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Scholastic minutes 02/02/2017

Scholastic Committee

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Scholastic Committee
2016-17 Academic Year
February 2, 2017
Meeting Thirteen

Present: Roland Guyotte (Chair), Merc Chasman, Joe Beaver, Leslie Meek, Dan Magner, Brenda Boever, Emma Kloos, Jennifer Goodnough, Ruby DeBellis, Josiah Gregg, Parker Smith, Emily Trieu and Judy Korn

Absent: Steve Gross, Ray Schultz

1. Approve minutes of January 26, 2017, meeting.

Approved as changed

Approve minutes of November 8, 2016, meeting

Approved as changed

2. Chair Report

No report

3. SCEP Report

SCEP has not met. Goodnough received information from Sandy Olson-Loy regarding single absences for medical reason. She provided an update to SCEP and it went through their policy system. This resulted in new language. "The Morris campus may request verification of single episode medical absences in certain situations such as missing laboratory sessions or exams." Health Services may need to work on procedures.

4. Brief review of fall 2016 suspension and probation report

Suspension and probation reports are available to anyone with an x.500 account and are on the SC website under reports. Korn reviewed the numbers on the suspension and probation reports. The breakdown for suspension by class standing was five freshmen, six sophomores, four juniors and three seniors.

Why would a freshman be suspended? Standing is determined by credits. A first year student will not be suspended the first semester. A student who did not take enough credits the first year, may not have enough credits to be classified as a sophomore.

Korn was asked if she noticed anything abnormal. Korn indicated she was hoping for a lower number comparable to fall 2015 when ten students were suspended. The lower number in fall 2015 could be because they knew they were doing poorly and withdrew.

Korn reported 176 students were placed on probation. Can non-degree students be suspended? Korn said, yes, if the GPA is under 2.00. How long can you be on probation? Students can remain on probation forever or until they graduate. Are there statistics on students who are just "hanging on"? Korn believes there are only a few students in that situation who have had a bad semester and are slowly improving their GPA to 2.0. Every year we have a few students who

complete their degree requirements and have less than a cumulative 2.0 GPA and then need to take UM classes to raise their GPA. Do we admit students with less than a 2.0? Korn responded that transfer students should have a 2.5.

How hard would it be to check if transfer students end up on probation or suspension? Are we serving transfer students well? One measure would be timely graduation. Korn said, in her opinion, our transfer students used to have more of an introduction to the Morris system. Often that group of students become a co-hort. Now we include them with the rest of the incoming students. Having a transfer student room or club may help that group of students in addition to knowing all the resources at the college. Boever said Dave Swenson has included a special orientation session for transfer students and it is scheduled again this year.

Korn asked if she should provide a report for advanced standing students. Goodnough said SCEP is looking at timely graduation of transfer students and that information would be useful and suggested removing the SUFE students. Guyotte asked if members might want to send Korn an email with their questions. Korn commented there are so many variations among students it may be hard to find a pattern. Goodnough thinks we need a baseline. Chasman said we know there are issues with SUFE students and their English scores and whether they transfer to the Twin Cities campus. Goodnough asked what the NAS GPA is. Boever asked if students with fewer than 30 credits are more likely to stay. Korn responded that it might be difficult to run a report that shows the beginning total of transfer credits, but the information can be found manually.

5. **Grading and Transcript policy review continued**

Korn said she misspoke at the last meeting. Students may take a course again if they have an incomplete. However, they may not sit in on the class without being registered.

If a student has an I and finishes all graduate requirements, will it turn to an F? Once a student graduates, the graduation GPA is frozen and the I will remain.

Goodnough said faculty still control the grading system. Faculty rights are still the same. The problem we are trying to solve is with faculty who need more guidance about when to assign an I and to do the contract. We also need to help students understand more clearly when an I is used and not enable students in such a way that it becomes a financial or GPA disaster. We want to send a message that in order to assign an I, coursework should be able to be completed in three or four weeks.

Korn asked the student members for their thoughts. Two students indicated they did not know incompletes existed until the conversation at the last meeting. Korn said this goes back to what Goodnough said. It is not fair if some students know about an I and some do not. One student asked if a failing grade could be replaced. The repeat policy allows students to enroll in a course twice. Because the registration system does not recognize an I, it is possible that a student could enroll in a course for a third time without petitioning to do so. A student member said although syllabi are very long, it should be in syllabi.

Members commented:

- the syllabi should reference the policy
- there are instructors who do not think an incomplete should be given

- assigning an I is supposed to be for extraordinary situations
- faculty who see absences should send an alert
- there should be training for new faculty
- it can be an extraordinary motivator to tell the student, I am not giving you an I

Do we see many students with a single I or with multiples? Korn said the multiples are those she notices and worries that instructors do not know about all the incompletes. She said we have had students with all I's for a semester who then register for the following semester.

In terms of solving the problem, there is not a lot the policy can do. Education is the solution. Most students know they need to figure out the professor for each class. What about all the important information in the syllabus? Student members were asked how they figure out the professor. They responded the syllabus is important and asking other students. They feel many students do not look at the syllabus other than the dates and deadlines.

Are there any caps to the number of incompletes? Kloos said a student with an academic contract could not get an I, F or W. For financial aid, 66% or $\frac{2}{3}$ of the courses attempted must be completed. Kloos believes only the W is taken into account. SAP can be appealed. Do we have students who have done poorly enough they lose financial aid but are still okay academically? Our current probation/suspension policy should catch a student who is doing poorly. The tuition waiver does not apply to SAP status. In Kloos' experience at One Stop, no one ever asked about an I. An I does not count toward SAP. SAP is a federal requirement. There are no consequences until the grade turns into an F.

The policy to complete an incomplete without a contract currently is a year, and faculty can extend another year. If the time frame could be shortened, the student would be thinking more realistically, i.e., can I get it done over break plus a function of time (winter break or summer break plus a chunk of the next semester). Faculty could still move the deadline out further. New faculty need to know this. Guyotte would oppose hardening the policy to say by the fourth week of next semester. Meek agreed. One of the student members commented every student is different, if the professor is willing; the student could have up to two years to have an I and could graduate.

Currently, students do not have protection if they do not have a contract and the professor leaves. There is no risk to the faculty, but it is critical for the student to understand that protection comes from a written contract. How do we fix the education piece so that students know? Guyotte asked Meek, if she saw this when she was division chair. Meek said no and she addresses this with her students on the first day of class.

Are most of the incompletes finished in a few weeks or drawn out? Korn ran a report last fall to determine how many students would be facing an F because they had not completed an I. If last fall were typical, we would have expected a result of about a dozen. Korn added she has not reviewed if it was 72 students or 72 incompletes. Beaver commented, at Morris we have interaction that is more personal and it may be harder for the faculty to deny assigning an I. It will interesting to see if there is a correlation between alerts or not.

Guyotte asked if the committee wants to continue the discussion next week. Goodnough asked that we wait to see what is coming to SCEP. Goodnough said if we add a time restriction, we

want it clear faculty still have the ability to extend.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Kill, Office of the Registrar