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Scholastic minutes 11/07/2017

Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic Committee
2017-18 Academic Year
November 7, 2017
Meeting Seven Approved Minutes

Present: Roland Guyotte (Chair), Leslie Meek, Alyssa Pirinelli, Merc Chasman, Jennifer Goodnough, Judy Korn, Elsie Wilson, Ray Schultz, Michelle Schamp, Parker Smith, Emily Trieu, Harshita Kalidindi, Dan Magner

Absent: Brenda Boever and Emma Kloos

Guests: Jennifer Herrmann, Office of Admissions and Jessica Porwoll

1. Chair's Report

Melissa Bert will be joining the Scholastic Committee (SC) next week.

2. SCEP Report

At the next meeting, SCEP will be bringing up for discussion and action the 2019-20 Morris calendar. Goodnough does not expect any concerns.

SCEP is also looking at a proposed Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Equity Policy that would address the preferred name issue. Goodnough was concerned policy addressing preferred name would be obscured if it only appeared in the Trans and Non-Conforming Equity Policy. Preferred name is meant for every student so including it in the Trans and Non-Conforming Equity Policy might not be where it should be stated.

SCEP is continuing its work on the Grading and Transcript Policy, but specific changes have not been formalized. Goodnough would like to discuss this further with the SC. In particular, Morris's Dean's List policy doesn't match the Grading and Transcripts policy. Does Morris wish to keep its policy as is or align with the Grading and Transcripts policy? Another potential change would be shorter time limits for incompletes.

3. Admissions Presentation by Jennifer Herrmann

Jennifer Herrmann had a conversation with the SC and answered questions addressing the processes and procedures used by the Office of Admissions with regards to admitting new high school (NHS) and new advanced standing students (NAS). The questions were provided to the director of admissions before the November 7 meeting.

NHS:

1. What can Admissions do to ensure that all incoming first-year students supply us with a high school transcript? If no high school transcript is submitted what information does Admissions use to make an admittance decision?

All NHS student must submit a high school transcript. The high school transcript may not be complete because students apply during the beginning of their senior year so the transcript might only have grades through the junior year. Admissions reviews the high school transcript, application materials, and SAT/ACT scores. The high school transcript carries the most weight when making a decision.

Is there a reason why advisers don't receive the high school transcript during summer registration? Might advisers see the high school transcript to review a student's

academic history? It could be helpful for advisers to be able to discuss a student's high school record and possibly see any interests such as theatre or fine arts.

There's no reason why the adviser can't have a copy of the high school transcript, but it may be difficult for advisers to read or understand as high schools use different language or terms on the transcript. There could be interpretation issues.

2. Does Admissions still track whether a student has met high school preparation classes using a student group?

High school preparation classes are tracked, recorded and submitted centrally with the final high school.

3. What is the current distribution by ACT score for students admitted to Morris?

Morris sees a distribution of ACT scores around 21 to 31 with scores of 22 and 26 being most common. There hasn't been much change from ACT scores earned by students enrolled fall 2016. Morris is fortunate to have a diverse student body with a good academic profile. Forty percent of this year's incoming students are students of color.

4. Does the application for admission ask if the student has previously earned credit (in any form). If so, are students notified that college transcripts must be submitted as part of the admission process?

Admissions counselors actively communicate the need for college transcripts throughout the admissions process, but students assume that since it's on their high school transcript they don't need the college transcript. Half of it falls on deaf ears and the other half don't know where/how to get their transcripts. Students are also advised by their high school counselor not to send the transcript until all their grades are submitted. Some students just don't do what you ask, but the lack of college transcripts is not due to lack of communication. Admissions will not put a hold for admissions decisions due to lack of college transcripts. Holds are another roadblock for students.

At a recent conference, Korn asked other college representatives if their college places a hold on a student's account for final college transcripts. About half of the representatives said they did place a hold. One suggestion to the problem of lack of college transcripts is working closer with high school counselors to explain the need for college transcripts and to help push students to send them.

It was also noted that Morris doesn't do very well helping its PSEO students acquire transcripts.

A member noted that the vast majority of students advised during summer registration have not submitted their college transcripts; and about half of the students have taken college courses. Advisers are providing bad or incorrect advice during summer registration because they don't have all the information.

The committee was asked to think seriously about the challenges of getting students here and the possible implications of putting holds. Morris might need to add more registration sessions or have later registration sessions if we're going to require final college transcripts.

5. Does the admission process track students who have not submitted final college transcripts and get missing transcripts before offering admission? If not, why?

No, a lot of the college work is listed on the high school. Morris has to take a practical position when requiring college transcripts. Some students take CIS courses from five different colleges and students don't always know where the courses are from. The Morris Area High School offers 18 CIS/PSEO courses from five different colleges.

6. What is the Morris admissions policy with respect to new students who have earned a low U of M GPA via PSEO, CIS, or as an IUT (U of M transfer)? How about PSEO and CIS students who studied at non-U of M colleges and earned low GPAs?

Admissions reviews the whole record and asks a lot of questions. There could be reasons such as health or family troubles that resulted in the student performing poorly. Students suspended from other U of M campuses are not granted admission to Morris per University-wide policy. PSEO attending Morris are reviewed every semester to make sure they are making progress and not putting themselves in a bad situation.

7. Does Admissions notify new high schools students with transfer credits from other U of M campuses of their probation status?

Counselors inform students that their GPA follows them to Morris, but nothing is provided in writing because counselors assume the student has been notified by the previous school.

8. On what criteria are applications evaluated if the student has not submitted their full academic record? What is the minimum amount of information Admissions uses to make a decision to admit a student?

Admission counselors ask a lot of questions and don't make assumptions. Counselors continue to get updates from students and more information from high school transcripts.

9. What does the student profile look like for students who were not admitted? ACT, GPA etc. What makes someone a "no"?

A record of poor performance in high school could be a reason to deny admittance. Admissions performs a holistic review of a student's record paying close attention to courses that would prepare a student for their major in addition to ACT scores. If no major has been selected then all high school coursework is carefully reviewed and special attention is paid to any trends in performance. Admissions might hold off on decision until next semester's grades are posted. Students with high ACT scores, but a low high school GPA might be denied.

10. Has there been any follow up to the question, what happens with the “Extra Advising Required” stamp on an application? What sort of follow-up happens when admissions counselors identify someone as having extenuating circumstances or predicting that they'll need extra help? Is a student group added?

This SC question was not addressed by the admissions director.

11. Are there any aspects of UMM's transfer credit policies (including PSEO/CIS/AP) for general education requirements that are a “hard sell” to interested students? More specifically, we want to know if the rigidity of WLA exemption is hurting our enrollment -- but it seems only fair to ask this in general.

This SC question was not addressed by the admissions director.

NAS:

12. Does the application for admission ask if the student has previously earned credit (in any form). If so, are students notified that college transcripts must be submitted as part of the admission process?

Transfer students with 30 or more postsecondary credits are not required to provide a high school transcript. The admissions decision is made based on how they're doing in college. If a student is majoring in biology, but does not take any science courses at the current college, Admissions assumes that the coursework at the college is more at level with Morris's coursework than high school courses.

Why is a major being considered on an application if Freshmen change their major multiple times?

Majors are considered on applications for certain disciplines that could require more rigorous coursework.

13. Does the admission process track these incomplete applications and get missing transcripts before offering admission? If not, why not?

Students with incomplete applications are not admitted. Students with incomplete transcripts are admitted. The Office of Admissions does not consider themselves gatekeepers. Morris is not that type of institution. We don't have the luxury of denying students who have not submitted final transcripts.

14. On what criteria are applications evaluated if the student has not submitted their full academic record? What is the minimum amount of information Admissions uses to make a decision to admit a student?

Admissions reviews the metrics, but also considers the individual. Admissions questions whether students are prepared and will they succeed. They provide some flexibility while retaining a selective standard.

15. What additional factors impact approved transfer admission when a student's GPA is below 2.5 at the previous institution?

A student's courses are reviewed to determine if there are issues with major coursework or possibly foreign language. If a student is struggling in one subject it may not be as bad. A look at the rest of the record may provide more information.

16. What is the distribution of incoming GPAs from previous colleges?

Herrmann didn't have enough time to collect this data.

17. Why does the transfer page on the Admission website state students should have a 2.75 GPA when Scholastic Committee policy per Campus Assembly states 2.50? Would you like Scholastic Committee to bring forth a change in the policy to Campus Assembly?

The 2.75 GPA listed on the Admissions transfer webpage was inherited from the previous director and Herrmann is unsure about the reasoning behind the discrepancy.

SC members shared their concern about the impact of listing a required GPA of 2.75 might be having on prospective students. SC student members stated they would not apply to Morris if they had a GPA lower than the 2.75 stated on the website. It was noted that students wouldn't read the bullet points below the noted GPA requirement. Changing the GPA back to 2.50 could mean Morris sees a bigger pool of applications, but does not change who we accept.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar