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Scholastic minutes 03/07/2011

Scholastic Committee

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University of Minnesota, Morris Scholastic Committee
Meeting #16, March 7, 2011

The Scholastic Committee met at 9:00 on Monday, March 7, in Imholte 217.

Present: T Berberi, C Braegelmann, C Cole, C Dingley, J Goodnough (Chair), S Gross, S Haugen, A Helgerson, H Ladner, J Ratliff-Crain, L Ranelli, J Schryver, C Stemper, D Stewart
Guest: B Boever, B Herrmann, M Page

1. With the insertion of point 6 to the numbered list under Academic Alert, paragraph 2, the Minutes of February 28 were approved.

2. Report from the chair

- The request for local approval authority for events during Study Day-Finals was brought to SCEP, and received the recommendation to be considered a procedural change, not an exception to the policy. Thus, Scholastic Committee will screen the requests and forward its recommendation to SCEP. It is likely that the approval of SCEP would be pro forma and wouldn't require being on the SCEP agenda and subject to lots of delays.
- AAC coordinator candidates will be on campus this week; emails will be sent later today with details about open meetings with the candidates. Some of the responsibilities of the position include one-on-one help, the peer tutoring program, time management skills, and teaching the Mastering Skills class. A responsibility not included is disability services. That position is ending, and a national search for a director of the two areas will be conducted.

3. Discussion of the need for college transcripts from new high school students

There are potential serious consequences if the transfer transcript is not received before registering. During summer registration, advisors rely on the APAS report included in the student's folder. The size of the advising group is from 5-10, so the need to see previous coursework is even more necessary than in a one-on-one session. Group advising is only possible if individual APAS reports reflect the complete record of the students; some faculty have declined to advise at summer registration because too many reports are incomplete and they are uncomfortable making guesses. In addition, many of our new high school students are first-generation college students who need more guidance in how things work in college. The committee hopes to find ways to motivate students to submit their transcripts as soon as they have registered for CIS or PSEO classes early in spring semester, rather than creating an unenforceable policy by requiring it.

Q. What are students told in the materials they receive from Admissions?

A. They are strongly encouraged to send their college transcript before registering but are not required (stated in three places).

- In the on-line signup, there are two questions about previous college work, each followed by a request to "send in your transcripts."

Q. Registration sessions are offered in April (1), May (1), and June (3). Why send a transcript early if grades will not be on the transcript before the April or May sessions?

A. Good advising can be done with courses showing as “IP” (in progress) on the APAS.

Q. Why not use the high school transcript that students submit?

A. Because the college course discipline/number do not appear on the high school transcript, it is not always possible to identify from title only which course(s) are the college ones.

Q. New high school students take courses from multiple schools, and don’t always know what institution is providing the courses they are taking. Can information be added to the Admissions website that tells them how to order an official college transcript?

A. Include a chart or graphic in the New Student Guide (and on the Admissions website?) that reminds students of the information they need to provide if they are taking college courses in high school:

Course and Number	Name of College offering the course(s)	Credits	Name and address to contact for official transcript (<i>link to directory?</i>)

- Clare will check with her professional organization about the availability of a Directory; a link could be provided on the Admissions site.

Q. What will motivate students to send in their college transcripts?

A. In recruiting calls, explain the negative consequences, e.g., “you may lose credits if you repeat courses you are currently taking.” Offer a positive consequence such as a rebate to offset cost of sending multiple transcripts.

- Tell students they can save money
- Tell students they will not need to take that course again.
- Tell students they need to send college transcript if they want to receive college credit.
- Charge students a “late processing fee” if the transcript is not here before registering.
- Students with PSEO credits are placed in a student group, so there is an avenue for targeted follow-up communication.

Q. Transcripts cost money to send.

A. Use a Penny-wise/Pound foolish graphic:

Cost to send an official transcript	Tuition to repeat a 4-credit class you took in high school (2010 rate)
\$5.00-\$10.00/school	\$1,458.80

Q. It is confusing that grades on a U of Minnesota transcript count in GPA but grades from any other institution do not. How do students know that credits from outside the University transfer, but grades do not?

A. Guidance Counselors and admissions counselors have this information when meeting with student prospects.

Q. Could we just wait for transcripts and fix the problems during the Orientation meetings?

A. Many students take courses in high-demand subjects such as math and English. Reworking a schedule at that late date is often not possible.

Q. How do we counteract high school guidance counselors who tell students to wait for grades before sending transcripts?

A. Communicate with professional associations that are in touch with both high schools and colleges.

Q. Could we address letters “To the parents of _____” about the consequences of no transcript?

A. Yes, but that undermines the expectation that college is a bit step into adulthood, where you are responsible for things, not your parents.

Clare contacted colleagues on the Twin Cities campus about this issue. CLA admits 2600 NHS per year, but transcripts in advance are not an issue because most of their PSEO/CIS students took their courses from the U of M, so the transcript and APAS are readily available.

Federal student aid issues have prompted legislators at the national level to look into financial implications of programs that transfer credits earned in high school to college.

- State allocations to districts pay for college courses taken in high school.
- Federal financial aid programs then pay for repeating the courses in college

This is not good stewardship of taxpayer money. In addition, if students submitted all their transcripts the increase in credits earned would allow access to higher amounts on grants/loans, and they could move up in the registration queue.

Credits are evaluated according to guidelines established by the University of Minnesota. If the courses are listed on the APAS as equivalent, advisors need to honor the evaluation by their peers and not advise students to re-take courses.

The committee recognized that the 2011-2012 information has been published, but hopes to tweak it where possible to strengthen the message to submit transcripts before coming to register.

- Add information on Admissions webpage
- Emphasize early submission in letters to prospects
- Work with high school guidance counselors
- In phone calls from recruiters, emphasize follow-through with transcripts
- Train advisors to use u.select
- Use OGLs during Orientation

Admissions and Advising were asked to respond on how/what can be modified, and to report the results of the modifications at the beginning of fall semester 2011. If improved communication does not work, then the committee will review more aggressive carrot/stick approaches such as a small refund to reward on-time transcript submission or a late processing fee if submission is after registering.

Respectfully submitted,
Dorothy De Jager