

10-29-2002

## Scholastic minutes 10/29/2002

Scholastic Committee

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University of Minnesota, Morris  
Scholastic Committee  
October 29, 2002

The Scholastic Committee met on October 29 at 3:00 o'clock in the Moccasin Flower room. The next meeting will be on November 12<sup>th</sup> in the same location.

Members present: W.Cox,, M. Fohl, S. Gashaw, R. Heyman, K. Klinger (Coordinator). B. McQuarrie, N. McPhee, L. Meek (Chair), R. Richards, K. Sharp, C. Specketer, C. Strand, R. Thielke

1. Minutes: The October 1<sup>st</sup> minutes were approved.

2. Credit exemption for First Year Seminar (FYS) changed from 15 to 12 credits: The Committee approved a request from Nic McPhee and T. Anderson to change the exemption from IS 1001 First Year Seminar from 15 to 12 credits. Under the quarter system, the exemption from Inquiry was based on completion of 15 credits earned after high school graduation--three five-credit courses. The Scholastic Committee based the semester exemption (15 credits) on the term rather than on courses. It could as easily have been based on the number of credits in three courses (12). Discussion covered the goals of FYS, the way in which PSEO students relate to the course, and the relation of AP credits to the exemption from FYS. It is assumed that only a small number of students will be affected by this change, but since the exemption possibility is not well known, we can't be sure of the numbers. It was moved and seconded that students with twelve credits earned after high school graduation be exempted from FYS. Requests for exemptions for other reasons are made through the Scholastic Committee. Credits earned through Advanced Placement are not counted toward this exemption.

3. Pending Senate action on Lapsing Incomplete (I) grades: The all-University Senate will be asked to vote in November on a proposal not to change electronically and automatically the I grades of students who have graduated. **The I grades of graduating seniors would remain on the transcript as an I.** Since 1998, the policy on incompletes at the undergraduate level is that the I automatically changes to an F or N if the make-up work is not submitted within a year of the last day of final examinations. When the I lapses, the cumulative GPA of a graduate sometimes drops below the 2.0 required for graduation. SCEP reviewed several options for correcting this situation. Under the option forwarded to the Senate, the college first determines whether a course grade is necessary for a student to graduate. If so, that course must be completed prior to graduation. If not, any Incomplete on the record remains an I and is not changed electronically to an F after a year has passed. Students may petition the Scholastic Committee to make up grades after graduation, and faculty can still provide grades if they choose. The responses to this proposal were wide-ranging. Some members don't think it matters if the GPA falls below 2.0. Others question whether an I should be frozen or changed into a W. Others dislike having a graduation GPA in addition to a later GPA. Chair Meek will share our responses with the members from the Senate, who will be voting on the issue at an upcoming meeting.

4. Academic Integrity: Dean Schwaller has asked the Scholastic Committee to work with him in continuing the debate on academic integrity and its place at UMM and to assist us in establishing “a method for approaching this important issue.” Chair Meek and Coordinator Klinger will meet to review our recommendations to the Dean and to suggest a strategy for the Committee’s consideration.

5. Mid-term alerts revisited: Nic McPhee asked whether the Committee wishes to explore again the issue of mid-term alerts recently implemented at the all-University level. The Scholastic Committee encouraged faculty to give alerts to all students through the mid-term alert system recently installed on the Web. Two concerns were expressed to Nic by several faculty:

- a. Coddling students: Providing mid-term grades is seen as coddling students. They are adults and should be able to figure out whether or not they are passing.
- b. Quantitative classes: In quantitative classes where the grades are clear, giving email alerts should not be necessary.

It was pointed out that this is an all-University policy, and that UMM has no choice in whether the system is in place. Since it IS in place and it is intended to make the communication regarding grades easier, it seemed appropriate to encourage UMM faculty to use it. The Assembly approved an advising policy in 1998 to encourage all faculty to provide mid-term grade alerts, through any appropriate method, to those freshman students earning a C- or less. This new all-University regulation extends the mid-term alert to all students and recommends a Web-based system that has been designed to make the mid-term alert easier to give. Those Committee members who gave mid-term alerts this fall recommended that the originator of the email message should also receive a copy of the alert for his/her own files. Concerns were expressed that someone could check on whether or not a faculty instructor provided grades. Richards reported that the mid-term alert had brought several students in to discuss their grades. Several felt that the system should be adjusted so that freshmen and sophomores are not treated the same way as juniors and seniors. Others felt that students must bear the responsibility for learning how they are performing. Klinger wondered whether our policy, as recorded in the minutes, seemed more rigid than we intended. Though we strongly recommended the use of the Web for posting because of its advantages, it had been our intent that faculty communicate with their students about grades in ways that seem appropriate to them. Chair Meek will present the proposal in the Assembly and open it to discussion. We can anticipate concerns similar to ours from the Assembly membership.

The meeting was adjourned.