

[In these minutes: OSAI business, Council of Undergraduate Deans report]

STUDENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITTEE (SAIC)

MINUTES

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2005

2:30 – 4:00 PM

510 MORRILL HALL

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

PRESENT: Shawn Curley (Chair), Sarah Angerman, Mark Bellcourt, Jonathan Bringewatt, Lorna Buikema, Francisco Diez-Gonzalez, Sharon Dzik, Robert Pepin.

REGRETS: Linda Jones, Laura Coffin Koch, Paul Myers, Abbie Stohlmann, Micky Trent, Christopher Zellmer.

GUESTS: Debbie Gettemy, Kathy Skelton.

1. OSAI BUSINESS

The committee held a closed discussion on the consequences of scholastic dishonesty for graduate and professional students.

Sharon Dzik then turned to the annual Center for Academic Integrity Conference, noting she attended along with Debbie Gettemy, from OSAI, and Mark Bellcourt.

Mark Bellcourt noted that a dichotomy existed at the conference between some institutions and honor code schools. Those honor code schools adamantly believed in their process and that it lead to fewer reported cases. However, research indicates that students at honor code schools report incidents at a higher rate than non-honor code schools. This lead to a discussion from both sides as to how well honor codes actually work.

He said that he was surprised by the amount of research being done in this area; the Center itself sponsors three fellows. He was also taken back at a session on multiculturalism. The researchers indicated that culture plays a role in conduct and referred to people only by their ethnic groups. When asked if they viewed their approach as stereotyping, the researchers said yes and then continued on with the presentation.

Lastly, Donald McCabe reported that it appears that students under-report the number of incidents they have participated in when completing a web-based survey since they think that they will be able to be tracked somehow. When given a paper survey, students at the same

institutions report much higher figures.

Debbie Gettemy said that she attended the conference to get ideas to help the student advocate program, but learned that there is nothing similar being done at any other institutions. She also noted that some institutions are using Turnitin.com as a tool to help students, instead of just catching cheaters. Some professors are asking students to submit drafts to the site, and then talk with the students about the results to teach them what in their writing is being seen as plagiarism.

Sharon Dzik said that she attended a pre-conference session on getting faculty more involved in the process. They mentioned using rewards or incentives for reporting. She would like members to think about possible incentives and then discuss this topic at a future meeting.

Others topics she noted were ethics training for new faculty, the need for faculty buy-in to reporting, the use of template emails to faculty before each semester, and issuing reports back to college deans on the high number or lack of cases that are being reported from their faculty.

Q: Were smaller institutions the ones using honor codes?

A: A few were smaller institutions, but most were military schools, and even those referred to themselves as modified honor code schools, which means that a student would not be expelled for a first violation.

Lastly, Debbie Gettemy said that student advocate training was completed December 2. Part of the process was for each student to orally present a module, with the other advocates doing a written critique. These comments were then shared with the advocates to improve their performance. There are 11 advocates, with one returning from last year. An email will be sent in January asking faculty to make requests for spring semester.

Q: Is the goal still to have advocates ready for fall semester?

A: That is still the goal. Students will be recruited and trained this spring with the hope that they can start the first week of classes next fall.

A student member of the committee is also an advocate and noted that since doing the training she is much more aware of cheating taking place than she was before. Her involvement in the program and discussion with her friends has also lead to some of them deciding against cheating.

2, COUNCIL OF UNDERGRADUATE DEANS REPORT

Shawn Curley referred members to the notes that were sent from that meeting and said that the Council seems supportive of OSAI's efforts.

A member said that faculty still think twice about reporting since there is a perception that it is a time-intensive process.

Sharon Dzik said that most faculty who report once are more than willing to report again since it

is an easy process, but for many the perception is what stops them. Many faculty also do not understand how to give an appropriate sanction. They think that there is one response for all cases when in fact there are a range of possible sanctions that can match varying degrees of cheating. She asked members to talk to faculty colleagues and identify concrete 'red tape' issues, to determine if she can make changes in her office or if more education is all that is needed.

Q: Was there any key point made with the Council?

A: They really liked the idea of a manual being created to provide consistency, case studies, and sanctioning options. This could be used during training with faculty or just distributed as a reference guide.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Q: How is the process in Duluth with the new policy in place?

A: Kathy Skelton reported that the process is going well and faculty seem pleased with the central reporting. There have been seven cases referred, most within the last two weeks.

With no further business, Shawn Curley thanked the members for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Becky Hippert
University Senate