

10-6-2008

## Scholastic minutes 10/06/2008

Scholastic Committee

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### Recommended Citation

Scholastic Committee, "Scholastic minutes 10/06/2008" (2008). *Scholastic Committee*. 137.  
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University of Minnesota, Morris  
Scholastic Committee  
Minutes #5, 10/6/2008

The Scholastic Committee met on 10/6/2008, in IH 202. Members present:  
C. Cole, D. DeJager, S. Haugen, D. Magner, B. McQuarrie (Chr), L. Meek (Secy), J. Nellis, J. Pelletier,  
J.Schryver, J. Towle, J. Wencil

1. Minutes from 9/30/08 were approved.
2. There was a discussion of students admitted conditionally for fall 2008. The Secretary provided the committee with a data set of enrolled conditional admits and students she thought should have been conditionally admitted. In addition, she provided some questions for thought:
  1. Conditionally admitted students frequently have an English ACT of 18 or lower. This score puts them into Fundamentals of Writing, a year-long course for which only 30 seats are available. In Fall 08, 49 students needed fundamentals of writing. This creates a backlog from year to year and means that students may be sophomores before they take such a course.
  2. Conditionally admitted students are frequently told to take Learning to Learn. As of late August, 45 people were enrolled in a course with room for 30 and no money to hire another instructor.
  3. As of 9/11/08, the census date, 80 students were in the Conditional Admit student group. This number is much higher (@ 4X) than previous years. Why? What are the criteria to be conditionally admitted? Have the criteria changed and has this resulted in many more conditional admits? If they have changed, why?
  4. How consistently are the criteria for conditional admission followed by everyone in Admissions? Why are some students not admitted conditionally when others who have the same quantitative profile are? Why are the conditions that are put on these students so variable? Are there quantitative criteria used to determine placement in Learning to Learn, limit of 14 credits, 2.0 GPA?
  5. Why even have conditional admits? If they are good enough to come to UMM, why not simply enroll them?
  6. Who checks on Conditional Admits at the end of their first semester to see if they have fulfilled their conditions? What kinds of conditions are put on besides the 14 credit limit and Learning to Learn? Does the term 'academic success' in the letter imply that they need to achieve a 2.0 GPA their first semester and if they do not, is their admission cancelled? Shouldn't the letter specifically say they have to achieve a 2.0 GPA so we have grounds to cancel their admission and there are no misunderstandings? Scholastic should be in charge of monitoring this, since we do the probation run anyway and we can easily determine who did not meet the 2.0 GPA standard. One suggestion is to put all conditional admits on probation at the beginning of their first semester and then if they do not achieve a 2.0 GPA, they are suspended.

The Secretary stated that she is afraid that if we enroll increasing numbers of conditional admits, we will corrupt the mission of UMM and become a remedial college without ever having had a discussion or making a decision about doing so. In addition, the Secretary presented data about retention of those students who are on probation after their first year that shows that students who do not achieve a 2.0 GPA their first semester are retained at very low rates (see table below).

**Retention of Freshmen on PB after first term at UMM:**

Term Entered	# NHS GPA < 2.0 after 1st term	Avg. GPA 1st Term	Avg. GPA Last Term	Avg. Cum GPA last term	Still at UMM Sp 08	Grad	Total Retain
F 04	30	1.216±0.601 (SEM 0.109)	1.084±1.098 (SEM 0.20)	1.603±0.876 (SEM 0.159)	2	5	23%
F 05	54	1.97±0.569 (SEM 0.077)	0.416±0.663 (SEM 0.09)	1.51±0.711 (SEM 0.096)	13	0	24%
F 06	47	1.328±0.590 (SEM 0.086)	0.896±1.338 (SEM 0.195)	1.633±0.620 (SEM 0.090)	18	0	38%
F 07	44	1.067±0.702 (SEM 0/105)	0.3209±0.750 (SEM 0.113)	1.277±0.815 (SEM 0.123)	24	0	54%

Most of the discussion centered around the upcoming visit to Scholastic by James Morales (Assoc. Vice Chancellor for Enrollment) and Bryan Herrmann (Assoc. Senior Director for Enrollment). The committee noted that they would first prefer having a discussion about Admissions' processes and procedures. Thus, the following questions were generated for Admissions and will be sent to them before the meeting.

**Processes and Procedures:**

1. What is the process for attracting and admitting students? This includes broad generalizations as well as the detail of what kinds of databases are kept, workflow, timelines, who does what, liaisons with campus entities, etc.
2. Do you have a narrative that describes your current process?
3. Job descriptions of the staff would be interesting for us to hear. In particular, we've had lots of questions about whose job on campus it is to monitor and improve retention and whether this should be something Admissions does or if we should have a specific retention position on campus.
4. We'd also like to know if there is a written training manual for counselors to ensure consistency in their decisions and who does the training.

**Student Pool:**

1. How are students selected to be admitted or denied?
2. How much of what is used are quantitative measures as opposed to qualitative measures? If more and more qualitative measures are being used, what is the danger of doing so? What is the danger of relying only or mostly on quantitative measures?

3. What are those quantitative and qualitative measures? Are students ever admitted on the basis of one characteristic (race, talent, etc.)?

4. Who is the pool of potential students we draw from, and how many students in the state of Minnesota fit our criteria? Has this pool decreased over time?

5. If the pool of preferred students is decreasing, what are the implications of this to the mission of UMM as a non-remedial, selective college with @ 2000 students? Could the mission of UMM be changed simply by the admission of more and more underprepared students?

The secretary was charged with compiling the questions into a document to be sent to the committee for approval and then to Admissions by Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be on Oct 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, in IH 202.