ITEM 1. Approval of Minutes
Discussion: Minutes from prior meeting sent via e-mail to committee. Professor Warren Smith asked for clarity on assessment cycle; former Assessment Director Helen Shub clarified it would be on an annual basis (assessment in fall and analysis and improvement strategies in spring). Minutes from prior meeting then approved.

Data/data source: Minutes sent via e-mail
Action: None

ITEM 2. Transition
Discussion: Professor Patrick Tierney expressed appreciation on behalf of the committee to outgoing Assessment Director Helen Shub as she begins her new position as Assistant Dean of Enrollment Management. Tierney also welcomed incoming Assessment Director Karen Pain. Tierney, Pain and Shub are working together to ensure a smooth transition. The committee thanked Shub for her years of dedication and service to this committee and college.

Data/data source: None
Action: None

ITEM 3. Scenario Scoring
Discussion: All scenarios have been returned. In the past, one day has been used for scorer calibration, practice scoring and scenario scoring. The current date for this is set as February 27. There will be a calibration session and team formation. There will be teams
of two scorers each, and if the scores are more than one point apart, a third reader will be brought in to resolve the score.

Data/data source: None
Action: Committee will meet on February 27 for calibration and scoring session.

ITEM 4. QEP Contest
Discussion: Karen Pain announced the QEP Student Contest will run again this year. The QEP Leadership Team believed last year’s contest did reinforce the focus on critical thinking with students. Therefore, the team, along with the QEP Advisory Council, revamped the contest to have an essay and speech component. The prompt for this year asks students to discuss the most pressing issue for students in 2015 and a solution. Carleton Chernekoff, Interim QEP Faculty Chair, has asked for volunteers for assistance in scoring the entries, using the existing QEP rubric.

Data/data source: None
Action: Interested members can contact Karen Pain or Carleton Chernekoff if interested in scoring/judging.

ITEM 5. Pearson Writer
Discussion: Warren Smith is currently piloting the use of Pearson Writer as a nonEnglish-faculty tool. He is looking at practical applications in the classroom and non-English composition courses. Associate Dean Sheila Scott-Lubin said there are changes being made to the program, such as being able to directly upload word processing documents to the program rather than cut and paste and using an anti-plagiarism component (though that might impact the cost). Current pricing is $17.60 for a 12-month access code; $32.00 for a 36-month access code; and $44.00 for a 48-month access code. There is a discount if there are more than 5,000 access codes. Some institutions include the Pearson access fee as a fee for all new students, and it can then be used for any class. Connie Tuisku asked for another trial period, but Scott-Lubin said current trial period might still be valid. Melissa Stonecipher is interested in a pilot in her literature courses and will meet with Scott-Lubin to discuss.

Data/data source: None
Action: Sheila Scott-Lubin will verify if trial period is still valid and report back to the committee.

ITEM 6. Information Literacy Plan
Discussion: Connie Tuisku presented a proposal for the formation of a work group to examine a framework for an information literacy plan to support the institutional learning outcome on information literacy. She proposed that librarians work with faculty to look at classroom research practices and assessment. Currently, such a pilot exists in SLS 1501, but it could be expanded into general education courses as well. One model suggested would involve mapping of information literacy goals to key courses in the curriculum, including BAS and honors courses. This link would strengthen this committee’s and the college’s ongoing efforts to improve writing across the curriculum. This proposal asks the committee to reach out to faculty to get involvement; the group will look not only at information literacy in the key courses, but explore avenues of measurement and find
strategies and/or a framework for assessment of progress. This proposed framework would then be reported back to the committee. After discussion of best time frame, it was decided Tuisku will send her proposal to Associate Dean Sheila Scott-Lubin, who serves as the administrative liaison to communication faculty. Scott-Lubin will forward the proposal to all English and Speech faculty and ask them to follow up on Development Day. In addition, Tracy Ciucci is willing to work on an information literacy learning module or pretest in her courses; she will also take the idea back to her cluster for other volunteers.

Data/data source: None
Action: Tuisku will send proposal to Scott-Lubin; Tuisku will work with Ciucci on pilot.

ITEM 7. Embedded Assessments
Discussion: Karen Pain reported embedded assessment results are available on the web; 77 classes reported, but only approximately 18 had 100% of their sections reporting. Helen Shub pointed out an 85% reporting rate is actually an improvement over prior years, but the committee did want to review the response rate and the method used by some instructors to input data. Pain and Patrick Tierney are working on a report (which includes a copy of the instruments) that should be available within two weeks. Tierney pointed out to committee that role is not to “police” compliance. There is a meeting in early February with associate deans to offer feedback on compliance, results and input. Tierney, Pain and liaisons Tracy Ciucci and Marcie Pachter will attend this meeting, as well as meet with faculty throughout the spring to assist faculty in interpreting data and linking results back to course learning outcomes.

Data/data source: None
Action: Ms. Pain will complete the report by February 2nd and share with the committee. Committee will review report upon its availability and discuss results at next meeting. Tierney, Pain, Ciucci and Pachter will meet with associate deans and faculty to review results and discuss improvement strategies.

ITEM 8. Gordon Rule Review
Discussion: Discussion included a review of faculty feedback to date on the proposed changes to the Gordon Rule statement. Patrick Tierney reminded the committee that two breakout sessions were held on Development Day last October, facilitated by Professors Tracy Ciucci, Warren Smith, Patrick Tierney, and Connie Tuisku. Participating faculty were invited to provide written suggestions or questions to the General Education committee. Following those meetings, the speech cluster requested a visit for further clarification and discussion regarding the specific language of the proposed changes. Tierney attended the speech cluster meeting on January 5th to hear the concerns and facilitate a conversation regarding the changes. Marcie Pachter is part of the speech cluster and in that role, was present at the meeting. Both Tierney and Pachter participated in the cluster discussion with the dual role as faculty members and as General Education committee members.

Primary concerns of the speech cluster were related to (1) the “prescriptive” nature of the proposed changes regarding what is and is not acceptable as a Gordon Rule writing assignment, (2) what is meant by the phrase “significant impact on the course grade,” and (3) language regarding feedback to students.
Speech cluster members questioned the need for listing assignments that are acceptable and not acceptable, suggesting that if the statement specifies that which is not acceptable, everything else should be acceptable. In the cluster meeting, each assignment was discussed and members explained that it is possible to make some assignments currently on the “unacceptable” list rigorous enough that those assignments would meet the criteria to be acceptable. They also suggested that it is possible that assignments on the “acceptable” list can be used in ways that would not meet the necessary criteria.

Speech cluster members also suggested that how “significance” is defined and interpreted is course-dependent and will vary among faculty members and administrators. Accordingly, they were concerned about including it in the Gordon Rule statement.

During discussion, committee members recalled previous decisions in which it had been agreed that the separate lists of acceptable/not acceptable assignments were intended to as an aide for conversations during cluster meetings, and in meetings between faculty and associate deans or adjuncts and department chairs if needed to discuss specific assignments. Committee members agreed that both lists should be retained but with revisions: the new language should reflect lists that are intended to serve as examples and suggestions, not prescriptions for what must and must not be done.

Committee members also agreed it is too difficult to define and interpret what is meant by “significant impact on course grade.” There was consensus regarding the suggestion to remove that statement from the current proposed Gordon Rule statement.

The committee discussed at length the intent of the Gordon Rule both on a state level and at the College. It became clear in discussion that the intent of the rule is to promote good writing among students, but that faculty (full-time and adjuncts) and administrators need varied degrees of direction on how to comply. The variation becomes even greater where non-English courses are concerned.

Committee members agreed that recommendations by the committee should reflect a statement that will establish the necessary parameters to comply with the law but that will also give faculty and adjuncts flexibility within those parameters. It was also suggested that the criteria currently listed on the statement include the actual language of the state rule as applicable.

Data/data source:
Action: Karen Pain will revise the existing Gordon Rule statement to reflect suggestions made by faculty College-wide, speech cluster members, and General Education committee members. Committee members will review the changes for accurate representation. The revision will be sent to all faculty and feedback will be considered by the committee and integrated where possible and applicable before a final revision is submitted to Dean’s Council. This process will be completed by the end of the semester (spring 2015).

ITEM 9. Future Meeting Dates
- January 30, 9:30am – 11am: QEP/PLG; Assessment Committee members invited (not required!)
- February 13th, 10am-noon: Assessment Committee meeting – embedded assessment results
• February 27th, 10am-noon: Scenarios – calibration session and team formation
• March 26th, 10am-noon: Development Day – committee meets as a breakout session to discuss scoring and scenario revisions
• April 10th, TBD: Campus visits with faculty
• April 17th, TBD: Campus visits with faculty
• April 24th, TBD: Campus visits with faculty

Some discussion about potentially moving April campus visits sooner in the spring term, but further discussion and review of semester goals are needed before scheduling these meetings with faculty.

Data/data source: None
Action: Patrick Tierney will work with Karen Pain to confirm dates, secure meeting rooms, and extend invitations as needed for upcoming meetings.

Submitted by:

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Marcie Pachter, Scribe