Academic Affairs Committee—July 14, 2020

Present: Kim Besio, Steve Wurtzler, Allison Barner, Katie Donahue, Lukas Alexander, Sam Scott, Genesis Cazales, Karlene Burrell-McRae, Russ Johnson, Jim Sloat

(This meeting was conducted by videoconference.)

I. Welcome and announcements.
New members (Kim, Allison, and Steve) were welcomed to the committee. We briefly reviewed the charge and responsibilities of the AAC, and the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

II. Transfer credits from online courses.
Colby’s normal policy is that we do not allow transfer of credits to Colby from online courses. That prohibition was temporarily suspended for the Spring 2020 semester and for Summer 2020 classes. With that context, we discussed the question of whether (and under what circumstances) we should continue the allowance of credit transfer from online courses for the fall 2020 semester.

It was noted that transfer credits from online courses might be important for some students who cannot get at Colby all the courses they need for graduation. This would most likely be the case for students who are enrolled at Colby remotely, and will have only a limited subset of all our courses available to them. The committee felt that while there are good reasons for not granting a “blanket” exemption (such as what we did for summer courses), certain students who due to their particular extenuating circumstances would need to transfer credit to Colby for an online course taken somewhere else, should be permitted to do so.

The following guidelines were suggested for departments and advisors who will consider requests for credit transfer for the fall semester.

During the fall 2020 semester, students who (to fulfill a graduation requirement or for another very compelling reason) need a specific course that is not available to them at Colby, may apply to transfer credit for an online course taken at another institution. Such applications should be submitted in advance, through the normal process for requesting a credit transfer. Forms on which to seek approval can be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

III. Adjustments to the Residence Requirement.
For the fall 2020 semester some of our students will be enrolled full-time at Colby, but studying in a fully remote manner. That brings up the question of how our residence requirement might be applied for them. This is especially relevant for 21J graduates (for whom fall 2020 is their last semester) and for any transfer students who need the fall 2020 to be one of their four semesters in residence.
The committee agreed that, for the purposes of the residence requirement, being enrolled as a full-time student at Colby (even for fully remote students) should count as being “in residence”. This is consistent with the current definition of a resident student (“a full-time student taking at least 12 credit hours and paying tuition at the semester rate”) in the catalogue.