**Present:** Angela Anderson, Aaron Ansell, AJ Bass, Stephen Biscotte, Corinne Guimont, Molly Hall, Earl Kline, Victoria Lael, Yejin Moon, Annie Ronan, Hannah Shinault, Jeremy Sudweeks, Khanh Ngoc Tran, Sparkle Williams

**Absent:** Briana Ermanni, Aaron Goldstein, Janet Hilder, Jason Malone, Nicole Pitterson, Zack Underwood

**Guests:** None

Call to order by Hannah Shinault at 2:31 pm

Announcements

S. Biscotte shared that the Pamplin College of Business will begin phasing out student credit-hour fees next year, starting with 1000-level courses. Moving forward, student fees will be charged to PCOB majors and students will no longer be charged credit-hour fees for Pathways courses in Pamplin.

## 1. Update on New Governance

S. Biscotte provided an update on the governance changes that will take effect in the fall. The UCC, GCC, and PGECRC will be dissolved to streamline the curriculum review process. The resolution for this change can be found on the university governance site. The UCCGE will remain as a governance committee and will continue to provide leadership on issues related to the Pathways curriculum.

Under the new governance structure, a Pathways course or minor proposal will follow this sequence of steps:

Faculty member writes proposal → proposal goes to department for approval → proposal enters 15-day review, during which the campus community, the Registrar's Office, and the Office of General Education review the proposal, flagging any concerns that need to be addressed → once concerns have been addressed, the proposal moves on to the college curriculum committee for final approval.

The Office of General Education will bring any Pathways proposals that require disciplinary expertise or that cross disciplines (e.g., a course in the College of Science seeking alignment with Critical Thinking in the Humanities) to the UCCGE for review and approval.

H. Shinault noted that, under this new system, it will be even more important for departments and colleges to have designated representatives to review pending proposals and flag concerns.

H. Shinault also shared that the university is transitioning from JIRA to a new curriculum management software, Courseleaf, which is expected to launch Fall 2023.

## 2. Study Abroad & Special Study Reviews

The committee unanimously approved *ITAL 2984: European Food Practices* for concept 2 (Critical Thinking in the Humanities), with the below requested modifications.

In the learning objectives:
- Revise the opening statement to "Upon completion of this class, students will be able to:" and revise the learning objectives accordingly.
- Replace the verb "understand" with something more measurable (e.g., describe, analyze, etc.).
- Replace "familiarity with" with "explore", so "explore theoretical and literary texts..."
- Remove the references to the activities/assessments that students will engage in. For example, in LO #1, remove "as demonstrated in the reflective essay").

The committee unanimously voted to table the *PHS/ALS 2984: Human, Animal, and Environmental Connections* proposal requesting approval for concept 4 (Reasoning in the Natural Sciences).

The committee expressed the following concerns:

- The proposal may not be accurately reflecting the course as it is being taught, as some information in the syllabus and proposal contradicted information that the proposers shared verbally.
- Absence of learning objectives, which need to be included and mapped to the Pathways learning outcomes.
- The learning outcome paragraphs on the proposal should more clearly address how students are learning foundational scientific knowledge.
- How will students be assessed and graded? The syllabus suggested that students' grades would be based to a significant degree on effort, but the proposers referenced graded assignments/quizzes in conversation with a committee member.

The proposers may submit a revised proposal for review in the fall.

## 3. Assessment Redesign Proposal

M. Hall provided a summary of a proposal to redesign how Pathways assessment is conducted (see Appendix). Institutional Effectiveness and the Office of General Education will compile additional information to present to the committee for deliberation when they return for the Fall 2023 semester.

The committee unanimously voted to pause assessment for the 2023-24 academic year to allow time to redesign the new process.

The committee also provided unanimous support for moving to a sampling system, in which only a subset of Pathways courses would be required to submit assessment data.

**4. Subcommittee Reports**

No subcommittee reports due to time. The Advising Subcommittee will share by email a presentation they had prepared for the committee.

**Meeting adjourned** by Hannah Shinault at 3:47 pm

*Minutes compiled by Jenni Gallagher*

## Pathways Assessment Redesign Spring 2023

**Current State of Pathways Assessment and Rationale for Redesign**

The implementation of VT's current general education program, Pathways, started in Fall 2018. This was the first semester assessment data were collected for the program. Data continued to be collected every term until Spring 2020 when the process was put on hiatus due to the pandemic. Data collection started again in Spring 2021 and has continued every semester since.

Over the past several semesters, the percent of sections reporting data has ranged between 59% and 70% with large multi-section courses making up a large percentage of the assessed students. The current process has allowed VT to get an overall picture of the newly designed program. However, several issues have arisen.

Currently, there are no incentives for instructors or departments to participate in the process. In addition, given the large number of Pathways courses offered every semester, very little one-on-one assistance can be provided. At times, the data collected has not been able to be used due to various implementation/assessment issues. These areas include not collecting data specific to each of the outcomes covered, not measuring the approved outcomes, and not developing assessments appropriate for the outcome of interest.

Although multiple resources are available, as with any assessment process, more hands-on assistance would enable instructors to collect better, more informative data for not only improvement in their courses but for the Pathways program as a whole. An additional concern with the current plan is not providing enough time between data collection cycles for the information collected to be used effectively for continuous improvement.

Given these concerns, the following proposal has been developed.

**Goals of Assessment Redesign:**
- To create a process that yields enough data to evaluate the extent to which we are delivering on the promise of the program and to make improvements in a timely manner.
- To create a process that yields less–but more accurate and useable–data.
- To lessen burden on all involved with the process.
- To provide more individual support throughout the process.

**Proposed Cycle:**
- Hiatus/Redesign Year: Summer 2023 to Spring 2024
  - Pathways assessment data collection will be put on hiatus during the 2023-2024 academic year.
  - During this time, work will be done to finalize a new assessment process, including developing an appropriate section sampling plan for data collection.
  - Pathways course enrollments will be reviewed to determine the extent to which students are enrolling in particular courses to receive Pathways credit. If needed, a potential course of action will be determined.
  - During Summer 2023 a reasonable sampling approach will be developed and changes to the assessment process (e.g., sampling, a new cycle, elimination of summer/winter data collection) will be considered by UCCGE in Fall 2023 to begin the governance process as needed.
  - Ongoing exploration of enhancements to Canvas to support assessment.
- New Cycle
  - Year 1: 2024-2025 academic year
    - Data collected from sampled courses in every concept area.

- Hands-on assistance provided to instructors and programs to develop effective assessment plans.
            - Additional support including onboarding, office hours, and report prescreening by the Office of General Education and Institutional Effectiveness.
            - Mini-grant funding and support.
            - Consistent and ongoing communication with deans and department heads/school directors as well as sampled instructors.
    - Year 2: 2025-2026 academic year
        - All above steps for Year 1. The sample for Year 2 will not contain sections sampled in Year 1.
        - Compile, analyze, and share 2024-2025 data with stakeholders.
    - Year 3: 2026-2027 academic year
        - Data sharing, instructor discussions, and improvement plan development.
        - Instructor working groups discuss and recommend changes to the Pathways program such as changes to Pathways outcomes and rubrics.
        - Support course-level improvements by providing professional development to instructors and programs interested in making course-level changes.
        - The Office of General Education and Institutional Effectiveness continue to support improvements to Pathways through UCCGE.
    - Year 4: 2027-2028 academic year
        - Changes discussed during Year 3 are taken through university governance including potential outcome or concept revisions, changes to rubrics based on those revisions, changes to the overall program design, assessment updates, etc.
- Cycle 2: Restart Years 1 through 4, 2028-2029 academic year
    - Restart assessment data collection.

## Rationale for New Cycle:
The proposed new plan will support VT's commitment to continuous improvement by providing:
- A hiatus year to instructors as the Office of General Education and Institutional Effectiveness work to finalize a new assessment process that includes a well-designed sampling plan and assessment cycle.
- More hands-on support to instructors for the collection of better, more useable assessment data.
- A year allocated for conversation and development of necessary programmatic and structural changes.
- A year allocated to take any proposed improvements through the university governance process.
- Continuous improvement of the Pathways program.

## Alignment with Relevant Institutional Requirements:
- State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV): Policy on Student Learning Assessment and Quality in Undergraduate Education
    - SCHEV reporting for the second series of outcomes designated in Virginia Tech's assessment plan for this requirement will be reported in Fall 2023.
    - A second series of data will be collected during Years 1 and 2 (2024-2026) and reported during Fall 2026.
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)
    - There will be an additional two years of data collection and ½ year of improvement discussions and plans prior to the submission of VT's 5-year interim report.
    - Currently, the standard for general education is not included in the 5th year interim report. However, this could potentially change as the standards will be reviewed this year.