

Mason Core Committee
October 14, 2014
11:00 – 12:30 p.m., Merten Hall, D3300

Attending: Janette Muir (Chair), Dominique Banville, Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Kim Eby, Doug Eyman, Marcy Glover, Stephanie Hazel, Hugh Sockett, Carol Urban

Out: Rick Diecchio, Kelly Dunne, Becky Ericson, Tamara Maddox, Frank Allen Philpot, Mara Schoeny, Peter Winant

Agenda:

1. Check In
2. Course Proposals
3. Mason Core – Synthesis/Capstone proposal to Faculty Senate – final
4. E-series

Check In

- Stephanie conducted research over the summer exploring the link between curiosity and research focus. She is analyzing the data now. This led to conversation about whether this could change the way we approach learning outcomes, to make them less threatening, to shift from discovery to curiosity.
- Janette shared that that we have extended the deadline for 4-VA grant funding. All grants should be collaborative.

Course Proposals

- IT subcommittee – Carol reporting
CYSE 493 – Synthesis – tabled
EVPP 378-379 – Synthesis – tabled
Both proposals were tabled due the discussion regarding capstone versus synthesis. Both courses would function better as capstone courses, in fact they do a great job of tying together four years of major coursework, however they are missing the interdisciplinary component. If the proposal is not accept by the Faculty Senate, the proposals need to be returned for additional information. It has been requested that all future synthesis proposals include rubrics. The subcommittee was having great difficulty assessing how the learning outcomes are met even with the detailed proposals.
- Global subcommittee – general discussion as subcommittee did not get change to discuss
FRLN 331 – Global Understanding – approved
They liked the course by asked that the title be verified – there is a contradiction between the proposal sheet and the syllabus.

Mason Core – Synthesis/Capstone proposal to Faculty Senate – final

- The group worked on revising the proposal to the Faculty Senate. The recommendation is to add that students must complete their Oral Communication and Written Communication requirements prior to taking these courses (either capstone or synthesis). There is growing evidence that students are taking the OC and upper level WC requirements in their senior year and transfer students are taking synthesis in their first semester. This is not ideal and as synthesis is supposed to have a strong emphasis on OC and WC, mandating these as prerequisites is logical and may improve student success in these courses. After discussion, the prerequisite was also added to the capstone course.

E-series

- One of the primary focuses this semester will be on creating “pathways” through the Mason Core curriculum. To assist students in having a more intentional experience and to earn a credential at the end (to be determined).
- The requirements currently recommended:
18-21 credits
co-curricular work (to be monitored by a subject matter related office, most likely within University Life)
- Identified areas where this might be possible: Well Being, Sustainability, and Global.
- Currently exploring Creativity and Civic Engagement as two other areas.
- Students will have two options to choose from: purely academic or academic with co-curricular. There will be an academic component to experiential learning – not just activities.

Mandatory Course for all Transfer Students

- A significant number of students transfer into Mason with their lower level general education requirements already met. With the exception of ENGH 302, there is no other course that they take at Mason that has a “shared” experience component to it. Given our focus on the Mason graduate, do we feel they are missing a component? Should we create a special course, at the 300 level for all transfer students to take? There was general discussion and the consensus at this time is that there could not be a mandatory new course. Perhaps a workshop prior to starting courses or an enhanced UNIV 301 in the future, but not at this time. Before such a course could be created, the question of what is the problem needs to be answered first to ensure the course addresses the concerns behind creating the requirement.