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Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic minutes 09/25/2018

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Scholastic Committee
2018-19 Academic Year
September 25, 2018
Meeting Two Minutes

Present: Roland Guyotte (chair), Judy Korn, Jennifer Goodnough, Nancy Pederson, Mitchell Scanlan, Brenda Boever, Parker Smith, Leslie Meek, Heather Pennie, Michelle Schamp, Chris Atkinson, Bryan Nell, and Emma Kloos

Absent: Elizabeth Abler and Esmira Alieva

1. Approve minutes of September 11, 2018, meeting

Minutes approved as amended.

2. Chair's Report

Chair Guyotte reported on a biennial meeting of the University's Academy of Distinguished Teachers (ADT) that he and Leslie Meek attended with several other UMM ADT members. They learned about other U of M campuses' work with respect to issues UMM also faces. He plans to follow up with a UMTC faculty member about an initiative to help first generation college students succeed. Additional topics taken up by the ADT group included free speech on campus and off; campus learning spaces; online and blended courses; and inclusive pedagogy, among others.

3. SCEP Report

SCEP meets in a week, but there isn't much on the agenda.

4. Petition # 1269

Request: Due to hardship, allow a student to register for a course for the third time, and register after the deadline. Motion to deny. Second. No discussion. In favor: eleven. Opposed: none. Abstaining: none. Petition denied.

Student was informed they must be enrolled in the course to be able to attend class.

5. Retention Effort: Advising discussion

Brenda Boever, Office of Academic Success, started a discussion about the possibility of changing the approach on advising holds. The current advising holds practice and policy has not been reviewed since the campus moved to semesters. Boever noted that a strong connection with an adviser is really important for students to succeed and graduate. The campus is seeing more students coming in with more transfer credit than before. This trend is leading to fewer opportunities for students to meet with their adviser because current policy does not require students who have earned 60 credits or more to meet with their adviser. Many students are coming in with 30, 40, or 50 credits which means they might only have to meet with their adviser once or twice.

Boever met with the Master Advisers to discuss the proposed changes to advising holds. Some advisers believed the change would result in more work for advisers because they would have to advise more students. A member noted that they meet with more than 90 percent of their

advisees, therefore, their workload wouldn't change. Another member commented that they have already met with their two advisers five times in the first five weeks of class. The student member shared that they came to Morris with 62 PSEO credits. The student member also noted that they knew other students with more than 60 credits who only met with an adviser when they first registered and are now unsure how to proceed to complete their degree.

It was noted that increasing the number of semesters students must meet with their advisers would provide time to establish regular meetings and help students see the value in meeting with their advisers. A member noted that they only met once with an advisee who was just under 60 credits. The student did graduate, but the faculty member would have liked to have met with the student a few more times. Another faculty member noted that some students are using discipline coordinators as advisers.

It was noted that there is a difference between advising for the major and advising about general education requirements. Advising in the major depends on the major because some majors have very strict course sequencing.

This fall there were 12 new high school students who came in with an associate of arts degree. These students will not be required to meet with an adviser before spring registration. It was questioned whether there is any data that shows that Morris retains new high schools students with previous credit at a lower rate than those without any previous credit. A member commented that sometimes the students with previous credit are the ones that show an initiative to succeed and actively meet with their adviser.

Retention efforts are focused on retaining new high school students from their first year to the second year. Do students who come in with 60 credits or more graduate in three years? It was noted that not many students quickly complete their degree just because they have previous credit.

Boever presented data provided by Jeri Squier, Office of the Registrar, about the increase in the number of students who would need to meet with an adviser should the advising hold policy be based on admit term.

A member noted they stopped meeting with their adviser because the advisers assigned kept leaving and the member never had an established relationship with their advisor. They also noted that their adviser was not a faculty in their major. It was questioned whether the new advising hold practice should be based on admit term and have students meet with an adviser in their major. Another member noted that students assigned advisers outside the major makes advising more difficult for everyone involved and can be detrimental to students. Students with an adviser outside their major will then go speak with a faculty member in their major and they have to work harder to figure out how to get the student back on track (4-year plan). Another member noted that advisees outside their major do not get the most inspiring advising because the faculty adviser is not aware of all the opportunities of that other major.

Can there be added criteria used to require students to meet with their adviser? Squier recommended that criteria be kept simple in order to be able to better query the students. Is there a mechanism that would allow for holds to be placed on students based on major? Some majors do not require as much advising as others, such as education which deals with licensure

requirements. It was noted that setting different advising holds based on major might appear unfair.

Are success coaches a factor in faculty advising? Success coaches encourage students to meet with their academic advisers, but not all students are assigned a success coach.

It might help to get an advisee into their adviser's introductory course. However, a member noted that they have four new advisees in their introductory course that won't come see them for advising.

A member commented that the Morris campus offers many opportunities and resources for students to connect with people. Students can contact advisers, success coaches, faculty, athletic coaches, counselors, residential life staff, and other student support services staff if they need help. Should the committee create or change policy due to a small group of students not willing to connect with anyone? Is a new policy going to make a difference or are these students going to see it as another checkbox to mark off? Is there a better way to help these students than an advising hold? The goal of the proposed change is not to make more work for people or to create artificial connections. How do we change the stigma of advising seen as babysitting and encourage students to reach out?

When the plan to place a hold on students with less than 60 credits was put in place it was meant to require students to meet with their advisers for two years. When thinking of the new policy/practice it is best to look back at the spirit of that approach. It was recommended that the new plan discuss the continued intention of wanting students to meet with their adviser their first four semesters at Morris rather than talking about credits. If students meet with their advisers for the first four semesters it will help establish a relationship and hopefully students will continue meeting with their advisers.

The committee agreed to revisit the topic at a later time. Judy Korn offered to try and gather data about students who left and how many credits they came in with.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar