ITEM 1. Approve Minutes from 2/13/15
Discussion: Minutes from the 2/13 meeting had been previously disseminated via email; minutes from that meeting were approved without comment.
Data/data source: email communication
Action: Karen Pain will have minutes uploaded to the Outcomes Assessment page online.

ITEM 2. Pearson Writing Tool
Discussion: Representatives (Jennifer Stevens, Anna Schultz, and Cindy Hewitt) from Pearson demonstrated a new product which was presented as a tool to improve students’ writing skills. The product provides assistance to students as they copy and paste papers into the tool for a review of grammar, organization, sentence structure, citations, source credibility, and to a limited degree, writing style.

Schultz reported that in nine pilots at Palm Beach State during the fall and spring semesters (2014-2015), students had logged in multiple times to review and revise papers. She stated that students can print their reviews and Writing Tool comments for their own use or if required by their instructors. The Writing Tool is “mobile friendly” and, as of October 2015, students will be able to import external sources into the Pearson tool.

Committee discussion included comments from English and non-English faculty. Committee members first noted that the purpose of such a tool would be different for English faculty than it would be for those who teach English. Given that case, perceptions of the value might also be different, as they were for English and non-English faculty on the committee who had piloted the Pearson product. English faculty had concerns regarding accuracy and consistency, and whether or not students will be confused by or
have false confidence if mistakes are not caught by the product. Non-English faculty saw the benefit in having the product offer students feedback and review, giving them the chance to revise and submit a more polished paper. Students in the pilot were surveyed and reported a positive experience.

Committee members agreed there is potential in a product such as the Pearson Writing Tool, believing that it may be useful in non-English courses to support efforts to comply with the Gordon Rule. However, the committee is interested to learn what other products might compete with the Pearson tool before making a recommendation to the College for widespread use. Grammarly is one example.

Data/data source: Pearson representatives
Action: Ms. Pain will investigate other options, such as Grammarly, and report back to the committee at the first meeting in the fall (2015) semester. Professor Stonecipher will pilot the Pearson Writing Tool in a literature class this summer and report back to the committee at the first fall meeting.

ITEM 3. Review Gordon Rule statement survey
Discussion: Finalizing a 2-year process of gathering input from and reporting back to faculty, a survey went out to full-time faculty earlier in the spring semester. The survey presented the final recommendation of the revised Gordon Rule statement that will be presented to Dean’s Council. Results were mostly favorable, but there still seem to be some misconceptions regarding the intent of the Gordon Rule policy, specifically, there is a perception among some that the responsibility for holding student accountable for good writing falls only to English faculty. The committee discuss options to become more readily available in the fall semester, perhaps in regular PTLC sessions, to discuss the need for all faculty to expect good writing from students.

Data/data source: Gordon Rule survey results.
Action: Ms. Pain will discuss scheduling options for PTLC sessions with Professor Tierney and next year’s liaisons, presenting the options to the committee at the first fall meeting.

ITEM 4. Embedded Assessment Results Update
Discussion: Ms. Pain shared the report that was provided to faculty on Development Day for cluster meetings. Recommended benchmarks for each course are coming in as expected. Results will be compiled into the General Education Assessment Results report over the summer.

Data/data source: Fall embedded assessment results (internal files)
Action: Ms. Pain will compile and share the 2014-2015 report for General Education this summer.

ITEM 5. Debrief scenario scoring
Discussion: Ms. Pain provided a 3-year comparison of average scores for critical thinking, information literacy, ethics, and global awareness. Critical thinking shows a slight increase over this year for the first time; information literacy has remained steady; ethics and global awareness both have slight declines. Additionally and of concern, it was noted that more than half of the scores for each outcome were in the lowest range (scores of “1” or “2” on a 5-point rubric).

There was also some discussion regarding the inter-rater reliability of the scoring efforts. Specifically, given the current standard of agreement (same score or within one point on
the 5-point rubric), there was more than 90% agreement between the two readers for every set of scenarios scored.

Data/data source: Scenarios scores (internal files)
Action: No action until next fall when Scenarios implementation will be discussed.

ITEM 6. Plan for next year
Discussion: Ms. Pain announced that Professor Tierney will return as Faculty Chair for the committee, and Professors Ciucci and Pachter will return as Faculty Liaisons. Additionally, Professors Larson and Gaul will become Faculty Liaisons. In these roles, they will assist with the campus meetings to discuss General Education assessment with faculty in the fall and spring semesters next year.

We will repeat embedded assessment in the fall. IRE staff will work on correcting issues with reporting that are within their control, and Ms. Pain will work on improving communication to faculty to encourage continued participation. Significant strides were achieved in 2014, specifically, assessment results were reported for nearly 90% of courses. Committee members feel that effective and positive communication will maintain that level of participation. We will also continue to solicit feedback from faculty on how we can improve the process.

Scenarios need to be reintroduced for some of the General Education areas. We have one already for communication and mathematics, but each should be checked with critical thinking for a possible need to revise. Additionally, the committee will work on developing a scenario that can be used for natural sciences, social science and humanities. Ms. Pain asked if any members would be available for this work during the summer: Professors Tierney, Piccolino, Pachter, and Larson, as well as Connie Tuisku and Debra-Anne Singleton volunteered to help.

Ms. Pain will confirm 2014-2015 committee members before the end of the semester.

Data/data source: n/a
Action: Ms. Pain will contact the sub-committee to help revise and develop scenarios; she will also contact Tierney and the liaisons to propose a fall planning meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30am.
Submitted by

Karen Pain
Assessment Director and Meeting Scribe