Marquette University
University Board of Undergraduate Studies
Approved Meeting notes of December 14, 2011

Members present: Christine Shaw (Chair), Sandra Cleveland, Noel Adams, M. Benham Ghasemzadeh, Gary Meyer, Debra Oswald, Stephanie Quade, James Richie, Peter Toumanoff
Absent: Joyce Wolburg, Kathleen Ford, Matthew Hurley, Joan Wihpp, and Chae Yi.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of meeting for November 30, 2011 were approved without corrections by consensus.

Announcements / Reports: Christine Shaw noted that the Academic Senate approved the Media Studies major and corporate communications minor. The new Faculty Liaison from Academic Senate is Kris Krueger

New Business

University Core of Common Studies – Charges from Academic Senate
The committee had a discussion regarding the following three questions, as charged from James South, Chair of Academic Senate. 1. What do we know about student learning as related to the core? 2. Do the nine current knowledge areas still make sense today? 3. Does the current structure and integration of the core facilitate learning?

Context to this issue was provided from Gary Meyer. Part of reaccreditation process is a self-study where MU addresses the core and learning outcome assessment. To date, Marquette doesn’t have a lot of direct measures of student learning for the core of common studies, as noted in our previous meeting with core director, Dr. Mike Monahan. Most assessment is from self-reports in the senior and alumni surveys. Part of the lack of direct measures is because the core learning objectives are often vague and hard to measures with direct outcomes. Students take core classes in different order, at various points in their career. Peter Toumanoff noted that some core goals are lofty and important, and while not measurable are central to our mission.

A number of preliminary possible recommendations regarding assessment were discussed. Gary Meyer noted that this assessment could include looking at the 4 integrated learning outcomes and possibly rewriting them to be clearer and more measurable. Christine Shaw and Stepanie Quade suggested that looking at program outcomes might also provide some direct measures related to the core. Course based assessment was also suggested as a method of assessing the core.

During the discussion it was noted that the core is 8 years old and it might be time to have a reevaluation and reflection of the core, if it “works” and is meeting the goals that it was set out to achieve. The difficulty in creating the core and developing learning objectives was highlighted and the committee questioned how to reflect on the core without creating new battles. The role of the UBUS for addressing these questions was discussed. It was also discussed which groups on campus have responsibility for assessing the core, including the assessment director the Core Curriculum Review Committee, the role of faculty, and advisors. Some of the core goals also involve student services and institutional learning.

Tasks the committee identified to accomplish for January 18th meeting:
- Review the core of common study annual reports
- Review the Institutional learning reports for the last 5 years. This report includes the senior survey and alumni survey reports
- Review the 9 learning knowledge area objectives
- Christine Shaw also noted a number of useful articles on assessment and Jesuit education that could be used to further our assessment strategy.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:15

Respectfully submitted by Debra Oswald