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Scholastic Committee

Campus Governance

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Scholastic minutes 02/19/2013

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University of Minnesota, Morris

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Scholastic Committee
2012-13 Academic Year
February 19, 2013
Meeting Fifteen Minutes approved

In attendance: Jennifer Goodnough (chair), Hilda Ladner, Jen Zych Herrmann, Chad Braegelmann, Judy Korn, Nic McPhee, Steve Gross, Pete Wyckoff, Ellery Wealot, Luciana Ranelli, Brenda Boever

Not in attendance: Melissa Hernandez, Zach Kroells, Clare Dingley, Kent Blansett, Jess Larson

1. Minutes For Review

February 12, 2013 meeting minutes approved with one revision. Boever did not attend the February 12 meeting.

2. Chair's Report

The SC will not meet on February 26. The Academic Integrity SC subcommittee will meet to debrief. The group will discuss possible procedure/process changes and report to SC. A question was asked about reports and discussions on Academic Issues in regard to public information and the nature of the committee. Details about students and classes are not public, but numbers of violations and other issues will be a part of our SC minutes, for example, after Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Sandy Olson Loy presents to the SC. Specific information about hearings and sanctions will not be shared. The volume of Academic Integrity hearings last fall covered all groups of students. We don't want to imply that violations increased because of any one group. The SC subgroup will also reflect on the fairness to all students in regard to the procedure.

3. SCEP Report

SCEP has not met since our last SC meeting, so no report from member McPhee. A question was asked about the Faculty Consultative Committee's relationship to SCEP in regard to the topic of grade compression. FCC asked SCEP to investigate grade compression. FCC was hoping SCEP would suggest putting course grading information on the transcript, but the SCEP subcommittee concluded that it was not feasible.

4. Discussion on recommendations received from International Student Program (See Addendum One)

The SC will be making a recommendation to campus assembly. The committee discussed the three proposals submitted by Pilar Eble, ISP coordinator, and Nancy Pederson, ESL.

Based on previous discussions, SC appreciates the first two proposals, but the SC also understands the associated constraints, especially in resources. In addition, Morris has recently negotiated a new three-year contract with Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SUFU).

It was noted that even though SC understands the obstacles, we should recommend to campus assembly the best option. There is value in saying what should happen even if Morris does not have the resources or opportunity to make it happen at this time.

Motion made, seconded, and passed: Raise the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score for admission to 6.5, the equivalent of the longstanding Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 79.

Discussion topics:

- Although it is not a policy or a requirement, the Summer Transition for English Language and Liberal Arts Readiness program (STELLAR) is necessary for some SUFU students.

- It was noted that the ISP data reflected that the IELTS score alone wasn't a predictor of success.
- Students who do not do well in the SUFE courses, and may have a lower IELTS score as well, are unlikely to do well in IC because of weak language skills and their successful peers are not in the class to help them.
- Students with <12 credits + 5.5 IELTS often struggle in IC affecting the academic reputation of all SUFE students. Should all International students be required to take IC?
- International students who plan to transfer do not wish to take the nontransferable IC. But, if those students don't do well at Morris and earn a low GPA, they may not be able to transfer, and IC will not be completed in the expected timeframe.
- A reason to change the IELTS to match the TC's requirement would be that we don't want students to begin at Morris, who hope to transfer, and then are "stuck" here because of a low GPA.

The SC reviewed characteristics of the Twin Cities Minnesota English Language Program (MELP) that could inform the Morris discussion of serving ESL students.

In the past, MELP was a resource for Morris, but more recently the program has been filled. It was noted that MELP seemed to better serve students already in the U.S. Also, in the past MELP was used for students prior to Morris admission. A program like MELP does not coincide with our agreement with SUFE.

Morris has ESL students who are beyond the 1000-level ESL offerings but could benefit from further study. ESL students can take seven credits of ESL courses in one semester, and the courses are repeatable. Although ISP staff strongly recommend repeating, most ESL students do not. Often advisers don't know their advisees' ESL levels and cannot make good recommendations. Parents can be highly influential in discouraging ESL students from repeating these courses. Repeating often is viewed as remedial and not progress towards a degree, although the result of repeating ESL courses could greatly benefit students as they progress through degree requirements.

Could the seven ESL credits be changed to a different grading basis (A-F) as an incentive?

The SC briefly discussed the advantages of the possibility of a 16-credit immersion semester in which students could earn general education requirements. Could Morris provide a "HECUA-type" experience for ESL students in which they would study for one semester with one instructor?

The SC was reminded that the students under discussion are fully admitted to Morris. They are not conditional admits, so recommendations must reflect the students' admit status. Requiring a hold for one particular group of students would not be appropriate.

The lack of a staff member whose first or second language is Chinese is of concern. Students often bring a friend with stronger English skills to the Office of the Registrar, advising meetings etc and this resource could be beneficial at orientation, Health Services or SCMC etc While students are expected to communicate in English, the reality is that some can't and this is a problem in certain important situations.

A subcommittee comprised of McPhee, Ladner, Wyckoff, and Ranelli will meet with Pederson and Eble to write a memo to be presented to assembly. In particular, they will address:

- Students who earn a 5.5 IETL score must enroll in STELLAR
- Provide Pederson with the resources necessary to administer ESL placement exams when students arrive
- Students would enroll in Fundamentals of Writing or Writing for the Liberal Arts based on placement exam
- Extend orientation
- Finding resources for a second semester of ESL coursework should be considered
- Advisers need the results of placement testing
- ESL writing room resources
- Safe contract should not be renegotiated with the 5.5 IETL score
- Assistance from the Twin Cities China Center at key moments in students' Morris careers

5. Discussion on Prior Learning topics for Campus Assembly

Tabled for next meeting on March 5, 2013. The Chair's recommendations will be sent with meeting materials for review prior to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy R. Korn, Executive Staff

Addendum One

Recommendations for Scholastic Committee for International Student Language Proficiency Requirements

1. Raise IELTS to 6.0 or 6.5

Raising the IELTS score to a 6.0 or 6.5 would help to more consistently assure strong English language proficiency (see data below). Just as a strong test score does not ensure academic ability, a low score does not always predict a lack of academic success.

Why are we accepting a score that is so low compared to our TOFEL requirements?

Comparison Charts

Based on the research reports that link TOEFL iBT scores to IELTS, ETS developed these comparison charts to help make informed admissions decisions.

TOEFL Score	IELTS Band
0-31	0-4
32-34	4.5
35-45	5
46-59*	5.5
60-78*	6
79-93*	6.5
94-101*	7

102–109*	7.5
110–114	8
115–117	8.5
118–120	9

* Indicates score comparison ranges with the highest degree of confidence

2. **Require TOFEL 79, no longer accept IELTS**

TOFEL is arguably more rigorous, has a longer history and is more trusted in the industry. In addition, 79 is a higher requirement than the current IELTS 5.5 and will assure we admit students with stronger English language proficiency. While there is no set equivalent to a 79 TOFEL industry standards are a 6.5 for the IELTS. One potential drawback, in some countries the access to the TOFEL may be limited.

*Also, there are issues of fraud that make relying on international standardize tests un- reliable.

3. **Leave admissions policy of accepting students at 5.5, but with requirements:**

- a. Test upon arrival for placement into or exemption from SOME ESL coursework.
- b. Require ESL coursework of ALL students regardless of score.
- c. Require additional ESL coursework if students score below a set score on UMM language exam.
- d. Place Hold on record until requirements are met.

Drawbacks are more administrative work required: administering and interpreting the exam, placing and releasing holds on records, counseling students. UMM may potentially need to offer more levels of ESL courses.

Details would have to be discussed for test upon arrival for exemptions for students transferring in college writing from a U.S. institution, exchange students, students from various English speaking countries and test scores above a certain level.

This plan would allow admissions to continue to admit the same number of international students we are admitting now. This will also give UMM more control and information about student ability. We will be more equipped to meet student needs.

All students will be admitted with a hold placed on their records: students will be tested during orientation or STELLAR to determine placement in or exemption from ESL writing and reading coursework. All students regardless of test scores SHOULD be required to take LANG 1063: Oral skills and Academic Culture in American Universities. Requiring LANG 1063 for ALL international students will allow for an extended orientation and assure they learn about American academic culture, especially concepts like academic integrity, plagiarism and other issues.

Prepared by:

Nancy Pederson, ESL Coordinator

Pilar Eble, ISP Coordinator

SUFE COHORT 2010 entering UMM with 5.5 IETLS score, TERM GPA.

		TERM FALL-10	TERM SPR-11	TERM FALL-11	TERM SPR-12	CUM GPA SPRING 2012
AVG GPA:		2.48	2.89	3.05	2.69	2.81
MED GPA:		2.80	3.09	3.25	2.96	2.76

Of this group of 22 students:

TRANSFERRED: 6 or 27%

SUSPENDED: 1

DROPPED OUT: 1

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS: 8

SUFE COHORT 2010 entering UMM with 6.0 IELTS or better includes students who took TOEFL.

	TERM FALL- 10	TERM SPR- 11	TERM FALL- 11	TERM SPR- 12	CUM GPA SPRING 2012
AVG GPA:	3.14	3.56	3.58	3.29	3.62
MED GPA:	3.64	3.76	3.65	3.60	3.72

Of this group of 23 students:

TRANSFERRED: 15 or 65%

SUSPENDED: 0

DROPPED OUT: 0

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS: 1 (take into consideration transfer rate)

SUFE COHORT 2011 entering UMM with 5.5 IETLS score, TERM GPA.

		TERM FALL-11	TERM SPG-12	CUM GPA
AVG GPA:		2.65	2.93	2.81
MED GPA:		2.83	2.99	2.85

Of this group of 34 students:

TRANSFERRED: 3

SUSPENDED: 0

DROPPED OUT: 0

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS: 5

SUFE COHORT 2011 entering UMM with 6.0 IETLS score or better, or TOFEL, TERM GPA.

		TERM FALL-11	TERM SPG-12	CUM GPA
AVG GPA:		2.95	2.97	3.06

MED GPA:		2.88	3.19	3.09
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Of this group of 21 students:

TRANSFERRED: 4

SUSPENDED: 1

DROPPED OUT: 0

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS: 8