

Academic Affairs Committee—March 6, 2018

Present: Sandy Maisel, Steve Saunders, Loren McClenahan, Katie Donahue, Dale Kocevski, Beth Schiller, Jacob Adner, Marcques Houston, Sam Scott, Russ Johnson, Jim Sloat

I. The minutes from the February 27, 2018 meeting were approved.

II. Consent agenda: two course proposals were approved

A. Art 2xx (Renaissance Art)

B. Religious Studies 2xx (Religion in the Modern State of Israel)

III. Requirements for the Managerial Economics minor

The Economics Department proposes to modify the requirements for the Managerial Economics minor to make *EC221: Managerial Economics* no longer a requirement for the major but an optional elective. Thus, the managerial economics minor would require two EC2xx electives, one of which could be EC221. The rationale behind this proposal is that the popularity of the minor (currently the largest minor at Colby) is making EC221 difficult to staff consistently. In addition, the department would like to create a more flexible minor that would better serve the interests of their students (who come from 24 different majors). With their recent hires they are looking to diversify their offerings at the 200-level to appeal to a broader range of student interests.

Members of the committee expressed concerns about whether the minor would still meet its goals if the namesake course were no longer required. There was some question about what the actual goal of the minor is, considering its complex legacy as a replacement for Administrative Science. The large popularity of the Economics minor was also a concern, and the committee questioned whether this change might allow it to become even larger. The motion was tabled, with the understanding that Russ will meet with the department to clarify some of these uncertainties.

IV. Incomplete grades

Currently there are no guidelines for when it would be appropriate to grant an “Incomplete” to a student who requests one. Also, there have been cases where faculty members have reported a grade of “Incomplete” in the absence of any request at all. The committee felt that Incompletes should be granted in cases of significant illness or critical emergency, and in general for circumstances that were out of the student’s ability to predict or control. The Incomplete would not generally be appropriate for situations where a student become overwhelmed with the academic workload due to poor time management. A consensus also emerged that the decision (by a course instructor) about granting an Incomplete should be done in consultation with the student’s academic advisor and class dean. A suggestion was made that perhaps the process of “creating” an Incomplete should begin with the student making an “Incomplete Request” at a designated web page. This would send a notice to the instructor, advisor, and

class dean for consideration. Such a system would prevent instructors from reporting an Incomplete at the grade reporting stage in the absence of a request from the student and would facilitate consultation in the decision-making process.

As time ran out, the committee deferred further discussion to a future meeting. In the meantime it will be helpful to do some research on how Incomplete grades are handled at other colleges.