

# University of Mary Washington

## **FSEM Committee**

### **September 27, 2024 Regular Meeting**

Time and Location: 3-4pm, DuPont324

In attendance:

#### **2024-2025 FSEM Committee**

- 2025 Bridgette Dennett, Chair (Assistant Professor, CAS)
- 2025 Marcus Leppanen, Secretary (Assistant Professor, CAS)
- 2025 Virginia Mackintosh (Associate Professor, CAS)
- 2026 Gary Richards (Professor, CAS)
- 2027 Ginny Morriss (Assistant Professor, CAS)

#### **EX OFFICIO MEMBERS**

- April Wynn, Director of the First-Year Experience

Guest Member (Non-voting role)

- October Edwards, Research and Instruction Librarian

Meeting called to order at 3:00pm

#### **I. Old Business:**

- a. Updates on Proposal Workshops
  - i. Currently no pre-registered attendees, but drop-ins are an option.
  - ii. Tuesday 10/1 workshop is being held in Seacobeck 105 from 3:30 to 4:30pm
    1. Committee attendees: Virginia, Ginny, Bridgette, April
  - iii. Wednesday 10/2 workshop is being held in Seacobeck 105 from 3:00 to 4:00pm
    1. Committee attendees: Gary, Marcus, April
- b. Proposals are beginning to be submitted for future courses
  - i. Feedback on proposals is initially being provided online via a shared document
  - ii. Committee discussed the type of feedback to give at the workshops to help new committee members assist submitting faculty.
  - iii. As a reminder: committee is meeting Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup> at 3:00pm to provide final decisions on submitted proposals.
  - iv. Update to requirements that happened after checklist went out: Only the library module is expected to be assigned. Any other modules are optional.
- c. Discuss the next steps for the UFC motion
  - i. Update sent via email by April Wynn, includes updated motions
  - ii. Need to vote on desired motion. Options are provided below.
    1. Motion 1 from the FSEM Committee to the UFC – To treat emergency FSEM approvals in the same manner as DBL proposals – where once

approved by the committee they do not need to be signed off on by the UFC.

2. Motion 2 from the FSEM Committee to the UFC – Under emergency or urgent circumstances allow the executive committee of the UFC to approve curricular proposal that have first been approved by committee (DBL, SI, WI, FSEM, GenEd, etc.). This emergency or urgent process mostly for use during the summer or winter where there are long stretches between UFC meeting. Emergency or urgent circumstances are defined as necessary to solve a staffing shortage that will need to be resolved before the next UFC meeting. The executive committee would review the curricular proposal and the minutes from the committee and a majority vote will be needed to approve.
  - a. Committee discussed pros and cons of the two proposed motions. The need for flexibility to allow for revisions while also respecting the need to make staffing decisions is crucial to the operations of the committee.
  - b. Committee unanimously approved submitting Motion 2 to the UFC. Motion emphasized below:

**d. FSEM Committee motions to the UFC to consider the following change to approval procedures: Under emergency or urgent circumstances allow the executive committee of the UFC to approve curricular proposal that have first been approved by committee (DBL, SI, WI, FSEM, GenEd, etc.). This emergency or urgent process mostly for use during the summer or winter where there are long stretches between UFC meeting. Emergency or urgent circumstances are defined as necessary to solve a staffing shortage that will need to be resolved before the next UFC meeting. The executive committee would review the curricular proposal and the minutes from the committee and a majority vote will be needed to approve.**

- e. Update from UFC re: Committee Structure
  - i. Communication needs to occur between the committee chair, UFC, and UFOC before any changes are made
  - ii. Ultimately, guidance on structure will come from UFOC
  - iii. Committee discussed the need to revisit the overarching charge that should guide our work moving forward.
  - iv. Committee supports a potential broadening of charge to include the full First-Year Experience and not just FSEMs.
    1. Charge should continue to include oversight over academic matters that affect first-year students
    2. To maintain diversity of opinion, membership should remain at five.
    3. Discussed possibility of adding other non-voting members (e.g., a student representative) to address the many different stakeholders in the program.

## II. New Business:

- a. FYE (First-year Experience) Redesign Discussion
  - i. Context for this discussion: Provost was charged with envisioning potential future iterations of the FYE and passed charge on to Director of the Program (April)
    1. Points of concern that need to be addressed

- a. Faculty do not like teaching FSEM. Why?
  - b. Students are prepared differently than in the past. How do we meet them where they are?
  - c. FYE includes more than just academics (need for many voices)
- ii. Need for even more transparency about committee expectations and need for consistency amid current organizational changes
- iii. Library staff expressed concerned about potential updates to the FYE and what they mean
- iv. Discussed the reporting structure of a potential FYE redesign committee
- v. The goal of any FYE redesign needs to be student success and maintaining a “level up” theme that focuses on academics and social support
  - 1. Current weaknesses supported by data: Writing and social academics (i.e., students helping each other to succeed in classes)
- vi. Committee discussed the potential for a three-subcommittee structure
  - 1. academics
  - 2. co-curriculars
  - 3. academic support
- vii. Committee discussed the potential makeup of a FYE redesign committee (one-year commitment for right now)
  - 1. Committee discussed the need to have a variety of viewpoints represented on this committee. Need to hear from people who like the current system, dislike the current system, and have different amounts of involvement (e.g., have/have not taught an FSEM).
  - 2. Director of the FYE suggested current FSEM committee members be involved
  - 3. Concerns about faculty buy-in if this committee is not primarily comprised of faculty (at least numerically a majority)
  - 4. Committee believes the library should be involved
  - 5. Students have been/will be directly impacted by the FYE and it may be important to have students/peer mentors involved
  - 6. Committee discussed who to reach out to about serving on this committee
  - 7. Recruitment will be happening within the next month

### III. Upcoming Meetings:

- a. Nov 1st @ 3-4pm
- b. Dec 6th @ 3-4pm

Meeting Adjourned: 4:07