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University of Minnesota, Morris Scholastic Committee
Minutes #2, October 28, 2009

The Scholastic Committee met at 4:00 p.m. on October 2, 2009 in the Prairie Lounge.
Members present: Baker, Earl, Govada, J. Goodnough, Haugen, McQuarrie (Chair), Nellis, Pelletier, Raymond, Schryver . Guest: Ratliff-Crain

The Minutes of October 21 were approved. Following the approval, there was brief discussion of possible consideration to the chair in light of the increased work load following the elimination of the Secretary

Petitions:

McQuarrie introduced the three criteria considered in petitions to waive requirements:

1. The student has met the spirit of the requirement through another experience
2. The petition resulted from an action taken by the institution (institutional responsibility)
3. The student has attempted to meet the requirement but has an insurmountable hardship

The chair intends to hold his vote to use only as a tie-breaker on committee motions.

#1188--Waive the International Perspectives requirement of the GER based on meeting the spirit of the requirement. Approved based on criteria 1 and 3.

#1189—Allow the student to combine two 1-credit courses earned on a credit system different from the U.S. system to meet the HUM category of the general education requirements. The committee voted on a motion “to approve this petition in a non-precedent-setting way.”

Petition #1189 generated considerable discussion of the difficulties associated with evaluating transcripts from other systems—particularly the Chinese system. The Transfer Specialist has been researching agencies that provide this service to international students. Outside of those services, no standard conversion ratio has been established. Students from China report that courses in general education meet fewer hours or fewer days per week, and courses in the major meet more hours and more days, but there is no indication on the transcript which courses are in which category. There is little consistency in the assignment of hours per credit. Discipline designators and numbers are not present, so lower/upper division distinctions are lost. The Twin Cities has offered training, but the process is unclear and the cost is unknown. Professional evaluation agencies charge a fee to the student, but the fee is considerably less than the \$50.00/credit charged for an examination for credit, the students’ other option.

Until a pattern or a standard conversion rate is established, petitions of this type will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

As a result of this petition, policy issues were raised. In the Scholastic Committee role of evaluating credits, the Committee recognizes that we need to be vigilant regarding expanding relationships with China. The meeting ended before further discussion could occur.

The Committee will meet on November 4 at 4:00 in the Prairie Lounge.