

Academic Affairs Committee—October 2, 2018

Present: Katie Donahue, Sandy Maisel, Sam Scott, Sam Lee, Steve Saunders, Lindsey Nelson, Christie Woodside, Dale Kocevski, Loren McClenachan, Barbara Moore, Russ Johnson

- I. Minutes from the previous meeting (September 25) were approved.
- II. A set of three proposals has been submitted by the Jewish Studies Program.
 1. To redefine the Jewish Studies Program as the Jewish & Middle Eastern Studies Program
 2. To establish an official minor in Middle Eastern Studies
 3. To establish an official major in Jewish Studies

In its discussion of the proposals, the committee raised a number of questions.

- The establishment of two separate steering committees for J&MES, one for JS and one for MES, seemed like a lot of administrative structure for such a small program. Would it be possible for the J&MES program to function with a single steering committee?
- Would there be enough student interest/enrollment to justify the establishment of an MES minor and/or a JS major at Colby?
- Would a MES minor be viable at Colby given the current situation of Arabic language being taught only by temporary Fulbright scholars, or would its viability depend on the establishment of a faculty line in Arabic language?
- How popular and viable are MES programs/majors/minors at other colleges that have them?
- The requirements for the proposed JS major seem rather unstructured. That is probably necessary given the fact that it relies so heavily on courses offered by a number of different departments (many of which won't be offered every year). Is a major with such an unstructured set of requirements sufficiently coherent that students will have a clear sense of progression through the major?
- How are JS majors structured at other institutions?
- JS has generous endowed funding for programming. How will comparable funds be made available for the MES part of the program to avoid imbalance?

The proposals were tabled to allow for further consultation with the provost, and with the JS Steering Committee.