University Board of Undergraduate Studies

Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2013

Present: Noel Adams, Edward Blumenthal, Marcus Braga-Alves, Sandra Cleveland, Ellen Eckman, Alex Lahr, Gary Meyer, James Richie, Christine Shaw, Mary Anne Siderits, John Su.

Meeting called to order at 1:01pm by Gary Meyer.

Reflection was given by Christine Shaw.

The minutes of the previous meeting (October 2) were approved as submitted.

Announcements:

1. Mary Anne Siderits will be replacing Debra Oswald during her leave. UBUS members introduced themselves.

2. Noel Adams will serve on the Program Review Council for the current academic year with the possibility of serving for a longer term.

Discussions and Actions

1. Update on academic integrity

Tara Baillargeon, Head of Research and Instructional Services at Raynor Memorial Libraries, provided an update on the activities of the Academic Integrity Task Force, which is responsible for developing a comprehensive educational program that will promote academic integrity at Marquette. The Task Force is developing online learning modules for undergraduate and graduate students that will address awareness of academic honesty and Marquette University’s honor code. A module developed specifically for faculty will provide information regarding best practices in course design and assessment procedures that discourage plagiarism and cheating. The faculty module will also present resources and procedures available to assist instructors with issues related to integrity and misconduct. A 90-minute undergraduate module is expected to be launched in the fall of 2014 and will be required for all undergraduate students, who will be granted a certificate of completion once they have successfully completed the module. The graduate student and faculty modules are expected to be launched in the fiscal year of 2015.

Gary Meyer reminded the board members that the Academic Integrity Task Force was created to implement recommendations made by the Boards of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies to the Office of the Provost. Alex Lahr explained that the Marquette University Student Government considers the Task Force initiative important, approved the recommendations and has been involved in the development of the resulting policies and procedures. In order to maximize the effectiveness of the educational program and help students retain initial information, it was suggested that the topics covered in that program be incorporated in classes through assignments related to behavioral expectations. There is evidence that instructors’ communication of expectations regarding academic conduct is very effective. It was also suggested that the modules be broken up in multiple sessions to facilitate memory retention and be
offered in different versions with the same lessons but different questions. There was a consensus that the value of education increases when integrity is in place (some universities have instituted an annual integrity day) and that policies and procedures need to be applied consistently within and across colleges and departments.

2. Curriculum review in the English Department

Gary Meyer presented the revision in the ENGL (English Literature) and WINE (Writing Intensive English) majors to the ENGL and ENGW majors for discussion and input. He also introduced a third and new major, ENGA (English Language Arts), for discussion and voting. John Su explained the changes in the English Department’s undergraduate curriculum to the board members. These changes will result in a more sequenced learning experience that will help students to reinforce the skills and content knowledge required to pursue a variety of careers. They will also help to maintain the high quality of teaching and learning and to stabilize enrollment. Regarding the course offerings, one of the main changes is the replacement of the 2000 surveys with a single 2001 course (Engaging Literature) that will be required for all ENGL, ENGW and ENGA majors. Gary Meyer mentioned that the changes in course offerings will make the core experience more consistent.

The UBUS also considered how the changes resulting from the undergraduate curriculum review will be communicated to other colleges. John Su suggested that this be done by their representatives on the Core Curriculum Review Committee. He also mentioned that the Core of Common Studies website is constantly updated. And Gary Meyer suggested that advisers inform students of the changes during advising week.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the ENGA (English Language Arts) major for education students. The motion passed unanimously.

John Su explained that the changes will be implemented in the fall of 2014.

3. Graduation credit hour requirements

There was an initial discussion on whether the number of credit hours required for graduation at Marquette should be reduced. Comparative information on credit requirements shows that some of Marquette’s peer institutions have already lowered their graduation requirements to 120 hours. While this reduction would make it easier for students to complete their degree work within a four-year timeframe, there is a concern that it would be difficult to lower the number of credit hours in some programs due to the nature of some majors. Gary Meyer suggested that the UBUS continue to discuss this issue in the following meetings with the goal of reaching a final recommendation by the end of the next spring semester.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcus V. Braga-Alves