1:45pm – 2:45pm	Quorum	Lights, Camera...Think! Building Critical Skills through Historical Films	
	Mint 1	ROUND ROBIN Rethinking Assessment: Data, Dialogue, Impact	
		Core Assessment: Data or Narrative?	
		Missing the Forest for the Trees: A Reconsideration of General Education Assessment	
3pm – 4pm	Mint 2	Deepening and Broadening the Institutional Dialogue about General Education Assessment	
		ROUND ROBIN Rebuilding Gen Ed: Structures of the Future	
		Supporting Faculty with the Transition to a Skills Based General Education Program	
		Recommitting Liberal Arts Education: Remaining Optimistic Amidst the Mess	

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE AGLS 2026 CHARLOTTE

assessment	teaching/learning	revision/reform	partner	all conference
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	University Spirit	Steering the Current: Shaping AI with Gen Ed Values to Build Durable Skills Mo Students, Mo Problems... and Mo Possibilities! Navigating the Unique Challenges and Opportunities of Leading Gen Ed at Large Institutions
	Quorum	Professorial Identity: Building Authentic Relationships through Authentic Selves
	Mint 1	Navigating the Current: Real-Time Strategies for Supporting Adult Learners in General Education
	University	Class VI Rapids: Teaching Gen Ed Writing at the Onset of AI
	Spirit	Reconsidering Recertification: Models, Challenges, and Practices in General Education
	Quorum	Meet <i>Journal of General Education</i> Authors and Learn More about Publishing your Work with the <i>Journal</i>
	Mint Ballroom	Presidents Reception with cash bar
	Minto Ballroom	Coffee Hour for Networking with New Attendee Coffee Corner
	Mint 1	Beyond Classroom Diversity: Inclusive Pedagogies
	University	Paddle, Pivot, Pedagogy: An Inquiry-First Approach to Assessment
	Spirit	Building the Raft While Riding the Rapids: A Case Study in Collaboration during Undergraduate Curriculum Reform
	Quorum	Navigating the AI Rapids: Strategies for Integrity in the AI Era
	Discovery	The Scholarship of General Education: Findings from a Scoping Review
		ROUND ROBIN Engaging Learnings: Teaching across Contexts
	Mint 1	Riding the Rapids: Navigating Diverse Viewpoints in the Gen Ed Classroom
		Paddles Up: Experience-Driven General Education for Adult Learners
		Divided by Generations, United by Stories: Using Personal Narratives to Navigate Age Differences and Perspectives in the Composition Classroom
		ROUND ROBIN Evidence, Culture, and the Meaning of Gen Ed
	Mint 2	Riding the Rapids of Evidence: Faculty-Calibrated Assessment and the Challenge of Longitudinal Learning
Saturday 9/26	University	Culture Change Challenges with General Education
		Employer Perception of General Education and Micro-credentials
	Spirit	Data-Driven Curriculum Redesign in Spite of External Pressures
		A Collaborative and Data Driven General Education Program Revision
	Quorum	Using State Legislation to Transform Curricula
	Discovery	From Friction to Flow: Improving the Course Proposal Process
	University	Cooley's New Looking-Glass: Using Gemini to Build Empathic Communication Skills
	Spirit	Telepathic Teaching: The Unspoken Understanding in Writing Courses
		Scaling Quality: A Comprehensive Framework for General Education Assessment
	Discovery	First-Year Experience and High Impact Practices
		Building a First-Year Experience that Actually Works: Lessons from the River Program
		The "C" Word: Career Readiness Meets Liberal Studies Redesign
	Mint Ballroom	BUFFET LUNCH
	Mint Ballroom	KEYNOTE: Meg Mulrooney & Rowanna Carpenter -- We are STILL the Leaders We've Been Waiting For

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE AGLS 2026 CHARLOTTE

assessment

teaching/learning

revision/reform

partner

all conference

2pm – 3pm	Mint 1	Gen Ed Anonymous Support Group -- all are welcome
	University	Riding the Rubric Rapids: Revising and Remaking Assessment Tools that Work
	Spirit	Navigating the Revision Rapids: A Multi-Stakeholder Crew for General Education Curricular Alignment
	Quorum	Student Engagement and Belonging within an Institutional Ecosystem
		Building Community Engagement in the First-Year Writing Sequence: Connecting Students to Place and to One Another
		It Takes a Crew: Coordinating General Education Beyond the Classroom
	Mint 2	Life In and After Gen Ed: Being Ready for Your Next Lap
	Mint 1	The Reflection is the Assessment: AI-Guided Reflection as New Evidence for General Education Outcomes
	University	From Dialogue to Design: A Rapid-Cycle Model for Translating Faculty Sentiment into Action
	Spirit	Emerging Challenges to Gen Ed
3:15pm – 4:15pm	Quorum	Shoring Up General Education in a Reduced Credit Environment
		Rigor and Grade Inflation: A Faculty Conversation
	Mint 1	Reading the River: Evidence-Based Tools that Help Gen Ed Science Students Navigate the Rapids
	University	Ten Years In and Still Navigating: Lessons from a Radical General Education Redesign
4:30pm – 5:30pm	Spirit	The Gen Ed Committee as Peer Reviewers
	Quorum	Smooth[ish] Waters: Strategies for Making more Navigable the Waters of GenEd Revision
		A Bridge over Troubled Waters: Teaching Data Fluency as a Foundation for Community Change in the Composition Classroom

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th

3:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Spirit *Beyond Oversight: Engaging and Supporting Instructors in General Education* [R]
Tricia Mieden Wilson and Laura Wheeler Poms (George Mason University)

Leading a strong general education program takes more than curricular oversight. It requires meaningful, sustained connections with the instructors who bring general education to our students. From experienced faculty to first-year instructors and adjuncts, general education educators need targeted support to design effective courses, engage diverse students, and generate meaningful assessment data. In this interactive two-hour workshop, we will explore practical, scalable ways to connect with and support instructors, no matter the size or structure of your general education program. Drawing from our own experience, we will share three high-impact initiatives that have strengthened teaching, learning, and assessment in our program and can be adapted for use on your campus, including: 1) course proposal workshops that support thoughtful course design and embed general education outcomes into the very fabric of a course; 2) an instructor certification program focused on evidence-based strategies for teaching non-majors and fostering student success in general education classrooms; and 3) pre-assessment workshops offered prior to data collection, emphasizing assignment alignment, transparency, and student success. Participants will receive sample materials and practical guidance, along with tips and strategies for building cross-campus partnerships with key units such as teaching and learning centers, career services, and assessment offices. Attendees will leave with a clear, actionable outline for implementing one of these initiatives to better support instructors and strengthen general education at their own institutions.

6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Discovery All-Conference Welcome Reception [Z]

Join us for light snacks, cash bar, and a bit of fun for first time attendees to meet new gen ed colleagues.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th

7:00 AM to 8:00 AM

Mint Ballroom Morning Coffee -- and new member networking [Z]

Don't worry - coffee and other beverages are available all day at The Financial Grind in the hotel lobby



7:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Mint Ballroom Name Badge Pickup and Information Desk

8:00 AM to 9:00 AM

Mint Ballroom *AGLS is Your Guide through Rough Gen Ed Waters* [Z]

Welcome to Charlotte hosted by David DiMattio (Springfield Technical Community College) and Joyce Lucke

Presentation of 2026 AGLS Awards

Jerry G. Gaff Faculty Award, Emerging Campus Leader presented by Kenneth Purcell

(University of Southern Indiana)
Exemplary General Education Program Awards presented by John Regan (Boston University)

9:15 AM to 10:15 AM

Mint I *Gen Ed Reform in an Era of Distrust: Strategies for Navigating the Current* [R]
Hannah Deuyour (Virginia Tech)

In the U.S., public trust in institutions (government, media, business, and NGOs) has been declining for more than 20 years. The result of that waning trust is visible everywhere, including on our campuses and in our classrooms. Seven in ten Americans believe that higher education is headed in the wrong direction, up from 5.6 in 2020. At least part of that crisis of confidence is rooted in distrust. How do we effectively revise and reform general education against a backdrop of prevailing mistrust, which may be coming from both outside and within our campus communities? How can we manage the byproducts of sustained mistrust: polarization, grievance, and insularity in a higher education environment? In this 60-minute practice session, we will explore a brief history of public trust, discuss ways mistrust presents itself in the context of general education, and identify strategies that can be used to rebuild trust with various stakeholder groups. Participants will identify at least one trust-related problem on their campus related to general education and work with other participants to apply what they have learned in the session to brainstorm steps they can take to broker trust.

University *Program-Level Assessment and Faculty Engagement in Reform* [A]
Students' Perspectives on General Education: Going Beyond Class Assessment to Program Assessment Paul Gorelik and Shambraelyn Baker (Binghamton University SUNY)

As an institution, we have continued to follow recommended assessment strategies by our accreditors and governing bodies. We found that, despite our assessment of learning outcomes and courses, we still heard from students that they were not satisfied through individual conversations and secondhand information. We decided we needed to take a deeper look into the program as a whole. To understand how students perceived the program, we ran two large-scale surveys. The first survey was conducted in Fall 2025 among first-year students. We created a paper survey and worked with first-year course instructors across the university to collect them in their courses. With 586 viable surveys completed, we had a good-sized sample of the over 3,000 first-year cohort. Similarly, in Spring 2026, we ran a slightly updated survey for seniors entering senior seminar classes, collecting 487 responses. Some themes that emerged from the data include: uncertainty about the value of general education; a perception of too many requirements; and negative reinforcement from instructors, advisors, and other students. Both first-year and senior students frequently indicated that they think there was some value in general education, but few could express what that value was. Many students reported that there were too many requirements in general education, which often contradicted their majors or outside of classroom activities. Finally, many students noted that instructors, advisors, and other students reinforced the lack of importance of general education. Understanding not only learning outcome achievement but also the perception of a general education program is vital to having an effective and impactful program. Going beyond what is required of us by accreditors and governing bodies is a necessary step in ensuring we are providing a general education program that supports the holistic development of our students.

Core Curriculum Assessment: Discussing Wholesale Revision and Early Piloting Jeffrey Punske and Katherine Martin (Southern Illinois University Carbondale)

We will be discussing ongoing assessment changes in the University Core Curriculum (UCC; our general education program) at Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC), a rural, R1 public institution. We discuss the factors precipitating these changes and our work to foster broad faculty support in developing and piloting assessment changes. A tension exists between two competing pressures: increasing faculty engagement and ensuring assessment credibility. Faculty involvement can illuminate the relevance and

value of assessment activities. However, ensuring reliability and validity requires extensive training and validation procedures that go beyond the expertise or interest of most faculty. Further, adding requirements to already over-extended faculty must be done carefully and with widespread support. Past practices at SIUC emphasized faculty involvement but lacked consistency or validation. Virtually all assessments were made within the context of the course, not the UCC's overall goals. Faculty used a variety of measures, and the student learning outcomes (SLOs) were vague and subject to considerable variation in interpretation, making institutional-level understanding of student progression and achievement impossible. Previously, UCC assessment utilized AAC&U's LEAP framework, which has 17 SLOs mapped unequally to four overarching outcomes. This number of SLOs was overwhelming and faculty gravitated towards just a handful of them; they were also difficult to manage for assessment and reporting purposes. Feedback from our accreditor demonstrated that substantial changes were needed. Working with faculty, we reduced the number of SLOs to four, each comprising four associated performance indicators with rubrics. Faculty have indicated that this system is much easier to understand and implement but covers the same breadth as LEAP. We present the process for faculty feedback and results from our first assessment pilot. We also provide a toolkit for other campuses to gain faculty support and seek feedback on our pilot.

Spirit *Advancing Academic Decision Making: Real Time Dashboards for Course Outcomes and Student Support* [R] Puja Shahi and Paul Mueller (Chamberlain University)

This session highlights how a practical, data driven Excel workbook, built entirely from information institutions already collect, can be transformed into clear and actionable visualizations that support student success, faculty decision making, and course level continuous improvement. Instead of focusing on Excel features on their own, the session demonstrates how simple, well-designed spreadsheets can operate as effective decision support tools that scale easily across courses and programs. A key component of this approach is the use of real time data feeds that give faculty and academic leadership up to date insights into course performance. Each week, intentional data sets are combined to identify indicators such as assignment completion, early alert patterns, and withdrawal risk. By reviewing these consistent weekly snapshots, academic teams gain a complete and holistic understanding of each student's standing in the course. With this level of visibility, teams can develop and implement immediate action items proactively, long before small concerns grow into course failures or withdrawals. The data also allow associate deans and faculty to initiate tailored student outreach based on individual needs, such as missing work, changes in engagement, early assessment performance, or inconsistent participation. This targeted approach ensures that interventions remain timely, relevant, and personalized. Participants will learn how to organize datasets, design meaningful charts, and interpret trends that clarify students' academic pathways. The session emphasizes simple tools, repeatable processes, and rapid insights, showing that strong data informed decision making does not require complex analytics systems. Through templates, examples, and weekly course outcome reviews, the session encourages cross institution collaboration on scalable and sustainable academic support strategies. At the end, attendees will leave with practical methods for turning existing institutional data into a dynamic, real-time system that enhances teaching effectiveness, strengthens student support, and drives continuous academic improvement.

Discovery *Riding the Rapids: Using Campus Partnerships to Smooth the Ride* [R] Lynn Hogan (Florida State University), Martyn Oliver and Elizabeth Worden (American University)

In the realm of general education, the expression "no person is an island" rings true. Often as the largest educational offering at an institution, those of us charged with its oversight rely upon partnerships across campus—from student advising to facilities—to get our work done. We depend on these invaluable relationships to design curriculum, assess student learning, hire faculty, train course instructors in the content and methodology of different disciplines, build course schedules, advise students, and secure facilities to name a few gen ed "chores." Yet amid the rising rapids of higher education, could we be doing more? Are there ways in which we can better leverage campus partnerships? Or are there new partners that could aid student retention and thriving? This interactive session will explore these questions as well as: what is the role of campus partners in managing general education? who are our key partners? are there opportunities for new relationships that would enhance program effectiveness and, more importantly, boost student learning? In this interactive session, participants will: 1) Discuss the importance of campus connections and the challenges and opportunities associated with these connections; 2) Identify key

partners on their home campus; 3) Consider other potential associations; and 4) Explore what it takes to cultivate, maintain, and reinvigorate key partnerships. Individuals should leave the session with an understanding of the web of campus relationships currently in place and with ideas for cultivating new associations to strengthen general education and student learning.

10:30 AM to 11:30 AM

University *Charting a Course through the AI Current: Fostering Authentic Inquiry and Professional Skill Building* [A] Kate Scarpena, Stuart Collins, and Jennifer Harrison (Purdue University Global)

As higher education continues to grapple with Generative AI, the course SS255: Digital Citizenship introduces a novel pedagogical framework: the 'Dual-Pathway' assessment model. This presentation outlines how the course empowers students to choose between a traditional manual analysis or an "AI-Assisted" pathway using tools like Google NotebookLM and Gemini. Central to the student AI use option is the mandatory AI Use Log, a critical transparency mechanism that requires students to document their prompts and share the AI's output. By shifting the focus on academic integrity from breach detection to transparent documentation, this model uses assessment to bridge the gap between General Education and career readiness. Ultimately, the ability to use AI tools ethically and to critically evaluate their output, are treated as skills that will be increasingly important in the modern workplace. Through this assessment, students do not just learn course content; they practice the "soft skills" of accountability and digital fluency required in the modern workforce. Attendees will examine student examples of these logs to identify effective documentation practices and discuss how transparency-based frameworks allow students to tackle complex sociological concepts, such as surveillance capitalism and algorithmic bias, while mastering the practical, career-aligned tools of the future. By the end of the session, attendees will be able to: Implement a "Dual-Pathway" Model with an AI Use Log: we will provide copies of the actual AI use log so that participants can adapt the framework for use at their institution. Participants can see in real time how to allow students to choose between manual and AI-assisted assignments, fostering agency and critical experimentation. Bridge Gen Ed to the Workforce: Use the log to teach AI Auditability, a professional competency that teaches students to document and verify AI-generated workflows for transparency and ethical oversight. Evaluate Authentic Inquiry: Use provided student examples to distinguish between superficial AI use and deep, critical engagement with complex concepts like algorithmic bias and surveillance capitalism. A quick demonstration of prompt engineering.

Spirit *Navigating Structural and System Level Transformations* [R]
Paddling Two Canoes and Staying on Course: Merging a Core Curriculum Mary Frances Pipino and Eric Dart (Gannon University)

One of the first rules that tandem canoeing newbies learn is to paddle on opposite sides because it provides the best stability and control. Indeed, the late freestyle paddler and canoe builder Mike Galt once wrote: "Decide at birth on which side of the canoe you want to paddle, then never, ever change" (<https://paddlingmag.com/skills/tandem-canoe-paddling/>). However, when canoeing in stormy and uncertain conditions to stay on course, sometimes you must break the rules. In September 2024, Gannon University in Erie, PA, and Ursuline College in Pepper Pike, OH announced plans to merge in response to the challenging and unpredictable currents of higher education. Among the many considerations brought about by the merger, managing a common core curriculum became paramount. In this presentation, Eric Dart (Director, Liberal Studies Core Curriculum, Gannon University) and Mimi Pipino (Director, Ursuline Core Curriculum) share how they have learned to paddle with one another over the last 18 months to develop a common understanding for a shared Core Curriculum. Mimi and Eric will explore the process, blueprint, and valuable lessons learned from this merger. Most importantly, they will address how engaging in a process that respects each institution's identity and charism, has yielded thoughtful discussions, strong relationships, and ultimately a shared core curriculum. The presentation will utilize the 30-minute format, with about 20 minutes for presenting the merger process, and 10 minutes for discussion/Q&A. Our goal for the session is to share what we have learned in this process, and In the words

of the CFP, “By comparing maps and learning from one another’s rapids and eddies, we avoid paddling the same stretch alone—or worse, getting stuck in the same whirlpools.”

Anchors in Rough Waters: Navigating Big Institutional Changes Paula Patch (Elon University) and Shawn Bowers (Queens University of Charlotte)

We are facing a unique and challenging moment in higher education. Shawn Daley, vice president of strategic relationships and dean of the college of education at George Fox University points out a reality facing academia -- “there are more institutions than projected student numbers can sustain.” School closures are imminent, as are mergers and acquisitions. In an ever-evolving higher education landscape, what skills and mindsets will serve educators and administrators as they navigate new territories? In September 2025, Queens University of Charlotte and Elon University, two private liberal arts universities in central North Carolina, announced an intent to merge. Although the schools are close geographically, many faculty and staff at both institutions lack awareness of one another. As luck would have it, administrators in the general studies programs at each institution have an already established working relationship, owing to professional networks in their home disciplines of English and writing studies, where both have been recent leaders. These two administrators will present what they are learning together about managing the uncertainty of a campus merger and offer suggestions for how to build and leverage strong local networks built on trust, lead with compassion towards transformative change (Maimon), imagine hopeful and resilient systems (Riddell, Hope Circuits), and, most important, advocate for one another. As changes occur on campuses across the nation in response to national, state, and local pressures (be it legislature, mergers, board mandates, etc.), this session aims to provide attendees with helpful anchors that provide stability in times of change.

Quorum **Instruction Design, Pedagogy, and Faculty Development** [T]

Participation, Persistence, Performance: How Simplified Instructions Transform Online Discussions Jonathan Racster (Purdue University Global)

Discussion boards are intended to be collaborative learning spaces where students engage with academic texts. (Afdal et al. 2023). However, research reveals that expectations of understanding often imposes high cognitive load on students in these environments (Faulconer et al., 2023). Complex instructional language and task complexity further impedes participation due to added cognitive load (Ibid.). Such linguistic barriers can be especially challenging for new students, first-generation learners, and non-native speakers (Reeves, 2015). Drawing on Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), this session explores the impact of a simplified instruction template on student outcomes. Grounded in "modular" rather than "molar" presentation (Gerjets et al., 2004), the template utilizes segmenting, navigability, and clear expectations to improve online course quality (Caskurlu et al., 2021). By eliminating lengthy sentences that otherwise trigger working memory overload (Al-Shehri & Gitsaki, 2010), these strategies free cognitive resources for deep engagement and schema construction. This session reviews the results from a pilot study comparing participation, performance, and persistence scores between course sections using the simplified template versus standard instructions. Participants will learn to identify "expert blindness" and discuss strategies to mitigate cognitive overload and metrics for evaluating success (Baxter et al., 2025).

Navigating the Currents of a New General Education Curriculum: Challenges and Opportunities for Faculty Development Joanna Love, Kitty Maynard, and Elisabeth Gruner (University of Richmond)

Our new general education curriculum launched in the fall of 2024 after a seven-year process of study, planning, revision, and development. The new “Web of Inquiry” curriculum blends a traditional field of study model (our “Areas of Inquiry”) with First-Year Seminars, Wellness, and Second Language Requirements (what we call “Engagements”). Most novel are areas that develop skills and competencies that cut across disciplines, all four years of study, and are embedded into majors—what we call “Integrated Focus Areas.” These areas focus on competencies meant to address 21st century needs, including writing, data literacy, cultural awareness, and embodied communication. Because the Integrated Focus Areas focus more on skills and outcomes than disciplinary content, faculty often require additional support to incorporate these elements into new or existing courses. We encourage them to participate in a variety of

development opportunities to hone pedagogies needed to successfully teach to the new learning outcomes in these areas. Launching in the immediate aftermath of a global pandemic, with all the challenges that presented to faculty, meant that our efforts were often seen as “just another add on.” Moreover, just as we were preparing to launch an expanded emphasis on writing, Generative AI threatened to upend writing instruction. Our development opportunities, then, had to be both flexible and accessible, attentive to the challenges of the moment while still stressing data-informed pedagogical practices. In this session, we will briefly outline our new curriculum, present a short case study of one development model, and share a plan for an expanded menu of faculty development opportunities. This is a work in progress, and we welcome comments, suggestions, and feedback from the group as we share our ongoing work. Session Learning Goals: Session participants will have the opportunity to examine one faculty development model closely, and to analyze and discuss the ways that faculty development for general education can be provided in both a timely and sustainable way.

Discovery *Scaffolding Self-Authorship: Developing Student Agency along the Learning Journey through Books of Knowing and Unknowing* [T] J.R. ‘Jones’ Estes (Portland State University)

Years before the pandemic highlighted the challenge of student disengagement, many of us had been struggling to facilitate student engagement with active, reflective, and/or integrative learning. Through student feedback, I discovered that students perceived participating in the practices that foster engaged and integrative learning as a significant personal risk with little-to-no reward. In addition, an increasing focus on their grade created an added barrier to participation. Frustrated, I began looking for an alternative and consulting several scholarship of teaching and learning literatures, such as “ungrading” (e.g., Blum, S.D., 2016) and an ethic of care (e.g., Owens, L.M. & Ennis, C.D., 2005). But thinking of the first-year, first-time, predominantly underserved students at my open-access public university as well as remembering my undergraduate experience, a full abandonment of “traditional” evaluative assessment of student work would undermine them in later courses. Since 2018 I have been using a scaffolded, self-assessment rubric titled Books of Knowing & Unknowing, or BoKUs, in all my courses. The title communicates the expectation that student learning will be uncertain (i.e., risky), reflective, and reiterative. Initially, for most students, the BoKU is a place to perform/pretend learning, but through the regular practice of using the BoKU and its self-assessment rubric, students come to experience their learning as a process that benefits from their engagement and agency while practicing and demonstrating integrative learning. Learning Agenda: After a brief introduction to the Book of Knowing & Unknowing (BoKU) assignment and assessment, the time will be spent facilitating participant engagement and experimentation with the BoKU framework in their course contexts. Specifically, participants are invited to: 1. Explore ways that BoKUs can be used in their course(s); 2. Identify and draft BoKU definitions of potential learning outcomes; 3. Generate a draft of their own BoKU self-assessment rubric; and 4. Provide and receive peer feedback on their draft rubric.

11:45 AM to 12:30 PM

Mint Ballroom Lunch [Z]

1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Mint Ballroom AGLS Keynote Plenary [Z] *Making Higher Education Human/e* Kevin Gannon (Queens University of Charlotte)

A list of all the difficulties we face in higher education would occupy the entire conference program, and we are all well aware of—and living through—them anyway. But the list of paths out of this morass is much shorter. Merely acknowledging the fact, we occupy a new landscape is not enough; we need actual, tangible alternatives. And that's where liberal and general studies comes in. This talk will offer strategies grounded in the science of learning and the history of educational technologies that we might use not just for defending, but expanding, our curricular and institutional presence. In doing so, we will have the opportunity (obligation?) to create compelling models of a higher education that is both humane and eminently human.



1:45 PM to 2:45 PM

Mint Ballroom *Ride the Rapids to the next AGLS Playbook Chapter: Aligning General Education with Transfer Success* [Z] McKenzie Huber (Oregon State University)



Ready to ride the rapids of transfer and general education? Join fellow general education and transfer leaders for a fast-paced, interactive session to design the next AGLS Playbook chapter. Using the AGLS “plays” framework, we will tackle the twists and turns of credit alignment, gen ed clarity, and student-centered pathways—together. This session is built for those with hands-on experience in general education and transfer who are eager to share ideas, collaborate, and shape a practical resource for the field. Come ready to contribute, connect, and help chart the next stretch of the AGLS Playbook journey!

University *Go for the Gold! Charting a Course toward Better Faculty Engagement and Higher-Quality Assessment* [A] Joseph V. Ross and Cara Brooks (Florida Gulf State University)

Until recently, General Education assessment at FGCU was limited and not always taken seriously. Now, Gen Ed assessment is driving a culture change in prioritizing systematic assessment of undergraduate education. In this interactive presentation, we will facilitate a discussion about the obstacles we face in engaging faculty in assessment before recounting the strategies we have used to increase faculty engagement and describing how we have situated Gen Ed assessment within a broader push for improved program assessment across the University. At the center of our 2025-26 work is an Olympics-themed "Go for the Gold" model that gamifies faculty participation through three achievement levels: bronze (identifying at least one assignment for direct assessment), silver (identifying different assignments for each outcome), and gold (importing and scoring a standardized rubric in Canvas). By the time of the presentation, we will have results addressing both faculty engagement levels and the validity of grade-based versus rubric-based direct assessment as compared to juried review. By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Identify common obstacles to faculty engagement in Gen Ed assessment and recognize them within their own institution. 2. Develop at least one strategy for increasing faculty participation in Gen Ed assessment. 3. Explain how Gen Ed assessment can serve as a catalyst for broader institutional culture change. 4. Describe how administrative leaders can legitimize and sustain assessment efforts. 5. Analyze the benefits and drawbacks of different types of direct assessment using a centralized platform. After engaging the audience about obstacles to faculty engagement at their institutions, we will describe the key components of FGCU's culture change: new and supportive leadership, the adoption of an assessment platform (HelioCampus), and Gen Ed's role at the forefront of this shift, most notably through

the annual “Gen-Ed-Palooza” presentation, discussion, and celebration. We will then present our Go for the Gold results, including whether gold-medal sections, which incorporate ungraded rubric items, show stronger alignment with juried assessment results than bronze sections relying solely on assignment grades.

Spirit *‘Read the River’ Together: Teamwork in Leadership* [T] Elissa Graff (University of Pikeville) and Kenneth Purcell (University of Southern Indiana)

General Education faculty who become raft guides (aka leaders) are practitioners who are experts in their discipline, self-reliant, and largely independent. Few who move into administration are taught how to be, or function as, collaborators who work together seamlessly with their team or department. Further, many general education instructors may be uncomfortable speaking on behalf of a co-worker in a large program, let alone lead a multi-faceted division, where they facilitate on behalf of their own field, and jointly across a diverse team. Then how should today’s leadership ‘read the river’ and support general education departments and programs, especially when water becomes choppy and paddling together is needed in times of challenge, strife, or disruption? The Agility Imperative: How Employers View Preparation for an Uncertain Future, the 2025 AAC&U publication states that, “Employers see as much importance in mindsets and dispositions as they do in other highly rated skills, such as teamwork and communication.” This raises the stakes for gen ed leaders as they and their institution's curriculum must model those very dispositions it aims to develop in students. Yet as Liz Norrell observes in *The Present Professor*, sustaining that kind of intentional, mindful leadership is itself a skill that must be practiced. A skill that requires leaders to extend the same care to themselves and their faculty that they hope students will carry into the world. This session will focus on the upstream needs and approaches to care and collaboration for administrators, department heads, or for the general education faculty to maintain their presence and continue the work needed to guide and survive through the GE course rapids. Mini-scenarios and simulations for riding the current will be presented for participants to fully experience the leadership waters or to just deep breathe through.

Quorum *Lights, Camera...Think! Building Critical Skills through Historical Films* [T] Michele Riley, Russell Fail, and Carolyn Stevenson (Purdue University Global)

This presentation proposes a cross-disciplinary approach to strengthening critical thinking in the general education curriculum by making historical films central objects of analysis. While traditional secondary sources provide essential factual grounding, films offer students a more immersive entry point to historical events, interpretations, and emotional contexts. Cinematic storytelling allows learners to encounter history in a layered, compelling way, prompting deeper engagement than reading alone. The proposed pedagogy shifts students from passive viewers to active investigators. A structured assignment requires students to conduct independent research to verify the historical accuracy of what they see on screen. Students examine whether events are portrayed faithfully, whether historical figures are represented authentically, and whether settings and costumes reflect the period. This research-driven verification process compels students to reconcile the film's narrative with the established historical record, strengthening their ability to question and validate information. In addition to exploring historical aspects, war-related films are also a powerful way to examine ethical theories, including the ethics of armed conflict. They allow students to see how moral dilemmas unfold in real time. The study of war and film also provides a unique opportunity to explore the ethics of armed conflict. Just war theory seeks to address two key questions: when it is ethical to go to war (*jus ad bellum*) and what is an ethical manner to conduct it (*jus in bello*)? Historical war movies often explore these issues, offering excellent opportunities for discussion, lectures, and assessments in an ethics course. The visual depiction and drama help students connect with ideas beyond philosophical abstracts. By incorporating these interactive learning experiences, faculty can highlight innovative pedagogical practices that energize general education courses. Teaching through film equips students with essential critical thinking skills, enabling them to analyze, verify, and interpret information across multiple formats. Ultimately, this approach helps students develop a deeper understanding of how history is constructed, represented, and communicated, ensuring they leave with the analytical tools necessary for informed citizenship and lifelong learning.

3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Mint 1 ROUND ROBIN – Rethinking Assessment: Data, Dialogue, Impact [A]

facilitated by Mary Frances Pipino (Gannon University) and Alex Otieno (Arcadia University)

Core Assessment: Data or Narrative? Scott Campbell (Nazareth University)

In this presentation, I will provide a brief historical background on how we have conducted assessment in the Core Curriculum at Nazareth University. Recently, we made a shift from collecting large amounts of data related to student learning in the Core to encouraging departments to engage in meaningful discussions about student learning in the Core. For accreditation, it is probably better to show data related to student learning. For developing new and innovative approaches to student learning, meaningful discussions among teachers are probably better. I would like to know how other Gen Ed leaders conduct core assessment, whether they focus on data or narratives, and, most importantly, how they are able to include both data and narrative in their assessment reports. I want to frame this discussion in terms of rubrics and assignments. We developed high order rubrics to assess student learning in the Core Curriculum. I am interested in learning from other Gen Ed leaders how they use rubrics in assessing the core. We have found that faculty often do not use the rubrics as written. Some will translate the rubric into a letter grade. Other faculty will holistically place the student's performance into the rubric. How precise does the use of the rubric need to be? It may be that using the rubric as a guide is more helpful than strictly applying the criteria in the rubric to student learning. Are they used for data collection or are they used to drive narrative discussions about student learning? I am interested in learning from other Gen Ed leaders about the best kinds of assignments for conducting this kind of assessment. Do other schools use a signature assignment or a series of assignments that they use to evaluate student learning in the Core Curriculum? What are the best kinds of assignments to assess student learning? Again, some assignments will lend themselves to the generation and collection of data. Other assignments will lead to meaningful discussions about student learning. My interest is in narrative assessment based on meaningful discussion, but how can I incorporate data into those discussions?

Missing the Forest for the Trees: A Reconsideration of General Education Assessment

Sarah Maveety, Jordan Kuck, and Lisa Busche (Brevard College)

This discussion will center on the topic of general education assessment. As administrators and faculty, we devote much time and expend much energy assessing respective general education or course outcomes. We also studiously compile data and produce reports about those respective outcomes. But there is a drawback: all of that hyperfocus on respective outcomes can mean that we often miss the forest for the trees. Following a recent revision to our general education program, we are embarking on a new assessment culture. Our goal is to use innovative end-of-the-program reflection assignments to evaluate the transformative impact of the general education program. Pairing this with traditional assessment data will enable us to gain a more holistic view of the effectiveness of the general education program. The presenters will give an overview of recent curriculum changes and the new assessment practices before facilitating a group discussion.

Deepening and Broadening the Institutional Dialogue about General Education Assessment

Kristin Nagy Catz and Nancy Staton Barbour (Oregon State University)

Oregon State's Core Education assessment system is designed to collect, evaluate, and share evidence of student learning across all Core Education categories. The newly launched system relies on a model of shared responsibility and expertise. A select group of Faculty Assessment Fellows will play a central role, contributing both subject-matter knowledge and assessment expertise to the scoring and interpretation of student work in each category. After the assessment data and insights are distilled, the Faculty Fellows will synthesize their findings to engage the broader campus community. A proposed series of Category Retreats will serve as a key mechanism for cultivating a community of practice focused on continuous improvement in teaching and learning. The Retreats are intended to be structured, collaborative spaces where faculty and other stakeholders review assessment results, reflect on student learning, and identify opportunities to strengthen pedagogy, assignments, learning outcomes, and curricular processes. The retreats aim to translate assessment evidence into meaningful reflection and actionable next steps, while

fostering deeper dialogue about student learning. In this interactive roundtable, participants will examine the institutional assessment model and contribute insights from their own experiences to help shape approaches for facilitating broad dialogue around general education assessment. Together, we will identify strategies to (1) engage faculty and key stakeholders, (2) translate assessment findings into actionable teaching practices, and (3) communicate the value of what students are learning in general education. Questions for roundtable participants to consider include: 1) What makes conversations about assessment engaging for faculty? 2) What types of workgroups would be most productive? 3) What activities or tasks could small groups complete during a retreat? and 4) What guiding questions would help faculty transition from reviewing results to identifying action items?

Mint 2 Round Robin – Rebuilding Gen Ed: Structures of the Future [R] facilitated by Rowanna Carpenter (Portland State University)

Supporting Faculty with the Transition to a Skills Based General Education Program

Elisabeth Johnston and Laura Tilghman (Plymouth State University)

Plymouth State University (PSU) is in its first year of a revised general education program. In this new iteration, students select from ten skill-based Pathways. Students take two lower and two upper division courses to complete a certificate in a chosen skill. One of the major shifts from the faculty perspective is that the Pathway program uses existing major courses, rather than unique General Education courses. The result is that more faculty will teach students in the general education program. Additionally, faculty will have students enrolled for different reasons; some may be fulfilling major requirements, while others may be taking the same course for a Pathway skill requirement. In anticipation of the rollout in Fall 2026, PSU has already supported faculty in several ways. These include discussions amongst campus leaders, professional development workshops to share perspectives on the ten skills, and opportunities to revise existing syllabi and course assignments with the new skill-based framework in mind. We would like to share a brief overview of PSU's Pathways General Education program and our efforts thus far, and then facilitate a discussion about future ways that we could support faculty. We will use the following questions to guide the discussion: 1. How can we quickly onboard a large number of new faculty without diluting the goals of our revised general education program? 2. How can we help faculty balance the needs of specialization for majors and skill development for Pathways in their course design and teaching? 3. How do we increase ownership of the Pathways program across the broader faculty body? 4. How can we build continuity across the skill-focused Pathways courses and the two general education bookend courses (Tackling a Wicked Problem for first year students and Signature Project capstone for graduating students)?

Recommitting to Liberal Arts Education: Remaining Optimistic Amidst the Mess Bridget Trogden (American University)

If you feel like everything is changing too much and too fast, you are not alone. Even our Constitute theme "Ride the Rapids" seems especially apropos. In a curricular world where workforce development is the new hot phrase, breadth requirements – once the backbone of a liberal arts curriculum – are quietly vanishing, budgets are tight, budget models are archaic, turf wars abound, and accreditors are quite literally rewriting the rules, we as gen ed peeps (#Geeps) need a chance to regroup and discuss. This session is a chance for us to engage in a frank, funny, and hopeful discussion centered on riding the rapids of the current moment. Despite many challenges, the discussion will remain grounded in optimism. Participants will explore actionable approaches for recommitting to a liberal arts education.

University Steering the Current: Shaping AI with Gen Ed Values to Build Durable Skills

[P] Jeffery Yan and Kelly Driscoll (Digication)

We are not just surviving the rapids; we are choosing our line. The AI current is fast and unpredictable. General education gives us the values to steer it. This session offers a steadying, practical answer: shape AI with gen ed values. Keep reflection at the center so students think more not less and build the durable skills needed for a future we cannot yet picture. Key takeaways for attendees will be: 1) a reframe: we get to shape what AI is for, and reflection is how we build durable skills instead of eroding them; 2) a small set of reflection practices using conversational AI tools backed by TORI (The Taxonomy of Reflective

Inquiry); and 3) a concrete way to connect reflection to general education outcomes, producing continuous evidence of learning while preserving human.

Spirit *Mo Students, Mo Problems...and Mo Possibilities! Navigating the Unique Challenges and Opportunities of Leading Gen Ed at Large Institutions* [R] Stephen Biscotte (Virginia Tech), Jodene DeKorte (Purdue University Global), Lynn Hogan (Florida State University), McKenzie Huber (Oregon State University), and Laura Wheeler Poms (George Mason University)

Leading and supporting BIG gen ed programs at BIG universities introduces BIG challenges of scale. Bigger can mean more courses, more governance, more assessment artifacts, more instructor professional development, more advisors, and students to inform, more branch campuses and online offerings, more cat-herding, more opinions... whew, we are exhausted just thinking about it. However, large schools may have some advantages like larger support units, access to larger funding opportunities and expanded digital tools, efficiencies of scale, a broader alumni network, or simply larger pools of ideas and resources. Sure, gen ed leaders at large institutions must balance the ideal with the real, their hopes with the scope, but should not shy away from innovation simply because of size. In this session, facilitators will seed discussion and idea-sharing from participants on the challenges and possibilities for a variety of topics, including program structure options, shared governance, communication, professional development, assessment, and doing more with less. And of course, although we will focus on gen ed at big schools, there will certainly be useful info for smaller programs; we can all learn from each other regardless of size. Participants will leave with a BIG list of ideas from the facilitators and other attendees to take back to their campuses to make BIG things happen in gen ed!

Quorum *Professional Identity: Building Authentic Relationships through Authentic Selves* [T] Jan Watson and Robert Musante (Purdue University Global)

The professor's identity springs from a range of past and evolving personalities. Given the motivational forces we are as writing teachers, we have grown, transitioned, and earned our paths forward--our identities spotlight the hardships, triumphs, and events etched in our pedagogical selves. We teach better--and "reach" better--because we have accumulated an instructional lifetime of experience. We are readily inspired to assist others when and how they need us! Who has guided you? How have you grown? What challenges, hardships, and joys shaped you? In this presentation, we will examine how the rugged and unexpected landscapes of our past provide us with the experiential wisdom to offer empathetic mentorship to our students. The presentation will be accompanied by guided questions and interactive discussions to help participants uncover the vital foundations of instructional expertise.

4:15 PM to 5:15 PM

Mint 1 *Navigating the Current: Real-Time Strategies for Supporting Adult Learners in General Education* [T] Kate Scarpena and Mark Scarpena (Purdue University Global)

In the fast-moving waters of General Education, "reading the river" means identifying the invisible currents, the diverse backgrounds, professional stressors, and varying levels of academic confidence—that adult learners bring to the virtual classroom. At Purdue Global, where our student body consists primarily of non-traditional adult learners, waiting for mid-term grades to adjust instruction is often too late. Rooted in adult learning theory, this session demonstrates how to use early-alert data, diagnostic assessments, and "human-in-the-loop" observations to pivot instruction in real-time (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020). We will share specific, proven strategies for gathering diverse types of data rapidly to support student success. Participants will explore how to translate these data points into actionable shifts such as tiered scaffolding, personalized feedback loops, and flexible engagement pathways that honor the professional expertise adult learners already possess. By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1) Identify at least three non-traditional data points (e.g., login patterns, introductory forum sentiment, and prior learning assessments) that signal adult learner readiness; 2) Evaluate "just-in-time" instructional adjustments that reduce cognitive load without sacrificing rigor in General Education courses; 3) Develop a "River-Reading

Roadmap" to implement immediate diagnostic practices back at their home institutions. Primary Takeaway: learn how to build a toolkit of "Micro-Adjustments"- a set of rapid-response instructional strategies mapped to common adult learner obstacles.

University *Class VI Rapids: Teaching Gen Ed Writing at the Onset of AI* [T] Deb Dimond Young and Rachel Morgan (University of Northern Iowa)

Since Chat GPT launched in November 2022, higher education and writing faculty have been swimming upstream. Faculty have examined whether AI has a role in the general education writing classroom, discussed how to dissuade students from using AI, and strategized how to teach its effective use. We want to slow down the AI race and begin a conversation with our general education writing students about AI: if they use it, how they think it impacts their writing, and whether they think its use is ethical. This data is vital in understanding the backgrounds of our students, shaping our programs, and enhancing engaged learning. Now that we have begun that conversation at our university, we would like to invite you to join us on the river of this conversation by adding more voices. This session is an open invitation for conversation and collaboration surrounding student use and perceptions of AI. The presenters will share the survey and two years of data gathered from hundreds of students in general education writing courses. We will also discuss how the survey data has been used to shape and improve general education writing courses. We hope to create a network of collaborators who wish to extend the conversation with students in two- and four-year colleges and universities across the country. Session participants will be invited to collaborate on the research instrument utilized in the study and to create an open-source research tool that can be used and adapted at their institution. Our end goal is to create a repository of data collected from across the network. Participants will leave the session prepared for the turbulent waters of gen ed writing education in the age of AI with a survey they can use to gather important student data. They will feel empowered to have honest conversations about AI with students and colleagues at their institutions and be invited to contribute their research to a larger conversation.

Spirit *Reconsidering Recertification: Models, Challenges, and Practices in General Education* [R] Jenni Gallagher (Virginia Tech), Elizabeth Brown (James Madison University), Heather Lettner-Rust and Kris Paal (Longwood University), Laura Wheeler Poms (George Mason University), Jenn Sloggie (Old Dominion University) and Virginia Wray Totaro (Virginia Commonwealth University)

Recertification processes for general education courses are becoming increasingly common as institutions seek to ensure curricular coherence, alignment with learning outcomes, and ongoing program quality. Yet approaches to recertification vary widely, and many institutions struggle to balance meaningful review with faculty workload, administrative capacity, and program flexibility. This interactive session brings together presenters from five diverse institutions—ranging in size, structure, and governance—to share how recertification is (or is not) implemented within their general education programs. Panelists will briefly outline their institutional contexts, including whether recertification is required, how often it occurs, what criteria are used, and how the process is experienced by faculty and administrators. Presenters will also reflect candidly on challenges encountered, such as faculty resistance, unclear expectations, resource constraints, and difficulties maintaining consistency over time. Institutions that have chosen not to implement recertification will discuss their reasoning and alternative strategies for ensuring course quality and alignment. Following these short presentations, participants will engage in small-group discussions centered on guided questions. These conversations will invite attendees to share their own institutional practices, identify persistent challenges, and consider the purposes and potential impacts of recertification. Groups will be encouraged to explore practical questions such as: What problems are recertification intended to solve? How could recertification shape faculty engagement with gen ed? What were the unexpected challenges you did not anticipate? What were the unexpected positive outcomes? The session will conclude with a full group debrief, during which key insights and emerging best practices will be shared. Participants will leave with a clearer understanding of different recertification models, practical strategies for implementation (or reconsideration), and ideas they can adapt to their own institutional contexts.

Quorum *Meet Journal of General Education Authors and Learn More about Publishing Your Work with the Journal* [P] Laura Cruz and Margaret Slattery (Penn State University Press)

You are invited to join us for a lively conversation with authors (and AGLS members) who have recently published their work in the *Journal of General Education*. You will have the opportunity to meet with multiple authors to discuss their scholarly contributions (e.g., the subject of their research) and ask questions about their experiences in developing, writing, and publishing in the scholarship of general education. Both new and experienced scholars are welcome to participate. In addition, if you have ever considered publishing on the work you are presenting here at the conference, this interactive session is for you. Learn more about the *Journal of General Education*, what kind of articles it publishes, and how you can contribute to a growing body of scholarship on general education. Participants will have the opportunity to share ideas and ask questions directly to the journal editors. *The Journal of General Education* is an official partner of AGLS.

5:30 PM to 7:00 PM

Mint Ballroom Presidents Reception [Z]

Join us for an AGLS celebration with light snacks, cash bar, and mingling your gen ed colleagues.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th

7:30 AM to 8:30 AM

Mint Ballroom Morning Coffee -- and new member networking [Z]

Don't worry - coffee and other beverages are available all day at The Financial Grind in the hotel lobby



7:30 AM to 5:00 PM

Mint Ballroom Name Badge Pickup and Information Desk

8:30 AM to 9:35 AM

Mint I *Beyond Classroom Diversity: Inclusive Pedagogies* [T] Kevin Hermberg (Dominican University New York)

In many courses and academic departments, at many institutions, much attention has been rightly paid to the need to diversify with regard to who teaches; who is taught; and which authors, thinkers, artists, and questions are the focus of study. The motivation for this is often inclusivity, but this particular focus on diversity is not sufficient. Afterall, as much as diversifying the curriculum, the professoriate, and the student body are critical, a course with a diverse student body engaging work from diverse authors can be taught in a way that silences the voices of some students within the class—and thus such a class would not have really met the larger and deeper goal of making our courses and programs open, available, and for all students—and a course with more traditional content could be taught in a way that is welcoming and, thereby more inclusive than it otherwise would be. The pedagogical choices matter. This presentation will begin to address a gap between the focus on demographic diversity within academia and the canon, on the one hand, and inclusive pedagogy, on the other. The goal of inclusive pedagogues is to welcome a diverse body of students into our courses and programs and for as many of those students as possible to have the greatest chance to learn as much as possible. For true inclusion to obtain, it is necessary to diversify

content, instructors, and students and to adopt inclusive pedagogical strategies. This presentation will explore a number of those strategies and their guiding principles.

University *Paddle, Pivot, Pedagogy: An Inquiry-First Approach to Assessment* [A]
Bartell Berg (Hanover College), Aaron Sizemore and Timothy Rosignol (University of Southern Indiana)

For many institutions, assessment too often remains a compliance-driven hurdle rather than a tool for meaningful improvement, and assessment professionals have long argued for a shift towards cultivating a broader culture of assessment in higher education. This process takes time and involves support from campus leadership, as well as attention to pedagogical innovation and sustainable practices. Our session will outline how one institution leveraged a high-enrollment general education course, Principles of Sociology, to bridge the gap between classroom practice and institutional effectiveness. We will demonstrate how fostering faculty engagement, supporting pedagogical innovation, and engaging student participation coincide with efforts to prove and improve student learning outcomes. By asking ourselves the guiding question “Can we use that?,” we re-envisioned assessment as a tool focused on application of knowledge rather than a mere data-collection exercise. We will demonstrate how centering faculty engagement and integrating student participation (a High Impact Practice) – specifically through an advanced student researcher tasked with coding and reflecting on learning outcomes – created a sustainable and meaningful assessment process. This session will provide both qualitative and quantitative evidence of improved learning outcomes and illustrate how these intentional processes can enhance institutional effectiveness. Designed for those new to assessment or for seasoned practitioners, this session will offer tangible takeaways to support the evolution of assessment, including: 1) An Inquiry-First Framework; 2) A Can We Use That Decision Workflow; 3) Assessment Communication Strategies.

Spirit *Building the Raft while Riding the Rapids: A Case Study in Collaboration during Undergraduate Curriculum Reform* [R] Millinda Fowles, Sarah Collins, and Claire Engelken (University of Kansas)

The current landscape of higher education may be comparable to raging rapids, simultaneously racing to outrun a multitude of storms brewing in the distance while repairing a hole in the raft. There is little within your control, but you know you must act, and quickly. In fall 2024, the University of Kansas faced a similar reality, charged with implementing a systemwide general education curriculum overhaul while concurrently preparing for a reaffirmation of accreditation visit and a forthcoming math pathways initiative. A siloed approach was not acceptable or appropriate to tackle this multifaceted, institutional challenge. Instead, administrators, faculty, and staff ranging from the Registrar’s Office to Academic Advising, Admissions, and Athletics, joined with Academic Affairs to build a coordinated and collaborative framework, which employed a cohesive strategy, meeting every requirement while preserving a curriculum grounded in KU’s mission, vision, and values. In a matter of months, KU revised degree plans and wrote learning outcomes, developed signature assignments, and drafted assessment rubrics, all while maintaining operational standards of academic catalog updates and communicating changes to a variety of internal and external stakeholders. Using the KU experience as an exemplar, we invite you to reflect on your own strategies, partnerships, achievements, and aspirations through a series of guided questions and small group conversations. You will leave with concrete ideas for proactively preparing for the next major initiative that comes your way. Learning Goals: 1) Explain how university-wide coordination and collaboration supports the implementation of multiple large-scale academic initiatives.; 2) Discuss strategies for breaking down institutional silos to align general education reform, accreditation requirements, and curricular innovation.; 3) Analyze the University of Kansas case to recognize effective practices for maintaining mission-driven curriculum development under significant time and resource constraints.; and 4) Reflect and evaluate on institutional strategies, partnerships, achievements, and aspirations.

Quorum *Navigating the AI Rapids: Strategies for Integrity in the AI Era* [T] Stephanie Thompson and Irina Negrea (Purdue University Global)

As Generative AI is reshaping General Education, writing instructors are facing a turbulent "Ride the Rapids" moment. Without clear boundaries, the core tenets of authentic inquiry and academic integrity risk

being swept away by robotic shortcuts and hallucinated data. This session introduces a dual-pronged strategy to anchor the classroom and guide students through the complexities of the AI era. We propose a shift from top-down prohibition to intentional, "Machine-in-the-Loop" (MITL) workflows, based on two pedagogical strategies: Pedagogical Partnership: Drawing on Nelson et al. (2025), we explore the "Co-Created Contract." By utilizing a "Ladder of Engagement," instructors move students from passive compliance to active agents in defining the ethics of original work. This partnership charts expectations by determining when AI serves as a "meaningful supplement" rather than a "mental shortcut." Front-Loaded Research: To bypass the "whirlpools" of AI misinformation, we present a research workflow based on Knowles' principles of cognitive load (2024). By "front-loading" the memory task—requiring human-driven research and annotated bibliographies—students ensure accuracy before inviting AI to "transform" (not write) their vetted blueprints into prose. In the interactive portion of the session, participants will use an AI tool to draft a "Co-Created Contract" and critique a "front-loaded" assignment sheet that tethers AI output to human-vetted facts. Bowen and Watson (2026) offer helpful guidance on framing AI as a creative partner that can support our students' journey. By promoting shared responsibility and re-engineering the research process, educators can empower students to navigate the AI rapids with integrity and purpose.

Discovery *The Scholarship of General Education: Findings from a Scoping Review* [P]
 Laura Cruz and Margaret Slattery (Penn State University Press)

We all collect assessment data to ensure that our general education programs are functioning effectively, but that data does not always translate into a shared body of evidence-based practice. In this session, we present the findings from a rigorous and extensive scoping review of research on general education (2010-2025) which highlights open questions, identifies major lines of inquiry, and illuminates opportunities to participate in and advance evidence-based practice in general education. The findings of the study suggest that there are multiple facets to the scholarship of general education: philosophy, pedagogy, practice, and institutional change, each of which have developed distinctive, though intersecting, lines of scholarly inquiry.

9:45 AM to 10:45 AM

Mint 1 **ROUND ROBIN -- Engaging Learnings: Teaching across Contexts** [T]
 facilitated by John Regan (Boston University)

Riding the Rapids: Navigating Diverse Viewpoints in the Gen Ed Classroom Beth Kramer, Rick Cole, and Jenai Engelhard Humphreys (Boston University)

Debate that respects varying ideologies is at the core of a liberal arts education. Today, every political and societal event becomes a flash flood of extreme response and often attack. We hope to facilitate discussion and gain advice on how to navigate the turbulence of today's polarized world by bringing current events discussion into the classroom. We hope to find ways to bring students holding diverse viewpoints onto the same boat and help them synchronize their oars toward mutual respect, debate, and the concept of "charitable discourse"—assuming the best intentions from those who hold opposing views. Rather than avoid current events and turbulent topics altogether, we hope to find access points that will allow for concerted discussion, research, and debate in respectable ways. In this roundtable, we will explore strategies that have worked in our classrooms, while also seeking ideas from our colleagues in teaching and administration. We hope to explore these questions: *How do we as lead guides direct discussion and debate to ensure safe passage for all ideas in the classroom? *How do you navigate the currents of discussion/debate in gen ed courses in today's polarized world? *What strategies allow students to both learn argumentation and how to paddle against conformity and the whirlpools of groupthink? *In a divisive climate, how can students bring in topical contentious issues in a way that encourages discussion while respecting opposing viewpoints? How do you encourage students to find common ground amidst differing viewpoints? *For stormy issues, how can we find a safe haven that allows for students to debate/challenge ideas? *How do you create an environment that encourages intellectual risk and diverse viewpoints, even if it is uncomfortable? *How do you create group assignments or activities that ensure each student pulls

their weight in the boat? *How can administrators scout the turbulence with faculty to ensure intellectual freedom and harmonious balance in the classroom? By sharing ideas and strategies, we hope this roundtable will lead to productive sessions to strengthen the foundation of our discussion-based classrooms and chart a course for the future of general education.

Paddles Up: Experience-Driven General Education for Adult Learners Carolyn Stevenson, Michele Riley, and Russell Fail (Purdue University Global)

Adult learners, especially military-affiliated learners and professionals returning to college, bring life and work experience that can transform general education. This interactive session explores how experiential learning portfolios, flexible assignments, and experience-driven strategies can turn prior knowledge into high-impact classroom engagement. Participants will share ideas and brainstorm approaches to help adult learners become co-creators of knowledge, not just “catching up.” As general education courses increasingly welcome adult learners, traditional pedagogy often underestimates the knowledge, skills, and life experiences these learners bring to the classroom. This session explores strategies for designing Gen Ed courses that honor adult learners’ expertise, moving beyond remediation to practical application and self-directed learning. This session is highly interactive, framed around guiding questions designed to spark participant discussion: 1) How can experiential learning portfolios be structured to validate adult learners’ prior knowledge while meeting General Education outcomes?; 2) In what ways can assignments be redesigned to connect coursework to professional or life experience, including military backgrounds? What strategies encourage adult learners to engage as co-creators of knowledge, contributing to collaborative projects and class discussions?; 3) Participants will share insights and brainstorm creative approaches. This open dialog allows attendees to hear multiple perspectives and generate actionable ideas for their own courses. By the end of the session, participants will leave with practical strategies to: 1) Incorporate experiential learning portfolios and reflective projects into General Education courses; 2) Engage adult learners as active contributors in the teaching and learning process; 3) Adapt assignments and classroom structures to leverage prior experience while achieving general education outcomes. This session demonstrates that adult learners are not “catching up.” They are valuable contributors whose experiences can transform general education into a highly engaging intellectual journey.

Divided by Generations, United by Stories: Using Personal Narratives to Navigate Age Differences and Perspectives in the Composition Classroom David Healey (Purdue University Global)

Adult learners, especially military-affiliated learners and professionals returning to college, bring life and work experience that can transform general education. This interactive session explores how experiential learning portfolios, flexible assignments, and experience-driven strategies can turn prior knowledge into high-impact classroom engagement. Participants will share ideas and brainstorm approaches to help adult learners become co-creators of knowledge, not just “catching up.” As general education courses increasingly welcome adult learners, traditional pedagogy often underestimates the knowledge, skills, and life experiences these learners bring to the classroom. This session explores strategies for designing Gen Ed courses that honor adult learners’ expertise, moving beyond remediation to practical application and self-directed learning. This session is highly interactive, framed around guiding questions designed to spark participant discussion: 1) How can experiential learning portfolios be structured to validate adult learners’ prior knowledge while meeting General Education outcomes?; 2) In what ways can assignments be redesigned to connect coursework to professional or life experience, including military backgrounds? What strategies encourage adult learners to engage as co-creators of knowledge, contributing to collaborative projects and class discussions?; 3) Participants will share insights and brainstorm creative approaches. This open dialog allows attendees to hear multiple perspectives and generate actionable ideas for their own courses. By the end of the session, participants will leave with practical strategies to: 1) Incorporate experiential learning portfolios and reflective projects into General Education courses; 2) Engage adult learners as active contributors in the teaching and learning process; 3) Adapt assignments and classroom structures to leverage prior experience while achieving general education outcomes. This session demonstrates that adult learners are not “catching up.” They are valuable contributors whose experiences can transform general education into a highly engaging intellectual journey.

Mint 2 **ROUND ROBIN – Evidence, Culture, and the Meaning of Gen Ed** [A/R]

facilitated by McKenzie Huber (Oregon State University)

Riding the Rapids of Evidence: Faculty-Calibrated Assessment and the Challenge of Longitudinal Learning Shawn Miklaucic and Cindy Kistenberg (Johnson C. Smith University)

This roundtable discussion will present and solicit feedback on an evolving general education assessment model grounded in AAC&U VALUE Rubrics, with a focus on Written Communication and Critical Thinking. Our general education committee has implemented a faculty-driven scoring process using calibrated raters to evaluate student artifacts at two key points: an introductory writing course and a senior capstone paper. However, several methodological and practical challenges remain. This session will focus on three key areas where participant feedback is sought: validity of current model in terms of sampling and reliability; possibilities for including oral communication using the AAC&U Value Rubric given the challenges of public speaking as an artifact for assessment; and feedback on adding a longitudinal element to the assessment that goes beyond its current focus on aggregated samples. Participants will hopefully take away assessment strategies from our current approach using VALUE Rubrics. In addition, creative approaches for extending such a model to longitudinal assessment as well as the assessment of oral communication within the model will be discussed. A key question for participants will be: How does your institution approach assessment of oral communication, especially within a model using rubrics such as the Oral Communication VALUE Rubric.

Culture Change Challenges with General Education Donald Loewen and Alex Chase-Levenson (Binghamton University SUNY)

“Try to get rid of your GenEds as soon as possible.” When students hear that (from peers, advisors, or others on campus), how can we expect them to value the general education curriculum as something that enhances their degree and future well-being? Why would they approach it with curiosity rather than irritation? In an era where students and families are increasingly focused on a transactional approach to undergraduate education, “getting rid of my GenEds” translates too easily into the belief that general education courses are an obstacle rather than an enhancement. They become a series of burdensome checkboxes rather than an opportunity to explore unknown worlds and wonders. At Binghamton University, we are embarking on a multi-year effort to change campus culture and conversations about general education. We know that it won’t be easy: *Our general education is prescribed by our state system, with a few local wrinkles added by faculty governance; *Our students struggle to see value in general education; *Staff and even some faculty (perhaps unknowingly) undermine the curriculum by reinforcing the notion that it is a series of individual requirements to be gotten through as quickly as possible. This roundtable will: *Describe efforts to establish baseline attitudes among students, staff, and faculty so that we can track progress; * Share ideas that we are developing to try to shift attitudes; *Brainstorm approaches that have worked on other campuses. We hope to foster a campus culture that promotes general education as valuable, even essential, for students in a rapidly changing world and workplace. We welcome conversation with others who face a similar challenge, who have made progress in tackling (or never faced!) this problem, and who are willing to help us move forward.

University *Employer Perception of General Education and Micro-credentials* [R]

Benjamin Gross (Jacksonville State University)

As states and employers place increasing emphasis on workforce readiness, conversations about student preparation often center on majors, while general education is frequently overlooked or perceived as a barrier by students. This poster examines how employers evaluate general education and related micro-credentials, drawing on data collected through the development and ongoing assessment of Jacksonville State University’s Jax MIX program. Building on initial employer feedback used to design Jax MIX, this project returns to employers to better understand how they perceive general education competencies and micro-credentials in experiential learning (e.g., internships) and hiring decisions. The poster presents findings on the relative importance of general education skills, such as communication, critical thinking, and collaboration, while accounting for other factors employers consistently identify as influential,

including those reported by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. In addition, the poster highlights how students completing Jax MIX micro-credentials distinguish themselves in experiential learning contexts, particularly internships embedded in upper-level coursework, and how these experiences shape employer perceptions of their readiness.

Spirit **Data-Driven Curriculum Redesign in Spite of External Pressures** [R]

A Collaborative and Data Driven General Education Program Revision Ted Zerucha
(Appalachian State University)

Revising a general education program shares many similarities with navigating a river, complete with unexpected turns, branches, seemingly still waters suddenly becoming rapids or giving way to a waterfall, and plenty of rocks both seen and beneath the surface. Appalachian State University, in the mountains of western NC, is a public R2 university and one of seventeen campuses in the University of North Carolina System. Appalachian implemented an updated version of its general education program for the 2025-2026 academic year, which resulted from a five-year revision process, and represents the third iteration of the program overall. (Previous iterations of the program were implemented in 2009 and 2015.) The latest revision process was based on feedback on the previous iterations from stakeholders across campus, multiple years of assessment data, and analysis of course sections and seats data across the more than seven hundred courses in the program. In this presentation we will describe the assessment efforts and enrollment data that provided a guide for the latest program revision. We will also discuss how this information and relationship building was used to secure buy-in and collaboration from campus stakeholders as we navigated the rapids and stones. Finally, we will share the lessons learned in the first year of the latest edition of the program as we look back on the journey.

Using State Legislation to Transform Curricula Kenneth Purcell and Wes Durham
(University of Southern Indiana)

Signed into law effective July 1, 2025, Indiana House Enrolled Act 1001 (HEA 1001) mandated sweeping reform across the state's public colleges and universities. While there are several individual components to this legislation impacting public higher education in Indiana, this presentation focuses on the component of the legislation requiring baccalaureate programs to have a rolling three-year average of fifteen graduates annually. As a result, programs falling under this threshold were provided with the following options: a) suspend the academic program, b) eliminate the academic program, c) merge or consolidate academic programs, and d) petition to continue with an improvement plan. According to this legislation, programs that were suspended or eliminated should also eliminate all associated costs with said program. While this part of the HEA 1001 could be interpreted differently based on the reader, it could be assumed that programs with a significant general education presence (e.g., communication and physics) might be at risk if their program is under threshold. Consequently, a program's ability to continue to offer its general education courses could be tied to the overall health of its program enrollment. In this presentation, we discuss the approaches taken by two academic departments (Communication & Media and Geology, Physics, and Environmental Science) to address the new HEA 1001 requirements. These approaches include programmatic mergers along with a fresh take on which departmental courses might be included in a general education curriculum when program enrollment is paramount.

Quorum *From Friction to Flow: Improving the Course Proposal Process* [R] Tricia Mieden Wilson and Laura Wheeler Poms (George Mason University)

Navigating the gen ed course approval process is challenging. Faculty proposing courses are confronted by an array of potential obstacles, ranging from developing enticing courses that reflect gen ed principles while meeting unit demands to aligning assignments to learning outcomes to responding to revisions from the gen ed review committee. Equally challenging, faculty who are serving on a gen ed committee may not understand how to review courses or provide usable feedback. In this interactive workshop, we share an array of tried-and-true tools and techniques that have clarified and improved the proposal process at our university, resulting in stronger courses and a more efficient review process. We will discuss how we created course standards, taught faculty about assignment alignment, developed a transparent review process, and improved resubmission guidance. Templates for these materials will be provided. During the

session, participants will be invited to share their own experience with the general education review process, providing an opportunity to learn from our colleagues. Throughout the workshop, participants will work with the materials to determine how they might best be used at their institution. At the conclusion of the session, attendees will have made a solid start on revising or improving their institution's gen ed course approval process.

Discovery Skills [T] *Cooley's New Looking-Glass: Using Gemini to Build Empathic Communication* Jonathan Racster (Purdue University Global)

This 60-minute interactive session utilizes Generative AI as a professional development coach to help participants manage challenging academic discussions with empathy and tact. Rooted in the principle that “vulnerability drives empathy,” the event transitions from theoretical frameworks to live, in-person practice using Gemini. Drawing on research showing that AI-generated feedback significantly enhances interpersonal skills and client-centered empathy, Gemini will provide real-time critiques and notes focused on emotional intelligence. Integrating Steed’s strategies for maintaining human connection, attendees will learn to treat AI as a collaborative mentor for soft-skill development. Willing participants will role-play with Gemini using voice-to-voice interface. Gemini will then provide a real-time Tact & Empathy Audit, critiquing the participants’ tone and validation strategies. Gemini will also offer advice for future interactions. A secondary “Empathy Reply Lab” will demonstrate Gemini’s ability to help draft collaborative, inclusive replies to difficult situations. This session aims to demonstrate that AI-mediated coaching can provide faculty with actionable insights into their communication style, fostering a more supportive campus culture. The session concludes with a debrief of Gemini’s improvement notes and insights regarding Gemini’s suggested responses, ensuring participants depart with strategies for more empathetic, authentic communication.

11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

University [T] *Telepathic Teaching: The Unspoken Understanding in Writing Courses* Robert Musante (Purdue University Global)

In his nonfiction work, *On Writing*, author Stephen King described writing as telepathy (2020). Much unspoken communication occurs between writer and reader as the reader receives and interprets what is said—and unsaid—on the page. For the writing teacher, the process of writing instruction can be telepathic in nature as well. Telepathic teaching is an intuitive and communicative approach designed to inspire students across class forums, helping students learn in more constructive, engaging, and focused ways. Such careful and caring instruction reveals an innovative classroom where learning significantly advances from one unit to another. In these educational moments, a student-teacher connection is rooted in nonverbal and progressive understanding. Through telepathic instruction, students better comprehend skills, using their valued voices to become more complete and proficient learners, and teachers experience the pedagogical light of success. During this presentation, we will use intuition-building activities to help attendees refine their tools for creating a more personalized and developed learning experience.

Spirit [A] *Scaling Quality: A Comprehensive Framework for General Education Assessment* Caitlyn Jessee, Lynn Hogan, and Galiya Tabulda (Florida State University)

This session presents Florida State University’s scalable, faculty-governed model for assessing student learning outcomes (SLOs) within a general education curriculum. Participants will explore how course-embedded assessments, multi-level data visualizations, and structured departmental and peer review support continuous improvement of learning across many departments. The presentation highlights governance structures and faculty engagement strategies that ensure both accountability and flexibility. Attendees will gain practical insights into designing sustainable, data-informed assessment systems that strengthen curriculum quality and foster shared responsibility for student learning. To deepen this exploration, the session involves participants in analyzing the structural components of this scalable framework—from SLO development and course-embedded assignments aligned to Bloom’s taxonomy to the use of technology for data engagement. The session is designed to be interactive as we navigate the

implementation lifecycle, including the interpretation of multi-level assessment data visualizations in Power BI to identify instructional and curricular improvement opportunities. By evaluating these strategies for balancing institutional standardization with instructor autonomy, attendees will gain a functional understanding of how to integrate faculty leadership and transparent review mechanisms into a sustainable assessment process at their own institutions.

Discovery First-Year Experience and High Impact Practices [R]

Building a First-Year Experience that Actually Works: Lessons from the River Program

Libby McFalls (Columbus State University)

Many institutions are leaning into high-impact practices (HIPs) as a way to strengthen general education and improve student success. But building a first-year experience that meaningfully integrates experiential learning, community engagement, and collaborative work—across multiple sections and instructors—is often more complicated than it sounds. This session shares the development of the River Program, a first-year experience model designed to do exactly that. Rather than focusing on a polished “final product,” this session will walk through what it actually takes to build and run a program like this in real time—balancing shared learning outcomes with faculty flexibility, coordinating community-based experiences, and managing the logistical realities that come with scaling HIPs. We will discuss how assignments were structured and scaffolded across the semester, how common artifacts were used for assessment, and where things became more complex than anticipated—particularly around faculty workload, scheduling, and maintaining consistency across sections. This session is intended as a conversation as much as a presentation. Attendees will be invited to reflect on their own programs, identify pressure points, and consider what is realistically possible within their institutional context. Participants will leave with practical ideas, examples, and a clearer sense of what it takes—not just to design—but to sustain a high-impact first-year experience.

The “C” Word: Career Readiness meets Liberal Studies Redesign Dawn Smith-Sherwood (Indiana University of Pennsylvania)

From 2022 through 2025, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, a member of the PA State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), engaged in a general education redesign that resulted in a significant paradigm shift, from content- to competency-based coursework, from Liberal Studies to Crimson Core. Among the multiple suggested outcomes of the long-standing state-system policy on general education, “career readiness” (PASSHE Policy 1993-01A, 2021) in Liberal Studies had largely been ignored or perhaps imagined to be the responsibility of major programs. In the redesign process, however, campus stakeholders from academic affairs, student life, and admissions perspectives collaborated to align NACE Career Readiness Competencies with existing undergraduate student learning outcomes, AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes, and the PA Transfer Framework, to revise the core to refocus on student transition, career and self-development in preparation for the revised policy's reference to “a lifetime of careers” (PASSHE Policy 1993-01A, 2023). This presentation details how a general education revision at a regional comprehensive university was meaningfully impacted by challenging conversations regarding the value and purpose of higher education generally and general education specifically. The resulting ten competency-based Crimson Core curriculum includes a HIP-endorsed first-year experience (FYE) course, taken by all incoming students with fewer than thirty credits, which focuses on transition (or transfer), academic skills, campus engagement, and career preparation. A unique feature of our three-credit FYE, known as FLY (First Learning Year) is the incorporation of *Designing Your Life* (Burnett & Evans 2016) mindsets and practices that are subsequently developed and strengthened in a one-credit second year course completed in major, SOAR (SOphomore Area Readiness). While these two courses fulfill the Lifelong Learning, Career & Self-Development competency, the Crimson Core's additional nine competencies draw directly from alignment with both AAC&U and NACE, most notably Teamwork, Leadership, & Project Development. Session attendees will be (re)familiarized with the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics, (re)introduced to the NACE-based Career Launch Career Readiness Inventory --both for use in direct and indirect general education assessment-- and encouraged to identify and leverage their own changing currents to advance curricular change. Discussion time will include 1-2 “think-pair-share” activities to brainstorm which “changing currents,” local, regional, (inter)national, and which campus partners might be engaged in the ongoing work of general education reform and maintenance.

12:00 PM to 12:45 PM

Mint Ballroom Lunch [Z]

12:45 PM to 1:45 PM

Mint Ballroom AGLS Keynote Plenary [Z] *We are STILL the Leaders We've Been Waiting For* Margaret 'Meg' Mulrooney (James Madison University) and Rowanna Carpenter (Portland State University)



Higher education is experiencing a leadership crisis: rapid turnover at the top; erosion of faculty governance; intrusive legislatures and boards; administrative 'bloat;' and debates over campus speech are just a few of the many indicators. What can those of us charged with leading General Education and Liberal Studies programs do about it? In this plenary, we propose replacing corporate, leader-centered models of leadership with egalitarian, group-centered approaches that are better suited to higher education. Join us to explore crucial principles and practices intended to help you find solidarity and build community on your campus and across the AGLS network.

2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Mint 1 *Gen Ed Anonymous Support Group Meeting* [Z] facilitated by Stephen Biscotte (Virginia Tech)



All are welcome at this informal discussion on all things gen ed. Topics are to be decided by those present.

University *Riding the Rubric Rapids: Revising and Remaking Assessment Tools that Work* [A] Megan O'Byrne, Alex Hernandez, Michele Baranczyk, and Meg Norris (Kutztown University of Pennsylvania)

Outcomes of assessment are only as valuable as the tools used. In 2018, our institution was placed on an accreditation warning due to a paucity of active assessment practices. As we worked diligently to resolve warning status and to develop a campus culture of assessment, we found it increasingly difficult to close the loop on assessment. We had completed the work of building an assessment system that worked far better than it ever had previously on our campus – we had an assessment cycle, we could gather student work product, anonymize and distribute that product for assessment, and get it assessed but then we were flummoxed. What were we supposed to do with single data points? At that time, we were using holistic rubrics based on the industry standard AAC&U Value Rubrics. That single value across outcome dimensions was not sufficiently instructive. In this presentation, we engage with the process of transforming rubrics and discuss the outcomes of running a full assessment cycle using analytic rubrics. We will share the rubric revision process for seven student learning outcomes (SLOs), which we accomplished in two steps. First, in moving from holistic to analytic, we contacted campus partners teaching in relevant courses. Second, in improving the initial analytic rubrics we took feedback from raters and fully revised them again. Our goal is that through this presentation, participants will walk away with a working example of how to adjust rubrics to best meet individual campus needs. We will share our experiences while developing a process for assessing analytic rubrics, the multi-dimensional data it is beginning to generate, including its impact on instruction, and aim to demonstrate the shared learning process that develops when assessing the assessment process. We hope participants will walk away with ideas to engage with rubric adjustment, to consider integrating the voices of campus peers, and to find ways to continue to make assessment efficient and effective.

Spirit *Navigating the Revision Rapids: A Multi-Stakeholder Crew for General Education Curricular Alignment* [R] Stephanie Thompson, Kate Scarpena, and Josef Vice (Purdue University Global)

In the increasingly turbulent waters of higher education, successful curriculum revision requires coordination, judgment, and an expert crew. This session demonstrates how Purdue Global's Humanities & Social Science department utilizes a multi-layered, collaborative, and cross-disciplinary model to ensure that general education continues to help students clarify their values, develop workforce skills, and pursue personal enrichment. We move beyond traditional subject-matter expert oversight by integrating a diverse team that includes department administrators, curriculum specialists, and a rhetoric expert to build courses that help students navigate the rapids without capsizing. Participants will learn how this team aligns rubrics with instructions to ensure clarity, revises writing prompts to be more AI-resilient and uses AI tools like NotebookLM to identify ways to improve courses and create continuity with other courses in the program. We will also showcase how the team provides different pathways for students by developing multimodal deliverables, such as podcasts and visual presentations, which give students other options for demonstrating their mastery of course outcomes (Rethinking Assessment for a Multi-Modal Future). During the interactive portion of the session, participants will step into the roles of our "stakeholder crew" to collaborate on a general education assignment. Using the provided Revision Stakeholder Checklist, small groups will assign roles, such as the Rhetoric Specialist and Curriculum Specialist, to identify hidden obstacles in an assignment prompt, such as misalignment with the rubric or a too-easy answer from AI. This activity will culminate in groups brainstorming a multimodal pathway for the assignment, allowing participants to practice shifting from traditional essays to more resilient formats like podcasts or visual presentations.

Quorum Student Engagement and Belonging with an Institutional Ecosystem [R]

Building Community Engagement in the First-Year Writing Sequence: Connecting Students to Place and One Another Hayley Verdi and Valentino Zullo (Gannon University)

In Fall 2024, Ursuline College, located in Northeast Ohio, re-designed our first-year writing sequence to help our largely local student body build a better understanding of our region. Selected texts that illuminate Cleveland's history and emphasize the many important social movements that emerged from our region were selected with the purpose of helping students to recognize that Cleveland was, is, and can continue to be a site of knowledge production. As part of this effort, we designed a series of events that we require students to participate in during the course of each of the first-year writing courses. We call these events "Community Engagement" and they have included author talks, visits to local cultural institutions, cartooning workshops, and on-campus events planned in partnership with other departments. We would like to use this presentation to share how we developed the events we invite students to attend, how we connect events to the themes of our courses, and the responses students have had to this course requirement. We hope to open discussion about how other institutions are exploring community involvement requirements for their students. The goal of this reframing is to help students think about the role of place in their writing and broadly in their education with the goal of helping students become involved citizens of and advocates for their communities. The presenters will reflect on the first year of the sequence revamp and how other instructors can root their classes in the context of their region.

It Takes a Crew: Coordinating General Education Beyond the Classroom Virginia Wray Totaro and Rigby Bendele (Virginia Commonwealth University)

General education is often designed as a curriculum, but students experience it as a series of requirements unless its purpose and value are reinforced across the broader institution. In the absence of intentional coordination, we risk leaving students to make sense of general education on their own—obscuring its relevance and reinforcing inequities for those with less access to guidance. This session reframes general education as a shared institutional responsibility. While much of our work focuses on courses, outcomes, and assessment, students' understanding of general education is shaped just as much through advising, career conversations, and other points of contact across the university. If these spaces are not aligned, even the most thoughtfully designed curriculum can feel fragmented and disconnected. Drawing on early-stage work to build partnerships with academic advisors, this session explores general education as an ecosystem rather than a discrete program. We will consider how meaning-making happens across the student experience, where connections are reinforced—or lost—and what it might look like to more intentionally coordinate messaging and support across units. Participants will engage in guided activities to map where general education currently "lives" on their campuses, identify gaps in how its value is communicated, and

reflect on the institutional responsibility to make these connections more visible and accessible. Rather than presenting a finished model, this session is designed as a space to surface shared challenges, test ideas, and begins outlining practical approaches to strengthening coherence across systems. By shifting from a course-centered to a systems-centered perspective, institutions can better support students in understanding how general education connects to their academic pathways, career goals, and broader sense of purpose.

3:15 PM to 4:15 PM

Mint 1 *Life In and After Gen Ed: Being Ready for Your Next Lap* [Z] Bruce Umbaugh (Webster University), Margaret Mulrooney (James Madison University), and David DiMattio (Springfield Technical Community College)

General education leadership is often an identity as much as a role. So, what happens when the checkered flag waves and you move on? This session brings together four AGLS veterans who built careers shaping general education programs who have transitioned into new institutional roles. They come to share a compelling truth: the mission of general education follows you. Drawing on their varied experiences, the panelists will share candid reflections on both what it means, first, to learn the “ways of gen ed” after being enculturated in a discipline, and later to carry the values of broad intellectual formation, integrative thinking, and student-centered learning into different roles. Whether navigating administrative leadership, returning to the classroom, or preserving institutional memory, panelists’ experience shows that the skills and commitments cultivated in gen ed work translate across the full range of faculty and administrative life. Attendees will be invited to reflect on their own professional identities and the transferable assets they are already building. Through structured small- and large-group conversation, participants will explore questions such as: What values define your work in gen ed? Where do you imagine those values showing up next? What would it mean to be ready for your next lap? Participants will leave with a clearer sense of their own professional through-line, practical frameworks for thinking about career transitions in higher education, and the reassurance that investing deeply in general education is never a dead end — it is preparation for wherever the track leads next. Learning goals: 1. Identify transferable skills and values from gen ed leadership; 2. Develop a personal inventory of strengths and commitments to draw on when opportunity arises; 3. Envision pathways to other institutional roles; 4. Gain confidence that career transitions in higher education are navigable and professionally enriching.

Mint 2 *The Reflection of Assessment: AI-Guiding Reflection as New Evidence for General Education Outcomes* [A] Jeffrey Yan (Digication) and John Regan (Boston University)

What if the reflection itself were the evidence? This session shares results from a Boston University College of General Studies course in London, where students reflected on their learning in conversation with an AI and the reflections were read as assessment evidence for general education outcomes. The AI’s role was narrow and deliberate. It asked one opening question, read the answer, and asked the next one in a conversational format with the students. The AI never wrote for the student or supplied an answer. While the common worry about generative AI is that it does the writing for students, here the AI is strictly a thinking partner. Every line of the reflection came from the student, which is what makes it usable as authentic evidence of learning. Each reflection was tagged against the Taxonomy of Reflective Inquiry (TORI) so that learning could be read at the level of the individual student, across students, and across the cohort. For this group, the dominant patterns were cross-cultural awareness, perspective shifting, personal growth, and narrative construction. We will show the student writing itself, with quotations shared by permission, alongside the cohort-level view, and be candid about where the method still needs work. Participants will leave with a working model for AI-guided reflection as assessment evidence, a clear line between AI that thinks with students and AI that writes for them, and the questions to ask before bringing any AI-assisted approach into an assessment cycle.

University *From Dialogue to Design: A Rapid-Cycle Model for Translating Faculty Sentiment into Action* [T] Ananda Newmark, Virginia Wray Totaro, and Zach Goodell (Virginia Commonwealth University)

In a moment of rapid (pun intended) change - shifting student expectations, AI integration, and increasing pressure to articulate the value of general education - faculty perspectives are abundant but often dispersed. We hear ideas, concerns, and skepticism across meetings and events, yet struggle to translate that input into timely, actionable support. This session shares an emerging, rapid-cycle model for capturing faculty sentiment and using it to design responsive, high-impact professional development within weeks, not semesters. This work began with a large-scale General Education Symposium intentionally designed as a listening space rather than a one-directional event. Through structured roundtables, rotating prompts, and facilitated discussions, faculty and staff engaged key questions about the future of general education, the role of AI, and the need for more coherent, integrative learning experiences. These conversations helped to identify both areas of innovation and persistent tensions - insights that are often difficult to capture through traditional feedback mechanisms. The critical next step and the focus of this session was translating that qualitative input into action. Within two weeks, symposium insights were synthesized into a targeted Course (Re)Design Workshop that directly addressed the needs and concerns identified by participants. This approach positioned faculty feedback as the foundation for immediate, visible change, reinforcing trust and demonstrating institutional responsiveness. Participants will explore a practical framework for designing events that surface meaningful faculty perspectives, capturing and organizing qualitative data, identifying patterns across stakeholder input, and translating those insights into targeted faculty development. The session will model elements of the symposium structure, including a brief facilitated discussion and a small-group activity in which participants analyze sample “faculty sentiment snapshots” to design a responsive workshop. Aligned with AGLS’s emphasis on practical, interactive sessions, this presentation offers a replicable model for moving from listening to action. Attendees will leave with adaptable tools and concrete strategies for using existing events as catalysts for timely, data-informed change in general education.

Spirit Emerging Challenges of Gen Ed [T/R]

Shoring Up General Education in a Reduced Credit Environment [R] Lauren Ingraham
(University of Tennessee at Chattanooga)

Recent developments in higher education indicate a growing interest in reduced-credit bachelor’s degree models, particularly 90-credit-hour pathways, as institutions seek to address concerns related to cost, time-to-degree, and workforce alignment (Inside Higher Ed, 2025). Emerging frameworks from institutional accreditors signal a shift toward greater flexibility, allowing institutions to propose reduced-credit programs under defined conditions that maintain academic quality and coherence (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC, 2026). At the same time, scholars note that such models carry implications for general education requirements, as some see these dedicated credit hours as disassociated from and unnecessary for the major and the goal of preparing graduates for workforce needs (Kelchen, 2023). In alignment with these national developments, the University of Tennessee System has begun exploring reduced-credit degree pathways with each institution challenged to develop and implement at least one 90-credit-hour program. A state-wide working group has been formed with two aims: 1) review proposals from both the UT System and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission to define the structure and specific nature of these degrees, and 2) meet with the SACSCOC president to offer feedback on its published guidelines. In this session, I will detail my effort as part of the working group to maintain current general education requirements, currently forty-one credit hours by State statute for community colleges but unmandated for 4-year institutions. This effort has been successful so far in part by tying GE learning outcomes to NACE competencies such as communication and critical thinking (naceweb.org). By the time of the Constitute, I will be able to report on the status of Tennessee’s effort and offer some advice on advocating for robust general education when the reduced credit conversation inevitably reaches other states. To keep participants engaged, the session will begin by asking them to name general education impacts they imagine might be felt by their home institutions in addition to simply cutting hours. As the presentation continues, participants will use two think-pair-shares to unpack ideas such as achieving GE outcomes in some major courses. Finally, participants will connect the NACE competencies to one or more of their GE courses.

Rigor and Grade Inflation: A Faculty Conversation [T] Seth Hepner (Walsh University)

Annually, in May, Walsh faculty attend an on campus professional development day. In May 2026, members of Walsh's General Education committee will facilitate a 50-minute session designed to engage faculty in conversation about rigor and grade inflation. The session will begin with an anonymous, five question survey related to common student performance/behavior scenarios. Survey results will be displayed instantaneously and analyzed by the presenters and audience. The anticipated range in responses amongst faculty peers will inspire initial conversations that eventually lead to new and/or revised General Education syllabus policies. A survey question might be: *a student athlete earns a final grade that makes him ineligible for the upcoming season. After grades posted, he shares he dealt with personal issues throughout the term that were detrimental to his academics and resulted in missed assignments. Due to his personal situation, he requests his grade to be reconsidered. As lead faculty, how would you proceed?* Answers to select from might be: A. excuse the missing assignments and recalculate grade; B. curve the student's grade to a higher score; C. submit the final grade as calculated; or D. recommend the student appeal the grade with administration. By September's AGLS conference, Walsh's Gen Ed committee will be utilizing quantitative and qualitative data from the May survey. My AGLS presentation will include the same five question survey for the audience, instantaneous results and brief discussion, comparison of Walsh's survey results, as well as an overview of Walsh initiatives inspired by the May session.

Quorum *Reading the River: Evidence-Based Tools that Help Gen Ed Science Students Navigate the Rapids* [T] Wendi Wolfram and Amy Smith (Purdue University Global)

General education science courses often feel like whitewater rapids for students, especially when they have varying backgrounds and experiences in science and faculty must keep everyone moving toward shared learning outcomes. This session will share classroom evidence from a suite of "river-guide" teaching tools designed to empower student success through the use of creative educational tools. The presentation will report outcomes associated with six scalable interventions: low-stake polls / surveys to "read the water" in real time; infographic "eddy breaks" that summarize information for quick access; time-management course maps that help students plan their "route;" mini-video lectures that provide "life preservers" for just-in-time content support; community-building discussion boards that strengthen belonging; and gamified practice that promotes forward momentum. This session will explore how these educational tools correlate to general education science course-level performance indicators alongside student feedback to see how each tool relates to engagement and student success. The presentation is designed as an interactive "rapid run," where participants will complete live poles, identify one "hazard" in their own courses, and select a tool they might want to pilot in their own courses.

4:30 PM to 5:30 PM

Mint I *Ten Years In and Still Navigating: Lessons from a Radical Gen Ed Redesign* [R]
Bo Odom and Judy Giering (University of Virginia)

In academic year 2017-18, the University of Virginia's College of Arts and Sciences launched a fundamentally different general education curriculum, replacing a traditional distribution model with something far more ambitious. Anchored by the Engagements, a required sequence of four first-year seminars organized around four modes of inquiry (Aesthetic, Empirical and Scientific, Engaging Difference, and Ethical), the curriculum also reimagined how distribution requirements work through the Literacies and Disciplines components. Rather than sorting courses into broad disciplinary buckets, the Disciplines taxonomy categorizes courses by their learning goals, demanding a more granular, precise account of what students are actually doing in any given class. As we approach our tenth anniversary, we have much to celebrate. We have also learned that radical redesign has far more tendrils than anyone anticipates, and that the work of sustaining an ambitious curriculum never plateaus. Faculty staffing, course structure and classification, scheduling logistics, and student advising each have required adaptation and, in some cases, school-wide initiative. Most recently, we embedded professional advisers directly into first-year Engagements classrooms, a move that transformed advising satisfaction from 55 to 84 percent among first-year students. We recognize that UVA's resources and reputation are real advantages. We also believe

the challenges we have encountered are not R1 problems. They are general education problems. Faculty buy-in, coordinating curriculum governance across a large, non-disciplinary program with competing faculty interests, course-level taxonomy decisions, and the ongoing tension between departmental needs and college-wide obligations are shared by institutions of every size and type. This session will briefly orient attendees to our model, then move quickly into an honest accounting of what surprised us, what we would do differently, and what has held. Attendees will work through a structured worksheet to map their own institutional landscape, identify likely hurdles, and consider the partnerships and allies they will need. Think/pair/share discussion and significant Q&A time with presenters will round out the session. Participants will leave with a diagnostic of their own program's pressure points, a practical list of lessons learned from a decade of implementation at scale, and frameworks they can put into motion on their own campuses.

University *The Gen Ed Committee as Peer Reviewers* [A] Lynn Hogan, Jim Fadool, and Galiya Tabulda (Florida State University),

Over the past few years, Florida State University has ridden the rapids of conceptualizing, implementing, refining, and expanding its general education assessment protocol. The goal is continuous improvement in student learning and success. The institution has developed a multi-tier assessment process that yields actionable data. Working with instructors each year, data on student success on learning outcomes is collected, participating departments analyze those data, devise improvement plans, and submit reports. A couple of years ago, we wondered what more needed to be done to help departments improve analysis and the resulting improvement plans? Ultimately, it was decided departments needed feedback on their analysis and improvement plans. But who was going to do that review and provide that feedback? Enter the CoreFSU Policy Committee, FSU's faculty oversight body for general education. Participants will learn about the institution's general education assessment peer review process. The presenters will: 1. Discuss the origins of the peer review process; 2. Outline peer review procedures; 3. Discuss the logistics of managing a peer review protocol; 4. Discuss lessons learned; and 5. Facilitate discussions of how session participants might introduce similar process on their home campuses. The presenters - the Faculty Chair of the CoreFSU Policy Committee, the Director of Institutional Planning and Assessment, and the Director of CoreFSU - represent various aspects of the general education assessment process. Each brings different perspectives that will inform participant understanding and learning. In the end, attendees will leave this session with an understanding of one university's approach to peer review in general education and ideas of how such a program might function at their home institution.

Spirit *Smooth[ish] Waters: Strategies for Making more Navigable the Waters of GenEd*
Revision [R] Kevin Hermberg (Dominican University New York)

General education revision is challenging, and its waters can be difficult to navigate. The reasons for this are many, as are the stakeholders that can be or create obstacles. In this session, we will focus on the early work that can help the curricular revision or reform work go a bit more smoothly. As a group, we will identify and explore some of the obstacles to successful gen. ed. reform and the facilitator will share and open for discussion strategies and decisions made at the early stages of reform work (some even before reform work "officially" started) that helped to smooth the waters of successful general education curriculum revision at his institution. Attendees will have the opportunity to share their own strategies and lessons learned so we can all learn from each other's experiences in work of general education reform. Note: While I was unable to put together a small panel, and the presentation works well in the hour-long time frame, I think this session might be even more valuable to participants if scaled back and paired with one other on the same topic. If there has been such a proposal, I would welcome planning for half the time and turning the session into a two-person panel session.

Quorum *A Bridge over Troubled Waters: Teaching Data Fluency as a Foundation for Community Change in the Composition Classroom* [T] Irina Negrea and Jan Watson (Purdue University Global)

Many students face a critical educational gap as they navigate today's data-saturated world. While they often uncover a wealth of data during the research process, they frequently lack the specialized tools

required to analyze, assess, and critically reflect on its implications. Our presentation explores ways to integrate data literacy into writing assignments to help students transform from passive consumers of data into informed advocates. We are proposing a pedagogical approach that moves beyond traditional academic reporting to emphasize the rhetoric of action and responsible citizenship. We will also discuss how students can develop an ethical framework for working with data, cultivate rhetorical agency and civic literacy, and become informed, data-fluent advocates for change in the community. Key takeaways from this session include: 1) Ethical Frameworks: Methods for teaching students to handle data with integrity; 2) Rhetorical Agency: Strategies for translating raw numbers into persuasive, community-focused narratives; and 3) Civic Literacy: Transforming data fluency into a tool for local advocacy and change. We will conclude by reviewing practical examples of ethical versus unethical data visualization and opening the floor for a collaborative discussion on classroom implementation.

Handouts and other materials may be available post-Constitute if the presenters have shared their materials with us. We have set up a private/hidden webpage for attendees to download shared materials and other Charlotte meeting resources. Materials will be added for a couple of weeks after the Charlotte meeting.

Be sure to check back as materials may have been added since you last checked.

This page will be available through December 24, 2026.

Visit the 2026 Attendee page [HERE](#) for handouts, resources, and more.

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THE GEN ED CREW YOU WANT WHEN NAVIGATING TURBULENT WATERS RUNNING FOR AGLS COUNCIL

Voting will open September 30th. As an attendee of the 2026 Charlotte Constitute, you are automatically a member of AGLS.

Voting will remain open through midnight EDT October 23rd.

Watch your inbox for complete candidate information and the ballot link to cast your vote.



For Member-at-Large Cohort (2026-2029)



Rowanna Carpenter (Public Administration)
Director of Assessment
Portland State University

Lynn Hogan (Higher Education)
Assistant Provost, and Associate Dean
Florida State University



John Regan (American Literature)
Director of ePortfolio and Assessment
Boston University

RESOURCES FOR GEN ED ADMINISTRATORS



Live Chats Monthly open discussions on topics of interest to people involved with gen ed programs of all sorts. Topics often come from members who have a question or challenge. Everyone is welcome to attend, member or not, and lead a live chat session.



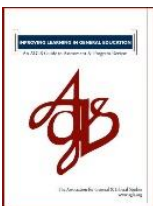
Gen Ed Reformers Anonymous Support Group While the idea is a spoof of 12-step programs, the live virtual meetings offer those working in gen ed the opportunity to gather in a safe and supportive 'cone-of-silence' environment with like-minded colleagues from all over to discuss and tackle all things gen ed. In the past, we have explored broad issues of transfer, assessment, messaging, etc....as well as digging into topics decided by the group as we go along. Hope you will join us for any/all the meetings!

Welcome to the Neighborhood: A Primer for Those New to General Education Programs

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.



Gen Ed on My Mind Have a musing on something related to gen ed? Share your thoughts with your colleagues around the US and beyond. This is an informal venue – so anything fun or serious is encouraged. Anyone is welcome to submit a piece.



Improving Learning in General Education: An AGLS Guide to Assessment & Program Review *The Guide*, as it is often referred to, is grounded in the most current thinking regarding quality general education and student learning. General Education luminaries such as John Nichols, NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor at St. Joseph's College; Rob Mauldin, AGLS President from 2002-2004; and Jerry Gaff, Senior Scholar at AAC&U, have led the writing and editing of the booklet. A host of experienced program administrators and faculty from two and four-year, private, and public institutions have contributed to the writing, reviewing, and editing. FREE download on our website.



Judgments of Quality: Connecting Faculty Best Assessment with Student Best Work Project participants wrestled with the issue of how to do assessment of liberal learning at the highest (about-to-graduate students) undergraduate levels that did not involve any lowering of expectations simply in order to produce data, perhaps even quantitative, for accountability purposes. The idea was to exert intelligence and ingenuity, in order to keep student learning primary to any other concerns from administrators or accreditors. FREE download on our website.

AGLS Jerry G. Gaff Faculty Awards for General and Liberal Studies These awards honor faculty on campuses who exemplify the advocacy for leadership and teaching in liberal education. Each year we recognize faculty who have demonstrated leadership on their campuses,

shown evidence of outstanding teaching in general and liberal education courses, or have a record of achievement in curriculum development, innovation, or implementation.

The AGLS Award for National Leadership in General and Liberal Education This award recognizes exemplary individuals who have made significant contributions to the practice or theory of general education and liberal studies as a national leader.

AGLS Exemplary General Education Program Award Known more commonly as the *Exemplary Program Award*, this 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. AGLS recognizes institutions committed to systematic, verifiable general education learning.

AGLS Gen Ed Administrators Playbook Each chapter's goal is to provide general education instructors, curriculum committee members, administrators, and any campus academic leader with a variety of tools and perspectives to address the tough questions as they arise. This is meant to be more than a simple FAQ, because how you respond will vary depending on who is asking, where, in what context, and in what tone. Obviously, no resource like this can be comprehensive, so some improvisation, trial-and-error, and live-and-learn will be inevitable.

External Gen Ed Review Support Looking to conduct an external academic program review for your general education program? Whether you are conducting the review as part of an institutional or accrediting body cycle or need an outside perspective as you gear up for a gen ed reform, AGLS can inform the process and connect with you people to get the most out of your review. Here you will find questions to consider while planning out your external review, a list of potential reviewers highly involved with gen ed at the national level, and guidance on conducting an institutional self-study to inform and complement the external review.

Are You New To General Education? Are you a new general education leader at your institution? This includes administrators, deans, dept heads, committee chairs, and anyone else tasked with facilitating the day-to-day nuts-and-bolts work of gen ed. If so, you have come to the right place! Welcome to AGLS! This is where you will find the resources and people to make your gen ed position great! The best, most supportive people and the professional development that will give you the best resources to tackle the challenges and celebrate the successes of doing the daily challenging work of improving general education on your campus.

Good Gen Ed Reads Recommended By AGLS Members This List Are Books, Chapters, Articles, Or Blogs Anyone New To Gen Ed May Find Useful. This Is Not A Comprehensive List And Will Be Updated As Recommendations Are Made Or We Find New Publications.

Essential Reads for Those New to General Education These ten books will give you a solid foundation to begin your journey as a gen ed champion.

CONSIDER NOMINATING SOMEONE IN 2027

FOR AN AGLS AWARD

As a part of our mission to support and celebrate the work and people who make a difference in the general education programs – AGLS is proud to be the only organization that routinely recognize the excellent and challenging work of people like you.



2027 focus: Outstanding Teaching

Since 2002, the AGLS has given one Gaff award each year to recognize faculty who have demonstrated leadership on their campuses, shown evidence of outstanding teaching in general and liberal education courses, and have a record of achievement in curriculum development, innovation, or implementation. Nominees should be full-time, instructional faculty who have a significant record of outstanding teaching and/or course development specifically in general education programs, core curricula, or liberal studies. Learn more about the Gaff Award at <https://www.agls.org/agls-awards/gaff-awards/>



Our Exemplary General Education Program 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. AGLS recognizes institutions committed to systematic, verifiable general education learning achieved through one of identified focus categories found in the *AGLS Guide to Program Improvement*. The Guide is available for free on the AGLS website. Learn more about the Exemplary General Education Program Award at <https://www.agls.org/agls-awards/exemplary-program-awards/>



Beginning in 1992, AGLS has offered a biennial award that recognizes exemplary individuals who have made significant contributions to the practice or theory of general education and liberal studies on a national level. In 2017 the AGLS Council voted to re-frame the award and its criteria to include a greater range of leadership categories that characterize higher education in the 21st century. Learn more about the National Leadership Award at <https://www.agls.org/agls-awards/natl-leadership-award/>

Note: Details for the awards which will seek nominations in 2027 will be available by late January 2027.

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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