June 28, 2011

Re: spring Semester 2011 Report to the George Mason University Faculty Senate by the Academic Initiatives Committee

Committee Membership: Elizabeth Sook Chong, CHHS, Wayne Froman, CHSS, Tom Kiley, COS, Terry Zawacki, CHSS, and Thomas Speller (Chair), VSE

ACADEMIC INITIATIVES COMMITTEE SENATE REPORT FOR SPRING SEMESTER 2011

Dear Fellow Colleagues of the GMU Faculty Senate:

The Senate Academic Initiatives Committee met twice with Dr. Anne Schiller, who has been named Vice President of Global and International Strategies, concerning Mason’s academic initiatives in China and Korea.

Within the Office of Global and International Strategies, the China initiative is organized by Madelyn Ross, Director of China Programs. Since its inception in 2004, this GMU initiative has maintained a positive net cash flow. The program is a “US-China 1+2+1 Dual Degree Program, begun in 2001, [which] involves American and Chinese universities participating under the auspices of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the China Center for International Educational Exchange (CCIEE). As of 2010, some 80 Chinese universities and 18 American universities were participating in the program.”

[http://china121.gmu.edu/about/121-program-at-george-mason-university/] This program has been successful in bringing Chinese students to Mason and is fiscally of value. However, an area still requiring improvement is Mason’s encouragement of enrolling an equal number of its own students in the exchange program. So far the GMU students who participate primarily visit China during the summer.

The Korean program differs from the Chinese program in that it is in the process of review by the Office of Global and International Strategies and has thus far served as a means for seeing how new program prospects are evaluated before firm commitments are made by GMU. This Korea initiative is being evaluated in part by Dr. Min Park, Assistant Professor, College of Education and Human Development, and Faculty Adviser for Korea Programs. A market study had been completed in collaboration with a research firm in the United States to study the potential demand by Korean and GMU students for a partnership. Based on that survey, the GMU Office of Global and International Strategies chose to consider for possible
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implementation the program entitled, “Economics, Management, Global Affairs and Environmental Studies,” which appears to have the most promising demand size.

Dr. Auerswald of GMU will be teaching at Seoul National University in summer 2011, and Dr. Sklarew of GMU is anticipating summer teaching at SungKyunKwan University next year. Both of these opportunities were initiated by the Global Office. At this time it is uncertain whether or not a Korean program will be beneficial to both GMU and participating Korean universities. However, there is plenty of potential if educational and economic terms can be worked out. Even exchange of GMU and Korean students is difficult because it is hard to establish parity. However, an agreement being considered, as an example, is for the Korean University to send students to Mason during the regular academic year or semester and then offer scholarships to our students in their summer schools. There are summer programs in Korea which offer an avenue for Mason to provide international experience to students who could not otherwise afford to go abroad. Dr. Park also noted that a Korean law firm has been engaged by Mason to assist Mason’s legal office in negotiations. Dr. Schiller states that over the next year, she will seek advice from faculty about our needs and interests and about what would make the opportunity to teach in Korea of particular interest to us.

Next fall semester 2011, our committee will continue to follow up on progress with the Russian, Chinese, and Korean programs as well as other initiatives being considered by the Office of Global and International Strategies. Of particular note as expressed by the AIC is the need for formal process planning to screen new prospective academic initiatives. The process should be documented by activity flow diagrams and supporting descriptions. Continuous improvement of the process should become part of the quality program within the Office of Global and International Strategies. Furthermore, next fall semester we will review the mission and goals of the Office of Global and International Strategies and where possible offer suggestions.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the GMU Academic Initiatives Committee,

Thomas Speller (Chair)