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Scholastic minutes 09/15/2015

Scholastic Committee

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**Scholastic Committee
2015-16 Academic Year
Tuesday, September 15, 2015
Meeting Two Approved Minutes**

Present: Steve Gross (chair), Judy, Korn, Merc Chasman, Brenda Boever, Dan Magner, Jennifer Goodnough, Mike Vandenberg, Leslie Meek, Jennifer Rothchild, Ray Schultz, Edison Yellick

Absent: Madeline Youakim

1. Approve minutes of September 8, 2015, meeting

Minutes approved with changes.

2. Chair's Report

Steve Gross provided an overview of topics that will be discussed within the next weeks. Among those topics, is the One Stop office's proposal to advise students on both academic issues as well as financial aid issues. This visit will also provide SC a sense of what the One Stop office is doing and whether the best interests of students are being met. The date has not yet been set.

Julie Eckerle and Jayne Blodgett, representing Consultative Committee, have requested that Scholastic discuss the proposed online teaching evaluation process. The Twin Cities campus has moved to online evaluations which has sparked a conversation on the Morris campus. It was suggested SC invite Professor Engin Sungur to talk about his experience with online evaluations and explain what he did and what worked. Professor Nic McPhee was also mentioned as a source of information regarding online evaluations. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* has featured articles about online teaching evaluations. The major concern voiced in the articles is students are using the online survey to go on angry rants about instructors that have nothing to do with teaching, such as gender or race.

Gwen Rudney would like to bring to the SC a growing concern of students registering for too many courses during summer sessions. The concern is with students registering for three or more courses per summer session. The Crookston campus has written a policy about how many credits students can take during summer sessions. Crookston students must petition to take credits over the set limit. It was suggested a proposal be made for Morris to put in writing a credit limit for summer sessions. A concern with setting a credit limit during summer sessions was that Morris would be pushing students to take classes elsewhere. It was then recommended that SC look at the number of students registering for more than two courses and seeing how well the students performed. SC would like to be convinced there's an actual problem instead of a perceived problem.

3. SCEP Report

The Twin Cities (TC) campus is planning a transfer student initiative/restructuring designed to treat transfer students as "first-class citizens" and provide the opportunity for

reverse transfer. The initiative is looking to provide transfer students with better housing and orientation experiences. Transfer students comprise one-third of the TC undergraduate population. Of that one-third, 45 percent transfer from MNSCU colleges; 38 percent transfer from community colleges. The TC campus admits few new advanced standing students with less than 26 credits. It is unknown if this applies to Morris students participating in intra-university transfer.

The TC campus is looking at a new model for enrollment management which targets recruitment by college/major. This new model may impact Morris recruiting if a student's first choice is the TC campus and they have been placed on a waitlist early in the process. Morris students on TC waitlists have cancelled after depositing if they have been allowed to enroll at the TC campus late in the enrollment process.

A new advising model has been proposed at the TC campus focusing on curricular analysis and creating parallel planning. The new model will be discussed at SCEP in October.

SCEP discussed retention and improving graduation rates.

The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum was mentioned during discussion on changes to the TC liberal education requirements. The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum would need to be renegotiated if the liberal education requirements were no longer met by completing an associate of arts.

There was further discussion on the interpretation of the First Day of Class policy. If students do not attend the first day of class students may lose their seat to other students on the waitlist. It is the belief of SCEP that this policy can be used to deny enrollment to those who missed the first day of class. Instructors may ask a student to disenroll. The policy was amended to state "You will lose your spot in the class." without the addition of "to another student."

According to the *Pioneer Press*, the Board of Regents requested the TC campus consider lowering its ACT score admission requirements. The current average is 27/28. The TC campus is focusing on retention and graduation, and higher ACT score students have higher rates of retention and graduation. TC admissions is not lowering ACT requirements.

4. Finalize SC membership to Academic Integrity Subcommittee

Nic McPhee volunteered to fill the final faculty position on the Academic Integrity subcommittee. The final roster includes Steve Gross, Leslie Meek and Nic McPhee as faculty representatives with Jennifer Goodnough serving as an alternate faculty representative. The student representatives will be Madeline Youakim and Edison Yellick with Ellery Whealot serving as an alternate.

5. **Academic Standing and summer suspension/probation discussion**

Academic standing is automatically entered on a student's record in PeopleSoft and displayed in the student's MyU account. This automatic process worked well in spring semester with only a few student records needing manual adjustments. The process then ran again after summer session II for financial aid purposes. The SC of the previous academic year decided that Morris would not change its probation/suspension practices: 1) Students will not be placed on academic probation/suspension after summer. 2) Students will be removed from academic probation/suspension after summer.

Following the SAP academic standing process for summer session II, two students were dismissed, nine students newly went on probation, 16 students were moved to probation two status, and 26 students returned to good academic standing. Of the two students dismissed, one student is not returning to Morris and the second student was manually changed back to probation status, per SC policy.

Crookston, Morris, and Duluth are not placing students on probation/suspension after the summer.

Stacey Tidball, interim director, Continuity and Compliance provided the following information regarding academic standing.

- In regards to federal funding compliance, individual colleges (and perhaps other administrative bodies) have the ability to change a student's Academic Standing. If the Academic Standing is changed (for example, from DISM to another status), the SAP program will recalculate the student's SAP status.
- For undergraduates, there are four SAP criteria, one of which is the Academic Standing of DISM (dismissal); it ignores all other statuses/actions (including academic probation). A student with Academic Standing = DISM is put on SAP suspension.
- From a practical standpoint, usually by the time a student gets to DISM, he is failing one or more of the other SAP criteria, so would still be on SAP suspension [even with a change to Academic Standing]. So, while a college or campus may reduce the severity of a student's Academic Standing, if he is still on SAP suspension due to failing one or more of the other criteria, he is not eligible for aid.

SC affirmed its spring 2015 decision, and Judy Korn will adjust student records that were affected by the academic standing process run after summer term.

6. **S/N policy discussion**

Korn presented on the proposed change to the S/N policy put forth by the system-wide policy group. See Addendum One.

Korn was provided a list of Morris students who earned more than 20 credits of S/N, over the proposed S/N credit limit, in the past three years. Korn presented a breakdown of

those students according to their academic work. The data showed the majority of the students over the proposed limit are students who are elementary education(ELED), secondary education(SEED), and Music majors. ELED majors are required to take 22 credits of S/N from practicums and direct student teaching. SEED majors are required to take 18 credits S/N for field experience. Music majors only have the option to take music ensembles with a S/N grading basis.

Suggestions for dealing with the proposed policy change include:

- SC create a blanket exception for all ELED and SEED students to allow for 30 credits of S/N grading. Other students would have to petition to go over the 20-credit limit. This exception would then require a manual manipulation of each of these student's APAS reports.
- Ask the policy committee to consider allowing ELED or SEED students the opportunity to take a course outside their academic plans with S/N grading by allowing this student population 25 credits of S/N. Even with a limit of 25 credits, the proposed policy would bind certain majors from exploring other general education courses afforded to the rest of the student body.
- Does Morris have to comply with this policy? Duluth has all of its own policies.
- Ask the policy committee to establish the limit at 30 credits instead of the current 25 percent of the 120. Korn has already made this suggestion, and TC policy committee is adamant that it should be lower than 30 credits because of the information they have gathered from peer institutions.
- Could we exclude the major required courses only offered S/N from the credit limit?
- Does this affect the Dean's List?

As SCEP representative, Goodnough offered to bring forth to SCEP the SC concerns regarding the change in the S/N policy.

SC agreed to continue the conversation at next week's meeting.

7. **2015-16 SC topics discussion**
Tabled for next week's meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Senger

Office of the Registrar

Addendum One

S/N Policy Revision Proposal

Current Policy

Under the University of Minnesota's Satisfactory/Non-satisfactory (S/N) grading option, students earn a Satisfactory or "S" grade for work equivalent to a C- or better and an N for work below that level. Grades of S earn credit, and grades of N do not. Current undergraduate policy allows students to apply up to 25% of their University of Minnesota credits graded as "S" to their degree (e.g., 30 credits if 120 are used to complete a degree).

Issue

Issues have arisen in the application and monitoring of this policy. The academic degree audit (APAS) has the ability to track the policy as a degree requirement, but it cannot determine whether a course is registered as S/N or A-F until the final grade is submitted. As a result, students may register for a course as S/N, but it does not become apparent to the student and/or academic adviser until the semester is over that the student exceeded the allowable 25% of "S" credits. This problem most often occurs close to graduation, thus requiring the student to take additional coursework and extend time to degree. Further, calculating and tracking the "S" grades as a percentage of total credits outside of APAS is cumbersome to both the student and the adviser; particularly at the end of a student's career when the student has amassed a large number of credits. A hand calculation of this kind also lends itself to misinterpretation and misapplication of the policy.

Research

A review of peer institutions showed just one other institution uses a percentage to enforce an S/N credit limit. Instead, most institutions limit S/N credits using a specific number, ranging from 12 to 30 credits. Pennsylvania State University and the University of Illinois limit the number of courses taken S/N to two courses per semester with an additional limit on the total number of courses/credits allowed.

At the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, students who earned a bachelor's degree from 2011-2012 had an average of 5.2 "S" credits applied to their degree. Of the courses they took S/N, 59.4% of those courses offered the option to be taken either as A-F or S/N. Just 5% of students earned more than 16 "S" credits and fewer than 2% earned more than 20 "S" credits.

For in-progress credits, PeopleSoft and APAS do not have functionality to track the percentage or the raw credit number by grading basis. Peer institutions, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Illinois, have worked around this limited functionality by requiring students to obtain permission in order to select an S/N grading basis for a course.

Proposal: change S/N upper limit from 25% of total credits to 20 credits

The following changes to the S/N policy would uphold the University's goal of providing clear and transparent degree requirements to students, as well as support student degree progress and facilitate timely graduation.

A total credit number, rather than a percentage of total credits, would simplify requirement tracking for students and academic advisers, thereby minimizing registration errors and delays in graduation.

A majority (98.1%), of UMTC students earned 20 or fewer "S" credits. We propose that the number of "S" credits students are allowed to apply to their degree be limited to 20 credits.