Membership

Co-Chairs:
Dr. Erin Baumgartner, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, General Education Director
Dr. Shaun Huston, Social Sciences, First Year Seminar Coordinator

Dr. Carmen Cáceda, Education Leadership
Tim Cowart, Creative Arts
Dr. Jessica Dougherty, Education Leadership
Dr. Patricia Flatt, Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Dr. Breeann Flesch, Computer Science
Camila Gabaldon, Library (General Education Committee Chair)
Dr. Leigh Graziano, Humanities
Dr. Katrina Hovey, Education Leadership
Dr. Isidore Lobnibe, Social Sciences
Dr. Kristin Mauro, Transfer Pathways
Dr. Leanne Merrill, Natural Sciences and Mathematics
Dr. Becka Morgan, Computer Science
Dr. Mari Sakiyama, Criminal Justice Sciences
Dr. Katherine Schmidt, Humanities
Dr. Chehalis Strapp, Behavior Sciences
Diane Tarter, Creative Arts
Garima Thakur, Creative Arts

Ex-Officio:
Beverly West, Special Projects Manager, Academic Affairs
Dr. Michael Baltzley, Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness

Key to Acronyms

GELO - General Education Learning Outcome
ULO - Undergraduate Learning Outcome
GEPLC - General Education Professional Learning Community
GEC - General Education Committee
FYS - First Year Seminar
PLC - Professional Learning Community

Learning Outcome Assessed

General Education Learning Outcome 1: Foundational Skills and Breadth of Knowledge

This learning outcome was selected in large part so that we could begin to assess the First Year Seminars, which are the newest element of the General Education Program. We also selected GELO 1 since it aligned to Quantitative Literacy, the 2019-2020 AY focal Undergraduate Learning Outcome.

Courses included in Assessment

All topic sections of FYS 107 and FYS 207 along with any General Education course for which Quantitative Literacy had been aligned as the Undergraduate Learning Outcome.
Disseminated to

- FYS 107
- FYS 207
- MTH 105
- MTH 110
- MTH 111
- MTH 112
- MTH 211
- MTH 212
- MTH 231
- MTH 243
- MTH 251
- CH 103
- CH 104
- CH 105
- CH 106
- CH 221
- CH 222
- CH 223
- PH 201
- PH 202
- PH 203

Introduction

Goals of Professional Learning Community

The goals of the General Education Professional Learning Community (GEPLC) reflect the evolution both of the General Education program at WOU and of the practice used to assess the program.

Support interdisciplinary collaboration.

Faculty and staff from across campus comprise the GEPLC and together they thoughtfully explore this interdisciplinary program. The General Education's framework is designed to bridge traditional disciplinary boundaries. Bringing together colleagues to compare GELOs in context helps to build these bridges. While the GEPLC did not collect any evidence of erosion of disciplinary silos as part of our activities this year, we identify actions that we think contribute to enhancing interdisciplinary collaboration.

Assess First Year Seminars

The 2019-20 academic year is the first year in which students are enrolled in the new program. The newest element of the program is the First Year Seminar requirement. The FYS classes, a foundational component of the General Education program, are likely to be the first General Education experience these students have. First Year Seminars are also the only courses within General Education that do not have a "home" department or program outside of General Education by which they might be assessed.

The relative newness of the First Year Seminars also presents a challenge and opportunity to engage in the practice of setting targets for student achievement in General Education courses. Because the First Year seminars are relatively new, we do not yet have a suite of student outcome results upon which to base projected targets. The First Year Seminars are also the only courses in the General Education curriculum that are offered under the aegis of the General Education program, with topics being reviewed and approved by the General Education Committee. The review process includes assessment planning for each topic proposal.

Verify alignment of General Education Learning Outcomes to Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

As with all programs, the General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs) included alignment to Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (ULOs). The assessment of each GELO should include an exploration of how the GELO connects to the ULO or ULOs to which it is aligned. Our intention this year was to examine connections between GELO 1: Foundational Skills and Breadth of Learning and ULO: Quantitative Literacy. We were unable to fully address this goal because we'd initially prioritized another goal, and the pandemic caused our workload and priorities to shift.

Refine rubrics to allow for assessment of General Education Learning Outcomes in all disciplinary contexts

The assessment of First Year Seminars using the initial Foundational Skills Rubric represents the first attempt to practically use this instrument to assess General Education courses. Following our initial attempts to review work samples with this rubric, this goal emerged as our

top priority and we focused on refining the Foundational Skills rubric, documenting the process used for application to development and revision of rubrics supporting each of the other GELOs. During the development of the GELOs, the assumption was made that to some extent, the LEAP VALUE rubrics could be used for assessment of the GELOs. The initial version of Foundational Skills Rubric was developed by combining and editing features from several VALUE rubrics to form an instrument that could be use to address GELO 1.

Methodology

TK-20 data collection (based on previous PLC strategy) of instructions and typical student work

Advance preparation for assessment

In Spring of 2019 all instructors teaching a course included in the planned scope of were provided with instructions to plan for assessment of their courses in the upcoming year (Appendix A). Department Heads of Departments with General Education courses aligned to Quantitative Literacy ULO were also provided with these instructions to accommodate potential updates or changes to instruction around new or contingent hires and ensure notification to those individuals. FYS instructors were given the option of aligning signature assignments to the Foundational Skills rubric or to the Quantitative Literacy (FYS 207) or Written Communication (FYS 107) rubrics. General Education courses aligned to the Quantitative LIteracy ULO were instructed to align signature assignments to that rubric. Each term during the 2019-20 academic year, instructors of record identified in Banner for each course were provided with a detailed set of work sample submission instructions, links to the General Education assessment plan, and sample work sample submissions, and a link to the submission form.

GEPLC refinement of data collection practice

In early Fall term 2020, the GEPLC convened to discuss potential refinements to practice utilized by previous PLCs. In this endeavor we benefited from membership that was about 63% individuals with experience on an earlier PLC, including 3 past PLC chairs or co-chairs. Members were offered the opportunity to also review prior PLC reports to consider potential adjustments to practice that could help improve our review practice.

The outcomes of this discussion included an immediate interest in rubric review (described in more detail in *Rubric Revision* below) and several modest adjustments to the work sample collection practice. The GEPLC determined that it would be helpful and appropriate to request that each instructor submitting a work sample provide contextual information about what they had in mind when they developed the assignment and instructional information that might help

provide background regarding how the students approached the assignment. This contextual information is especially valuable in General Education assessment which is interdisciplinary in nature.

Previous PLCs requested student work that represented modal student work and this PLC agreed to follow the same practice. Historically, however, we've not gained a sense for the trends of how many students achieve above that typical performance and how many are below. modal work does not give any information about mean/median student performance, or about the nature of the distribution of scores. The PLC agreed to request brief overviews of the distribution of scores at, below and above the mode.

We placed examples of these supplements providing context and distribution overviews for the worksample on the General Education website (www.wou.edu/gened/assessment) to support their inclusion in assessment submissions.

The GEPLC also discussed at length the natural tension between providing meaningful feedback to instructors while also maintaining confidentiality and ensuring that people feel comfortable with the assessment process and do not perceive it as judgmental or punitive. Previous PLCs had received feedback regarding a sense that assessment on the WOU campus can feel like a "black box" in which instructors provide evidence of student learning but do not in return gain a sense for how that evidence has been reviewed. While PLC reports are disseminated via the Academic Effectiveness website and at Faculty Senate, many faculty do not necessarily access them via these routes and may not be aware of their availability. Moreover, there has been an expressed desire for individualized feedback that is simply not possible as part of the open reporting in these reports. At the same time, faculty may feel exposed to criticism from colleagues, and if their work is judged as subpar, they worry about facing perceived punitive measures. While the GEPLC agreed that such fears will continue to fade over time as the assessment process continues on campus, we felt that it was best to retain the practice of emphasizing holistic assessment of the program and not providing individual feedback to instructors.

GEPLC members also noted the workload implications for providing individual feedback. The normal practice is to record notes focusing on the direct observations of the work sample. These tend to be brief and direct and to emphasize areas of concern as part of the normal review process. Reviewers noted that if they felt their work was to be seen outside the PLC, they would be likely to slow down and engage in a much deeper mental exercise to temper and soften the language in their review notes if those notes were to be shared outside the PLC.

The PLC concluded that it was best to retain confidentiality of the work sample review and commenting process, but to provide the PLC's numerical review information to faculty upon request for comparison and self-study purposes.

Random review of work samples

Following methods established by previous PLCs, the GEPLC engaged in randomized review of work samples. Each member was provided with a small group of work samples and each work sample was reviewed by 3-4 reviewers. Prior PLCs had engaged in several strategies to norm the rubric review process. As our first Fall term meeting preceded the collection of any work samples, we initially explored assignment instructions provided by a GEPLC member using the Foundational Skills rubric to discuss our understanding of the rubric. We immediately discovered that there were widely varied understandings of the Analysis feature in particular, and that these approaches were informed by the disciplinary background of the reviewers. The GEPLC identified a need to explore the revision of this feature.

At a subsequent meeting, in which we did have work samples to review, we identified the work samples with the broadest variations in reviewer assessment and discussed them to norm our rubric use. During this conversation, we uncovered additional variation in understanding around all features. Analysis and Mechanics, in particular appeared to be better crafted for use with some disciplines over others. The PLC agreed that there was a need to refine the entire rubric to ensure its utility across disciplines.

As one of our stated goals was to determine the usefulness of the Foundational Skills rubric, reviewers assessed FYS work samples using both the Foundational Skills rubric and the Written Communication (FYS 107) or Quantitative Literacy (FYS 207) rubric. We ultimately chose to focus our efforts on a full revision of the Foundational Skills rubric and wanted to explore the revised rubric in the context of the two VALUE rubrics. Pandemic disruptions prevented this exercise and also limited the submission of FYS work samples. As we needed a reasonable sample size of FYS samples identified as aligning to Written Communication or Quantitative Literacy features and we were unable to complete this activity.

Foundational Skills Rubric Revision

As noted above, from our earliest discussions, we identified the Analysis feature of the Foundational Skills rubric as being difficult-to-use and not equivalently applicable to all disciplines. While all GEPLC representatives noted that they feel analysis is a crucial aspect of their disciplines, the description in the rubric did not capture that aspect for many of them. In subsequent discussions following the first round of review discussion this feature again emerged as limited in scope and more easily applicable to some disciplines than others. Reviewers also noted that the deficiency language in the rubric made it harder to assess student work as it required reviewers to seek the absence of evidence in student work rather than simply locate affirmative presence of the feature. For example, it is easier to clearly identify student work that "follows the conventions laid out in the assignment instructions" rather than attempting to determine if a student demonstrates "lack of skill".

Two GEPLC members (Katherine Schmidt, Humanities and Tim Cowart, Creative Arts) tackled taking the GEPLC recommendations and refining the Analysis feature. In their revision, Drs. Schmidt and Cowart re-referenced the Inquiry and Analysis VALUE rubric in a way that clearly aligned the General Education outcome to an Undergraduate outcome. Their revision emphasized positive and aspirational growth mindset language at each level of the feature. They used backwards design to identify where students would be expected to emerge when they have mastered the Analysis feature of the Foundational Skills rubric and then identified the scaffolded steps through which students would move as they demonstrated mastery. They also emphasized greater disciplinary inclusion by emphasizing process over product and focusing on habits of mind rather than sophistication of a completed product.

ORIGINAL WOU FOUNDATIONS RUBRIC: Deficit Model

Analysis: Benchmark 4
Uses deep and thoughtful judgments to draw insightful, logical, and carefully qualified conclusions that shape the work towards its specific purpose.

	4	3	2	1
Analysis	Uses deep and thoughtful judgments to draw insightful, logical, and carefully qualified conclusions that shape the work towards its specific purpose.	Uses informed judgment to draw reasonable conclusions that shape the work toward its specific purpose.	Uses competent judgment to draw feasible conclusions that shape the work toward its specific purpose.	Draws tentative or only partially supported conclusions in the completion of the work.

REVISION: Growth Model, with Habits of Mind over Sophistication

Analysis of Text, Images, Symbols, Audio, Multimodal, Movement, or Performance
Differentiates or ascertains the elements of something complex in order to determine its nature or structure and, hence, to explain or understand it in an original way.

	1	2	3	4
Analysis	Student is able to summarize something complex.	Student is able to identify the available and most appropriate lenses through which to see the component parts of something complex.	Student is able to distinguish how one or more parts work in relation to the greater whole using an appropriate lens.	Student is able to articulate why their perspective matters and how it impacts the greater whole.

Following the overview and discussion of this revision to the Analysis feature, the GEPLC strongly agreed that the strategy taken would benefit the other rubric features as well and small subcommittees formed to tackle the revision language with a follow up presentation and discussion amongst the full GEPLC to finalize the revisions. The subcommittees were:

Context - Carmen Cáceda (Education Leadership), Diane Tarter (Creative Arts)
Conventions – Leigh Graziano (Humanities), Leanne Merrill (Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Kate Hovey (Education Leadership)
Evidence – Camila Gabaldon (Library), Becka Morgan (Computer Science), Erin Baumgarter (Natural Sciences and Mathematics)

The GEPLC meeting scheduled to engage in the full review following subcommittee revision was scheduled for week 10 of Winter term; this meeting was cancelled to accommodate the workload experienced by our membership in preparing for online finals and online classes in Spring term; we placed all revisions into a shared Google document for commentary ahead of a Zoom meeting during which the revisions were discussed and refined by the full GEPLC. The revised rubric is available in Appendix B.

We want to emphasize how crucial it was that the entire GEPLC participated in rubric review and revision. Interdisciplinary perspectives ensure that the rubric will apply across all disciplinary contexts. In General Education, we think it reasonable that all reviewers should be able to review and understand student work regardless of discipline. This is because General Education courses assume approachability to all students regardless of their intended major and thus as disciplinary novices. As we had made a strong attempt to include all Divisions in the PLC and only one Division did not take part, we feel much more confident that the revised rubric will be more inclusive. Previous PLCs have also indicated applicability of rubrics to all disciplines as an issue for assessing General Education or University-wide achievement of learning outcomes.

Quantitative Literacy sub-group

In addition to collecting evidence from First Year Seminars, we also collected work samples from General Education courses aligned to Quantitative Literacy Undergraduate Learning Outcome. We had originally intended to have a small group of GEPLC members who volunteered to review these work samples both with the Foundational Skills and Quantitative Literacy rubric to determine if the former could be used effectively to address Quantitative Literacy as a Foundational Skill. This activity was postponed to completion of the revision of the Foundational Skills rubric. As this revision was not completed until during the pandemic crisis, we determined that archiving the evidence collected for a future PLC to review would be appropriate at this time.

Covid-19 disruption to Data collection and review

It has by now become obvious to the astute reader, that like the rest of the University, we found our activities somewhat disrupted by the Covid-19 situation. We were only to able collect work samples from Fall term courses, since most PLC work sample submissions occur from late in the term work such as final exams/project. The timing of the shutdown just ahead of Winter term finals week clearly disrupted the plans many instructors had to administer or complete their signature assignments. For example, one instructor had planned a poster session for their Winter final activity, which could simply not take place as students could not print their posters on campus or come together to hold their poster session. As the pandemic dragged on, we recognized the stress and strain that students and faculty were under and provided the option to note that assessment activities had been disrupted by the pandemic. Moreover, many of our GEPLC members found themselves needing to shift their responsibilities. Not only were our members working hard to migrate classes they had intended to be face-to-face into an online delivery format, many of them were doing so with small children at home, and managing their own and other family members' physical and mental health needs.

For these reasons, we were not able to test our revised rubric as we intended. We were unable to present a complete picture of Foundation Skills addressed in First Year Seminars, nor of Quantitative Literacy achievement in General Education.

Initial Data

Return Rates and Trends

Assessment submission rates were disrupted by Covid-19. The overall submission rate for FYS sections was 29%. However, the submission rate for FYS topics offered only in Fall (we encourage only one submission for topics taught in more than one term) was 100%. FYS Sample submission rate in Winter was 16% and in Spring was 12.5%.

The overall submission rate for Quantitative Literacy samples was 24% and all samples submitted came from the Mathematics Department (Chemistry and Physics courses did not provide samples). In Fall, the Quantitative Literacy sample submission rate was 44%. The response rate in Winter was 8% and no samples were returned in Spring.

We suggest that Fall term 2020 is the only term that could be considered representative for the year. The lower response rate in Fall for Quantitative Literacy samples is likely in part due to the large number of courses offered every term and potential planning for sample submission later in the year. There were however some Chemistry and Physics courses offered only in Fall for

which samples were not submitted. It is recommended that all courses be provided the opportunity to submit work samples again in the upcoming academic year.

Several non-tenure track instructors contacted the GEPLC stating that they did not have enough information about assessment to submit work samples. They expressed that they were unaware of learning outcomes and their alignment, had not been given adequate information about assessment plans, and in some cases were unaware that they needed to submit a signature assessment.

FYS samples

Foundational Skills Rubric
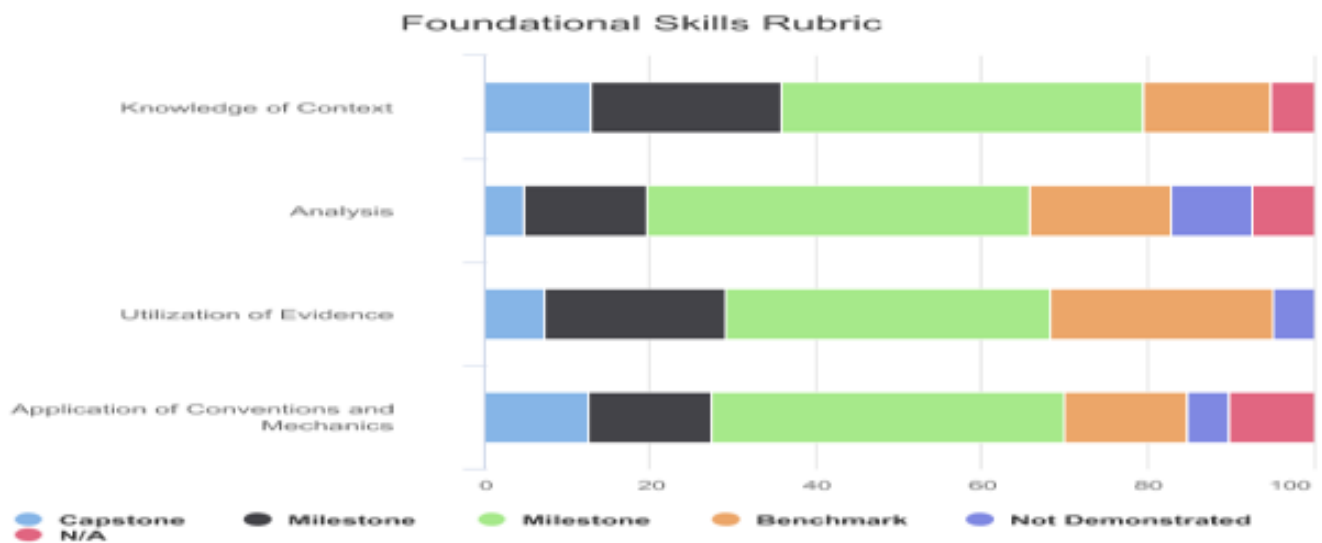
For review purposes, GEPLC members identified a work sample as N/A for a feature when the assignment instructions did not provide a student an opportunity to demonstrate the feature. A work sample was identified as not demonstrated when the assignment instructions did provide an opportunity to demonstrate the feature but the student did not do so. We recommend that this particular review practice be institutionalized as consistent for future PLCs.

The initial GEPLC review of work samples found that all work samples offered students the opportunity to demonstrate use of evidence in their FYS experience. This was the only feature consistent across all samples. Analysis and Application of Conventions and Mechanics were the features least frequently demonstrated. Unsurprisingly these were also the two features indicated as the most challenging to use in the original version of the rubric by the GEPLC. For all features, the majority of student work demonstrated Milestone level 2 in performance.

One of the main issues that the GEPLC noted in the initial set of reviews was the "sliding scale" of expectations that reviewers discussed applying, dependent upon the class level of the student. The original rubric language was grounded in deficiencies, which led to reviewers

making assumptions about the kinds of experiences and opportunities students would have been likely to have as first year students. These assumptions led to reviewers holding first year students to different standards based on those assumptions. For example, one reviewer noted that what they would consider a capstone level 4 for the conventions feature for a first year student, but would consider the same work at a milestone level 2 for a graduating senior. The GEPLC agreed that to understand whether or not students are meeting the learning outcomes, it would be necessary to apply the rubric features in a way that emphasized verifying evidence of a student performing a particular foundation skill free of assumptions based upon the student's class level.

In addition, we agreed on the need for clarification of rubric use for learning outcome assessment to submitting instructors. We still find that many instructors still misunderstand the purpose of assessment. These instructors are not using assessment to find disconnects between learning outcomes and what students are producing in class that could guide instruction. Instead, they feel pressure to demonstrate students are performing capstone work at the end of each course, and try to demonstrate capstone performance dependent upon the assumed level of the students in the course. We recommend encouraging instructors to identify the level of performance for each feature they find appropriate for their course and focusing on that. This recommendation includes continued professional development for faculty. If people better understand the purpose of assessment, they will also recognize that the lowest levels of student performance in FYS courses are expected and completely acceptable. We think refining the rubric to feature positive language and affirmation of evidence at each level of each feature, will help instructors feel more comfortable collecting and demonstrating evidence of performance at all levels, even benchmark.

Recommendations for Future Practice

Review Foundational Skills Rubric additional year.

There is a great deal we hoped to accomplish this year that we were unable to complete due to pandemic disruptions. Our plan had been to review the revisions to the Foundational Skills rubric using the work samples submitted through Winter and Spring, including comparing and contrasting the Foundational Skills rubric to the quantitative Literacy rubric in reviewing samples submitted for courses aligned to the Quantitative Literacy ULO.

We recommend that the 2020-21 academic year serve as a continuation of the work we began this year. We can engage with the Foundational Skills rubric - using the remainder of work samples collected this year together with next year's work to validate the revised rubric and to establish clear targets for FYS performance. We may also be able to expand the work sample collection to establish targets for other courses meeting Foundations requirements in General Education. This would allow us to rubric to more thoroughly explore how students are

experiencing GELO 1 in the full program and to more clearly demonstrate how GELO 1 aligns to the Undergraduate Learning Outcomes.

Rubric review for other GELOs

We recommend emphasizing the alignment to the GELOs by developing a rubric for each GELO that can be used consistently for all courses in the categories aligned to the GELOs. We found the practice that we used to refine the Foundational Skills rubric to be effective and meaningful. We recommend that future GEPLCs use the same practice of forming small subcommittees to initially tackle individual features (hypothetically identified and reframed from the VALUE rubrics identified in our ULOs). The development of each feature should rely on backwards mapping, first identifying the capstone performance expected of students when they have fully mastered the feature and emphasize positive aspiration language at each level to emphasize growth toward mastery. Each full GEPLC should convene to review and refine the recommended features to ensure disciplinary inclusion. As we are recommending that the 2020-21 academic year continue to focus on First Year Seminars, which also align to GELO 4: Multidisciplinary Learning, we recommend the 2020-21 PLC consider developing and testing a GELO 4 rubric as part of their work.

Clarification of Signature Assignment instructions and rubric use.

As we continue to collect evidence of General Education Learning Outcomes in the program, we recommend providing instructions and support for students to meet the General Education Learning Outcomes. We recommend emphasizing the alignment to the GELOs by requesting that instructors use a rubric for each GELO that can be used consistently for all courses in the categories aligned to the GELOs.

As we are refining the GELO rubrics, we also recommend clarifying the instructions for more typical assignments that indicate the most frequently observed student achievement. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of helping instructors understand our goal to understand the program as a whole and not to "judge" or "critique" individual instructors' classes. Rubric revision to emphasize positive language over deficiency language and continued refinement of submission instructions to indicate expectations for the importance of evidence of student achievement at all rubric levels will, we hope, raise the comfort level with the assessment process. We recommend continuing the practice of asking instructors to limit signature assignment alignment to two features to remind instructors that they are not expected to cover all features in all classes. Several PLC members recommended allowing instructors to submit work they consider exemplary as a way of alleviating concerns that may accompany typical sample submission when students in the class don't perform to the level the instructor was hoping for.

The initial articulation of assessment practice in the Faculty Senate-approved framework allowed for development of signature assignments aligned to one of two required GELOs in

many categories. To truly understand how each course and requirement supports and contributes to General Education Learning Outcomes, it will be necessary that instructors submit signature assignments that demonstrate all learning outcomes to which their course aligns. As we move forward, we may wish to explore ways to ensure that General Education courses are using signature assignments aligned to all GELO(s) for the requirement they are meant to meet.

PLC size and composition -

We were gratified by the high level of enthusiasm for PLC service this year and the excitement generated by the new General Education program. As a result, we allowed a large group to participate, but some challenges arose due to its large size. We found it could be challenging to manage discussion in such a large group and some PLC members did not participate as extensively as we would have hoped. Members participating in prior PLCs did note that they felt that smaller groups allowed for deeper engagement. A larger group also contributed to the challenge of finding meeting times to accommodate so many schedules. The GEPLC does agree that building in assessment time to the academic calendar would benefit our work.

The benefit of our larger PLC is that we were able to secure representation from all Divisions save two (after the initial volunteer period, the GEPLC chair repeatedly contacted Division Chairs to seek representation if there were no volunteers). Going forward, we would recommend maintaining the PLC representation at one member from each Division as disciplinary context is valuable to establishing a wide understanding of rubric and ensuring rubric review addresses such disciplinary context.

In the 2019-20 academic year, the General Education director served as the PLC chair. This represented a certain cost savings as it did not require an additional course reassignment for the PLC chair. Moving forward, however, it seems more appropriate to consider the PLC as an "external reviewer" to the General Education program and could be considered a conflict of interest for the Director to serve as chair. There could be a benefit to reverting to the practice of electing a Chair from the broader body of the PLC. The General Education Director may support the work of the PLC even if they do not lead it.

GELO to ULO alignment needs clarification

Even taking the pandemic disruptions into account, we found it difficult to try to manage reviewing a GELO and a ULO at the same time. This practice did not work well when those outcomes remain somewhat divorced from one another or are treated as separate. As noted in the recommendations related to rubric revision, we believe it would be most appropriate to model the kinds of program assessment occurring in other academic programs. We need to identify exactly how the GELOs connect to the ULOs and then emphasize assessment of the GELOs rather than trying to accomplish understanding both sets of learning outcomes separately. Future GEPLCs should emphasize review and assessment of the GELOs and

identify any alignments to underlying ULOs as part of rubric re-design. General Education courses should be required to emphasize and demonstrate alignment to GELOs using these refined rubrics as they become available.

Appendix A: Instructions provided for assessment

Pre-2019-20 Academic Year Assessment Preparation information:

Dear 2019-20 FYS instructors,

Congratulations on successfully proposing a First Year Seminar for General Education. We're delighted to have such a diverse and compelling roster of these flagship General Education courses for the 2019-20 Academic Year.

Our goal is to engage in a holistic assessment practice that helps us understand the effectiveness of the program for students. As the First Year Seminars are the newest element of the program and the only courses that are wholly situated in the General Education program, we are emphasizing them as the area of emphasis for program assessment in our launch year. Here is what you can expect related to General Education program assessment as a First Year Seminar instructor:

Assessment Instruments:
1. **Developmental Surveys.** The first time students take a First Year Seminar, they will be asked to complete a developmental survey. These surveys are designed to provide us with a picture of who our entering freshmen are and gauge their backgrounds and feelings about attending college.

What you need to do: Nothing (although we'd like you to remind students to complete them)! Surveys will be administered and collected electronically.

2. **Instructional Surveys.** We will be asking students and faculty both to provide us with feedback on the perceived emphasis on General Education Learning Outcomes in First Year Seminars and on the use of student-centered teaching practice. Students will get a formative survey mid-term; the results of these available to each faculty member to use in shaping their practice. At the end of the term both students and faculty will receive a survey. The goal of these surveys is to identify areas where student and faculty perceptions align and misalign so that we can examine our program holistically.

What you need to do: Opt in to receiving formative student surveys if you would like (and provide us with your feedback on the surveys). Complete your own survey at the end of the term.

3. **Signature assignments aligned to General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO).** We will continue to use the Professional Learning Community (PLC) model for General Education program assessment. This year, we will focus on collecting assessment information on First Year Seminar alignment to GELO 1: Foundational skills.

What you need to do: Develop a signature assignment that aligns to the Foundational skills rubric *or* the Quantitative Literacy (FYS 207) *or* Written Communication (FYS 107) rubrics. You can find these rubrics linked here and we will be hosting some assignment design workshops in Spring term. Submit your signature assignment plans with rubric alignment to the General Education director by the beginning of Fall term 2019. Provide a summary of student assessment results along with a piece of typical student work to the PLC at the end of the term in which you teach your FYS. We hope you might also consider serving on a PLC!

4. **Faculty reflections.** We're asking all faculty engaging in FYS instruction to provide us with a brief reflection on the experience and their recommendations for improvement.

What you need to do: Respond to the reflective prompts upon completing FYS instruction. If you are teaching multiple sections, you only need to respond once - we recommend at the completion of your final section.

Assessment Work Sample Submission Instructions

Dear colleagues,

You are receiving this email because you are currently teaching a General Education course with a primary alignment to the Quantitative Literacy Undergraduate Learning Outcome (ULO) or First Year Seminar, and the assessment submission period is now open.

The submission form is located at: https://forms.gle/nG39xfH7gBhX4d2c9

Here are the basics of what is required. More details are provided below this list:
    Using the online submission form, submit:
        ·   A signature assignment
        ·   A typical piece of student work
        ·   Rationale for how the assignment aligns to features of the applicable rubric(s)
        ·   Explanation of the submitted student-work's demonstration of those features, as well as a summary of this for the class as a whole.

Submit as soon as the information is available, and no later than (insert term deadline)

As you know, in 2019-20 we are assessing General Education Learning Outcome 1: Intellectual Foundations and Breadth of Exposure, with an emphasis on the Undergraduate Learning Outcome, Quantitative Literacy.

We are asking you to help us understand how the new General Education Program is working for students. We want to see if students are getting opportunities to learn and do the things identified in the General Education Learning Outcomes and also if the underlying rubrics are effective in representing those opportunities. Use of submitted assignments by the Professional Learning Community is focused on assessment of the program as a whole and on how assignments align to General Education Learning Outcomes and [associated rubrics](). The Community will not be evaluating individual assignment quality or individual instructors and courses.

Instructors of General Education Courses with Quantitative Literacy as the primary Undergraduate Learning Outcome, will be submitting the following:

1) A signature assignment (an essay, activity, portfolio, performance, exam question(s), or other activity that provides students the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of a learning outcome). **The PLC recommends that you carefully consider identifying the two rubric features that you find to be most emphasized in your assignment.** For General Education courses that emphasize Quantitative Literacy as the primary ULO, this signature assignment should address at least two features of the Quantitative Literacy rubric at a level of two or higher.

2) A typical piece of student work. For our purposes, "typical" is the equivalent to "mode," or a work sample that you think represents or captures how most students in the course performed on the assignment.

3) A brief summary of the student results. We are requesting a brief overview of the trends and patterns of how students perform on the assignment, e.g. the percentage achieving the desired level of rubric performance or higher. Feel free to use this summary to discuss any challenges you had in choosing a "typical" work sample or to qualify how you selected the provided work.

A sample of the narrative and summary can be found at
http://wou.edu/gened/plc-updates/

Courses that are coordinated and use a standard signature assignment in all sections need only submit one assignment example and typical piece of student work, but we would hope to get an overview of student trends that encompasses all sections, if possible. Courses that are taught multiple times per year need only submit once, but please provide an overview of student trends for the year if possible.

Submissions from Winter 2020 courses should be made by **March 31, 2020**. If you can submit earlier, it would be much appreciated by the Professional Learning Communities.

If you would like the PLC to provide you with feedback, there will be an option to request that at the end of the submission form. The feedback will consist of a numerical overview of the PLC's review of the target features they identify in your signature assignment and student work sample. While you will not receive narrative feedback, you can connect the numerical feedback to the overview of trends that will ultimately be provided in the PLC report.

Follow up to submission instructions re: Covid-19 disruption:

In recognition of the unusual circumstances in which we find ourselves, the deadline to submit Winter term work samples to the General Education Assessment PLC has been extended to mid-April. Since some of you may have had plans for students to submit a signature assignment or do an activity during finals week that may have been disrupted, if that is the case we would ask that you simply make a submission that identifies what you *had* planned to do and notes that the ability to gather student work was disrupted by COVID-19 so that we may document those disruptions for accreditation purposes.

Appendix B: Revisions to Foundational Skills Rubric

	1	2	3	4
Context Relates to how students understand, apply or bring together knowledge using the appropriate skills, tools and frame	Student presents work that is general with limited awareness of the context, or begin recognizing that they are still gaining	Student presents work that shows awareness of context at a superficial level	The student is aware of the context and can differentiate, compare and contrast to better understand the context.	The student's work shows a thorough/deep understanding of what the context is and how it reflects

of reference within "the historical, ethical, political, cultural, environmental, or circumstantial settings or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of any issues, ideas, artifacts, and events." 1	experience with context			and/or influences their work.
Evidence Relates to students' use of sources of information, which may include evidence produced by original student work, reasoning, existing non-peer reviewed evidence and peer-reviewed summaries of evidence	Student includes at least one source of information appropriate to the context of the assignment, that they have evaluated for accuracy/validity.	Student includes more than one contextually appropriate source that they have evaluated for accuracy/validity and describes relevance of the sources.	Student partially integrates multiple contextually appropriate and relevant sources that they have evaluated for accuracy/validity and can identify potential bias inherent in each source.	Student fully integrates multiple contextually appropriate and relevant sources, including sources from differing perspectives, that they have evaluated for accuracy/validity and for bias.
Analysis Relates to the separating of any material or abstract entity into its constituent elements as a method of studying the nature of something or of determining its essential features and their relations.	Student is able to summarize something complex.	Student is able to identify the most appropriate lenses through which to see the component parts of something complex.	Student is able to distinguish how one or more parts work in relation to the greater whole using an appropriate lens.	Student is able to articulate why their perspective matters and how it impacts the greater whole.
	Student follows the formatting, organization, and	Student uses a consistent system for organization and	Student makes appropriate choices about organization,	Student executes a wide range of conventions

Application of Conventions* Relates to the formal and informal rules for a particular text, image, symbol, audio, multimodal, movement, or performance that guide formatting, organization, and stylistic choices used to convey meaning to an audience.	style requirements specified in the assignment prompt.	presentation of ideas to fulfill the assignment.	presentation, formatting, and style to fulfill the assignment.	particular to a specific discipline including organization, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices to enhance meaning.

*By "fulfill assignment," we mean "meets the expectations and requirements set out by the assignment prompt.

We wanted #1 to speak to assignment prompts that are so prescriptive that students have no choice about how to set up their text; 2-4 are aimed at speaking more to student agency.

Ref. 1 (Page 5 of this pdf: https://wou.edu/academic-effectiveness/files/2017/05/All-16-Leap-Rubrics.pdf)