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Scholastic Committee

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University of Minnesota, Morris Scholastic Committee
Meeting #15, February 28, 2011

The Scholastic Committee met at 9:00 on Monday, February 28, in Imholte 217.

Present: C Braegelmann, C Cole, J Goodnough (Chair), S Gross, S Haugen, A Helgerson, H Ladner, J Ratliff-Crain, L Ranelli, J Schryver, C Stemper, D Stewart
Guest: J. Larson, M Page

1. With the insertion of point 6 to the numbered list under Academic Alert, paragraph 2, the Minutes of February 14 were approved.
2. Report from the chair
 - At the March 7 meeting Brenda Boever and Bryan Herrmann will visit to talk about the transcript questions.
 - Peh Ng forwarded the Study Day/Finals request for local approval to SCEP.
 - Jennifer Zych Herrmann will attend a later meeting to demonstrate Pharos software.
3. Report on Academic Alert – Background on the two alert programs was provided: certain performance or behavior in class prompts an alert via either the Mid-Term Alert system (MTAS) or UMM's Academic Alert system (AAS). MTAS is the automated system of the university; one alert per student can be submitted per class, with a copy to the advisor. AAS was developed by UMM faculty to address concerns about students that are academic and beyond; the alert are submitted via email to the academic alert team, which meets weekly to process the alerts. This group looks for patterns of behavior, alerts submitted for multiple classes, and communicates the concerns to the appropriate groups on campus.

Jess Larson reported that the Academic Alert system has been streamlined as much as possible due to cuts in staff over the past two years.

1. A new website for submitting alerts was created. In academic year 2010-2011, faculty were encouraged to submit mid-term alerts if the situation allowed, in an effort to reduce the workload of managing the AAS. Approximately 60 alerts were submitted in fall 2010, down from about 300 in previous years. About 100 MTAS's were submitted, which is sharply up.
2. Areas such as athletics, international program, gateway have developed support systems for member students.
3. Faculty in classes that may offer particular challenges to new college students have responded positively when contacted about ways to help.
4. Each semester, some students who earn all F's in a term received no alerts; more consistent reporting is needed.
5. Students in jeopardy are contacted and offered resources; however, the team recognizes that students who repeatedly present the same signals but make no effort to address the concerns are ultimately responsible for their own education.
6. Faculty at UMM will no longer be able to submit Mid-Term alerts, but will use Pharos instead.
7. Despite the cuts, Larson is making every effort to ensure that AAS is running smoothly.

Morris has purchased Pharos software that can interface with Peoplesoft, integrating MTAS and AAS. Pharos has customized the product to provide data accumulation, data entry, communication, routing, and tracking. An important feature is the record created record for the student. Reports will be generated

weekly, so timely intervention will be possible. This technology will help compensate for the loss of staff time needed to support this critical advising and retention program at UMM.

4. Below is a document summarizing the information on TOEFL/IELTS scores and their application that has been collected by the committee from interviews with Twin Cities personnel and other research. Note the comparisons among UMTC, UMM, and UMD.

Where do we go from here?

UMM

<http://admissions.morris.umn.edu/howtoapply/international/>

Where did our TOEFL come from? According to Steve Granger, UMM Scholastic Committee would have checked with UMTC Admissions about appropriate TOEFL scores to require of international students. We would not have reinvented the wheel when the information was readily available.

UMTC

http://admissions.tc.umn.edu/admissioninfo/intl_english.html

A recent (Feb 2011) conversation with UMTC admission explains their use of scores:

- If score is 6.5 IELTS Unrestricted admission to a U of M college
- If score is 6.0 IELTS Conditionally admitted to U of M, required to take three ESL per year plus regular classes to meet full time load.
- If score is 5.5 IELTS Conditionally admitted as nondegree to Minnesota English Language Program (MELP); credits not transferrable to degree program.

<http://www.cce.umn.edu/Minnesota-English-Language-Program/>

2010-2011, UMTC admitted no international students with IELTS below 6.5.

A pilot group of about 100 students this year who scored slightly lower on the TOEFL (73 instead of 79) was determined to be able to succeed academically as long as they had ESL support. They are required to take a proficiency test on arrival. Based on the results, they may be allowed to take some regular credit-bearing ESL classes and some regular classes. An ESL language hold will be placed on their record until the proficiency test is satisfactory.

UMD

<http://www.d.umn.edu/admissions/istudents/requirements.html>

UMD and MELP have a cooperative program. Students with 5.5 or lower were conditionally admitted, then referred to MELP where their full time schedule is non-credit ESL classes. There is an end-of-term assessment. Students who attain a paper-based TOEFL of 520 (IELTS equivalent 6.0) are admitted to UMD, and their paperwork is transferred there. The IELTS score at UMD was set at 6.0 because there are some non-ESL support classes available for international students.

Other US Institutions:

<http://bandscore.ielts.org/search.aspx>

While it may be true that there are not 'official' conversions between TOEFL and IELTS, google searches would suggest that many colleges and programs have a semi-standardized table with the possible original sources being:

<http://secure.vec.bc.ca/toefl-equivalency-table.cfm>

http://www.shef.ac.uk/elc/useful/toefl_ielts.html#toefl/ielts

Here's some info from IELTS regarding use of their scores:

http://www.ielts.org/institutions/global_recognition/setting_ielts_requirements.aspx

The committee asked for more specific information correlating scores from the tables with particular majors as predictors.

After reviewing the document, the committee had two questions:

1. How was the 5.5 score for the SUFE exchange program determined?
2. Who determined the score?

There was no discussion of the TOEFL information presentation.

Respectfully submitted,
Dorothy De Jager