

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Finance Committee

Campus Governance

4-1-2021

Finance minutes 04/01/2021

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UMM FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

4-1-21 (via Zoom)

Members Present: Brad Deane, Roger Rose, Jon Anderson, Bart Finzel, Naomi Skulan, Bryan Herrmann, Shelby Maloney, Peh Ng, Mary Zosel, Marie Hagen, Angela Hume

Members absent: Juan Garcia

Others Present: Jessica Dierks, Melissa Wrobleski, Melissa Bert

Agenda:

I. Approval of Minutes

The minutes were approved with no opposition.

II. Visit from Melissa Bert and Brian Studebaker

A PowerPoint presentation was presented to give the Finance Committee updates on enrollment.

Enrollment Update

Across the nation, there is an almost 10% decline for 4-year public schools and over 10% decline in enrollment at 4-year private schools. This data looks at Fall 2020 vs. Fall 2015 data. Melissa Bert said that retention rates have stayed steady over the last for years, with the exception of transfer student retention rates. Part of this is from students from SUFE, and part of this includes students transferring to other campuses in the University of Minnesota system. The Morris campus has about the same 4 and 6-year graduation rates as Crookston, Duluth, and Rochester. The Twin Cities campus has higher graduation rates than the other campuses.

Enrollment Management Update

Melissa Bert noted that the work on enrollment management started pre-pandemic, with gathering campus input to decide on the direction of planning Morris should go into. Last March things changed and slowed down with the pandemic. The planning team originally had 5 members, but 2 were faculty that had to leave the team because of other obligations.

Melissa said that there are 7 SEM goals, with 4 current focus goals being increasing enrollment, increasing student persistence, creating intentional

pathways, and creating transfer student infrastructure. Work on these goals started in the Fall 2020 semester. Morris did not require standardized tests, which forced the campus to modify awarding criteria for achievement scholarships. There was a new method created for awarding merit-based aid. The Community of Scholars event was modified as well. Melissa Bert noted that there was also a change in the recruitment marketing partner. In the past, the campus worked with EAB but now works with a smaller company (3E that is a better fit for Morris). This company uses behavioral scoring as part of their work, and the hope is that they can help us increase enrollment. Admit Hub is new, which is a text-based chatbot that allows Morris to communicate with students via text which better aligns with students today.

In the Spring 2021 semester there were also changes, Brian Studebaker took over in Admissions. In part with the hiring freeze and the departure of Admissions Counselors, 3 part-time coaches were hired to work in Admissions. Melissa Bert added that these coaches are already used to engaging with students and that this is a pilot to see what this model will look like to our campus. There have also been collaboration teams with the Crookston Office of Admissions. This won't fully take effect until this summer but there are staff in Crookston and Morris working in teams on efforts identified by admissions leadership for areas of focus for Fall 2021. Melissa Bert said those areas of focus include micro-scholarship opportunities for students and to have an increased effort in transfer students and family engagement. Morris is partnering with Crookston on a new CRM, which is more user friendly and will allow our campus to communicate with students more effectively. There is also a student success team that is thinking about enrollment beyond Admissions. The goal with this is to identify students who aren't engaged in courses before it is an issue. There are also pending Articulation Agreements with Normandale and White Earth Community Colleges.

During Summer 2021, the Admissions collaboration with Crookston will be moving forward more intentionally. The Student Success Center will offer more coordinated services for students, and more offices will be centrally located so resources are available for all. The first year experience effort includes a course for all incoming students that will be offered in the fall; those working on the course have been in close communication with those working on both orientation and Welcome Week.

Brian Studebaker said that for Fall 2021 we are currently trending well with Fall 2019. He said that April is a key month and we are currently in a better spot now than last year. Melissa added that many efforts have been put forth in Admissions to navigate from in-person events to virtual only events and now back to in-person as well as virtual events. Brian S mentioned that he didn't see virtual events going away now but that there is still a value of an on-campus experience. Shelby asked if there has been any student input on these campus conversations. Melissa B said that there were 2 students that participated in the recruitment and persistence teams and that student involvement is an essential piece in this. Jon asked how the Admissions pipeline has changed. Brian S said that the applications coming in have been reduced so we are now getting better quality vs quantity in applications. 3E is building up a stronger pipeline with more sophomore and junior outreach as well. We are also working with Niche which advertises to get names from digital marketing as well as searching for "best fit" prospective students with Raise.me and micro scholarships. Peh mentioned that this past year we tried implementing a different process for Community of Scholars and asked what the percentage of CoS students accepting the scholarship is. Melissa said that they are currently working on this and will be able to provide that information soon. Brian added that with CoS being virtual we were able to open the pool to more students this year.

Shelby noted that enrollment problems have stemmed before the pandemic happened and asked what success looks like as well as the timeline for success. Melissa B asked how Shelby was defining success, as to her success is thinking of students as a whole. Brian S said that when speaking of enrollment it doesn't just mean new students but also retention and transfer student growth. He said finding growth in multiple areas and getting improvement with retention leads to a better overall enrollment and opportunity for success. Melissa noted that Morris is trying to reach our goals and have had consultation with Bryan Herrmann when thinking about setting targets based on budget.

Mary Zosel asked if we can work with the Twin Cities campus with reaching out to students before they transfer out of the University of Minnesota system to try and catch them to come to Morris if they may be a better fit here.

Melissa said that we have used National Student Clearinghouse data to look for students denied or who were admitted but didn't attend. There has been outreach to those students with minimal response but that effort has and will continue to be done with the Office of Registrar. Mary also wondered in regards to transfer students if we can continue to keep track of students to let them know they are welcomed back anytime. Melissa said that we would have information about the students that had indicated interest in Morris but that this hasn't been a conversation that has been had. Bryan noted that the Twin Cities will likely do whatever they can to prevent them from transferring. Mary asked if our campus could set up articulation agreements with Fergus Falls and Alexandria as those Community Colleges are in close demographics to Morris and we are more likely to get those students. Melissa said that articulation agreements are faculty driven and that if faculty have developed relationships with those Community Colleges this can be a possibility. Brian added that there have been Phi Theta Kappa outreach to target students at Community Colleges. These are students who are 4-year college bound (as not every Community College student is) who have a GPA that will automatically make them admissible to Morris.

Brad mentioned that with the Finance Committee time ending the committee may possibly send more questions to Brian and Melissa.

The meeting was adjourned.