UDM’s New Core Curriculum

By Matt Mio, MFA President

The important work of Shared Governance is all around you: decisions regarding academic standards, retention, and UDM-wide (Teams) matters are made by and with faculty all year long. Also on this list is the process of academic Program Review, a duty which the McNichols Faculty Assembly has completed in the last year so that each and every McNichols program has been reviewed once in the last 7 years. As the “second cycle” of Program Review begins this Fall, another very important responsibility of the MFA will begin, maintenance and assessment of the Core Curriculum. While a new Core has always been under the purview of the MFA, the Core Curriculum Task Force (CCTF) and its successor group the Core Curriculum Implementation Committee (CCIC) have, respectively, set the learning outcomes and the criteria for course inclusion in a new, outcomes-based and assesseable Core at UDM.

The next steps in this process are imminent and fairly fast-moving, as earlier this summer the MFA voted to solidify its support of the CCIC policy document entitled: “Guidelines for Proposing a Course for Inclusion in the UDM Core Curriculum.” With MFA approval, the CCIC is now charged with performing three sizeable tasks:

1. The current/older UDM Core is to be vacated and all courses will need to re-apply to the CCIC for inclusion in the new Core. College/School Curriculum Committees will be instrumental in helping the CCIC make these decisions, which will comprise a final recommendation to the MFA. Of particular interest to some faculty will be the “Integrating Themes” portion of the new Core – stay tuned to your email for how to become more involved in reviewing these vital outcomes in the New Core.

2. In efforts to constrict the above process to the 2014 calendar year, the CCIC will be holding information sessions in the Fall of 2013 to educate faculty who may want to propose their courses to the New Core. Bloom’s Taxonomy and its relationship to the Core learning outcomes will be described, as well as how the process of course review will proceed.

3. As previously alluded, the CCIC’s final task will be to compile all the course proposal data into a final report to the MFA. If all goes according to plan. This document will be considered by the MFA in early 2015 with possible implementation for new Freshmen by the ensuing Fall term.

As always, questions or concerns can be raised with each college’s MFA reps and anyone is welcome to attend regular MFA meetings (first and third Thursdays). To help Shared Governance at UDM remain as transparent as possible, items in this newsletter include: a current list of MFA representatives, as well as McNichols Committees, ad hoc Committees and University Teams (page 2); a summary of how a curricular proposal can become policy (pages 2-3); a description of the Shared Governance Clearinghouse (page 3); a list of MFA accomplishments for the 12-13 academic year (pages 3-4); and reports on program review, the new and improved Adjunct Committee, President Garibaldi’s address to the MFA (page 4).

The MFA encourages every member of the UDM community to get involved in Shared Governance.
Read this newsletter and comment by sending a message to mfa@udmercy.edu. Contact your MFA rep directly. Run for election to an open post on a committee or team. The best way to explore what Shared Governance does for you and what it is capable of doing is to contribute to the process!

MFA Representatives for the 13-14 Academic Year

School of Architecture: Allegra Pitera, Noah Resnick

College of Business Administration: Robert Hutchinson, Greg Ulferts

College of Engineering and Science: Jeffe Boats, Stephanie Conant, Mustafa Demir, Rick Hill, Matt Mio, Sergey Morozov

College of Health Professions: Tom Fockler, Lori Glenn, Kathy Moran, Thelma Phillips, Kate Walters, Carmon Weekes

Library: Julia Eisenstein, Susan Homant

College of Liberal Arts and Education: Steve Abell, Rita Barrios, Michael Barry, Jocelyn Bennett-Garraway, Laurie Britt-Smith, Harold Greene, Dave Koukal, Elizabeth Oljar, Carol Weisfeld

MFA Executive Committee: Matt Mio, President; Julia Eisenstein, Vice President; Laurie Britt-Smith, Secretary; Susan Homant, Communications; Noah Resnick, Parliamentarian

McNichols Committees address important crosscutting academic concerns and are standing committees of the MFA: Graduate Program Review; Graduate Retention and Standards; Undergraduate Program Review; Undergraduate Retention; Undergraduate Standards; Core Curriculum

Ad hoc Committees are generated to complete a specific task: McNichols Tenure and Promotion; Core Curriculum Implementation Committee

University Teams involve representation from across UDM, including our professional schools: Assessment; Budget; Facilities, Planning, Standards and Safety; Faculty Development; Information Technology; Mission/Urban/Social Justice; Strategic Planning

We Need You!
The roster of elected Shared Governance positions was designed to turn over by one-half annually. The next set of elections to the MFA, McNichols Committees and University Teams is slated for February 2014. Mark your calendar and plan to run!

How a Curricular Proposal Becomes a Policy at UDM
According to the founding documents of Shared Governance, the MFA is in charge of all curricular matters on the McNichols campus. New proposals include certificates, minors, degrees or other matters of academic standards. What follows is a summary of the process from idea to policy:

1. Generation of a curricular proposal by an individual or committee; proposal must follow the adopted guidelines for its type (i.e., minor, new degree program)

2. Proposal approved by the faculty of involved Departments

3. Proposal approved by the college/school curriculum committees and Deans of involved academic units

4. Proposal sent to the Shared Governance Clearinghouse (SGCH)

5. SGCH determines the Committee or Team needed to vet the proposal (i.e., minors are handled by Undergrad Standards, but new degree programs are examined by Undergrad/Grad Program Review)

6. Committee or Team recommendation voted upon by the MFA

7. MFA sends the recommended proposal to the Academic Vice President for administrative approval by the Academic Leadership Team, President’s Council and, if needed, the Board of Trustees

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding this Process:

What if changes to a proposal are requested?
Amendments to proposals can be requested at any stage and are usually managed by the original authors.

How long might the above process take?
Most Committees and Teams meet at least once a month throughout the academic year; the MFA meets once every two weeks. The minimum amount of time for a proposal to travel from the SGCH to final implementation of policy is one academic year. Some proposals travel faster (minors) than others (new degrees), owing to the length of the proposals and the due diligence needed to review for and ensure academic rigor. All new degree program proposals submitted to the Program Review Committee on or before September 15 will be reviewed by the Committee in Term I; proposals received on or before January 15 will be reviewed during Term II.

Where can I find the guidelines for preparing my proposal? Check out the link below to find the adopted polices of the MFA, which includes both guideline documents and previously-approved proposals:

udmercy.edu/governance/proposals/adopted-policies

What is the Shared Governance Clearinghouse?
Early in the pilot period, it became clear to the Academic Vice President and the MFA Executive Committee that the original structure of Shared Governance lacked a central body. While many of the Committees and Teams report to the AVP and MFA, no body existed to collect submitted proposals and send them to the proper group. The Shared Governance Clearinghouse was generated to remedy this situation and allow for monthly discussions between MFA officers and the AVP. If you have an item for discussion at the SGCH, send a message to mfa@udmercy.edu and we’ll transmit it to the Committee or Team best suited to consider it.

MFA Work Since May 2012
The McNichols Faculty Assembly completed the evaluation of many curricular proposals during the 12-13 academic year. You can find the SGCH proposal tracking system (with data back to 2005) at the link below:

udmercy.edu/governance/proposals/track
Minors
Economics; Education; Islamic Studies; Financial Economics; Religious Studies

Academic Standards
Midterm Grades Policy; Minor Credit Sharing Policy; Revised Standards for Academic Minors; High School Dual Enrollment Policy

Continuing Work
Core Curriculum; McNichols Course/Instructor Evaluations

Adjunct Faculty Committee
The Adjunct Faculty Committee (AFC) was formed in recognition of the important role adjunct faculty play in academics. The intent of this committee is to “establish a forum for adjunct faculty to participate in shared governance and to raise issues of concern to adjuncts.” The AFC is currently represented on the MFA by Evan Peterson and Kioumars Paryani. If you are an adjunct faculty interested in attending AFC meetings or just have a question or a concern, please contact Evan or Kioumars.

President Garibaldi Addresses the MFA
On August 15, 2013 President Garibaldi spoke to the MFA on the topic of the changing academic workforce. In a reprise of a panel discussion he participated in for the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) National Conference last April, President Garibaldi went over some national statistics regarding full-time and part-time faculty at institutions of higher education. These statistics included the numbers of part-time and full-time faculty, contract status and trends in gender and racial composition. In contrast to national averages, UDM’s faculty are younger in age and more equal in distribution across gender. Like other institutions, UDM is still lacking minority faculty. President Garibaldi mentioned three factors important for faculty recruiting: flexibility in teaching and research, marketing and promoting the positive aspects of UDM, and attracting quality students. He also stressed the importance of full-time faculty in student retention. Students need positive and consistent relationships with faculty for advising and for research.

Program Review 13-14
In addition to its curricular and standards duties, the MFA is also in charge of shepherding UDM’s annual program review process. In 12-13, the first cycle of program review came to a close with the reviews of English and History.

The schedule for the second cycle of program review was finalized and is available on the Shared Governance web page under Adopted Proposals (http://www.udmercy.edu/governance/proposals/adopted-proposals/index.htm)

In 13-14, the following undergraduate programs are scheduled for review: Architecture, Computer Science, Health Services, Health Services Administration, Social Work, Communication Studies, Liberal Studies and the Honors Program. The following graduate programs are scheduled for review: Architecture, Computer Science, Product Development, Health Services Administration, and Liberal Studies.