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University of Minnesota, Morris
Scholastic Committee
Minutes #11, February 25, 2003

The Scholastic Committee met on February 25 at 3:45 in the Behmler Conference room. The next meetings will be March 4th and 25th.

Members attending: S.Gashaw, R. Heyman, K. Klinger (Coordinator), N. McPhee, L. Meek (Chair), J. Mullin, R. Richards, R. Thielke, C. Gonzalez, K. Sharp, C. Specketer, M. Uttke

1. Minutes: The February 18th minutes were approved.
2. Academic Integrity Case: Chair Meek announced that the Academic Integrity Sub-Committee may need to meet this term to consider a case. All student members of the Scholastic Committee serve on the sub-committee. After the meeting Meek checked the minutes from fall to see whether faculty had been appointed. Faculty appointed to the sub-committee are Meek, McQuarrie, Cox and Fohl.
3. Sub-committee on re-admission following suspension: The academic progress re-admission policy that went into effect in Fall 2002 specified that suspended students who later seek re-admission will present *an academic plan for improvement, evidence of successful completion of evening, summer or transfer courses, and/or evidence that his/her personal difficulties are being addressed*. K. Klinger will convene a group with representatives from offices such as Admissions, Counseling, Academic Assistance, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA), and Campus Security to consider non-academic criteria for making a judgment and for developing a simple process for considering these applications. A Scholastic Committee representative in addition to Meek and Klinger will be asked to serve. Recommendations from the sub-committee will be brought back to the Scholastic Committee.
4. Academic Integrity Issues: At the end of the 2001-2002 academic year, the Scholastic Committee sent Dean Schwaller a list of recommendations for furthering the debate on academic integrity and its place at UMM. He responded by asking us to work with him on this issue. Our earlier recommendations to him can be found in the agenda for February 25th and in the 2001-2002 annual report.

Meek suggested appointing a sub-committee to re-draft the academic integrity brochure. The current brochure was printed in 1979. There was agreement last year that the brochure needed to be updated, particularly in light of recent technology advances and availability of material over the internet. The office of the VCSA will help with the task. The current brochure is written from the perspective that the student has cheated. It needs to give a clearer picture of the actions students can take. Meek, who serves on the academic integrity sub-committee reviewing cases in which students have been accused of cheating, believes the current system is not working well. The student has little recourse when accused by faculty of cheating. There is usually not enough evidence to determine whether or not a student has cheated. The sub-committee reviewing the case may find in favor of the student and ask that the penalty imposed by the faculty be lessened, but the sub-committee does not have the authority to change a grade or to enforce a recommendation. The student may then complain to the Dean, but grades are the responsibility of the faculty, and in almost all instances, only faculty can change them. Sometimes, because of the accusation, the student will be distracted in the middle of the course leading to performance problems, which in turn lead to a poor course grade.

Heyman asked for an illustration of the UMM process: The student is accused of dishonest work by the faculty instructor. If the student admits this, s/he accepts the penalty. If not, and if cheating is reported more than once, the student goes to the VCSA, who oversees student behavior. The VCSA contacts the

academic integrity sub-committee. The sub-committee reviews the evidence and provides a recommendation. If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome, s/he can go to the Dean. C. Specketer reported that in the policies of COPLAC institutions he has checked on the Web, the faculty must prove that academic dishonesty occurred. Various boards or honors councils may recommend that a penalty be lightened.

We agreed that faculty shouldn't accuse a student without proof. Because it is unlikely that faculty authority for assigning grades can be challenged, Mullin suggested that we look at other options for recourse for those students who are exonerated of charges of academic dishonesty by the Academic Integrity Subcommittee. For example, perhaps retroactive withdrawals could be allowed, or a student could retake the course with another instructor. Gashaw recommended that faculty stipulate clearly in their courses what cheating is. For example, when is collaborative work acceptable? One faculty member said she is stating what cheating is and what it is not before each assignment. Another thought that though a course should have expectations, it would be very difficult for the faculty member to provide examples to spell out everything.

We decided to discuss the brochure copy for the March 4th meeting, identifying areas that need to be updated and issues that need to be addressed. This will provide direction for the sub-committee to draft a revision. Because we are concerned about students who have been unfairly accused, we will also consider other grading and registration options.

Submitted by Karla Klinger