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Scholastic minutes 11/11/2008

Scholastic Committee

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University of Minnesota, Morris
Scholastic Committee
Minutes #8, 11/11/2008

The Scholastic Committee met on 11/11/2008, in IH 202. Members present:

C. Cole, J. Deane, D. DeJager, S. Haugen, M.Lackey, D. Magner, B. McQuarrie (Chr), L. Meek (Secy), J. Nellis, J. Pelletier, J.Schryver

Guests: Jeffrey Ratliff-Crain (Assistant Dean), B. Herrmann (Sr. Assoc. Director of Admissions), J. Morales (Assoc. Vice Chancellor for Enrollment).

1. Minutes from 10/14/08 and 11/3/08 were approved.

2. Announcements:

A. The new catalog will, at the request of the Dean, contain information that we accept both ACT and SAT scores. The decision to do so may not need to go to Assembly.

B. The Executive Committee of the Assembly will host a Campus Conversation on 12/2/08 that highlights joint information from CRPC, Scholastic and Admissions relating to recruiting, admissions standards and expectation, current mix of students and strategic goals for growth.

3. The rest of the discussion centered on talking about the pool of students we can draw from. Morales presented data on ACT distribution both nationally and from Minnesota. 85% of our students come from Minnesota, and Minnesota students are strongly recruited by out of state colleges. He demonstrated that in 2006, 7,458 MN students had an ACT Composite score of 27 or greater, we received 282 of those scores, and 116 of those students deposited. For ACT scores from 21-26, 18,896 MN students had those scores, 433 sent us their scores, and 167 deposited. For ACT scores from 8-20, 15,296 MN students had those scores, we received 186 of them, and 38 deposited.

The interpretation of this data is that there are not a lot of students in the top tiers of the ACT, and we get a decent number of those students. We do not get enough of the middle tier and we need to develop strategies to attract and convert these students.

A question was asked whether there is a positive correlation between ACT scores and high school GPA. Morales answered that generally speaking, students who do well in high school also do well on the ACT, but that ACT performance is affected by whether or not English is a student's first language, how rigorous their high school courses were and that ACT is positively correlated with socioeconomic status.

A question was asked about whether the high school a student attended is taken into consideration for admission decision. Morales answered yes, since some are less rigorous, but that in general, Minnesota schools are considered to be good schools and that the greatest number of students we have from any one school is 5. Admissions looks at the profiles of how schools rank on average ACT profiles.

Three related questions were asked. How do we pick the schools to go fishing in? How do we get in the door and establish connections? How do we get student counselors to speak on our behalf? Herrmann indicated that picking the schools is the hardest part, since we generally get only 1 - 2 students from a school and there are a lot of schools in Minnesota. For rural schools, counselors talk to the principal or secretary. Usually a guidance counselor is only at the school once every one to two weeks, so they are no longer our primary source of input to students. For suburban high schools with students from a high socioeconomic bracket, guidance counselors tend to be there full time, but their load can be 400 – 500 students. In those schools, counselors talk to career centers (often manned by volunteer parents). For inner city schools, the load on guidance counselors is much greater, and so counselors work with Admission Possible, MEP and other entities.

It was suggested that we ask alumni who work in high schools (guidance counselors, psychologists, teachers, etc.) to advocate for us. Morales noted and others agreed that when current students are asked why they decided to attend Morris, one very common answer is that they know someone here or know someone who went here. We do have an Alma Mater Ambassador program in which former students go back to their high schools and talk to prospective students. We also waive application fees for any student who applies because of information from an alumnus. They did note that alumni can give wrong information about us, especially enrollment, so they need to create something they can use that is based on current data.

How much are application fees? Web is \$25.00 and paper is \$35.00. They can be waived for hardship. Students can also apply on line without paying the fee and then ask for a waiver later. We get about \$100,000.00 annually from application fees.

Morales and Herrmann will attend the next meeting also, and we will talk specifically about strategies to convert applications to deposits.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be on Nov 17th, at 1:00 P.M, in IH 202.