After a gracious welcome from President Jonathan Gibralter of SUNY Farmingdale and introductions all around, Donald Steven updated everyone on expanded GEAR membership and the new Frequently Asked Questions section on GEAR’s Web page (at http://cortland.edu/oir/gear/FAQs.html). In addition to the recent appointment of June Pierson, Vice President of the Faculty Council of Community Colleges, GEAR welcomed three additional members: Dr. David A. Carson, Professor of History and Social Studies, Buffalo State College; Professor Gladys Cleland, Department of Journalism, SUNY Morrisville; and Dr. Runi Mukherji, Professor of Psychology, College at Old Westbury. (Dr. Mukherji was also a member of the Provost’s Advisory Task Force on the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes.)
campus general education programs were originally approved. According to DeFilippo, in a limited number of cases (e.g., mathematics, foreign language, American history), students may be credited with completion of a portion of general education requirements based on previous academic achievements such as SAT or Regents exams scores. In those cases, these students do not have to complete that particular requirement at that campus.

After discussion, the GEAR group decided that this issue is not really relevant to its work, since the focus of GEAR is general education assessment, not student assessment. That is, no campus will be in a situation in which all students are credited with a particular competency based on prior academic performance, and so therefore all campuses will be offering some courses that address each competency. These courses would likely be included in any assessment of that particular skill or knowledge area.

On a related issue, there was discussion as to whether it would be appropriate for campuses to include students who are credited with completion of a specific part of the SUNY-GER on the basis of prior academic performance in a campus’ report as “meeting” or “exceeding” the standards for that particular competency. Several concerns were raised re this strategy. Clearly, the purpose of general education assessment is to determine and report on how well students are learning and this purpose is not served by including in a report students who didn’t complete the requirement at a particular campus. On the basis of this discussion, the GEAR Group decided that students who have been credited with completing parts of the SUNY-GER on the basis of prior academic performance should not be included in the campus’ assessment report.

III. Reporting Format

After discussion and agreement re several modifications, the reporting format for campus-based assessment of General Education was approved. (See attached.)

IV. Workshop

The campuses at Farmingdale, Nassau and Stony Brook each made a presentation on how they are planning to implement assessment of one learning outcome, following the GEAR Guidelines and criteria.

Presentations:

- Mathematics: Kathleen Breidenbach, Assistant Dean of Curriculum, Arts and Sciences, University at Stony Brook
- Natural Sciences: Kumkum Prabhakar, Assistant Professor of Biology, Nassau Community College
- Social Sciences: Lucia Cepriano, Assistant Professor of Biology, SUNY Farmingdale

Responses to the presentations were very positive, and there were a number of questions for each participant regarding methodology. Francis and Steven also announced that these presentations would be added to the GEAR web page as soon as possible. These presentations are now available at http://cortland.edu/oir/gear/supportdocs.html.

It was agreed to make every effort to include presentations in the arts and humanities in the workshops at our next meeting.

V. Dialogue with Campuses

GEAR continued with a dialogue with campus guests, including a discussion of time line, the degree of specificity the GEAR group will be looking for in its review of campus proposals, and the need for more prototype plans from the arts and humanities. The point was made that GEAR will not require excessive detail about all learning outcomes, but that at least for the outcomes campuses plan to assess beginning in Fall 2002 there should be sufficient detail so that GEAR can understand the campus plan and determine that the campus is prepared to implement an assessment program that conforms to standards included in the process review guidelines. To the greatest extent possible, campuses should make use of embedded assessment strategies, as these are relatively less resource- and labor-intensive. In addition, not all student work needs to be included, as long as the work that is assessed is representative. Along these same lines, while it is necessary to demonstrate inter-rater reliability of non-objective measures, this process need not take place for all student work. Instead, a random sample of inter-rater reliability checks will be sufficient.
VI. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held at SUNY Cobleskill, likely in late January or early February. GEAR has accepted invitations to hold meetings at a number of SUNY campuses across New York. These are open meetings and invitations will be extended to campuses in the various areas to attend.

This meeting summary will be posted on GEAR’s Web page: (http://cortland.edu/oir/gear/) and sent to campus Chief Academic Officers and subscribers to the assessment listserv (ASSESS-L@ls.sysadm.suny.edu).