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Scholastic minutes 04/14/2014

Scholastic Committee

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**Scholastic Committee
2013-14 Academic Year
April 14, 2014
Meeting Twenty-two Minutes approved**

Present: Jennifer Goodnough, chair, Jennifer Herrmann, Steve Gross, Nic McPhee, Brenda Boever, Peter Wyckoff, Chad Braegelmann, Judy Korn, Hilda Ladner, Laddie Arnold, Andrew Sletten

Absent: Saesun Kim, James Wojtaszek, Clare Dingley, Roland Guyotte, Marcy Prince

1. Minutes review and approval

April 7, 2014 minutes approved

2. Chair's Report none

3. SCEP Report

The University has implemented a new web tool that allows anyone, no password required, to look at grade distributions down to the level of semester-major-level (1000, 2000, etc.). SCEP members were surprised when McPhee pointed out that in some cases at Morris this provides distribution info down to the class/instructor level (CSci only teaches one 2000-level course and only one section). It is possible to identify the course and figure out who taught the course. Thus, the new tool does not aggregate for anonymity. The primary concern in aggregating this kind of data has been to protect student anonymity, but there's also at least an implied sense that we're protecting faculty anonymity as well at least to some degree. On the TC campus this might be true (although after McPhee brought this up, people pointed out that 5000-level courses on the TC campus can be unique in a given semester), but McPhee believes it's often not true here. (All this data has been available in the reports, but only to limited people.) This information could be used out of context. Tenure review committees could access this information. McPhee will be considering making an announcement at the next Campus Assembly meeting or sending an update to faculty via the FACPA listserv. (Classes with fewer than five students are not included on the website.)

SCEP heard a report from a subcommittee that's been looking at interdisciplinary teaching. SCEP is generally in favor, but the budget model works against it. This will probably go to the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) for further discussion since there are financial implications. It was noted that when Morris faculty team teach an honors course, they do receive full credit for teaching and full salary. McPhee is not sure if this issue will directly impact Morris, but it seems like another area where the TC campus seems to be taking initiatives that one might have expected from the liberal arts campus of the system. This is more of a Morris Curriculum Committee issue, and it is a two-fold problem. All Morris faculty are at full load. At Morris, data reporting (eg RAR) is often skewed with interdisciplinary coursework. How would Morris replace the professor teaching the interdisciplinary courses? It was noted that the Provost for undergraduate education represents the Twin Cities not the Morris campus.

SCEP approved moving the Twin Cities drop deadline to the 10th week. [SC discussed this change at the 11.6.13 meeting and supports the 10th week deadline for Morris as well.]

The debate continues about whether there needs to be a specific graduate version of SCEP. The chair is collecting "straw poll" votes from members. While at some level it would be nice to not have to sit through the graduate discussions, McPhee's sense is that the two [SCEP and proposed graduate committee] are fairly connected or at least have significant overlap, and that SCEP should just be a little more inclusive/mindful. McPhee welcomes feedback/ideas.

The revised Student Rating of Teaching (SRT) form will be going to the Faculty Senate before the end of spring semester.

4. Retention report by Jennifer Zych Herrmann, retention coordinator

Herrmann presented a PowerPoint presentation on retention [See additional file], answered questions, and facilitated a discussion.

Morris's goal is 90-percent retention between the first year and the sophomore year. Nationally, Morris is doing better at retention than our "selective BA" peer group.

Morris secured Noel-Levitz Higher Education Consulting to investigate Morris's financial aid/scholarships leverage. The data indicated that Morris is granting the "the right amount of aid to the right people," and that, overall, financial aid does not heavily impact retention, even though Morris is a high-need student body.

McPhee shared SCEP information on the President's Emerging Scholars program. The data gathered on this program for students who otherwise might not attend college indicates that students who live off campus have a higher incidence of academic difficulties. It was noted that there are many reasons for living off campus, for example financial or family, but the level of engagement on campus impacts academic success.

The SC discussed the size of classes in relation to retention. The data suggests smaller classes improve retention.

Morris chemistry data interestingly shows a negative correlation between the number of A's given in General Chemistry I and retention to II.

Herrmann and the retention committee are using a 100-question Noel-Levitz college student inventory tool to identify possible retention risks. If risks are identified, adjustments for the student can be made in advance rather than allowing problems to grow. The inventory is conducted at the beginning of the academic year and again at midyear to identify any changes that could indicate difficulties.

Mental health is a predictor of success, but academic health and mental health are not easily separable. Disability strategies that worked in high school may not work in college. Students need coaching and support. National data indicates that 25- to 33-percent of students experience mental health issues such as depression and anxiety during college.

Students can sustain one risk factor...first-generation college student, students of color, financial/family issues, too many credits...but two risk factors is very difficult.

Fifteen families attended a Google Hangout with Herrmann and Dean Bart Finzel. It was an opportunity to get families talking and to link them to Morris resources.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy R. Korn
Scholastic Committee Executive Staff