

Fall 9-29-2015

Scholastic minutes 09/29/2015

Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic Committee
2015-16 Academic Year
9:30 a.m., Tuesday, September 29, 2015, Moccasin Flower
Meeting Four Approved Minutes

Present: Steve Gross (chair), Judy Korn, Jennifer Goodnough, Leslie Meek, Merc Chasman, Edison Yellick, Ray Schultz, Brenda Boever, Mike Vandenberg, Jennifer Rothchild

Guest: Dean Bart Finzel, Division of the Humanities Chair Pieranna Garavaso

Absent: Dan Magner, Madeline Youakim

1. Approve minutes of September 22, 2015, meeting

Minutes approved.

2. Chair's Report

No Chair's report.

3. SCEP Report

SCEP has approved to move the First Day of Class policy and the Makeup Work policy into the 30-day review.

4. S/N policy discussion continued from September 22 meeting

Steve Gross provided an overview of the proposed S/N policy change put forth by the systemwide policy group. The proposal would change the S/N credit limit from its current 25 percent to an absolute 20 credits. This proposed change would greatly affect certain disciplines here at Morris such as elementary education, secondary education, music, and theatre. After comparing the number of S/N credits allowed by peer COPLAC institutions, the Scholastic Committee (SC) agreed that the number of credits allowed is a futile comparison without knowing the number of credits required for the degree. The SC did note that a number of colleges allow one S/N course per semester.

Dean Bart Finzel asked whether the S/N credit limit would also apply to courses that are offered S/N-only or would it only apply to courses with a choice of grade basis. It would apply to all courses. Dean Finzel's main concern is the policy change's effect on experiential learning. Students could be discouraged from enrolling in a directed study/field study due to an S/N constraint. The University would like to encourage and enable students to choose courses outside their comfort level and expand their knowledge rather than only choosing courses they know they will succeed in.

The motivation behind the policy change appears to be technologically driven. The APAS report can track S/N credits as an absolute number, but not as a percentage. However, APAS cannot account for S/N courses that are in progress. SC questioned whether the S/N policy at COPLAC institutions was driven by technology or pedagogy. The policy group has not provided substantial rationale for the change.

The music discipline is concerned about how the policy change would affect music students and their enrollment in concert attendance and music ensembles which are offered S/N-only. Music students are required to take 3.5 credits of concert attendance leaving only 16.5 credits for

ensembles and other learning experiences. Concert attendance was changed to S/N-only because of a slight concern about grade inflation. The grade basis could be changed back to a letter grade, but the music discipline does not believe that would be a good idea.

The theatre discipline has a lower number of required courses offered S/N-only, but they do have practicums, directed studies, and experiential learning opportunities. The theatre discipline would like their students to have the option to participate in these experiences as well as having the opportunity to explore areas outside their major.

Elementary education majors would automatically go over the proposed 20 credit limit due to their required student teaching and practicums. This also does not take into account students who may also have a music or theatre major. The education disciplines believe the University should be celebrating students working in different areas instead of putting up barriers and restricting their options.

Curriculum believes disciplines could work with a 30 credit S/N limit rather than 20 credits. An absolute count of 30 credits was viewed as reasonable.

Members questioned the percentage of students taking courses outside their major or focus.

The proposed change to the policy could inadvertently impact students with significant transfer credits, both advanced standing and new high school students. If the proposal allows 20 credits of University of Minnesota S/N credit, those with significant transfer credits may have more grading flexibility than students who begin their careers at Morris. Admissions is noticing a trend of more new high school students enrolling at Morris with 30 or more transfer credits (see Addendum One).

Some schools allow students to take as many courses S/N as needed/wanted if they are offered S/N-only. This option would give disciplines more flexibility and would give students the opportunity to explore areas outside their comfort zone. The option for more flexibility was thought to be a good point to present to the policy group.

It was suggested that maybe more courses could be offered A-F-only, but a change of that nature would have to go through the Curriculum Committee.

Scholastic Committee motioned and approved to retain the current S/N policy of allowing 25 percent of University of Minnesota credits to be S/N. As SCEP representative, Jennifer Goodnough will relay Morris's decision at a future SCEP meeting.

5. Timely graduation policy discussion continues from September 22 meeting

Judy Korn met with Marie Hagen (Financial Aid) and Lori Kurpiers (One Stop) to discuss how financial aid affects the Timely Graduation policy. Korn was informed that as long as a student remains financial aid eligible a student can earn a maximum of 180 credits before financial aid is no longer awarded. Therefore, most students would not be affected by the policy because most students graduate with less than 180 credits. The question about timely graduation is being posed to the Universitywide Financial Aid group. Korn will then meet with Jill Beauregard, Hagen, and Kurpiers to discuss the outcome.

SC discussed the issue of interpretation versus implementation. Does “a program” constitute a degree or a major? Would this policy mean that transfer students with enough credits to graduate in three years would be administratively cleared to graduate? Will someone inform the Financial Aid office that a student should no longer receive aid? Is someone going to require discipline coordinators and administrative staff to administratively clear a student to graduate?

Our Morris four-year graduation rate is just under 50 percent. Morris’s six-year graduation rate is close to 60 percent. Morris does not get to count a student in the four-year rate if a student transfers to the Twin Cities after two years in Morris and graduates in the Twin Cities after two years.

Postsecondary Education Opportunity (PSEO) students with an equivalent of two years of transfer credits would not be forced to graduate in two years because their major may not be finished in two years.

If students are made aware of the policy, some may delay in taking a required course until they are ready to graduate. That is not a practice the University wants to encourage. Others may be forced to find creative ways to stay in order to complete an additional major or to study abroad for a year. Other students may want to take nonmajor/minor courses that are prerequisites for graduate school.

The policy also has specific expectations of when students should declare a major. Advising monitors students that have not declared a major to help keep students on track. Students with 60 or more College in the Schools (CIS) and PSEO credits might be pushed to declare a major they don’t want or are ready for.

All new high school students have to meet with an adviser at their initial registration, but if they have 60 or more credits they are not required to meet with an adviser for consecutive semesters. The initial registration hold for new high school students is based on credits. However, policy implies that an adviser can have a hold placed on a student’s record to assure the student receives proper advising before registration.

SC suggested considering a new hold that could be placed on a student’s account regardless of how many credits a student has earned to ensure that all students receive at least one year of advising. The discussion regarding a new hold will be tabled for a future meeting.

6. AP Psychology scores recommendation

Tabled for the following meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar

Addendum One

Fall 2014 NHS Previous College Credit Distribution		
# of Credits	# of Students	Percent of Total
0	117	28.19%
1-12	102	24.58%
13-18	36	8.67%
19-24	49	11.81%
25-30	34	8.19%
31-38	30	7.23%
39-44	17	4.10%
45-59	19	4.58%
60-80	8	1.93%
80-93	3	0.72%
Total	415	