

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Scholastic Committee

Campus Governance

10-14-2021

Scholastic minutes 10/14/2021

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Scholastic Committee
2021-22 Academic Year
Thursday, October 14, 2021, Zoom
Meeting Four - Minutes

Present: Dennis Stewart (Chair), Jason Ramey, Joseph Beaver, Josh Kuusisto, Alyssa Pirinelli, Julie Eckerle, Marcus Muller, Jessica Larson, Jessica Porwoll, Beth Zaske

Guest: John Tornes

Minute-Taker: Julie Eckerle

1. Approval of Previous Minutes:
 - a. Sept. 30, 2021 minutes unanimously approved.

2. SCEP Report:
 - a. Jessica Larson reported on the October 13, 2021 meeting.:
 - i. Academic calendars:
 1. The 2 that went through Assembly most recently were approved by SCEP.
 2. If it turns out that Juneteenth messes with summer schedules, the calendars might come back.
 3. There were some questions about why UMN Morris's schedule is different from the others, especially in terms of fall; there is some interest in having all campus schedules synched.
 - ii. Committee Make-up discussion
 - iii. Graduate Student concerns re: COVID impacts

3. Introductions (since we had a guest, John Tornes, & a new committee member, Beth Zaske as USA Rep)

4. Presentation by John Tornes, Director of the Transfer Office
 - a. Update on articulation agreements
 - i. Currently have 2: White Earth Tribal Community College, in Human Services, & Normandale, in French)
 - ii. In conversation with other institutions, with hope of having 4 or 5 more before the year ends, including with Alex Tech & Ridgewater)
 - iii. Working with Angie and Marcus on these agreements, as well as other campus offices (NASS, Admissions, etc.)
 - iv. An important strategy for recruiting transfer students
 - v. General feeling that they are moving in the right direction
 - vi. Number of articulation agreements is dependent on various disciplines, some of which are not as transfer-friendly as they should be & need to be. The Office would like as many as possible, but they have started with those disciplines that *are* transfer-friendly.

 - b. Challenges that transfer students face at UMN Morris:

- i. Transfer of credits (working with different divisions re: stream-lining credit equivalency & being more transfer-friendly): this we *can* control
 - ii. Location: this we *cannot* control
- c. What Scholastic Committee can do to help with transfer student issues
 - i. Meetings like this
- d. Anything else?
 - i. Tornes sees himself as an advocate for transfer students & wants their voices to be heard, especially given enrollment trajectory with more and more students starting at community or tribal colleges before moving to 4-year colleges.
 - ii. Tornes is still learning a lot about transfer student needs at UMN Morris but believes it is time to act and wants to develop a plan that can be acted upon.
 - iii. One idea is to create special orientation events for transfer students
 - iv. Wants to develop a plan that can be acted upon. It's time to act.
- e. Questions:
 - i. Do transfer students want a "Welcome to Morris" class to match the "New Student Experience" class? → Tornes thinks we can handle this by setting a number of credits to distinguish transfer students with many credits from those who are still brand-new to a college environment and would/should join those types of courses. Perhaps less than 30 credits?
 - ii. Does number of credits with which a student transfers in typically determine how they are defined? → Tornes says this is typically how it works, with a certain number of credit hours associated with certain intentional programming. He is working on this.
 - iii. Have you been involved with conversations re: Gen Ed updates? Any concerns about impact to transfer students? → Tornes has not been involved in these conversations yet but has rigorously looked at Gen Ed & has seen a number of red flags from the transfer student perspective, including accessibility (it is difficult for prospective students to understand; the curriculum needs to be more available and up-to-date, etc.). Tornes is still learning exactly which classes satisfy WLA, IC, etc., and students have a lot of confusion about this, too. Having something on website to explain this would be helpful for students and for partnering institutions. Those courses should be available at the state and community college level.
 - iv. It is important in advising transfer students to figure out why they left & why they're here. Could that be a component for a 101 setting? → Tornes agrees and has considered this. Learning how to engage our transfer students is going to be case-by-case. But it starts with development of partnerships with community and state. We gave to be on the same page. These things can be summed up in Memorandum of Understanding documents. Having early interventions (What school will you transfer to? Here are the Gen Ed requirements for that school, etc.) would help. There could be even be guidance in the application process. Partnership benefits need to be established. So both institutions understand that that student "belongs" to both institutions. There's not a lot of transfer programming in place here right now. But they have great plans in Transfer Student Services – including National Transfer Student Week next week – to support retention, etc. Also having dedicated staff for these students to help negate the "I'm not happy" claims. But we still need to help them as they transfer out if it comes to it. We need a reverse transfer policy as well – if someone does not finish here, they can reverse transfer

so they can get Associate's from the prior institution. These are steps that need to be taken for students to be happy.

- v. UMN Morris generally does not offer a lot of online courses, and students probably come from institutions with more flexible course offerings (in terms of modality). Is that a concern on transferring? → Tornes thinks the pandemic has kind of helped us because our location is uncontrollable. Students who might not come here can be online. But yes, our location is one of our draw-backs for our trans students. Not sure how we get around that. [Marcus notes that we are 80% in person / 20% online now. Pre-COVID it was 95% / 5%; there will be less online offerings across the whole system in the future]

5. Chair Report

- a. Dennis Stewart reported that he has contacted several individuals in order to learn which meetings we hold annually, which periodically, etc. He got lots of useful info, including why we hold these meetings: 1. We have an accountability function according to the Constitution 2. It is an opportunity to ask other individuals and offices "what can we do for you?" Fall meetings should be Admissions, Retention, Student Success Center, Office of the Registrar.
- b. What questions do we want to ask Admissions in the fall meeting if they agree to come? (They just came to the committee in April and may not want to come again):
 - i. Fall meeting is important, especially if we are supposed to have oversight. It would be good to have new Admissions Director in habit of providing us Accountability Data. If we get this data in the fall, we have a better idea of what is going on and what needs fixing, etc. Real numbers would be helpful (and in the spring the numbers were not settled). Perhaps we need to more clearly explain to Admissions what we need and why – a change from reporting to actually sharing with a committee with oversight. There needs to be a clearer match between the Committee Charge and what the people are asked to bring/present/discuss. Or maybe a series of visits is better?
 - 1. This could help:

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Scholastic Committee develops, reviews, and recommends policies affecting the quality of education including admission, academic progress, academic advising, student academic honesty, undergraduate scholarship, and graduation. It has the power to enforce policies and to grant exceptions to academic regulations when the spirit of such regulations has been satisfied. The committee sets admission standards and evaluates transfer credit in accordance with standards established by the Campus Assembly.
 - ii. It would be good to know their opinion and any data re: how things change when we go from ACT/SAT- required to ACT-optional. Are they getting data from other campuses that is helpful in this regard?
 - iii. What are the cool things that you are doing? (the interaction does not have to be negative)
 - iv. A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
 - v. Whatever slides we want or they plan to bring should be sent to us at least a week ahead of time so we have time to look at data before their presentation and develop appropriate questions.
 - vi. Since our new student visits are booked out (a good sign!), this is a good time to re-set with Admissions. Start with conversation about post-pandemic building to bigger campus population?

- vii. We also want to know what the process looks like, how the classes/students will be different. Numbers are important, but it's not just about numbers.

Dennis will try to get Admissions to come in the fall. If not, he will try for the very first meeting in the spring. At least we will then be moving them back toward the fall, which is when we want it to happen regularly. As for what we tell them (see b.i), Dennis wonders if this is better as a conversation point. Someone suggested that having Barry for some of these potential meetings with Admissions could be helpful.

Dennis is also working on meeting with Marcus and his office re: probations and suspensions; we will use that meeting to launch a conversation about the implications of not having used suspension, etc. during the pandemic.

Meeting ended at 12:42 p.m.