UCF Meeting Minutes
4/27/17


I. Call to order

Called to order at 9:40 am. A quorum (50% + 1) was reached at 9:40 am

II. Announcements

a. Student Art Exhibit in Buley Library

b. Deb Weiss, on behalf of UCF, thanked the chairs of standing committees and the UCF members – it was an extremely productive year and everyone put in extra time to accomplish the work.

c. Special thanks to those chairs who will not return next year to their positions: Rebecca Silady, Ad hoc Assessment and PRAC Committees; Stanley Bernard, UWIC; Liz Keenan Ad hoc Transfer Committee

III. Approval of UCF minutes of April 13, 2017

Correction: correct spelling of Jen Ruggiero’s name.

Minutes approved unanimously

III. UCF Chair Elections

Deb Weiss led a discussion about the overall commitment for credit awards for the UCF steering committee – in general, the administration provides the pool of credits for the whole group and then it is divided among steering committee based upon anticipated workload in a given year. However, this year, no commitment has been made to UCF on the number of credits, therefore it is difficult to determine who would be able to manage the workload for UCF along with their teaching credit loads. Deb Weiss suggested that perhaps it is in the best interest of UCF to wait until that is determined before electing a new UCF chair/co-chair.
There is a scheduled meeting on Monday for an overall discussion regarding a formula for coordinators that has been developed by Dean Hegedus, which will also include other non-teaching roles so it is anticipated that more information may be available after that meeting.

UCF membership agreed tentatively to meet on May 11, 2017 for UCF Chair election if more information is available regarding the credit allocations.

UCF membership offered a special thanks to Deb Weiss for serving as UCF Chair this year.

IV. Standing Committee Reports
   A. NMC – Notifications Management Committee

   1. Motion to approve Revised Course Proposals

      SCE 494 – Student Teaching – Science
      SCE 496 – Student Teaching Seminar – Science
      Motion approved unanimously

   2. Motion to approve Departmental Minor Proposal

      CSC Minor
      Motion approved unanimously

      Minutes of April 20, 2017 were received

   B. LEPC – LEP Committee

      Discussion from Karen Cummings – the LEPC continued to look at an Assessment Plan from a big picture perspective and to have it mirror the program review process, i.e., surveys, pre and post at the global level, and assessments at the course level. Discussions also include considering balancing academic freedom and innovation with uniformity and consistency; part-time vs. full-time faculty; etc. The group feels that because of the heightened work of the committees, right now is the greatest opportunity to move ahead and there is a need to get everyone involved.

      • Motion for approval of Assessment Document (see attached).
        Motion approved unanimously

      • Motion for approval of Appendix A (see attached)
Motion approved unanimously

Note: Appendix A will be effective fall of 2018. During AY 2017/18 the implementation plan will be developed.

Minutes of April 20, 2017 were received.

C. UWIC – University Wide Impact Committee

Discussion centered on accessibility for students with disabilities. There is currently a university-wide task force that is working to identify resources and needs for students with autism on campus. This committee will expand its mission to include all students with disabilities and any relevant curricular recommendations/plans will be sent to UWIC for endorsement.

Megan Barboza was elected as Co-Chair for next year.

Minutes of April 20, 2017 were received.

D. Ad Hoc Assessment Committee

Discussion with Critical Thinking Affinity Group and Karen Cummings on plans for LEP Assessment.
Proposed plan:
Discussion of flexibility in assessment
   Different courses within Critical Thinking may assess different key elements using different assessment tools
1. Embedded questions on exams
2. Short pre/post assessment
3. Rubrics
   Discussion of best practices for development and use of rubrics
      a. Each course within Critical Thinking may use a separate rubric.
      b. Instructors of a given course should agree upon and use the same rubric.
      c. There should be training on the use of the rubric.
      d. Periodically a subset of artifacts should be scored by multiple instructors to test for inter-rater reliability.

Minutes of April 20, 2017 were received.

E. WACC – Writing Across the Curriculum Committee

Continued discussion of goals for students’ writing in program and discussions with Liz Kalbfieisch about writing proposal. Liz Kalbfieisch will present thoughts under new business.
Minutes of April 20, 2017 and revised Minutes were received

F. **Ad Hoc Transfer Committee**
   No Meeting

G. **Special Topics Courses**
   No new courses this month

V. **TAP Faculty Implementation Review Committee**
   The most current versions of the Pathways can be found at: [http://www.ct.edu/initiatives/tap#pathways](http://www.ct.edu/initiatives/tap#pathways).
   No new pathways for approval

VI. **Updates from LEP co-directors**
   There were no new updates from Terri Bennett. Karen Cummings’ report is under the Ad hoc Assessment Committee report.

VII. **Old Business**
   None

VIII. **New Business**
   Presentation by Liz Kalbfieisch on writing proposal. See attached power point.

   Discussion following presentation:
   - Clarity on “what makes a good writer”
   - Many questions on data presented – need to look more into what faculty think; perhaps a survey
   - Presentation on writing to learn and learning to write is clear and helpful but still wonder about what faculty consider a “good” writing assignment
   - What do faculty need to implement “writing to learn”?
   - Clarity where and how writing is embedded in LEP courses?
   - Differences between students that emerge from Honor’s College with skills on how to write compared to those in “W” courses that are not emerging as “better writers” (student insight)
   - Need to get more information on course restrictions by majors and the need to take additional courses to meet the “W” requirements
   - Is there a need to revisit “word count” in W courses? Is that taking the place of rigor and learning to write?

A. **Adjournment**
   The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am.
Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Resha
APPENDIX A: TRANSFER STUDENTS  
*Draft Revisions 4-17-17*

The following policies shall be used to determine how transfer credits are applied to LEP requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transfer credits (at time of transfer)</th>
<th>SCSU Transfer Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15+ credits</td>
<td>INQ waived without credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1-29 credits                           | Transfer credit is determined with course-by-course analysis.  
                                           Remaining LEP courses must be completed by waiver exam or course completion. |
| 30-59 credits                          | Waived from the Multilingual Communication T1 requirement with completion of Level 3 high school or Level 2 college foreign language. Students who do not qualify for the waiver are required to complete the 101 level at Southern (not the 200 level). [Approved by UCF 2-23-17]  
                                           Students with at least 9 General Education transfer credits\(^1\) and a transfer GPA of 2.50 or above are waived from the Critical Thinking requirement without credit. [Approved by UCF 4-13-17\(^2\)]  
                                           Transfer credit for remaining requirements is determined with course-by-course analysis.  
                                           If student has the 30-credit **TAP package**: accept the 30-credit TAP package according to the TAP Framework\(^3\). [Approved by UCF 2-23-17\(^2\)]  
                                           Remaining LEP courses must be completed by waiver exam or course completion. |
| 60+ credits                            | Waived from the Multilingual Communication T1 requirement. [Approved by UCF 2-23-17]  
                                           Students with at least 30 credits in General Education courses\(^1\) at time of transfer may meet Tier 1 and Tier 2 requirements in the following manner:  
                                           **General Education Requirements** | **Credits** |
|                                         | Mathematics at the SCSU QR level | 3 |
|                                         | English at the SCSU ENG 112 level | 3 |
|                                         | Arts and Humanities | At least 3 |
|                                         | Sciences | At least 3-4 |
|                                         | Social Sciences | At least 3 |
| Additional **General Education** credits\(^1\) | At least 24 |
| Tier 3 Capstone must be completed by course completion at SCSU | 3 |
| **Total** | 42 - 43 |

Any requirement not met at time of transfer must be met with equivalent SCSU LEP courses.  
Students must take LEP courses required for the major that are not yet completed. [Approved by UCF 4-13-17\(^2\)]

---

\(^1\) See definition of *General Education Transfer Credits* on next page.

\(^2\) Implementation plan to be constructed in AY 2017-2018 with implementation targeted for Fall, 2018.

\(^3\) See *TAP Framework* description on next page.
## TAP Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAP Framework</th>
<th>Credits awarded at SCSU for completing Framework</th>
<th>SCSU Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>6 INQ 101, Written Comm. (W&amp;R)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative reasoning</td>
<td>3 Quantitative Reasoning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific reasoning, knowledge, understanding</td>
<td>6-8 Natural World I-Physical Realm Natural World II-Life &amp; Environ</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical knowledge &amp; understanding</td>
<td>3 Time and Place</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Phenomena</td>
<td>3 Social Structure, Conflict, Consensus</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic Dimensions</td>
<td>3 Cultural Expressions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section B Course I</td>
<td>3 Critical Thinking (CT)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section B Course II</td>
<td>3 Technological Fluency (TF)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note 1:** Students who earn a TAP Transfer Degree follow TAP pathway/articulation agreements. *WLL requirement waiver needs to be inserted in all approved TAP pathway/articulation agreements.*

**Note 2:** The course mapping shown in this table is not necessarily a course-by-course transfer equivalency. Rather the ENTIRE 30 credits shown in Column 1 must be transferred in order for the student to receive the equivalencies shown in Column 2.

### Defining General Education Transfer Credits

General Education requirements, as defined by NEASC, traditionally refer to courses in the arts and humanities, the sciences including mathematics, and the social sciences (*NEASC CIHE Standards, 2016* – Sections 4.16-4.18). The table below associates SCSU’s discipline prefixes to the defined general education categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Categories</th>
<th>Discipline Prefixes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Humanities</td>
<td>ART, ENG, HIS, JST, LIT, MDS, MUS, PHI, THR, WLL, WMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>BIO, CHE, ESC, ENV, MAR, PHY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>ANT, COM, ECO, GEO, JRN, PSC, SOC, PSY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional discipline prefixes to be included in the 30 credits of general education at time of transfer</td>
<td>CSCSPA, ITA, GER, FRE, LAT, CHI, JPN above the 101 levelMAT at the 103 level or higherENG at the 112 level or higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEP Assessment Plan

Goal
Collect the appropriate type and amount of high-quality, actionable data for use in informing improvement of individual Liberal Education Program courses and the Liberal Education Program (LEP) as a whole.

Key Aspects of the Assessment Plan
1. **Assess current implementations via a faculty survey:** Faculty self-report alignment between learning objectives stated in the LEP document and what is actually being done in their course. We will also probe what aspects of the LEP course faculty currently consider most/least important and most/least difficulty to implement. We will solicit information regarding what aspects of Tier-1 courses are most important to Tier-2 instructors. Feedback goes to the LEP Committee and informs assessment plans.

2. **Assess learning outcomes in individual courses:** Initial focus will be on 1-3 key elements in every LEP course. Course level assessments in Tier-1 should include some direct measure of skill or competency development. Tier-2 course assessments should focus on direct measures of LEP-related learning goals. Ideally, Tier-2 course assessments should also include at least one element common to all courses within the Area of Knowledge. Tier-3 course assessments should include a values-/ethics-based dimension.

3. **Assess the overall, cumulative impact of the LEP on student learning:** This will involve
   i) A small number of representative student portfolios (approximately 3 per year) which can be used as deep, qualitative case studies of student work. Artifacts will be scored by trained evaluators external to the courses and using agreed upon rubrics.
   ii) Larger scale pre/post testing of students in regard to critical thinking, writing, and quantitative reasoning within the context of the Tier-2 courses.

4. **Survey of alumni and current students completing the program.** This will allow us to gain insight into students’ short- and longer-term views of the LEP’s value, how well it serves their goals and needs, and perceived strengths and weaknesses.

Connection to Other Assessment Efforts
Assessment of the LEP as discussed in this document should be integrated with assessment efforts associated with departmental program reviews, system-wide transfer agreements, and external accreditations. LEP assessment work should either leverage or facilitate these other assessment efforts. For example, a course both required as part of a major/program and offered as part of the LEP should be assessed with a single assessment tool that focuses on areas of overlap between program goals and LEP goals. LEP-assessment data should feed into, or draw on, data required for various accreditations.

Appropriate Types and Amounts of Data
We should be thoughtful and flexible about the types of assessments we employ, acknowledging that pre-test/post-test methodologies, embedded assessment, rubric based scoring of student work, portfolios, and indirect measures of student learning will all contribute
to our goal of improving the LEP. In addition, we must take care to collect as much data as needed to accomplish our goal, but no more than this. See below for a discussion of when data collection is required. When choosing an assessment approach, we should consider what method of assessing a key element is most valid, actionable, reliable, efficient and cost-effective. Rubrics will not be the best choice in all cases.

**Implementation Survey**

The purpose of this survey is to periodically remind full- and part-time faculty of the key learning outcomes expected of their LEP courses, provide feed-back to the LEPC that can inform discussions of an evolving program, and give insight into the most fertile key elements for assessment development. The Director of LEP Planning and Assessment will develop this survey with help from the Office of Assessment and Planning. The survey will be given in the Fall 2017 semester, Spring 2019 semester, and every fourth semester thereafter. This is an approximately 18-month cycle and ensures that data will periodically be collected in both spring and fall semesters.

**Course-Level Assessment**

Primarily, the instructors of a given course will decide how to assess learning. However, assessment decisions should be made in consultation with the Director of LEP Planning and Assessment to ensure that program-level needs are being met.

In Tier-1 courses, reliable and direct measures of core competencies should be a part of the assessment. In Tier-2 courses, some Areas of Knowledge may use a single rubric to assess all courses. In other Areas of Knowledge, much of the assessment may be course-specific. However, we will strive to find some common questions or metrics that can be applied across all courses in each Area of Knowledge.

---

### Course-Level Assessment

- **Questions or metrics applied to all courses in the Area of Knowledge**
- **Questions or metrics specific to a particular course**

The amount of course-specific material will vary by Area of Knowledge and course. We will work to find at least some common questions or metrics that can be used across all courses in the Area of Knowledge.

---

All sections of a particular LEP course, including those taught by different instructors and part-time faculty, must use the same baseline assessments. All instructors for a given course are expected to engage in assessment based on the timeline discussed in the *Additional Information* section below and using the agreed upon procedures and assessment tools. Instructors within a given course may engage in additional assessment if desired.
Portfolios
Our goal is to complete approximately 3 portfolios per year that each span a particular student’s entire LEP experience and include artifacts for every LEP course taken by that student. In order to accomplish this, we will start the process with 6 incoming freshmen each year. These 6 students will be chosen as follows: All incoming freshmen will be asked if they are willing to have artifacts of their LEP coursework archived and evaluated for LEP-assessment purposes. From the group of students who agree to this, we will choose a random but representative group of 6 students. Given current attrition rates, this should provide us with an average of about 3 complete portfolios per year.

At the start of every semester, the Director of LEP Planning and Assessment will contact the instructor in every LEP course taken by students in the portfolio cohorts. The instructors will be asked to archive and submit at least one notable example of the student’s work. Archiving can be done by scanning, photographing, or otherwise digitizing the work. The instructors will then send the archived work to the LEP Director who will manage the digital portfolio and subsequent rubric-based evaluation of student work.

Pre/Post Testing of Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, and Written Communication
The overall effectiveness of the LEP will be evaluated through large-scale pre- and post-instruction testing of students in regard to critical thinking, quantitative reasoning and written communication skills within the context of the Tier-2 courses. Pre-testing will be done in the first semester with incoming freshmen in Tier-1 courses. Post-testing will be done when students are enrolled in their Tier-3 courses. (However, this is not an assessment of the Tier-3 course.) The goal is to have a summative measure of learning outcomes in the LEP.

Currently, the Office of Assessment and Planning is engaging in two closely related projects: the Multi-State Collaborative and exploratory use of the College Learning Assessment Plus (CLA+). Both of these projects make pre/post measures of the three key outcomes noted. The data from these projects has been significant in mid-cycle assessment-data reporting to NEASC.

In order to accomplish our goal of assessing the LEP, we will leverage our participation in these projects while developing in-house tests and perhaps expanding our use of the CLA+ and Multi-State collaborative
Additional Information

Role of the Affinity Groups

It is expected that the Affinity Group for each Area of Knowledge meet at least once per semester. If the Coordinator for the Affinity Group does not call a meeting of the group by mid-term each semester, or if a Coordinator for the Affinity Group is not identified, the Director of LEP Planning and Assessment will organize the meeting. All instructors of LEP courses are expected to attend these meetings.

For purposes of planning and assessment, the Affinity Groups are charged with two primary tasks:

1. The first task is to provide current recommendations regarding common assignment types, experiences, expectations, etc. for courses within the Area of Knowledge. For example, the Critical Thinking affinity group might decide to recommend that all students taking a critical thinking course write a three-page argumentative essay with supporting evidence. This type of guidance regarding what is typical or recommended for courses within an Area of Knowledge will aid new instructors and will make assessment discussions and LEP planning more effective.

2. The second task required of the Affinity Groups is to discuss assessment and assessment outcomes within the context of the Area of Knowledge. These discussions should pertain to current assessment practices, difficulties associated with assessment, and evaluation of how assessment data is being used to improve instruction. The discussions should also be a part of ongoing efforts to find one or more common assessment element(s) that can be used across all courses in the Area of Knowledge.

Which LEP courses will be assessed and when?

All LEP courses will be assessed within the next 3 years.

How often must assessment data be collected in an LEP course?

Data may need to be collected every semester if assessment tools are under development and/or being validated. Data will be collected according to the schedule below once the instructor(s) teaching an LEP course and the Director of LEP Planning and Assessment agree that a stable, valid assessment tool is available.

An instructor teaching an LEP course must collect assessment data if

- S/he is teaching the LEP course for the first time.
  OR
- S/he did not collect data the last time s/he was required to do so.
  OR
- S/he has taught the LEP course before and more than two academic semesters have passed since s/he last collected data.
  OR
- Department-level assessment or accreditation require assessment data.
For example, if I am teaching PHY230 for the first time in fall 2018, I need to collect assessment data that semester. I am not required to collect assessment data in PHY230 again until spring 2020. In spring 2020, I am required to collect assessment data even if the last time I taught the course was fall 2018. If I don’t teach PHY230 in spring 2020, I am required to collect data the next time I teach that course.

**Developing/Adopting Assessment Tools**

In many cases we will find existing tools are available for use in assessing our LEP courses. In some cases, we are already using tools developed elsewhere (e.g. Multistate Collaborative, AAC&U rubrics). Where there is no appropriate tool already available, or in cases where using an externally developed tool is expensive, we will develop tools and rubrics “in-house”. Because the instructor(s) of a given LEP course are in the best position to determine how student learning should be assessed, they are charged with adopting, developing, or adapting an assessment tool for use in their course. The Director of LEP Planning and Assessment will provide guidance to ensure that the chosen tool and/or approach will provide data that contribute to meeting the stated goal for assessment within the LEP. (See first page of this document). Tools and approaches should be shared within the Affinity Group for the Area of Knowledge. In addition, the affinity groups for each Area of Knowledge will work to develop or adopt the portion of the assessment that will be used across all courses within the Area. Assessment tools and procedures will be shared with the Deans and Provost.

All instructors who are teaching, have taught, or intend to teach a given LEP course will be encouraged to participate in deciding how learning will be assessed within the course and in developing tools when needed.

**Evolution of Assessment Tools and Procedures:**

Once an assessment tool and procedure have been agreed upon by the instructors and Director of LEP Planning and Assessment, that assessment tool and procedure will remain in use for no less than 4 years before it is modified or replaced. This will allow consistency in data collected is important in evaluating the evolution of courses and the LEP program. It will also allow the University to report consistent data to external accreditors.

**Who will score the assessments?**

This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the instructors involved and the Director of LEP Planning and Assessing, in consultation with the administration. For example, a multiple-choice assessment given pre/post instruction may be machine-graded through the Office of Institutional Advancement. As another example, an assessment involving multiple-choice and short-answer questions that can be evaluated with a very direct rubric and that might be included as part of a final exam would be graded by the instructor, with periodic checks for inter-rater reliability.
Do we need to revise the WAC program?

Presentation to UCF by WAC committee and Director Liz Kalbfleisch, April 27, 2017
Rationale for revision

There is little, incomplete assessment data describing student writing, but what data we have says:

• 256 seniors graduating from SCSU in 2016 had their writing rated as ranging from below expectations to met expectations (see fuller explanation in appendix)

• 41 juniors (not a large enough sample size) had an overall score average of 2.65 on a 4 point rubric
Rationale for revision

Additionally, for some time, those involved with writing on SCSU’s campus—

• WACC committee
• Former WACC directors Karen Burke and Debby Carroll
• Current WAC director Liz Kalbfleisch
• Faculty teaching W courses
• ENG 110 and 112 coordinator

--Have felt that the WAC program is in need of revision for a variety of reasons.
Limits of program design--bureaucratic

- Uncertainty about how the W is “certified”: course or teacher?

- Paperwork required is onerous

- No on-going “quality control” or assessment of program by SCSU faculty

- May not have the Ws in the “right” place—i.e. not enough tier 2 courses are W. Especially a problem for transfer students
Limits of program design-curricular

Put simply, there seems to be a misalignment between the theoretical design of the WAC program and faculty’s expectations for the outcomes of the program.
Limits of program design-curricular

More specifically, we have a “writing-to-learn” program, but faculty may want a program that teaches students to “learn to write”

“Writing-to-learn” and “learning to write” are different, not necessarily incompatible, designs for a writing program.
“writing to learn”

From the WACC documents: “The purpose of WAC is to create a curricular structure and educational environment in which writing can be encountered as a tool of discovery across the curriculum for both faculty and students who participate in writing-intensive courses”
A program that has a “writing to learn” design uses writing as a “tool” to learn course content. In this sense, writing (papers, exams, etc.) is one of a variety of pedagogical strategies faculty may use to teach—or assess the learning of—course content. Other “tools” might be multiple choice tests, class presentations or demonstrations, etc. Of these various tools, writing can be one of the most powerful and effective, which is why the “write to learn” paradigm was developed.
“writing to learn”

Further, though students are using writing and doing writing, they may not be learning to write. The instructional emphasis in a “writing to learn” curriculum may not involve much instruction in how to write.
Additionally: when we talk about student writing, faculty are commenting on deficiencies they encounter in the following areas of their students’ writing:

- Reading comprehension
- Cognitive operations like synthesis, analysis, abstract reasoning
- Producing grammatically and syntactically correct writing
- Organization
- Use of sources/citation of sources
- Knowledge of genre features
“learning to write”

- Reading comprehension
- Cognitive operations like synthesis, analysis, abstract reasoning
- Producing grammatically and syntactically correct writing
- Organization
- Use of sources/citation of sources
- Knowledge of genre features

These are the skills of **academic literacy**. Facility with these aspects of academic literacy marks a “good writer”. “Writing to learn” programs work best at schools populated by “good writers” but these programs may not *produce* good writers.
“learning to write”

Many people believe that a list of skills like the one above is the domain of first year composition (FYC). They think that students should acquire these skills in FYC and then be ready to write successfully everywhere else in the university.
Acquiring academic literacy

Unfortunately, this is not how the acquisition of academic literacy works for a variety of reasons. I’ll describe two:

1) reading comprehension, producing grammatically and syntactically correct prose, and facility with cognitive skills like synthesis, analysis, and abstract reasoning are not static skills that can be acquired at the beginning of an education and applied smoothly throughout a degree program. Rather, these are dynamic skills that build up and break down and build up and break down as students learn increasingly complex material and intellectual operations.
Acquiring academic literacy

2) Organization, the use of sources, and features of particular genres are varying aspects of disciplinary writing. How a written work is organized, how its sources are cited, and the features of its genre (i.e. do you have to discuss the method by which you arrived at your argument?) are quite different for different disciplines.
WACC will propose a new program

So:

in order to align our program design with faculty’s goals, we may want to redesign our program to have more “learning to write” features.
WACC will propose a new program

The WAC committee is working on a proposal for a writing program that will have more “learning to write” features and will address our stated concerns about our students’ writing more directly and effectively. We hope to have the proposal ready for presentation to you in mid-fall 2017.
Join us!

Want to join us? Know a faculty member you think would be helpful in this program re-design? There are open seats for FA 2017-2018 on WAC, so please persuade yourself or a colleague to get involved.
Through participating in the Multi-State Collaborate to Advance Quality Student Learning (MSC), Southern is influencing the national conversation about the “yardstick” by which the effectiveness of higher education should be measured. MSC builds on assessments directly linked to faculty instruction, actual curricula, and real student work (instead of standardized testing). The metrics are directly related to teaching and learning in contrast to such proposed metrics as alumni default on student loans and wages earned in first job. The metrics--the VALUE rubrics for critical thinking, quantitative literacy, and written communication--were developed by faculty working with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

Seniors who received PELL grants had scores that did not differ from the scores of their peers. Also, non-traditional seniors (aged 25-39) had scores that did not differ from those of their peers. Male and female seniors had scores that were more similar than different. The scores of the seniors from African-American and Hispanic/Latino backgrounds did not differ from those of White seniors.

During the 2015-2016 academic year, Southern collected 279 papers from students nearing graduation. Students from 26 different courses submitted their de-identified final papers. The papers were scored by faculty in other states. The most important finding was that there was a wide range of scores. Student performance ranged from below expectations to exemplary.

*Scoring: Benchmark=1, Milestones=2 & 3, Capstone=4*

Once again, Southern met expectations (most of the scores were between 2 and 3), but did not exceed expectations (scores of 4).

**Critical Thinking:** Average Score Range: 1.44-3.25

**Written Communication:** Average Score Range: 1.7-3.4

**Quantitative Reasoning:** Average Score Range: .64-3.33

This academic year, Southern will collect de-identified papers from first-year students *and* seniors. In this way, we will be able to measure growth over time.