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Scholastic minutes 02/11/2015

Scholastic Committee

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**Scholastic Committee
2014-15 Academic Year
February 11, 2015
Meeting Eleven Minutes Approved**

Present: Judy Korn, Jess Larson, Marcy Prince, Steve Gross, Roland Guyotte, Brenda Boever, Megan Jacobson, Jennifer Rothchild, Chad Braegelmann, Leslie Meek, Hilda Ladner, Tisha Turk, Guest: Jennifer Zych Herrmann

Absent: Merc Chasman, Yee Thao, Laddie Arnold

1. Agenda review. Roland Guyotte, chair, conducted the meeting.
2. February 4, 2015, minutes approved.
3. Chair's Report
Next week Dean Finzel will talk about exam for credit, and Brenda Boever will provide an advising update.
4. SCEP Report
Tisha Turk arrived at SC directly from a SCEP meeting and will provide the report next week at SC.
5. Retention Presentation by Jennifer Zych Herrmann, retention coordinator
Herrmann presented a PowerPoint presentation on retention (See addendum one), answered questions, and facilitated a discussion.

Freshman are defined as first-time, full-time enrollees.

Morris's goal is an 88 percent retention rate between a student's freshman year and sophomore year. Nationally, Morris is underperforming in retention with a rate of 78 percent compared to a national average rate of 84 percent. Within the University system, Morris's retention rate is comparable. The Twin Cities campus has the highest retention rate among the campuses, and their rate continues to improve. Compared to most private institutions in Minnesota, Morris has a better retention rate.

Morris collaborated with Noel-Levitz Higher Education Consulting using three years of data to build a model to help predict/identify risk factors and how they might manifest in retention. A higher model score results in a higher retention rate. A lower model score corresponds to more risk factors that could affect retention. The goal is to attain an 88 percent retention rate by impacting the middle band of students.

Herrmann and the retention committee are utilizing a 100-question student inventory survey to measure a student's perception of his/her strengths and concerns. The questions are rated on a scale of one to seven with seven being a student strongly agreeing with the statement. The study clearly identified the students' top 10 responses. These responses will be applied in a mid-year assessment to measure whether the student believes he/she is making progress.

There is great concern over the low score on responses to statements regarding a student's desire to finish college and obtain career closure. The Scholastic Committee discussed reasons students do not feel the importance or desire to graduate. One of the reasons expressed was that students don't understand a liberal arts education. Herrmann agreed and felt this required further attention. Other reasons include:

- Students are not certain a college degree is worth anything.
- They don't know what follows after college.
- Students enroll at Morris with the intention of transferring.
- Some students attend Morris as a "soft launch" into the college experience.

The survey also captures areas of assistance where students are more receptive. The data can be used to help students by creating initiatives focused in those areas.

Herrmann and the retention committee have employed a number of initiatives to increase retention by targeting specific groups. Hilda Ladner presented information on the Great Lakes funded program. The Great Lakes program serves students that meet at least two of the three following attributes: first-generation, low income, or students of color. Last year, 87 percent of students served by the program were retained from fall 2013 to fall 2014. The data shows that 84 percent of those students were first-generation students; 76 percent are low income students; and 64 percent are student of color.

Another initiative implemented last year was a student coffee date with his/her adviser. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisers to help build a relationship and discuss study methods and assistance programs that worked in the fall semester. Jess Larson and Chad Braegelmann agree that this year's students were some of the most engaged advisees they have met. They felt the students were thinking at a higher level about their futures, career plans, and backup plans. Braegelmann believes the retention rate can be improved with students that speak with multiple academic professionals such as the Writing Room and academic support.

AlertPlus is a program that serves students who receive PELL grants. It is a program for at-risk students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, and students who are first in their families to attend college. A portion of the Great Lakes grant money is being used to enhance existing programs and create case manager positions such as academic success counselors. The counselors help students who receive academic alerts make the connections they needed for assistance. The counselors stay connected with students on probation and help coordinate communication with various resources.

What percentage of students does Morris lose due to mental health or chemical use? Retention does not have an actual number, but it is significant. There is no way to address retention in these situations. However, Retention does provide these students help withdrawing from their courses before the withdrawal deadline so that students can return in good academic standing.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar

Addendum One: [Retention PowerPoint Presentation](#)