University Board of Undergraduate Studies

Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2013

Present: Edward Blumenthal, Sandra Cleveland, M. Behnam Ghasemzadeh, Stanley Harrison, Alex Lahr, Gary Meyer, Stephanie Quade, James Richie, Christine Shaw, Mary Ann Siderits, John Su, Peter Toumanoff, Zachary Wallace, Joan Whipp, Joyce Wolburg

The minutes of the previous meeting (April 3) were approved as submitted.

Announcements & Acknowledgements

1. Gary Meyer announced that these 3-year terms on the board are ending in 2013: Sarah Feldner, Noel Adams, and Peter Toumanoff.
2. Gary announced that Sarah Feldner has expressed a willingness to serve as Board chair next year if the schedule can accommodate her class schedule
3. The Board thanked James Richie for his work as Board chair this academic year

Discussion and Actions

1. Annual Report – There were suggestions for minor edits and agreement that Jim should forward the report to the Academic Senate.
2. Core Curriculum Models (continued discussion).
   a. John Su is interested in getting more thoughts from the Board on the various Core Curriculum models that have been proposed: Which model seems to be best? Is a hybrid of any of the models possible? Should any model be off the table? Which ones are most reasonable/practical? He then sought feedback on the various models that have been proposed.
   b. Model 1 – Eliminate Integrate Core Learning outcomes
      -Currently MU has 2 sets of outcomes – 9 knowledge outcomes and 4 integrated outcomes
      -Bringing the two together is a challenge
      -Currently the integrated outcomes do not appear on any syllabi
      -If kept, the integrated outcomes need to be rewritten in order to be measurable
      -There needs to be agreement across the colleges on whether the integrated outcomes are endpoints for undergraduates or alumni?
      -How do the integrated outcomes relate to the 4 pillars?
      -Can the pillars be the focus of the learning outcomes – Right now, there is a disconnect between the MU mission and pillars and the integrated outcomes
      -What is the relationship between the Core and the university mission?
      -For the integrated outcomes to work, there is need for Core faculty to be convened periodically to discuss how they are integrating outcomes – this is currently not occurring
      -There was agreement that all of the problems above are real but no strong move to give up on the idea of integrated outcomes
   c. Model 2 - Disciplinary Capstone/Senior Experience Model
• Could be way to incentivize instructors to integrate core outcomes into final courses and also a way of ensuring assessment across all colleges

• Problematic because this approach is costly because of its reliance on incentives; some colleges would need to create new courses

• Conversion of existing core course that is later in course sequence as a capstone less expensive – but question on whether the integrated learning outcomes are built into the course curriculum OR are the integrated learning outcomes simply assessed in such a course

Do student acquire the outcomes in the course OR do they simply get assessed on the outcomes in the course?

• The second Theology course, the second philosophy course (ethics) or a Diverse Cultures course have been seen as possible courses where the integrated outcomes could be assessed

• There was consensus that the Integrated Senior Capstone Experience should be given highest priority of all of the models being considered.

d. Model 3 - The Electronic Portfolio Model

• There was agreement that while putting evidence all in one place that students are meeting the integrated outcomes sounds like a good idea, this approach is not practical.

• Joyce and Joan discussed that considerable technical and capacity issues exist in the current D2L e-portfolio system. Both Communication and Education have been using the D2L eportfolio system.

• The student representatives had mixed feelings about this model. Zach said it would be convenient to look back at a portfolio of one’s work when doing the senior exit survey. Alex, however, was skeptical about whether students would learning much or integrate much through an eportfolio system.

e. Model 4 - Thematic Grouping of Courses

• This model would incentivize and push for more integrated, cross-disciplinary courses that would then integrate learning outcomes.

• There was consensus that this model would be hard to implement because it would be so highly dependent on strong advising

f. Model 5 - A university-wide integrated capstone course

• There was interest in this model but not much time for discussion.

• Gary Meyer asked for ideas on possible overarching themes if such a model were tried and encouraged Board members to discuss with colleagues and email him with ideas

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joan Whipp