Discovery Task Force Minutes for 11/7/16

In attendance: Julia Paulk, Monica Adya, Jane Peterson, Lowell Barrington, Rebecca Sanders, Joe Mueller, Andy Starsky, Jim Marten, Scott Reid and Sarah Feldner

1. Updates:
   a. no updates from other meetings for today.
   b. Review of all task force meeting; not much about Discovery, so we seem to be on right track.
   c. 1st listening session today; 18 attendees; 6 were from Foundations task force; 5 or 6 staff people rather than tenure-line faculty. Small faculty representation at listening session. Positive responses generally.

2. Recap of decisions from last meeting: 4 courses = 1 for primary major; open for 2ary majors and minors

3. Ideas from small groups:
   a. Scott, Jim, Jane group:
      i. Limited number of broad themes, student pick a theme (4 courses) and define threads within a theme; uncomfortable with the quantitative/qualitative so went with “threads” to have general categories without strict defining terms; would be a menu within each thread; take a course in each thread; how do you select courses; discovery tier is about questioning, investigating and interpreting – courses should incorporate these; courses should meet these criteria; courses self-contained; local, national, global 3 threads in living together (not organized by departments but by areas); example of sustainability, divided into threads, add courses
      ii. Questions & Clarification?
         1. The threads differentiate – how to define?
         2. subsection of theme, organized by methodology or scope – themes will differ according to theme, meant to help guide students to variety of choices will giving students options – 10-12 courses per thread; 1 courses from each thread plus 1 additional; can be lower or upper division
         3. at listening session, idea of different approaches to inquiry – how structured will that be? How do you still include some different approaches like quantitative/qualitative?
            a. Answer: divide the threads into social science, humanities, etc., but needs further definition. But don’t want to say “quantitative/qualitative”. Threads are a proposal for discussion, one way to organize. Method should follow the problem. Allow for adjustment according to class, topic, methodology. It is possible that they could miss one of the
categories but not likely. Will depend on how courses are arranged under the threads.

4. how does this helps us meet the outcomes?
   a. broad themes are good.
   b. Broad but concrete. Students can understand what they might mean.
   c. Requires chairs going through to be sure broad enough to include different types of classes.
   d. idea of different themes addresses concerns about students graduating without having taken X –

5. needs refinement; thread needs to be firmly expressed so it can be applied. Gives choice but also ensures students have had broad tour of what is offered at Marquette. Will need clear definition for those applying it down the road

6. 3 rather than 2 moves away from a bi-polar approach – quantitative vs. qualitative;

7. we will have to work with registrar on how to track what courses students are taking. There are practical concerns to work out.

8. should there be another restriction on a, b, c – can’t repeat acronyms across threads. Maybe wait until we see what the lists look like.
   a. a student could repeat acronyms but get different methodologies
   b. names of threads would be for us to know how to categorize – different methodologies under threads
   c. threads must be well-defined

9. how many courses in a thread and theme?
   a. will be tracked by computer – more courses makes it more complex – want students to make decisions rather than a computer telling them
   b. example 30 courses per theme – some themes will look good but not have enough courses to be sustained

10. can courses appear in different themes? Yes
   a. living together and sustainability can be in same class

11. learning objectives make this a common experience but taking classes with others makes an experience for students
   a. in foundation courses they will be together
   b. a department could offer multiple sections of a course in a theme
   c. 10 per thread might be a lot

b. next group: Amelia, Karen, Patrick: (doc in Google drive)
   i. Quantitative/Qualitative reasoning –
ii. Engaging social systems and values – more than one course in core that looks at engaging social systems and values – could one of discovery tier courses be an engaging social systems and values – could give options in every theme – better to have multiple options within themes so everyone not trying to take that one course

1. what does essv mean? – is tied to learning outcome – not easy to sum up in one word like “discovery” – group wants students to be able to go beyond describing diversity and difference; to think about structures and implications; to be able to engage and discuss; develop competence at foundation level; idea of engagement; how engage with others who have different values –

2. can we also look at how past societies have engaged with the other

3. within US, outside US – cultural diversity

4. process of recognizing issues and questions – transferrable competencies – even in Milwaukee there are different cultural groups

5. look at the learning outcome – for anthropologists, there is a lot of learning before you get to skills

iii. quantitative vs qualitative; take ssv course and one course per theme; have 20% of courses be ssv so students more likely to take them

1. sample theme: community; list of existing courses (not designated a or b)

iv. how to choose themes; what requirements to hold theme together

c. Joe, Rebecca, Julia group:

i. responded to questions – structural rules for the tier; people would declare theme like declaring a minor, after completing foundational level or while in it; students could take courses before declaring; 1 course counting for major or college req.; same course could run out of different themes; need a theme coordinator to monitor assessment and rotation of courses; uncertainty over math/science requirement; complete them before culminating experience;

ii. Joe’s model – sticking with a dichotomy – based on methodology – humanities or math/science type analysis – is clearly defined but is a dichotomy; question of integration – any course at this level must pursue 5th learning objective; has to have explicit graded component apply to theme what learned in previous level of core; should have graded component ask students to demonstrate learning 5th learning objective; theme coordinators would facilitate conversations about themes once per year and coordinate campus events regarding theme;

iii. assessment – theme coordinator would do; assess one theme per year; one outcome per year or two – tie to two assessments – can write in way shows they are doing 5th learning objective
iv. theme: human dignity – in COAS

4. Tentative agreement to work through first model
   a. Remaining questions to be decided:
      i. Process for choosing themes
      ii. Expectations for courses included in theme (criteria)