

## **Student Success Minutes February 20, 2025**

**Members Present:** Chair T. Aguirre, M. Burkardt, M. Elshinawy, R. Figueroa, K. Finlator, R. Gioannini, K. Knight, S. Lynch, D. Magoc, E. Oskey, J. Rice

**Members Absent:** None

Guests: Vice-Chair Brown, Kari Cena, Melissa Magnusson, Lindley Hornsbey

### **Agenda Item 1 Kari Cena, Program Manager Education Abroad, Available Scholarships for Study Abroad**

Ms. Cena explained to the committee that the Benjamin A. Gilman scholarship was one of the largest scholarships that they provided. It can provide up to \$5,000 per students if the student applies and meets certain requirements such as U.S. Citizenship, and Pell Grant recipients. Other scholarships can be found on their webpage at <https://educationabroad.nmsu.edu/scholarships.html>

Senator Magoc asked if there were any updates regarding visa issues for international students. He also asked if there was any model in place to increase scholarships for study abroad purposes.

Ms. Cena answered that they have considered adding a study abroad fee to tuition, but that would have to go farther than ASNMSU. She stated that Texas Tech and UTEP collect an additional \$8.00 in tuition for study abroad scholarships.

Senator Burkhardt asked if they have talked to the Foundation and asked if they could raise money for this specific purpose? She also provided an e-mail from the Foundation to Ms. Cena.

Vice-Chair Brown and Chair Aguirre both volunteered to write a Proposition if she felt that this might help with their fund-raising efforts.

### **Agenda Item 2 Melissa Magnusson, Director of Financial Aid, Institutional Scholarships**

Chair Aguirre asked if a student receiving an institutional scholarship based on a G.P.A. requirement would lose the scholarship if their G.P.A. fell below a the required G.P.A.

Ms. Magnusson explained that this would be the case except that a student can appeal to have the scholarship reinstated if they lost the scholarship. She stated that if it was due to extenuating circumstances then it would most likely be reinstated. If the student didn't have a legitimate reason for the drop in G.P.A. it most likely would not be reinstated. She also shared that they only check G.P.A. at the end of the year, so the student could use the summer to bring up their G.P.A.

Senator Finlator asked if it might be possible to send warning e-mails to recipients to let students know that they have the Spring and Summer sessions to bring up their grades. He also asked if it might be possible to have an alert system based on midterm grades.

Melissa was hesitant to do so based on her sense that not all instructors submit midterm grades even though it is a requirement.

Senator Burkhardt also suggested that some form of communication be distributed letting students and faculty know that they have the full academic year to bring up their grades. Ms. Magnusson felt that faculty and students should refer to their webpage because it is always up to date.

Senator Burkardt also asked if the credits students earn have to be in their major to count towards G.P.A. Ms. Magnusson replied that they do not as long as they are new and not repeated courses.

Senator Burkardt also asked if the student was on a NMSU scholarship if they had to take all of the classes at NMSU. Melissa answered that in most cases they would have to be taken at the main campus. She stated that sometimes there are exceptions if a needed class is not offered on the main campus.

**Item # 3 Lindley Hornsby, President Graduate Worker Union, Insurance International Students**

Ms. Hornsby explained that prior to unionization there was a mandate for international students to enroll in a specific insurance that had a cost of up to \$ 1,100. Through negotiations the Union asked the university to look at other alternatives. Eventually, the university approved the Be Well Plan for graduate students. However, there has been some confusion in the communication from the legal office stating that if students use the Be Well plan that they may have some issues applying for a green card going forward.

Senator Burkardt asked if the students knew how to receive the tax credit. Lindley explained that the messaging that has come from the university is that if students use the Be Well plan that it might affect their application for a green card later.

Senator Magoc stated that he thought that he believed that many international students don't realize how hard it is to receive insurance in the United States since it might be a low cost, or no cost in their native countries.

Senator Burkardt stated that there was a time when the Health Center was open to all students and that maybe they could bring back broader services to NMSU.

Chair Aguirre will check with Amanda Blair to find out what services are available for students at the Health Service Center.

The main take-away was that graduate students are receiving mixed messages regarding their health care options and would like more clarification about their options. They would also like a lower cost option that would not affect their application of a green card at a later date.

**Item # 4, January Minutes Approved.** Motion to approve from Senator Gioannini and second from Senator Burkardt. Unanimous yes.