Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Jim Richie, Chairperson at 1:02 pm in Zilber Hall Room 470.

Attendance:

Members present: Jim Richie (Chair), Edward Blumenthal, Sandra Cleveland, Sarah Feldner, Stanley Harrison, Alex Lahr, Gary Meyer (ex officio), Stephanie Quade (ex officio), Christine Shaw, John Su (ex officio), Peter Toumanoff

Members not present: C. Terrence Anderson, M. Behnam Ghasemzadeh, Debra Oswald, Joan Whipp

Reflection: presented by Christine Shaw

Approval of Minutes of October 3, 2012 – Christine Shaw moved to approve, second by Stanley Harrison and the minutes were approved unanimously with no changes.

Announcements – none

Discussion of University Core of Common Studies – In preparation for the board’s discussion of the three CCRC recommendations and on which the board should focus, Jim Richie (chair) summarized the September 23, 2012 document from the Core Curriculum Review Committee.

Recommendation #1 – Establish a process to directly measure student learning

During the discussion of the first recommendation Peter Toumanoff indicated that before the structure is changed or a process is created, information needs to be gathered that indicates what learning is currently occurring. Sarah Feldner added that without having a specific order to core courses it is difficult to know where to do assessments. Additional concern, per Sarah, is that attempts have been made to measure core learning outcomes, but the feedback received suggests that the measures were not good so learning outcomes need to be re-written; however, cannot re-write without data. Included in this part of the discussion was the suggestion that the curriculum does not integrate learning, that the university has a “distribution requirement.” The conversation quickly switched to recommendation #2.

Recommendation #2 – Consider approaches to better structure or more fully integrate core in ways that support student learning

Several board members commented that recommendation #2 reflects the “big picture” at Marquette University, involving all colleges. There are challenges with fully understanding the CCRC recommendations and the mechanics of assessing the integrated core learning outcomes. Peter Toumanoff emphasized that the integrating of the core and re-structuring of curricula has large programmatic implications, exemplified by the curricular changes in engineering and business where professional and skills courses were moved earlier in the curriculum, then required core courses to come later in the curriculum. This exchange between professional and skills courses and core courses, at least for the business curriculum, prepares business students for greater success in internships.

In addressing the effective assessment concern, Gary explained that assessment at MU is on two levels – direct measure of learning outcomes of each of the nine learning areas and how to effectively measure the integrated core learning outcomes. Measuring the integrated core learning outcomes (ICLO)
effectively is the area of challenge and must be addressed in the self-study for the upcoming reaffirmation of accreditation. Though there is no data collected, there is a process in place to collect and evaluate the integrated core learning outcomes through the capstone courses within various programs at Marquette.

The conversation continued and ideas regarding how to proceed emerged.

- Without knowing where the institution is currently or is headed, ideas and changes of any kind may miss the overall intent and “spirit” intended with the original draft of the integrated learning outcomes.
- Start with the ICLO’s – Do we keep the ICLO’s? What should MU graduates “look-like” upon graduation? If we change that student picture, how do we change the ICLO? What needs to change? Funding? Different type of learning?

Recommendations #3 - Preserve the nine knowledge areas

The committee questioned whether or not nine knowledge areas are too many. It was again mentioned that in the College of Business students enroll in skills and professional courses early in their curriculum to better prepare for internships during their junior and senior years.

Additional comments around this recommendation include the following.

- Consider a smaller number of courses in the knowledge areas and try to integrate a smaller number of courses into the overall core curriculum.
- Review what other schools and universities are doing regarding core curriculum.
- Reminder that changes in the University Core of Common Studies have curricular impact to each college and program.
- Whatever is recommended by UBUS, consensus and support to make this process a priority must include Provost Office, Core Curriculum Review Committee, and Academic Senate.

The discussion on how to proceed ended with the question, “Whose responsibility is it to change the Integrated Core Learning Outcomes and the Institutional Learning Outcomes?” This question led to another discussion on appropriate committees to prioritize the recommendations presented by the CCRC. The following committees were suggested as possibilities: Committee on Academic Procedures, University Board of Undergraduate Studies, Dean’s Council, and University Academic Senate.

Committee members expressed that there is a great deal of good will to address the challenges with prioritizing the recommendations by the CCRC; however, without specific direction and clarity on what to address completing this request is extremely difficult. UBUS has a concern whether or not it is their responsibility and priority to identify and suggest changes to the University core. To address this matter fully by UBUS, significant time would be required.

A final suggestion was to develop a small task force with a specific charge including committee expectations and goals with a discrete series of tasks identified. Sarah Feldner agreed to draft such a charge and the UBUS unanimously agreed. Copies of the charge will be sent to Jim Richie (UBUS chair), John Su (CCRC chair) and copied to Alex Lahr (MUSG representative) and Gary Meyer (UBUS co-chair, Provost Office).

Next meeting (December 12, 2012) will be devoted to the Academic Integrity conversation.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Cleveland