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Scholastic Committee

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10-10-2011

### Scholastic minutes 10/10/2011

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University of Minnesota, Morris  
Scholastic Committee 2011-2012, Meeting #5

The Scholastic Committee met at 10:30 on Monday, October 10, in Imholte 217.

Present: M.Page (Chair), T.Berberi, E.Christensen, C.Dingley, M.Donovan, S.Gross, H.Ladner, D.McBrady, P.Ng, J.Robinson, D.Stewart, P.Wyckoff, A.Wolf, J.Zych-Herrmann

1. The Minutes of October 3 were approved.

2. Report from the Chair

- Bryan Herrmann will visit the committee on October 31 to present data on the high school rank (HSR) and ACT score of enrolled, admitted, and denied students in fall 2011. He will return if there are questions to be answered, and a second formal visit will be scheduled in the future to look at additional data.
- Retention data will be provided at a meeting scheduled in the future with Jen Zych-Herrmann.

3. The chair brought two motions to the committee, and a third was added following the approval of Motion 1. Motion 1 was formulated as an effort to capture the discussion in the October 3 meeting.

***Motion 1:*** *In the case of performance-oriented, credit-bearing classes (e.g., music ensembles, theater, athletics) whose events (e.g., performances, matches, exhibits) serve as the primary structure, purpose, goal, or assessment of the course, such events shall be considered as 'classes' under part D of the University Senate policy 'Scheduling Examinations, Final Examinations, and Study Days' (<http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/EXAM.html>). Therefore, scheduling of performance activities related to such classes during study days and exam periods is prohibited according to university policy. University policy does not provide for exceptions.*

At its meeting on September 12, the Scholastic Committee denied a request to schedule a Mus 1300 concert on Study Day. When notified of the action, the Humanities division chair asked whether making participation optional would bring the activity into compliance. The chair's initial instinct was to just make a judgment call saying that the Symphonic Winds group was now in compliance with policy. Ultimately, the question was brought to the committee because:

- the authority of interpretation of the policy belongs to the committee, not one individual;
- the decision would now be inviting review by SCEP since it would have been a policy exception;
- the policy interpretation/decision carries with it implications for other events/courses not just now, but in the future;
- for the sake of adhering to the spirit of the policy and not just the letter of the law, a full and thoughtful discussion was merited;
- and ultimately, whatever the final outcome, the question deserved the broadest hearing possible--this is ultimately the best service to students and instructors, not a simple "yes" or "no" response.

The Scholastic Committee takes seriously its charge of enforcing academic policy but it also takes seriously its power to grant exceptions and does exercise such power. Our actions are guided by balancing the integrity of policy (if one always makes exceptions, the policy is null--this policy exists to protect students, even if they do not wish to be protected) and allowing for exceptions in cases of compelling circumstances.

**Motion was approved 8-0-3** (Peh Ng, SCEP/SCI faculty representative to the committee, abstained until voting status of that position clarified. She stated that her vote would have been in favor.)

In May 2011 the 2010-2011 Scholastic Committee chair informed each division chair of the move to compliance with this policy. However, in that the application of the study day/final exam policy has not been clearly understood or enforced on the UMM campus, in order to allow time to educate faculty and administrators on the policy and its implications, and in order to avoid the appearance of capricious application of said policy, the chair moved the following:

***Motion 2:*** *The policy interpretation approved by Scholastic Committee (Motion 1 above) shall go into effect and be enforced beginning in **spring 2012** in order to educate the campus on the implications of the policy and in order to allow faculty to schedule classes and events in accordance with University policy. Under part D.1 of the Study Day and Finals*

*Week scheduling policy, classes are not permitted to be scheduled during this time. Unlike extracurricular events, University policy does not provide for exceptions.*

Committee members added Motion 3 for the sake of clarity and specificity regarding action taken.

**Motion 3:** *For Fall 2011 the Symphonic Winds and Chamber Orchestra concerts currently scheduled on Study Day shall be allowed to proceed if participation in these events is optional. Students who do not wish to participate shall not have their grades affected nor shall faculty or other students pressure group members to participate.*

The committee emphasizes that scheduling the Music concerts on December 10, 2011, is a one-time only grandfathered approval that may not be used to create a new normal of so-called “optional.” The Scholastic Committee is not creating a loophole to the policy. The SC chair was told that the Chamber Orchestra concert was in the process of being moved, but it still shows up on the Events Calendar; therefore, it was included in Motion 3 for the sake of even application of the policy and for clarity.

The Humanities division chair reported to the SC chair that schedules for spring 2012 are already being adjusted. The original syllabus for Mus 1300 stated that all concerts are required, as are rehearsals, and that there are penalties for unexcused absences. The division chair stated that the syllabus would be adjusted to exempt students from that requirement if scheduling the December 10 concert is approved as recommended in Motion 3. There is a back-up plan that allows the program to be adjusted according to the students who are participating.

**Motions 2 and 3 were approved 10-0-1 (Ng)**

A memo from the Scholastic Committee recommending approval of the request to schedule the two concerts on Study Day in Fall 2011 only will be sent to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP) to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting on October 19, (copy to Peh Ng, UMM representative to that committee). The Humanities division chair will be informed of SC action. No report can be issued to the campus until a response is received from SCEP.

4. Replace the assistant dean in the procedures for academic integrity violation hearings – last year’s discussions when formulating the procedures addressed the need to avoid even the appearance of impropriety or conflict of interest by individuals reporting to the dean, since any appeal is heard by the dean. An academic integrity hearing results if the violation is not resolved between the student and the instructor or in cases of persistent violations. In the procedures developed during 2010-2011, the assistant dean had a role. Since that position no longer exists, Scholastic needs to replace the assistant dean wherever mentioned in the procedures. One suggestion offered was a faculty member appointed by the dean--either a single member for the year or one appointed when a hearing becomes necessary—including the standard language concerning replacement due to conflicts of schedule or interest. The committee will consider this issue at the next meeting, October 24. A copy of the AI procedures with assistant dean roles highlighted will be sent to the committee via email attachment.

Submitted by Dorothy De Jager