

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Scholastic Committee

Campus Governance

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10-4-2016

### Scholastic minutes 10/04/2016

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**Scholastic Committee  
2016-17 Academic Year  
October 4, 2016  
Meeting Five Approved Minutes**

**Present:** Roland Guyotte (chair), Leslie Meek, Merc Chasman, Colin Wray, Joe Beaver, Ray Schultz, Jennifer Goodnough, Emma Kloos, Dan Magner, and Judy Korn

**Absent:** Brenda Boever and Stephen Gross

**1. Approve minutes of September 20, 2016, meeting**

Approved as amended.

**Approve minutes of September 27, 2016, meeting**

Tabled

**2. Chair's Report**

No report

**3. SCEP Report**

Jennifer Goodnough reported SCEP will be discussing mental health at a future meeting.

SCEP is also reviewing language in the Managing Records policy to make the policy clearer. It was suggested that faculty be reminded of this policy especially regarding collecting and returning coursework.

SCEP will review the Makeup Work policy in response to Boynton's concerns regarding item number seven in the policy requesting health excuses. Boynton would like to decrease the number of students with cold or flu symptoms coming into health service requesting class excuses. It is best practice for patients with cold or flu symptoms to stay home rather than going to see a doctor and potentially exposing others to the illness. Boynton proposed amending item number seven of the policy to include "for prolonged or recurring absences."

There is a misconception by students who believe they have to have an excuse no matter the circumstances. Many instructors only request verification of the absence when students miss exams or are requesting to makeup work. Most instructors don't generally request verification of an absence if a student misses a lecture. However, the proposal by Boynton could be imposing on an instructor's purview or right to manage their class as they see fit.

Some time ago, Health Service on the Morris campus conducted a study on how many students were requesting absence excuses and they found the number to be relatively low. Morris does not experience the high volume of students requesting excuses as they do on the Twin Cities campus. Morris students are allowed to call in for an excuse. Health Service tracks the number of requests from individual students. Students with recurring health excuse requests are instructed to see a doctor regarding the recurring illness.

The Scholastic Committee (SC) unanimously agreed it does not favor the proposed wording change to the Makeup Work policy regarding health excuses. Goodnough would mention the SC viewpoint to SCEP Chair Sue Wick during the next meeting.

The Student Senate is requesting that Student Senate meetings be added to the circumstances list on item number three of the Make Up policy regarding unavoidable or legitimate circumstances for which instructors cannot penalize students for absences. The Student Senate explained the reason behind the request is due to difficulty in getting student involvement. The Student Senate reasoned that students participating in sports received an excused absence, so why not students serving on student government?

It was questioned, why the Student Senate did not instead request that meetings be approved as a University sponsored activity? The Student Senate had made the request to be added to University sponsored activities, but the request was not approved by the Provost because they did not want to create regulations that needed to be followed by faculty. Instead the Provost recommended faculty excuse students for Senate meetings, but it is at the discretion of the instructor.

The Office of the Chancellor on the Morris campus is empowered to give Student Senate members an excused absence.

#### **4. A-Level Examinations presentation**

Judy Korn provided some history about the introduction and review process for A-Level exams. A-Level exams are nationally recognized exams similar to IB, AP, and CLEP. The exams are offered through Cambridge International Examinations and Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board. It is the responsibility of the SC to determine how national exams are recognized at Morris.

Last year, the Office of the Registrar and Academic Advising worked with the chemistry, math and physics discipline coordinators to help a student who had completed A-Level exams in these areas be placed in the correct course sequences. Since the SC and discipline coordinators had not reviewed A-Level exams for transfer credit, the student had to take special exams to determine placement. The student did not receive credit for any A-Level exams.

Korn sent discipline coordinators A-Level exams information to review for credit and course substitution. Disciplines expressed great concern about A-Level exams and were hesitant to accept any more high school courses for the major. Disciplines also asked to know how the Twin Cities would accept credit for A-Level exams. None of the disciplines provided a review of their corresponding A-Level exams.

It was noted that disciplines did not see syllabi during last year's meeting when discussing A-Levels. It may be possible disciplines were unable to make a conclusion without a syllabus.

It was suggested that SC invite the three students who have completed A-Level exams to speak with the committee about their experience on how the exams prepared them for courses at Morris. One of the students had previously volunteered to speak with SC about their experience. This student believes exams with grades below a B should not be accepted and transcripts with less than three exams should also not be accepted.

Korn contacted the Twin Cities Admissions Director regarding review of A-Level exams. A review of the Twin Cities transfer articulation rules shows the Twin Cities is being very generous in awarding credit for A-Level exams.

A review of other comparison institutions revealed that institutions were accepting A-Level credit in very different ways.

Korn proposed that the SC review the syllabi for all A-Level exams to determine if an exam should be accepted for credit and awarded general education credit. After the SC has reviewed the courses, then the course syllabi would be sent to the discipline coordinators for review for substitution and use in the major.

The committee discussed the responsibility of the University as a public, liberal arts college to accept credit earned outside the institution. The committee also discussed the philosophical differences between committees when reviewing credit earned outside of Morris.

It was suggested that SC break up the review of A-Level exams by general education requirement (eg. Science, Science without a Lab, Mathematical/Symbolic Reasoning, etc.).

The committee agreed to continue the discussion next week and also to invite the students with A-Level exams to next week's meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger  
Office of the Registrar