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Scholastic minutes 11/13/2012

Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic Committee
2012-13 Academic Year
8 a.m., November 13, 2012, Science 2185
Meeting Eight Agenda for review

In attendance: Jennifer Goodnough (chair), Steve Gross, Pete Wyckoff, Nic McPhee, Hilda Ladner, Judy Korn, Clare Dingley, Brenda Boever, Jess Larson, Ellery Wealot, Kent Blansett, Jen Zych Herrmann, Luciana Ranelli, Chad Braegelmann

Not in attendance: Melissa Hernandez, Zach Kroells

1. October 30, 2012 Minutes approved

2. Chair's Report

As a follow up to the SC discussion on readmit process, the Chair spoke with Vice Chancellor Sandy Olson Loy. She learned that students may be denied enrollment for behavior issues even if those issues have not been officially reported or noted in official student records. They spoke about discrepancies between readmit variations between nondegree, leave of absence, online education, etc., especially in regard to the criminal background check. There are discrepancies between TC and Morris procedures on this topic. Chair will continue investigation of the policy and procedure discrepancies, and the issue will be discussed at a SC meeting in the future.

Raw data of TC student/faculty survey on academic integrity will be reviewed and presented by Chair at a future SC meeting. Vice Chancellor Sandy Olson Loy will also present to SC on the topic of academic integrity.

TC Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity is creating a grid of typical sanctions related to a particular Academic Integrity violation which was shared with the Senate SAIC (Student Academic Integrity Committee). Chair will present to SC before the anticipated SCEP discussion on the same topic.

SC will discuss the probation letter at the November 27 meeting.

3. SCEP Report from Nic McPhee.

SCEP discussion topics include: all-University assessment; credit hours, permission to share SRT data, and grade distribution reporting.

4. Petitions

Petition #1211 denied. Request: Grant Historical Perspective (HIST) requirement. Rationale: Institutional Responsibility

Petition #1212 approved. Request: Waive International Perspectives (IP) requirement. Rationale: Spirit of the Requirement

5. International Student Program Report, Pilar Eble, coordinator

Eble shared recent stats, history, and information on the international students at UMM. (See attached.) It was noted that we did not have details about the SUFE process for recruiting SUFE students. It was also noted that the discussion looked at several measures of success.

Language exams

Former Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Cheryl Contant brought the issue of the Morris IELTS score is 5.5 to the Scholastic Committee in fall 2010. Most institutions comparable to Morris require an IELTS score of 6.0 or higher for admission. Within the University of Minnesota, requirements are 6.5 at TC, 6.5 at Duluth, 6.0 conditionally admitted at Duluth, 5.5 at Crookston.

There a number of reasons that IELTS is currently more prominent than the TOEFL. At Morris, students must score 79 (the equivalent of 6.5 IETLS) in the TOEFL. IETLS is relatively new, it is more popular in China, and students perceive it to be easier. It is easier for students to retake the IETLS a number of times.

Seventy percent of 2012 new international enrolled Morris students received a 5.5 on the IETLS exam. Morris's newly renegotiated three-year SUFE contract continues the 5.5 requirement.

SUFE courses pre-Morris

Also per the contract renegotiated by Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Bart Finzel, SUFE students are enrolled in four courses for 17 credits during their year at SUFE. During the fall semester, they study English and Calculus I for 5 credits. During spring, they take 12 credits (Econ 1111, 1112, and a stats course). The new contract was renegotiated to state that students in the SUFE program must pass one of these four courses before coming to Morris. This is a change that will take effect fall 2013. The first three years of the agreement, 2010-12, students were not required by UMM to take or pass these courses.

There appears to be a correlation between success in the SUFE courses and success as students at Morris. The 2011 cohort students who transfer nine or more SUFE credits average a 3.1 GPA. Students who receive eight or less SUFE credits average a 1.96 GPA. A higher amount of credits could be an indicator of motivation.

STELLAR

Summer 2012, SUFE begin requiring students who receive an IELTS score of 5.5 must attend STELLAR. This is NOT a UMM requirement. A difference in attitude between self selected and required STELLAR students has been observed, which could have been caused by several factors including the size of the group or the lack of self selection.

ESL

Eble shared that ESL courses are seen as remedial, and it is a “hard sell” to convince students to enroll in ESL classes beyond the writing course.

Retention

The retention rate of the first SUFE cohort 2010 is 47 percent. Of the 2010 cohort, about half who remain at UMM are “successful” at Morris. For UMM in general, the junior year retention is about 72 percent. The committee discussed SUFE students transferring to the TC campus. Unless failing at Morris, CLA will accept most of the SUFE students because they have been admitted to the University of Minnesota. Their language score requirement is a 6.5 OR one year at an United States university. So, they can transfer after being at UMM for one academic year. They are already admitted to the University through the Morris campus and request a Change of College. It was noted that many students request help in transferring to UMTC from advisers and the Office of the Registrar before their first semester classes have begun.

Comments and concerns

International students studying at Morris is a positive.

In general, China is slowly becoming more familiar with the liberal arts which will ultimately help Morris. But we are recruiting a business school and most of these particular students are looking to study finance.

We have very few students with higher scores which makes it difficult to see significant differences between students who enroll with 5.5 and those who score higher. It is also complicated by the observation that some students with a 5.5 are successful at Morris and some are not. Generally, the students with higher scores are more likely to be in the successful group.

How do we define success at Morris? Many students come and can do ok the first years with SN grading, but there is a concern that the students are not prepared to see the program through to the end...senior seminar, etc. Students can dodge expectations for a while, but may not have the academic skills to progress towards and finish a degree.

Many have a solid enough background to make it through courses like chemistry which has more limited vocabulary and the concepts are the same. Some students have tracked down a Chinese translation of science text books.

Oral skills might be adequate, but in courses that require intensive reading, the students can't keep up because they can't read more than two or three pages per hour.

Could we create more requirements after they arrive? Could we ask students to take the TOEFL when they arrive at Morris? Some institutions require the English proficiency test when international students arrive on campus, but that could sound like conditional

admit. Is there a way to create “pre-reqs” which would avoid the concerns over conditional admission but not let the students advance into classes they aren’t prepared for?

Can we work with SUFE on recruitment to talk about which type of students are successful here, and recruit the right kind of student for Morris.

The SUFE students are very good with networking to help each other, so there are a few who believe they can navigate Morris without learning English. Some are embarrassed about their language skills which inhibits interactions with native English speakers, which decreases their improvement via immersion. They know each other from SUFE. There’s a cultural disconnect that some students do not try to overcome. They may be planning to return to China.

For those students who are motivated to succeed, they do so.

Diversity interaction should be encouraged in the classroom. Are there simple ways faculty could encourage this?

The objective should be to enroll motivated students who are prepared with skills needed to progress to degree completion at Morris.

SC would like to invite Dean Finzel to continue the international student conversation at a future meeting.

Spring meeting times will need to be decided soon.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy R. Korn
Scholastic Committee Executive Staff