Core Revision College Faculty Discussion Sessions, Arts and Sciences #2, 9/30/15

Core Revision Facilitation Group member provided an overview of the Core revision process, including the Core revision process website (http://www.marquette.edu/common-studies-revision/), the Core Revision Charge document, timeline, and how of college-level discussions fit into the process.

CRFG member Dr. Sarah Feldner (College of Communication) then introduced the two main questions that would guide the discussion for the discussion today:

1) What ideas have you heard in this initial results that you would want us to hold on to? That is, what ideas do we want to make sure are not lost as we move forward?
2) What is missing? What ideas would you expect to see here that are not captured.

Dr. Feldner then presented an overview of the results of the first Core revision faculty survey, taken by the faculty in mid-September. (The full version of the results of this survey are available in .pdf format on the Core Revision website, as well as a PowerPoint document that summarizes the results.)

Following the presentation, the discussion moved between the two questions (What from the survey needs to be emphasized? What is missing from the results of the survey?). Points raised by the faculty in attendance included:

- Math not mentioned in the results from questions 1 and 2 of the survey. Why not, especially since it was an important them in question 4.
- Jesuit background and social justice: keep this focus but link it to a first-year experience.
- Students need to know why the Core is important.
- Sequencing is hard for scheduling.
- Linked courses in the Honors Program are working. Can serve as a model for the Core if there the linked courses form of integration is chosen.
- Should be fewer options for students in the Core; there should be a more common experience.
- Seniors shouldn’t be taking Core courses at the introductory level; more structure needed for how students take courses across the Core.
• There should be some kind of first-year experience. We don’t use the Core unite students across colleges, but we should.
• How do we, as teachers, connect across disciplines and do we reward or punish students who bring in ideas from their other Core courses into our course?
• Need to focus not just on curriculum but also on pedagogy. This needs to be part of the review of the Core. Small courses will make the Core more appealing to students and make the delivery of the course material more effective.
• Core should be competency-based rather than discipline-based.
• What are the financial and other constraints on the changes to the Core?
• Easier if we limit the new Core to existing Core courses, but this will not really be a change.
• There are practical benefits to revising the Core in terms of making Marquette more attractive. The Core offers a “curricular location for distinctiveness,” but we don’t take advantage of this at present.
• Students need to understand the value of Core courses and should be able to explain this to others.
• Parents want students to get their major training, but in a setting in which ethics and service to others are central.
• How do we change the Core when departments are currently staffed to deliver the existing Core?
• Are we analyzing what students take in the current Core? Are the early courses they take in the Core offering opportunities for making connections?
• Need to emphasize excellence. Guarantee an experience of excellence.
• There should be a common first-year experience involving regular faculty teaching courses of 20 or fewer students.
• What happens in the first two years? We want them to move beyond courses and narrow topics to a broader way of understanding the world.