

[In these minutes: Academic Integrity at the Coordinate Campuses, OSAI Report]

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITTEE (SAIC)

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 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), Yev Garif, Betty Hackett, Laura Coffin Koch, Robert Pepin.

REGRETS: Mark Bellcourt, Steve Brandt, Shawn Curley, Daniel Svedarsky, Nicholas Velkov, Carston Wagner.

GUESTS: Leslie Meek, Bob Nelson, Kathy Skelton.

1. DISCUSSION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ON THE COORDINATE CAMPUSES

Bob Nelson, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at Crookston, began by noting that Crookston started discussing this issue almost two years ago in response to what was happening on the Twin Cities campus. In April of 2000, Betty Hackett was invited to campus to give the faculty a presentation on student academic integrity. Meetings have been held on campus with the academic standards committee and the student conduct committee to determine who is the responsible agency on campus.

Crookston has been waiting for any recommendation from this committee for help on how to proceed. When the OSAI website was started, faculty and staff were e-mailed with the website so that they have it as a resource. The one difference is the Crookston uses its own reporting form for incidents.

During Fall 2001 orientation, Vice Chancellor Douglas Knowlton presented information to new students on academic integrity and what the campus expects from them. Information on academic integrity has also been included in the Fall 2002 class schedule and will be included in future college catalogs. Last year only four faculty reported violations. Faculty are reluctant to report incidents though.

Q: Does Crookston require academic integrity language on a syllabus?

A: A model statement is shared with faculty but there is no mandate to include it.

Q: Why are faculty reluctant to report violations?

A: Traditionally, offenses have been handled by the faculty so many prefer to continue in this way. In the last 15 years, there has only been one student brought to the student conduct board for scholastic dishonesty.

Q: What was the pattern of the four cases last year?

A: One incident involved five students in a class, another was one student for attendance reasons, a third was for using materials during a test, and last case was for eight students plagiarizing and cheating.

Committee members noted that two cases involved group cheating, which is becoming more of an issue with the increase in group assignments. New students also have a problem since they do not understand how to work together in groups. Faculty need to explain group work better and for every class and assignments since each department and college has its own requirements and standards. Students also need to police their own work and ask if they have any questions or doubts.

Kathy Skelton, Administrator for Academic Support and Student Life at Duluth, said that the faculty in each college handle violations. A central office for violations is a new concept on the campus. An academic integrity committee has also been started. It is working on a draft policy, a reporting form, and sanctions. These drafts will be forwarded to the campus educational policy committee for approval.

The proposals will likely cause debate among faculty who have been handling it themselves for so long and who are opposed to central reporting of violations. It would be helpful to have Betty Hackett give a presentation to the campus.

Faculty are required to have a course syllabus but not required to have any statement in it on academic integrity. They are reluctant to mandate a statement for the same reasons they are reluctant to report violations.

Q: What are the efforts to educate new students?

A: The educational policy committee will review the draft materials so that they are in place for the first week of classes.

Q: How many cases were reported last year?

A: There is no number since it is not handled centrally. Instead, each college has its own procedures.

Q: How will students be informed of these changes?

A: Information will be placed in the class schedule, course syllabi, web sites, orientation, and on bookmarks when students buy their textbooks.

Leslie Meek, Professor of Social Sciences at Morris, said that an academic integrity subcommittee has been formed as part of the campus scholastic committee. Academic integrity does not seem to be a problem on campus because of the culture that it is in place at Morris.

This last fall, a pilot study was conducted with turnitin.com being used in two English classes. The students were very upset since they felt that the faculty did not trust them. The scholastic committee talked with faculty and students about its use and academic integrity. A resolution is being drafted to the dean to discontinue use of turnitin.com until faculty and students are educated on the software and a policy is in place on its use.

A broader discussion of this topic will be held on campus to get student and faculty input and to determine if any differences in interpretation or use of the software exist between groups and departments.

Currently, faculty handle the violations themselves. One case was forwarded to the academic integrity subcommittee, regarding miscommunication on an assignment.

Q: Why will turnitin.com not be used?

A: Morris students are active on campus and until they are satisfied with its use, faculty will not use it. Students were upset because faculty used it for only some papers, which made the students feel that they were being singled out for cheating. Students want it used for every paper and for every student if it is used at all. Students also did not want their paper part of the turnitin.com database. After September 11 the government has more freedom to look at information, which might include uploaded papers on this site.

Q: Many students do not arrive on campus with an understanding of plagiarism. Is this the case at Morris too?

A: Some do understand, others do not. It all depends on a student's classes and their high school experience. Plagiarism is often times just ignorance of what is not acceptable.

Q: Does the smaller campus help with a culture of academic integrity?

A: Yes since students are not segregated and everyone knows each other. Faculty also treat the students as peers.

Q: Does Morris do anything on academic integrity at new student orientation?

A: A presentation was started last year, although its effectiveness is hard to assess since students are so overwhelmed at orientation. That is why it is reinforced on every assignment in every class so that faculty make sure that students are clear on what is expected. Information is also included in the bulletin, class schedule, and brochures.

Laura Coffin Koch said that a committee is looking at all the materials that students receive during the application and admittance processes. Many times students do not read most of what is sent, so an effort needs to be made to focus what prospective students receive.

A committee member said that the University needs to get the message across at the beginning so that it is easier to reinforce it later. Another member stated that faculty who teach first year experience courses cannot carry the burden alone for reinforcing the message of academic integrity; all faculty need to incorporate it into their classes.

Q: Is there anything that the committee can do for any of the campuses?

A: Morris noted that they need to deal with the issue on campus first; Duluth would like the committee available to answer questions, and Crookston would like increased contact with Betty Hackett and OSAI.

Q: Have any of the campuses considered an honor code?

A: Duluth and Crookston are not considering it; Morris will include it as a part of the campus resolution but the culture will likely preclude any honor code being adopted.

Dorothy Anderson then thanked the three campus representatives for joining the meeting.

2. OSAI REPORT

Betty Hackett distributed fall scholastic dishonesty figures to the committee and went over the data with the members. She noted that there were 26 reports and they are grouped by type on the handout. Interesting details from the data are that four of the 25 years and older students caught were female and that 10 of the students were so new to the University that they did not have a GPA.

Another issue is that the Student Conduct Code is being reviewed. The first offense is scholastic dishonesty, and this will remain, but a second item is being considered to specifically deal with unauthorized collaborations and submissions of the same work in two courses. Other changes being considered are a new introduction, combining some other items, and removing disruptive classroom behavior from item 5 and making it its own item.

She has received a survey from Donald McCabe on academic integrity which will be administered to 200 students and faculty. It is possible that she will add a few University specific questions on an honor pledge and why faculty do not want to report violations. She will bring any survey to the committee for approval first.

Other items she has been working on include:

- LeAnn Melin has placed academic integrity in a new place on the new student CD
- She will be helping collegiate staff at orientation facilitate case studies

- Center for Teaching and Learning will incorporate academic integrity in its new faculty education
- Workshop is being planned for TA's and RA's
- She is meeting with student affairs groups on orientation and reporting
- Center for Ethical Development is planning an ethics course for the residence halls
- There was an article in the Minnesota Daily although it was incorrect and poorly written
- She met with the Council of Undergraduate Deans to share her statistics and talk about the unwillingness of faculty to report violations. Many faculty do not want to mark student so that is why they handle the violation informally. Faculty are very opposed to transcript notations or an automatic 'F' since it removes their latitude to make a decision.
- She met with Carol Gruber regarding athletics and academic integrity, trying to see if an honor code could be started and if academic counselors are reporting violations.
- She will connecting with residence halls next
- She will look into including academic integrity language in the class schedule
- Faculty Affairs Committee is looking into computer harassment of faculty. Student Judicial Affairs handles this issue if students are identified. There was also concern expressed about how much harassment is expressed on unanimous student evaluations.

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

Becky Hippert
University Senate