

STATE OF ALABAMA

Articulation and General Studies Committee

MINUTES OF MEETING Virtual Annual Review and Planning Session July 28, 2025 - 1:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: The planning session of the Articulation and General Studies Committee (AGSC) was called to order by Dr. Mary Beth Lancaster at 1:04 p.m.

WELCOME: Dr. Mary Beth Lancaster welcomed members and guests to the virtual meeting.

ROLL CALL: Dr. Lancaster asked Jacinta Whitehurst to call the roll to have a record of members present even though no voting would take place at this meeting.

Members present: Dr. Douglas LaVergne, Dr. Wubishet Tadesse, Dr. Seela Aladuwaka, Dr. Rhonda Gaede, Dr. Tonjanita Johnson, Dr. Julie Estis, Dr. Eric Loomis, Dr. Catherine Wehlburg, Dr. D. Kristen Gilbert, Dr. Hammonds, Dr. Mary Beth Lancaster, Mrs. Jackie Screws, Ms. Leslie Reeder, and Dr. David Campbell. STARS staff: Dr. Keith Sessions and Shannon Nichols. ACHE staff: Dr. Stephanie Dolan and Mrs. Jacinta Whitehurst.

WELCOME & RECOGNIZE GUESTS: Dr. Lancaster asked the attendees to introduce themselves for the benefit of the new members and guests.

PRESENTATION DRAFT OF 2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT. Dr. Keith Sessions presented an overview of the first draft of the 2024-2025 Annual Report. *A copy of the 2024-2025 Annual Report is available by request.*

2024-25 Priority 1: Dr. Sessions gave a review of the General Studies Core Subcommittee priority information listed in the annual report. He suggested continuing to explore possible changes to the current Area 1-4 state general education structure. Also conducting additional surveys to collect input on the literature and history sequencing requirements. Also reviewing recent changes in general education requirements for native students at Alabama institutions.

Dr. Sessions discussed proposed changes at the following universities:

- Troy University- created a committee to look at their General Education with possibility of changes.
- University of Alabama has reduced three credit hours from Areas 2 and 4 and lowered their General Education requirement to 36 hours. He also mentioned some types of capstone courses for seniors, which may be intended to replace some of the removed credit hours. He stated there's a page on the website that outlines the University of Alabama's changes.

- UAB has restructured their general education to focus more on learning outcomes rather than content areas.
- Dr. Welberg shared discussions currently being had at Athens State University. That work with all transfer students at the undergraduate level, and they remain committed to accepting the general education coursework that comes from the community college partners. However, they are also seeing a significant number of adult learners returning to complete their degrees, One of the key discussions we're having involves the issue of course sequences, as these often-present challenges for our students.

2024-25 Priority 2: Dr. Sessions gave an overview of the work of the Succession plan subcommittee which was formed to evaluate future staffing needs for Alabama Transfers and to present recommendation to AGSC regarding a potential succession plan. He proposed delaying the planning process by a few years since he doesn't anticipate retiring for a few more years.

2024-25 Priority 3: Dr. Sessions provided an overview of the Achieve Conference, as outlined in the annual report. The event was hosted by Alabama State University and drew 265 registered participants, with 220 in attendance. He shared that one of the keynote speakers generously donated their speaking fee and contributed additional funds to support the Alabama Transfers student panelists. As a result, each student on the panel received a \$1,000 scholarship Dr. Sessions also mentioned Alabama State University raised around \$4000 for transfer student's scholarships after covering all event expenses.

2024-25 Priority 4: Dr. Sessions gave an overview of the ongoing AP & CLEP Credit scoring requirements for transfer credit listed in the annual report. The AP committee sent their recommendation for a statewide AP score of a "3" for credit transfer to the Council of Chief Academic Officers through a formal letter from the AGSC Chair. The committee has not received an official response. Dr. Sessions proposed creating a webpage that includes links to the AP credit score requirements for each institution and maintaining the page regularly to ensure the links remain functional and the information accessible and accurate. He asked the committee to consider whether to follow up with the Council of Chief Academic Officers on this matter or to leave the current process as is.

2024-25 Priority 5: Dr. Sessions gave an overview of the impact of the Numeracy Act on Elementary/Early Childhood Education and its potential effects on the transfer credit for math courses in Area V. He talked about the significant work being completed and continuing among the Colleges of Education to address the implications of the Numeracy Act on Elementary and Early Childhood education programs regarding how it may affect transfer credit for math within the general studies curriculum. He spoke about a workshop attended that explored options to shift certain upper-level courses to the sophomore level. The goal is to enable transfer students to complete more coursework at the community college level before transitioning to selected four-year institutions.

2024-25 Priority 6: Dr. Sessions provided an overview regarding the guidance on the use and allocation of all discretionary funding. A portion of the funding was used to support the EdVisorly pilot, which leverages AI to assist students through a mobile app. The app allows students to upload unofficial transcripts and receive feedback on their academic progress—highlighting both completed milestones and remaining requirements. It also offers flexibility for students to explore and adjust their academic paths. The institutions participating in the initial phase are Troy University, Enterprise State Community College, Lurleen B. Wallace Community College and Wallace Community College-Dothan. There's an informational webpage that highlights EdVisorly role, the pilot's goals and objectives. The webpage will also have frequently asked questions and serve as a central hub for ongoing updates.

Annual Usage Reports: Dr. Sessions provided an overview of the monthly breakdown of official transfer guides accessed through Alabama transfers from July 2024 through June 2025. He noted that guides were up 204 guides over last year.

It was suggested that the transfer guides be reviewed and updated, as many new courses have been added since the guides were originally developed.

BUDGET REVIEW & DISCUSSION. Dr. Sessions discussed the current Alabama transfer budget. The funding remained the same FY 2024-25, but he intends to request additional funds for the upcoming year.

DRAFT PRIORITIES & GOALS FOR 2025-2026.

Dr. Wehlburg led the committee discussion on draft priorities and goals for 2025-2026. The committee suggested to carryover some priorities from 2024-2025 year, which includes the following:

- Continue with the General Studies sub-committee's work to refine the mission of general education in Alabama, enhance the AGSC general education framework, and address issues with literature and history sequencing requirements in Areas II and IV.
- Continuing hosting the ACHIEVE Conference in a virtual/online format.
- Support institutions in adopting an AP score of 3 for all courses granting credit, including sharing College Board recommendations, institutional experiences with score changes, and methods for collecting data to support score recommendations for specific courses and programs.
- Align curriculum changes in elementary and early childhood education programs at four-year institutions with Alabama Transfers Guides.
- Develop metrics to evaluate the success of the EdVisorly Pilot after its first year and, if successful, assess future phases for statewide implementation and funding needs.

CALL TO TWO-YEAR MEMBERS: Dr. Sessions requested recommendations from the two-year members to be considered for the role of Vice-Chair for the upcoming 2025–26 year. The recommendations will be discussed during tomorrow's business meeting.

OUTGOING CHAIR RECOGNITION: Dr. Sessions recognized and thanked Dr. Lancaster for her service as the Chair of the Committee, a plaque was given as a token of gratitude. Dr. Lancaster thanked Dr. Sessions, Shannon Nichols and the committee, stating it had been a pleasure to serve on the committee.

Dr. Lancaster adjourned the Annual Review and Planning Session at 3:02 p.m. The business meeting will be held tomorrow at 1:00 p.m.

Chair

Jacinta Whitehurst, Recording Secretary