

1-28-2014

Scholastic minutes 01/28/2014

Scholastic Committee

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**Scholastic Committee
2013-14 Academic Year
January 28, 2014
Meeting Fourteen Minutes Approved**

Present: Jennifer Goodnough, chair, Brenda Boever, Chad Braegelmann, Jennifer Herrmann, Judy Korn, Hilda Ladner, Roland Guyotte, Peter Wyckoff, Steve Gross, Saesun Kim, guests Pilar Eble, director, International Students Program and Nancy Pederson, English as a Second Language Instructor, and James Wojtaszek, SC for spring 2014

Absent: Marcy Prince, Laddie Arnold, Andrew Sletten, Clare Dingley, Nic McPhee

1. January 21, 2014, minutes

Approved with one clarification, seven yes, zero no, one abstention.

2. Chair's Report

James Wojtaszek, professor of Spanish, has agreed to serve on Scholastic Committee for spring 2014. The Membership Committee will present his nomination for vote at the February Campus Assembly meeting.

Goodnough attended a meeting for committee chairs. She updated the group on the agenda items SC has identified for spring 2014.

3. SCEP Report

No report

4. International Students Program presentation and discussion

Eble and Pederson shared information and answered questions about the International Student Program in general and, in particular, the 2012-13 recommendations to the SC. University of Minnesota English Proficiency Score Tables and ISP 2012-13 recommendations to the SC documents were distributed. (See Addendum one and two.) The SC's recommendations determined during the 2012-13 academic year in conjunction with ISP were shared with Campus Assembly for information as a committee update (not agenda item) but not action. Eble, Pederson, and the SC discussed at length the SC recommendation to change the minimum IELTS score to 6.5. Raising the score would bring Morris into alignment with most other colleges. If the recommendation was adopted by admissions, implementation would be driven by the terms of the exchange contract with Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SUFU).

SUFU students need only earn 5.5 on the IELTS to attend Morris. About 80 percent of the students who participate earn 5.5. In addition, until the new contract, students were not required to satisfactorily complete the pre-Morris SUFU courses. Anecdotally, some SUFU students concentrate on studying for the IELTS and do not invest in the other pre-Morris courses. The test score credits they earn do not reflect in their GPA, and for other transfer students, a 2.5 GPA is required for admission.

What can International Programs do now and in the future to ensure that all SUFU students are successful? SUFU students must now complete at least one class before they come to Morris. Test credits earned in Shanghai have been a predictor of success at Morris.

Morris could require an English placement exam for students who score 5.5, and require ESL courses, if needed, based on the placement exam scores. Currently, Eble and Pederson state, there is no way to require ESL work for those students who would benefit.

Pederson and Eble would like to be empowered to require international students to repeat ESL courses, if needed. Students who need more ESL often ignore their recommendations to enroll in ESL and to use academic assistance resources. Pederson and Eble have discussed special contracts for international students on probation. Also, more information shared with advisers working with international students could be provided. Mentoring is a foreign

concept to international students. It was also noted that one division hosts a much higher number of international students than other divisions, and resources do not match the numbers. Could we require a specific first-year schedule for international students?

Scholastic Committee's role in general education, retention, and graduation warrant a role in the success of SUFE students in earning a Morris degree. The SC's oversight of the foreign language general education requirement for transfer students may be an avenue to ESL requirements. English is the students' second language, so it is the purview of the SC to require a 6.5 IETL score before receiving the FL exemption as an international student. The Curriculum Committee would decide if the ESL course or courses satisfy the FL. Not offering ESL with S/N grading could also be discussed. Curriculum could also add the ESL prereq to ENGL 1601.

It was noted that international students studying at Morris contribute to its liberal arts mission, but it is a disservice to students to admit them when they are not prepared to succeed. It was acknowledged that the international students are a tremendous financial asset to the campus, which could impact decision-making.

Morris looks at admission factors in addition to test scores for non-SUFE students. The question of motivation or ability is always a concern in regard to students who struggle. Since the inception of the SUFE program, our numbers of international students on probation and suspension has risen significantly.

A motion will be crafted for further discussion at our next meeting. We need to discuss this topic with the Curriculum Committee. We need to consider a transition plan for steps needed to move the IETL to 6.5. A subgroup could continue the discussion with an invitation to the Dean to participate.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy R. Korn
Executive Staff

Addendum One

University of Minnesota English Proficiency Requirement Cutoff Scores					
Test Results					ESL Requirement
TOEFL (PBT)	I TOEFL (iBT)	MN BATTERY	MELAB	IELTS	
550 and above	79 and above	80 and above	80 and above	6.5	Exempt
520-547	68-78	73-79	73-79	6	1 Academic ESL Class
477-517	53-67	64-72	64-72	5.5	2 Advanced ESL Classes (first semester) & 1 Academic ESL Class (second semester)
Graduate Sub Scores: Reading: 19 iBT/78MNBatt Writing: 21iBT/83MNBatt					
University of Minnesota English Proficiency Requirement Cutoff Scores					
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Addendum Two

Possible 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. That said, we accept an IELTS score that is significantly lower than our required TOEFL comparison. (We admit students with either a 79 TOEFL or 5.5 IELTS)

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 TOEFL 79, no longer accept IELTS

TOEFL 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 TOEFL industry standards are a 6.5 for the IELTS. One potential drawback, in some countries the access to the TOEFL may be limited.

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

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. Explore possibility of using LANG (ESL) to fulfill the General Education Foreign Language requirement that is currently fulfilled by international students because they are already fluent in a language other than English.
- c. Offer leveled ESL based off of test results, consider making level one non-credit bearing, similar to remedial Math courses.
- d. Require additional ESL coursework if students score below a set score on UMM language exam.
- e. 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 Assistant Director