University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Scholastic minutes 03/29/2016

Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic Committee
2015-16 Academic Year
March 29, 2016
Meeting Twenty Approved Minutes

Present: Steve Gross, chair, Jennifer Goodnough, Judy Korn, Jennifer Rothchild, Merc Chasman, Dan Magner. Leslie Meek

Absent: Emma Kloos, Madeline Youakim, Edison Yellick, Ray Schultz, Joe Beaver, Yujing Song

Guest: Dean Bart Finzel

1.   **No approval of March 8, 2016 minutes as a result of computer malfunction.**

2.   **No Chair's Report**

3.   **No SCEP Report**

4.   **Petition # 1250 unanimously approved**

5.   **Office of Academic Success position description discussion**

Dean Bart Finzel attended the meeting to request feedback on the Office of Academic Success (OAS) director position description (see addendum one). It is hoped that the search for this position will begin this spring.

One of the goals for the new position is to expand the number of faculty advisers. From 2007 through 2011, the number of faculty advisers dropped from 112 to less than 90, which created a strain on the faculty advising model employed by Morris. The position will grow the number of tenure track and term faculty advisers. Term faculty teach six courses if they do not advise. Some faculty may serve as advisers in lieu of courses taught. Other means of growing the number of advisers has already begun such as providing academic advising training to athletic coaches.

The position will be responsible for assembling statistics and reporting on the areas/responsibilities within OAS.

The Scholastic Committee is charged with both Advising and Admissions responsibilities. It was asked if the OAS position will contribute to admissions policy if OAS programming and policy reflect incoming student needs. The Dean noted that the "Dean's Liaison" position on the Scholastic Committee would work with the OAS director. The OAS director could provide regular reporting to the SC, and if monitoring would suggest, an ex officio position on SC could be explored.

After the SC provides feedback on the position description, the Dean would like to post the position by April 10, 2016. Candidates would be invited to campus in late May. The OAS director is a 12-month position, and the timing of the interview process would allow an "ethical opportunity" for a candidate to leave another position between academic years.

The committee reviewed the position description with the Dean. Korn noted that he may wish to add International Programs to the list of directors/offices with whom the OAS director will collaborate. In addition, it was noted that the OAS director will be responsible for APLUS as it relates to advising and comments. APLUS content is generated in PeopleSoft. The success coaching programs were briefly discussed in regard to the position description. The OAS director will oversee the first-year success coach program and collaborate with the Ethnicity, Diversity, International Program director who oversees the grant-funded success coach programs.

6. Student Rating of Teaching (SRT) data online placement

Per the Evaluation of Teaching: Twin Cities, Crookston, Morris, Rochester administrative policy (http://policy.umn.edu/education/teachingevaluation), Morris must provide SRT course information (**http://oms.umn.edu/srt/data/SRT_MO_Spring_2015.pdf)** for Morris students.

The committee reviewed the OMS.umn.edu website rating of teachings information and the Twin Cities campus One Stop website link to SRT information.

Goodnough noted that the "ship sailed" three years ago in regard to this policy that states that students must have access to course information gathered through the SRT process. Professors Peh Ng, Janet Ericksen, and Nic McPhee were serving in systemwide leadership roles during this time period and brought the topic to the Morris campus for discussion. McPhee, at the time, noted that the information to be shared with students is not protected data. Companies are making money by requesting this information from institutions and publishing it behind a paywall. It is public information, and students should not be paying for it.

Morris now needs to determine how students can access this information if needed.

The committee discussed the fact that even though the information is about the course, not the instructor, at Morris it is very easy to determine the instructor. Gross is interested in the history. Those with concerns were assured that it would not be reflective of instructors, rather just the courses would be identified. That's not the case, which is often the nature of public data.

The Dean noted that the information in the report is not terribly useful or valuable. He suggested placing it online to fulfill the requirement that students have the right to see this information, but he "wouldn't put it front and center."

Goodnough suggested that the information be available on the site that belongs to the office that generated it: OMS.

Rothchild agreed. She noted a study in which grade inflation directly correlated with student ratings. She stated that this is an issue of concern. It could change the way people teach.

Chasman shared information about a study whose investigation revealed that male names received higher ratings that female names.

The Dean stated that if we had 30 or 40 sections of a class, this would not be an issue, but Morris many times has only one section, and students can link the course info from instructor very easily.

No SC student members were present at the March 29, 2016, meeting, and it was noted that it would be good to hear their opinions on this topic. In past discussions, McPhee noted that Morris students would speak to their peers rather than look for SRT reports.

A motion was made by Goodnough to ask OMS to place the Morris SRT course information on its website so that Morris will be in compliance with policy. The PDF as reviewed by SC would be preferred over the searchable information for the TC campus. Seconded. Unanimously approved.