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Scholastic minutes 09/22/2004

Scholastic Committee

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University of Minnesota, Morris
Scholastic Committee
Minutes #2, September 22, 2004

The Scholastic Committee met at 4 p.m. on September 22nd in Science 3500. The next meeting will be at 9 a.m. on October 6th in the same location.

Members present: S. Aronson, B. Burke, J. Hass, W. Hunt, J. Kim, N. McPhee (chair), L. Meek, J. Ropp, G. Shaegley, K. Strissel, D. De Jager, S. Haugen, K. Klinger (coordinator) and R. Thielke

1. The September 8th minutes were approved as edited.

2. Grade replacement when repeating a course: Nic McPhee (chair) provided an overview of the topic, including a summary of the Twin Cities repeat policy and the adaptation followed at UMM. The discussion took the rest of the scheduled meeting.

a. We began with a discussion of whether courses taken within the University of MN system can be considered repeat courses for the purposes of grade replacement. The Scholastic Committee has interpreted a *repeat* course as a UMM course with the same content taught by UMM faculty. Because of interest expressed in addressing the topic last year, it is proposed that the Scholastic Committee *allow courses from other U of MN campuses that are the same or essentially equivalent courses to be considered repeat courses for purposes of grade replacement*. In its implementation, introductory courses from within the University system will be reviewed by the Registrar with faculty consultation. Advanced courses are approved by the faculty in the discipline of the course.

The other campuses of the University allow courses within the system to be considered repeat courses. Though UMM has a high standard of teaching and the advantage of small classes, it is difficult to raise the argument that other courses within the University system are inferior to ours. More importantly, UMM's offerings are limited and often can't be repeated within a limited time period. Students who need to repeat a course rarely find that course offered at UMM during the summer. There are problems with counting the credits twice, if a student takes essentially the same course elsewhere. In addition, all campuses share a transcript and are part of one system.

b. Members made little progress on the definition of a repeat course and McPhee agreed to move to the second issue: Shall we petition SCEP to allow UMM to follow its own policy or shall we accept the all-University policy?

The Twin Cities policy is: *A student may repeat a course once. When a student repeats a course, (a) both grades for the course shall appear on the official transcript, (b) the course credits may not be counted more than once toward degree and program requirements, and (c) only the last enrollment for the course shall count in the student's grade point average.*

The adaptation of this policy at UMM, approved informally for use until recently, is that *students may repeat courses for which they have received a grade of D, F, or N. Courses with a grade of C-, S or higher may be repeated only with permission from the Scholastic Committee*. Last year a recommendation to the Campus Assembly to allow students who earned a C- to retake a course without special permission was withdrawn at the request of Vice Provost Swan's Office as part of an effort to have an all-University interpretation. A review of SCEP minutes made clear that the Morris position had been discussed a few years ago; the SCEP membership thought it unlikely that an individual college could decide on its own not to follow an all-University policy.

One of the members had discussed this question with faculty colleagues who favored staying with UMM's current policy. If, indeed, we accepted the all-U rule allowing any student to repeat a course no matter what the grade, resource problems would need to be addressed. A question was raised whether we could allow repeats only on a space available basis. Science lectures may be open to additional enrollment, but lab courses are often closed. Since the University is encouraging students to complete their requirements in four years, why would we want to lengthen the time needed? Wouldn't this discriminate against students with limited funds? The members reviewed data provided by the Registrar's Office that there had been 753 repeat course registrations since the move to semesters. Of this total, 721 students repeated a course once, 30 repeated a course twice, and three students repeated a course three times. Since we limit the number of students who repeat courses and discourage appeals, we can't estimate how many students with grades of C or higher would wish to retake a course.

It was moved and seconded that UMM follow the all-University policy to allow all students to repeat a course once. The motion was approved 8-1-1 (in favor-opposed-abstain).

At the urging of one of the members, a task force was appointed to develop a strong rationale with a plan for addressing resource problems that will arise before taking this recommendation to the Campus Assembly. Task force membership includes J.Ropp, R.Thielke, and K. Strissel. McPhee asked them to report back at the next meeting.

The meeting ran well past the scheduled hour. The members stayed to review two petitions requesting permission to repeat a course in which a grade higher than a D+ had been earned. Petition 1131 fell within the parameters we had operated within last year and was approved. Petition 1132 would be approved under the all-U guidelines but denied under UMM's. For that reason it was tabled.

#1131-- Allow the student to repeat Chem 1101 in which she earned a C. . **Approved.**

#1132--Retroactively allow the student to repeat Engl 1131 in which she earned a B+. . **Tabled.**

The meeting was adjourned.
Karla Klinger, Coordinator