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Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic minutes 11/24/2015

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Scholastic Committee
2015-16 Academic Year
November 24, 2015
Meeting Ten Approved Minutes

Present: Steve Gross (chair), Judy Korn, Brenda Boever, Merc Chasman, Ray Schultz, Emma Kloos, Dan Magner, Jennifer Goodnough, Leslie Meek, Jennifer Rothchild, Madeline Youakin, Edison Yellick

Absent: Mike Vandenberg

Guest: Gwen Rudney, chair of summer session, and Rose Murphy, summer session coordinator

1. Approve minutes of November 17, 2015, meeting

Minutes approved with two changes.

2. Chair's Report

IB course was sent to music discipline for course substitution review and recommended general education credit. The credits awarded are standardized.

Steve Gross is waiting to hear from the Dean regarding international students and language score requirements.

3. SCEP Report

No report.

4. Petition # 1247

Waived two credits of the 15 of the last 30 credits required for residency due to spirit of the requirement.

5. Summer session credit limit discussion

Gwen Rudney, chair of summer session, presented on the issue of credit load management during the summer terms. The structure of the summer terms and the lack of mechanisms to prevent students from over-enrolling in summer courses has created an issue of students performing poorly in courses and potentially leaving or dropping out in response. The workload for a four-credit summer term course is equal to 180 hours. This means students who are taking a four-credit May term course are expected to put in 60 hours per week of work to successfully complete the course. Some faculty teaching summer term courses believe this information regarding the expected workload is not being conveyed well to students. A draft of a proposed message to send to summer students was provided by Rudney and Rose Murphy, summer session coordinator (see Addendum One). A course load of that magnitude may be manageable if that is the only course the student is enrolled in. However, that is not always the case. Students are enrolling in four-credit May term courses as well as courses for summer session I which overlap for about three weeks. Although concurrent enrollment in May and summer session courses is allowed by the system, it is not considered feasible in regards to coursework.

Rudney entertained the idea of rescheduling summer terms to only include two terms that are each six weeks long. A credit limit that would prevent students from taking too many courses during the summer terms is also desirable. The current credit limit of 20 credits does not reflect the condensed terms.

It was also noted that a reason students may be concurrently enrolling in May and summer courses is due to financial aid awards. The requirement of full-time enrollment for direct loans is six credits. However, Emma Kloos, One Stop/Financial Aid, noted that this is not the case for every student. A student's financial aid package is unique to that student, and therefore students should not be making enrollment decisions based on a perceived requirement of six credits to receive financial aid. In regards to tuition refunds, Kloos mentioned that the current structure of summer terms provides little time for students to decide whether they should continue in a course.

The reason behind the implementation of a May term is believed to be an accommodation for study abroad. May term was designed for courses requiring unique timeframes and not for regular session courses. With proposals from faculty wanting to teach summer courses, May term evolved into what it is now.

Jennifer Goodnough commented that she would not offer to teach a course during summer if there were only two six-week terms. The timeframe of the proposed terms would not allow for the 10-week commitment for grant-sponsored undergraduate research. Rudney shared that current discussions about May courses suggest that four-credit courses will not be approved. The goal in restructuring the summer terms is to offer fewer but fuller courses. On-campus enrollment during the summer is down with online enrollment increasing.

Another point to consider is students on probation taking summer courses to increase their GPAs. Students on probation are advised to take fewer credits, however many of them believe they should take more to increase their GPAs faster. Athletes on probation after spring semester also feel pressure to get their GPAs up before fall semester so they can participate in sports.

SC discussed credit limits and implementation. Is it better to have a credit limit for the entire summer or each session? Students wanting to exceed the credit limit could petition SC. Goodnough proposed implementing a credit limit of 10 credits for the entire summer and a credit limit of eight credits for students on probation. Rudney believes the overlapping of courses is more of an issue than credits taken. Members agreed that having a policy regarding the maximum number of credits, whether enforceable through the registration system or not, sends a message to students about the workload they should expect.

Jennifer Rothchild proposed implementing an adviser hold for summer terms along with the 10-credit limit. Advisers should discuss summer plans with students and inform them of the commitment required for summer courses. Members agreed with Rothchild's proposal.

Members agreed that students could meet with their advisers during the spring semester, and the master advisers could advise students during the summer.

SC also discussed the implications of implementing an adviser hold and a credit limit. Would these "road blocks" deter students away from Morris? Is this another reason to take MNSCU courses which are less expensive? How will this affect summer programs? Gross asked Judy Korn for the statistics on summer enrollment and possibly the number of students that are taking overlapping courses.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar

Addendum One

DRAFT STATEMENT FOR SUMMER TERM PUBLICITY AND NEXT CATALOG

Please be aware that Summer Term courses require the same rigor and workload, in a condensed format, as any course offered during the fall and spring semesters. For example, a 4-credit course offered during a condensed 3-week May session requires a commitment and workload comparable to a 20-credit course that is scheduled for a full semester during the academic year.