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# AGLS News

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*The Newsletter of  
the Association for General  
and Liberal Studies*  
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From the President

## John Nichols: AGLS Updates

Two important changes in AGLS operations occurred during 2001, one voted on by the membership via this newsletter, the other enacted by your Executive Council. After several years of frustration over the lack of follow-through on ideas and projects, the Council proposed a change in the by-laws whereby the president would serve a **two**-year term of office—with resulting changes in the terms for the president-elect and the past president. Members supported this change, and it has been implemented. I am in my second year in office, and Rob Mauldin will be installed as president next October after two years as president-elect.

Last February the Executive Council ended the publication of *Perspectives*, our AGLS journal, and asked (stronger than that, but let's go with "asked") John Nichols to investigate some sort of special arrangement with *The Journal for General Education* from Penn State University Press. The issue was cost. We were spending around \$13,000 a year for two issues of *Perspectives*. The 40th anniversary issue alone cost \$15,000 (equal to 375 memberships at \$40; we have 300 members). The journal was absorbing all the dues payments and strangling the conference, the newsletter, the web site, and all other communications with members.

We (Nichols and Lowe) signed an agreement with Penn State whereby all dues-paying members of AGLS will receive the four annual issues of JGE as part of AGLS membership. This will cost us \$6,600 per year, a special discounted subscription rate. We are all warmly, and even enthusiastically, invited to send in articles to JGE—the guidelines are published in this very issue of our newsletter—to serve as reviewers for JGE, and

eventually to be on the editorial board. How "good a deal" this becomes for AGLS, in other than financial ways, depends on how much we get involved in JGE. The arrangement obviously frees up some funding to be used to enhance our other operations. If you have any suggestions for this, please communicate them to a member of the Executive Council.

AGLS has been involved in three important higher education events. Bob Levy, Tom Lowe, and John Gottcent organized an overly successful—attendance outstripped the grant from Lilly—meeting on general education for all the colleges and universities in the State of Indiana. They invited John Nichols to do part of his AGLS Presidential Address from the Chicago conference as the "kick-off" presentation for this May 17, 2001 event.

The National Collegiate Honors Council held an "undergraduate summit" in Chicago on Oct. 31, 2001. Along with NEH, AAC&U, Phi Beta Kappa, AGB, ACE, and CAPHE, the organizers invited the president of AGLS to come, because of what they knew AGLS stands for. The concern of the "summit" was the diminishing role that the liberal arts seem to be playing in our colleges and universities. Because of the great variety in the ranks of the invited associations, no clear consensus was achieved in this three-hour meeting; but the dialogues will continue. And AGLS will continue to be involved.

Tom Lowe and Fred Janzow, executive directors of AGLS and CAGLS, have also been charter members in an AAC&U "Project on Accreditation and Assessment" that is directed by John Nichols. The project aims to enhance the role and value of liberal education in an environment where accred-

*The AAC&U "Project on Accreditation and Assessment" aims to enhance the role and value of liberal education in an environment where accreditors are revising their standards and putting great emphasis on assessment.*

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*President's  
Message,  
continued*

itors are revising their standards and putting great emphasis on assessment. All six regionals, five specialized accreditors, and executives from eight higher education associations participate in the project. The best news comes from the specialized accreditors. As they have made the shift from inputs to outcomes, they have realized that some liberal arts outcomes are absolutely essential for 21st century professionals. The list will surprise no one: communication skills, critical thinking, cultural sensitivity, ethics, and knowledge of socio-econ environments. The regionals are also stressing education for life and for citizenship beyond career preparation. This project is in its final stages and will issue some valuable publications this coming year.

In all of the foregoing good news, which is what I judge it to be, I nevertheless see three critical issues. And AGLS has valuable experience to contribute on each of them.

- 1) The general education component of the undergraduate experience has much more than instrumental value. In addition to skills, general education contributes breadth of cognition and depth in its own content (e.g., diversity) and values.
- 2) There can be real integration between general education and the major. The role of the liber-

al arts for the professional is not something that can be supplied anywhere or with anything. Instead of "separate but equal," we strive to achieve collaboration between general education and the major.

3) Nothing can happen on #1 and #2 without a collegial sense of responsibility on the part of the faculty. General education is where we work to achieve institutional mission—our local concept of the "educated person"—with all our students.

In closing, let me connect two distinct assertions in the preceding paragraphs. Specialized accreditors value cultural sensitivity or diversity. I also claimed that general education aims at depth in its own values. Therefore, there is a moral dimension to liberal education, to the liberal arts, to general education. We don't teach diversity in order to promote hatred! For what, then? Come to AGLS in Louisville—"Liberal Education and Character"—to engage in this discussion.

*John Nichols  
NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor  
Saint Joseph's College  
nichols@saintjoe.edu*

**In Memoriam**

**Brendan  
Gilbane,**

retired from Boston University, died in mid-December at the age of 71. He was a member of the AGLS Executive Council, President, and a very dedicated member of AGLS who had a significant impact on the health of this association during the 1970s and 1980s. AGLS holds his memory in highest regard and sends condolences to his family.

**2001 Pittsburgh Conference Highlights**

The 41st Annual AGLS Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, valiantly went forward on Oct. 11-13, 2001, in spite of opening on the one month anniversary of Sept. 11th. Although with reduced numbers, almost 150 intrepid educators came together to engage what was an uncannily timely topic: The Changing Face of Liberal Education for a Democratic Society.

Drs. Ira Harkavy and David Cox opened the conference with a rousing plenary session exploring the need for closer working relationships between institutions of higher education and their surrounding communities. Dr. Harkavy's successes in Philadelphia from his position at the University of Pennsylvania offered many the tangible examples and insights they eagerly sought. The conference then reached a high point when Dr. Judith Ramaley, formerly president of the University of Vermont and now with the National Science Foundation, gave the keynote speech of the conference. Dr. Ramaley provided an impressive overview of the state of science and general education at both the primary/secondary level, as well as in higher education. Her breadth of insight rounded out a conference during which we had many opportunities to share teaching strategies, the perils of political flux, and funding opportunities. If you did not make it to Pittsburgh, the plenary papers can be found at the AGLS website ([www.bsu.edu/agls](http://www.bsu.edu/agls)).

*AGLS News* is the newsletter of the Association for General and Liberal Studies. Send news, information, or queries to:

Marianne Hopper, *AGLS News* Editor  
Dean, School of Behavioral & Social Sciences  
St. Edward's University, Box 1018 • 3000 S. Congress Ave. • Austin, TX 78704-6489  
Or e-mail to [marianh@admin.stedwards.edu](mailto:marianh@admin.stedwards.edu)

**Also, see the AGLS website at [www.bsu.edu/agls](http://www.bsu.edu/agls)**

## Transferring General Education from the Community College: A Four-Year Faculty Member's Perspective

By John H. Gottcent, University of Southern Indiana

First, I want to thank Mike, Ann-Marie, and Paul for inviting me to participate on this panel. I think this is an extremely important issue for AGLS members to consider, and I'm happy to supply whatever help my perspective may provide.

### The Transfer/Community College Situation

Let me start on a personal note. I myself was a transfer student as an undergrad (though not from a community college). I recall from first-hand experience what transferring to a 4-year institution can feel like. I actually had the audacity to write a letter to the registrar at my new institution spelling out how I wanted my transfer credits allocated. Very quickly, I received a reply telling me my credits would be assigned by the receiving institution "irrespective of my wishes." Forty years have passed since that postal exchange, but I can still recall the sting of those words.

Today, I'm overwhelmed by the complexity of this issue from a community college perspective. People who work at community colleges must juggle 8–12 balls in the air at once, since their students wish to transfer to many different institutions, all of which have different general education programs. Under such circumstances, I'm both amazed at and appreciative of how well it's done even now.

I'm also sensitive to the snobbery that can come from 4-year faculty, many of whom look down on community college faculty as inferior rather than as colleagues. These same people often view any attempt to compromise with community colleges as a sell-out.

In addition, there are problems within and among 4-year institutions themselves which impinge on the issue of transfer. For example, individual majors at four year institutions often want to use General Education for their own purposes. At my college, we allow our University Core Speech requirement to be met by Introduction to Speech (the traditional formal speaking course) or by Introduction to Interpersonal Communications (a less formal, more interactive course), and we accept either course from a community college for such a purpose. But if a student wants to major in, say, Business, that department requires her to have Intro to Speech, and only Intro to Speech. If she's

taken the other course, she has to go back and take Intro to Speech also.

Also, the snobbery I mentioned earlier does not only exist between four year and community college faculty. Major research institutions usually do not consider other four year state schools to be on equal footing with themselves, and often do not see themselves as part of a state system at all, preferring to use peer institutions nationwide as their benchmarks. This too impinges on the issue of transfer.

### The 4-Year Perspective

On the other hand, having worked at a 4-year institution for over 30 years, I can also see things from that point of view. Though the public (and many legislators/administrators) would like to think of higher education as a seamless web—would like to think that it should matter naught whether a student begins at Institution X, then moves to Y, then to Z, then back to X—faculty want their campuses and curricula to maintain a certain uniqueness, a certain local flavor. And I agree. My institution is not the same as Indiana University or Ball State University, and should not be. We are smaller, with a different mission, and a different campus climate. (For example, we can require Ethics of all students, while realistically, they cannot.) This is not snobbery, but a recognition of individuality.

We are much concerned with diversity today. But one sense of diversity requires that, to some extent, we maintain some of these unique characteristics—and a campus' General Education program is a major component of this character. To state the same idea from a student's perspective: Students value choice. But there will be no choice if all the transfer options before them are the same. A trade-off between choice and convenience is necessary.

### So What Do We Do?

Here are five ideas:

**1. Communication:** we must get 4-year and 2-year faculty to engage in more frequent and more meaningful conversations.

**2. Globalism:** we must get faculty to see themselves and their work as part of a larger whole—a web that may not be seamless, but which is nonetheless there. The age of the multi-

*These comments were delivered at the end of a panel presentation at the 2001 AGLS Conference in Pittsburgh. The other presenters—all from community colleges—were Michael Gress, Anne-Marie McCartan, and Paul Blaisdell.*

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***Transferring  
General  
Education,  
continued***

transfer student (the student who transfers more than once as an undergrad) is not going away, but is going to become more common.

**3. Mutual Respect:** we must generate such respect, not only between/among faculty or institutions of varying types, but also within institutions (for example, respect between professional programs and Gen Ed, with neither using the other for its own purposes).

**4. Holistic Thinking:** we must generate a willingness to engage in such things as program articulation, accepting the spirit of one institution's Gen Ed program as equivalent to the spirit of one's own (within reasonable limits), at least for those students who complete Associate of Arts or Science degrees.

**5. Acceptance of Limitations:** we must realize that we are not going to create a world in which every program is identical and interchangeable, and we should not create such a world. But we can work toward smaller successes (for example, statewide common minimum requirements). Students who transfer from a community college without an AA or AS, and those of us who work with such students, at either end, must learn to live with some inconvenience here.

As is so often the case, these things are easier to say than to do. But since doing usually starts with saying, let's make a commitment to turn these words into action.

***Call for Proposals***

**AGLS 2002 Annual Conference in Louisville  
Liberal Education and Character**

***Can character be taught? Is higher education the place to teach it? What are the connections, if any, between liberal education and character? What roles do values play in the educational process? These issues, hot topics of debate at all educational levels, will form the theme of AGLS's 2002 conference.***

Where: The Camberly Brown Hotel (Room Rate: \$125 single/double)  
335 West Broadway  
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

When: October 17-18-19, 2002

How: Please consider submitting proposals for programs (interactive discussions and workshops are especially encouraged) on topics such as:

- The role of character in higher education
- Connections to values education in K-12
- Faculty as role models
- Internships, service learning, and character
- Character and values in general education programs
- Why character should not be taught
- Assessment of character development
- Faculty development for values education

Further details, including proposal submission forms and instructions, will be mailed to you in March.

For further information, contact:

John H. Gottcent  
University Core Coordinator  
University of Southern Indiana  
8600 University Boulevard  
Evansville, Indiana 47712  
(812)464-1750  
gottcent@usi.edu

## JGE Submission Guidelines: Manuscripts Wanted!

AGLS members are most warmly encouraged to submit articles for publication in *THE JOURNAL OF GENERAL EDUCATION*. Your issues of JGE won't start arriving until 2002, so if you have something (perhaps from the Pittsburgh meeting) ready for submission, here is a copy of the SUBMISSION INFORMATION that is from an issue of JGE from 2000 and that provides directions and guidelines for you to send in an article.

"Articles are selected for the original ideas, cogent arguments, and new information they contribute. Each article is assessed by the editors, selected readers, and members of the editorial board for its contribution to the discussion and debate over these issues. Manuscripts for submission should be typed double-spaced throughout, including block quotations and references, and pages should be numbered consecutively, with notes grouped in one section at the end. To ensure anonymity, authors' names and affiliations should appear on a separate cover page. Essays, literature

reviews, and position papers regarding issues in general education should not exceed 25 pages. Research articles on general education or general learning should not exceed 35 pages. Synopses of innovative programs and practices in schools and colleges should not exceed 10 pages. A 50-word abstract is required with all submissions. Authors should follow the *PUBLICATION MANUAL OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA)* in preparing their manuscripts. The original manuscript plus three copies should be sent for editorial review to *THE JOURNAL OF GENERAL EDUCATION*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 820 North University Drive, University Support Building 1, Suite C, University Park, PA 16802-1003. All manuscripts should be available on IBM-compatible (preferred) or Macintosh 3.5" disk."

***Dues-paying members of AGLS will receive the four annual issues of JGE as part of AGLS membership***

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### CAGLS update

## New Board Members and Conference Participation

The Council for the Administration of Liberal and General Studies held its 2001 annual meeting in association with the AGLS 2001 conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At its meeting, CAGLS elected new board members and officers.

Information regarding board members and officers can be found at the CAGLS web site (<http://cstl.semo.edu/cagls>). John Nichols, Saint Joseph's College, was elected President. William Jenkins, Youngstown State University, became President and asked the group to pursue two projects: a mission and goals statement, and a

best administrative practices statement. In addition, CAGLS has posted a general education consultant database on its web site.

CAGLS will participate in two spring 2002 conferences. The Council will host a breakfast on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the AAC&U 2002 annual conference in Washington, DC. Later, during Feb. 21-23, 2002, CAGLS will cosponsor the AAC&U's working conference, to be held in Dallas, TX, that will focus on assessment of student learning in general education.

***Persons interested in joining the CAGLS network may do so by completing an online form at the CAGLS web site at [http://cstl.semo.edu/cagls/join\\_form.htm](http://cstl.semo.edu/cagls/join_form.htm)***

Joseph P. Katz Award

## John Hinni Receives Award

John Hinni, Dean Emeritus of University Studies, Southeast Missouri State University, was the recipient of the Joseph P. Katz award at the 2001 Annual AGLS conference. To make it easy to understand why John was the recipient, sections from the compelling nomination letter submitted by John Gottcent and Robert Mauldin are quoted below.

### Contributions made to General and Liberal Education

"It is difficult to give a 'brief' description of John Hinni's contributions to general and liberal education since he might well be described as the godfather of general education programs, at least in the Midwest. There is hardly a school in this region, and not many in the nation, which has designed or revised a general education program over the past twenty years without being touched in some way by John's presence and expertise...He has vast experience in general education curriculum revision, having served first as the director of the general education program at Southeast Missouri State University, and then as the founding dean of its School of University Studies. ... He was the founding president of the Council for the Administration of General and Liberal Studies (CAGLS), and has published not only on academic and administrative issues related to general education, but on co-curricular issues involving student affairs programs as well...."

### Commitment and activity contributing to the improvement of the educational experiences of students

"Most of our students today are engaged in general education programs developed by faculty who were mentored, to one degree or another, by John. But who mentored John? When he helped develop the general education program at SEMO in the 1980s, there were only a few models to work with. Nonetheless, the program that emerged became a driving and integrating force for every undergraduate on his campus, and, by extension, for countless undergraduates throughout the land... We have both seen John interact with students on our own campuses. His enthusiasm and his grandfatherly manner are infectious. We have also worked with John as consultants reviewing programs at other schools. When he does so, John always insists on meeting separately with that school's students. We have seen him elicit from them ideas and opinions that they would not have shared with their own faculty, thus insuring that student voices are heard in the curricular review process. In so doing he reminds us, as he constantly reminds himself, that education is first and foremost a student-centered endeavor."

### Commitment and activity contributing to colleagues

"In the early 1980s, before the most recent wave of general education reform began in earnest, John Hinni was instrumental in bringing about a comprehensive proposal for change in the program at his home campus, Southeast Missouri State University...The new program was of the infusion model, in which all courses in the program were required to address seven common goals. This model gave the program an identity and

coherence seldom found in higher education today. Recognizing that such a program required considerable nurturing in order to be successful, John enlisted the talent on his own campus via weekly workshops in order to address the manner in which these seven goals could be accomplished. When asked how he was able to accomplish all that he did, he called it a "shoe leather" job, meaning that he worked very closely with his colleagues in a one-on-one fashion. While we agree that shoe leather had a lot to do with it, we suggest that a remarkable level of enthusiasm and political savvy were key elements as well. Many who are involved in general education are well aware of the obstacles associated with constructing and implementing a quality gen ed program—very few of us have been as successful as John Hinni in getting it done."

### Commitment and Activity contributing to the understanding of the theory and practice of General/Liberal Education at the national level

"John has been a frequent presenter and workshop leader at AGLS conferences dating back to the mid-1980s, and has served on the organization's Executive Board. He has done similar work for professional organizations ranging from the American Association for Higher Education to the Conference on the Freshman Year Experience. He has also published frequently on issues in gen ed in media ranging from journals like *Perspectives* to volumes such as that produced by Jerry Gaff's 'Strong Foundations in General Education' project, of which John was an integral member. As such, he has been a leader in identifying general and liberal education as worthy of serious professional attention. As pointed out by Jerry Gaff, John was not only the 'prime mover' behind CAGLS (and its first executive director), but almost single-handedly, 'he kept the lists of people in newly created positions of director or deans of general education programs and arranged for meetings of this small but growing group of new professionals at various conferences.' John continues to be active in CAGLS, and offers workshops for new administrators of general and liberal programs at AGLS annual conferences. We have witnessed John in action at these workshops, and have observed first-hand the kind of impact that he has had on those who are just beginning in general education. Although now a retired 'dean emeritus,' John Hinni is still actively involved in the pursuit of excellence for general and liberal studies."

"Having met John when I went to my first AGLS meeting in 1992 as a new general education administrator, I too am one of the victims of his influence, for which I am forever thankful. To me he provided wisdom and perspective, support and friendship, and all those other things that can only be described with an endless list of adjectives. Again, John, congratulations and thank you."

## AGLS Executive Council 2002

The following is a list of Executive Council members. If you have any issues, concerns or questions you would like taken up by the Executive Council, please contact us. We would like to hear from you.

### 2001/2002 President

John Nichols  
NEH Distinguished Teaching Professor  
Box 895  
Saint Joseph's College  
Rensselaer, IN 47978  
Off (219) 866-6133 Fax (219) 866-6300  
E-mail: nichols@saintjoe.edu

### Past President / 2000 AGLS President

Robert Levy  
Coordinator of Gen. Ed. (Emeritus)  
Professor of Psychology (Emeritus)  
6321 Tanglewood Road  
Terre Haute, IN 47802  
Off (812) 894-2120  
E-Mail: ascrlevy@scifac.indstate.edu

### Vice President / 2002-2004 Pres. Elect

Rob Mauldin  
Director General Education  
Professor of Chemistry  
Shawnee State University  
940 Second Street  
Portsmouth, OH 45662  
Off (740) 351-3137 Fax (740) 351-3501  
E-mail: rmauldin@shawnee.edu

### Advisory Council Convenor

Janice Green  
New England Resource Ctr Higher Edu.  
12 Royal Crest Drive #6  
North Andover, MA 01845  
Off (978) 689-8494  
E-Mail: jangreen66@aol.com

### Secretary Treasurer

Barbara Frankle  
Dean of Faculty Academic Affairs  
Lemoyne-Owen College  
807 Walker Avenue  
Memphis, TN 38126  
Off (901) 942-7305 Fax (901) 942-7373  
E-mail: barbara\_frankle@loc.edu

### Editor of The AGLS Newsletter

Marianne Hopper, Dean  
School of Behavioral and Social Sciences  
St. Edward's University  
Box 1018, 3001 S. Congress Avenue  
Austin, TX 78704-6489  
Off (512) 448-8551 Fax (512) 448-8492  
E-Mail: marianh@admin.stedwards.edu

### 2001 Conference Planner

Roberta Aronson, Director  
The Honors College and Program Dev.  
Duchesne University  
212 College Hall  
Pittsburgh, PA 15282  
Off (412) 396-1818 Fax (412) 396-5197  
e-mail: aronson@duq.edu

### 2002 Conference Planner

John Gottcent  
University of Southern Indiana  
8600 University Blvd.  
Evansville, IN 47712  
Off (812) 464-1750 Fax (812) 465-7152  
e-mail: gottcent@usi.edu

### Executive Director

Thomas Lowe  
Dean, University College  
Ball State University, NQ 323  
Muncie, IN 47306  
Off (765) 285-1511 Fax (765) 285-2384  
E-mail: tlowe@bsu.edu

### Secretary to the Executive Director

Rebecca Amato  
University Core Curriculum  
NQ 323, Ball State University  
Muncie, IN 47306  
Off (765) 285-2385 Fax (765) 285-2384  
E-mail: bamato@bsu.edu

### Executive Council Members Oct. 1999- Oct. 2002

Margaret J. Downes  
Department of Literature  
228 Carmichael Hall CPO #1620  
One University Heights  
Asheville NC 28804-8505  
Off (828) 251-6809  
E-Mail: downes@unca.edu

Mary Ellen Pitts  
Director, Writing Center  
Rhodes College  
2000 N. Parkway  
Memphis TN 38112  
Off (901) 843-3293 Fax (901) 752-0762  
E-Mail: pitts@rhodes.edu

Patricia Richard  
Dean, University College & Assoc. Provost  
for Undergraduate Studies  
Ohio University  
140 Chubb Hall  
Athens OH 45701  
Off (740) 593-1935 Fax (740) 593-0206  
E-Mail: richard@ohio.edu

### Executive Council Members Oct. 2000- Oct. 2003

Belinda C. Anderson  
Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Virginia Union University  
1500 N. Lombardy Street  
Richmond, VA 23220  
Off (804) 257-5606 Fax (804) 257-5800  
E-Mail: bcanderson@vu.edu

Anne-Marie McCartan  
Provost and Dean  
Richard Bland College  
of The College of William and Mary  
11301 Johnson Road  
Petersburg, VA 23805  
Off (804) 862-6210 Fax (804) 863-1666  
E-Mail: amccartan@rbc.edu

Gil Porter  
Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate  
Studies  
General Education Program  
The Conley House, 602 Sanford Street  
University of Missouri-Columbia  
Columbia, MO 65211  
Off (573) 882-6805 Fax (573) 884-4690  
E-Mail: porterm@missouri.edu

### Executive Council Members Oct. 2001- Oct. 2004

Ron Daniel  
Assoc. Provost for Undergraduate Programs  
Virginia Tech  
330 Burruss Hall (0132)  
Blacksburg, VA 24061  
Off (540) 231-3341 Fax (540) 231-7211  
E-Mail: rdaniel@vt.edu

Michael Gress  
Coordinator of General Education  
Professor of Philosophy and English  
Vincennes University  
1002 N. First St.  
Vincennes, IN 47591  
Off (812) 888-5441 Fax (812) 888-5531  
E-Mail: mgress@indian.vinu.edu

Fred Hinson  
Assoc. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
& Director of General Education  
Western Carolina University  
560 HFR Adm. Building  
Cullowhee, NC 28723-9015  
Off (828) 227-7498 Fax (828) 227-7498  
E-Mail: hinson@wcu.edu

### Representative of Council for Admin. of General & Liberal Studies

Bill Jenkins  
Coordinator of General Education  
Youngstown State University  
1 University Plaza  
Youngstown, OH 44555  
Off (330) 742-2983 Fax (330) 742-7169  
E-Mail: wdjenkin@cc.yzu.edu

### Representative of Historic Black Colleges

Phyllis Worthy Dawkins  
Co-Director, HBCU Faculty Development  
Network  
Johnson C. Smith University  
100 Beatties Ford Road  
Charlotte, NC 28216-5398  
Off (704) 378-1287 Fax (704) 378-1281  
E-Mail: pdawkins@jcsu.edu

**AGLS NEWS**

c/o Marianne Hopper  
 School of Behavioral & Social Sciences  
 St. Edward's University, Box 1018  
 3000 S. Congress Ave.  
 Austin, TX 78704-6489

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*Is your membership in AGLS due for renewal? Look at your mailing label on this newsletter. The date following your name is the year your membership expires. Use the membership renewal form included here. If you think our records are wrong, or if you have questions about your membership, contact the Executive Director, Tom Lowe.*

### **AGLS Membership Form**

New Membership     Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Department or Program \_\_\_\_\_

University/College Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Membership Fees**

Faculty/Administration:     One Year \$40     Two Years \$70     Three Years \$100

Student \$10     Institution \$60     Adjuncts \$25

**Send with your check made payable to AGLS and mail to: B. Thomas Lowe, AGLS Executive Director, Dean of University College, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306**