Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Planning Committee
June 9, 2008—2:00-4:00 p.m.


Discussion of possible themes for our QEP

• Global competence/understanding
  o What is its impact on student learning?
  o Is there anything distinctive about the university in the Strategic Plan?
    ▪ Other than its global potential and unique student body?
    ▪ Global understanding/competence pulls it all together and says what is distinct about Mason
    ▪ Mason as a global university
  o Strategic Plan even points out the need to improve the definition and develop assessment mechanisms for global competence
  o This theme could lead to shared learning outcomes – we could look to other institutions’ QEPs and/or general education goals/requirements for example language. We could also look to documents being produced by ACE re: internationalizing the curriculum.
  o What does “global” mean for us?
    ▪ Global community—how does Mason take advantage of the global diversity it has?
    ▪ Social networking
    ▪ This is what Mason is and this is what it will be...
    ▪ Students could discuss common themes, texts, and perspectives with each other
      • You don’t get diversity unless you can bring everyone together
      • Gen Ed curriculum is a possible focal point for this
    ▪ How do we measure this?
      • What are the learning outcomes?
      • Confidence and ability to put one’s ideas forth in a discussion
    ▪ Multicultural vs. global
      • We should talk about diversity in terms of non-international students as well

• Student/faculty interaction
  o What would students get out of it?
    ▪ Critical thinking? Global understanding?
    ▪ We could make it a student-driven statement with a subtopic

• Enhancing the learner-centered environment to effect student outcomes
  o Addresses needs on the campus
    ▪ Aging professoriate
    ▪ Student/faculty engagement
  o Could incorporate global issues
  o Students need to learn how to think longer thoughts
    ▪ You have to be able and willing to engage the other (whether it is another person or a text)
    ▪ Create opportunities for reflection
    ▪ How are students using information?
This is part of modern globalization

Students need to learn when to slow down

- The focus group for this project would be the faculty
- Students’ learning could be enhanced through the use of portfolios and experiential or service learning
- Integration of curricular and co-curricular
  - Academic life is not separate
- How do students support each other?
  - Learning how to facilitate learning among students who are in the same class

*Note: We discussed the need to differentiate learning outcomes vs. strategies → let’s remember the focus on the student learning outcomes

What do we know about the needs of students?

- Student/faculty interaction is missing
- Level of academic challenge
  - Could be connected to global understanding
  - If students aren’t engaged, they’re not going to be challenged
    - Is this because of the number of AP’s that high school seniors are taking?
    - Is it the transition from high school to college?
    - High school is overly structured and then college is not?
- How are we defining student engagement? We seem to be talking about doing a few things in depth versus examining many issues more superficially. Is there a bias in the way we are thinking about this?
- Should we go on a strengths-based approach or go with something we really need to improve upon?
- Academic advising could be improved
- We have a diverse environment—but what are we doing with it?
- These are engagement and communication issues
  - Could be because of Mason’s rapid growth
- Development of more living-learning communities
- Collaborative learning, peer learning, and student/student learning also needs to be looked at
- Community seems to be a value
  - Both co-curricular and academic
  - What is Mason as a community?
- How do students use and apply what they are learning in the classroom?
- Our QEP could have different learning outcomes, measures, and methods of assessment for different groups of students
  - First-generation students, students with many AP’s, etc.
- SACS wants a focus on learning outcomes and not on strategies