

President's Update on Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

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At the beginning of the current academic year, the members of the President's Cabinet and I, in collaboration with the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC), identified diversity and inclusion as the first of three major areas of focus for the year. This commitment was stated clearly in the preamble to the 2011-12 "Strategic Action Agenda" (SAA), where we place issues of diversity and inclusion within the broader context of responsible citizenship. On various other occasions, I have written at length about the concepts of *intercultural and global understanding*, *intercultural literacy*, and *diversity and inclusion* (see notes at the end of this message). The Cabinet and I chose to emphasize diversity and inclusion this year because we remain convinced that those concepts identify fundamental requirements for the educational experience we expect our students to have (see Skidmore's "Goals for Student Learning and Development") and because they are essential to the type of academic community we expect to be – not only for every student at Skidmore, but for every member of our faculty and staff. We have made considerable progress in recent years on a number of measures, but we also know that we still have considerable work to do as a community both to assess the effectiveness of the steps we have taken so far and to continue this crucial work.

This year's special commitment to addressing issues of diversity and inclusion was reflected in a number of items in the "Strategic Action Agenda" itself, and I am pleased to report that we have seen initiatives in virtually every area of the College, even beyond those identified in the SAA. §1 of this report catalogs those efforts (along with references to SAA items, where appropriate) – some of which have been more visible than others, but all of which have been important. (Please note that some items included below represent work in several divisions and so are listed in each of those areas.) In §2, I comment on one particular "Strategic Action Agenda" item, #21, which articulated my commitment to advance our diversity and inclusion agenda, in part, by "review[ing] the structures established to support Goal II to ensure effective implementation of priority initiatives." §3 contains references to other related documents.

This report highlights the broad scope of our institutional commitment to enhancing diversity and inclusiveness at Skidmore. I encourage you to read this report and ask that you join me in acknowledging the important work that we have undertaken as a community to advance this institutional priority during the past year. I also ask that you renew your personal commitment to join with me as we continue to advance this work in our community.

§1. Divisional 2011-12 Initiatives To Support Diversity and Inclusion

PRESIDENT

- Conducted a review of the "diversity triad" structure (SAA #21); see §2, below.
- In response to the President's request, CIGU conducted a review of its function and membership. CIGU's proposed changes were presented as revisions to the IPPC Operating Code and approved by IPPC on April 4, 2012. (SAA #21)
- Engaged an outside consultant to lead yearlong cultural competency and inclusion training for Cabinet. (SAA #26)

- Continued work begun last year with diverse group of leaders from Saratoga Springs to create community dialogs around issues of diversity, inclusion, and ensuring that Saratoga is a safe and welcoming environment for its increasingly diverse population (including but not limited to the Skidmore student, faculty, and staff populations).

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Community Discussions

- Continued to review, disseminate, and discuss data and reports (Middle States Periodic Review Report, NSSE, CHAS, CIGU, exit interviews) to determine action steps (Faculty Meeting, Academic Staff retreats, other venues). (SAA #22)
- Professor Carol de Wet (Franklin and Marshall) led discussions on “Recruiting, Retaining, and Maintaining Women Faculty in Academic Institutions in the 21st Century” (NSF SUN ADVANCE grant); STEM faculty has engaged in exploring the issue of gender bias in the classroom.
- CEPP/CAPT committee has led discussion of changes to the student ratings questions with some attention to issues of bias.

Personnel

- Held annual Inclusive Hiring Workshop in Fall 2011. In the ten searches this year, three faculty of color have been recruited. Six of the ten are international faculty; two of the international faculty members are faculty of color. (SAA ##6, 25)
- Transferred three faculty members in contingent appointments to tenure-track lines. Of the three, two enhance the diversity of the faculty. (SAA # 6, 23)
- Will partner with an external consultant to conduct a significantly revised Inclusive Hiring Workshop in May. (SAA#25)
- Associate Dean of the Faculty Paty Rubio has led the planning of a conference with other CHAS institutions to discuss and share best practices in retaining faculty of color, scheduled for September 2012. (SAA #25)
- New structure for Academic Affairs includes an Associate Dean with responsibilities for diversity (Associate Dean for Personnel, Development, and Diversity). (SAA #1)
- Will shortly announce plans for filling the position of the Director for Intercultural Studies.
- Proposed reinstating Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellow as new initiative in FY13.
- Continued to explore ways to increase support for international faculty.

Faculty Development

- Integrated material regarding multicultural classroom and climate issues in New Faculty Learning Community curriculum.
- CIGU set up resource portal for pedagogy on CIGU website.
- Proposed as new initiative for FY13 workshops for course development in matters of difference and diversity.
- Office of Special Programs to create new training module for Pre-College faculty to prepare them to teach New York City Opportunity Program students more effectively. Training funded by a Teagle grant for SEO (Sponsors for Educational Opportunity)-Skidmore Connections. (SAA #18)

Curriculum/Program

- CEPP, using data from CIGU exit interviews, CHAS, and NSSE, has proposed revising the Culture-Centered Inquiry requirement. That proposal is currently before the faculty for

- deliberation. (SAA #22)
- Implemented additional support for IGR. Recruited ten faculty members to IGR workshops. Of those ten, three will teach in the program in the short term; we expect more will do so in the long-term. (SAA #22)
- Director of OCSE Cori Filson to assess student learning in Skidmore programs abroad in China, London, Paris, and Spain. She expects to start that work by the end of the year. (SAA #9)
- With support from a Presidential Leadership Grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Associate Dean of the Faculty (ADOF) for Advising Corey Freeman-Gallant conceived and implemented the SEE-Beyond awards (Summer Educational Experience) for students, paying particular attention to matters of access. (SAA #15)
- ADOF for Advising assessed issues relating to equal access to Engaged Liberal Learning Practices and began implementing programs for improvement.
- Director of Honors Forum Catherine Golden has been working to provide greater student access to the Forum. (SAA #15)
- Next FYE first-year book choice to be *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity* by Katherine Boo.

Selected Campus Events

- Student Affairs/Academic Affairs (Dr. Frances Kendall visit). (SAA #22)
- Selected Tang exhibits: Kiki Smith (Fall 2011), Nancy Grossman (Spring 2012).
- Daniella Talmon-Heller, Greenberg Scholar in Residence (September-October 2011), expert in Islamic history and thought. Offered mini course "Islamic History and Institutions" and a public lecture (September 20, 2011): "'The first of the two directions of prayer, the second of mosques, the third of sanctuaries': Jerusalem in Islamic Thought and History."
- Zana Briski delivered Carr lecture (October 12, 2011), "Through an Artist's Eyes: An evening with Photographer and Filmmaker Zana Briski" (Oscar winner for *Born into Brothels*).
- Performance by the Isle of Klezbos, Perlow event (February 23, 2012).
- Julianne Traylor delivered Harder Lecture (Department of Management & Business, March 22, 2012): "Human Rights and Corporate Accountability."
- Angela Brown was the 2011-12 McCormack Resident (April 2-5, 2012): "Opera from a Sistah's Point of View."

External

- Collaboration with Academy of Life-Long Learning (several faculty-student panels).
- Partnering with Advancement, VPAA Susan Kress visited Hong Kong and London in November 2011 (alumni/ae engagement and student recruitment). (SAA #23)

<h2>ADMISSIONS</h2>

- Expanded international travel, including travel to Latin America. (SAA #23)
- Increased the number of full-pay international students in the applicant pool. (SAA #23)
- Continued to give priority to need-based financial aid appeals from students of color. (SAA ##23, 40)
- The Admissions and Advancement staffs held two workshops (one in the summer and one in January) to explore issues surrounding diversity and inclusion. The first, which ran for two days, was directed by Charles Behling and Monita Thompson from the Intergroup Relations Program at the University of Michigan. The second provided an opportunity for the two staffs to continue that conversation.

ADVANCEMENT

- In collaboration with the Alumni Association, initiated discussions with potential leaders to re-launch the Multicultural Career Alumni Network (MCAN); meeting scheduled for April 2012. (SAA #24)
- The Admissions and Advancement staffs held two workshops (one in the summer and one in January) to explore issues surrounding diversity and inclusion. The first, which ran for two days, was directed by Charles Behling and Monita Thompson from the Intergroup Relations Program at the University of Michigan. The second provided an opportunity for the two staffs to continue that conversation.
- Two members of the Advancement Staff attended the Workshop on Inclusive Hiring offered by the Office of Human Resources.
- The Advancement Office organized visits by then Acting President Susan Kress to meet with alumni, parents, and friends as well as prospective students in Hong Kong and London.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

- Supported Black Faculty and Staff Group, which held a community reception in the fall, co-sponsored a performance in February, and hosted a reception for an Admissions program in April. (SAA ##23, 25)
- Developed proposal to the President for an independent diversity consultant. Researched, sourced, performed reference checking, and negotiated the contract. (SAA #26)
- Developed and delivered the new “Inclusive Hiring Workshop for Staff” training program held in April. (SAA ##25, 26)
- Following up on cultural competency work being done by Cabinet (see above, under “President”), Human Resources is working with the same consultant to develop and implement a similar program for supervisors and staff. Implementation of this second phase of work is planned for next year. (SAA ##25, 26)
- Increased on-line ads to include national sites that are identified as connecting with diverse audiences.
- Participated in the Leadership Council on Inclusion - Annual Diversity Awards Program.
- Developed Diversity in Hiring Guidelines for Searches.
- Key support for the DOF team with Inclusive Hiring Workshop for Faculty held September 12, 2012.
- Updated Local and Regional Resources Guide and Diversity Recruiting Resources.
- Worked with VPAA to review EEO, Diversity, and Anti-Harassment: Policy and Procedure (*Faculty Handbook*, Part VI).
- Reviewed postings for all regular searches on campus to assess diversity of the pool.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

All-Student-Affairs Division

- Fall meeting worked with Dr. Frances Kendall to learn ways to interrupt bias in our professional roles in Student Affairs. (SAA ##15, 27)

- Spring meeting presentation by Darren Drabek (based on student interviews) on supporting International Students. (SAA #23)
- Members of Student Affairs staff participated in IGR training – currently, approximately 40% of the Student Affairs staff has participated in the IGR initiative.
- Nine members of the Student Affairs staff participated in the Inclusive Hiring Workshop. (SAA ##25, 26)
- Each area is currently conducting an assessment of their department and services – an important aspect of the assessment is to determine whom we are serving and who is absent.
- Everyday Leadership Program: Based on the Bystander Intervention work developed from the Green Dot Project, worked with more than 450 students to teach techniques for interrupting negative behaviors including bias. (SAA #27)
- Supported work of Campus Disabilities Advisory Committee: first draft of final report on review of campus accessibility issues and needs, with recommendations and long-range plan, is in review. (SAA #22)

Dean of Student Affairs – Dean of Faculty Collaborations

- Fall Discussion: Climate and Diversity Issues. (SAA #22)
- Spring Discussion: Using the work of researchers Walton and Cohen, discussion of belonging as a way to create welcoming, diverse, and inclusive community. (SAA #22)

Office of Student Diversity Programs

Supports student clubs and organizations during the academic year to bring to campus speakers, films, and performances addressing issues of diversity and inclusion. (SAA #22 – all items immediately following)

- Worked with the student Committee on Diversity Affairs (CoDA) to mount an exhibit in the Payne Room of the Tang called “Underneath” (a program designed to encourage individuals to look beyond the surface of identities and get “underneath” to real understanding).
- Supported the establishment of a new student group called “United Minds” which has created a publication and blog, Liberation Chronicles, and coordinated the Trayvon Martin vigil and film (which may be shown at Academic Festival).
- Select and coordinate with students attending NCORE (National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in American Higher Education).
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – coordinated with Religious and Spiritual Life Office and the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures to present “Soundtrack for a Revolution” and “Bringing King to China.”
- Dialogue between Jewish students and Arab students concerning the fair representation of Palestinian and Israeli perspectives co-sponsored by OSDP and the Religious and Spiritual Life Office.

Campus Life

- Working with the student dispute resolution club, Fight Club hosted an important dialogue between the SGA and the Jewish community to work out the conflict that resulted from programming issues (a major concert was scheduled on Yom Kippur). (SAA #22)

Career Development Center

- Developed Opportunity Program LinkedIn subgroup to encourage networking, compiled OP alumni LinkedIn profiles and Creative Thought Works profile to demonstrate alumni success, composed and distributed weekly events with OP students and staff. (SAA #15)

- Created a Job Search Guide for international students, delivered workshop on job searching and locating H1B Visa resources, purchased “Going Global” to increase access to international listings. (SAA #15)
- Participates annually in the Multicultural Networking event hosted in New York (student and alumni event). (SAA ##15, 24)

Student Academic Services

- Coordinated student and staff participation in the CHAS Black and Latino Male initiative. (SAA #22)
- Coordinated a day in the dining hall, “Mix It Up,” to encourage cross group interaction. (SAA #22)
- Intercultural group of students participated in a community service spring break trip to work together on an educational farm in Shelter Island, New York. This trip also included a visit to New York City where the students attended a networking dinner with international alumni and alumni of color. (SAA #24)

Bias Response Group

- Sponsored “What Will Make Us Act: Understanding and Interrupting Bias in Our Community”, Dr. Frances Kendall visit. (SAA #27)
- Hosted 5 Community Conversations (topics included: general information about the work of the group; review of policies and practices that might reflect unintentional bias; discussion of sexual misconduct, rape myth, and effective consent). (SAA #27)
- January Retreat with Campus Safety and Residential Life to discuss ways to use our various roles to interrupt bias on our campus. (SAA #27)

Health Promotions

- Center for Sex and Gender Relations sponsored a mediated dialogue about sexuality and religion. (SAA #22)
- Center for Sex and Gender Relations organized a Solidarity Walk to raise awareness about issues that students face, particularly students of color and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered students. (SAA #22)

§2. Review of the Structures Established To Support Goal II

Last spring, the Committee on Intercultural and Global Understanding (CIGU) recommended that I consider whether we have the right structures in place to advance our institutional agenda in this area and determine, as well, whether we are providing appropriate support for the individuals holding key positions. I have met with the individuals involved, and I now report my conclusions.

Structural Considerations

The particular structures involved here define three positions that have come to be known collectively as the “diversity triad” along with the supporting role of CIGU. These positions are the Assistant Director for Equal Employment Opportunity and Workforce Diversity (ADEWD) (a position located in Human Resources), the Director of Student Diversity Programs (located in Student Affairs), and the Director of Intercultural Studies (a joint faculty-administrative position in Academic Affairs). The individuals in these roles have responsibility for key functions relating to equal employment opportunity, prevention of harassment within our workforce, and the like, and for promoting the College’s work on Goal II of the *Strategic Plan*. It should be noted that these positions are primarily operational. That is to say, the individuals in these roles are responsible for leading divisional efforts to implement diversity and inclusion initiatives. At the same time, these individuals bring important expertise to the College and so

are well positioned to provide advice and guidance to those charged with developing policy and articulating institutional goals – most especially, the members of the Cabinet and me. As part of their operational and advisory responsibilities, these individuals meet periodically to discuss issues, both within their divisions and throughout the College, to undertake joint projects, and to consider how best to advise others, including members of the Cabinet and myself.

CIGU, a subcommittee of the IPPC, was established as such on April 4, 2008, following three years of work by the Intercultural and Global Understanding Task Force, which I had constituted to advise me in implementing Goal II of the *Strategic Plan*. The three individuals identified above sit on CIGU to advise that group, to seek advice from the other CIGU members, and to participate in initiatives undertaken by CIGU.

During the 2011-12 academic year, I held several meetings with the individuals serving in the “diversity triad” positions, the leadership of CIGU, and others involved in this work at the College. Following are my conclusions from this review and decisions regarding how we will proceed going forward.

Conclusions

Positional support for diversity initiatives – I continue to believe that the College is well served by having the three positions noted above: the Director of Student Diversity Programs, the Assistant Director for Equal Employment Opportunity and Workforce Diversity, and the Director of Intercultural Studies. This structure is appropriate at Skidmore, in large part because it reflects the fact that work on diversity and inclusion, intercultural literacy, and intercultural and global understanding occurs within and across all divisions of the College, and this work differs depending on context and the members of the Skidmore community who are involved.

However, as part of the reassessment of the structure of Academic Affairs, we now have created a new position of Associate Dean of the Faculty for Personnel, Development, and Diversity. This Associate Dean will take on responsibilities relating to faculty hiring that previously had fallen to the Director of Intercultural Studies, who now will report to the Associate Dean. By charging another individual with operational responsibilities specifically relating to diversity and inclusion, creating this Associate Dean position strengthens our institutional support of diversity initiatives within Academic Affairs. For these reasons, it makes sense to expect this Associate Dean to consult and collaborate with the other three members of our operational diversity and inclusion team. In addition, I will ask that the Associate Dean assume responsibility for convening this informal group periodically. I believe these changes will add to our institutional capacity to address issues of diversity and inclusion, enhance the work of the members of this working group as individuals, increase the capacity of this group to undertake initiatives on its own, and strengthen its collective voice.

Above all, I want to ensure that the individuals in these key leadership positions feel supported in their work and have access to appropriate resources. I also want to continue to be well informed by hearing their perspectives on campus climate and diversity, especially to know of any challenges they might identify that merit additional institutional attention. Accordingly, I will take the following steps:

- I will meet at least once each semester, and otherwise as needed, with this group and their immediate supervisors. Any one or all of these persons may request a meeting with me at any time, should they believe such a meeting is warranted by circumstances.
- As indicated, I support the new structure in Academic Affairs that includes the newly defined position of Associate Dean of the Faculty for Personnel, Development, and Diversity. Furthermore, I affirm my expectation that this Associate Dean and the ADEWD will lead the College’s efforts to recruit and retain a more diverse faculty and staff. This charge encompasses:

- The responsibility of the Associate Dean and the ADEWD to work with department chairs, program directors, and hiring managers, as appropriate, to develop diverse applicant pools.
- The responsibility of the Associate Dean and the ADEWD, if appropriate, is to re-start a search (the Associate Dean in academic searches, the ADEWD in non-academic searches) if they determine that sufficient attention has not been paid to advancing our commitment to diversity.
- The responsibility of the Associate Dean and the ADEWD to develop retention goals and strategies informed by best practices elsewhere and appropriate to Skidmore.
- The Associate Dean and the ADEWD will report annually to me on recruitment and retention of a more diverse faculty and staff. The reports will summarize searches undertaken, the results, key initiatives and lessons learned, and any recommendations for future actions.

CIGU – At my request, CIGU has considered its function and membership, including its status as a subcommittee of IPPC, to determine how effectively its structure supports the work of Goal II. Importantly, CIGU determined that its constitution as an IPPC subcommittee is appropriate. Given that determination, CIGU then presented a number of proposed amendments to IPPC’s Operating Code to clarify CIGU’s role and to enhance its effectiveness. Those changes have been considered by IPPC, and the approved amendments are reflected in the IPPC minutes of April 6, 2012. Among other things, the changes clarify that CIGU’s work relates to intercultural and global understanding, intercultural literacy, and diversity and inclusion broadly speaking, not only in relationship to Goal II of the *Strategic Plan*. The revisions also result in changes to the composition of CIGU’s membership, including a slightly smaller subcommittee.

Institutional Leadership for Diversity and Inclusion

I wish to express my appreciation of and continuing support for the work of those currently holding the “diversity triad” positions (Herb Crossman, Mariel Martin, and Tim Harper on an interim basis this year) and the co-chairs of CIGU (Michael Ennis-McMillan and Cori Filson) for their important, on-going work. In addition, I thank Associate Dean Paty Rubio for assuming new responsibilities as Associate Dean of the Faculty for Personnel, Development, and Diversity.

Importantly, I want to emphasize that the members of the President’s Cabinet who head divisions hold overall individual responsibility for advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives within their divisions and collective responsibility for overseeing such initiatives across the College. Furthermore, I affirm my own responsibility, as President, for ensuring that we continue to work intentionally and forcefully to advance strategic initiatives in this area. The Cabinet and I, in collaboration with others, will continue to monitor and assess our progress toward meeting our objectives.

In the end, the work of diversity and inclusion is about respecting one another – each one of us in relation to everyone else at the College – as a valuable, contributing member of the Skidmore community. Several years ago, a group of students developed an initiative called “Give More, Respect More, Skidmore.” I urge each of us to renew our commitment to this ideal and to ensure that the work of intercultural and global understanding is and becomes the work of each of us.

§3. Other Important Documents Relating to Goal II

Engaged Liberal Learning: The Plan for Skidmore College 2005-15 (Strategic Plan), Goal II
<http://cms.skidmore.edu/planning/loader.cfm?url=/commonspot/security/getfile.cfm&pageID=211425>

Reaffirmation, Recommitment, and Renewal: The Strategic Action Agenda 2011-12
<http://cms.skidmore.edu/planning/upload/SAA-11-12-final.pdf>

President's Statement on Intercultural Literacy (November 1, 2007)
<http://cms.skidmore.edu/president/essays/index.cfm>

CIGU Statement to the Community with Recommendation (May 2011) (Appendix A to CIGU Annual Report 2010-11)
<http://cms.skidmore.edu/cigu/reports/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=768337>