
Announcements

• The International Affairs Journal serves as evidence of students organizing themselves around opportunities for scholarship and publication
  o The team of students on the editorial board is not working with an incentive in mind – other than the experience gained
  o How will this be sustained after this team graduates?
• The central focus of the NSF CI-Team grant is on the mentoring of undergraduate students who are doing research
  o Ideally, this will offer computational environments and access to software
  o The grant could potentially help acquire new software (or types of licenses) as well

Site Visit to University of Michigan’s UROP

• UROP = Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program
• The program was started as a retention tool for first-year students
• They wanted to bring students in to discover principles and practices of research
• They see this as a way that students can contribute to the faculty sponsors’ projects
• Students can receive academic credit or complete the opportunity as a work study position
  o Students are expected to spend 10-12 hours a week on their projects and approach them as a job
• The UROP office identifies, selects, manages, and provides support to students
  o They have 32 peer advisors who each supervise 35 students
    o The peer advisors are classified as wage employees, they must be juniors or seniors, and have generally had 1-2 years of prior experience as participants in UROP
• The program does not operate under a curricular model, but is instead seen as a job at the university
• Their goal is to take a broad group of people and introduce them to the research culture of the university to make the first-year experience meaningful
  o This is not entirely about mentoring, though mentoring is definitely a component
• Building models for faculty on how to work with students and how to break their projects into manageable pieces that a first-year student could contribute to has been a challenge
  o Students can help with translating documents into various languages, websites, literature reviews, editing document, editing and cleaning data, etc.
• It is critical that faculty sponsors set expectations and periodically communicate with their students
• The program provides research skills workshops for students
  o In the fall, they ask faculty to identify skills that they would like to see in the students who participate in their projects and also have students do a self-assessment of their skills
  o Students are required to participate in a specific number of online and face-to-face workshops
• They have graduate students working on the assessment of the projects
• UROP staff manage the peer advisors and are faculty of record for students receiving course credit for their participation
• Junior faculty say this gives their research a boost and helps them make progress that they wouldn’t have been able to make otherwise
• They have not revised their RPT guidelines for this
  o If a faculty member sponsors a student, they get $500 – but the emphasis is on jump-starting the research and giving the student research experience
• Because these are all faculty projects, the faculty take care of getting their proposals through the IRB and the students don’t need to worry about this process
  o They negotiated a mass HSRB approval for people who work through the Center for Research on Teaching & Learning
  o If people deviate from this class of exemptions, they then must go through IRB
• The operation of their summer research program relies on external funds – they have corporate sponsors and independent donors

Discussion about Site Visit
• Mason’s Information Technology Assistance Program (ITAP) allows students to work on websites under the supervision of a faculty mentor
  o In Learning Support Services - Katrina Joseph and Lisa Andion are in charge
  o The Libraries could play a role in ITAP as the program continues to grow
• We’ll need to have flexibility in the curricular aspect of this in terms of whether or not students have space in their course schedules to participate
  o If students want to participate in a project for more than one year, for example, wage work may be a nice alternative that will allow them to do this
• UROP recommended that we begin with the first-year experience, which could potentially serve as a feeder into the Undergraduate Apprenticeship Program
  o Will UAP get redefined in its mission as a result of the QEP? Or, will it stay as it is?
  o Its current structure doesn’t allow students to participate in more than one project or to continue a particular project over time
  o If we want to make a big impact, we have to do something other than UAP – the one-on-one model is too small
    ▪ We’ll need to have a clear indication of how students can get credit for their participation
• At the first-year level, students could help faculty with their projects
  o Faculty will see this not as something additional, but as something that will help them make progress in their own research
  o Students need to clearly understand their role in the project and what they’re contributing to it from the start
• In their junior and senior years, students would be more able to design their own original projects
• UROP has a database where faculty can enter their information, but how does the matching process work?
  o See: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/urop/sponsors/newsponsor/SelectingStudent
  o Students select projects of interest from the UROP project listing, contact the sponsor, request an interview, and provide the sponsor with their resume
  o The sponsor can interview as many or as few students as they would like to ensure that they have a good student match for their project
• We need to figure out how to approach the HSRB and get through the process of getting proposals approved
  o What are the things that we anticipate as potential obstacles that we would need to have a conversation with them about?
  o The HSRB is flexible when it comes to classroom research, but anything beyond it is more difficult
We could have language that would be regularly understood for faculty members who encounter issues with the HSRB

- **Example:** for developing a proposal that would allow a new student to take over an existing project

We need to find out what can happen within the HSRB guidelines at Mason early on so that we can work within the limits

**Student Learning Outcomes**

- We may want to transform our SLOs into a chart so that we can check off how each activity meets each outcome
  - It is not an expectation that every single activity we propose will meet all of the outcomes
- Primary outcomes vs. secondary outcomes
- “Everybody” = those who are touched by or participate in at least one of the QEP activities
  - What is the base of the pyramid? How many students do we expect to touch?
- First outcome as an awareness issue that doesn’t even have to be acquired through a course
- One, two, and four are a “low bar” and it is reasonable to expect that all students at Mason would encounter them at least once
  - We could approach departments to ask if this is a reasonable thing to expect from their majors
  - Transfer students may not get this broad first exposure, so they must be included in a first-year experience
  - How do you assess that this happened?
    - Through the advising process (theoretically)
  - E-portfolios and transcripts provide a way of capturing these “low bar” experiences
- There is some discomfort with prioritizing and categorizing the outcomes
- First item – we need to capture the missionary role of students who contribute to a sense of values
  - This is not just about the role of student scholarship at one university, but about the role of students as scholars after they leave Mason
  - Because it is difficult to assess what students do after they leave the institution, we may want to add this piece to the vision of our plan
- Second item (now third) – not a big enough idea for the QEP since it is enshrined in every single general area
  - Does the third (originally fourth) item assume the second one?
  - We could talk about this as a foundation/strength in the report – something we’re building on
  - The “in their field” piece of the third item is critical and shows that this is reaching beyond general education
  - Remove “information,” leaving it simply to “manage resources”
- Sixth item (now fifth) on arguing a position – this is about taking something that is new to you (like a used car) and understanding it
  - This does not have to be an original position
  - Change to “Articulate a position and support it…”

Revisions to draft student learning outcomes are on the wiki for general comment here: [http://masonqep.pbworks.com/Draft-Student-Learning-Outcomes](http://masonqep.pbworks.com/Draft-Student-Learning-Outcomes)

**For next time:** Based on our SLO conversation, what are some of the outcomes that you’re seeing in your subcommittee work? This will help give us some clarity for next time…