

University of South Carolina
Quality Enhancement Plan Proposal Committee
Minutes
March 24, 2010
11:00 a.m.

Attendees: Helen Doerpinghaus (Ex-Officio), Michelle Faucett (student), John Gardner (by phone), Susanne Hicklin (Institutional Assessment), Sarah Krivak (International Programs), Jed Lyons (CTE), John McDermott (Business), Phil Moore (Ex-officio), Bruce Nims (Lancaster), Dennis Pruitt (Ex-Officio), Irma Van Scoy (Education/Chair),

Absent: Val Littlefield (History), Jeremy Lane (Music).

1. Minutes approved (March 4, 2010)
2. Helen Doerpinghaus took minutes in Val Littlefield's absence. Jed will take notes next time.
3. Discussion of Committee goals:

We have latitude but we are using the four proposals to meld into one QEP proposal. (We aren't starting from scratch.) The "Tenth Dimension" (10th D) is possibly an umbrella for all four. Phil Moore reported that U. Texas has a "Utopia" program that looks somewhat like "10th D". Phil also mentioned that the chair of our SACS team is from UT. Phil will send the link. Irma will send a link for another related "10th D" type application.

4. We discussed questions and approaches for the four presenters we will hear from now (two today, two next time).
5. Greg Forter made a short presentation on his "Knowledge for Social Change" proposal. The purpose is to imagine new forms of collaboration that are academically substantive and morally grounded. This goes beyond service learning (SL) in that it is connected to a university-wide collaboration across faculty, students and others, centered around four themes:
 - Racial Equality
 - Gender Empowerment
 - Sustainability (broadly defined)
 - Global Citizenship

He suggests running service learning courses and hosting dialogues with the community (to identify issues). He also suggests non-service-learning satellite courses on these four themes. The last key component is incorporating research into this endeavor. We would establish a speaker series for the campuses and community.

Discussion topics and highlights:

Impacting a critical mass of students: As proposed, the initiative would reach approximately 1,000 students per year. Ideas to increase this include integrating service learning into UNIV 101 or ENGL 101 and 102. Greg agreed embedding service learning in an existing course makes sense. He also noted that it is important to have a clear understanding of how service learning courses are currently coordinated at USC. John Gardner reported that the national trend is to move service learning to lower division courses. Nationwide, English is home to more service learning courses than any other discipline. Discussion ensued on service learning courses that already exist at USC. It was noted that defining service learning is important in determining the extent to which it already exists.

Student and community engagement: It could be a challenge to involve students who may not be inclined to select participation in service learning. One possibility is that if courses and service learning opportunities are available, student participation could grow through word-of-mouth “advertising”. Regarding community involvement, Greg suggested working with leaders and existing organizations to learn what issues service learning opportunities could address.

Themes: Articulating why particular themes were chosen was noted as important. Current themes seem to emphasize humanities and social sciences. These could be expanded to include more themes related to the natural sciences and professional schools. Any theme that opened up relationships with the community would be worth considering. It was noted that the tone and language of the proposal could be interpreted as promoting a liberal agenda. Gregg responded that the proposal is rooted in the university mission and Focus Carolina goals. It was noted that faculty discussion and creating a consensus on the themes would be very important.

The committee thanked Greg and discussion continued after he left. Jed let everyone know that the Center for Teaching Excellence website has service learning resources. Irma pointed out that there is overlap between these ideas and new Carolina Core. She then invited the next guests to join the committee.

6. Doyle Stevick and Pat Willer made the next presentation on “Fostering Global Engagement.” Doyle provided a brief overview of their proposal. What can we do to enhance student cultural understanding? The proposal suggests some affordable things USC can do. Pat discussed ways to bring international activity into the curriculum. She said this needs to cover all of the campuses, a broad range of faculty and fields. There needs to be a broad variety of options. The proposal supports an international certificate that helps guide students in developing international expertise. Listing courses that have a global emphasis would be helpful to all students.

Discussion topics and highlights:

Impacting a critical mass of students: International studies currently impacts approximately 1,000 students with study abroad, research, or internships. We need to broaden this. One idea is to use UNIV 401 (variable credit 1-3 hours). We do First Year Reading Experience for all undergraduates and we could take a similar approach to international education. We could also

make study abroad opportunities more affordable through creative scheduling and through experiences in our own hemisphere and/or to lower socio-economic status countries that can be visited for less expense. Scheduling options include travel between fall and spring semesters or Maymester or blocked courses that allow a part of a semester to be used for an international travel/study experience.

Connecting university opportunities and resources: There is already a lot of activity going on with international studies. We need to “connect the dots” and highlight what is already available. We have international faculty and students here and should engage with them and benefit from their perspectives and knowledge. A certificate program might be a way to “connect the dots.” It would identify a global component in courses in our curriculum and allow us to build on what’s already underway here. We have, e.g., Africanists in every professional school. The “dots” are here but we need to connect them. We could take advantage of this without enormous curriculum change.

We thanked Doyle and Pat for their guidance.

Irma asked if there were any announcements before we adjourned. The other two proposal presentations are scheduled for our next meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.