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Scholastic Committee

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Minutes
Scholastic Committee 2011–12, Meeting #15
March 7, 2012

Members attending: Michelle Page, chair, Luciana Ranelli, Holly Gruntner, Dennis Stewart, Steve Gross, Jen Zych Herrmann, Peh Ng, Peter Wyckoff, Hilda Ladner, Clare Dingley, Erin Christensen, Chad Braegelmann, Judy Korn, executive staff, Absent: Allison Wolf, Dillon McBrady, Tammy Berberi

1. Approved February 22, 2012, minutes
2. Chair report

Chair provided an overview of the goals for the meeting. The Registrar provided information about the advantages of the new change in IC registration. A new student can now place his/herself on a waiting list. IC courses are the only classes that have restricted seats in the registration system. The Office of the Registrar will monitor students registering for IC courses until the last registration event. The waitlist will help, but it does create a risk that students may register for more than one IC courses.

3. Finalize recommendation(s) to be forwarded to Dean regarding IC

The committee reviewed previous discussion notes. What do we need to include in the committee's recommendation to the Dean?

Intellectual Community

To foster development of a liberal arts intellectual community through the introduction of intellectual and practical skills and through active student-faculty engagement in course material.

IC in general still concerns several committee members. The class size of 25 students is not conducive for a seminar conversation/discussion environment, hard to facilitate with those numbers. Discussion is intrinsic to a seminar course. Once the first semester and then the first year have passed, and the student has not completed IC, is the course still relevant? Is there anything unique to IC that if missed needs to be taken later? Although other courses have some of the components of IC, only IC itself has all the components of the goal. The committee does not have assessment data of IC. As a committee, we don't know how students are assessing the course.

The comment is made that the "prevention" prong is the most exciting element of the committee's IC discussion. We can add IC text to the general education worksheet and APAS such as "intended for first semester, mandatory by end of year."

The conversation moved to the various reasons student have or might have in the future for not completing IC in the first semester and the first year.

The second-year SUFE students misunderstood the requirement. They thought they would fulfill the IC course in the same way as the first cohort through STELLAR. More international students are coming in the future with more credits. If greater than 12 credits, they will be exempt from IC.

It is noted that language is a big factor in a discussion seminar. New IC courses in science and math that are more analytical are being created, but they still require the same amount of participating and discussion.

Acculturation is also a factor. The first semester or even the first year might not be the right time for some students to enroll in IC. But, IC should not be a segregated experience. Enrollment management might be necessary for IC.

Ladner says there is strength in numbers. In a small seminar, maybe four or five international students would draw strength from each other.

The question is asked if there is a relationship between English proficiency and failing or withdrawing from IC, and, in relation to that question, is there a rationale for a lower English proficiency at Morris than the rest of the University.

Ladner shares that data doesn't show a strong correlation between success and the IELTS score, although Morris hasn't had significant numbers of international students for a long enough period of time to gather sufficient data.

Morris accepts 5.5 on the IELTS chart, while IELTS does not recommend this score for a college like Morris.

Could we create IC sections that are intentionally multicultural? Morris does not have anyone assigned to intentionally manage IC. Who will step up and do it? The SC committee can make this recommendation.

IC registration is monitored by Advising and the Office of the Registrar.

The SC committee considered the steps discussed so far.

1. If students don't complete the IC course, for any reason,
2. they take an IC course the following semester.
3. If they fail twice or drop twice, they must petition the SC committee.

Would carrying the F curb students from dropping? Would the proposed steps set up a system for students to "work the system" by dropping twice and then taking a different seminar course in their areas of interest? We need to make clear that the IC course cannot be used for the major or gen ed. "Can't double dip." Need to add to the IC goals document.

IC is needed to graduate. The committee needs to discuss what will happen if the petition is denied. Take an alternate course? Petition a different class? Will the Scholastic Committee review case by case?

There's a tension between making getting out of IC too easy and the possibility of students altering the dynamics of sections when they take IC the following semester. And, it's added, there's a difference between receiving an F and dropping.

The chair will write a report that will be disseminated to the committee for reflection and comments.

The committee needs to address "accelerated probation" for nondegree seeking students. SCEP will be addressing grade distribution on the transcript. The topic of averaging grades also needs to be discussed.

The committee does not meet during spring break.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Korn
Executive staff