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Scholastic minutes 11/13/2013

Scholastic Committee

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**Scholastic Committee
2013-14 Academic Year
November 13, 2013
Meeting Ten Minutes Approved**

Present: Jennifer Goodnough, chair, Brenda Boever, Chad Braegelmann, Jennifer Herrmann, Steve Gross, Judy Korn, Hilda Ladner, Marcy Prince, Laddie Arnold, Andrew Sletten, Clare Dingley, Roland Guyotte, Saesun Kim, Jess Larson

Absent: Nic McPhee, Peter Wyckoff

1. October 30 minutes for review

Motion to approve, seconded. Yes 10. No zero. Abstention one. Passed.

2. Chair's Report

The chair reported on a number of Writing for the Liberal Arts (WLA) general education requirement conversations that she has had in the last week. Mark Collier, who serves on Curriculum Committee, asked about WLA stating that the Curriculum Committee has not been informed of WLA discussions.

Michael Lackey, English discipline coordinator, asked for a brief summary after his discussion with the Dean who questioned whether the Scholastic Committee (SC) has the authority to "rule" on transfer courses. Lackey noted that the writing coordinator was not part of the decision-making, so he believes the decision is invalid. The Chair shared that English and the writing coordinator have been invited to attend SC meetings, and that Larson, Division of Humanities, was part of the decision-making discussion. There is no precedent of requiring a representative from each discipline for SC. The Chair also told Lackey that the goals of WRIT 1301 are the same as WLA. Peh Ng and Michael Korth asked the Chair for clear WLA information.

The Chair also spoke to former SC Chairs Michelle Page and Barry McQuarry who affirmed recent SC discussions on WLA versus ENGL 1601. The course must be distinctive. Morris should not be making students take ENGL 1601 if it is not significantly different than their college writing transfer courses.

Why does the Dean want to bring the WLA discussion to Campus Assembly? To discuss the intent of the Assembly's vote in November 2012.

The December 2, 2013, Campus Assembly WLA conversation must be framed with clear, accurate information. WLA gen ed description is Curriculum Committee's decision. Disciplines are responsible for courses in majors. Gen eds are "owned" by the entire campus, and the Scholastic Committee is responsible for transfer coursework evaluation including wrt meeting a gen ed requirement. Rehashing the history of WLA will not move us forward, nor will anecdotes and storytelling.

On transfer, Campus Assembly is a judicial body not a legislative body.

SC could endorse a short document to be sent to the Steering Committee, not telling them what to do, but rather, providing information about SC's constitutional responsibilities and how those responsibilities coincide with WLA implementation. The Catalog is the ultimate implementation of Campus Assembly decisions. The WLA concept to graduate good writers is good, as we all agree, but the implementation is flawed and the lack of equity for students is unfair.

We must advocate for students. Perhaps Morris does do things better, but that doesn't mean that other places don't rise to the level of fulfilling a gen ed. Students may know that a transfer course isn't as "good" as Morris, but they are balancing cost, time, etc.

We are a public institution not a private college. We've had a 10-year battle to increase enrollment. Morris is behaving cavalier in regard to the writing general education requirement.

There's a very strong perception that SC believes it doesn't have to abide by the Campus Assembly WLA vote. We need to clarify that nothing about this body [SC] is rogue. We just did the SC's job. The SC system is working. It is not broken. SC has to act. It is part of the implementation of a general education requirement.

After months of discussion, SC understands the WLA situation. How will Campus Assembly understand in one meeting?

A memo will be sent to the Steering Committee to provide background. We should start with the constitutional "nonnegotiables" and the issues. It would perhaps be better if SC does not offer solutions. That is not our role. It would be better if the Steering Committee reviews the situation and comes to conclusions on its own. Campus Assembly reassesses the implementation.

It was noted that the memo must be written with student interests in mind. While being "tougher" on writing, Morris may be perceived as a better institution, but students are allowed to choose institutions based on factors such as money and time. Gen eds can be met with other courses.

Concurrent enrollment is a key WLA issue. SC members discussed the Catalog's explicit language about the IC exemption. The 12 credits needed for exemption must be post high school. The goals of IC are distinctive as well. Could WLA be implemented in a similar way? IC exemption is for New Advanced Standing students. The same type of rule wouldn't work for New High School students.

The statement has been made that everyone with writing courses will be evaluated case by case. That's potentially 550 new students each year. This also increases the chances of non-uniform decisions and creates possible disparity based on adviser, etc.

There is wide variability in concurrent enrollment programs and there is a national accrediting body. Concurrent enrollment instructors may be required to have master's degrees. And high school students may study a whole year to receive their credits.

The suggestion was to not use "concurrent enrollment" in the memo to the Steering Committee. Many transcripts do not identify if a student enrolled in the course through on-campus PSEO, high school concurrent enrollment, or as a post high school student.

WLA is the best we could do. We need to support it.

The counter argument to that statement is, "We need to do better."

The Curriculum Committee may not have had complete data when it discussed ENGL 1601 and WLA. They did not investigate why students were not enrolling in ENGL 1011. They reviewed the number of students exempt by ACT. Many students did not enroll in ENGL 1011 because they fulfilled the requirement with a transfer course. In addition, many students who were exempt based on ACT enrolled in ENGL 1011. And many ACT exempt students also had transfer coursework. They did not assess whether students who were "bad writers" had taken ENGL 1011 or not.

It is believed that the English Discipline will also be submitting a document to the Steering Committee. Herrmann, who also serves as vice chair of the Steering Committee, will be meeting with the Steering Committee chair on Friday. The goal will be to complete the memo before that meeting. All members will have access to review and comment on the document before it is sent.

3. SCEP Report

No report.

4. Discussion of statement for Steering Committee in regard to Writing for the Liberal Arts requirement satisfied by TC WRIT 1301

Discussion generated as part of Chair's report.