

11-7-2013

Consultative minutes 11/07/2013

Consultative Committee

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Recommended Citation

Consultative Committee, "Consultative minutes 11/07/2013" (2013). *Consultative Committee*. 52.
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Consultative Committee Minutes

October 3, 2013

Present: Jean Rohloff, Ray Schultz, Nancy Helsper, Jim Barbour, Chad Braegelmann, LeAnn Dean, Molly Donovan, Jim Hall, Heather Waye, Allison Wolf, Janet Ericksen

Dean Bart Finzel in attendance.

International Student Agenda Item:

Our SUFE (Shanghai University of Finance and Economics) agreement has been updated for the next 3 years; we will accept up to 50 students for each cohort and are expecting about 40 new students each year.

The curriculum has changed a bit, adding courses that encourage students to spread out from economics and take advantage of the other offerings at UMM.

We are talking about sending a UMM faculty to SUFE to begin a UMM course abroad so that we may take better advantage of the exchange agreement set up. Courses for this are being discussed.

Getting the SUFE students conversationally ready in English: there is an English course that they take in conjunction with a calculus course, SUFE faculty continue to play around with that. The STELLAR program does seem to be helping students that choose to attend that.

The new agreement has included a demand for students who do not score high enough on the English placement test to enroll in the STELLAR program before they come to UMM for the fall semester.

There is a lot of resistance to increasing the language level demand; many students will come with lower levels and get here and increase their skills dramatically from being here. There are also students that do not improve at all.

The SUFE program sends students much earlier than the other exchanges, so the success is based on study skills, language skills and maturity level, not unlike other students that come here.

The retention rate is good from first to second year. As juniors and seniors they do slip out; however, we retain at least 50%.

Multi-I has been a good tool, allowing students to go to the cities for a while and come back if they'd like.

Student services for SUFE/International students: Hiring international students for PAL (Peer Assisted Learning) positions. Working to lower class/section sizes to make that classroom experience better.

ACE Office Agenda Item:

ACE was proposed about 7 or 8 years ago, envisioned with faculty leadership in the areas of focus. It became an office where students in the different programs could come together. The faculty members heading up the programs were supposed to meet with the director of ACE to work out how the office could best enrich the various programs. Turns out that students were doing most of the discussion between programs.

Jeff Ratliff-Crain left after one year of being director, giving us an opportunity to rethink the leadership position. There is an interim director for this fall semester (Jess Larson), working with a 'board of directors' model to see how ACE can better support the programs. The board is

comprised of Sylke Boyd for the UROP STEM programs, Jimmy Schryver for the other UROP areas, Sarah Buchanan for study abroad and international programming, Marynel Ryan Van Zee as the national scholarship/fellowships coordinator, and Tammy Berberi as the Honors coordinator. They should meet every month or so to identify how the ACE office can better support the programs, and we will use their advice to create a new directorship job description. The director has historically been a faculty position that gets course release so they are in the office part-time.

The new option may be a full-time director, not necessarily faculty, who could do the HR and budgeting of the office, and complete the initiatives identified by the 'board' at this time. The board model would continue to meet once a month, to monitor the success of the director, and provide guidance for the director.

We would like to keep the office open year-round, for summer support. Currently there is a study abroad advisor there for 10 months of the year, and a faculty director always leaves in the summertime.

The new model returns us, a bit, to the 'Tom McRoberts model' at a time when Kaler has just asked for administrative cuts. Hiring a faculty member as director would not be a new admin. position, because we're already paying him/her.

What are the envisioned qualifications of the director? Someone with background in our administrative procedures, who understands our financial and student records systems, HR processes, and can bring folks together and get things accomplished. It would be best if it could be someone from the University with an administrative role; they could hit the ground running. Summertime function: Is there much traffic?

It is very quiet in the summer, there are even days where it is very dark in there. There is a need for someone there when there are students visiting in the summer. The interim director has tried to show at peak summer visit days. There is a need for the campus to work on better models for summer research. We have as many as 60 paid summer positions for research all over campus and there could be a community created around that. There is also work that can be done over the summer, for study abroad and the national scholarship. A year-round presence would allow for things to run more smoothly. Given the office's proximity to advising and retention, there may be an opportunity for a fluid role between those offices.

In terms of advertising to the student body, Jess has done a great job of publicizing. Someone on the committee suggested that the MCSA secretary (Zach Johnson) could meet with Jess to discuss options for him to work on publicizing the ACE office through his MCSA position.

Dean Finzel needs some real help to find a director model for the spring semester.

Under the new director model, we would continue a stronger presence of faculty in ACE, and the board positions could be on a rotating basis; members would have some support/compensation for their duties.

The year-round director model would cost more, but not a lot more and could be very successful.

Please weigh-in on the different models, think about the priority of this office on campus.

Other Discussion:

J. Ericksen: What is the relationship between our HR and Kathy Brown at central HR?

B. Finzel: Our staff tends to be generalized instead of supervision and specialization, the central 'families' identified don't fit Morris very well. They are trying to fit classifications into the report they have for the legislature. The benefit advisors are not accessible if you're not in Minneapolis. Central HR has grown in ways that were different than the past. The added background checks should be quick; they're only looking for felony convictions.

J. Ericksen: Is there a way to collect confidential recommendation letters ? Every other Big 10 school has this.

B. Finzel: There has been suggestion that we review without letters, and we may be moving to electronics.

Next Meeting:

Discuss Bart's proposals

Civility issues

Approve the last meetings' minutes

Try to get Sarah Mattson here

Submitted by M. Donovan