Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Planning Committee
Tuesday, November 3, 2009 – 11:00-1:00 p.m.


Presentation of NSSE Data
• We have conducted the NSSE at Mason every three years since 2000
• We are starting to look more like our peers in terms of the number of freshmen living on campus (see slide 4)
• Changes in benchmark scores for supportive campus environment, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction were all statistically significant from 2003-2009 for first-year students (see slide 5)
• 60% of respondents on the 2009 NSSE were transfer students
  o This has important implications for the QEP – what are the best ways to reach this group?
• We are below our peers on the number of seniors who report working with a faculty member on a research project outside of course requirements (see slide 13)
  o 12% of seniors reported that they had done so on the 2009 NSSE
• We are below our peers on Enriching Educational Experiences for seniors – although first year student comparisons are good, which has direct implications for QEP as well (see slides 20-23)
• What do the changes within the data mean?
  o Example: what is the impact of midterm grades on the prompt feedback rating?
  o It might be helpful to map out a timeline of when institutional changes took place to see if they had an impact on the changes in the data across the 2003, 2006, and 2009 NSSEs
• Is there a way to survey faculty members to compare student perceptions with those of faculty?
  o We will identify important questions on the NSSE and conduct a similar survey of faculty
• Questions/concerns about the institutions on our list of peers because many of them are not really similar to Mason
  o We will develop a list of QEP peer institutions and the OIA will run report of the questions that are of particular interest to us
• See Karen and Ying’s PowerPoint slides for more complete details about the 2009 NSSE data…

Site Visit to University of Houston
• UH is very similar to us because of their:
  o Transfer student population
  o Number of adjunct faculty
  o Diversity
  o Location
  o Multiple campuses
  o Mission to become a Research I institution
• They distributed a bound copy of their QEP to every institutional leader, the executive summary to every faculty member, and pamphlets about the QEP to all students
• We’ll need to pull in a representative from Writing, probably Writing Across the Curriculum Committee, as part of committee/subcommittee
  o Also reach out to Career Services and the Center for Leadership & Community Engagement
• They adopted the term “research-supportive curriculum” to talk about curricular changes and adjustments
• The activities that we develop and promote need to have related student learning outcomes
• They did not tell departments and colleges what they ought to be doing – there are grants for them to create their own activities and goals
• Added a “Reality Chats” event, which provides funding to bring in external speakers
• UH has similar ambitions as Mason for institutional direction and growth
• They are currently trying to build sustainability into their model
  o Their $5 million budget funds their curricular changes
  o Annual curriculum development grants are issued each spring
    • Curriculum Task Force keeps track of this
• They may have kept their definition of research intentionally broad to get around issues involving assessment

**Ideas for Moving Forward**
• We’ll need to maintain transparency with our budget throughout this process to help with faculty buy-in
• We may conduct a survey to find out about scholarly and creative activities that are taking place on campus
  o There is concern that there is currently not a centralized way for folks to assess and document their experiences with these activities

**Our Revised Timeline**
• Spring 2010 semester:
  o Conduct research on best practices
  o Continue gathering information, meeting with key stakeholders, holding focus groups, etc.
  o Break into subcommittees to focus on certain areas
• Summer 2010:
  o Write the next iteration of our plan
• Fall 2010:
  o Draft will be ready for university review

**QEP Conversations & Outreach**
• Kathy presented about the QEP to the COS Undergraduate Coordinators
  o They were very interested and were sharing their ideas
  o They look forward to updates!