

June 4, 2021 General Education Assessment Email from Ann Cary

Greetings Faculty,

This past February, the review process for our new General Education framework was completed and will go into effect Fall 2021. Many thanks to the members of GEARS (the General Education Assessment Review Subcommittee) for the time and energy they spent reviewing assignments and providing feedback. And many thanks to the collaborative effort put forward by faculty and SACs with Gen Ed courses. Throughout this process, I witnessed faculty discussions on student-centered assignment design and the teaching and learning process that were commendable--they were authentic, collaborative, and underscored the value of faculty-led learning assessment.

The rest of this message has details that pertain to [General Education courses](#) and faculty who will be teaching them next year. All are welcome to continue reading - feel free to read as much or as little as you find valuable if this does not directly pertain to you.

What do faculty need to do?

As part of this new framework, every section of every General Education course will need to administer a signature assignment to students every term. This is no small lift, and the next year will no doubt be a learning year for all of us. The most critical aspect of this new framework is that faculty administer quality signature assignments to students that map to the appropriate rubric and are authentic to the course and content they are teaching. For step-by-step instructions on how to prepare your course, see this [document of key info](#).

Questions about how/where/when signature assignments will be collected by Academic Affairs?

Because we in Academic Affairs at PCC recognize this has been a challenging time, we would like for faculty to concentrate on the quality of their signature assignments first. Therefore our focus will not be on the collection of the assignments in the 2021-2022 academic year, but on the use of them by faculty. *We have decided not to universally collect all submitted signature assignments or to require that assignments are uploaded in our learning management system (D2L) during the 2021-2022 academic year.* This will give us all more time to focus on the assignments themselves next year, learn and explore what this looks like on a large scale, and then iron out the logistics of collection at a future point in time.

What about accreditation?

While the full development of this process will continue for many years, we are well situated for our Year 7 accreditation visit. To meet accreditation expectations, we will continue to do college-wide scoring as we have for the past two years. As we work to scale this up, we are committed to engaging faculty to build sustainable processes and practices that yield meaningful information.

To help faculty prepare for this next phase of implementation, we have planned the following:

Signature Assignment Repositories for SACs	Each SAC has a repository where signature assignments that were recommended by GEARS have been posted. To find these, go to the SAC Recommendations and Minutes Spaces pages. (Note that these have access restricted to members of each SAC). *This repository is still under construction and will be finished by the end of Summer 2021.*
Exemplary Signature Assignments	We have a sample set of exemplary signature assignments . We will continue to add to the folder of exemplary signature assignments throughout this summer.
Faculty Coaches	We have identified a number of experienced faculty that are willing to provide mentorship and coaching around assignment design. They will do so through our Learning Assessment Council's coaching model. Please reach out to our Academic Support Specialist, Nichole Reding (nichole.reding@pcc.edu) if you'd like to be connected with a coach.
Learning Assessment Council Online support	The LAC is working on online support materials for developing signature assignments and understanding each of the DSAC rubrics. Stay tuned for more on this coming Fall 2021.

Again, know that this year will be a learning year and please take the time to implement and fine tune the delivery of these assignments. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out. I hope your Spring 2021 term is wrapping up well, and I look forward to seeing you back next fall-

Best,

Ann