

[In these minutes: Academic Integrity in Admissions, Updates]

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITTEE (SAIC)

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2002

10:00 – 11:30

238A MORRILL HALL

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate or Twin Cities Campus Assembly; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represent the view of, nor are they binding on the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Dorothy Anderson (Chair), Betty Hackett, Laura Coffin Koch, Robert Pepin, Nicholas Velkov.

REGRETS: Steve Brandt, Shawn Curley, Yev Garif, Daniel Svedarsky.

ABSENT: Mark Bellcourt, Amber Benning, Angelita Reyes, Andy Uttke, Carston Wagner.

GUESTS: Wayne Sigler.

1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN ADMISSIONS

Wayne Sigler, Director of Admissions on the Twin Cities Campus, said that while his staff work hard to ensure integrity during the admissions process, there is currently nothing on the topic that is sent to prospective students. Most of the work that is done on integrity involves industry standards to prevent fraud and to verify that documentation is authentic.

He said that if a problem is found before a student is admitted, then Admissions handles the case. If the student is admitted, then the case is handle by Student Judicial Affairs. The University has not experienced much dishonesty during the admissions process. Out of 30,000 applications, only 10 cases were noted last year that dealt with a jump in test scores and transfer credit problems.

Q: What problems exist with transfer credits?

A: Some students have a past transcript with poor grades and they would like a clean start. Admissions reviews the transcript in terms of the number of credits and how many years ago the classes were taken to determine if transfer credits will be accepted.

Betty Hackett said that many times graduating seniors produce an old transcript with general education credits so that they do not have to take more classes here. These cases are closely examined to determine if the transcript is authentic and to determine why the student did not

produce it when they applied for admission.

Q: Is there any statement on the application regarding honesty?

A: The application asks students to sign a statement that they have included all past college coursework, but does not directly address honesty.

Q: Can students choose whether or not to transfer credits?

A: Yes they can, although they normally want the extra credits. Admissions needs the past records to make sure that there are not any financial aid problems.

Q: What happens if a student receives a scholarship and then it is determined that his/her test scores are fraudulent?

A: The student's scholarship would be terminated and he/she would have to repay the scholarship amount.

Q: How are test scores counted if a student took a test more than once?

A: A student can retake a test, but can only submit test scores from one date, not the best scores by division over several dates. Admissions also does not allow students to self-report test scores.

Q: What percentage of test score jumps are fraud?

A: Many are, although some of the jumps are accounted for by students with disabilities who were not diagnosed the first time that they took the test.

Q: Does the University work with high schools to educate the personnel about cheating on tests?

A: He was not aware of the University doing this.

Q: What do students receive from Admissions?

A: Interested students are sent an application and booklet; once admitted, students receive a newsletter.

Q: How many athletes challenge rulings from Admissions?

A: The majority of athletes try to challenge the rulings because they want to be admitted and be eligible to compete. Athletic admissions are a nation-wide problem that is out-of-control.

Wayne Sigler said that if the committee proposed adding a statement on academic integrity, he suggested that the statement be short and meaningful since there is already quite a bit of information in the admissions booklet.

Committee members agreed that language should be added to let students know what the University expects, but from a positive viewpoint.

2. UPDATES

Betty Hackett provided the following updates:

OSAI FLYER

- Flyer was perfectly timed
- Referred people to syllabus insertion
- Many calls were tracked to it

WEB SITE

- Site went active November 13 and has registered 5,099 hits
- In December, the greatest number of hits were on the student FAQ and Gopher Guide language pages
- In January, the greatest number of hits were on the faculty FAQ and the syllabus insertion pages

RESEARCH

- Ron Huseman was approached
- IRR is receptive to research on the topic
- National survey will be used to compare the University to national norms
- Some customized questions will be added

FALL CHEATING

- 28 cases were reported, some are still pending
- Most of the cases involved plagiarism, partly from the internet and partly from sharing of papers
- Some occurred because the student has a 4.0 and cannot accept anything less than an 'A'

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

- Committee formed to review the Code and campus procedures
- Student Judicial Affairs and the General Counsel both serve as ex officios on the committee
- Preamble will be changed to include academic integrity

OTHER

- Newspaper articles have appeared in the Dispatch, Start Tribune, and Brief regarding student academic integrity
- Instructors in 1XXX-level leadership minor courses will start to include academic integrity in the course content
- Academic integrity has been added to the Welcome CD
- She is giving a workshop on positive classroom environment for the Center for Teaching and Learning
- Colleges are working on including academic integrity language in undergraduate handbooks
- OSAI is pursuing a database to issue reports on its caseload
- Meeting with Carol Gruber to discuss an honor code for athletes; this is a smaller, cohesive group that may be able to develop its own code as long as they do not feel that they are being singled out
- She has consulted with many faculty and students regarding classroom disruptions, many of which are tied to September 11

Q: Should OSAI or Student Judicial Affairs be called for classroom disruptions?

A: It depends on the behavior, but OSAI and SJC have resources available or know who to direct a faculty member to for resolution. Students need to be held responsible for this behavior and to re-establish classroom standards.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Dorothy Anderson said that a professor in her college is using Turnitin.com. A student in the class told Professor Anderson that the software is being used because the instructor does not trust the students. Many students are now upset. A question has also been raised: would the software show that a paper is plagiarized if a student previously submitted it since all submitted work becomes part of the software? Linda Ellinger should be brought back for an update.

With no further business, Dorothy Anderson thanked the members for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate