**Mason Core Meeting Agenda**Thursday, December 12  
1:00-2:30pm  
Merten 3300

In attendance: Cheryl Druehl, Melissa Broeckleman-Post, Samaine Lockwood, Mara Schoeny, Krista Shires, Courtney Wooten, Tom Polk, Laura Poms, Ali Weinstein, Jane Hooper, Stephanie Foster

1. Discuss University of Virginia’s new general education program and policy documents from SACSCOC and SCHEV.

The general consensus is that the UVA method seems difficult to implement and resource intensive, particularly the designation of special faculty (who are pulled from their departmental duties to create courses). The idea of offering a freshman experience is enticing but we do not want to create too many separate experiences when we are aiming for unity and cohesiveness in the curriculum. The discussion turned to the focus groups for Mason Core and entailed having 4 faculty from different disciplines teach an introductory course with 3 weeks from each disciplines (similar to the UVA forums method). This is similar to the Peter Stearns model for one of his classes in world culture. It would be difficult to have multiple models (UVA has three different cores). Having students meet their core outside of their department would be ideal and one or more of the models they presented aim at this goal. Is there a computing or technology requirement missing from their outcomes? It looks like capstone/synthesis part missing as well? This does reduce credits with this model. We should be conscious of not adding too much. Freshman model supports the “why come to Mason” push, while still providing value for transfer students (especially with ADVANCE). We do not want to have the general education requirements become an impediment to our student body, which is very different from UVA. The committee discussed requiring students to take foundational classes first and whether the UVA system may be too complex for students (for advising purposes) otherwise. Discussion about faculty concerns over budget and quality of education ensued.

1. Update on online program development

There have been conversations about what online education at Mason would look like. Right now, faculty objected to separate or private institution that would separate curriculum. Now administration is trying to move forward with building online access to programs within our current structure. This includes Mason Core. Sub committees were created, including one on curriculum. Conversations are ongoing. Faculty have indicated online education should include pedagogical development to ensure that online education aligns with on campus education and that both have academically meaningful, transformative components. Discussion is still ongoing regarding budget and model/partner and whether or not the cost will be accessible to our diverse student body. There is concern over advertising accessibility for online courses, but then actually charging premium prices (that go along with Wiley partnership essentially inherently). How will this be navigated? For undergraduate, unlike graduate, you can go back and forth between online and on campus mixed (such as NOVA does). Scheduling questions, labor and compensation questions, and how hybrid classes and classroom space might be impacted. Evidently, there has been difficulty hiring quality instructors to teach these online classes. If not, who will train those who are not ready yet? It cannot be assumed that online pedagogy is the same as in classroom. Retention will also be an issue (if training) because of pay scale here-most have been leaving once trained to work at universities that are paying better. There is also burnout on faculty who set up the online classes but then are asked to step away. Wiley tends to have full time faculty to set up the courses and complete the instructional design and then have them turned over to adjunct. There is also concern about courses that are harder to teach online (for example calculus) and there may be pushback between departments and management. There is also an issue with multilingual learners getting a quality education online, and getting the extra support they may need.

1. Review and vote on course proposals

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Proposal** | **Comments** | **Vote** |
| QR | [MATH 272: Mathematics for the Elementary School Teachers II](https://workingcatalog.gmu.edu/courseleaf/courseleaf.cgi?page=/courseadmin/10182/index.html&step=showfullrecord) | The committee approved this unanimously | APPROVE |
| CAP | [SOCI 416: Internship in Sociology I](https://workingcatalog.gmu.edu/courseleaf/courseleaf.cgi?page=/courseadmin/13944/index.html&step=showfullrecord) | Needs to say that is a capstone class | APPROVE |
| IT | [SOCI 431: Survey Research](https://workingcatalog.gmu.edu/courseleaf/courseleaf.cgi?page=/courseadmin/16200/index.html&step=showfullrecord) | Strong course. Doesn’t seem to have any clear assessment of the learning objectives demonstrated on the syllabus. It seems to address the older IT outcomes. It was renumbered from SOCI 410. The lab component was not strongly addressed (its existence doesn’t mean that the learning outcomes will be addressed in it). Where is storage, exchange, etc.? More information about assignments especially in the lab might be needed to clarify. Specific evidence is needed to show that the course meets the L/O for the new IT outcomes. It was not taught the semester the IT category was assessed. | Roll Back without encouragement |