

MSE PD COUNCIL MEETING

February 16, 2012

Present: Ellie Dickmann, Chair; Rick Mason, Facilitator; John Zbikowski, Coordinator; Kelly Witte; Nancy Stevens; Pam Clinkenbeard; Scott Peters and Edric Johnson. Absent: Steve Albrechtsen.

1. Capstone – current and proposed actions to address student concerns:
 - John Z. has been sending a letter to all students who are newly admitted since the start of the MSE-PD program except for those in the Reading emphasis. The letter alerts students to important aspects of their particular program such as which courses to take first, the sequence of courses for completing a capstone project, and how to contact the advisor. Whenever a student is admitted, the advisor receives a copy of this letter. About a year ago the Reading emphasis coordinator started sending out a version of this letter to newly admitted students too. John recently started enclosing a copy of the “Working Concept: What Is a Capstone Project” document with this letter. The document lists several different kinds of projects that might be appropriate as capstones for the program. John will send a copy of this letter to Ellie to be shared with Council members along with the minutes of this meeting. However, he did not think it would be appropriate to post the letter on the MSE PD Council website because it is designed to be personalized by deletion to match any of the ten different emphasis areas. Posting it as is would be confusing, he noted.
 - The information about capstone projects currently on the web is difficult to find. John Z. will send a memo to all currently enrolled students explaining where they can go for information related to capstone options and/or contact John with questions.
 - John has been conducting a survey with students at the end of each set of capstone project presentations asking how well they were prepared to conduct a capstone project. He will bring the results of the most recent survey to the next meeting.
 - Faculty currently in teaching and advising roles for the MSE PD Program will receive a memo from John Z. that refers them to where they can locate current information re: capstone projects. Over the years students have gotten conflicting information about the capstone projects and licensure requirements from advisors, other faculty members, and fellow students.
 - John Z. distributed a Preliminary Overview of capstone projects completed since the start of the MSE-PD in 2008. The list did not include projects completed by students finishing the M.S.-C&I during that time, who make up about half the total. Most of the projects were either classroom action research or curriculum development, with wide variation in scope and methodology within those definitions, and with many projects mixing different types. Other kinds of projects done during that time include handbooks, surveys, staff development programs, family or community involvement programs, and website development. The list also indicated a few instances in 2010-2011 when students, as an

experiment with the blessing of this Council, were given the option of skipping a project in favor of writing a series of issue papers. John also shared the catalog of Capstone Projects which is kept on file along with copies of all the project reports accepted during the past five years that students can browse during normal business hours in the Curriculum and Instruction department.

- Rick will meet with faculty who teach the Issues and Research courses and have them share their syllabi and orientation of students to the program, the Capstone, etc. This will be completed by April 1, 2012. Faculty will be convened at the start of each semester by the MSE PD facilitator, Rick Mason.
 - The MSE PD webpage will be reviewed and revised by the end of the Spring 2012 semester. The design will be branching, with students starting at a common point and selecting their specific emphasis areas. The website will include information for students about requirements, project options, licensure (in appropriate emphasis areas) and advising, along with links to the School of Graduate Studies website for more general information about admission, transfer credit, graduation, and related issues.
 - John and Rick will draft expanded definitions of the options for the capstone projects in the “Working Concept” document to increase clarity.
2. There was a subcommittee meeting on February 14 to discuss the current web pages. Pam and John will create a basic template for the site based on the common University design, and other emphasis areas will be consistent with it. Discussion followed about the changes that will be made to the web and it was the consensus of the Council to accept the changes discussed at the February 14 meeting of the subcommittee.
 3. Ellie referred to a letter (attached to the agenda) from the Pewaukee School District asking IHEs to submit a program description, course sequence and learner outcomes for master’s degree programs. A team of educators from the Pewaukee district will evaluate each master’s degree program to decide whether to approve it as part of their compensation system.
 4. Higher Education Administration Emphasis Update: Rick distributed a document of Higher Education Administrative Emphasis Course Offerings that will be offered as workshops during summer and fall of 2012 and spring of 2013. Rick said that the Office of Student Affairs is very interested in offering Higher Education Administration courses. He said he foresees approximately 10 students in the Higher Ed program to start. Rick said students in the Higher Ed program are working on scholarships and need at least 9 credits. He would like to market these courses as soon as possible. Rick said there seems to be interest in sports administration and asked if we could develop a course for this. Kelly said a course already exists, COACHING 460/660, Organization and Administration of Interscholastic Athletics.
 5. Tracy Arneson-Baker joined the meeting at 10:00 to address the topic of advisor training. Scott briefly outlined the way the MSE PD courses are offered. He also stated the fact that faculty teaching different sections of the same course have different opinions and ideas of how to teach their section. Tracy said communication needs to happen between the capstone instructor and the initial advisor. John asked if Tracy had any suggestions regarding staff development for advisors. Tracy suggested a mandatory meeting be set for the instructors of the capstone

courses. Edric brought up the fact that faculty already have full loads and would object to a mandatory meeting. Ellie asked Tracy if she would be willing to attend our next meeting on March 15 to continue this conversation. Tracy agreed to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30.

Working Concept

What is a Capstone Project?

Basic Features:

- **Individual** project
- Build on the **research** – incorporate a review of literature in areas related to the topic of study
- Tie research to **practice** – apply analytical and practical skills to a specific concept or issue, develop and get feedback on something that ties the research to practice
- Present project to a critical audience for feedback (**voice**) – preferably with an oral presentation
- **Assessment** by student, advisor, course instructor (or client if created for a school, organization, or business)

Examples:

- Action research study in one's own setting (Identify the problem to address, develop an approach to address the problem, carry out the investigation, present findings)
- Curriculum development with testing based on research
- Development and implementation of professional development program for others with analysis of results (i.e., workshop development and implementation)
- Development and implementation of an instructional product (e.g., online tutorial, game) with analysis of results (could be a model or prototype)
- Development of a manual, guidebook, long-range strategic plan, advocacy plan, or other problem-solving project for a given audience / client with feedback from a group of experts in the field or critical analysis by the client
- Comparative education study with critical analysis of similarities and differences tied to the larger educational, social and political context in the two countries (or wildly diverse areas of the U.S.)
- Major grant proposal with feedback from experts (statement of the research question, the specific aims of the proposal, review of literature, study design, methods of analysis, evaluation methods, implications and significance of the work).
- Exhibit of artistic works (or screenplays, performances, documentary films) with reflective essay discussing their aesthetic choices and how they situate the project within artistic traditions