

Mason Core Committee  
November 2, 1015  
11:00 – 12:30 p.m., Merten Hall, 3300

**Attending:** Janette Muir (Chair), Melissa Broeckelman-Post, Kelly Dunne, Doug Eyman, Marcy Glover, Stephanie Hazel, Tamara Maddox, Mara Schoeny, Carol Urban, Andrea Weeks

**Out:** Dominique Banville, Cheryl Druehl, Kim Eby, Becky Ericson, Matt Scherer, Nathan Pittman, Peter Winant

### **Agenda**

- No courses to review
- discussion of IT category - revision of learning outcomes
- continuation of Global Understanding learning outcomes discussion

### **Information Technology - learning outcomes revision and removal of ethics component**

Tamara Maddox led a small subcommittee to discuss how to change the IT category to reflect current technology trends and needs. She has also spoken with her peers in the Volgenau School to solicit their opinions about the category and whether or not it meets current needs. The consensus was no. The current wording for the ethics portion could be defined as basic home security and does not need to be taught in a course.

After extensive discussion, there were several ideas on what to do next with this category.

- Devolve the requirements to the schools/major level, similar to synthesis or capstone. This would require a faculty senate vote. We would set a baseline requirement for all courses and units could decide if they wish for their students to take one of the approved courses already on the books or create/assign one of their own courses to fulfill.
- The current learning outcomes do not meet current technology/societal needs. We can revise them to be concept driven, or in the case of department offerings, discipline based.
- Another option would be to create one IT course, but teach it in the same way as ENGH 302, with sections defined by discipline specific needs. There was concern about the burden this would place on the home department however.
- Tamara will speak to the IT department (largest provider of class seats currently) what their opinion is of this course. She will also speak with the Deans Caraballo and Ball to get their perspective on the requirement and our proposed changes.

### **What about ethics?**

This portion of the requirement has been the most problematic since inception. Is it only for technology ethics, if so, it is not adequately taught in the majority of the courses that are approved for the category.

Doug Eyman explained that IT can be defined three ways.

1. How to use
2. information literacy
3. computation thinking

If we revise the category, should it be a combination of 2 and 3?

## **MOTION: Do we remove ethics from the Information Technology requirement?**

YES – unanimous

Now that we have removed ethics from the IT component, the change will require a final Faculty Senate vote to implement the change. Where should ethics reside? Standalone requirement, imbedded in the major as part of a pre-existing course, in Global Understanding or Synthesis? What does ethics mean? In the field or ethical theory in general? If we desire an “ethics across the curriculum,” that will need to come from Faculty Senate.

Should we change the title of the category to Information Literacy?

After extensive discussion about where to house the ethics requirement, the group came to the conclusion that ethics is already infused across the Mason Core curriculum.

**CONCLUSION:** The Mason Core committee, after extensive review of the requirement and the Mason Core curriculum, has found that the ethics component of the Information Technology requirement is being met in multiple categories and therefore, the inclusion of ethics in the IT category is redundant and ineffective. The committee also recommends that the Global Understanding requirement add language about ethics (currently implied) and that the synthesis, capstone and research intensive courses strengthen their ethics components.

The committee will re-write the IT learning outcomes to remove the ethics component. There will be discussion as to whether or not the other learning outcomes need to be changed.

## **Global Understanding – revision of learning outcomes and ways to fulfill the requirement**

Scenarios currently under discussion:

1. Leave it alone, except add the word “ethical” to L.O. 3.
2. Inventory analysis against new learning outcomes and begin process of removal of noncompliant courses.
3. Are there other ways to meet this requirement other than a course? Study abroad, experiential, internships, waiver for international students, essay waiver process?
4. Create a GU Encore module?

Janette and Marcy met with the Study Abroad office to discuss ways for their programs to meet the GU requirement. We are waiting on them to provide us with learning outcomes for their programs. It is their hope that once these L.O.s are accepted by our committee, that all of their future programs must meet those L.O.s in order to take place.

The general consensus was that if we allow a study abroad or any non-classroom based program to count for this category, it has to meet the GU learning outcomes and be pre-vetted and officially on the books. The committee did not feel comfortable with the Undergraduate office shouldering the burden of reviewing and approving waivers for students as they could foresee the workload becoming substantial in a very short period of time. Whatever decision is made, it has to be programmable in Banner.

This issue will continue to be discussed at future meetings once we have additional information to consider.