Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Planning Committee  
Tuesday, March 17, 2009 – 2:00-4:00 p.m.  

To-Do for the Full Committee:  
• Send your white paper comments to the following point people as soon as possible  
  o Global Perspectives: Marty Perlin (mperlin@gmu.edu)  
  o Social Entrepreneurship: Marcelle Heerschap (mheersch@gmu.edu)  
  o Student Scholarship: Tim Born (tborn@gmu.edu)

To-Do for the Subcommittees:  
• White paper revisions (no more than 15 pages) are due by noon on Wednesday, March 25th

General Discussion  
• GMU-TV is going to start filming a PSA that will air while the topic selection survey is out  
  o Will also air on local cable channels  
  o They’re trying to recruit faculty members from across the university to give little taglines for each topic  
  o Should be ready by mid-April and will continue to air while the survey is up  
• We expect survey to go live Monday, April 6th

Student Scholarship  
Key points from subcommittee:  
• Overall goal: to get students more engaged in scholarship and creative activity  
  o Tried to broaden the definition of research by calling it a “culture of scholarship”  
• University as a whole seems to lack this “culture” — Mason community and visitors may not realize all that is going on  
• This QEP will make it so that scholarship is something that is available to students and expected from them  
• A lot of crossover with social entrepreneurship  
• This does not just promote individual research, but includes group projects as well  
• Want as many students as possible to get involved with scholarship while they’re at Mason  
  o Through courses  
  o Through OSCAR — the proposed student research office that will gather data about the impact of this and coordinate research activities  
    ▪ Will also help bring in funding for research and scholarship  
  o By having one day a semester (with no classes) devoted to showcasing student scholarship  
• Could improve support for parts of the university that are already engaging in this kind of scholarship  
• Will bring the university together and eliminate the disciplinary “silos”
• Students learn how to engage in scholarship over their four years at Mason in a sequential way from orientation to commencement
  o Special recognition at graduation for students who engage in scholarship
• There needs to be some recognition of what the hidden curriculum is on campus
• Want to make all research (not just student research) on campus excel
• This proposal provides the structure to make this happen

Feedback from committee:
• Concerns about anticipated budgetary needs
  o Projected costs for FTEs seems low in terms of salary and benefits
    ▪ Build in fringe to make it more accurate
  o Roles of the Executive and Administrative Assistant need to be defined
    ▪ Develop position descriptions to see if these are needed
  o Include money that would be needed for events on the campus
  o Build in budget for assessment and for faculty development
• Concerns about the development of a new office that seems like it would be a substitute for providing faculty members with funding to get their work done
  o This office would be in place to distribute money for projects, but would it have any to give?
  o **Response from subcommittee:** Role of office is to create connections across the university—it would provide structure and remove silos
    ▪ OSCAR would connect people from different disciplines who are interested in doing the same work
    ▪ Office will foster learning teams
    ▪ We currently lack a centralized office that is aware of all the research and creative scholarship opportunities that are taking place on campus
• Can we coordinate all of this under existing leadership?
  o Danger of separate office: harder to integrate it into central processes
  o Instead of calling it an office, we might consider calling it “Opportunities for…”
• Question about one-credit course: why stop at one?
  o Could this course become a part of gen ed?
    ▪ Could we think about a gen ed substitution so that no additional credits are added?
  o **Response from subcommittee:** Keeping it at one will get majors without many elective credits engaged in the course
    ▪ Will hit the maximum amount of students and provide them with a foundation at the beginning of their education for how they can become engaged in scholarship
    ▪ Is not intended to increase total number of credits needed to graduate
• Seems like there are additional possibilities that could be added to this
• It’s not clear what you get with version B that you don’t get with version A
  o Would the impact on student learning be the same for both scenarios?
  o **Response from subcommittee:** Version B would be able to support more students and fund more apprenticeships
    ▪ Version A will be less transformative than B for all of the topics
• Would like to see examples of how this will work in each department
Social Entrepreneurship

Key points from subcommittee:

- This would get students engaged at the very foundation of their education
- Wanted to focus on current student needs that have been identified by the NSSE
  - What impact does learning have on students’ actual experiences?
  - How do we create incentives that will make faculty want to become more engaged with their students?
    - Course development grants and interdisciplinary learning ventures
- Entrepreneurship is embedded into Mason’s mission statement
- Focus on civic engagement, social responsibility, and the application of interdisciplinary knowledge
  - Incorporates experiential learning
  - Using knowledge to solve urgent and nontrivial problems
    - Example: how mapping in geography can be used to solve problems
- Something new and different with a lot of excitement
  - Could bring a new kind of visibility to Mason
- Bigger focus on local nonprofits and associations – we are not currently taking advantage of these resources
- Would add relevance to student course work—how can what students are learning be applied to the real world?
- Would start at Orientation and during Welcome Week
  - Marketing could happen before this as we try to attract students to the university

Feedback from committee:

- It’s not clear what you get with version B that you don’t get with version A
  - Would the impact be the same for both scenarios?
  - What’s the faculty and student impact in each?
- Concerns about entrepreneurial language
  - Response from subcommittee: they are trying to go with university’s language and they recognize that social entrepreneurship is an actual practice/field
    - Social entrepreneurship is social change, but is a more focused and targeted effort using a more rigorous approach
    - Makes use of metrics to determine the impact
    - Added “innovators” to the title to help with this
- Concerns about naming this “social entrepreneurship”—will it look like we are jumping on the bandwagon?
- Concerns that this seems to leave out a lot of the university
  - Response from subcommittee: they want to get people thinking about how their disciplines apply to larger problems
  - How can this engage the science or engineering department?
    - Need to ensure appeal across the disciplines?
    - Science department has to explain how their research will benefit the larger society so this will not be a problem
- Could learning ventures be done for course credit as an independent study?
  - Response from subcommittee: They could be course-related or not
- How many faculty members will be engaged each year?
  - Response from subcommittee: Would like to provide incentives for faculty to become involved – money will come from the QEP
Course development grants for faculty members will impact a broad range of students for relatively low cost

Examples of ventures in each department would help and get more buy-in

Global Perspectives

Key points from subcommittee:

- See talking points for more details…
- Inspiration: there are many global activities and initiatives going on and we have a very diverse student body
  - Are we achieving all of our intended results by engaging in these activities?
- This QEP topic could help Mason become a leader in international education
  - It would provide evidence of global student learning at Mason
  - We have a lot going on, but we don’t know what we’re accomplishing
- We would not be starting from scratch with this in terms of resources
- Would enhance our reputation as an international university
- Helps us determine what the student learning outcomes are for global education
  - Would help us structure activities around these outcomes
  - What are students doing with this information after graduation?
- Would be a comprehensive push that goes beyond study abroad and bringing international students in – those are important, but they are also just numbers
  - Need to look at the other 90+% of students on campus
- Would teach students about what is going on in the rest of the world
  - Examples: how other educational systems work, how other cultures operate, etc…
- There are many global issues right now that make this topic important and relevant
- There is a connection between this topic and social entrepreneurship

Feedback from committee:

- What students will want to know: What is the value added as a result of this QEP topic?
  - How is this different from what we’re already doing?
- It seems risky to tell people that they don’t know what the outcome of their global programs/activities/initiatives are
  - It could just be that the institution has not shared this information with the entire university
  - Need to soften tone of some language here
- Trying to assess what we’re trying to do global vs. global as an experience
  - What exactly would we be doing if this is the QEP?
  - Need more specific examples of what is happening and what would be strengthened
- What is the next step?
  - We’re already a step ahead of most of our peers
  - The urgency with this is not clear, other than on the assessment side
- Concern with getting buy-in from science faculty because they won’t know what to do with it
- Concern about what this would look like in the curriculum
  - Gen ed?
  - We haven’t yet created a space for necessary interactions among those in our diverse population

Response from subcommittee: faculty development to better the facilitation of diversity and difference in the classroom

- Would integrate all global activities
• There is a lot of excitement around this—importance of selling it as a new and exciting idea
  o We have already branded ourselves as a global university
  o Will it be as transformative as the other two?
• Would make interactions across cultural boundaries more intentional
• What does diversity mean outside of the classroom?

General Comments about White Papers
• **Audience:** importance of engaging faculty across the university
  o Across the disciplines
  o Across appointment lines
    ▪ Would be great if there were ways to address adjunct faculty (part time)
    ▪ Note for language clarification: term faculty are full time teaching faculty
• **Budget:** when the white papers go public, we’ll keep the budgets out because they are so preliminary
  o Write a budget narrative for version A and version B that will articulate what additional resources will be added to version A for scenario B
  o All of the white papers need to devote more money to assessment and faculty development
  o Kim (and others, time allowing) will provide feedback re: budgets
• **Unified voice:** please work to make sure that your white papers flow clearly from one section to the next and do not sound like there was a different person writing each section