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Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic Committee
2015-16 Academic Year
April 19, 2016
Meeting Twenty-three Approved Minutes

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

Absent: Jennifer Rothchild, Ray Schultz, Joseph Beaver, and Yujing Song

Guest: French Professor Tammy Berberi and Spanish Professor Stacey Aronson

1. Chair's Report

Steve Gross is unable to attend this week's Campus Assembly meeting so he will not be able to provide a Scholastic Committee report in person, but he will submit a written report.

2. SCEP Report

SCEP met last Wednesday and discussed the Academic Unit Authority policy and the committee will vote online later this week.

SCEP also discussed a report from Boynton Health Service regarding mental health issues and food security concerns expressed by students. SCEP discussed a possible conversation with the Disability Resource Center. The concern being addressed is whether there is enough policy in place to support mental health. With the anticipation that this issue may impact Morris students as well, Morris should begin a conversation about building a support system.

It was noted that students on the Morris campus may have to wait over a month for an appointment to see a counselor unless the student is in crisis. The Scholastic Committee (SC) may have to weigh in on this issue if there are impacts to areas overseen by the Scholastic Committee.

Senior Vice President and Provost Bob McMaster shared the Twin Cities 2016-21 Undergraduate Enrollment Plan and informed SCEP that every system campus has been tasked with creating a similar enrollment plan. Goodnough asked the Morris Planning Committee Chair Engin Sungur about Morris' enrollment plan, however Sungur is unaware of any enrollment plan in progress.

The Twin Cities plan targets an undergraduate enrollment increase to approximately 32,000 to 33,000 students while maintaining an average ACT score of 28 (3 points above Morris). Goodnough commented that when discussing Morris' retention rates, the Twin Cities should note that Morris serves a different student body population.

The Twin Cities plan also seeks to maintain access for Minnesota students by continuing to enroll 65 percent Minnesota residents in the freshman class and 68 percent in the transfer class. Morris continues to boost the Twin Cities claim of serving Minnesota students by enrolling 78 percent Minnesota students.

The plan emphasizes a commitment to transfer students by facilitating transfer among University of Minnesota campuses, as well as Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) institutions. However, it was noted that Morris students are never given personal attention when transferring to the Twin Cities or participating in Multi-Institutional enrollment. Morris should try to leverage the Twin Cities commitment to transfer students to better serve Morris students.

The plan aims to reach/exceed a 65 percent four-year graduation rate for New High School students, but only a 54 percent four-year graduation rate for Pell-recipient students. Again, it was noted that Morris serves a different population than the Twin Cities such that Morris does not solely enroll students with a 28 ACT score and family income of \$100,000 or more.

McMaster also shared the Twin Cities plan to minimally raise the resident tuition rate and increase the nonresident rate to the mid-point of the Big 10. The Twin Cities campus also plans to utilize “tuition discounting” to ensure they remain accessible to nonresident students. SC members noted that “tuition discounting” could also be used a strong recruitment tool by offering it to more favorable applicants.

The Twin Cities will continue to allocate financial aid resources with two-thirds going towards need-based aid and one-third towards merit-based aid. Goodnough noted that Senior Vice President and Provost Bob McMaster oversees Morris’ financial aid allocations.

3. Foreign Language discussion continued

French Professor Tammy Berberi and Spanish Professor Stacey Aronson presented the proposed World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures requirement. Berberi explained that the proposed requirement would differ from the current foreign language requirement such that the new requirement would remove the cap of proficiency equivalent to the first full year of college language study and require all students to take two semesters of college level foreign language. Also, all students will be required to take a language placement exam. Students with previous study of a foreign language would then be required to take two semesters of language at the level of placement or in a new language. Berberi noted that the proposed change will not impact every student, but only one-fourth of Morris students. Berberi stated that the foreign language faculty are constantly dealing with an enrollment cliff that happens at the 1002-level, since many students stop taking language courses after they have satisfied the general education requirement. Only 21 percent of students continue on to higher level courses. The language faculty feel they have to constantly manage enrollment to stabilize their program.

Berberi and Aronson spoke about studies showing that language study is very beneficial for adult brains. They noted that one year of language study at the college level can improve emotional intelligence and cognition.

Berberi went on to discuss how the proposed WLLC requirement would differ from the current requirement. Thirty-eight percent of students taking the language placement exam will enroll in 1001 and 1002 language courses to satisfy the requirement. In the current foreign language requirement only eight percent of students take 1002 to satisfy the requirement because they have shown proficiency equivalent to the first year of college language study. With the proposed requirement those eight percent would now have to take 1002 and 2001 to satisfy the requirement. Under the current requirement, 16 percent of students are exempted from foreign language by placing above 1002 in a proctored exam. The proposed requirement would require those 16 percent to take eight credits of foreign language at placement or in a new language. Currently, about three percent of students satisfy foreign language through AP, IB, and CLEP exams. The language faculty proposal would require those three percent to take eight credits of foreign language at placement or in a new language and would grant four elective credits for their

AP, IB, or CLEP exams. The proposal includes the current exemption from FL for international students, as well as acceptance of transfer courses to satisfy the FL requirement.

Berberi and Aronson noted that exemption procedures and grammar tests used by institutions nationwide are inadequate. They argued further that under the current system students cannot adequately engage in international settings.

The proposed requirement would also require heritage learners to take eight credits of foreign language because many who can speak a foreign language do not necessarily know how to read or write in that language. Berberi and Aronson spoke about a student who spoke Hmong who went on to take a 1003-level course in Spanish because there was no way to test the student's written skills. However, it was pointed out that an exam is available to test Hmong in written form.

The following questions and comments were addressed after the presentation.

- What will be the spirit of the new requirement? Will it be based on culture or language? Aronson stated that proficiency at the 1002 level would allow students to function marginally well in a restaurant, but still not be able to function well as a tourist.
- Does the additional eight credits signal that language is more important than science? Students who take AP language and expand their knowledge while in high school are asked to go above and beyond what students who do not take college level work during high school are asked. If the science requirement were to make a similar change students would be asked to take Organic Chemistry to satisfy the requirement. Berberi and Aronson believe there appears to be an inequity in how general education exemptions are applied. They believe foreign language is the only general education requirement that can be satisfied with high school placement. However, SC members note, this is not the case, as students can take special exams, such as Calculus and Chemistry, to satisfy general education requirements.
- SC believes students will perceive the proposed WLLC requirement as unfair when they learn that some students need to take upper level courses to satisfy the requirement while others can take 1001 and 1002 level courses. It was noted there is a lot of literature explaining how retention is negatively affected by requirements that are perceived to be unfair.
- Other questions that were raised by SC: Why should heritage learners who can't take placement exams have to take French, Spanish or German? Why restrict students to only those languages offered here in Morris? Why can they not be exempt?
- Berberi states that Curriculum Committee is looking at having a more restrictive exemption process. The language faculty are proposing that international students would be exempt from foreign language because they are learning English at a higher competence than the two semesters of foreign language that are required.

Scholastic Committee is responsible for general education exemptions, not Curriculum Committee, and SC noted they would have to review current exemptions based on a new requirement if the proposal passed Campus Assembly.

- SC posed a specific test case: Previously, a Navajo-speaking student was able to meet the FL requirement by demonstrating proficiency in that language via a proctored exam. How would this be handled under the new system -- would we require this student to take a European language? The language faculty replied that UMM offers Anishinaabe.
- SC wondered how the same general education requirement could be satisfied by either 1001 and 1002 OR 2001 and 2002 when: 1) the content of these courses is not changing from what is currently offered; and 2) the level of competence acquired is quite different between 1000 and 2000 level language courses.
- Could the Curriculum Committee instead propose an additional international perspective general education requirement instead of the proposed two semesters of foreign language that are UMM-specific? Requiring eight credits of foreign language is a substantial investment, considering students only need to take 30 credits at Morris to obtain a Morris degree. The proposed WLLC requirement would constitute almost 30 percent of the required credits. It would be difficult for student planning to do two majors to fit eight credits of foreign language into their schedules. Many prepare by taking AP, IB, or CLEP in high school to make room for their major requirements. It would also be difficult for students in pre-professional programs who have to satisfy general education requirements, major requirements, and prerequisites for their pre-professional programs.
- Would the Curriculum Committee consider raising the proficiency bar to a 2001 level and continue to allow exemptions? The Curriculum Committee is still in discussion regarding the proposed requirement.

4. **IC discussion**

Brenda Boever discussed the problem of completing the Intellectual Community (IC) requirement for students who have failed or dropped the course. How can students be put back in the cycle to repeat the requirement?

SC created a petition process that would allow students to take another course to substitute for an IC course. However, the current petition process is long and complicated and requires the student take the course then petition the SC after they've completed the course. This petition process was created before Morris stopped offering IC courses in the spring. An alternative the Dean allowed was to manage/monitor students who need to repeat an IC course and allow one seat in each section for students to repeat the course out of sequence.

There are many students admitted for spring semester who must take their IC course the following fall. There were a couple of students admitted in spring 2015 who did not take their IC course in the fall of 2015 and now have to take it fall 2016, a year and a half later.

One committee member voiced that as an IC instructor, she would not like to have a student in their third or fourth semester in college in her IC class, as they can disrupt the class because the student has already learned much of the content covered in the course. Members suggest

streamlining the petition process for substituting another course for an IC course. There was a similar issue with First Year Seminar, and in those cases students were required to take an additional Human Diversity course, which was applicable because First Year Seminar had themes.

A motion was made to have students complete a modified petition form and submit their petition to the SC before students take the required course. The SC will decide if the course meets the spirit of the requirement at their next SC meeting.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar