Present: Angela Anderson, Aaron Ansell, Stephen Biscotte, Corinne Guimont, Aaron Goldstein, Molly Hall, Earl Kline, Victoria Lael, Jason Malone, Nicole Pitterson, Annie Ronan, Hannah Short, Jeremy Sudweeks, Khanh Ngoc Tran, Sparkle Williams

Absent: Janet Hilder, Siri Rao, Lauren Thomas

Guests: Emmanuel Benitez, Jenni Gallagher, Brandy Puryear

Call to order by A. Ansell at 2:32 pm

Announcements:
Emmanuel Benitez joined the committee for the Undergraduate Student Senate.

1. Study Abroad & Special Study Reviews

Committee unanimously approved ME 2954: Podcasting in Riva San Vitale for Advanced Discourse (1a) with the following modification:

- In pre-requisites section of syllabus, remove reference to Pathways concept 2

Committee unanimously approved ARCH 4984/5984: Athens Program for Critique and Practice in Design (6d)

Committee requested additional information for their review of AAD 3984: Intro to Immersive Multimedia for Critique and Practice in Design (6d). Once feedback is received and reviewed, the committee will vote electronically.

- Provide a more detailed syllabus and clarify what students will be doing in the projects.

2. Revised Pathways Assessment Redesign Proposal

Committee reviewed and discussed the revised assessment redesign proposal (see Appendix A).

M. Hall summarized the changes: the revision includes more detailed information and tables have been added. The report is ready to be distributed by representatives to their constituencies. UCCGE members will collect feedback from their constituencies and report back to the committee at the December meeting. Members might consider using a discussion board or other mechanism to collect and organize feedback.

If anyone has questions about the proposal, they can attend the November or December Pathways office hours, held on the first Friday of the month from 10-11am on Zoom: https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/85154450609.

3. Subcommittee Reports

Advising

V. Lael: reported that the advising subcommittee met in October and discussed needing more information on how students used to pick Pathways courses. They would like to survey to students first and then, based on the feedback, hold a focus group.

They identified questions they would like to ask:
1. Major
2. Freshman, sophomore, junior, senior (ask advisors if do this or by year/semester)
3. Transfer or first time in college
4. For any Pathways course you've taken, how have you chosen what course to take? (Select all that apply)
   • Academic advisor?
   • Required for major
   • Reputation of the class in terms of grades/professor
   • Cost of books and materials
   • When the course is offered
   • Relevance to major
   • Other: _____
5. If you want, use this space to share more detail about how you choose Pathways courses. You may refer to one or more specific Pathways course if you'd like.
6. If you have ever recommended a Pathways class to another student, why did you recommend it to them?
   • Reputation of the class in terms of grades/professor
   • Cost of books and materials
   • When the course is offered
   • Relevance to major
   • Other: _____

J. Gallagher noted that the program improvement subcommittee has already drafted a student survey which asks these questions. They are making final edits to the survey and will share it at the December meeting. UCCGE members will be asked to share it with their students in the spring.

Program Improvement
A. Ansell shared that the subcommittee discussed the student survey and course recertification. The subcommittee is gathering information on how other universities recertify general education course. The subcommittee stressed that they are just

exploring the idea, and the committee may or may not decide that it would be beneficial for Pathways

<u>Pathways Plus</u>
S. Biscotte shared that Pathways minors was the priority of their last meeting. They discussed how to leverage events and campus partners. The Office of General Education is also beginning to create student testimonial videos for each of the minors.

A. Ansell adjourned the meeting at 3:43 pm

Minutes compiled by Brandy Puryear

Appendix A

Pathways Assessment Redesign, October 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 semester and summer session 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 have not been able to be used due to various implementation/ assessment issues. These 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 to facilitate improvement in their own courses as well as 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 course 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 and Fall 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 and approved by UCCGE.
    - The Office of General Education and Institutional Effectiveness will continue exploring potential enhancements to Canvas to support assessment.
- New Cycle
  Note: Details on specific activities are included in the bulleted lists below.

Appendix A

Cycle Year	Focus of Activities
Year 1	Assessment data is collected from a sample of course sections
Year 2	Assessment data is collected from a sample of course sections
Year 3	Faculty working groups discuss the data collected and recommend improvements to the Pathways program
Year 4	As needed, recommended improvements go through the university governance process
Cycle starts again with Year 1	Assessment data is collected from a sample of course sections

- Year 1: 2024-2025 academic year
  - Data will be collected from a sample of course sections during the fall and spring semesters. All seven Core Concepts[1] will be represented in the sample each semester. In addition to Core Concept data, instructors teaching sampled course sections will also submit data for the Integrative Concept(s)[2] approved for their course. The sample size per semester will be approximately 200 course sections out of a total of approximately 1,600 course sections offered.
  - Hands-on assistance will be provided to instructors and programs to develop effective assessment plans.
  - Additional support will be provided including onboarding, office hours, and report prescreening by the Office of General Education and Institutional Effectiveness.
  - Mini-grant funding and support will continue to be provided.
  - Consistent and ongoing communications will be shared with deans and department heads/school directors as well as sampled instructors.
- Year 2: 2025-2026 academic year
  - Same as above for Year 1. The sample for Year 2 will not contain sections sampled in Year 1.
  - 2024-2025 data will be compiled, analyzed, and shared with stakeholders.
- Year 3: 2026-2027 academic year
  - Assessment data will not be collected. In Year 3, the focus will be on data sharing, instructor discussions, and improvement plan development.
  - Instructor working groups will discuss and recommend changes to the Pathways program such as changes to Pathways student learning outcomes and rubrics.
  - Course-level improvements will be supported by providing professional development to instructors and programs interested in making course-level changes.
  - The Office of General Education and Institutional Effectiveness will continue to support improvements to Pathways through UCCGE.
- Year 4: 2027-2028 academic year
  - Assessment data will not be collected. Changes discussed during Year 3 will be taken through university governance as needed including potential outcome or concept revisions, changes to the overall program design, etc.

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[1] Pathways Core Concepts are Discourse, Critical Thinking in the Humanities, Reasoning in the Social Sciences, Reasoning in the Natural Sciences, Quantitative and Computational Thinking, Critique and Practice in Design and the Arts, and Critical Analysis of Identity and Equity in the United States.
[2] Pathways Integrative Concepts are Ethical Reasoning and Intercultural and Global Awareness.

- Cycle 2: Restart Years 1 through 4, 2028-2029 academic year

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.

Comparison of Current Process with Proposed Process:

	Current Assessment Process	**Proposed Assessment Process**
When is Pathways assessment data collected and reported?	Data collection is ongoing and is required each time a Pathways course is taught during the fall, spring, or summer.	Assessment data will only be collected during Year 1 and Year 2 of a four-year assessment cycle. Summer session courses will no longer submit data.
Who is required to collect and report Pathways assessment data?	All instructors teaching Pathways course sections (approx. 1,600 course sections are offered each fall and spring semester).	Only instructors teaching sampled course sections (approx. 200 sections per semester) will be required to submit assessment data.
Is substantial time set aside to allow faculty working groups to analyze and discuss the data and recommend potential improvements?	No	Yes
Is substantial time set aside to allow recommended improvements to go through the university governance process (if needed)?	No	Yes
Is individual assistance provided to help instructors submit high-quality assessment data?	Yes, if instructors participate in the Pathways Mini-Grant Program or request assistance.	All instructors teaching a sampled course section will be contacted and receive needed assistance.

In order to move forward with the proposed assessment process, the participation of sampled course instructors will be critical.