

Academic Affairs Committee—November 27, 2018

Present: Sandy Maisel, Steve Saunders, Loren McClenachan, Dale Kocevski, Luke Parker, Katie Donahue, Sam Scott, Sam Lee, Christie Woodside, Russ Johnson, Jim Sloat

I. Minutes from the previous meeting (November 13) were approved.

II. Some members of the committee inquired about why students have not been more fully involved in the work of the Distribution Requirements Task Force, which has been reviewing and revising the college requirements. It was pointed out that although the AAC (in 2015) originally proposed a (20-person) task force including student (and staff) members, the faculty ended up approving a smaller task force made up only of faculty members. Thus, the task force cannot add to or amend its own membership, since it was established by vote of the faculty. It was understood at the time that the task force would consult with students and staff while doing its work. Until this academic year, consultation with students was quite limited, but has now increased. For example, a delegation from the DRTF is scheduled to meet with SGA next week. The suggestion was made that perhaps one or two students could be invited to attend (as guests) the DRTF meetings. Russ said he would check with the task force to see if it is willing to accommodate this request.

III. The committee discussed some potential revisions to the Course Proposal Form that is submitted to the AAC whenever a department wishes to introduce a new course into the curriculum. For the section “Methods used to assess the learning goals” where assignments for the course are listed, it was suggested to add additional options that would capture information about reading assignments and other possible types of out of class work not included in the current questions. It could also be beneficial to mention in the form that a standard expectation (both by Colby and by accrediting bodies) is to have 2-3 hours of work outside class for each hour of class time. The committee also felt it would be helpful to reorganize the order of the questions, grouping together those that are about pedagogical aspects of the course, and separating that group of questions from the others that are about more “bureaucratic” information such as meeting times, maximum enrollment etc. For the question about “Priorities for enrollment”, it can be clearly stated that if no information is provided by the department for this question, then the default priorities of the college will apply.