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Scholastic minutes 10/27/2015

Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic Committee
2015-16 Academic Year
9:30 a.m., Tuesday, October 27, 2015, Moccasin Flower
Meeting Six Approved Minutes

Present: Steve Gross (chair), Judy Korn, Jennifer Goodnough, Brenda Boever, Leslie Meek, Merc Chasman, Jennifer Rothchild, Madeline Youakim, Edison Yellick

Absent: Dan Magner, Ray Schultz, Mike Vandenberg,

1. Approve minutes of October 13, 2015, meeting

Minutes approved with one change.

2. Chair's Report

Steve Gross was contacted by the Consultative Committee soliciting advice from all committees regarding some issues brought forth during Campus Assembly (CA). One of the issues discussed was the opinion that some members of CA believe a small group of people appear to be doing all the governance on campus while some people do none. Another issue/opinion brought forth was that CA has become a reporting session rather than a discussion. Others believe CA has become optional because they feel their voices are not valued or heard. Gross would like to add a discussion regarding all these issue to a future Scholastic Committee agenda.

3. SCEP Report

Jennifer Goodnough reported on her SCEP discussion regarding the Timely Graduation Policy and administratively clearing degrees. Goodnough asked the policy group how the GPA freeze and repeat grades might impact students who have an administratively cleared degree. From the response she received it appears the issue never occurred to them. The issue regarding repeats and "I" notations was also brought up, but the policy group did not seem concerned about that either. With no changes happening on the Morris campus, Goodnough believes it will not be an issue.

The policy group is working on a list of acceptable reasons not to administratively clear degrees that will be entered in the procedure section of the policy. Goodnough did confirm that Morris will not be pushed to move to administratively clear degrees. The TC campus indicates it will be moving forward with administratively clearing degrees.

SCEP also heard a report on advising. The Twin Cities campus has had some issues dealing with areas of campus having different advising structures. The TC would like to move toward creating standards in advising across the campus. It appears the TC campus is moving to a model similar to that on the Morris campus. Brenda Boever received a copy of the initial advising recommendation model, and she informed SC that she will check if Morris is out of alignment with anything.

Discussion regarding the professional advisers on the TC campus followed. Goodnough commented that one reason the TC campus could be having issues in advising is that the professional advisers are inclined to move positions from broader advising in the College of Liberal Arts to more specialized advising areas where compensation is better.

4. IC Exemption

Judy Korn brought forth a concern from a faculty adviser regarding Intellectual Community transfer exemptions. Currently, new advanced standing (NAS) transfer students with 12 or more postsecondary transferable credits are exempt from the Intellectual Community (IC) requirement. The adviser was concerned about a particular NAS transfer student who had completed many technical transfer credits that did not transfer to Morris. The student therefore did not receive an IC exemption. The adviser believed the student had satisfied the requirement even though the credits did not transfer and questioned the IC exemption process. Korn mentioned that the IC exemption process was brought forth and approved by Campus Assembly. The goal of the IC requirement is to prepare students for small group discussion in a liberal arts community and their upcoming college experience.

SC members agreed that the student would have the option to petition SC and explain how he/she met the goals of the IC general education requirement. The mechanism to handle such situations is already in place. Members agreed there is no need to review the process.

Some members expressed that it can be difficult to have a student in an IC course who believes they should be exempt from the course. If a student has a bad experience in IC, is this student really benefiting from the course? In regards to the student with the technical background, IC is preparing them for discussion and writing in a liberal arts setting which is very different from a technical college. It was noted that the IC experience at Morris is very varied with some courses having a lot of discussion and little writing experience or vice-versa.

An issue has arisen with international students regarding the IC requirement. Many students from the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SUFU) are not prepared to be in a robust discussion atmosphere. Some of these students drop their IC courses after the first day for another IC course because they've discussed among themselves which course is best for them. If these students were to take the course in their 2nd/3rd/4th year, they may perform better because they would have gained experience. However, that does defeat the first-year experience. Would SC consider allowing international students to take IC courses in their second year?

Some SUFU students are exempt from IC if they've completed nine or more test credits from Shanghai plus successfully completing the STELLAR program which earns them three postsecondary credits. The STELLAR program ends two weeks before the fall semester begins, which provides little time to determine if a student should receive an exemption and make registration changes.

The SUFU students that are not IC exempt appear to be the weakest in language. This can then create a false impression of SUFU students from this subset. The IC requirement can also contribute to SUFU students' unsettledness because discussion is difficult for them. SUFU students usually perform well in their major courses.

There was discussion last year about having SUFU students take proficiency exams, but there's been no further discussion with the Dean and International Student Programs if/when this may take effect.

Many SUFU students talk about transferring to the TC campus before they even arrive at Morris. The TC campus has prestige in China because of their extensive background there.

What if all SUFE students were required to take an IC course? Would not having an exception take away from the instability? Members agreed this would be a good discussion to have with other IC instructors. The goal is to find a way to best serve SUFE students and set them up for success at Morris as a liberal arts environment.

An option proposed was to create two sections of IC specifically for SUFE students taught by an instructor that is accustomed to creating good discussion and writing experiences. If these sections were in place, then all SUFE students would be required to take an IC course. Creating courses would be a discussion with the Curriculum Committee. SC would also like to have a discussion with international students about what they need to be successful.

Creating two sections of IC specifically for SUFE students could cause an issue of segregation versus integration. Another proposal was to create an intensive three-week IC course offered in the summer worth two credits. SUFE students could take this course before classes start to better prepare them for the college experience and identify any problem areas. The only problem with this proposal is that not all SUFE students come to Morris for summer classes. Could this summer IC course be made mandatory in the SUFE contract?

Korn offered to contact the faculty adviser and relay the IC discussion from the minutes. SC would like to stress that students can always petition the requirement.

5. AP Seminar Course, new AP course

Tabled for the following meeting.

6. Multi-I Conversation

Tabled for the following meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar